

THE  
COMPLETE WORKS  
OF  
SISTER NIVEDITA

*BIRTH CENTENARY PUBLICATION*

VOLUME IV



SISTER NIVEDITA GIRLS' SCHOOL.

*Published by* The Secretary  
Ramakrishna Sarada Mission  
Sister Nivedita Girls' School  
5 Nivedita Lane  
Calcutta 3

*Printed by* P. C. Ray  
Sri Gouranga Press Private Ltd.  
5 Chintamani Das Lane  
Calcutta 9

RAMAKRISHNA SARADA MISSION  
SISTER NIVEDITA GIRLS' SCHOOL

*First Edition* October 1955

Price Rs. 12.00

“Fourth Five Year Plan—Development of Modern Indian Languages. The popular price of the book has been made possible through a subvention received from the Government of West Bengal.”

**SOLE DISTRIBUTORS**  
**ANANDA PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LTD.**  
5 CHINTAMANI DAS LANE  
CALCUTTA 9

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

The Fourth Volume of the present edition of the Complete Works of Sister Nivedita includes the following works:

Footfalls of Indian History

Civic Ideal and Indian Nationality (Civic and National Ideals)

Hints on National Education in India

Famine and Flood in East Bengal in 1906

Lambs among Wolves.

The first three works are posthumous publications, in which the publishers have collected some valuable writings of abiding national interest on the subject dearest to Sister Nivedita's heart—INDIA. Her Master, Swami Vivekananda, had said in 1897: "For the next fifty years this alone shall be our key-note—this, our great Mother India." And true to her Master's words Sister Nivedita has sung with love and devotion, thought and concern, about India and India alone, for the rest of her life.

Her writings bring forth her inner convictions: her style is brilliant and vigorous, and even the most hackneyed topics and common-place themes are invested by her pen with new power and grace. From her rough notes it becomes evident that she herself had planned to bring out these books. But unfortunately during her life-time they were not published.

*Footfalls of Indian History* was first published in 1915 by Messrs Longmans Green & Co., London. It is a beautiful edition with six coloured plates by well-known artists like Abanindra Nath Tagore, Gaganendra Nath Tagore and Nanda Lal Bose. Besides these there are 22 photo-plates. A new edition of the same was brought out by the Advaita

Ashrama in 1956. It has been reprinted here with the same title but with the following changes:—

1. 'The Chinese Pilgrim' was originally published in *The Modern Review* in March, 1911, as 'Fa-hian'. This title has been retained here.

2. In *The Modern Review* of 1907 the writing entitled 'Some Problems of Indian Research' was published in three instalments; the second and the third instalments having the sub-titles 'The Final Recension of the Mahabharata' and 'Relation between Buddhism and Hinduism' respectively. Hence these three articles are published serially in this editor.

3. 'The Historical Significance of the Northern Pilgrimage' has been omitted as it has already been included in the book *Kedar Nath and Badri Narayan* printed in the First Volume of the Complete Works.

4. 'The City in Classical Europe: A Visit to Pompeii' has been omitted because it forms part of a series of articles on civic ideal included in the next book.

5. To aid the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service in Varanasi, Sister Nivedita wrote an appeal which was published in *The Brahmavadin* of March, 1907, as 'Benares and the Home of Service'. In the same month it was also published in *The Modern Review* as 'A Study of Benares', in which the concluding paragraphs referring to the Home of Service were omitted. But as these form an integral part of the original appeal they have been given in Appendix I on p. 199.

The article on 'Bodh-Gaya' was first published in *The Brahmavadin* in August, 1904. As it is akin in subject-matter to some of the articles in this book, it is included here.

In 1911 the Udbodhan Office published a book called *Civic and National Ideals* containing thirteen articles of Sister Nivedita. Since then it has gone into five editions. With the permission of the publishers seven writings on Indian Art were included in the Third Volume of the

Complete Works. The remaining six articles are printed in this volume. To these are added eleven more articles which have been hitherto unpublished in book-form. It is due to these vast changes in the contents that it was thought proper not to retain the original title of the book, but to change it to *Civic Ideal and Indian Nationality*.

It is essential to add a few words about some of the writings included in this book. In *The Modern Review* of 1908, four articles on civic ideal of the east and west were published serially between January and April. Of these the first and the fourth were included in the *Civic and National Ideals*, and the third was included in the *Footfalls of Indian History*. Here all the four articles are published serially as was originally done, though the titles of the second and the third articles, namely, 'Evolution of the European City' and 'A City of Classical Europe: Visit to Pompeii' have been changed to 'Civic Symbolism in Mediæval Europe' and 'Civic Ideal in Classical City: Pompeii' respectively. The reason for this change is that these titles are more expressive of the subject-matter and have also been suggested in her rough notes.

'The Task of the National Movement in India' was first published in *The Indian Review* in 1906. Its title has been changed to 'The Indian National Congress' in the *Civic and National Ideals*. Here, however, the original title has been retained.

The sources of the other articles are mentioned in the Chronological Table and hence are not mentioned here.

*Hints on National Education in India* was first published by the Udbodhan Office in 1914. It has since gone into five editions. It has been reprinted here as it is, except that some of the portions omitted in 'The Project of the Ramakrishna School for Girls' have been restored.

*Glimpses of Famine and Flood in East Bengal in 1906* was serially published in *The Modern Review* in 1907. Chapters I—III are dated Sept. 12, 1906; Chapters IV—VII are dated Sept. 26, 1906; and Chapters VIII—IX are dated

March 1, 1907. The Indian Press at Allahabad published the book in the same year. It has long since been out of print. This deeply moving narrative excels in style and sentiments all other smaller writings of Sister Nivedita.

*Lambs among Wolves—Missionaries in India* was written to counteract the prejudicial activities and propaganda of the Christian Missionaries in India. In February, 1901, Sister Nivedita was invited to Edinburgh, Scotland, to give lectures. Her lectures were a challenge to the false accounts of India presented by the missionaries. The following letter of Sister Nivedita written to Miss MacLeod on 7.3.1901 is interestingly revealing: "We had a tremendous challenge from missionaries in Edinburgh. . . . They gave a *terrible* account of India and her ways and I had only time to fling defiance at one of them and leave. Then of course they had their own way—till they asked a young Indian Christian man to speak—and he got up and said I had been right and that he didnot since reaching Europe, care to call himself a Christian! Did you ever hear anything more manly? He was a Madrasi. Now the Club is trying to restrain me from right to reply. They must be afraid. I suppose they do not want the material used in India as 'missionary statements'. However some deliberate grappling with missionary opinion I shall do before I stir, in one form or another. . . . Blessed India! How infinitely much I owe her. Have I anything worth having that I donot directly or indirectly owe to her?"

By July her reply to the missionaries was ready and it was published in *The Westminster Review* in the same year. It was reprinted by R. B. Brimley Johnson, London, in 1903. The Udbodhan Office printed it again in 1928, and it has been out of print since a long time.

The authorities of the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Sister Nivedita Girls' School had contemplated to bring out Sister Nivedita's Complete Works in Four Volumes during her birth centenary year (1967-68). Three Volumes

have already been published in 1967. We are happy now to present before the public this Fourth Volume.

In conclusion, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have helped us in bringing out the present edition.

Our best thanks are due to the Belur Math, the Advaita Ashrama, the Udbodhan Office, the National Library, the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad and Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir for permission granted in the readiest and most cordial manner to make use of certain manuscripts, newspapers, blocks etc. in their possession.

PRAVRAJIKĀ ATMAPRANA



**CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE**  
of the  
**WRITINGS AND SPEECHES OF SISTER NIVEDITA**  
**INCLUDED IN THIS VOLUME**

Date

- 1900 April ; *The Project of the Ramakrishna School for Girls* written and published in America, reprinted in *The Brahmavadin* of 1901.
- 1901 *Lambs Among Wolves*, published in *The Westminster Review*.
- 1903 Reprint of *Lambs Among Wolves* by R. B. Brimley Johnson, London.
- 1904 April 1 ; Lecture on *Bodh-Gaya*, reproduced from *The Brahmavadin* of August 1904.
- 1905 *Manual Training as a Part of General Education in India*, published originally in the *Prabuddha Bharata* as 'Manual Training in Education'
- 1906 March ; *The Swadeshi Movement*, reproduced from *The Indian Review*.  
*The Task of the National Movement in India*, published in *The Indian Review* of July 1906 ; reprinted in *The Civic and National Ideals* as 'The Indian National Congress'.
- 1907 March ; *A Study of Benares*, reproduced from *The Modern Review* ; originally published in *The Brahmavadin* as 'Benares and the Home of Service'.  
March—May ; *Glimpses of Famine and Flood in East Bengal in 1906*, published in four instalments in *The Modern Review* of 1907.  
July ; *Some Problems of Indian Research*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
August ; *The Final Recension of the Mahabharata*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
First Edition of *Glimpses of Famine and Flood in East Bengal in 1906* by the Indian Press, Allahabad.

## Date

- September; *The Relation between Buddhism and Hinduism*, published in *The Modern Review*
- 1908 January—April; *The Civic Ideal; Civic Symbolism in Mediæval Europe* as 'Evolution of the European City'; *Civic Ideal in Classical City: Pompeii* as 'A City of Classical Europe: Visit to Pompeii' and *Civic Elements in Indian Life*, published serially in *The Modern Review*.  
 July; *The Place of the Kindergarten in Indian Schools* and *The Cities of Buddhism*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
 October; *Elephanta, the Synthesis of Hinduism*, published in *The Modern Review*.
- 1909 *Unity of Life and Type in India*, published in *The Brahmavadin*.
- 1910 January, July, August, *The Ancient Abbey of Ajanta*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
 March 12, *Papers on Education—IV* and *Papers on Education—I*, published in the *Karma Yogi* as 'Papers on National Education'.  
 March 19; *The New Hinduism*, published in the *Karma Yogi*.  
 March 26; *Primary Education A Call for Pioneers*, published in the *Karma Yogi*.  
 November 2; *The Unity of India*, published in the *Karma Yogi*.  
 December; *The Present Position of Woman* submitted to the First Universal Races Congress.
- 1911 February—March; *Papers on Education—I*, published in the *Prabuddha Bharata*.  
 March; *Fa-Huan*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
 April—May; *Papers on Education—III*, published in the *Prabuddha Bharata*.  
 May—June; *Papers on Education—III*, published in the *Prabuddha Bharata*.  
 August; *The Place of Foreign Culture in a True Education*; published in *The Modern Review*.  
 First Edition of *Civic and National Ideals* by the Udbodhan Office.

## Date

- 1912 February; *A Note on Historical Research*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
 March—April; *The History of India and its Study* and *A Note on Co-operation*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
 June; *Rajgir: An Ancient Babylon*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
*The Rise of Vaishnavism under the Guptas* and *The Old Brahmical Learning*, published in *The Modern Review*.  
 Reprint of *Civic and National Ideals* by the Udbodhan Office.
- 1914 First Edition of *Hints on National Education in India* by the Udbodhan Office
- 1915 First Edition of *Footfalls of Indian History* by Longmans Green and Co., London
- 1918 Second Edition of *Civic and National Ideals* by the Udbodhan Office.
- 1921 *Indian Nationality, a Mode of Thought*, published in *The Modern Review*.
- 1928 Reprint of *Lambs Among Wolves* by the Udbodhan Office.
- 1929 *On the Influence of History in the Development of Modern India*, published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of March as 'Passing into the Modern Age'  
 Third Edition of *Civic and National Ideals* by the Udbodhan Office.
- 1935 May. *Bodh-Gaya*, published in the *Prabuddha Bharata*
- 1948 Fourth Edition of *Civic and National Ideals* by the Udbodhan Office.
- 1950 Fourth Edition of *Hints on National Education in India* by the Udbodhan Office.



# FOOTFALLS OF INDIAN HISTORY



## THE FOOTFALLS

We hear them, O Mother!

    Thy footfalls,  
Soft, soft, through the ages  
    Touching earth here and there,  
And the lotuses left on Thy footprints  
    Arc citics historic,  
Ancient scriptures and poems and temples,  
    Noble strivings, stern struggles for Right.

Where lead they, O Mother!

    Thy footfalls?  
O grant us to drink of their meaning!  
    Grant us the vision that blindeth  
    The thought that for man is too high.  
Where lead they, O Mother!  
    Thy footfalls?

Approach Thou, O Mother, Deliverer!

    Thy children, Thy nurslings are we!  
    On our hearts be the place for Thy stepping,  
    Thine own, Bhumya Devi, are we.  
Where lead they, O Mother!  
    Thy footfalls?







SISTER NIVEDITA

# FOOTFALLS OF INDIAN HISTORY

## THE HISTORY OF MAN AS DETERMINED BY PLACE

**T**HE character of a people is their history as written in their own subconscious mind, and to understand that character we have to turn on it the limelight of their history. Then each anomaly is explained, and the whole becomes a clear and consistent result of causes traced to their very root. In the same way the geographical distribution of ideas falls under the same explanation as absolutely as that of plants or animals. A map of a country is only a script produced by all the ages of its making. In the beautiful maps of the past, in which rivers are seen with their true value as the high roads of nature, the veins and arteries of civilisations, this fact was still more apparent than today, when the outstanding lines of connection between cities are railways, the channels of the drainage of wealth being of more importance than those of its production. Yet even now it is the river-made cities that the railways have to connect. Even the twentieth century cannot escape the conditions imposed by the past.

Only the history of Asia explains the geography of

Asia. Empire means organisation, organisation whose basis is the consciousness of a unity that transcends the family. That is to say, empire demands as its preceding condition a strong civic concept. Two types of empire have occurred within the last two thousand years: one the creation of the fisher-peoples of the European coast-line, the other of the tribesmen of Central Asia and Arabia. In the one case, the imperialising instinct is to be accounted for by the commercial thirst natural to those whose place has always been on the prehistoric trade-route. It may be true, as suggested by a distinguished scholar, that the salmon-fishery of Norway, with its tightly organised crew, giving birth to the pirate-fisher, the Viking, and he to the Norman, is to be regarded as the father of the Feudal System and immediate ancestor of all modern European Empire. Such considerations can, however, by no means account for the Roman Empire. To this it might be answered that behind Rome lay Greece and Carthage; behind Greece and Carthage, Phoenicia and Crete; and that here we come once more on the element of trade-routes and fisher-peoples. A strong sense of unity precedes aggression, and the sense of unity is made effective through internal definition and self-organisation. Such organisation is obviously easy to gain by the conquest of the sea, where captain, first mate, and second mate will be a father, with his eldest son and second son, and where the slightest dereliction from military discipline on the part of one may involve instant peril of death to all. Thus the family gives place, in the imagination, to the crew, as the organised unit of the human fabric, and the love of hearthside and brood becomes exalted into that civic passion which can offer up its seven sons and yet say with firm voice, "Sweet and seemly is it to die for one's country."

The second type of imperial organisation, seen within the last two thousand years, is the pastoral empire of Central Asia and Arabia. Islam was the religious form taken by the national unification of a number of pastoral tribes in

Arabia. Mohammed the Prophet of God, was in truth the greatest nation-maker who has ever appeared. The earliest associations of the Arabs are inwoven with the conception of the tribe as a civic unity, transcending the family unity ; and the necessity of frontier-tribal relationships and courtesies at once suggests the idea of national inclusiveness and creates a basis for national life. On these elements were laid the foundation of the thrones of Baghdad, Constantinople, and Cordova. The Hunnish, Scythic, and Mohammedan empires of India have, each in its turn, been offshoots from the nomadic organisations of Central Asia. The very name of the Mogul dynasty perpetuates its Tartar origin. Here again, we see examples of the educational value of tribal and pastoral life, in preparing communities for the organisation of nations and empires.

In the far past, those shadowy empires whose memories are all but dead to man—the Assyrian, the Parthian, the Median, and some others—seem to have based their powers of aggression and co-operation on the instincts and associations of the hunter. From one point of view, the hunter is on land what the fisher is on water ; and the soldier is only a hunter of men. But the mind of man is supreme. Even the results of a peculiar occupational education may be appropriated by others, through the intellect alone. In ancient Egypt the world saw a peasant nation stirred to emulation by the sight of empires—Hittite, Babylonian, Cretan, and perhaps Phoenician—and fully able to protect itself by its grasp of the idea of national solidarity and self-defence. This is the value of science, that it analyses a fact, displays the secret of power, and enables man to formulate new methods for arriving at the old result.

The sense of unity can only occur, as a spiritual reaction on the mind, against a manifoldness. Whether it be the cities of Egypt, the tribes of Arabia and Tartary, or the fleet of pirate vessels from many kindred harbours that give birth to this sense, it needs when born to be watched, trained, and guided in definite ways. The patriarch,

deeply versed in strategy, must be still more experienced in the maintenance of intertribal peace. The men who unite, with the energy of the thunderbolt, for the attainment of the common goal of heart and conscience, must be men accustomed to combined action and sustained co-operation ; men who know the grounds of their faith in one another ; men who are familiar with certain outstanding principles of conduct, and constantly dominated by them. Such character, such experience, is built up for the service of the nation by social forms like those of tribe and crew and lion-hunt. The requisite discipline is conferred by the necessity of obedience on peril of death. The large outlook and due combination of readiness for war with love of peace are created by lifelong considerations of the common good and the way in which it is to be served by a clear mutual understanding. And all these results have been produced on mankind, unsought, by its history and its environment.

## THE HISTORY OF INDIA AND ITS STUDY

### I

India, as she is, is a problem which can only be read by the light of Indian history. Only by a gradual and loving study of how she came to be, can we grow to understand what our country actually is, what the intention of her evolution, and what her sleeping potentiality may be.

We are often told that Indian literature includes no histories. It is said that the Rajatarangini in Kashmir, the Dipavamsha and Mahavamsha in Ceylon, and the records made after their accession to power by the Mohammedans are the only real works of history which she possesses. Even if this be true—and we shall be better able to discuss the question in a generation or two—we must remember that India herself is the master-document in this kind. The country is her own record. She is the history that we must learn to read. There are those who say that history as a form of literature can never survive the loss of political power, and that this is the reason why India has not more works of an accurate and dynastic character. Those who urge this believe that at each new epoch in her history vast numbers of chronicles belonging to the past have been destroyed. May be. On the other hand, we may find in our family pedigrees the counterpart and compensation for this feature of other national literatures. The little band of devoted scholars who are already at work on the history of Bengal tell us that their great trouble is to keep pace with their material. It pours in upon them day after day. The difficulty is to keep today's opinion so fluid and receptive that it shall not conflict with, or be antagonistic to, tomorrow's added knowledge. There may not at the moment be in our inheritance from the past many formal works of history. But perhaps the swimmer, who knows

the joy of the plunge into deep waters and strong currents, is glad. Such minds feel that they have abundance of material for the writing of history, and are thankful indeed that this has been left for them to do.

It will be from amongst the records of home and family-life that light will be shed upon the complete history of Bengal. It will be by searching into caste-origins and tribal traditions that real data will be gathered for estimating the antiquity of processes. My friend Babu Dinesh Chandra Sen, says that he believes, from a study of pedigrees, that an overwhelming proportion of the higher-caste families of Bengal came from Magadha. If this be so, it is necessary to assume that there was at a certain time, a wholesale evacuation of Magadha. This would agree so well with the facts of history—the removal of the capital to Gour, on the destruction of Pataliputra, and the immense cultural potentiality of the Bengali people—that the suggestion cannot fail to form a dominant note in subsequent research. This research will for some time be of a deeply inductive character. That is to say, it will proceed by the accumulation of particulars. This process is the ideal of modern science, and it may be said that so arduous and so against the natural appetite of the human mind is it, that few there be that attain unto it. Yet as an ideal its greatness is unquestionable. Conclusions reached by careful gathering of facts without bias towards one or reaction against another theory, are incontrovertible. For this reason anyone who can bring forward one fact out of the far past, however private or circumscribed may seem its significance, so long as it is unknown and certain, is doing a service to historians. For progress must for some time depend upon this accumulation. We must investigate the elements, in order to come at true concepts of the whole.

When we have reached a new fact, the next effort should be to relate it to known central events. We know for instance that capitals changed in Bengal from Pataliputra to Gour, and from Gour to Vikrampur. These

transitions could not take place without immense social consequences. The ruins of Bihar mark the long struggle of Bengal against invasion. This fact belongs to her military history. But another record is found in her industrial development. The transfer of government from the old Hindu centre of Vikrampur to the Mohammedan capitals of Dacca and Murshidabad, meant, in its turn, great changes in the direction of arts and crafts. It would be marked by new tendencies in the matter of taste, the old artistic power exerting itself to meet new standards. We must accustom ourselves to the psychological analysis of ornament, and the historical and geographical placing of works of art, in order to understand the immense influence of great political events upon private life and interests. Architecture, music, and poetry are things higher than the concrete industrial crafts of home and household life, yet marked, no less surely, with the era to which they belong. By learning to refer everything to its own time, and to the state of mind that gave it birth, we build up in ourselves a wonderful readiness for the graver and more serious aspects of history. We learn too that lesson which botanists, zoologists and geologists have had during the last century to learn and teach, namely, that things which are found together may have taken wide distances of space and time to produce. The poems of Vidyapati and Ram Mohan Roy may stand side by side in our hymn-books, but what travail of the human spirit lies between the making of the two! In ages of normal growth, a new mode in building, or graving, or thinking is born but slowly and goes much deeper than we can imagine in these degenerate days of trumpery and passing fashions. No one who has been in the Fort of Agra and noted the styles of using black and white marble against red sandstone, distinctive of the reigns of Akbar, Jehangir, and Shah Jehan, could afterwards make a mistake as to which of these a particular pattern must be assigned to. The designs appear side by side at Agra, yet it took three reigns to make them possible.

The year, as we go through it, constitutes another kind of historical record. The festivals of the old village life which follow each other in such quick and delightful succession throughout the twelve or thirteen moons of the solar year, are not all effects of some single cause. On the contrary, the Car-festival of July hails from Buddhism and has the great metropolis of its observance at Puri on the Orissan coast. But Janmashtami belongs to the Vaishnavism of Krishna and turns our eyes in a very different direction, to Mathura and Brindavana. The Divali Puja, again, connects us on the one side with the famous Japanese Feast of Lanterns, and on the other with Latin and Celtic anniversaries of the souls of the dead. How different are the thought-worlds out of which spring inspirations so various as all these! How long a period must each have had, in order to win its present depth and extent of influence! The very year as it passes, then, is a record of the changing ideas that have swept in succession across the Indian mind.

It is a characteristic of India that almost every great outstanding thought and doctrine has somewhere or other a place devoted to its maintenance and tradition. This brings us to the thought of the geographical synthesis. The whole of India is necessary to the explanation of the history of each one of its parts. The story of Krishna comes from the Jamuna, that of Rama from Ayodhya. Other elements may not be so easily assignable to their places of birth, but it is quite certain that when studied hard enough from that point of view each will be found to have its own definite area of origin. India is at once the occasion and the explanation of the web of Indian thought. But yet, throughout Bengal at any rate, there is a certain definite agreement as to which elements shall be included in the list of yearly celebrations, and in what order. Not all the great things of Indian memory are commemorated thus. There has evidently been a certain selection made, and a certain rule imposed, by some one or other at some definite

time. Throughout Bengal there is no great disagreement as to the festivals and the order in which they occur. The selection must have been made therefore by some person, or body of persons, whose influence was universal in the province. It is a conception that penetrates everywhere, therefore the shaping pressure of this all-pervading influence must have been long-continued. It may have lasted perhaps for centuries. <sup>(1) *The change of rule*</sup> does not seem to have been a personal influence, for individuals change their policy of government, under caprice or circumstance, from generation to generation. This would seem rather to have been a steady consensus of opinion, a strong vested interest uniformly exerted in a certain direction. But the complexity of the matter ruled upon, would point to some central seat of counsel and decision again, with as little that was purely personal in its authority as it is possible to imagine. Lastly, whatever was the source of deliberation, <sup>it</sup> is clear that there must have been a consolidated royal authority to give its support to the <sup>*change*</sup> decisions of this centre, without flinching or changing, throughout the formative period. Only by a combination of all these conditions can we account for the uniformity and regularity with which so complex a yearly calendar is worked out, from one end of Bengal to the other.

If we wish to be clear about the element of deliberation, let us look, for example, at the Holi festival. In the observance of this day, three different factors are distinctly traceable. First, there is a strain of prehistoric Eros-worship, as seen in the villages, in the use of abusive language to women and in the fact that these in their turn are privileged on that day to beat the lords of creation. The conceptions which belong to this phase of the celebration of the full moon of Phalgun must be extremely ancient, and consequently we must look for their analogues and correspondences amongst widely separated branches of the Aryan family, amongst Greek festivals of Love and Spring, for example, in Roman Saturnalia, Mediterranean Carnivals,

and even so lately as in the old-fashioned Valentine's Day of English childhood.

That the birth of Chaitanya took place on this very day of Holi-Puja, thus determining another of its associations, may seem to some of us an accident. But it was no accident that attempted to interpret the festival in terms of Krishna-worship. Some phase of Hinduism—to which, in the elaborateness of its civilisation, the thought of frank Eros-worship was as revolting and incomprehensible as now to ourselves—some such phase took into its consideration this festival, and decided to reinterpret each of its games and frolics in the light of the gambols of Krishna with the cowherds in the forest of Brindavana. The red powder of the spring-time thus became the blood of the demon Medhrasura slain by the Lord. It was natural that the young peasants, under the excitement of danger just escaped, should “blood” one another and should yearly thereafter burn the effigy of Medhrasura in celebration of their deliverance. We can almost hear the voices of those who made the ingenious suggestion!

In the Holi-Puja, then, as an instance, we can trace the efforts of some deliberately Hinduising power. This power, it is safe to suppose, is the same that has determined the sacred year as a whole. As a power it must have been ecclesiastical in character, yet must have lived under the *aegis* of a powerful throne. What throne was this? A very simple test is sufficient to answer. Those comparatively modern institutions which are more or less universal to the whole of India must have derived their original sanction from Pataliputra. Things which are deeply established, and yet peculiar to Bengal, must have emanated from Gour. One of the most important points, therefore, is to determine the geographical distribution of a given observance. In this fact lies the secret of its age.

Historical events as such have never been directly commemorated in India. Yet perhaps, had Guru Govind Singh in the Punjab or Ramdas of Maharashtra lived in

the time of the empire of Gour, he would have obtained memorials at the hands of Bengali Hinduism. The fact that none of their age has done so shows that the calendar was complete before their time. Even Chaitanya, born in Bengal itself, and a true product of the genius of the people, is scarcely secure in the universal synthesis. His veneration, like that of Buddha, is overmuch confined to those who have surrendered to it altogether. But if in the intellectual sense we would fully understand Chaitanya himself, it is necessary again to study the history of India as a whole, and to realise in what ways he resembled, and in what differed from, other men of his age. What he shared with all India was the great mediaeval impulse of Vaishnavism which originated with Ramanuja and swept the country from end to end. That in which his Vaishnavism differed from that of the rest of India represents the characteristic ideas of Bengal under the strong individualising influence of Gour and Vikrampur.

In all that lies around us then, we may, if our eyes are open, read the story of the past. The life we live today has been created for us by those who went before us, even as the line of sea-weed on the shore has been placed there by the waves of the tides now over, in their ebb and flow. The present is the wreckage of the past. India as she stands is only to be explained by the history of India. The future waits, for us to create it out of the materials left us by the past, aided by our own understanding of this our inheritance.

## II

If India itself be the book of Indian history, it follows that travel is the true means of reading that history. The truth of this statement, especially while the published renderings of our history remain so inadequate and so distorted, ought never to be forgotten. Travel, as a mode of study, is of infinite importance. Yet it is not everything.

It is quite possible to travel the world over and see nothing, or only what is not true. We see, after all, only what we are prepared to see. How to develop the mind of the taught, so that it shall see, not what its teacher has led it to expect, but the fact that actually passes before the eyes is the problem of all right scientific education. In history also, we want to be able to see, not the thing that would be pleasant, but the thing that is true. *For this we have to go through a strenuous preparation.*

With a few of the counters of the game, as it were, we take it for granted that one is already familiar. The great names of Indian history—Buddhism, Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Islam—mean something to one. Gradually each student makes for himself his own scale of signs by which to compare the degrees of this or that quality that interests him. He chooses his own episode, and begins to see it in its proper setting. Bihar, from its geographical and ethnological position, cannot fail to be one of the most complex and historically interesting provinces in India. In studying Bihar, then, we early learn the truth of the dictum of the late Purna Chandra Mukherji, and whenever we find a tamarind tree mentally substitute by way of experiment, a Bo or when we come across a rounded hillock with the grave of a Pir on the top, convert it into a Stupa, and make it a Buddhist centre.\* If we do this, and cultivate the habit of summing up our impressions, we shall be led to many wonderful and unexpected conclusions about the distribution of population at the Mohammedan invasion, the strength and forms of Buddhism, and so on.

But one of the master-facts in Indian history, a fact borne in upon us more deeply with every hour of study,

\* To the Mohammedan, the tamarind tree is holy, and the fact that on entering Bihar he would plant them in the place of the Bo, or take the trouble to build a Pir's tomb on a rounded hillock, goes far to show that the sacred character of tree and hill was still at that moment maintained in Bihar. That is to say, Buddhism was remembered.

is that India is and always has been a synthesis. No amount of analysis, racial, lingual, or territorial, will ever amount in the sum to the study of India. Perhaps the axioms of Euclid are not axioms after all. Perhaps all the parts of a whole are not equal to the whole. At any rate, apart from and above, all the fragments which must be added together to make India, we have to recognise India herself, all-containing, all-dominating, moulding and shaping the destinies and the very nature of the elements out of which she is composed. The Indian people may be defective in the methods of mechanical organisation, but they have been lacking, as a people, in none of the essentials of organic synthesis. No Indian province has lived unto itself, pursuing its own development, following its own path, going its way unchallenged and alone. On the contrary, the same tides have swept the land from end to end. A single impulse has bound province to province at the same period, in architecture, in religion, in ethical striving. The provincial life has been rich and individual, yet over and above it all India has known how to constitute herself a unity, consciously possessed of common hopes and common loves. Thus in the pursuit of epochs and parts we must never forget the Mother and the Motherland, behind them all. In remembering her and turning to her, again and again we shall find the explanation that had baffled us, discover the link that we required.

We must not be cowed too easily by proofs that such and such a cherished idea had a foreign or semi-foreign origin. In this world there is no such thing as real originality. Some mind more powerful than others breaks up common symbols into their elements and recombines these in an unexpected fashion. This is the whole of what we call originality. The proof of a mind's vigour lies in its ability to work upon the materials it meets with. What is true of persons is true in this respect of nations. Some achievements, because we do not know their history, appear unique, solitary, miraculous. In reality, civilisations like

religion, are a web; they are not statues or *salon*-pictures, great creations of individual genius. If we could unveil the spectacle of the genesis of Greece, we should find links between common and uncommon in every department of her extraordinary output, and much that now seems unaccountable for its beauty or its boldness would then appear inevitable. The fact that Egypt, Assyria, and the East itself were all within hail, had more to do with the peculiar form taken by the Greek genius than we are now prepared to grant. If so, the actual glory of Hellenic culture lay in the distinctiveness of its touch, and the energy of its manipulation, of the materials that came its way. Perhaps above even these qualities was a certain faculty of discrimination and organisation in which it excelled. But in any case the Greek race would not have produced the Greek civilisation in any other geographical or ethnological position than the one which they happened to occupy. The utmost that can be said in praise of any special people is that they have known how to give a strong impress of their own to those materials which the world of their time brought to their door. If this be the high-water mark then of national achievement, what is there to be said for that of India? Has she, or has she not, a touch of her own that is unmistakable? Surely it was a knowledge of the answer that led us to this question. Even in decorative matters the thing that is Indian cannot be mistaken for the product of any other nationality. Who can fail to recognise the Indian, the Assyrian, the Egyptian, or the Chinese touch in, for example, the conventionalising of a lotus? In form, in costume, in character, and above all, in thought, the thing that is Indian is unlike any un-Indian thing in the whole world. For the mind that tends to be depressed by the constant talk of Indian debts to foreign sources, the best medicine is a few minutes' quiet thought as to what India has done with it all. Take refuge for a moment in the Indian world that you see around you. Think of your history. Is it claimed that some other

people made Buddhism? Or that Shiva with his infinite renunciation was a dream of Europe? No: if India shared a certain fund of culture elements with other peoples, that is nothing to be unhappy about. The question is not, where did they come from? but what has she made out of them? Has India been equal to her opportunities at every period? Has she been strong enough to take all that she knew to be in the world at each given period, and assimilate it, and nationalise it in manner and use? No one in his senses would deny this of India. Therefore she has nothing of shame or mortification to fear from any inquiry into culture origins.

This nightmare being disposed of, there is still another. The Indian mind can hardly help making questions of antiquity into partisan arguments. Perhaps this is natural; but in any case it is a great barrier to the popularising of real historical inquiry. The mind of the student ought to be absolutely open on the point of dates. If there is the least bias in favour of one direction or the other, it is just like a weight on one side of a balance. Fair measure does not come that way! As a matter of fact, the strictly historical period in India may be comparatively short, something less than thirty centuries, but there can be no difference of opinion as to the vast length of the total period of evolution. The oldest problems of the world's history have their field of study here. Those sociological inquiries that lie behind all history must be pursued in India. History proper only emerges when a certain group of people becomes sufficiently consolidated to carry on common activities in a direction and with a motive that we may call political. Man, as the political animal, is the subject of history. This is a stage that will be arrived at soonest by communities which are relatively small and compact and inhabit clearly defined geographical confines, on the frontiers of other populations not greatly unlike themselves in civilisation. Thus Egypt, Nineveh, and Babylon could not but arrive sooner than India on the

historical stage in virtue of their very nearness to one another. But this does not necessarily mean that they could compete with her in actual age, or in the depth of the tendencies making for their evolution. And in any case, while these are dead, India lives and develops still, responds still to all the living influences of the world about her, and sees before her, as the individual unit that her development has made her, a long vista of growth and perfection to be achieved. The art and architecture of Egypt date from four thousand years before the Christian era. Crete had a story almost as early. Who shall say what was the age of Babylon? But we must remember that when all these were already mature, India was still a-making. A long childhood, say the biologists, is the greatest proof of evolutionary advancement. Egypt, with her exceptional climate, made art and architecture the supreme expression of her national existence. India put her powers, perhaps as long ago, into the dreams and philosophy of the Upanishads. Cities would have crumbled into dust, temples and carvings would have succumbed in a few aeons to the ravages of time. Human thought, written on the least permanent and most ephemeral of all materials, is nevertheless the most enduring of all the proofs of our antiquity. Who shall say that we have not chosen the better part? Every generation destroys the parchment of our record, and yet a million generations only make its truth the more assured. We can hardly dig so deep into the past as to come upon the time when in Egypt, or Greece, or Crete, or Babylon, the name of India had not already a definite sound and association. At the very dawn of history in Europe, her thought and scholarship were already held in that respect which is akin to awe. His old tutor in the fourth century before Christ begs Alexander to bring him an Indian scholar! There is no need for discontent in the Indian mind, if those activities of which the historic muse can take account, activities intertribal, international, political, began for her comparatively late.

India, alone of all the nations of antiquity, is still young, still growing, still keeping a firm hold upon her past, still reverently striving to weave her future. Are not these things glory enough for any single people?

At the same time, when these conditions are loyally recognised and accepted, we cannot doubt that the result will be a continual snatching of new morsels out of the night of the prehistoric to be brought within the lighted circle of history. This will happen still more constantly if students will try to saturate themselves with the social habit of thought, that is to say, if they will accustom themselves to thinking of the human and psychological facts behind events. Only this habit can teach them when to postulate tribes and peoples for the individual names in ancient ballads, or when to read a war of migration and conquest for a battle. Only this can give them a sense of scale with which to measure the drift and tendency of the forces coming into play during certain epochs. To multiply here and divide there is very necessary, yet only to be done rightly by one who is accustomed to think sociologically.

The sociological habit is essential also if we would be in a position to gauge the relations of India to the incomers from beyond her border. Few people know that in the beginnings of human society woman was the head of the family, and not man. Queens, who seem to us now something of an anomaly, represent an institution older than that of kings. In certain nations the memory of this ancient time of mother-rule is still deeply ingrained. Others, like the Aryans, have long ago passed out of it. And some fragmentary communities in the world remain still more or less on the border line between the two. Only a deep familiarity with the traces of these different phases can give us a real clue to the history of Asia. Only a grasp of that history will enable us to compute distances of time truly. How old a given institution is, it may be impossible to say in terms of years, but we can tell at a glance whether

it is matriarchal or patriarchal, or by what combination of two societies it may have arisen. The thought of goddesses is older than that of gods, just as the idea of queens is prior to that of kings.

The history of common things and their influence on our customs is a study that follows naturally on that of human society. Much of this we can make out for ourselves. For instance, we can see that the ass must be older than the horse as a beast of burden. Once upon a time the world had no steeds, no carrier, save this useful if humble servant of man. Let us dream for a while of this. Let us study the present distribution of the donkey, and find out his name in various Aryan languages. All that the horse now is, as a figure in poetry, the ass must once have been. Noblest, fleetest, bravest, and nearest to man of all the four-footed kind, men would set no limit to their admiration for him. The goddess Shitala rides upon a donkey, because, in that dim past out of which she comes, there were as yet no horses tamed by man. There was once no steed so royal as the milk-white ass, which is now relegated here to the use of dhobis, while numerous are the allusions to its use, and the glory thereof, in the older Jewish scriptures. The very fact that it appears in the account of the Royal Entrance, in the Christian story, points to the old association of splendour clinging longer to the name of the ass in Arab countries than elsewhere, and in harmony with this is the fact that it is widely distributed throughout Africa. After the horse was once tamed, men would never have taken the trouble necessary to reclaim the ass, and from this alone we may judge of its great antiquity. At the same time we may form an idea of the time and effort spent on the gradual domestication of wild animals, when we read the reiterated modern opinion that the zebra cannot be tamed. Primitive man would not so easily have given up the struggle. But then he would not either have expected so quick and profitable a result. In the story of the commonest things that lie

about us we may, aided by the social imagination, trace out the tale of the far past.

Thus the mind comes to live in the historic atmosphere. It becomes ready to learn for itself from what it sees about it at home and on a journey. The search for stern truth is the best fruit of the best scientific training. But the truth is not necessarily melancholy, and Indian students will do most to help the growth of knowledge if they begin with the robust conviction that in the long tale of their Motherland there can be nothing to cause them anything but pride and reverence. What is truly interpreted cannot but redound to the vindication and encouragement of India and the Indian people.

## THE CITIES OF BUDDHISM

Accepting the theory that Buddhism was developed in India, not as a sect or church, but only as a religious order, founded by one of the greatest of the World-Gurus, we find ourselves compelled to account for the relations that would arise between the king or the populace, impressed by the memory of Buddha, and the order that followed in his succession and bore his name.

To do this, however, it is first necessary that we should have some determinate idea as to where, in the India of the Buddhist period, were the great centres of population. An Indian city, it has been well said, is a perishable thing, and it is easy to think of names which would justify the statement. No one who has seen the Dhauli Rock, for instance, seven miles away from Bhubaneshwar, can imagine that the edict it bears, fronted by the royal cognisance of the elephant head, was originally sculptured in the wild woods where it now stands. A glance is enough to tell us that the circular ditch which surrounds the fields below was once the moat of a city, backed and fortified by the Dhauli Hill itself, and that the edict-bearing rock stood at the south-eastern corner of this city, where the high-road from the coast must have reached and entered the gates. This city of Dhauli was the capital, doubtless, of Kalinga, when Ashoka, in his military youth, conquered the province. In order to estimate its value and importance in the age to which it belonged, we must first restore to the mind's eye the ports of Tamralipti and Puri, deciding which of these two was the Liverpool of the Ashokan era. A theocratic institution such as pilgrimage is frequently a sort of precipitate from an old political condition, and almost always embodies elements of one sort or another which have grown up in a preceding age. Presumably, therefore, Puri was the great maritime centre of the pre-Christian centuries.

in Northern India ; and if so, a road must have passed from it, through Dhauli, to Pataliputra in the north. By this road went and came the foreign trade between India and the East, and between the north and south. In the age of the Keshari kings of Orissa, not only had Dhauli itself given place to Bhubaneshwar, but Puri, perhaps by the same process, had been superseded by Tamralipti, the present Tamluk. It was at the second of these that Fa Hian in the fifth century embarked on his return voyage. Such a supersession of one port by another, however, would only be completed very gradually, and for it to happen at all, we should imagine that there must have been a road from one to the other along the coast. If only the covering sands could now be excavated along that line, there is no saying what discoveries might be made of buried temples and transitional cities. For a whole millennium in history would thus be brought to light.

On the great road from Dhauli to the north, again, there must have been some point at which a route branched off for Banaras, passing through Gaya and crossing the Punpun River, following in great part the same line by which Sher Shah's dak went later and the railway goes today.

Let us suppose, however, that two thousand and more years have rolled away, and that we are back once more in that era in which Dhauli was a fortified capital city. The elephant-heralded decree stands outside the gates, proclaiming in freshly-cut letters of the common tongue the name of that wise and just Emperor who binds himself and his people by a single body of law.

"I, King Piyadassi, in the twelfth year after my anointing, have obtained true enlightenment," the august edict begins. It goes on to express the royal distress at the imperialistic conquest of the province, in Ashoka's youth, and assures his people of his desire to mitigate this fundamental injustice of his rule by a readiness to give audience to any one of them, high or low, at any hour of the day

or night. It further enumerates certain of the departments of public works which have been established by the new government, such as those of wells, roads, trees, and medicine. And it notes the appointment of public censors, or guardians of morality.

In his reference to the obtaining of "true enlightenment" Ashoka records himself a non-monastic disciple of the great monastic order of the day. Nearly three hundred years have elapsed since the passing of the Blessed One, and in the history of the Begging Friars whom He inaugurated there has been heretofore no event like this, of the receiving of the imperial penitent into the lay-ranks served by them. Their task of nation-making is slowly but surely going forward nevertheless. In the light of the Gospel of Nirvana the Aryan Faith is steadily defining and consolidating itself. The Vedic gods have dropped out of common reference. The religious ideas of the Upanishads are being democratised by the very labours of the Begging Friars in spreading those of Buddha, and are coming to be regarded popularly as a recognised body of doctrine characteristic of the Aryan folk. Vague racial superstitions about snakes and trees and sacred springs are tending more and more to be intellectually organised and regimented round the central figure of Brahma, the creator and ordainer of Brahmanic thinkers.

Thus the higher philosophical conceptions of the higher race are being asserted as the outstanding peaks and summits of the Hinduistic faith, and the current notions of the populace are finding their place gradually in the body of that faith, coming by degrees into organic continuity with the lofty abstractions of the Upanishads. In other words, the making of Hinduism has begun.

The whole is fermented and energised by the memory of the Great Life, ended only three centuries ago, of which the yellow-clad brethren are earnest and token. Had Buddha founded a church, recognising social rites, receiving the new-born, solemnising marriage, and giving

benediction to the passing soul, his personal teachings would have formed to this hour a distinguishable half-antagonistic strain in the organ-music of Hinduism. But he founded only an order. And its only function was to preach the Gospel and give individual souls the message of Nirvana. For marriage and blessing, men must go to the Brahmins: the sons of Buddha could not be maintainers of the social polity, since in his eyes it had been the social nexus itself which had constituted that World, that Maya,\* from which it was the mission of the Truth to set men free.

The work of the monk, then as a witness to the eternal verities, was in no rivalry to the more civic function of the Brahmanic priesthood. And this is the fact which finds expression in the relation of the monkhood to the Indian cities of the Ashokan era. The Brahmin is a citizen-priest, living in a city. The Buddhist is a monk, living in an abbey. In all lands the monk has memorialised himself by buildings instead of by posterity. In India these have been largely carved, as at Mahabalipuram in the south, or excavated, as at Ellora and elsewhere, instead of built. But the sentiment is the same. In place of a single monastery with its chapel or cathedral, we find here a number of independent cells or groups of cells, and frequently a whole series of cathedral shrines. Apparently a given spot has remained a monastic centre during generation after generation. Dynasties and revolutions might come and go, but this would remain, untouched by any circumstances save the inevitable shifting of population and the final decay of its own spiritual fire.

In its decoration the abbey would reflect the art of the current epoch. In culture it would act as a university. In ideals it represented the super-social, or extra-civic conception of the spiritual equality and fraternity of all men. Its inmates were vowed to religious celibacy. And we may take it that *the place of the abbey would always be at a*

\* Cosmic illusion.

*certain distance from a city whose government was in sympathy with it.*

Thus the city of Dhauri, under the Emperor Ashoka and succeeding worshippers of Buddha, had Khandagiri at seven miles' distance as its royal abbey. The civic power was represented at Gaya: the monastic at Bodh-Gaya. Benares was the seat of Brahmins: Sarnath of monks. Elephanta was the cathedral-temple of a king's capital,\* but Kanheri, on another island a few miles away, offers to us the corresponding monastery.

From these examples and from what we can see to have been their inevitableness, we might expect that any important city of the Buddhistic period would be likely to occur in connection with a monastic centre some few miles distant. Now it is possible to determine the positions of a great many such cities on grounds entirely *a priori*. It is clear, for instance, that whatever geographical considerations might make Benares great would also act at the same time to distinguish Allahabad. By a similar induction, Mathura on the Jamuna and Hardwar on the Ganges might also be expected to furnish proof of ancient greatness. Now outside Prayag we have to the present time, as a haunt of Sadhus, the spot known as Nirvanikal. And in the vicinity of Hardwar is there not Hrishikesh? The caves of Ellora have near them the town of Roza. But this we must regard as a sort of Mohammedan priory, inasmuch as its population consists mainly of religious beggars (of course not celibate) living about the tomb of Aurangzeb. The neighbouring capital that supported the youth of Ellora was probably at Deogiri, now called Daulatabad.

It is the broken links in the chain, however, that fascinate us most in the light of this historical generalisation. What was the city, and what the state, that made Ajanta possible? What was the city that corresponded to the *Dharmashala* at Sanchi? What was the city, and what the abbey, in the case of Amaravati?

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\* And Elephanta is of considerably later date.

Undoubtedly a fashion once started in such strength under Buddha-worshipping sovereigns and commonwealths would tend to be imitated in later ages when the system of ideas that we know as Hinduism had come more definitely into vogue. It is also possible that when the Buddhistic orders failed or died out, their places were sometimes taken, in the ancient Maths and foundations, by Jain religious. Something of this sort appears at least to have happened at Sarnath and possibly at Khandagiri also. But the whole history of the relations between Brahmins, Buddhists, and Jains wants working out from an Asiatic and not European point of view, if many pages of history are to become clear to us.

One question of great interest that arises in this connection, is, What of this parallelism in the case of Pataliputra? Going back to Rajgir, we see the early ancestral capital of the Nanda kings confronted, at least in later ages, by Nalanda, the historic university of Bengal, to which Hiouen Tsang owed so much. But what of Pataliputra itself? Can we suppose that the imperial seat had no official Ashrama of piety and learning in its vicinity? Yet if it had, and if perhaps the "Five Pahars" mark the site of this religious college, what was the situation of the capital in regard to it?

Again we find place and occasion, by means of this generalisation, for more definite consideration than was hitherto possible of Indian culture and civilisation at various epochs. What were the various functions performed by these great extra-civic priories? No Englishman has reason to be prouder of Oxford than the Hindu of Ajanta. The eternal antithesis of Europe between "town and gown" was never a source of rioting and disorder in the East, only because from the beginning they were recognised by universal consent as distinct entities, whose separateness of interests demanded a certain geographical distance. What was the life lived in these royal abbeys, whose foundations date back in so many cases—notably Bodh-Gaya, Sarnath.

Dhauri, and Sanchi—even earlier than the reign of Ashoka himself? They were a symbol, to the eyes of the whole community, of democracy, of the right of every man to the highest spiritual career. It is not conceivable that they should have been entirely without influence on the education of youth. But undoubtedly their main value intellectually lay in their character of what we would now call post-graduate universities.

Here must have been carried on such researches as were recorded, in the lapse of centuries, by Patanjali, in his *Yoga Aphorisms*, one of the most extraordinary documents of ancient science known to the world. Here must have been the home of that learning which made the golden age of the Guptas possible, between 300 and 500 A.D. We must think too of the international relations of these ancient monastic colleges. Fa Hian (400 A.D.) and Hiouen Tsang (650 A.D.) were not the only eastern students, who came two thousand to fifteen hundred years ago, to drink of the springs of Indian learning. They were a couple whose books of travels happen to have become famous. But they were two out of a great procession of pilgrim-scholars. And it was to the abbeys that such came. It was from these abbeys, again, that the missions proceeded to foreign countries. No nation was ever evangelised by a single teacher. The word *Patrick* in Irish, it is said, means *praying-man*, and the vaunted saint is thus, beyond a doubt, either a member or a personification of a whole race of Christian preachers who carried Baptism and the Cross to early Ireland. Similarly Mahinda, Nagarjuna, and Bodhidharma in the twelfth century, were not the isolated figures that history as we know it points. They were merely conspicuous elements in a whole stream of missionary effort, that radiated from the quiet abbeys and monasteries of India in its great ages towards the worlds of east and west. Christianity itself, it has been often suggested, may have been one of the later fruits of such a mission, as preached in Persia and Syria.

Here, in these lovely retreats—for they are all placed in the midst of natural beauty—was elaborated the thought and learning, the power of quiet contemplation, and the marvellous energy of art and literary tradition, that have made India as we know it today. Here were dreamt those dreams, which, reflected in society, became the social ideals of the ages in which we live. And here was demonstrated the great law that will be expressed again and again in history, whenever the glory of India rises to one of its supreme moments, the law of the antithesis between city and university, between Samaj\* and religious orders, between the life of affairs and the life of thought. Antithetic as they are, however, these are nevertheless complementary. Spirituality brings glory in its train. The monastic life reacts to make civic strength. And the sons of modern India may well take heart, in the face of this law of mutual relations. For it is established in the innermost nature of things Indian that a moment of greatness either of Vairagya or of Dharma shall always be a prophecy to the nearing of an hour of approaching triumph for its fellow.

\* Society

## RAJGIR: AN ANCIENT BABYLON

Up, up, up. The long array of steps seems endless, as we climb the steep hillside to reach the dwelling that has been lent us for a few weeks' habitation ; and, after all, when we come upon it, it is nothing but a nest of robber-barons, this old manor-house of the Rajas of Annwa. A nest of robber-barons, truly, perched half-way up the mountain and concealed from sight, and yet with a wide stretch of country well in its own purview. Curiously small and unfortified to Western thinking, it consists of two parts—a court on the inside guarded against intrusion and crowned with wide terrace-roofs ; and without, a few rooms ranged about two sides of an open square. Its feudal and mediaeval character lends the building an interest which its undeniable beauty well sustains. But far beyond either of these considerations is the exciting fact that we are to keep house for twenty-one days in a spot where for a period of from twenty-five to thirty centuries there has been continuously a human habitation. For the great staircase by which we have climbed the rugged hillside is undoubtedly constructed over the foundations of the ancient walls of Rajgir, and the earliest predecessor of the Barons of Annwa must have chosen for his family stronghold to develop one of the buttresses of the guardroom of the selfsame walls, occurring on a small plateau. Below us lies the floor of the winding pass with the stream that forms a moat at the foot of our mountain-stairway. In front a great curving staircase, constituting what our modern railway companies would call 'a loop' of the fort, protects those temples and hot springs of Rajgir which still form the objective of a yearly Hindu pilgrimage. And out in the open, a stone's throw away as it seems in this clear plain atmosphere, but really perhaps a mile by the road, is the modern village of

Rajgir, anciently Raja-Griha, the city or dwelling-place of kings.

Already the villagers are showing us friendly attentions. The servant who has come with us was born a few miles away, and his womenfolk are arriving with our first meal in hospitable readiness. The peasant-guard have established themselves in the outer rooms for our protection, and a small boy of the neighbourhood is clamouring to be taken on as an attendant. It is as if we were guests of Semiramis in Nineveh of old! It is like pitching our tent on the ruins of Babylon and entering into friendly relations with lineal descendants of the ancient inhabitants!

How beautiful is the country that lies stretched before us! Outward from the mouth of our twisting pass, at Christmas time or thereabouts, it will be covered in the green of rice and other crops, with every here and there a field of white opium-poppies in full bloom. But now, at the change of the season in October, we see here fields as patches of many-coloured earth—purple and brown and red—and we remember the words of Buddha, half laughing doubtless yet full of affectionate memory and tenderness, of one who said to a disciple in a much-patched garment that he reminded him of the ricefields about Rajgir.

A quarter of a mile behind us the hills open out into a circle, and here lie the ruins of the ancient city of kings—wonderfully clear and distinct in every part of them. We almost might trace out the very lines of the bazaars. With regard to streets and roads, it sounds dangerously near truism to say that they retain their positions with little change from age to age; yet I do not know that the fact has been much noted. Here in Rajgir at any rate, where hundreds of cows and buffaloes, sheep and goats, are driven daily by the herds to and from the ancient ruins, many of the main roadways remain much as they must have been in the dim past. Here, for instance, is the thoroughfare that ran through the city, with traces at a certain point near the centre of the palace walls, bastions, and gateways;

and here beyond the palace are the outlines of the royal pleasure-grounds, with their wonderfully engineered ornamental waters intact to this day! All through this little mountain-arena and the pass that leads to it, indeed, there has been an extraordinary amount of hydraulic engineering. It would seem as if the fame of the hot springs must have been the original cause of the royal settlement in this natural fortress, and the artificial development of its streams the main occupation of the kingly line thereafter. Even now below our own walled and moated manor lies an empty tank that two thousand years ago most likely held lotuses in a park. Even now, the river that runs through the valley, though naturally one, is divided in parts into two and even three streams, forming a network that is enough to show us the attention that must have been paid in ancient India to the problems of irrigation, in order to give birth to so marvellous a degree of hydraulic science. Far away in Central India is a monumental building, of an age some two hundred years later than that of old Rajgir, which shows by its ornamental cascades the same engineering genius and the same royal idea of beauty and magnificence as we find here. Well may the Indian people glory in the ancestry which already lived in this splendour, while that of Northern and Western Europe went clad in painted woad.

There can be a few places in the world so old as Rajgir, about which so much is definitely known and so much safely to be inferred. It was in all probability about the year 590 B.C.—in a world in which Babylon and Phoenicia and Egypt and Sheba were of all facts most living and important—it was about the year 590 B.C. that there came along the road leading into the valley yonder, one whose very form was radiant with feeling and thought, that lifted him above the common world into that consciousness that makes history.

It may have been early morning when he came. For the books say that the great company of goats was being

led up at that moment for the royal sacrifice ; fixed, it may have been, for about the hour of noon. Or it may have been about the time of cowdust, on the eve of the festival, and the herdsmen may have intended to stable their goats for that night outside the palace. In any case He came, some say carrying on his shoulder a lame kid, followed by the patter of thousands of little hoofs. He came, moreover, in a passion of pity. A veritable storm of compassion had broken loose within Him on behalf of these, the helpless "little brothers" of humanity, who were caught, like man himself, in the net of pain and pleasure, of life and death ; bewildered, like man, by love and sorrow, but who unlike man, for want of speech, could neither express their perplexity nor form a conception of release. Surely they crowded round Him, and rubbed themselves against Him again and again, the gentle, wondering, four-footed things ! For the animals are strangely susceptible to the influence of a silent love that has no designs on their life or freedom. All the legends of the world tell us that they catch the hush of Christmas Eve, respond to the eager questioning of the child Dhruva, and understand that unmeasured yearning to protect them which may be read in the eyes of the Lord Buddha on the road that goes up to the palace of Rajgir.

We had been some time in the place, before we noticed that it was on one particular islet in the river below us, that the village deathfires might so often be seen at evening. It was a very ancient custom in India to burn the dead by the streamside just outside the town. But this sandbank was far away from the village. Hardly could they have chosen a point less easily accessible. Ah, yes ! certainly there was the explanation ; the burning ghat of these peasants in the twentieth century must be still where their ancestors had chosen it, in the fifth, in the first—aye, even for centuries before that—may be immediately without the city of old Rajgir. It takes a peculiar angle of vision, and perhaps a peculiar mood of passivity, to see the trees turn

into a forest when the existence of such was previously unsuspected. So I shall not attempt to guess how many more evenings elapsed before, as we went along the roadway on the far side of the burning ghat, one of us noted the broken steps and the entwined tamarind and Bo-trees that marked the old-time ghat of Rajgir. Nor do I know how many more days went by before there came to some one of us the flash of insight that led us finally to discover that the mass of fallen masonry close by was that very ancient gateway of the city through which Buddha himself with the goats must have passed, and brought to our notice the dome-like head of an old Stupa lying in the dust a few feet away.

Passing through the gate and standing at the opening of the theatre-like valley, we find that the river which flows out of the city as one, is made up of two streams which between them encircle the royal city as a moat, even within its girdle of mountains and its enclosing walls. They join at this point. Leaving unexplored that which flows towards us from the left part of the garden of Ambapali, the Indian Mary Magdalene, and past the abodes of many of the characters who figure in the narrative of Buddha's life, we may turn to that branch which comes to us from the right.

A world of discoveries awaits us here! The path leads us across to the water, but this is easily forded by stepping-stones which may still be detected to form fragments of an ancient bathing-ghat. Evidently bathing and the bathing-ghat were as prominent in the Indian civilisation twenty-five centuries ago as they are today. Then the road follows the streamside at a distance of some fifty yards more or less from the line of mountains on the right. About midway through the city, the face of this mountain is pierced by a great cave, supposed by some, with, as it appears to myself, overwhelming probability to have been the Satapanni Cave outside of which the First Buddhist Council was convened, in the year following the

Mahanirvana or death of Buddha. The place today is known to the peasants of the countryside as the Sone Bhandar or Golden Treasury, which may or may not be simply a modern pronunciation of the ancient name. The interior of this cave is polished, not carved. There stands in it, as if some party of robbers had been interrupted in an attempt to carry it away, the earliest Stupa I have ever seen. The outside is half concealed by shrubs and creepers. But even now the mortice-holes remain that show where the carved wooden ornaments were once attached. And even now, as we stand at the entrance, we see in the distance, in the middle of the city, the tower that Fa Hian noted as still intact and visible in the year 404 A.D., crowning a small stupa or well to the east of the palace.

This cave then was the cathedral of old Rajgir. Here Buddha must have rested or meditated or taught; and there must, suggested some member of our party, have been a roadway connecting it directly with the palace. Acting on this clue, we proceeded to brush aside the wild growths and explore the line between the two. Outside the cave we found a level floor of ancient asphalt, a sort of Venetian Plaza de San Marco as it were. This was evidently the town square, and we picture here the scene of the First Council, 543 B.C. It was more we read a reference in one of the old Chinese Suttas of a certain place in Rajgir—as the place where the peacocks were fed. “The place where the peacocks were fed”; how our minds had lingered over the words when we first read them! And now here we stand. For undoubtedly just as the pigeons are fed outside St. Paul’s, so on this asphalt plaza, before the cathedral entrance in an Eastern city, it fitted the royal dignity and bounty that peacocks should be daily given grain.

The asphalt runs down to the river and across it. For the water still flows under the ancient bridge, and we can walk on it though its level is somewhat sunken. Easily, then, we make our way to the royal mansion, clearly marked

as this is at its four corners by the foundations of four bastion towers. But turning again to the bridge, we find an unbroken line of this same asphalt running along the bank by the way we have come, though sooth to say we might never have noticed it if we had not been tracing it out from the conspicuous mass.

Was this, the river-front opposite to the palace, protected by the steep hills behind, and running from the town plaza to the bathing-ghat beyond, and across this to the city gates—was this the High Street of the ancient town? Every now and again, as day after day we pace brooding up and down the distance, every now and again we come upon some hitherto unnoticed mass of masonry or mason's tool-marks. Here are a couple of blocks lying on their sides, as if to form a seat in a river-wall. Here again traces of steps or fallen ornaments. At one place on the opposite bank, deeply sunk between masses of earth and vegetation, there runs down to the riverside a small ravine that would now pass as a gully if the pavement or ancient asphalt did not prove it—in days before Pompeii and Herculaneum were born—to have been a street.

What were the houses like that looked down upon these footways? What was the life that was lived in them? How long had the place been a city? How long did it continue to be one? What were the surroundings in the height of its glory of this abode of kings, now an austere and desolate ruin? These and a thousand other questions crowd upon us, and it is strange to how many of them we can give an answer. The rushing rains of Indian summers have long washed away most of the soil from the hanging gardens that once clothed the hillsides, and made the prospect from the palace to the gates and beyond them through the pass leading out into the plains a veritable vision of delight.

But still the artificial terraces of red trap-rock are smooth and level amidst the out-cropping masses of natural crags, and still the wanderer may take his stand on some

spot whence Bimbisara the king was wont to look upon the glories of his inheritance, or, with difficulty at one or two points, may trace the way through the old pleasance by which doubtless royal hunting-parties may have started for the forest-glades. Today, it is true, there are no rich woodlands covering slopes and mountain-tops, as in the royal ages. Wild undergrowth, dense shrubs, and here and there a twisted palm growing in a cranny are all that can stand for the lofty timbers, dense aisles of the days when the place was a paradise, a king's garden surrounding a king's palace. And still at the back of the ruined city, guarding it from the passes on the south and east, we find the double walls of enormous thickness.

The square mortice-holes in the face of the rock out of which the great Sone Bhandar is hollowed, give us a clue that enables us to rebuild, mentally, the ancient city. For these mortice-holes held the attachments of the wooden ornaments that formed the front of the cave. Now, between Bombay and Poona, on the west of India, is another cave, that of Karle, which though of a much later date must be of the same style and period as this, and there the wooden front is still intact. Moreover, the carvings form a picture, as Fergusson has pointed out, of an ancient street, from which we gather that the second storeys of houses standing in rows were decorated in front with crowded wooden verandahs, porches, niches, and all sorts of beautiful and irregular curved corners. That these, further, were not mere devices of beauty in the case of the houses, as they were in those of the caves, we see in the pictures which were carved, probably in the first or second century A.D., on the gateways of Sanchi. From these we can gather an idea of what the palace of Bimbisara and the homes of his subjects must have been like. The first storey, then, was massive, sloping inwards and upwards, loopholed and buttressed at its four corners by four circular towers. The first storey only was built of stone, and its parapet was battlemented. On the strong terrace provided by the

roof of this fortification were constructed the family living rooms, which were of wood and much carved. That it would have been possible, however, to withdraw the women into the lower storey in time of war may be seen from buried ruins at Ujjain, which are shown by the Pandas as part of Vikramaditya's palace, and appear to have belonged to a fortress of Ashoka's time. Here, built of hard grey stone, now black with age, we have what seems to be the inside corner, and part of the courtyard, of just such a building as the Sanchi sculptures would lead us to expect as the dwelling of a king or noble. Outside, the walls would be almost blind; inside, they are honeycombed with many-pillared halls and verandahs, and one room with raised floor that represents an old Indian form of bed-chamber and bed in one. In times of peace these were, we may suppose, the quarters assigned to men-at-arms. The building is of a massiveness that rivals nature, and there are a few pillars still left—amongst the many that the succeeding sovereigns decorated in different degrees and different styles—whose simplicity of form enables any observer that knows Sanchi to feel fairly confident in assigning the building as a whole to the reign of Ashoka, or earlier.

Of such a form, then, though perhaps smaller and less elaborate, may we suppose the palace of Rajgir to have been, and in the streets about it the more plebeian dwellings of the townsfolk must, though small and comparatively huddled, have been like unto it. True, their lower storeys would be built, in all probability, even as the huts of the Rajgir pilgrims are to this day, of mud and pebbles, instead of lordly stone. From hillocks formed of earth of such, anyone may by the streamside, pick out at various different levels, bits of old household pottery. But the facings and tops of these shops and houses were doubtless of carved wood, and the front of the cathedral was a faithful enough reflex of the life of the town. Through such streets, while the king stood watching him from the roof

of the palace, paced the Shakya Prince, "a lad in his first youth," ere yet he was Buddha, and no honour that Bimbisara could offer would tempt him from that bridal of Poverty in which alone his mind delighted. "This life of the household is pain, free only is he who lives in the open air"; thinking thus he embraced the life of the wandering monk.

Far away from Rajgir, in the north of Rajputana we have Amber and Jaipur, a couple of cities which every visitor to India tries to see. Of these, Amber is situated in the highlands, and Jaipur out in the open plain, and Amber is very much the older of the two. It is in fact an old Indian doctrine that no city should occupy the same ground for more than a thousand years. It is supposed that a potent means of avoiding pestilence and other ills is then to move out and occupy a new space. In accordance with this canon the new city of Jaipur was laid out. And when all was finished, the Maharaja moved into the new town, with all his people.

Now this history of Amber and Jaipur, enacted in modern India, and still fresh in the memory of the Rajput people, is our guide to much in the history of Old Rajgir. For in the lifetime of Buddha, the son of Bimbisara—that tragic king, Ajatashatru, across whose path falls the red shadow of a father's murder!—found that the time had come to move the city of kings, and he accordingly built a new city with walls and gates like the last, but out in the open plain. And there the grass-covered ruin lies to this day, to the west of the present village, the grave of a city, the memorial of New Rajgir.

Bimbisara was the king of Magadha in the days of the Great Renunciation. Ajatashatru was king at the death of Buddha. But we know, from the fact of the desertion of their highland stronghold and its rebuilding outside, that for five hundred years at least before their time there had been a city on the site of Old Rajgir.

Nor need we think that the city thus built was only a

palace and its appurtenances. The fact that it actually became the new centre of population, forming the direct ancestor of the present village, shows itself two hundred years later, when the great Ashoka, desiring to build fitting memorials to Him whom the emperor delighted to honour, chose its north-western corner, on the left hand of the main gateway, whereat to place a stupa and Ashokan pillar with an inscription. As the edicts carved by Ashoka on rocks and pillars have the character of proclamations, it follows that the rocks and pillars themselves partake somewhat of the nature of the modern journal, inasmuch as they were the means adopted to publish the royal will, and hence a position could never be selected for them at a distance from inhabited cities. The inscribed pillar at Sarnath was placed at the door or in the courtyard of a monastery. And similarly the inscribed pillars, whose fragments have been found at Pataliputra, were erected in the interior or on the site of the old jail as an act of imperial penance.

We may take it, then, that Old Rajgir was really deserted at about the time of Bimbisara's successor, and if it was afterwards used as a royal residence, was so used at intervals, as Amber is now. Such then was the city, already ancient, through which Buddha Himself has passed time and again, and where He was held by all as an honourable guest. Across these fields and up and down these streets, now ruined, or within the massive cathedral-cave of Satapanni, there echo to this hour the immortal reverberations of the voice of Buddha.

Why did He come this way at all? Was it for the sake of the learned men who forgather in the neighbourhood of capitals? Was the famous University of Nalanda of after-ages, already, perhaps, a university, where one might come in the sure hope of finding all the wisdom of the age? It would seem as if, any way, He passed this spot with treasure already in the heart, needing only long years of brooding thought to fuse His whole Self in its

realisation. Unless He was sure of the truth before He reached here, He could not have gone, sure and straight as an arrow from the bow, to the unfrequented forest of Bel-trees, with its cave overhanging the river, and its great tree between the farms and ponds, where now the humble village of Bodh-Gaya stands.

## BIHAR

From Patna on the east to Benares on the west, stretch in the month of January fields of white poppies all abloom. In this Holy Land of the Buddhist nations blossoms today this flower of death. The earth where it grows was made sacred long ago by the feet of Buddha. At the site of the ancient Pataliputra, almost where Bankipore stands today, He entered the kingdom of Magadha. For ages they called the river-crossing Gautama's Ferry, and told how on his last journey north He stood and watched the building of the first of its fortifications, foretelling the future greatness of the capital. In remote villages one constantly comes upon images of Buddha, worshipped inside or outside the temples of Brahman priests. In any field the peasant ploughing may turn up a relic or a fragment of carved stone. And under trees and bushes along the high-road one notes the three little heaps of mud standing side by side, that indicate a shrine of Jagannath the Lord of the Universe, name and symbol of Buddha himself. They have forgotten Him maybe, yet remember His memory, these simple worshippers of the Bihari villages. To far distant lands, and to scriptures written in a long-forgotten tongue, the modern organisation of scholarship has to go, to bring back to them the knowledge of Him whom under obscure names they worship to this day, in the very countryside where He lived and taught. A vague tradition of Infinite Mercy is all that remains amongst the unlearned of that wondrous personality. But this, after two thousand years, they cherish still. He belongs in a special degree to this peasantry of Magadha. There runs in their veins the blood of those whom He patted on the head as children. He taught them the dignity of man. He called upon them, as upon the proudest of his peers, to renounce and find peace in the annihilation of Self. To Gautama Buddha the

peasant of Bihar owes his place in Hinduism. By Him he was nationalised.

Even in those stories of Buddha which remain to us it is explicitly stated that He sought amongst all existing solutions for the truth. This is the meaning of his travelling with the five ascetics and torturing the body with fasts. The first effort of a new thinker must always be to recapitulate existing systems and sound them to their depths. The Prince Gautama in the year 590 B.C., in the populous districts of the Sakya kingdom, awakening suddenly to the sense of his own infinite compassion, and to the career of a world-thinker, feels an overpowering need to meet with the scholars of his age, and makes his way, therefore, towards the neighbourhood of Rajgir in the kingdom of Magadha. From purely geographical considerations, we can see that there was doubtless another culture-centre, even so early as the age in question, at Taxila, in the extreme north-west. Indeed, towards the end of the life of Buddha himself, we are told of a lad who went there from Magadha—as European students of the Middle Ages to Cordova—to study medicine.

It is also easy to infer that the learning which could be acquired at Taxila was somewhat cosmopolitan in its character. The knowledge of herbs is a comparative science, and Taxila was on the high-road to Persepolis and Babylon, as well as to China and Nineveh. It was the doorway of India, or at least the university which had grown up beside that doorway ; and that it was known as such among other nations is shown by the fact that Alexander came that way in 326 B.C. For the purchase of foreign stuffs, for knowledge of the geography that lay beyond her own border, for foreign news and foreign learning, possibly even for secular science as a whole, India had no centre like Taxila.

It follows with equal clearness that for the headquarters of a strictly national culture one would look nearer to the valley of the Ganges. Even the least organised of systems will somewhere have its central ganglion ; and the

fact that the Indian ganglion lay two centuries later in Magadha, is proved by the retirement of Chandra Gupta to Pataliputra after his defeat of the Greeks.

It was evidently not absurd with the means then at the disposal of the crown to look from that distance to mobilise armies on the frontier. But if military plans could be carried out so far from their base as this, then we cannot object that Magadha was too remote to be the religious centre of the whole. Benares and Baidyanath are still left at its two extremes to tell us of the spiritual energy of its great period. The miracle that puzzles the imagination of historians—the sudden inception in the sixth century B.C. of religions of conscience in place of religions of power—is, rightly viewed, no miracle at all. These religions themselves were always there; it was only their organisation that began with the date named.

The events of history follow sequences as rigid as the laws of physics. Buddha was the first of the faith-organisers, and first in India of nation-builders. But Buddha could not rise and do his work until the atmosphere about him had reached a certain saturation-point in respect to those ideas which the Upanishads preach. The founders of religions never create the ideas they enforce. With deep insight they measure their relative values, they enumerate and regiment them; and by the supreme appeal of their own personality they give them a force and vitality unsuspected. But the ideas themselves were already latent in the minds of their audience. Had it not been so, the preacher would have gone uncomprehended. Through how many centuries had this process of democratising the culture of the Upanishads gone on? Only by flashes and side-gleams, as it were, can we gather even the faintest idea.

It is partly the good and partly the bad fortune of Buddhistic movements in India that, from their association with an overwhelming individualised religious idea, they appear to us as a sudden invention of the human mind in such and such a year. We do not sufficiently realise that

they, together with all the words and symbols associated with them, must have been taken from a pre-existent stock of customs and expressions already long familiar to the people amongst whom Buddhism grew up. We imagine the great Chandra Gupta to have been the first monarch in India of an organised empire, but the words of Buddha himself, "They build the Stupa over a Chakravarti Raja—a suzerain monarch—at a place where four roads meet", show that the people of that early period were familiar enough with the drama of the rise and fall of empires, and that the miracle of Chandra Gupta's retirement to Pataliputra, thence to rule as far as the Punjab and the Indian Ocean, was in fact no miracle at all, since the India of his time was long used to the centralised organisation of roads, daks, and supplies, and to the maintenance of order and discipline.

The peculiar significance of Bihar in the comity of the Indian peoples rises out of its position on the frontier-line between two opposing spiritual influences. To this day it is the meeting-place of Hinduistic and Mussalman civilisations. Sikh and Arya Samaji and Hindusthani Rajput pour down the waterway of the Ganges, to go no farther east than the twin-cities of Patna and Bankipore, and these stand face to face with the unified and Sanskritic civilisation of Lower Bengal. All sorts of modified institutions, representing mutual assimilation, arise along the border-line. Costume, language, manners, and habits of life are all full of this compromise. The old standard of culture, which even yet is not wholly dead, along a line stretching from Patna through Benares to Lucknow, required of the highest classes of Hindus the study of Persian as well as Sanskrit, and one of the most liberal and courtly types of gentlehood that the world has seen was moulded thus.

The fertile country of Bengal, closely settled and cultivated, organised round the monarchy of Gour, and ~~claiming~~ claiming a definite relation to Benares and Kanauj as the sources of its culture, cannot, at any time within the

historical period, have been susceptible of chaotic invasion or colonisation. The drift of unorganised races could never pass through Bihar, which must always have been and remains to the present the most cosmopolitan province of India. It has doubtless been this close contiguity of highly-diversified elements within her boundaries that has so often made Bihar the birth-place of towering political geniuses. The great Chandra Gupta, his grandson Ashoka, the whole of the Gupta dynasty, Sher Shah, and finally Guru Govind Singh, are more than a fair share of the critical personalities of Indian history for one comparatively small district to have produced. Each of the great Biharis has been an organiser. Not one has been a blind force, or the tool of others. Each has consciously surveyed and comprehended contemporary conditions, and known how to unify them in himself, and to give them a final irresistible impulsion in a true direction.

## THE ANCIENT ABBEY OF AJANTA

### I

Like the curves and columns of some great organ, runs the line of stone arches and colonnades along the hillside that faces to the sunrise, in the glen of Ajanta. Twenty-six caves there are in all, making one long level line, overhung by the rounded ridge of dark-blue stone that was undoubtedly chipped into shape and bareness long long ago, to emphasise that balanced uniformity which gives to this ancient abbey so much of its solemnity and beauty. As we first see the caves, from the boulder-strewn stream, some hundreds of feet away, they appear like a succession of pillared verandahs, broken once near the middle, and culminating in the distance, in the tall arched fronts of great Chaitya\* halls. It is thus that we first become aware of Caves Ten and Twenty-six, and are affected by their severity and regularity as if by music. In reality, Nine and Nineteen are also Chaityas. But both are slightly masked by masses of rock, and only Ten and Twenty-six stand out, in this first view.

How lonely and remote is this glen in which we find them! It lies crescent-shaped among its hills, so that the view from each monastery-cave seems closed upon itself. The torrent that runs through it enters, as a great cascade, at the northern end, and leaves this rocky ravine without giving a hint of a world without, where twistings and windings are to bring it to a wider stream. Such are the sites that have ever seemed ideal to the monk. The murmur of running waters and the voices of the waterfalls make

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\* Chaitya—Building used by Buddhist monks for united worship; strictly comparable to Christian churches, which resemble it to an extraordinary degree, even now. The differences between nave and aisles are exactly the same. A Dagoba occupied the place of the altar. Ajanta has four chaityas.

† Dagoba—A Stupa or tope erected over the ashes or relics of a great teacher. An open-air Stupa is the Sanchi Tope. There are Dagobas within all the four Chaityas at Ajanta. Evidently the form was sacred.

to his ear a perpetual plain-song, in unison with the intoning of ancient psalters and the chanting of texts. In the circling path of the sunlight measured against the green, its first rays at dawn and its last at cowdust, are signals for ringing of bells and lighting of lamps, for processions, and incense, and sprinkling of holy water. The quivering of leaves through the tropical day speaks of coolness and shadow, the environment of learning ; and the solitude of nature promises remoteness from the world, the only possible environment of holiness. Such must Ajanta have seemed to the handful of monks who took up their abode in its natural caverns, perhaps a couple of centuries before Ashoka. The rough path by which they could climb to their eagle's nests of dwellings was soon hewn by their patient hands into simple stairs. But even these were reached, from the north, only after arduous travel over the boulders by the stream side. A perfect site for a monastery. It is difficult to imagine that amongst the scarped and rugged hillsides of Khandesh there could have been found another vale at once so lonely and so beautiful.

Twenty-six caves there are in all ; numbered, in the unemotional fashion of official surveys, in serial order from north to south. In reality, however, they fall according to their ages into some four main groups. The first of these, containing Caves Eight to Thirteen, lies to the left of the stairs by which one reaches the monastery terrace. One arrives on that level between Six and Seven, and the first seven numbers form the third of the periods. Caves Fourteen to Nineteen constitute the second period ; and Twenty to Twenty-six the fourth. Thus:—

13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8: Period I.

19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14: Period II.

7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1: Period III.

26, 25, 24, 23, 22, 21, 20: Period IV.

Not that all the caves of any single group were undertaken at once. In each period there is a progression.

Sixteen and Seventeen have inscriptions which, it is said, render them the heart of the matter ; for they were built during or soon after the lifetime of the great Gupta, Maharaja Deva (Chandragupta II, Vikramaditya, A.D. 375 to 413), by a sovereign who had married his daughter. And Caves Five to One were probably undertaken immediately after.

In any case, it is the first group, Caves Eight to Thirteen, that for hundreds of years formed the whole glory of Ajanta. Eight and Thirteen may probably have been natural caverns occupied tentatively long before the time of Ashoka by a handful of monks. Those were days in which kings, rich cities, and great landowners could scarcely perform a work of greater merit than hewing out caves for the residence of monks. In course of time, therefore, these natural recesses in the rock (which we imagine to have been the motive and starting-point) were transformed into simple monasteries by first enlarging the centre and then cutting tiny cells, each with its two stone beds and low doorway, round the space, which thus acted as quadrangle or courtyard. Number Thirteen has, in addition to these, a small earthen verandah in front. Number Eight has not even this. It seems probable that the occupation began from two points more or less simultaneously, and afterwards worked inwards, for how else are we to explain the fact that Nine and Ten, standing side by side, are both Chaityas?

We imagine too that the first settlement was early, when faith was strong, and the living impress of the Great Teacher was yet fresh. For how else can we account for the strength that clung to the bare rocks by the torrent-side with such pertinacity, decade after decade? Were they some band of wandering teachers, we wonder, those first monks, appointed to preach in the countries on the Southern Road, a mission sent to the powerful empire of Ujjain, or an offshoot perhaps from the mother-communities at Bhilsa and Sanchi? In any case, the caves were

valuable to them as headquarters during the wet season, when all begging friars are supposed to assemble for the time in some fixed dwelling-place ; and during their absence as a body, for eight or nine months at a time, the work of excavation must have gone forward. Little did they dream of how well-starred were both the spot they had chosen and the day of their advent ! We can see, what they could not, close on twelve hundred years of development and gathering fame, the learning they were to send out ; the beauty they were to build up ; the kings who would delight to honour them ; and roads from the far ends of the earth, all meeting on their threshold. Hiouen Tsang came here, in the middle of the seventh century after Christ, and speaks of the place as "a Sangharama constructed in a dark valley. Its lofty halls and deep side-aisles stretch through the face of the rocks. Storey above storey, they are backed by the crag and face the valley". It is evident here that the English translator—not having in his own mind the thing his author was describing—has rendered the text inaccurately. If we read, "its lofty Chaityas and deep Viharas\* at their sides", the statement immediately becomes luminous. Similarly, when later we are told that the great Vihara is about 100 feet high, and the stone figure of Buddha in the middle 70 feet high, while above is a canopy of seven stages, towering upwards, apparently without support,† it is evident that the great Chinese traveller is speaking of no Vihara, but of the principal Chaitya of his own day (Nineteen or Twenty-six?), and that the stone figure he describes is really the Dagoba it contains.

The first royal patronage extended to Ajanta must have been given at or soon after the time of Ashoka, when the Chaitya known as Cave Nine and the Vihara

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\* Vihara—A Buddhist monastery. At first these consisted of a central space of irregular shape, with small cells opening into it. Afterwards it becomes a quadrangle or main court with a great sanctuary on its longest side containing an image of Buddha, pillared aisles, verandah, and cells, as in the earlier examples. There are twenty-two Viharas, many unfinished, at Ajanta.

† Quoted by R. C. Dutt in *Civilisation in Ancient India*, ii. pp. 156-7

numbered Twelve were built. Every one who takes up the study of ancient sites in India finds his own indications of age. At Sanchi the gradual modifications in the pictorial treatment of the Ashokan rail give us a chronological scale which enables us to distinguish with absolute certainty no less than four different periods of building and sculpture. Here at Ajanta the time-unit that serves us from the first is the Chaitya-façade ornament taken in conjunction with the Ashokan rail. It would appear that the domestic architecture of the age was characterised by the rounded roof which we still see in the rocky caves of Ajanta ; by the Ashokan rail, used as the front of a verandah ; and by the horse-shoe window, breaking the line of the roof, or mansard. Now the instinct of cave-makers was to make their fronts as closely as possible resemble the outsides of the buildings of their period.

But a style creates a tradition, which persists long after the original reason for it has disappeared. Thus the horse-shoe ornament and the Ashokan rail become a mannerism at Ajanta, diverging constantly further and further from their true intention ; and by these progressive changes we can make a rough estimate of the ages of the caves. In Nine and Twelve they are used with obvious sincerity, reflecting the conceptions of their age, in the same way that the early printers of Europe laboured to make their machine-printed books look as if they had been written by hand. On Viharas Eight and Thirteen they do not occur at all. Evidently the founders were too early or too poor to indulge in such elaboration. Chaitya Number Ten had a timer front, which has fallen away and leaves no trace of its image or likeness, save in the panels sculptured in the rocks on either side. But these horse-shoe ornaments do not altogether cease till after Cave Nineteen. At first they are frankly windows in house fronts. In Cave Twelve they are to suggest used fan-lights over the cell-doors and run round the walls connecting one with another in simple dignity. In Caves Six, Seven, and Fifteen we

find the spaces filled with lotus patterns, and the semi-circular opening no longer has a definite meaning. They are no longer windows. They are now only decorative. On the façade of Cave Nineteen foreign influences art at work. A horrible vulgarity has come over the workmen, strictly comparable to the degrading effects of European taste on Indian crafts today. Each of these once beautiful outlines is now filled with a hideous grinning face, altogether meaningless. From the chequer-work which recurs here again and again (an ornament common amongst the Gandhara sculptures in the Calcutta collection), it is clear that these influences have come from the north-west. They are possibly Greek, as transmitted through Persia. There had been a great *rapprochement* between India and Persia in the course of the fifth century, and nowhere is the crude secularising effect of the West on Indian taste better illustrated.

Yet nowhere is the sober, synthetising power of the Indian intellect more visible. In spite of its eclecticism of detail, and daring romanticism in the treatment of sacred subjects, Nineteen at Ajanta remains one of the architectural triumphs of the world. It is the very flowering-point of a great civic life. The strong porch, brought forward on two solid pillars, suggests the presence and words of the leaders of men; the side-galleries, their supporters and attendants; while on the sill of the great window behind we have room and background for the anointing of a king, or the lying-in-state of the dead.

We are accustomed to think of the *hotels de ville* of Belgium as the crown of the world's communal architecture. But Belgium has nothing, for simple unity and mastery; to compare with this. It dominates a small court, from which a false step would precipitate one down a steep Khud.\* Obviously the style was not invented for such a position. Here, as at a thousand other points, Ajanta merely reflects the life of India during one of the greatest

\* Ravine.

periods of her history. Cave Nineteen remains, carved in imperishable rock, when all the buildings of its day have disappeared, a memorial of the splendour and restraint of Indian cities during the ages of the Gupta rule.

## II

From the story of the First Council, held at Rajgir in the year following the death of Buddha, we learn that it was usual among the monks to apply for royal aid for the construction and repair of the Viharas. It was not the business of the monks themselves to build or to excavate with their own hands; though those amongst them who had in the world been master-craftsmen would undoubtedly organise and direct the labour assigned to the Abbey, as has been the case amongst monastic orders in all lands and in all ages. It is indeed their disinterested co-operation, their giving all and asking nothing in return, that enables an order of monks to create so much that is permanent within a short time. No other industrial unit can be compared with them in their power of accumulating results. And the secret is, that the monk's whole purpose is his work itself. Whatever be his task, whether building, or education, or manufacture, his ideal requires that he have no motive outside. He subordinates himself to his duty, instead of using it to serve some selfish end. The gain derived from the deed, in means or skill, is only used to make possible some vaster and grander effort of the same kind.

This is why the old abbeys of Europe and their associated churches are so beautiful. They cost nothing like the wealth that went to the making of cathedrals. Standing in remote places, they were built almost entirely by peasant and village-labourer. But every stone was laid under the design and superintendence of the monks themselves. Years of dreaming found expression in groined roofs, clustered pillars, radiating arches; in chantry-niche

or holy well or casket-like shrine. The monks themselves were recruited from all classes of the population, but, on the face of it, we might expect that a smith or a carpenter who chose the religious life would be distinguished by somewhat more of thought and organising powers, more of idealism and more of dreams, than the brothers he had left at the anvil or the bench.

This law, exemplified in Europe, is as true of India. It characterises all monastic orders everywhere. It is in the very nature of the monastic idea, and nowhere have we a better opportunity of watching its action than at Ajanta. For the Buddhist orders, like those of Europe, were democratic. No stain or fetter of birth barred entrance into them. The Shramanas, unlike the Brahmanas, testified Megasthenes, three and a half centuries before Christ, are not born to their condition, but are taken from all classes of the population. Thus they represented the whole national life of their time, and we owe the beauty of their architecture to the taste and imagination of the monks themselves.

But we must remember that for command of means the monks depended upon neighbouring kings and cities. It was an act of surpassing merit to excavate caves or adorn Chaitya-halls for religious communities. Kings remitted the taxes of whole villages, which thus became the monastery glebe. Noblemen and great ministers devoted vast sums to the making of images, cloisters, and shrines. There is an inscription in the Kṛuda Caves\* which shows that a whole family of king's officers, including the daughters-in-law, joined to contribute the expenses of the various definite items necessary for the making of a Buddha chapel. In the Karma† thus accumulated not one of this loving and obedient group must be left out! Here at Ajanta itself Cave Sixteen is made by a minister of the Vakataka princes known as Varahadeva; Caves Seventeen, Eighteen, and

\* A place 45 miles south of Bombay. Very early caves  
 † Merit.

Nineteen by a minister of a tributary sovereign or great noble called Aditya ; Cave Twenty by a man of evident wealth and distinction, whose name is Upendra Gupta ; and the Chaitya-hall, Cave Twenty-six, by the abbot Buddha Bhadra with the special assistance of his subordinate Dharmadatta and his own disciple Bhadra Bandhu.

Throughout the west country it was long fashionable, even for houses that were themselves devoted to Shiva or to Vishnu, to make these benefactions to the Bauddha friars. And as time went on it became customary to add an inscription, with the prayer that the merit of the act might redound to the benefit first of the father and mother of the donor, and then of all living beings—a dedication that is still common amongst certain Buddhist peoples.

From Caves Sixteen and Seventeen, then, it can hardly be doubted that the great power, within whose territory Ajanta lay, was that of the Vakataka princes, whose sway is supposed on other grounds to have covered a large part of Central India, from the end of the third till the middle of the sixth centuries, their dynasty having been powerful enough to take a queen from the family of the great Chandra Gupta of Pataliputra, between A.D. 420 and 490.\*

Who were these Vakatakas? Where did they reign? What was the nature of their kingdom and their power? The inscription on Cave Sixteen claims that Harisena, the king under whom both it and Seventeen were excavated (A.D. 500 to 520), had conquered amongst other places Ujjain, Orissa, and Koshala. Are we to suppose from this that they were Rajputs reigning in Malwa, that country of which Hiouen Tsang said a century later, that it could only be compared with Magadha, as the home of learning? And were the tributary Asmakas—whose minister Aditya made Seventeen, Eighteen, and Nineteen—a mere local power, confined to the immediate neighbourhood? How urgently the history of India calls for students who will search it

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\* It is absurd to suppose that "the great king of kings, Devagupta", has any other meaning.

out in the light of its geography! An anxious antiquarianism has been very useful in providing a few data and starting-points for real work. But the day has come when we are able to realise that, except as the great stream of the Indian story carries it, even Ajanta has little value. We must know how it stood related to the life of its period; what it did for the world; who loved and served it; what joy they drew from it; and a thousand other truths about that living past which surrounded its birth. No one has yet troubled to depict the social conditions out of which it grew. Yet this is the very thing that we must know. The network of strong cities that must have surrounded every focus of ecclesiastical power and learning is non-existent as yet in the national imagination. Yet only a detailed study of the whole countryside can give us the real clue to the development of sites like Ajanta.

We forget that every age seems modern to itself, and that warm throbbing human life once filled these empty cells, that human love and conviction inspired every line and curve of their contour, and that human thought beat ceaselessly to and fro against their walls and screens, in its search to determine for man the grounds of eternal certainty. But even when we have answered these questions we have yet to answer one other, as pressing, as important. How did all this activity come to an end? The history of the death of Buddhism in India has yet to be entered upon, in the true spirit of critical enquiry, but when it is undertaken, what vast areas will be found elucidated!

Here, in the neighbourhood of Ajanta, are many features of interest and possible significance. The railway is still forty miles away, and has not yet had time to derange the commercial relations of the grand old market town called Neri, encircled by its battlemented walls. Some eight miles to the north of the caves lies the postal town of Vakod. Is there any connection here with the word *Vakataka*? Four miles to the south on one side, and again four to the north on the other, are the towns of Ajanta

and Fardapur. Both are seats of Mogul fortification testifying to the strong and independent character of the country from early times. At Ajanta there is a palace and a bridge of some ten arches, with an enclosed pool, below which lie the seven cascades that lead to the monastic ravine.

In the grim old village of Fardapur there is another fort of Aurungzeb, which is now in use as a caravanserai. The whole aspect of the place is ancient and fortress-like, and the mode of building which obtains there throws a sudden light on what must have been the aspect of Rajgir, when Buddha entered it, in the days of Bimbisara five and six centuries before Christ. Every wall has a basis of pebbles and mortar; and upon this are reared blocks of baked earth, shaped like masses of masonry. They are broad at the base, considerably narrower at the top, and the slope from one to the other is slightly concave. Even the delicate brick battlements of the Moguls are built upon an older foundation of rubble wall. A similar mode of shaping earth obtains even so far east, it is said, as the western districts of Bengal. Undoubtedly it is a method of unknown antiquity. The curving slant gives to every cottage the air of a fortification, which indeed it is, and from a mediaeval point of view a fortification of very admirable materials.

Even had the old walls of the fort not been visible under the Mogul battlements, we should have known that the place represented an ancient camp of the people, rather than the mere stronghold of an army of occupation. This is shown, in the first place, by its size. It is, in fact, a walled court or compound, containing a spring of water and a place of worship. Around it are quarters for hundreds of people, and at the gateways and corner-towers residences for officers. A whole population could take refuge here with their women and their cows, against the onset of an army, or the invasion of a tribe. The fact that it could have been worth while for a powerful government like that

of Delhi to occupy so large a work at the close of the Deccan wars, in what seems to us now an obscure village, is a wonderful testimony to the strength and hostility of the Mahratta country round it, a strength and hostility which were the expression of thousands of years of organised independence.

Outside the fort the city has been walled, and the river, circling within the walls, has acted at the gateway of the city as a moat, over which even now stand the ruins of a grand old bridge of three arches. At the end of the road that once crossed this bridge, at what must have been the outer gate of the city, there is a buttress-foundation, now treated as a sacred mound, where both Hindus and Mohammedans come to worship the Mother. The trees that grow on it are the Neem and the Bo, the old Bodhi-tree, or Ashvattha. At their feet a few stones are red with vermilion, and broken glass bracelets tell of accepted vows.

So much for the mingling of historic and pre-historic! All through this countryside we find ourselves close to the remoter origins of Hinduism. It is a land of the worship of Miri-Amma, the Earth-Mother, in her symbols of the Neem and the pointed stone. There are temples of Hanuman, too, here and there. But though I found a Brahmin chanting the worship of Satyanarayana, in his own house, on the full-moon night, I saw no shrines to Shiva or Vishnu. This Bo-tree, on the Ajanta road, may have sheltered a friars' Dharmashala in Buddhistic ages. Here, at this gate, Hiouen Tsang and his train, in the middle of the seventh century, may have stopped to pay toll, or to rest, on their way to or from the abbey, four miles distant. And the Bo-tree, growing here beside the Neem, may seem to the spirit of the place, with the memories it recalls of the peopled cloisters of twelve hundred years ago, a memento of what is a comparatively recent incident in the long long story of the land!

## III

## HINAYANA AND MAHAYANA

Buddhism might well be divided historically by the students into the Rajgir, the Pataliputra, and the Takshashila periods. Or we might choose for the names of our periods those monarchs who were the central figures of each of these epochs. At Rajgir these would be Bimbisara and his son Ajatashatru, at Pataliputra Ashoka, and at Takshashila Kanishka, the second sovereign of the Kushan empire. The epochs thus named would also be coterminous with the dates of the three great Buddhist Councils. No complete history of Buddhism could leave out of account the influence of the great Kanishka. For from his time, as we are informed by the Chinese travellers, dates that great schism of the Mahayana, or Northern School, which has carried with it China, Japan, and Tibet, while Burma, Ceylon, and Siam belong to Southern Buddhism, or the Lesser Vehicle.

A great haughtiness divides to this day the adherents of these different schools. To the Northern School belongs the new recension of the scriptures published by the Council of Kanishka. To the Southern belong the simpler and more ancient works, amongst which are included the three Tripitakas.

The characteristic doctrine of the Mahayana, according to the disciples of Hiouen Tsang in the early eighth century, lies in the veneration of the Bodhisattvas, along with the one earthly and supreme Buddha. The Southern School, or Hinayana, does not profess to invoke the Bodhisattvas. But it is easy to see that under this brief definition there is indicated a wide divergence of attitudes and teaching. Anyone who studies a religious movement which has its origin in an Indian and Hinduistic teacher, is bound to notice two opposite influences which come into play almost simultaneously. First there is the highly abstract and nihilistic character of the personal realisation of the

Master himself. No gods, no forms, no rites, and the unreal and phenomenal nature of the world about him, all this is the immediate and strongest impression made on the mind. Heaven must not be thought of, perfection is the only possible goal for the soul. And so on. But at the selfsame moment, by creating a profound sympathy for India, and the Indian way of looking at the world, the door is opened to all sorts of complexities, and the disciple may well end by accepting a thousand things, each as unthinkable as the one or two he originally abandoned at the call of a higher truth. This must always be the two-fold effect of an Indian teacher of religion on a foreign mind.

This very phenomenon we may watch on a geographical scale in the history of Buddhism. Here the Southern countries, served by the early missions, received a stricter and more personal impress of the deposit of faith actually left to his church by the Master. This system was atheistic, nihilistic, and philosophic in the highest and severest sense. Even in the reign of Ashoka we see the erection of rails, pillars, and Stupas, the glorification of holy places, and the worship of the sacred relics, but never a trace of the multitudinous extraneous elements which were later to be accepted.

Many of the great Chaitya-halls were built between the time of Ashoka and the Christian era, but the Stupas which they contain are simple reliquaries. The Dagoba<sup>s</sup> bears no image, though it is often ornamented with an Ashokan rail. Sculpture was in existence at this early date, but it seems to have been used always as a medium of secular commemoration, as at Karle and Bharhut. The religious symbolism of Buddhistic devotion seems to have been at this period the tree, the Stupa, the rail, the horse-shoe ornament, and sometimes a footprint. Nor can we adequately realise the thrill of sympathy and reverence which these austere and simple forms were at that time capable of producing in a susceptible mind.

The recognition of the Bodhisattvas, however, which came in with Kanishka, is a phrase which covers a great deal. It really connoted sooner or later the acceptance, more or less entire, of what may be called the Asiatic synthesis. And it too seems to go hand in hand with the worship of the personality of Buddha himself. It was in fact the emergence of a doctrine for which India has ever since been famous. It was an outbreak of the tendency known in Christianity as the religion of the Incarnation, a form of adoration by which Protestant England herself has well-nigh been torn in twain during the last fifty years. Whether or not Buddhism had before this inculcated the adoration of the Buddha's personality, no one who has read any of the early scriptures can doubt that she was always very ready for such a doctrine. There is a fine sentiment about every mention of the Teacher's name. One can feel the intense sacredness of each of his movements to the early recorder. And the worship of relics, so early as the moment of the Mahanirvana itself, is an evidence not to be set aside. The doctrine of the divinity of Buddha, and his miraculous birth into a world long preparing for his advent, must in the year A.D. 150, have been only the key-stone of an arch already built. Here we have the picture of the self-projection into the sphere of Maya of a soul immeasurably higher and sweeter than those dragged there by their own deeds. It is the theory which reappears in widely separate times and places under the names of Christ, Rama, Krishna, and Chaitanya. Even the Persian Bab would seem to owe the idea that makes him possible to this Indian "superstition," as it has been called.

This was the movement that placed in each new Vihara excavated at Ajanta its Buddha shrine. Whether Seven or Eleven is the older it is difficult to determine, but each contains its image in its shrine. This fact coincides with a further step taken about this time. The ancient abbey with its Bhikshugrihas\* began to transform itself into

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\* Houses for friars.

a university. Each of these new and more ambitious Viharas is a college as well as a monastery. We are very familiar, from the study of Burma and Japan, with the educational system in which every student is theoretically a novice of the monastery. Something of the same sort is true to this day of Oxford itself. And there can be no doubt that it obtained at Ajanta. It was with this emphasising of the function of the Sangharama† as the abode of learning that the image of the great teacher became all-important. For organised worship the Chaitya-halls always sufficed. The image in its shrine doubtless received a certain ritualised attention morning and evening—above all, incense was burnt before it—but its main purpose was to keep the students in mind of the great Guru, the divine teacher and ideal, in whose invisible presence every act was to be performed. It is this academic aspect of the life at Ajanta which speaks in the long rows of Viharas dug out within single epochs. Four to One cannot be far removed from Seventeen, and this fact can only be accounted for in this way. Of the learning that was imparted in these monastic colleges we read in Hiouen Tsang. From the beginning the texts must have been recited constantly in the abbey-halls. But that secular learning also was sometimes cultivated, we are expressly told in the case of Nalanda, where arithmetic and astronomy were studied, and standard time was kept for the kingdom of Magadha, by means of the state water-clock.

Not all the sculptural developments of Ajanta are Kanishkan. The façade of Cave Nineteen, of some centuries later, shows in a wonderful manner the richness and variety of the elements to which the Mahayana had opened the door. Buddha is there treated not simply as the Guru whose every trace and footstep is sacred, but as a great historic character, to be portrayed in many ways and from many different points of view. He is being crowned. He

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† Abbey.

carries the flag of Dharma. There is a freedom in his attitudes and in the arrangement of the adoring figures by whom he is surrounded. At the same time, the recurrence of the chequer-pattern, instead of the Ashokan rail, now forgotten, shows the influence of Gandhara. And so the substitution of grinning faces for lotuses in the horse-shoe ornaments shows the overwhelming of the old purely Indian impulse by foreign influences. And so does the peculiar coat worn by the Buddhas. This garment appears to me rather Chinese or Tartar than West Asian. But it must be said that it is not purely Indian. What is the date of Cave Nineteen? Kanishka was A.D. 150, or thereabouts, and Cave Seventeen is about A.D. 520. It is customary to assume that Nineteen is that Gandhakuti or image-house referred to in the inscription on Seventeen. Critics profess to find an affinity of style which groups them together. For my own part I must frankly say that to me this affinity is lacking. I believe the Gandhakuti to mean the image-shrine at the back of Seventeen itself. A pious founder might well count this and the cave and the cistern three separate works. This inference is confirmed by a reference I find in Hiouen Tsang to a Gandhakuti or hall of perfumes, i.e., doubtless, of incense *within* a Vihara in the kingdom of Takka. I cannot imagine that Nineteen was made by the same hands or at the same time as Seventeen. I think it is considerably later and less conservative, and exclusively Indian. At the same time I think it must be the "great Vihara" of Hiouen Tsang, which he describes as about 100 feet high, while in the midst is a stone figure of Buddha about 70 feet high, and above this a stone canopy of seven stages, towering upwards apparently without any support. Making allowance for faulty translation in regard to terms, which by those who have seen the caves are used with technical rigidity, this may offer a fair description of the cave as it would appear to one who saw it in the plenitude of its use and beauty. If this cave were, as I think, excavated about the year A.D. 600, then

when the Chinese traveller visited the abbey in the middle of the century it would be the central place of worship and one of the main features of interest at Ajanta. But there is at least one other synchronism of the greatest significance to be observed in reference to Cave Nineteen. This is the affinity of the treatment of Buddha in its sculptures to those of Borobuddor in Java. It is as if the style were only making its first appearance. There is the same idea of costume, and the standing Buddhas have something like the same grace of attitude and gentleness of demeanour, but the process of idealising has not yet been carried to its highest pitch in this kind. There is in the Javanese Buddhas, as revealed in Mr. Havell's photographs of them, an ethereal remoteness with which these do not quite compete. Yet here is the promise of it. And the great bas-relief on the Stupa in the interior has the same look, is of the same quality. The expedition that colonised Java is said to have left Gujarat in Western India early in the seventh century, and this was evidently the conception of fine art that they carried away with them.

In this visit of Hiouen Tsang to the abbey, we have a hint of the marvellous cosmopolitanism which probably characterised its life. It is another way of saying the same thing, that is said with almost equal distinctness, by the Chaitya-façade itself. Chinese, Gandharan, Persian, and Ceylonese elements mingle with touches from every part of India itself in the complexity of this superb edifice. The jewel-like decorations of the columns without remind us of Magadha. The magnificent pillars inside carry the mind to Elephanta and its probably Rajput dynasty. The very ornate carvings of the triforium and the pillar-brackets, were originally plastered and coloured. The Stupa also once blazed with chunam and pigments. The interior must have been in accord, therefore, with the taste of an age that was by no means severe. The Vakataka house must have ruled over an empire in Middle India in which civilisation had reached a very high level. It must have

been the centre of free and healthy communications with foreign powers. And above all, the old international life of learning must have had full scope in the abbey's hospitality. Buddha and the Bodhisattvas were only the outstanding figures in a divine world which included a constantly-growing number of factors. The little choultry outside is purely Hinduistic in its sculpture, as if to say that the order looked with no unfriendly eye on the less organised religious ideas and affections of the pilgrim householder. A mythological system which is practically identical in Japan, China, and India sheltered itself behind the Mahayana. All the sacred and learned literature of India was by it put in a position of supremacy. Hiouen Tsang was as careful to pass on to his disciples the comments of Panini on Sanskrit grammar as more strictly theological lore. He was as eager for the explanation of Yoga—the secular science of that age—as for the clearing up of points about relics and shrines. India, in fact, as soon as the Mahayana was formulated, entered on a position of undisputed pre-eminence as the leader and head of the intellectual life of Asia.

#### IV

##### THE THEORY OF GREEK INFLUENCE ON INDIAN ART

India is at present the target of a great many very depressing theories, coming from a great many different quarters. We are told by doctors that a belief in Nirvana is a symptom of Dyspepsia, by ethnologists that the possession of the higher faculties is not to be claimed by dwellers in the tropics, by historians that empires were never built by brown races, and so on, and so forth. Amongst these partisan-shafts, aimed in the name of candour and truth, none perhaps has been more profoundly discouraging to the Indian people than the theory that even their ancient national art was chiefly based upon loans from foreign sources, "cleverly disguised in native trappings". India is not at present in a condition to treat such views with the light-hearted amusement which is all that they probably deserve. She has too great need, for the moment, of the vision of herself and her own world, as they

really are. She needs to behold the organic processes of her own past history, the constructive forces that have flowed through all her being, and from time to time reached nations outside her own boundaries, with gifts of her giving. When she has once seen herself thus,—not as something small and mean and secondary, but—as a dynamic centre of thought and faith and civilisation, originating within herself fountains of inspiration for all the peoples of the world, it will be impossible for her to fall back again into inertness and unproductiveness. When she realises, not in bombastic words, but in detail added to detail, and shining point to shining point, how great and vital has been her past, there can be but one result. She will turn her about to create a future that shall be worthy of it. These facts must be the excuse for further pursuing what will seem to some a very ignoble argument.

So far from the sculpture of Indian Buddhism having been derived from the West, it is my belief that it was the spontaneous creation of India and the Indian Buddhist mind, itself; that Magadha, the Modern Bihar, was its source and prime centre; and that from this point it radiated in every direction, along with the ideal which it illustrated, to exercise an influence whose extent as yet is hardly guessed. That the order of nature was not reversed, in the particular case of Gandhara and Indian art, that the child did not confer life upon its mother, or the remote province determine the nation that had borne it, it is the special object of this study to show. Prof. Grunwedel is acknowledged amongst scholars as the authoritative exponent of the opposite point of view. His book 'Buddhist Art in India' is a precious mine of material bearing on the subject. It appears to me, however, that it would have been impossible for him to have used his material as he has done, had he ever had the opportunity of travelling in the eastern part of India, and realising the marvellous fertility and energy of the religious sequence which crowded itself into the centuries between the life-time of Buddha, and the building of Boro Budor in Java. Buddhism is only the blossom of the Indian genius organised. At each step of its own road, it forces a new development upon the faith of the laity, and as the Hindu out-branching can often be dated, we have sure means of knowing the preceding character of Buddhism. It is when the Buddhism of Bihar is turning to the thought of the Mother of the Universe, when Hinduism in Bengal is dwelling on the Many-armed, that the Gujarati kings of Java erect monasteries and patronise sculpture in which Prajnaparamita is the consort of the Adi-Buddha. This primity of Magadha is, to my own mind, the only possible explanation of the Indian historical development as a whole. In that development, Gandhara, and the relations of the art of Gandhara to the art of the mother church, is only an incident. The importance of that incident, however, to the subsequent Christian art of Europe, is, I begin to suspect, supreme.

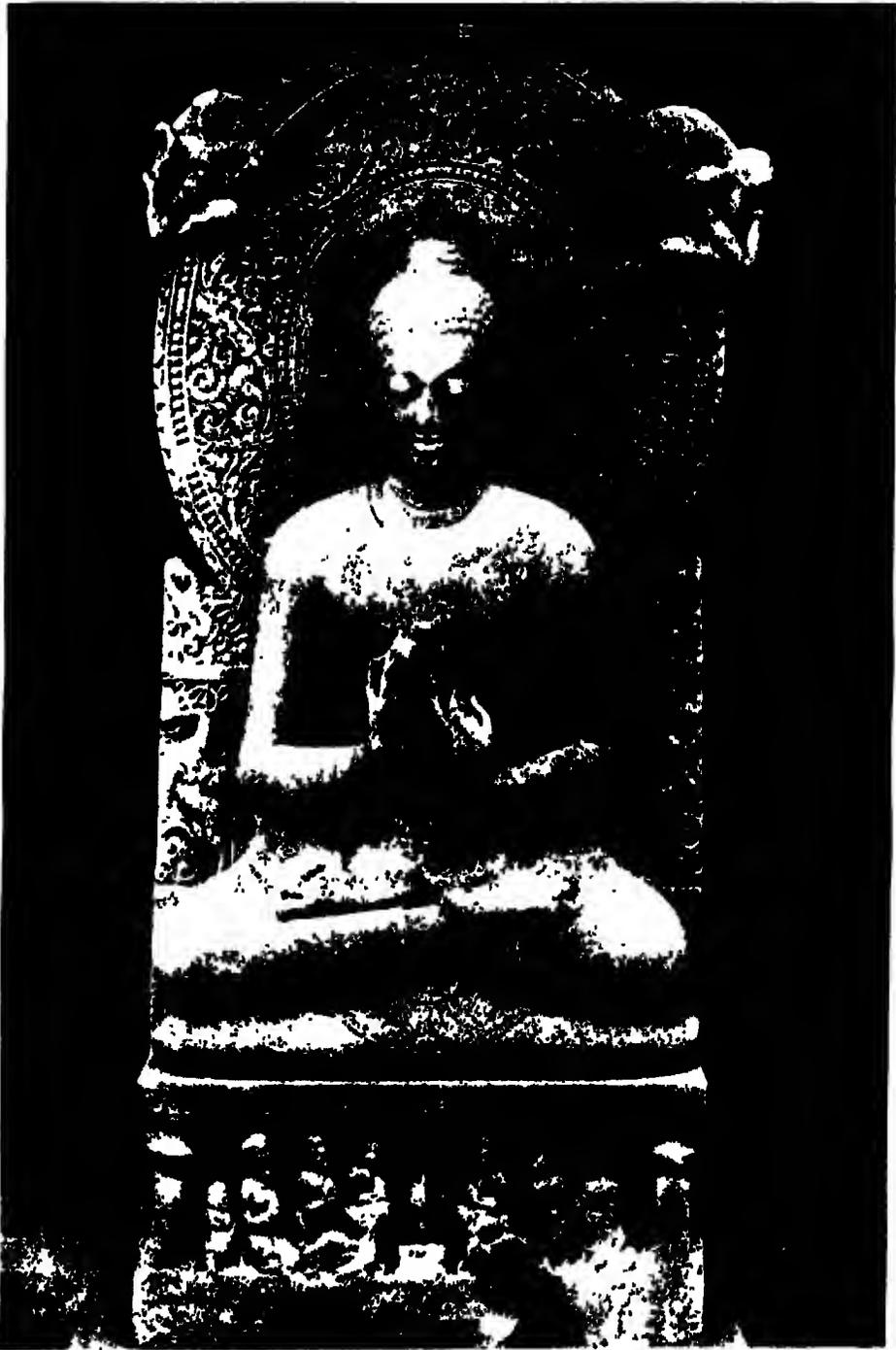
Nothing is clearer at Ajanta, than the existence of two separate and almost divergent ways of treating the Buddha. One of these we see in the Buddha of the Shrines, which represents the moment of the First Sermon at Benares. Buddha is seated on his throne, and Devas are flying into the halo behind his head. On the predella below his seat are the symbolic animals, and in their midst the Wheel of the Law. The dress of the Master is the Indian Chuddar\* of fine white muslin. And in some form or other there is always a suggestion of the lotus in the throne, although it may take the form of folds of drapery. In all these respects we have a very distinct approach to the type of Buddha which is fixed in our minds as representative of Sarnath and also of Sanchi. The face here is characterised by a much greater masculinity than that of Sarnath—whose ostentatious technical perfection shows it to be a late example of the style—but there are all the same elements in the composition as a whole: the flying Devas, the wheel, the lotus, and the halo; and the dress is of the same fine and barely visible order. In Number Fifteen, especially, a greatly heightened beauty is obtained by the fact that the halo is detached from the head of the figure, thus producing a shadow, which gives an air of life and freedom to the statue. This is only one out of many signs that the type is not rigidly fixed, but is to be seen at Ajanta as at Sanchi or Sarnath itself, playing round a general symbolistic convention. This Buddha is integral to Caves Seven, Eleven, Fifteen, Sixteen, and Seventeen, at any rate, and about the fact that these caves precede Cave Nineteen in date, there can be no doubt. A similar type of Buddha is also integral to the series of Caves numbered Six to One, but since it is probable that these were excavated after Seventeen, we dare not base upon them any argument which might depend upon their being anterior to Nineteen. Therefore, we shall here rely upon the

\* Thin cloth covering the upper part of the body

Sarnath Buddha, as found during the evolution of the type, in Caves Eleven to Seventeen only.

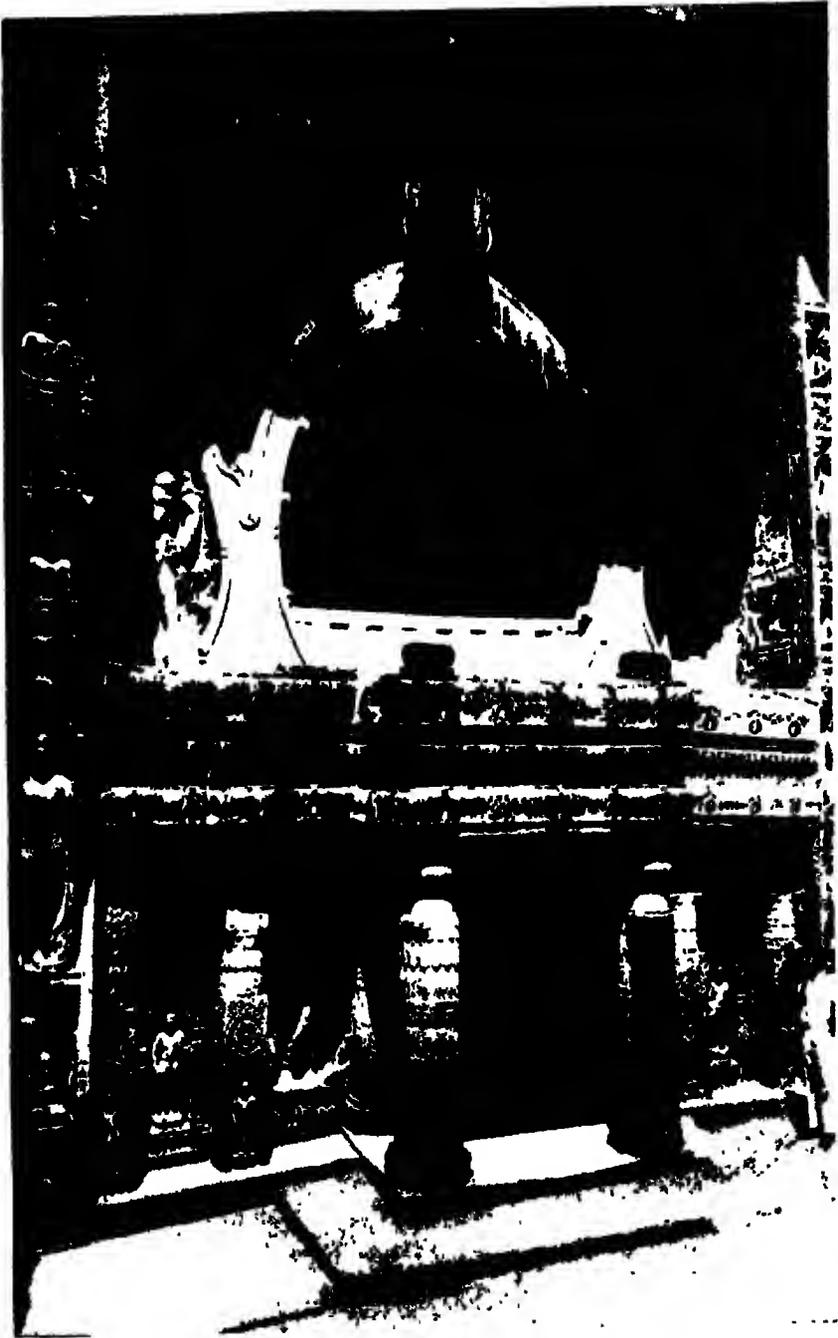
With Cave Nineteen we come suddenly upon a new type. Here the Buddha on the great Dagoba is standing in what is now commonly known as the teaching attitude ; though in truth the monks and their students who used the Viharas, probably thought of the attitude of the First Sermon as that of the teaching Buddha. Be this as it may, the standing Buddha of the Dagoba is clothed in a *choga* over and above his muslin underclothing. And this *choga* is not unlike the garment also to be found on the gold coins of Kanishka. It is in truth a yellow *robe*, and not merely the yellow *cloth*, of the Buddhist monk. It is in any case a clear and indubitable sign of the intercourse between Ajanta and the colder regions of north-western India, and marks the influence of the latter at this particular moment upon the Buddhist symbolism of Central India. This influence is borne out in many ways by subordinate evidence, into which we need not enter at present. The point now is, Had India already owed the idea of the Sarnath Buddha itself to this same stream of north-west influence on her arts?

Ordinarily speaking, we are accustomed to take for granted that an artistic style has arisen more or less in the neighbourhood of the place in which we find it. It requires no argument to convince us that Velasquez was the product of Spain or Titian of Venice. Even if we had not been informed of this we should have assumed it. To this rule, however, India has so far been an exception. The synthetic study of her past suffers from having been largely initiated by foreigners. The modern method has been forced upon the country from outside, and it is difficult for outsiders to believe that the same thing has not happened before, that it is not indeed somewhat distinctive of Indian development. The German scholar Grünwedel, writing on Buddhist art, reiterates his sincere conviction over and over again that India derives her new impulses from foreign



SARANATH BUDDHA

(Courtesy: Department of Archaeology)



AJANTA FACADE

Courtesy Department of Archaeology

sources. Fergusson, with the prepossessions of his long work for Indian architecture fresh upon him, finds more difficulty in minimising the purely native elements in Buddhist art, and though not untouched, is yet vastly less impressed by the pre-eminence of Gandhara types, when he comes upon them, than are his successors. And perhaps it is useful to know that neither of these writers is so assured of the negligibility of the indigenous contributions to Buddhistic symbolism as the latest of all, Mr. Vincent Smith, in his *Early History of India*. This is worth mentioning, because it may serve to remind us that even in a matter which has seemed so fixed and determined as this of the Gandharan influence on Buddha types, we really have to deal rather with a strong and cumulative drift of opinion or prejudice or preconception—as we may choose to call it—than with established facts. Vincent Smith is not better able to form an opinion than Fergusson. Indeed he is less fit in many ways; yet his opinion is much more fixed. What the one man threw out as a tentative suggestion the other uses as if it were an axiom. Evidently even the best of us is apt to believe as he would wish, or as he has prepared himself to think, and there is a large fraction of predisposition in every robust conviction. Therefore the formidable concensus of opinion which at present exists on the origin of Buddhist iconography, does not in the least exonerate us from examining carefully the grounds of that opinion. On the contrary, it rather challenges us to do so. Of the three famous names cited, it is precisely that of the man who knew his India best which is also that of him who attaches least importance to foreign influences in Buddhist art. And it is the man who knows least of Indian art at first hand, and is presumably most influenced by popular opinion, who delivers it over most cheerfully to a foreign origin and the assumption of native inadequacy and incompetence.

There are two different theories about foreign influence on the Indian art of the Buddhist period. One is that

from the beginning India had owed almost everything artistic to external forces. The Ashokan pillars were Persepolitan, the winged animals were Assyrian, the very lotuses and plant-forms were West-Asian. The school which thus almost holds that India has no originality in matters of art, leans its own weight for the sources of her Buddhistic inspiration on the existence in Bactria, ever since the time of Alexander, of Greek artisan colonies. From these descendants of Greek settlers sprang the art of India. And what was not communicated thus had been the gift of Persia to the East. These two sources being postulated, we may accept the whole story of India's greatness in matters artistic without doubt and without distress.

The other theory bears more especially and definitely on the evolution of the statue of Buddha as a sacred image. This, it is held, was not an Indian invention. The idea was first conceived in the country of Gandhara, the contact-point between India and the West. Here, between the beginning of the Christian era and the year A.D. 540, when they were broken up by the tyrant Mihirakula, there was a very rich development of Buddhism in the form of Stupas and monasteries. And the argument of Grünwedel may be accepted with regard to the number of Euro-classical elements which the art of this Buddhistic development displayed. There is to this day a highly artistic population established in the region in question, including as that does Kashmir and the North Punjab, and almost touching Tibet, and on the other side of Afghanistan and Persia. The fertility of the races who meet at this point, in decorative arts and forms of all kinds, need not be disputed. Nor would they ever be slow to absorb new elements that might present themselves in unusual abundance at some well-marked political period. The fact that this would surely happen is only part of their extraordinary artistic ability. The conversion of the country of Kashmir to Buddhism would follow naturally on Buddhistic activity in Gandhara, and this was strong between the first century of

the Christian era and A.D. 540, even persisted with modified energy for a couple of centuries longer, as we can gather through Hiouen Tsang. We may also accept without cavil the statement that ever since the raid of Alexander there had been an east-ward flowing traffic along the ancient trade-routes that connected India with the West. We cannot admit that Alexander created these routes. That had been done silently through the ages that preceded him by the footsteps of merchants and pilgrims, of traders and scholars and even monks. The fame of Indian philosophy in the West had preceded Alexander. Indian thinkers had long gone, however few and far between, in the wake of Indian merchants. But it is possibly true that before the raid there had been very little compensating back-flow into India. The great geographical unity and distinctness of this country must be held, if so, to account for the phenomenon. India was the terminus of at least one line of international travel in an eastern direction. Undoubtedly the overland route of those days was still more vigorously followed up under the Roman Empire. It was to India with her advanced civilisation that the Roman Empire went for its luxuries, and Pliny laments the drain of imperial gold for the silks and ivory and gems of the East. The finding of many obviously Greek relics, such as a Silenus, and Heracles with the Nemean lion, at Mathura, would seem to indicate that the older trade-routes had come in by sea, and ended at that city, in the interior of the country, on the river Jamuna. But the roads that ended in Gandhara, and brought the influences of classical Europe to bear on Buddhism there, were certainly those which connected it with the old Byzantium and with Rome. Greek art may have spoken at Mathura, but certainly nothing better than the Graeco-Roman ever made itself felt in the north-west. All this represents facts which will be acknowledged. The argument that the artistic capacities of the Gandharan region in the time of the Roman Empire were the result of a certain ethnic strain, due to

Alexander and the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom which succeeded him, is not of a character to be taken very seriously. Garrisons of occupation are not usually accompanied by the representative genius of their home-countries in such force and numbers as to act with this spiritual intensity on strange populations, partly through personal contacts and partly through mixing of blood! We may compare the assumed achievement with what has been accomplished by modern peoples, under similar circumstances and with vastly superior advantages, if we wish to bring the proposition to its own *reductio ad absurdum*. But in fact it need not be approached so gravely.

The best answer to the suggestion lies in the extraordinary difference between the two forms of art. The art of the Greek world was concerned almost entirely with the human form. The horse, indeed, with the deer, the eagle, and the palm-tree, are not altogether unknown to it. But it is remarkable for the absence of any strong feeling for vegetative beauty, or for the animal world as a whole. Now it is precisely in these two elements that the populations of the Gandharan country were and are to this day strongest. Severe chastity and restraint of the decorative instinct is the mark of Greece. Exuberance is the characteristic, on the other hand, of Oriental art. It revels in invention. Its fertility of flower and foliage is unbounded. Being of the nature of high art, it knows indeed how to submit itself to curbing forces. The highest achievement of the Eastern arts of decoration, whether Chinese or Persian, Tibetan or Kashmirian, or Indian proper, often seems to lie in the supreme temperance and distinction with which they are used. But the power of hydra-headed productivity is there. In Greece and Rome it is altogether lacking. Thus to say that the art of Gandhara was due to elements in the population which were of Hellenic descent is absurd. There was never in it the slightest sign of any wedding of East and West in a single blended product, such as this theory presupposes. We can always

pick out the elements in its compositions that are unassimilated of the West, as well as those that are unassimilated of the East, and those, thirdly, that are purely local and more or less neutral.

The same is true of the Persepolitan pillars and winged animals of the older Mauryan art. Of internationalism these are eloquent, but by no means of intellectual imitation. India, as the producer of so many of the rare and valuable commodities of the world, was the most international of early countries. The positions of her great merchants, such as was that one who excavated the Chaitya at Karle, may well have transcended those of kings. Amongst the most important of the world's highways were those that joined Babylon and Nineveh to the Deccan and to Pataliputra, or Egypt and Arabia to Ceylon and China. It shows the dignity and international standing of India that she should have used freely the best of the age, undeterred by any premature or artificial sense of national boundaries. If we take one group of winged animals quoted by Grünwedel from Sanchi, there is even a kind of accuracy of scholarship in the way these are given foreign men, as riders, in their own dress and with their heraldic devices, so to speak, of the time. Those who incline to think that because she used Persepolitan pillars, therefore she derived her civilisation from West Asia, have to ignore the whole matrix of the original and individual in which such elements inhere. The pillars of the Chaitya at Karle may go by the name of Persepolitan, but the idea of the Chaitya-hall itself, for which they are utilised, has never been supposed to be anything but Indian. The pillar with a group of animals on the top of it is not, in truth, adapted to the structural uses that it serves at Karle. It is the creation of Asia at an age when pillars were conceived as standing free, to act as landmarks, as vehicles of publication, as memorials of victory, and possibly even as lamp-standards. But this use was common to all Asia, including India, and though the Achamenides adorn Persepolis with

it in the sixth century before Christ, and Ashoka uses it at Sarnath or at Sanchi in the third, we must remember that the latter is not deliberately copying monuments from a distant site, but is translating into stone a form probably familiar to his people and his age in wood. In the simple Chaityas Nine and Ten, at Ajanta—excavated during the same period as Karle, but by simple monks intent upon their use, instead of by a great merchant-prince, with his ecclesiastical ostentation—the columns from floor to roof are of unbroken plainness. The result may lose in vividness and splendour, but it certainly gains in solemnity and appropriateness. And the extremes of both these purposes, we must remember, are of the Indian genius.

Other things being equal, it is to be expected that symbols will emanate from the same sources as ideals. For an instance of this we may look at the European worship of the Madonna. Here it is those churches that create and preach the ideal which are also responsible for the symbolism under which it is conveyed. It would seem indeed as if it were only as the vehicle of the ideal that the symbol could possibly be invented or disseminated. Now if we ask what was the radiating centre for the thought and aspiration of Buddhism, the answer comes back without hesitation or dispute—Magadha. The Holy Land of Buddhism was the stretch of country between Banaras and Pataliputra. Here the First Council had been held in the year after Buddha's death, at Rajgir. Here at Pataliputra, under Ashoka, was held the great Second Council about the year 242 B.C. It is quite evident that the lead so well taken by Magadha, in recognising the importance of Buddhism during the lifetime of its founder, had been signally maintained, and for the Council of Kanishka to assert canonical rank, it must have been attended by numerous and authoritative representatives from the monasteries of Magadha, notably that of Nalanda, whose supremacy as the seat of exposition and elucidation was still acknowledged in the time of Hiouen Tsang in the middle

of the seventh century of the Christian era. Unless then there should be unimpugnable evidence to the contrary, the rule being that ideals create symbolisms as their vehicle, and the source of Buddhist thought having always been Magadha, we should expect that that country would also be the creative centre in matters of Buddhist art, and that it would be responsible amongst other things for the devising and fixing of the image of Buddha. That this was the common belief on the matter in the seventh century, moreover, appears highly probable from the life of Hiouen Tsang, whose biographer and disciple Hwui Li, represents him as bearing back to China, and passing through the country of Takkha or Gandhara on the way, a precious load of books and images, and amongst these first, and evidently most sacred and important, that of Buddha preaching his First Sermon at Banaras, fully described. From this it is clear that in China, in the seventh century at all events, India was regarded as the source of authentic images as well as of authoritative texts and their interpretations. To India, and more especially to Magadha, the East turned again and again to refresh and deepen her own inspiration. For final pronouncements men did not look to the schools of the frontier countries and daughter churches.

Now there are to be found in Bihar, the ancient Magadha, to this day, the vestiges of a long history of Buddhist sculpture in many phases and developments. No one has ever denied to India the pre-Buddhistic existence of secular sculpture of the human form. In front of the Chaitya at Karle (date 129 B.C.) we find integral figures of men and women which may be portraits of kings and queens, or of donors and their wives. In the rail of Bharhut we find figures in the round, and abundance of animal representation. And the whole range of Naga-types is common from the earliest times.

No one has ever pretended that these sculptures were foreign in origin. In fact competent critics are wont to

turn to them for the exemplification of the somewhat vague entity that may be called the indigenous impulse in Indian art. In the low carvings in relief, therefore, on the Ashokan rail at Bodh-Gaya, we are not called upon to suspect a foreign origin. We may take these frankly as we find them, as examples of the Indian art of the year 250 B.C. or thereabouts. From this point on we watch the development of Buddhistic art in Bihar. Here we have the enclosure built about the sacred tree. Again we have a footprint, as at Gaya itself, where that now worshipped as the Vishnupada was almost certainly originally a Buddhistic symbol. Bihar was at one time full of Stupas, but the very fact that these have been defaced and treated as mounds or hills is testimony to the fact that they were probably as plain in the time of Ashoka as that now at Sarnath or at Sanchi. It is true enough that at its birth Buddhism found all holiness in that plain dome-shaped cairn of earth and bricks, which sometimes did as at Rajgir, and sometimes did not, as at Sanchi, conceal a deposit of relics. Amongst the small votive Stupas which it became the fashion for pilgrims and visitors to leave at sacred shrines, there are many of this phase of development.

It was essential that they should have five parts, clearly distinguishable, and a system of philosophy grew up which connected these with the five elements—earth, air, fire, water, and ether.

It must have been soon after Ashoka that attempts were made to evolve a portrait-statue of Buddha. In accordance with the Indian character as well as with the severe truthfulness of early Hinayana doctrines, the first efforts in this direction would almost certainly be intensely realistic. They would be filled with a striving after literal fact. In faraway Sanchi, even as late as 150 B.C., we have the bas-reliefs on the great gateways representing anything and everything Buddhistic that could be worshipped save and except Buddha himself. But this is only what we might expect, if, as we have supposed, precedence in this

matter really belonged to Magadha. At some later date we find at Kanheri illustrations of the blending of the old school of art to which Sanchi belonged—in which a story was told, in picture form—and this new idea of the supernatural personage appearing as heroic amongst even the holiest of mortal men. This particular panel illustrates the Jataka birthstories, which must have been the absorbing literature and romance of early Buddhism, and were in themselves only a hint of the place which the personality of its founder must sooner or later assume in the religion. This figure of a former Buddha is not naked, as might be supposed. It is merely clothed in muslin so fine as to be almost invisible. Grünwedel gives a reproduction of a clay seal from Bodh-Gaya, in which we have another specimen of this same period in the idealisation of the Buddha. The little turret-like patterns which accompany it are Stupas. But the Buddha himself is imaged in front of a temple-Stupa.

To this period probably belongs the story that when Ajatashatru wished for a portrait of the Teacher, he allowed his shadow to fall on a piece of cloth, and then the outline was filled in with colour. Grünwedel suggests that this story shows a desire to claim canonical authority for the portrait-statue. Whether this be so or not, it certainly does indicate incidentally that the Buddhist world itself ascribed the origin of the Master's image to Magadha. The supreme example of this school of sculpture is undoubtedly the Great Buddha of Nalanda, which is to this day the pride of the country-folk at Baragaon, who call it Mahadeva. To the same school belongs also the Buddha of the temple at Bodh-Gaya. And we cannot do better than take as an example of the type the Buddha from Anuradhapuram in Ceylon.

These are true statues, not mere bas-reliefs. And perhaps the great proof of their early occurrence in the Buddhist series lies precisely here, that they were found in Ceylon, where the enthusiasm of Indian intercourse was a

marked feature of the age immediately succeeding Ashoka, and where the Hinayana theology would not be friendly to statuary like the images characteristic of a rich mythology.

The clay seal is of extraordinary interest. The Buddha himself appears to be seated in something like the temple of Bodh-Gaya, with branches of the sacred tree appearing behind and above. The plain Stupas all round show the contemporary development of that symbol. Now there was a moment when, by the simultaneous modification of all its five parts, the Stupa was transformed into something very like what we now recognise as a temple. Specimens of this phase abound in the neighbourhood of Nalanda, and indeed some hand has gathered a quantity of representative examples together and placed them on the bathing ghat at Baragaon. Except in the instances of this clay seal figured by Grünwedel and a Stupa which is to be seen in the Sone Bhandar Cave at Rajgir, however, I do not remember ever to have seen this phase of the Stupa associated with an image. The panelled example at Rajgir would seem to be old because of the stiffness with which the standing Buddha is portrayed. He stands with feet apart, as in the drawings of children. But never have I seen a work of art which was equal to this in the depth and strength of the personal conviction which it found means to convey. The Buddha is clad in the usual invisible clothing of the period. He is stiffly and awkwardly posed, and conveys the idea of gigantic size. Outside the sunken panel on which he is carved, above him and to right and left, appear branches of trees of recognisable species, and each such branch half conceals a hand with pointing finger. The whole effect is extraordinary. The words "This is the man!" are almost to be heard. This vividness of feeling combined with the stiffness of the work would incline one to place the statue early, and with this the evidence of the clay seal now before us is in agreement. But if we are to assign an early date to sculpture of this

description, we must completely abandon the notion of pre-Buddhistic Indian art as semi-barbarous and crude. This degree of expressive power and this irresistible impulse towards the rapid modification of fixed symbols argues a long familiarity with the tools and the method of plastic enunciation. The Hinayana doctrine would incline the Stupa-maker at first to its aniconic development, but the innate genius of the Indian race for man-worship and its fundamental fearlessness of symbolism would triumph in the end over all the artificial barriers of theology, and the aniconic Stupa would inevitably receive its icon. Of this moment our clay seal is a memorial.

The next step was to take the unmodified Stupa, and carve on it four small Buddhas, one on each of its sides. We can well understand the impulse that led to this. The Dagoba was a geographical point, from which Buddha himself shone forth to north, south, east, and west upon the world. It is the same idea which in a later age led to the colossal images of the Roshana Buddha in Japan. The very thought of the Master, with his spiritual empire in the foreign missions, brought up a geographical conception. And this geographical idea it is that finds expression in those small and simple Stupas, carved each with the four Buddhas, which one could often hold on the palm of one hand. In imitation of these, but much later, four Buddhas were placed round the great Stupa at Sanchi.

These points established, the course of history is clear enough. He who would understand the development of Buddhist art has only to follow the development of the Stupa. This is as fixed in its succession of forms as a chronological scale. At first it is plain, as at Sanchi. Then it is ornamented with the Ashokan rail itself, which by this time shares the general sanctity of association, as at Karle, Bhaja, Kanheri, and Ajanta, Caves Nine and Ten. Then it is elongated, and forms what we regard as a temple. Then the small Stupa takes to itself the four Buddhas. Gradually these undergo changes. The line of development hesitates

for awhile, and then branches off in a new direction. The four figures become four heads, but whether of Brahma or the Mother of the Universe is not yet determined. Gradually the name of the Great God is triumphant, the pillar-like top in the middle of the four heads is more and more emphasised, and along this line of development the Stupa is finally converted into the Shiva emblem of Hinduism. One of the worship-Mantras to this day ascribes to Shiva the possession of five faces. That is to say, his emblem is still to the eye of faith a domeshaped projection in the midst of four heads.

At that moment when the four seated Buddhas were becoming the four heads, the image of Buddha was being detached from the Stupa altogether, and entering on a new phase of development as an icon or symbol of the highest sanctity. It was because this was happening that the Stupa itself had been enabled to undergo the changes necessary to convert it into the Shiva. It is now, then, that we may place the evolution of the image of the First Sermon at Benares. This was not so fixed as is commonly supposed. In the caves of the second period at Ajanta—Seven, Eleven, Fifteen, Sixteen, and Seventeen—we may judge for ourselves of the rigour or latitude of the convention. No two of these are exactly alike. Seven is one of the earliest, because the ambulatory which was essential to the Chaitya-Dagoba is here found, at immense cost of labour, to have been provided for the image in the shrine also, showing that the excavators were as yet inexperienced in the different uses of the two. The shrine, or Gandhakuti, was not yet stereotyped into a mere hall of perfumes, or incense, as Hiouen Tsang calls it. This processional use of the shrine explains the elaborate carving of the side-walls here, to be described later. In the image which is still more or less intact at Sarnath itself, we find an effeminacy of treatment which is very startling. The predella too is unexpected, holding worshipping figures turning the wheel of the law, instead of the peaceful animals lying quietly side

by side in that wondrous eventide. Grünwedel points out that the use of the halo speaks of the existence of an old school of art in the country. So also do the flying Devas and the wheel and the symbolic animals. The artist was speaking a language already understood by the people. The first images had arisen out of the desire to express to foreign peoples something of the ideal, in the form of the beloved personality. This particular image now became pre-eminent as a mark of the fact that Viharas were becoming colleges. Buddhism was taking upon itself the task of national education and scholarship.

But the original idea, in its original home, had not ceased to develop. There was always the irresistible instinct to express the growing and changing forms of the national faith in plastic concreteness. The evolution of Shiva and Shaivism being first to branch off from the original Hinayana stream, early hardened down, as far as Bihar was concerned, into the use of an emblem as its supreme expression, instead of an image. It gave rise to a certain amount of descriptive sculpture, as in the case of Kartikeya, for instance, but it did not share to the full in the later artistic and sculptural impulse. Still, there remained unregimented the old idea of the Mother or Adi-shakti, and sculptural allusions to this begin to be frequent in the later phases of Buddhist art, along with that which supersedes everything under the Gupta emperors as the religion of the state. Here we come upon a wholly new symbolism, that of Narayana or Vishnu, the Great God of those who worship Krishna. Artistically speaking, indeed, on the west side of India, it took centuries to exhaust the sculptural impetus associated with Shiva, and much history is written in the fact. He rose upon the horizon as the third member of a trinity—reflecting the Buddhist trinity, of Buddha, Dharma, Sangha—a conception which is recorded in the large cave at Elephanta. At Ellora and at Elephanta he is almost passionately revered, so absorbing is his hold on the artistic imagination, and such

is the wealth of illustration that they lavish on him. In Magadha, however, creative art is playing with two different ideas at this time. They are the Mother—later to become the occasion of an alliance between Brahmanistic and Mongolian ideas—and Vishnu or Narayana. At Ayodhya, indeed, the second member of the Trinity had already given rise to a humanised reflection of Buddha in the notion of a human incarnation, which had been preached as a gospel in the Ramayana. The poet Kalidasa had written the romance of both branches of Hinduism in his *Kumara-Sambhava* and *Raghuvamsha*. And throughout all the works of this period, the attempt is constantly made to prove the identity of Rama with Shiva. This is satisfactory evidence that the worship of Shiva was elaborated as a system earlier than that of Vishnu or his incarnations. It also shows the intense grasp which the Indian philosophy of unity had gained over the national mind. The Stupa continued even now to reflect the changing phases of thought. Hence it is doubtless to this time that we may ascribe those Shiva-lingas covered with the feet of the Lord that are to be met with occasionally in Rajgir.

After Shiva, however, the attention of sculptors in Magadha was more and more concentrated on the image of Narayana. It is probably an error to think of this as rigidly fixed in form. An unyielding convention is always the end of an evolution, never the beginning. And like Shiva in the west, so also Narayana in Magadha is connected with Buddha by a long series of gradual modifications. Sometimes we can detect Chinese influence in a particular statue. With the rise of the Guptas and the necessity of a gold coinage, it would seem as if Chinese minters had been employed, just as in his time and capital Kanishka had undoubtedly employed Grecks, for the same purpose. There is no difficulty in imagining that such Chinese workmen might sometimes be employed on a statue. The fact that the form itself however was not of

their initiating is best proved by the gradual transitions which connect it with the image of Buddha. So much has been said, so lightly, about the impossibility of Indian inventiveness, that it is necessary to guard from time to time against petty misconception. Another point of the same kind arises with regard to Hinduism itself. It may be well to say that Buddhism did not originate the ideas which in their totality make up Hinduism. Indeed Buddhism was itself the result of those ideas. But by its immense force of organisation, it achieved such a unification of the country and the people, that it forced upon the Brahmins the *organisation* of Hinduism.

The conception of Narayana was taken up by the Guptas to be made into the basis of a national faith. This took shape as Krishna, and its *epos* was written in the Mahabharata. But the image associated with it was still that of Narayana. This was the form that was carried to the south by the missionary-travellers who were the outcome of the educational and propagandist zeal of the Guptas, and there it is worshipped to this day. It was an image of this type that was placed by Skanda Gupta on the top of the Bhitari-Lat when he erected it in A.D. 455 for the purpose of recording on his father's Shraddha-pillar his own victory over the Huns.

There is thus a continuous history of sculpture in Bihar, beginning with the earliest period of Buddhism, and passing gradually, and by easily distinguished phases, into various forms of modern Hinduism. In this continuous development we can distinguish local schools, and this is the best answer to those who would talk of foreign influence.

The comparatively coarse, artisan-like work of Bodh-Gaya can never be mistaken for the soft, exquisitely curved and moulded forms of Baragaon, the ancient Nalanda. The Hindu carvings of Rajgir, again, are distinct from both. It is almost impossible therefore to speak of a single Magadhan school of sculpture. Much of the Rajgir work

is Shaivite in subject, being earlier than the Narayana types of Baragaon.

Early Buddhism has thus had two products: the portrait-statue and the iconic Stupa. The Stupa in its turn has given birth to the Shiva emblem and to the image proper. The image has developed itself as Buddha, and also borne as an offshoot the image of Narayana. But with this extraordinary energy of modification, only to be credited when we remember the wonderful theological and philosophical fertility of the Indian mind, it is not to be supposed that the Stupa as such had ceased to develop. There was at least one well-marked phase before it yet. The world, for the monk, was peopled with meditating figures. The church was ideally a great host who had attained through the Master's might. The lotus on which he sat enthroned had many branches. This thought also found expression in the Stupa. The same idea is laboriously sculptured on the walls of the shrine in Ajanta Seven. And on reaching more distant parts of the order, no doubt it was this development that gave rise to the multiplication of small meditating figures and their being placed even on straight lines, or amongst leafage, wherever the architecture gave the slightest opportunity or excuse.

All this goes to show that Magadha remained (as she began), throughout the Buddhist age the source and creative centre, alike for theology and for the system of symbolism which was instrumental in carrying that theology far and wide. Waddell some years ago communicated a paper to the Royal Asiatic Society in which he urged that the original types of the Mahayanist images of Tibet must be sought for in Magadha. He was undoubtedly right, and the conclusion is forced upon us that the doctrine of the Bodhisattvas must have been born in Magadha, and from there have been poured out upon the Council of Kanishka, at Taxila, or Jalandhara (Jullundur), or Kandahar. The Kanishkan Council thus would only give effect to the opinions and speculations that had long been gathering in

the eastern centre. The doctrine of the Bodhi-sattvas came full blown to Jalandhara and there gathered the force that carried it over the Chinese Empire. Indeed the very fact that the commentaries of this Council were written down in Sanskrit is strong presumptive evidence for the vitality and force of the eastern elements at the Council, an added witness to the prestige which their presence conferred upon it. This Council is said to have sat some months, and we are expressly told that its work lay in reconciling and giving the stamp of orthodoxy to all the eighteen schools of Buddhism which by that time had come into existence. That is to say, it did not profess to give currency to new doctrines. It merely conferred the seal of its authority on phases of the faith which would otherwise have tended to be mutually exclusive. This in itself is evidence of the way in which its members were saturated with the characteristic eastern idea of Vedantic toleration. And Buddhism stands in this Council alone in religious history as an example of the union of the powers of organisation and discretion with those of theological fervour and devotional conviction in the highest degree. Evidently we have here a great body of monk-pundits, imported for the summer into Gandhara. Probably many of them never returned to their mother-communities, but remained, to form the basis of that great monastic development which Gandhara was afterwards to see.

The priority of Magadha requires little further argument. At the time of the Council the synthesis of the Mahayana was already more or less complete. And in accordance with this is the fact that on the recently-discovered relic casket of Kanishka are three figures—Buddha and two Bodhisattvas. In harmony with this is the further fact that the few inscriptions hitherto discovered in the Gandhara country are all dated between A.D. 57 and 328. We can see that after the evolution of the ornate and over-multiplied style of Gandhara, Buddhism could not have had the energy to begin over again in India to build up a

new art with its slow and sincere history of a growing symbolism. As a matter of fact, Gandhara was in the full tide of her artistic success in the fourth and early fifth century, when Magadha had already reached the stage of pre-occupation with images of Narayana.

## VI

Thus a definite theory has been enunciated of the chronological succession of religious ideas in Indian sculpture. According to this theory, Magadha was the source and centre of the Indian unity, both philosophically and artistically. This province was in fact, like the heart of an organism, whose systole and diastole are felt to its remotest bounds with a certain rhythmic regularity of pulsation, as tides of thought and inspiration. All such will not be felt equally in all directions. In this case, the work in Ceylon was the result of an early impulse, Gandhara much later, and possibly we should find, if this were the place to follow up the question, that Tibet was evangelised as the fruit of a still later pulsation of the central energy. This being so, the fact would stand proved that Gandhara was a disciple and not a Guru in the matter of religious symbolism. The question is: Can this relationship be demonstrated, and how?

A crucial test would be afforded if we could find anything in the art of Gandhara itself which might show it to be a derived style. Creative works, like myths, almost always include some unconscious sign-manual of their origin and relations. What they deliberately state may be untrue, or, as in the present case perhaps, may be misunderstood. But what they mention is usually eloquent to patient eyes, of the actual fact. It has already been pointed out by Mr. E. B. Havell, in his *Indian Sculpture and Painting*, that even the Buddha-types, the serious affirmations of Gandharan art, could not possibly be mistaken for originals. And if anyone will take the trouble to go

into the hall of the Calcutta Museum and look for himself, it is difficult to see how this argument can be answered. Who that has steeped himself in the Eastern conception of the Buddha—unbroken calm, immeasurable detachment, and vastness as of eternity—can take the smart, military-looking young men there displayed, with their moustaches carefully trimmed to the utmost point of nicety, and their perfect actuality and worldliness of expression, as satisfying presentments? In very sooth do these Gandharan Buddhas, as Mr. Havell says, bear their derivative character plainly stamped upon their faces.

But it may be held that this is the end of the argument, not the beginning. There may be many incapable of appraising an expression, who will want more elementary and incontrovertible grounds of judgment, and for these we have plenty of evidence.

The first discovery of the Gandharan monasteries, with their treasures of sculpture, in 1848 and 1852, seemed to the minds of European scholars, naturally enough, an event of the greatest artistic and historic importance; and Fergusson has left on record, in his invaluable book, an account of that impression, and also of its grounds, in a form which will never be repeated. Unfortunately the finds were very carelessly and incompetently dealt with, and their mutual relations and story thus rendered irrecoverable. Out of the eight or ten sites which have been examined, however, it is possible to say that Jamalgarhi and Takht-i-Bahi are probably the most modern, while Shah-Dheri was very likely the most ancient. Judging by the plans and description which Fergusson gives, indeed, of this last-named monastery, it would seem to have belonged to the same age and phase of Buddhism as the old disused Cave Number One at Elephanta—a long verandah-like Chaitya cave which evidently held a circular Dagoba on a square altar. The sculptures of the later monasteries, according to Fergusson, as well as the plans of those monasteries appear to be characterised by excessive

duplication. The architecture associated with them seems to have been extra-ordinarily mixed and unrestrained in character. Amongst the leafage of pillar-capitals occur hundreds of little Buddhas. But it would have been obvious that these were late examples, even if Fergusson had not already announced that opinion. The main chamber of each monastery seems to have been a hall or court, either square or circular, in the middle of which stood an altar surmounted by a Dagoba. Round this the walls were broken up into quantities of small niches or chapels, each one containing its image, and the whole decorated to excess. Regarding this as representing theoretically the Vihara surrounding a Dagoba of earlier days, Fergusson is very properly struck with astonishment by the phenomenon. In no Buddhist monument in India of which he knows, he says, have the monks ever been thrust out of the cells to make way for images. If he had not been told what the plans were and where they came from, he would unhesitatingly have pronounced them to be from Jain monasteries of the ninth and tenth centuries. From architectural considerations he thinks that the classical influences seen here must have culminated at and after the time of Constantine, that is from A.D. 306 onwards, and that they speak even more loudly of Byzantium than of Rome. He has difficulty in understanding how Byzantium should make itself so strongly felt in a remote province, without leaving any trace on the arts of intermediate kingdoms, such as the Sassanian empire. But we have already seen that this is no real difficulty, since it is precisely at their terminal points that those influences act, which pour along the world's great trade-routes. The Indian man of genius in modern times makes his personality felt in London, and not in France, though he landed at Marseilles.

For ourselves, however, while we grant the mixture of elements in Gandhara, the question arises whether the latter did not influence Byzantium quite as much as the Western capital influenced it. According to the data thus pro-

pounded, we may expect to find amongst these Gandharan sculptures a vast mixture of decorative elements, all subordinated to the main intention of setting forth in forms of eternal beauty and lucidity the personality of Buddha, it being understood that the form of the Buddha himself is taken more or less unchanged from the artistic traditions of Magadha. It may be well to take as our first point for examination the Gandharan use of the Ashokan rail. We are familiar with the sanctity of this rail as a piece of symbolism in the early ages of Buddhism. At Sanchi—undoubtedly a very close spiritual province of Magadha, and intimately knit to Sarnath in particular—we find it used not only pictorially, but also to bound and divide spaces. As we have seen, the gradual forgetting of the meaning of architectural features like the Ashokan rail and the horse-shoe ornament affords a very good scale of chronology by which to date Indian monuments. Nowhere have we a better instance of this than in the Gandharan use of the rail. In the relief from Muhammad Nari we have several stages in its gradual forgetting, ending with its becoming a mere chequer, as at the top of the lower panel. This illustration is extraordinarily valuable for us, moreover, for the way in which the figure of the Buddha is violently inserted amongst strikingly incongruous surroundings. We can almost see the two opposing traditions, by the discord between him with his clothes of the eastern provinces and attitude which forbids activity, and his environment. This Buddha is not, however, a very successful example of the tradition out of which he comes. He has a singularly uneasy and intruded look on the height where he is seen uncomfortably perched.

A second feature that will strike the observant in this picture is the curious use of the lotus-throne. It looks as if the sculptor had been told to seat his subject on a lotus, but had had a very vague idea of how this should be done. We can almost hear those verbal instructions which he has tried to carry out. In the Buddha from Loriyan Tangai is

another instance of a similar difficulty. The sculptor in this second fragment, rightly feeling that the seat, as he understood the order, could not possibly support the hero, has adopted the ingenious device of introducing two worshipping figures to support the knees! Still more noticeable, however, are the two feet, or petals reversed, which he has adopted to make of the lotus-throne a lotus-bearing tripod. With this we may compare the genuine Indian treatment of a lotus-throne from Nepal. At the same time, the early age of the lotus-petal ornament is seen on an Ashokan doorway in the Vihara at Sanchi, the only doorway that has escaped improvement at a later age. Another curious example of the attempt to render symbolistic scenes, according to a verbal or literary description of them, is seen in the picture representing the familiar First Sermon at Benares. There is undoubted power of composition here. To the untrained European eye these beauties may make it more appealing than the old Sarnath images of the shrine type at Ajanta. Still, the fact remains of an obvious effort to render to order an idea and a convention only half understood. And the place occupied by the Dharma-chakra is like a signature appended to the confession of this struggle. It will be noted too, that this Dharma-chakra is wrong. The Trishula should have pointed away from the Chakra. Other curious and interesting examples of the same kind may be seen in the Museum.

Grünwedel has drawn attention to the question of clothing, but apparently without understanding the full significance of the facts. It will be noticed throughout these illustrations that the artists tend to clothe Buddha in the dress that would be appropriate in a cold climate. Our illustration of the relief found at Muhammad Nari is in this respect specially valuable. It is probably early Gandharan, since the attempt to render the clothes of Buddha and the ornaments of the women correctly is very evident, and, it may be added, extremely unsuccessful. It would appear as if this relief had been commissioned by

some monk who was a native of Magadha. But no Magadhan workman would have draped the muslin in such a fashion at the knees or on the arm. Yet the correct intention is manifest from the bare right shoulder. Afterwards Gandharan artists solved this problem by evolving a style of costume of their own for the sacred figures. As this was their own, they were much happier in rendering it. But another point that jars on the Indian eye is the allusion here made to women's jewellery. The matter has been mentioned as needing particular care—that we can see. But the results are forced and inappropriate, and serve only to emphasise their own failure. Instances of the particular facts abound. It is unnecessary to enter further into detail.

Throughout these illustrations what may be called the architectural ornament is very noticeable. It has no connection whatever with what we are accustomed to think of as characteristically Buddhist. The spacings are constantly made with the stem of the date-palm, and ends and borders are painfully modish and secular. Such a want of ecclesiastical feeling, in sculpture that aims at a devotional use, can probably not be paralleled at any other age or place. The Corinthian finals and floral ornaments, to eyes looking for the gravity and significance of old Asiatic decoration, are very irritating. An excellent example is the Lorian Tangai Buddha. Here we have a singularly phonetic piece of statuary. The feeling it portrays is exquisite. The pious beasts with their paws crossed are not less beautiful than the peacock which stands with tail spread to proclaim to the world the glories of the dawn of the morning of Nirvana. Yet even here a jarring note is struck in the irrelevancy of the borders, like a piece of school-girl embroidery.

Gandhara did really, however, have its period of influence over the sculpture of India. But this period began when its own style had reached its zenith. Comparatively early in the sixth century, incursions of Huns

swept over the country, and, in a year to which the date of A.D. 540 has been assigned, we are expressly told of the destruction of monasteries and Stupas in an outburst of vengeful cruelty, by the tyrant Mihirakula. This destruction was not complete, for a hundred years later the pilgrim Hiouen Tsang passed through the country and found many monasteries in full vigour. Still, it cannot have failed to drive large numbers of the Gandharan monks to take refuge in the Viharas and monastic universities of India. This is the event that is marked in the Ajantan series of caves by Number Nineteen. Here on the outside we have for the first time the employment of carvings of Buddha as part of the decorations included in the original architectural scheme. It is a secularised Buddha, moreover ; a Buddha who, as already said, has been seen from a new point of view as a great historical character. He receives a banner. He is crowned by flying figures. The chequer-pattern appears here and there, in lieu of the Ashokan rail which it represents. And inside the hall we have that great multitude of Buddhas, in the triforium and on the capitals, in those richly-decorated niches, for which Fergusson's account of the Gandharan monasteries has prepared us. But these represent a more Indianised and religious type than the panels of the outside. The date and source of the new influence is still further fixed by the indubitable fact of the *choga*, or robe, worn by the Buddha on the Dagoba.

We have seen that, according to the evidence of the inscription, Cave Seventeen with its shrine, and the cistern under Eighteen, may be taken as completed about the year A.D. 520. It is my personal opinion that the right-hand series of caves from Six to One were undertaken, or at least finished, not long after this date, and distinctly before the arrival of the refugees from Gandhara. Ajanta must have been one of the most notable of Indian universities, and the influence of the north-west upon its art does not cease with Nineteen. The whole interior surface of Twenty-six

—probably undertaken by the abbot Buddha Bhadra at some date subsequent to the visit of Hiouen Tsang in the middle of the seventh century—is covered with carvings, culminating in an immense treatment of the subject so much beloved by the latest Gandharan sculptors, the Mahanirvana of Buddha. The Buddha in this carving is 23 feet long, and even the curious tripod which seems to support the beggar's bowl and crutch is reproduced. This duplication of a known subject is very eloquent.

We may conclude, then, that a vital artistic intercourse was now maintained between Gandhara and Ajanta, and in this connection the carved ornament of palm-leaves, so reminiscent of the bole of the date-palm, amongst the ornaments of the doorway on Cave Twenty-three, is of the utmost significance.

But a second catastrophe occurred in Gandhara, and the destruction of the monastic foundations in that country was complete. The wars between the Saracenic Mohammedans and the Chinese Empire culminated about the middle of the eighth century in the utter defeat and expulsion of the Eastern power (A.D. 751). The Arabs must then have swept Gandhara from end to end, and every monk who had not fled was doubtless put to the sword. India was the obvious refuge of the consequent crowd of *émigrés*, and art and education the only means open to them of repaying the hospitality of the Indian monasteries and governments. From this period must date the small panelled Buddhas which have been carved all over the older caves, not only at Ajanta, but also at Kanheri, at Karle, and doubtless elsewhere. The great durbar hall at Kanheri (Cave 10) is filled with a splendidly planned and coherent scheme of such decoration. But the artists have not always been so considerate. They have begun their carvings in the midst of older work, and side by side with it—probably wherever they were not stopped by the presence of paintings—without the slightest regard to the appropriateness of the combination. For some

years the face of the rock must have swarmed with these industrious sculptors working all at the same time. And then some other political catastrophe stopped all chisels in a moment. The cheerful hum of study and ringing of tools on the stone were suddenly silenced. The caves were swept bare alike of the monks and their students; and though not destroyed, Ajanta lay for centuries deserted, like the Gandharan monasteries before it.

But some of the Gandharan exiles had taken up the task of general education, and it is probably from the period of the Arab conquest of Gandhara in A.D. 751 that we must date the Brahmanical organisation of learning, reflecting the monastic universities of the Buddhists, in *tols* and *akharas*, together with the widespread diffusion of the Saka or Scythic era, dating from 57 B.C.—in all parts of Northern India. Thus a remote province repaid its debt to the Magadhan and Indian motherland.

When we come to consider their relative dates, the influence of Gandhara on European art through Byzantium is hardly a matter that will be seriously denied. Anyone who looks at a scene in the Lumbini Garden, which is exhibited in the Calcutta Museum, not to mention many of the illustrations in Grünwedel's book, must acknowledge the debt owed to Gandhara by Christian art from the end of the fourth century and onwards. To some of us in Europe to this day, just as the Gregorian is the most devotional of all music, so even the art of Catholicism only seems fully religious in proportion as it returns upon the stiffness and gravity of that early Byzantine which is so obviously the product of the union of Eastern and Western elements in Gandhara.

For the art of Gandhara made a wonderful attempt at blending the epic feeling of European classical art with Eastern wealth of decoration. Such minglings can never be attempted artificially or of set purpose. They cannot be reached because we should like to reach them. They have to be unconscious, organic, a matter of growth round some

idea in which the whole heart is engaged. Aristotle lamented the fall of Greek art from *epos* to *pathos*, from heroic dignity to human emotion. But even *pathos* could be made heroic, as the East well knew, by consecration to an ideal; and that ideal the Gandharan artists found in Buddha. There Eastern and Western alike fell under the Eastern spell. The thought of a human being who was at the same time incarnate Godhead fascinated them. Influenced by the tendency of classical Europe to exalt the human and virile side of every concept, they busied themselves in portraying the companions and disciples of Buddha. These became as essential a part of the scheme of the evangel as the Master himself. The old Asiatic conception of a story told in a series of bas-reliefs, as we see it at Sanchi, came to their aid, and we have a singularly impressive *epos* of the ideal rendered into stone. Apostolic processions and saintly choirs, as we know them from the fourth century onwards in Christian art, whether Byzantine, Roman, or Gothic, began in the Gandharan art of the second and third. There, from Buddhist monks trying to instruct their workmen in the feeling and artistic traditions of Magadha, was learnt the power to utter the divine epic whose hero was the conqueror of the mind, perfect in chastity as in compassion, and its appeal to man in the name neither of country nor state, nor yet in that of personal emotion, but in something which is beyond either and includes both, the passion of the upward-striving soul.

We cannot too clearly understand that while Gandharan art made no contribution whatever to the Indian ideal of Buddhahood, while it created nothing that could stand a moment's comparison with the work of the nameless artist of Nalanda, it nevertheless captured Buddha, and through his life and his disciples elaborated a religious type for the West. From the moment when Constantine established his new capital at the ancient site on the shores of the Bosphorus, that is to say, from about A.D. 335, the influence of the East on the art of the younger faith would

become as energetic as the sculptural capacities of the artisans of Byzantium had already shown themselves in the Gandharan monasteries.

Magadha has produced symbols whose dignity Gandhara was never able to approach. But in complex composition, in power of architectural story-telling, in dignity of the decorative synthesis, it is difficult to feel that the ultimate achievements of Gandhara and her posterity had ever before been approached, even at Sanchi.

It must never be supposed, however, that Gandhara was Europe. In spite of the Western elements, whose existence its art demonstrates, Gandhara was pre-eminently Asiatic. And never again perhaps will the actual facts be better or more comprehensively stated than in the memorable words of Havell, in his *Indian Sculpture and Painting* :

“Indian idealism during the greater part of this time was the dominating note in the art of Asia, which was thus brought into Europe; and when we find a perfectly oriental atmosphere and strange echoes of Eastern symbolism in the mediaeval cathedrals of Europe, and see their structural growth gradually blossoming with all the exuberance of Eastern imagery, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Gothic architecture and Gothic handicraft owe very much to the absorption by the *bauhutten* of Germany, and other Western craftguilds, of Asiatic art and science, brought by the thousands of Asiatic craftsmen who entered Europe in the first millennium of the Christian era; a period which in the minds of Europeans is generally a blank, because the ‘Great Powers’ were then located in Asia instead of in Europe. Byzantine art and Gothic art derived their inspiration from the same source—the impact of Asiatic thought upon the civilisation of the Roman Empire. The first shows its effect upon the art of the Greek and Latin races, the other its influence upon the Romanesque art of Teutonic and Celtic races. The spirit of Indian idealism breathes in the mosaics of St. Mark’s at Venice, just as it shines in the mystic splendours of the Gothic

cathedrals ; through the delicate tracery of their jewelled windows, filled with the stories of saints and martyrs ; in all their richly sculptured arches, fairy vaulting and soaring pinnacles and spires. The Italian Renaissance marks the reversion of Christian art to the pagan ideals of Greece, and the capture of art by the bookmen, leading to our present dilettantism and archaeological views of art.”

### THE INDIAN SAN MARCO

There is outside Florence a Dominican monastery which is famous for the fact that once upon a time Fra Giovanni of Fiesole\*—better known as Fra Angelico—lived within its walls and covered them with his saints and angels against the gilded background of heaven. Later, it was the one undecorated chamber in this monastery that Savonarola took as his own, when he came as a Dominican to San Marco. The old convent remains to this day for Europe one of the trysting-places of righteousness and beauty. We know not which are more real, the angels that still blaze upon the walls, or the lives that once were lived within them.

Something of the same feeling must have clung to Ajanta in the late fifth to the eighth centuries. A great art-tradition had grown up about its name. It is very likely, of course, that such a tradition was commoner in the India of those days than we can now realise. Perhaps many buildings were covered within with emblazoned literature. Gold and scarlet and blue were often, it may be, united together, to sing the heroic dreams of the time to the eyes of all. But it is difficult to imagine that in any country the splendours of Ajanta could seem ordinary. Those wonderful arches and long colonnades stretching along the face of the hillside, with the blue eaves of slate-coloured rock overhanging them, and the knowledge of glowing beauty covering every inch of the walls behind

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\* Fra Giovanni of Fiesole lived from A.D. 1387 to 1455.

them—no array of colleges or cathedrals in the whole world could make such a thing seem ordinary. For it was doubtless as colleges that the great task was carried out in them, and we can see that it took centuries. That is to say, for some hundreds of years Ajanta was thought of in India as one of the great opportunities of the artist, or maybe as a grand visual exposition of the monkish classics.

We can judge of the length of time over which the work spread, the time during which the tradition was growing up, by the fact that the paintings in Cave Sixteen, which is older, are stiffer and more purely decorative, such of them as remain, than those in Seventeen. But even those of Sixteen are not the oldest pictures at Ajantá. When we enter Cave Nine for the first time, we find ourselves in the company of a great host of rapt and adoring worshippers. They stand on every face of the simple octagonal pillars, with their looks turned always to the solemn looking Stupa or Dagoba. They have each one of them a nimbus behind him. They might be Bodhisattvas, but the feeling of worship so fills the little chapel that instinctively one puts them down as the early saints and companions of Buddha, and turns with a feeling of awe to join their adoration of the domelike altar. They are not archaic in the sense of crudity. But they have the feeling of an early world about them. They are like the work of Fra Angelico, but may be anything in date from the second century onwards, that is to say a thousand years before his time! In the aisle that runs behind the pillars the walls are covered with simple scenes from the Teaching of Buddha. Here we find the mother bringing her dead son, and the Master seated with his disciples about him. But we return to the nave, and, again looking at the forms on the pillar-faces, let ourselves dream for a moment, till we seem to hear the deep *Adoramus* with which they fill the air around us.

This silent throng of painted worshippers suggests to the mind's eye the worship itself that once filled the little cathedral chapel. We see the procession of monks that

must have entered at one door, made Pradakshina about the altar, and gone out on the other side. We see the lights that they carried, the incense they waved, the prostrations they made, and the silent congregation of lay-folk and students who may have looked on them from the back of the nave, as even now at a Hindu Arati one may kneel apart and watch. We hear the chanting of the monks as the incense was swung, and we realise the problem that Buddhism had to solve in giving solemnity and impressiveness to a worship denuded of the splendours and significance of sacrifice. It must have been this consciousness that led to the rapid organisation of a ritual whose elements were all indeed derived from the Vedic, but which was in its entirety the most characteristic and organic expression of democratic religion that the world had ever seen. The history of Christian worship has not yet been written, but it is open to us to believe that when it is, its debt to the Chaityas will be found greater than is now suspected.

The host of saints and apostles brings us face to face with another thought. We see how much the Stupa-shaped altar meant to the Buddhist worshipper. We begin to feel our way back to all that it implied. Sanctified by ages of consecration—for there was a pre-Buddhistic Stupa-worship; Newgrange, the Irish Sanchi, is a thousand years older than Buddha—men saw in that domed mound more than we now can ever fathom. Yet we may look at it and try to summon up all that we have felt for this symbol or for that. How curious are the things to which the heart of man has gone out in its fulness from time to time! A couple of spars lashed together at right angles; a couple of crescent-shaped axes back to back; a cairn. And each of these has had the power in its day to make men die joyfully and merrily as a piece of good fortune! Usually it is easier to imagine this when the emblem has taken to itself an icon or image. The crucifix might better make martyrs than the cross, one thinks. The Stupa, with the Buddha upon it, stirs one deeper than the Stupa or Dagoba alone. Yet

here amongst the choir of saints we catch a hint of quite another feeling, and we understand that when the icon was added to the emblem, faith was already dim.

The University of Ajanta departs in its paintings from primitive simplicity. Cave Sixteen is highly decorated, and Cave Seventeen a veritable labyrinth of beauty and narrative. Everywhere flames out some mighty subject, and everywhere are connecting links and ornamental figures. Not once does inspiration fail, though the soft brightness today is for the most part dim, and the colours have largely to be guessed at. What are the subjects? Ah, that is the question! Here at any rate is one rendered specially famous, for the moment, by the recent labours upon it of an English artist,\* which evidently portrays the Maha Hamsa Jataka from the Jatakas or Birth-Tales.† These were the Puranas of Buddhism. That is to say, they were its popular literature. History is to a great extent merely the story of organisation, the gradual selecting and ordering of elements already present. And in that sense the Puranas form a reflection and imitation of the Jatakas. The elements of both were present before. Buddhism organised the one in Pali, and Hinduism, later, the other in Sanskrit. But in some cases it would appear as if the Mahavamsa, with its history of the evangelising of Ceylon, had been the treasure-house of Ajanta artists. There are in some of the caves, notably One, pictures of ships and elephant-hunts which seem to correspond to known fragments of that story.

\* See the reproduction in the *Burlington Magazine* for June 1910, together with Mrs. Herringham's valuable notes.

† Queen Khema has a dream about golden geese, and entreats Samyama, the king, to find one for her. The king has a decoy lake constructed and his fowler captures the king of the geese. The monarch is deserted by all his subjects save one, Sumukha, his chief captain. Then the two are brought before the king who treats them with great honour, and when the goose-king has preached the law to him, they both return, with his permission, to their own kith and kin on the slopes of Chitrakuta.

"The Master here ended his story, and identified the Birth: at that time the fowler was Channa, Queen Khema was the nun Khema, the king was Sariputta, the king's retinue the followers of Buddha, Sumukha was Ananda, and the Goose-king was myself. *Maha Hamsa Jataka*, p. 534, Vol. V. Cowell's Jataka.

Yet again, in the same cave, there will be another picture of something frankly Pauranika or Jatakayan,—such as the king stepping into the balances, in the presence of a hawk and a dove—and it is impossible in the present state of the paintings to make out the sequence. Here also occurs that political picture which dates the paintings of Cave One as after, but near, A.D. 626. It would be natural enough that the story of Ceylon should dispute with the Jatakas the interest of the Buddhist world. It formed the great romance of the faith. The same efforts had been made and as great work done in many other cases, but here was a country so small that the effort told. The whole civilisation yielded with enthusiasm to the stream of impulse that came to it from the home-land of its sovereigns. The Sacred Tree, with the prince Mahindo and the princes Sanghamitta, had formed an embassy of state of which any country might be proud. And the connection thus made had been maintained. We may imagine, if we please, that there were students from Ceylon here in the Sangharama of Ajanta. Kings and nobles would doubtless send their sons to the monasteries for education, even as is still done in the villages of Burma and Japan. The East was early literary in her standards of culture, and the fact that monastic instruction would in no way have benefited a Norman baron need not make us suppose that the ministers and sovereigns of India, early in the Christian era, boasted an equally haughty illiteracy. The whole aspect of the caves, with the Viharas containing the shrine of the Great Guru, tells us of the development which their functions had undergone, from being simple Bhikshugrihas to organised colleges, under the single rulership of the abbot of Ajanta. Hiouen Tsang was only one out of a stream of foreign guests who came to the abbey to give knowledge or to gather it. And we must, if we would see truly, people its dark aisles and gloomy shadows with voices and forms of many nationalities from widely distant parts of the earth. In Cave One is a historical painting of the Persian

Embassy which was sent by Khusru II to Pulakesin I about A.D. 626.

The cave I myself like least is Number Two.. Here we have side-chapels containing statues of kings and queens or it may be pious patrons of less exalted rank, in one case with a child. The painting also in this cave has in some cases deteriorated in quality, although some great master-pieces are to be found here. There are parts where we can only think that a master has painted the principal figure and left the background or the retinue to be done by pupils or subordinates ; and in some places we find foreshadowings of faults that were afterwards amongst the peasant painters to be carried far. There is an air of worldliness in placing the great of the earth almost in a line with the Master himself, though this must have been done long before the paintings were put on the walls, and the fact that some of these are also wanting in severity and style is a mere accident. There is another cave at the other end of the line where we find the same order of paintings as here. I think it must be Twenty-one. Indeed throughout the series from Nineteen to Twenty-six, any painting that remains is very inferior to that in Caves One to Seventeen. The subjects are full of life and energy. The fault is only that there is not the same learnedness and grandeur of treatment as in the best works of the Ajanta masters. Nowhere in the world could more beautiful painting be found than in the king listening to the golden goose in Cave Seventeen, or than the Masque of Spring—which I should have liked to interpret as the entrance of Queen Maya into the Garden of Lumbini—on the top of a pilaster in the same cave. According to the distinguished critic who has just been at work upon them, these pictures have many of the characteristics that appear almost a thousand years later in the best works of the great Italian masters. This is seen not only in general effects, but also in many of the details in method. The painters knew, for instance, how to graduate the outline so as to vary the intensity of its expression.

And the same authority says that the anatomical knowledge shown in the modelling of limb and flesh is almost unapproachable. All this implies not only the advanced contemporary development of painting, but also the highest degree of concentration and respect for the work on the part of the worker. It is this quality which seems somewhat to have lost its intensity in certain instances in Cave two.

My own favourite amongst the caves is Four. But it is unfinished, and appears never to have been painted inside. Its proportions are wonderful—wide, lofty, vast. "This might have been our Westminster Abbey!" sighed an Indian fellow-guest, as we entered it for the first time. And the words exactly express it. It might have been India's Westminster Abbey.

But as they stand, it is Cave One that contains the masterpiece. Here on the left of the central shrine is a great picture, of which the lines and tints are grown now dim but remain still delicate. A man—young, and of heroic size—stands gazing, a lotus in his hand, at the world before him. He is looking down and out into the Vihara. About him and on the road behind him stand figures of ordinary size. And in the air are mythical beings, Kinnaras and others, crowding to watch. This fact marks the central personage as Buddha. But the ornaments that he wears as well as his tall crown show that we have here Buddha the prince, not Buddha the ascetic. A wondrous compassion pervades his face and bearing, and on his left—that is, to the spectator's right—stands a woman, curving slightly the opposite way, but seeming in every line to echo gently the feeling that he more commonly expresses. This picture is perhaps the greatest imaginative presentment of Buddha that the world ever saw. Such a conception could hardly occur twice. Nor is it easy to doubt, with the gate behind him and the waving palms of a royal garden all about him, that it is Buddha in that hour when the thought of the great abandonment first comes to him, Buddha on

the threshold of renunciation, suddenly realising and pondering on the terrible futility of the life of man. His wife awaits him, gently, lovingly, yet with a sympathy, a heroic potentiality that is still deeper than all her longing sweetness. Yashodhara had a place, it seems, in the dreams of the monk-painters of Ajanta, and it was the place of one who could cling in the hour of tenderness, and as easily stand alone and inspire the farewell of a higher call. It was the place of one who was true and faithful to the greatness of her husband, not merely to his daily needs. It was the place of one who attained as a wife, because she was already great as a woman. These were the forms that looked down upon the noble Mahratta and Rajput\* youth of the kingdom of the Chalukyas in their proudest days. Students trained here may have been amongst those who officered the constant wars of their sovereigns against the Pallavas of Conjeeveram, and repelled the invasions that began to fall upon India by the west coast from the late seventh century onwards. In their country homes in the rich Indian land, or round the bivouac fires on the field of battle in the after-years, they would turn in their thoughts to these faces, speaking of a nobility and pity that stand alone in human history. A man is what his dreams make him. Can we wonder that that age was great in India whose dreams were even such as these?

\* The Mahrattas are described as the people of the Ajanta country by Hioen Tsang. The throne was held in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries by Chalukya Rajputs.

## FA-HIAN

AMONGST Indian historical documents, there is none more fascinating than the books of their travels written by the early Chinese pilgrims. Of these, the two now best known to us, are those of Fa-Hian, who came to India about A.D. 400, and Hiouen Tsang, about A.D. 640. Hiouen Tsang, owing partly to the accident that his life was afterwards written by his disciples, appears to us as a personality, as the head and master of a large religious following, as a saint as well as a scholar, a monk as well as a traveller. But Fa-Hian is a lonelier, more impersonal figure. Monk and pilgrim as he was, it is rather the geographer that impresses us in him. Grave and sparing of words, he tells us little or nothing of himself. For all we know, he may have been the very first of the travellers who came to India on the task of Buddhistic research. From the surprise with which he is everywhere received and the complimentary exclamations that he records, it would appear indeed as if this had been so. On the other hand, from the quietness with which he comes and goes, from his silence about royal favours, and his own freedom from self-consciousness, it would seem as if the sight of Chinese visitors had not been rare, in the India of that period, though the errand on which he and his party had come, might single them out for some special degree of reverence and interrogation. "How great must be the devotion of these priests," said the people in the Punjab, "that they should have come thus, to learn the law, from the very extremity of the earth!" And yet frequent references to "the Clergy of Reason" in Koshala and in the south, these Clergy of Reason having apparently been Taoist monks on pilgrimage, involve a curious contradiction in this matter. Hiouen Tsang's is really a work of autobiography, but Fa-Hian's is rather the abstract of a statement made before

some learned society, perhaps a university in the south of China, and countersigned by them.

In a certain year, with certain companions, Fa-Hian set out to make search in India for the Laws and Precepts of Religion, "because he had been distressed in Chhang'an (Sian, in Shen-si, evidently his native province) to observe the Precepts and the Theological works on the point of being lost, and already disfigured by lacunae." Such are the quiet words with which the narrative begins. So colourless can be the phrases in which the passion of a life is stated. From that moment when "Fa-Hian set out," to that other day when "at the end of the summer rest, they went out to meet Fa-Hian the traveller", who had surmounted obstacles incredible, and borne difficulties innumerable, was to be fifteen long years!

His book consists of some forty short chapters of paragraphs, each one dealing as a rule with a separate province or country. Of it he himself says:

"The present is a mere summary. Not having been heard by the Masters hitherto, he (Fa-Hian) casts not his eyes retrospectively on details. He crossed the sea, and hath returned, after having overcome every manner of fatigue, and has enjoyed the happiness of receiving many high and noble favours. He has been in dangers, and has escaped them. And now therefore he puts upon the bamboo what has happened to him, anxious to communicate to the wise what he hath seen and heard."

We can hardly doubt that this is a form of superscription, offering his paper on his travels to the consideration of some organised body of scholars.

Those travels themselves had occupied fifteen years. From the leaving of his native province of Chhang'an till his crossing of the Indus, "the river in the west", was a six years' journey. He spent six years in India itself, including two in Orissa. And finally reckoning apparently two years spent in Ceylon, he was three years on the voyage home. Each stage of the journey is described, from the

time of leaving Chhang'an. The kingdoms which he has traversed, he says in closing, number at least thirty. But, though the provinces south and west of Khotan are called "India of the North", he scarcely seems to think that he has reached India proper till he comes to Mathura. This he treats almost as if it were a capital. He seizes the moment of his arrival there, to give one of his gem-like pictures of the whole country and its civilisation. He describes the Government, the freedom with which men come and go, untroubled by passport regulations, and the self-restraint with which justice is administered, and the criminal punished. We must remember that these were the times of Vikramaditya, said to have been "of Ujjain". Was Ujjain, perhaps, the name of all Western India, and Mathura its metropolis? Compared with Mathura Pataliputra appears relatively unimportant. It was older, grayer perhaps, and more imposing. It had been "the capital of Ashoka". Its palaces were still marvellous. Ecclesiastically, too, it was strong as well as noted. Royal delegates were posted there from each of the provinces. But commercially, and perhaps even politically also, we feel that the centre of power in India was at the time of Fa-Hian's visit at Mathura. From this he makes his way, by Samkassa and Kanauj, into the heart of Buddha's own country—Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kushinagara, and so on, down to Ganga, a chain of sites that by the painstaking labours of so many archaeologists have now been in great measure recovered. From Ganga he returns to Pataliputra, and thence makes his way to Benares and Kausambi. Again making Pataliputra his headquarters, he seems to have spent three years in the Buddha country learning Sanskrit and copying manuscripts. And finally he sailed down the Ganges, through the kingdom of Champa, and came to Tamluk, or Tamralipti, where he stayed two years. When he left Tamralipti in a large ship for the south-west, he appears to have reckoned himself, though he was yet to spend two years in Ceylon, as already on the return journey.

The journey, as he describes it, constitutes an abstract of all that concerns Buddhism, and quietly ignores everything else in the country. "Brahmins and heretics" is Fa-Hian's comprehensive term for Hinduism in all its non-Buddhistic phase! Yet we are able to gather a great deal nevertheless, about the state of the country, from his pages. In the first place we learn—as we do with still greater emphasis, later, from Hiouen Tsang—that to a learned Chinese, who had made an exhaustive study of Buddhism in Gandhara, and the kingdoms of the north-west frontier, India proper, or "India of the Middle", as he calls it, was still the country in which to seek for original and authentic images. Traversing Gandhara, Swat, Darada, Udyana, Takshashila, Purushapura, and Nagara (probably Kabul), it was not in any of these, but in Tamralipti, that our traveller spent two years copying books *and painting images!* Again, already, at the time of Fa-Hian's visit, the old city of Rajgir, he tells us, is "entirely desert and uninhabited." It follows that the carvings and statuary, in which to this day that site is rich, are to a great extent of a school of sculpture which had grown, flourished and decayed prior to A.D. 400. This, in itself, is a fact of immense importance. We constantly find in the travels that sacred places are marked by "*chapels, monasteries, and Stupas*". Now a chapel of Buddha is undoubtedly an image-house. Nor is Fa-Hian himself entirely without feeling for the historical aspect of that Buddhistic sculpture which is one of the chosen objects of his study. He speaks always as if images were common enough in Buddhism, but he tells us that "the first of all images of Buddha, and that which men in aftertimes have copied," was a certain bull's head carved in sandal wood, which was made by Prasenajit, king of Koshala, at the time when Buddha was in the Tusita heaven preaching to his mother. The difference between an image and an emblem does not seem here to be very clearly apprehended, but the statement shows once for all that men in the fourth and fifth centuries looked to the eastern

provinces, and to the country of Buddha's own activity, as the historic source of Buddhistic statuary. Again, when travelling in the kingdom of Tho-ly—north-east of the Indus, east of Afghanistan, and south of the Hindu Kush ; or, as has been suggested, Darada of the Dards—he tells us that there was once an Arhat in this kingdom who sent a certain sculptor to the Tusita heaven to study the stature and features of Maitreya Bodhisattva. Three times the man went, and when he came down, he made an image of heroic size, about eight English feet in height, which, on festival days, was wont to become luminous, and to which neighbouring kings rendered periodic worship. "This image," adds the pilgrim, in the far-away tone of one who speaks on hearsay, "still exists in the same locality". It was after the making of this statute, he further tells us, that the Buddhist missionaries began to come, from the far side of the Indus, with their collections of the books and of the Sacred Precepts ; and the image was erected three hundred years after the Mahanirvana. Here we learn a great deal. In the first place, when Buddhism crossed the Indus, three hundred years after the death of Buddha, it was already the religion of the Bodhisattvas. Obviously, there had been solitary saints, and perhaps even communities of monastics, without the books, before—or how should there have been an Arhat to transport a sculptor three times to the Tusita heaven?—but there was a sudden accession of Buddhistic culture, at a date three hundred years after the death of the Master, and this culture was Mahayanist in character. Thus the Mahayana doctrine, with its fully-equipped pantheon, its images, and its collections of books, to be declared canonical under Kanishka, purported to come, like the Hinayana, from India proper, or, as Fa-Hian calls it, *Madhyadesha*. Magadha, Koshala, and Vaishali, then, may claim the honour of having initiated Buddhistic art as fully and truly as Buddhistic thought.

Further, it is clear that in Magadha itself, the great ages of sculpture were felt to be already past. Talking of

Pataliputra, which had been the capital of Ashoka, "the palaces in the town have walls," says our traveller, "of which the stones were put together by genii. The sculptures and the carved work which adorn the windows are such as cannot be equalled in the present age. *They still exist.*" We who have seen the work done under Mogul emperors in marble, and the pierced sandstones of modern Benares, might not, had we seen them also, have been so ready as Fa-Hian to attribute a supernatural origin to the windows of the Ashokan palaces. But the fact remains that an unimpeachable witness has assured us of the greatness and beauty of such work in Magadha, with the reputation of being ancient at the beginning of the fifth century A.D.

The great difficulty in the path of Fa-Hian was the scarcity of written documents. Everywhere he inquired for books, he tells us, but everywhere he found that the precepts were handed down by memory, from master to disciple, each book having its given professor. At last, in the great temple of Victory, in the Buddha country, he found what he wanted, and there he stayed three years to copy. This is a most important light on many questions, besides that with which it deals. It accounts, as nothing else could have done, for the tenacity with which the pure doctrine of Buddhism seems to have been held for so many centuries. The concentration of energy necessary for the carrying out of such a task as the memorising of a vast literature explains the gravity and decorum of the Orders so long maintained. "The decency, the gravity, the piety of the clergy," meaning the Buddhist monks, Fa-Hian takes several occasions to say, "are admirable. They cannot be described." It explains the tendency of Buddhist monasteries to become universities. It explains the synthetic tendencies of the faith, which in the time of Kanishka could already include eighteen schools of doctrine declared to be mutually compatible, and not defiant. It also explains, turning to another subject altogether, why

the first written version of the old Puranas should always so evidently be an edited version of an ancient original. It visualises for us the change from Pali to Sanskrit, and it justifies the sparseness of written archives in matters of Indian history. These were evidently memorised. On this point indeed Fa-Hian constantly tells us that kings granting lands to the Buddhistic orders, engrave their deeds on iron, and we can only feel that as long as this was so, their non-survival is not to be wondered at. It must have been at a comparatively later period that brass and copper came to be used for a similar purpose, with the desired effect of permanence. Curiously enough, in Tamralipti there is no mention of difficulty regarding manuscripts. Nor again in Ceylon. In the last-named kingdom we know that the writing down had begun at least two or three centuries before the visit of Fa-Hian, and he would seem to have benefited by this fact. We gather, then, that as Magadha and Koshala were the source of Buddhistic doctrine, in its different phases, and the source of successive waves of Buddhistic symbolism, so also they were the first religion to feel the impulse of a literary instead of a verbal transmission of the canonical scriptures.

The difference between "India of the North"—or the Gandharan provinces beyond the Indus—and India proper in all matters of learning and the faith comes out very prominently in the pages of Fa-Hian, and ought to refute sufficiently all who imagine Gandhara as possessed of a culture in any way primary and impulsive, instead of entirely derivative and passive.

As if forecasting our need on this very point, the pilgrim particularly notes that on reaching India proper (and apparently, in the great temple of Chhi'honan or Victory, in Koshala) his last remaining companion, Tao-chhing, when he "beheld the law of the Shaneen, and all the clergy grave, decorous, and conducting themselves in a manner greatly to be admired, reflected, with a sigh, that the inhabitants of the frontiers of the kingdom of Thsin (China)

were deficient in the Precepts and transgressed their duties ; and said that if hereafter he could become Buddha, he wished that he might not be reborn in the country of the frontiers ; on this account, he remained, and returned not. Fa-Hian, whose first desire was that the Precepts should be diffused and should penetrate into the land of Han returned therefore alone."

About this same "India of the North" we have still more detail. The pre-Buddhistic Buddhism, which undoubtedly existed, and was represented in Buddha's own day by his cousin Devadatta, was much more living in the Gandharan provinces at the time of Fa-Hian's journey than in India proper. Also the Jataka Birth Stories had become the romance of these provinces, and there were Stupas there to the almsgiving of the eyes, and of the head, to the giving of his own flesh by the Bodhisattva, to redeem a dove, and to the making himself a meal for the starving tigress. We cannot help distinguishing between those countries whose Buddhism was Hinayana and those in which it was Mahayana, as more or less anciently the goal of Buddhist missions. And we note that Udyana, whose name seems to indicate that it had been a royal residence, perhaps the home-country, as it were, of the Kushan dynasty, was entirely Mahayana, and is mentioned under the name of Ujjana, as one of the northern Tirthas in the Mahabharata. It would appear, indeed, that when the Himavant began to be parcelled out into a series of Mahabharata stations, sometime under the later Guptas, the undertaking was in direct and conscious succession to an earlier appropriation of the regions further west, as stations of the Jatakas, or Birth Stories of Buddha. We ought not, in the attempt to follow up some of the thousand and one threads of interest that our traveller leaves for us, to forget the one or two glimpses of himself that he vouchsafes us. Never can one who has read it forget the story of his visit to the cave that he knew, on the hill of Gridhrakuta, where Buddha used to meditate, in old Rajgir :

“Fa-Hian, having purchased in the new town perfumes, flowers, and oil lamps, hired two aged Bhikshus to conduct him to the grotts and to the hill Khi-che. Having made an oblation of the perfumes and the flowers, the lamps increased the brilliance. Grief and emotion affected him even to tears. He said, ‘Formerly in this very place was Buddha. Here he taught the Sheou-leng-yan.\* Fa-Hian, unable to behold Buddha in life, has but witnessed the traces of his sojourn. Still, it is something to have recited the Sheou-leng-yan before the cave, and to have dwelt there one night!’ ”

But Fa-Hian, enthusiast as he was, and capable of extreme exertions in the cause of the Faith and China, was not this alone. There was also, in that grave and modest nature, a chord that vibrated to the thought of home. “He longed ardently,” he says, when he had already reached the South of China, “to see Chhang’an again, but that which he had at heart being a weighty matter, he halted in the South where the masters published the Sacred Books and the Precepts.” Thus he excuses himself for a brief delay on the way back to his native province. But if he feels thus, when he has already landed on Chinese shores, what must have been his longing, while still in foreign lands? In Ceylon, seated before the blue jasper image of Buddha, perhaps at Anuradhapuram, he pauses to tell us :

“Many years had now elapsed since Fa-Hian left the land of Han. The people with whom he mingled were men of foreign lands. The hills, the rivers, the plants, the trees, everything that had met his eyes was strange to him. And what was more, those who had begun the journey with him were now separated from him. Some had remained behind, and some had died. Ever reflecting on the past, his heart was thoughtful and dejected. Suddenly, while at the side of this jasper figure, he beheld

\* The things which are difficult to discriminate from one another.

a merchant presenting in homage to it a fan of white lute-string of the country of Tsin. Without anyone's perceiving it, this excited so great an emotion that the tears flowed and filled his eyes."

Nor can we forget the simple and beautiful counter-signature which seems to have been affixed by the learned body to whom he presented it, to Fa-Hian's written summary of his travels. After telling how they met Fa-Hian and discoursed with him, interrogating him, and after telling how his words inspired trust, his good faith lent confidence to his recital, the scribe of the Chinese University, or Secretary to the Imperial Geographical Society, as it may have been ("the masters" in any case he calls them), ends thus:

"They were touched with these words. They were touched to behold such a man: they observed amongst themselves that a very few had indeed expatriated themselves for the sake of the Doctrine, but no one had ever forgotten self in quest of the law, as Fa-Hian had done. One must know the conviction which truth produces, otherwise one cannot partake of the zeal which produces earnestness. Without merit and without activity, nothing is achieved. On accomplishing aught, with merit and with activity, how shall one be abandoned to oblivion? To lose what is esteemed—to esteem what mankind forget—Oh!"

## ELEPHANTA, THE SYNTHESIS OF HINDUISM

At a great moment in the history of India, the caves of Elephanta were carved out of the living rock. A moment of synthesis, it was, that ages had prepared; a moment of promise that would take millenniums to fulfil. The idea that we now call Hinduism had just arrived at theological maturity. The process of re-differentiation had not yet begun. The caves of Elephanta mark perhaps its greatest historic moment. In all religious sects, the conflict of opinion is determined more by the facts of history and geography than by opposing convictions. What then were the sources, geographic and historic, of the elements that make up Elephanta?

The caves themselves were meant to be a cathedral. So much is apparent, on the face of things. Traces of palace, fortifications, and capital city, must certainly be discoverable in their immediate neighbourhood. On another island several miles away, is the Abbey of Kanheri, with its Chaitya hall, and its hundred and eight monastic cells, each two of which have their own water-supply; its bathing tanks, and refectory or chapter floors, on the mountain top. Kanheri was a university: Elephanta was a cathedral: and both were appanages of some royal seat.

How splendid is the approach, through pillars, to the great reredos in three panels that takes up the whole back wall of the vast cell! And in the porch, as we enter this central chamber, how impressive are the carvings to right and left! On the left, in low relief, is a picture representing Shiva, seated in meditation. The posture is that of Buddha, and it requires a few minutes of close examination, to make sure of the distinction. The leopard-skin, the serpents and the Jata, however, are clear enough. There is no real ground for confusion. On our right is another low relief of Durga, throwing herself into the universe, in

God-intoxication. Behind her the very air is vocal with saints and angels chanting her praises. The whole is like a verse from Chandi. And we hold our breath in astonishment, as we look and *listen*, for here is a freedom of treatment never surpassed in art, combined with a message like that of mediaeval Catholicism. The artist here uttered himself as securely as the Greek. It was only in the thing said that he was so different. And for a translation of that terms European, it needs that we should grope our way back to Giotto and Fra Angelico, and the early painters of missals.

Our astonishment is with us still, as we penetrate the shadows, and find our way amongst the grey stone pillars, to that point from which we can best see the great central Trimurti of the reredos. How softly, how tenderly, it gleams out of the obscurity! Shadows wrought on shadows, silver-grey against the scarcely deeper darkness, this, in truth, is the very Immanence of God in human life. On its right is the sculptured panel, representing the universe according to the Shaivite idea. Shiva and Parvati ride together on the bull, and again—as in the carving of Durga, in the porch—the heavens behind them are like a chorus of song. On the left of the Trimurti, finally, is the portrayal of the world of the Vaishnavite. Vishnu, the Preserver, has for consort Lakshmi, the Divine Grace, and the whole universe seems to hail Him as God. It is the heads of Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu, grouped together in one great image, that make up the Trimurti which fills the central recess, between these panels.

A ledge, for offerings, runs along below this series of pictures. The altar itself, where actual consecration took place, is seen to the spectator's right, in the form of a little canopy-like shrine or Shiva chapel, which once doubtless held the four-headed Mahadeva that may today be seen outside the caves, and now contains the ordinary image of Shiva, as placed there at some later date. We may assume that lights and offerings dedicated here, were afterwards

carried in procession, and finally placed before the various divisions of the great reredos. The pillared hall held the congregation, and stands for the same thing as the nave in a Christian church, or the courtyard, in a modern temple like Dakshineswar.

So much for the main cave. The plan of the entablature is carried out, however, in the architecture, and there are wings—consisting of cells built round courtyards enclosing tanks—to right and left of the great central chamber. And here, the carved animals and other ornaments that support short flights of stairs, and terraces, are all eloquent of a great art period, and a conception of life at once splendid and refined.

Elephanta, then, perpetuates the synthesis of Hinduism. How royal was the heart that could portray no part of his people's faith,—even though it held his personal conviction and worship—without the whole! Not Shaivite alone, but Shaivite, Vaishnavite, and the still remembered worshipper of Brahma, go to make up the Aryan congregation. All alike, it is felt, must be represented. Nay, when we recall the older Kanheri, we feel that not the churches alone, but also the monastic orders, outside all churches; not society only, but also the super-social organisation, denying rank, and all that distinguishes society, had a place here. In the architectural remains within a certain area of the Bay of Bombay, we have a perfect microcosm of the Indian thought and belief of a particular period. The question that presses for determination is, what was that period.

The first point to be noticed is the presence of Brahma in this synthesis of Hinduism. In the Mahabharata, similarly, we are constantly startled by the mention of Brahma. He is there called the grandsire, the creator, and sometimes the ordainer, with face turned on every side. This last attribute is perhaps derived from some old mysticism, which gave the Romans Janus,—from which our own January—and found expression amongst the Hindus in the fourheaded image, and the weapon with

four heads called Brahma's head, as mentioned in the Ramayana. While constantly referred to in the Mahabharata, however, Brahma is nowhere there invested with new functions. He does not appear as a growing concept of the divine. He plays rather the part of one receding from actuality, who must constantly be held in memory. In the Pauranic stories of Krishna, similarly, no one goes to Brahma with any prayer or austerity, as they do to Shiva. He is no dynamic factor in the life of men. Yet He is the Creator, beyond all argument, and is in a position to impose on Krishna the test of divinity. He requires to be satisfied whether the young Hero is or is not an incarnation of Vishnu.

In this quaint story, of a practical joke played by the Creator, there are volumes of history. To begin with, Brahma is chief and eldest of Hindu post-vedic deities. His position needs no proving. It is accepted by all. Nor does Brahma himself, in the Puranas, require to be convinced that Vishnu is the equal of Himself. Krishna, as the presentment of Vishnu, is new to Him, but Vishnu Himself He takes for granted. At the same time, while indisputably supreme, Brahma is by no means a spiritual reality. That place, as other stories and the whole of the Mahabharata show, is filled by Shiva, with whom are associated all those philosophical ideas nowadays described as Vedantic. And yet, if the story of Krishna had been written in the twentieth century, Brahma would have had no place in it at all. Partially forgotten as He was then, He is wholly forgotten now. From this evidence then, we may infer that the personality of Brahma was the first, and that of Shiva, the next, to be developed as concepts of Supreme Deity.

Thus there was a period in Hinduism, when the name of Brahma the creator was held in reverence,—having dominated the theology of a preceding age—and used in conjunction with those of Shiva and Vishnu, to make the specification of deity complete. Hinduism, at that time.

deliberately preached God as the Three-in-One, the Unity-in-Trinity. This theological idea we find expressed in its purity in the Caves of Elephanta, and perhaps slightly later, in the Ramayana of Valmiki.

The poet Kalidasa, also, writing both the Kumar-sambhava and the Raghuvamsha, would appear to have been under the inspiration of this Hindu idea of the Trinity. He shared the desire of the power that carved Elephanta, to represent the synthesis of Hinduism by doing something to concretise both its popular aspects.

But the form under which Vishnu appears in Elephanta is purely theological. It is Lakshmi-Narayana, the idea that to this day is more familiar to the West and South of India than to Bengal. This theological concept—ór divine incarnation, as it is called—was fully formulated, before the Ramayana was written, and is referred to there much oftener than in the Mahabharata; though that also was meant to prove the identity of a certain hero with Vishnu. Sita-Rama are from the very beginning argued as the bodying-forth of Lakshmi-Narayana in human form. Krishna, in the later epic, seems to be consciously a second attempt to paint the mercy of God in incarnation.

The ideas that succeed, in India, are always firm-based on the national past. Thus that idealism of the motherland which is today the growing force intellectually, can go back, for foundation, to the story of Uma, wedded in austerity to the great God. Similarly, it would be very interesting to see worked out, by some Indian scholar, the root-sources in Vedic literature, of these conceptions of Shiva and Vishnu. One can hardly resist the conclusion that each was elaborated independently, in its own region. But it would also appear that both alike represent aspects of God which has been impressed on the popular imagination by the personality of Buddha.

Is such a theory shocking to the Hindu mind? What if it were found to explain all the facts, better than any other? May it not well be, after all, that Hinduism is no

creature of a hoary antiquity, rigid and immovable, fixed in stony preconceptions ; but, instead of this, young, plastic, creative, tingling with life and vigour, her characteristics carrying their history with them, her errors mere maladies of childhood, to be speedily outgrown?

If this be so, we shall have to think of the Mother-Church as the expression of a people who, between 500 B.C. and A.D. 500, were intensely modern and alive. Indian civilisation has educated its children from the beginning to the supreme function of realising ideas. And ideas grew and succeeded each other, taking on new forms with amazing rapidity, in the period immediately before and after the Christian era. The impression that the chief formative impulse here was the life and character of Buddha, is extremely difficult to resist. On one side the stern monastic, on the other the very projection into humanity of the Infinite Compassion,—the Blessed One was both of these. His character was the world's proof that God was at once Preserver of His children, and Destroyer of their Ignorance, even while He was but a name for the Supreme Itself. Hence in men's dreams of Shiva, we see their effort thenceforth to realise the one, while Narayana is their personification of the other, of these attributes.

Just as Buddha may have been the radiant centre, whence diverged the popular religions, so Benares may have been the spot where the idea of Shiva was first conceived and elaborated. Many causes may have contributed to this. The Deer Park, seven miles away, must have been a monastic university before the time of Buddha. Its undisputed pre-eminence is shown, by the fact that he made his way to it, immediately on attaining enlightenment, because it was there that His theory, or discovery, must be published to the world. From this we can see that the monk, although a little apart, must always have been an impressive figure in Benares, which was itself, at this particular period, mainly a commercial and industrial

centre, associated with a great Brahminic wealth of Vedic memory.

After the time of Buddha, while his name still reverberated throughout the length and breadth of the land, Benares would doubtless become a place of pilgrimage, rendered doubly sacred by His memory and by its Vedic altar. The growing opinion that the Deity could take no delight in slaughter must have killed the sacrifices, and the Brahmins of Benares would take to cherishing a system of theology in which the great God was represented as remote, solitary, and meditative. The right of all classes to interest themselves in religious philosophy was indisputable, in face of the work done by the Buddhist Orders, and Vedantic theories and explanations were given freely to all comers, and by them carried back over the country to their distant homes.

We may suppose, meanwhile, that the memorial Stupas continued to be placed in the sacred city, as at other scenes of Buddhist memory, by pious pilgrims. Little by little, the Stupas changed their shape. At first plain, or simply ornamented, they came to have the four Buddhas on them, looking North, South, East, and West. Some were then made, by a natural transition, with four large heads, instead of four seated figures. According to the Brahmins, the God of the Aryans was Brahma, the personal aspect of Brahman. According to the thought of the world at that period, again, God, or Brahma, was "the Ordainer, with face turned on every side." Hence the four-headed stupa was first, perhaps, regarded as the image of Brahma. But it could not long be so taken. The new conception of God was growing, and presently, with the post in the middle, it came to be regarded as Mahadeva, and then as Shiva. From this time dates that notion of Shiva which prompts His salutation as having "five faces."

There was a good deal of hesitation, at this period. Any one who has seen the bathing ghat at Baragaon, between Bihar Sharif and Rajgir, will be in a position to

judge in how many different directions the emblem of Shiva might have been evolved. The fourheaded Stupa for instance, was sometimes made to refer to Parvati. Finally, however,—with the perfecting of the theological idea of Maheshwara,—the modified Stupa was taken as Shiva. This particular phase must have occurred, just as the Rajputs began to settle in Rajputana, and this accounts for the prevalence of the four-headed Shiva in that country. The family-God of the royal line of Udaipur is said to be a four-headed Mahadeva. In Benares, again, there may be more, but there is certainly one temple, in the Tamil quarter, behind the monastery of Kedar Nath, where a Shiva of the period in question is worshipped to this day. When first erected, this temple was doubtless on a level with the street. Owing to the accumulation of debris in the interim, however, it is now some eight or ten steps down. This fact alone gives us some notion of the age of the building.

The image of Mahadeva has gone through many further phases of simplification since the day we speak of. but this Shiva of Benares, and the other of Elephanta belong to a single historic period, and the small four-headed Stupa outside the Caves, is one of their most precious relics.

Hinduism throbs with the geography and history of India. How futile is the idea that the land had to wait for a railway-system, in order to realise her own unity! In every image of Shiva speaks the voice of pre-Gupta Benares. In that complex conception of Krishna which blends in one the Holy Child of Brindavana, the Hero of the Gita, and the Builder of Dwarka we celebrate the vision of the royal house of Pataliputra. In the Ramayana, we unravel the earlier dream of Koshala. And here in Elephanta, on the extreme West, we are confronted with a rendering of the great synthesis that comes after the formulation of Shiva, and a moment before the writing of the Ramayana. Whence did Elephanta take her Lakshmi-

Narayana? And what must have been the solidarity of the country, when the dream dreamt in Benares finds expression here a thousand miles away, or the Vishnu carven here, is to be sung, in a decade or two, as Rama, in far-away Ayodhya of Koshala!

Wherever we turn, we are met by the same phenomenon, of the marvellous and effective unity of pre-mediaeval India. That Narayana who is constantly worshipped in Madras, is the same whose images were wrought in Bihar, so long ago as the fifth century. A single style of architecture characterises a single period, from Bhubaneshwar to Chitore. Every child knows the names of the seven sacred rivers; and the perfect Tirtha, for every province of India, has taken a man, these many centuries, to the Himalayas, to Dwarka, to Cape Comorin, and to Puri.

## SOME PROBLEMS OF INDIAN RESEARCH

ONE of the first tasks before the Indian people is the rewriting of their own history. And this, in accordance with the tacit rule of modern learning, will have to be carried out, not by one, but by a combination of individuals; in other words, by an Indian learned society. It is a strange but incontrovertible truth, that none of us knows himself unless he also knows whence he arose. To recognise the geographical unity and extent of the great whole we call India is not enough; it is imperative also to understand how it came to be.

Fortunately we are now in possession of a single precious volume—*The Early History of India*, by Vincent Smith—of which it may roughly be said that it embodies the main results of the work concerning India done during the last century by the Royal Asiatic Society. The faults of this work are many and obvious, yet they are relatively of little importance, since a perfect history of India, written by any but an Indian hand, would be a wrong, rather than otherwise, done to the Nation of the coming days. In the meantime, we must be grateful for so handy a compendium summarising for and opening to the Indian worker the results achieved by the European organisation of research, as nothing else could have done, save that personal intercourse with great scholars which is at present beyond his reach. Vincent Smith's work may seem to some of us, considering its scope and subject, to be curiously unspiritual. Yet is it the veritable handing on to a new generation of scholars of the torch of the spirit. Many and many a forgotten page of history is here turned and opened. And though the author never seems to suspect that the people who made the history of which he writes are still a living race, still, with all their old power lying dormant in them, walking the streets of Indian cities, yet

who, after all, could have expected such recognition? These assertions are for India herself by her own act and deed to make and prove.

Nothing surely in all the story here told of early India is more inspiring than that of the Guptas of Magadha and the empire which they, from their ancient seat of Pataliputra, established over the whole of India. The central fact about this great Gupta Empire, as it will seem to Indian readers, is the identification of Vikramaditya, who is now seen to have been "of Ujjain" merely in the familiar modern sense of the title added to the name of the conqueror. Vikramaditya of Ujjain, then, was no other than Chandragupta II of Pataliputra, who reigned from A.D. 375 to A.D. 413.

If this was so, we might take the year A.D. 400 as a sort of water-parting in the history of the development of modern India. The desire becomes irresistible to know how far the Pauranika Age was then developed and established; to what extent and under what form Buddhism was still remembered; what was the political outlook of a Hindu of the period; and, among the most important of the questions to be answered, what were the great cities that made up the Indian idea of India, and what the associations of each? The answer to the last of these queries, if discoverable at all, would be of vastly greater significance than all the facts as to sovereigns and kingdoms about which the modern system of learning makes us so unduly curious.

It is already a commonplace among historians that Hinduism, together with Sanskrit learning and literature, underwent under the Guptas what is regarded as a great revival. According to Vincent Smith, most of the Puranas were during this period re-edited and brought into their present shape. Statements of this kind are at present somewhat vague, but accepting what has already been done as our basis, it will, I believe, prove possible to introduce a definiteness and precision into the history of the evolu-

tion of Hindu culture which has not hitherto been dreamed of as practicable. We shall soon be able to follow step by step, dating our progress as we go, the introduction of one idea after another into the Hindu system, building up again the world which surrounded the makers of the Pauranika age.

In Vincent Smith's pages we can see the great tradition of Gupta learning beginning in the person of the gifted and accomplished Samudra Gupta (A.D. 326 to A.D. 375), father of Vikramaditya, and a sovereign of such military ability as to be described as "an Indian Napoleon", while he himself had the fine ambition to be remembered rather for his love of music and poetry than for his success in war. In the reign of such a king, and in the personal influence of such a father, must have lain the seed of more achievements and events which were to make his son Vikramaditya the hero of Indian tradition through subsequent ages. It takes many lives sometimes to carry out a single great task, and we can only guess whether or not Samudra Gupta began the undertakings whose completion was to make his son illustrious.

In my own opinion, the very head and front of these must have been the final recension of the Mahabharata at some time within the famous reign, say at about the year A.D. 400. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that certain of the Puranas, notably the Vishnu and Bhagavata, were edited, exactly as the Bhagavata claims, immediately after the Mahabharata by scholars who found cause for regret in the fact that that work had not given them the scope required for all the details they were eager to give regarding the life of the Lord. I do not remember even to have seen any note on the social functions of the Puranas. But the Vishnu Purana strongly suggests a state curriculum of education. In the ages before printing, literature must for the mass of people in all countries have tended to take the form of a single volume—witness the name *biblos* or Bible, *the book*—containing elements of history and geography,

a certain amount of general information, some current fiction, and, above all, an authoritative rendering of theology and morals in combination. History, of course, would be reduced to little more than an indication of the origin of the reigning dynasty, or a sketch of the epoch regarded at the time of writing as "modern". Geography would consist of an account of the chief pilgrimages and sacred rivers. And in the Vishnu Purana, in the stories of Dhruva and Prahlada, when compared with the infinitely superior popular versions, we have a key to the treatment which fiction and folklore would receive. As the theological exposition proceeds, one can almost see the Brahman teaching at the temple-door while the shades of evening gather, and ignoring every other consideration in his desire to put the highest philosophy into the mouth of Prahlada, or to pin a religious meaning to the astronomical picture of the child Dhruva pointed onwards by the Seven Rishis.

It would be clearly impossible for every village in the Gupta Empire to possess either a scholar learned in, or a copy of, the Mahabharata. But the scheme of culture comprised in the knowledge of the work known as the Vishnu Purana was not equally unattainable; and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the book was planned or edited as a standard of common culture. If there be anything in this suggestion, a new importance will be conceded to the question of the province or district in which each separate Purana was produced. A single touch in the Vishnu Purana is sufficient to indicate its composition in the neighbourhood of an imperial capital, such as Pataliputra must have been. This is found in the story of Hiranyakashipu taking his little son on his knee, when he had been under tuition for some time, and putting him through his catechism. One of the questions in this catechism is extremely suggestive. "How should one deal with an enemy by whom one is vastly out-numbered?" asks the father. "Divide and attack them one by one," answers

the son, evidently from his book. In Hindu literature there is no second work which can be called "national" in the same sense as the Mahabharata. The foreign reader, taking it up as sympathetic reader merely and not as scholar, is at once struck by two features ; in the first place, its unity in complexity ; and in the second, its constant effort to impress on its hearers the idea of a single centralised India with a heroic tradition of her own as formative and uniting impulse. It is in good sooth a monarch's dream of an imperial race. The Gupta Emperor of Pataliputra who commissioned the last recension of the great work was as conscious as Ashoka before him or Akbar after of making to his people the magic statement, "India is one."

As regards the unity of the work itself, this in the case of the Mahabharata is extraordinary. That a composition so ancient in subject-matter, and so evidently complex in its derivation, should be handed down to us as one single undisputed whole, is historical evidence of the highest importance for its original promulgation in this form by some central power with ability and prestige to give it authoritative publication. The origins of the poem are hoary with antiquity. Its sources are of an infinite variety. But the Mahabharata was certainly wrought to its present shape in the shadow of a throne, and that imperial. So much is clear on the face of it to one who meets with the book for the first time in mature life.

One would naturally expect it to have existed in fragments, or at best to be current in many different versions. Indeed it is clear enough on the reading, that it has at some far past time so existed. Every here and there the end of one chapter or canto will tell a tale in one way, and the beginning of the next repeat it, or some part of it, from an utterly different point of view, as might rival narrators of a single incident. But the work of collating and examining, of assigning their definite values to each separate story, and weaving all into a single co-ordinated whole, has been done by some one great mind, some mighty hand,

that went over the ground long long ago, and made the path that we of today must follow still. The minute differences of reading between the Bombay and Benares texts only serve to emphasise this single and uncontested character of one immortal rendering of the great work. All through Maharashtra and the Punjab, and Bengal and Dravida-desha, the Mahabharata is the same. In every part of India and even amongst the Mohammedans in Bengal it plays one part—social, educational man-making, and nation-building. No great man could be made in India without its influence upon his childhood. And the hero-making poem is one throughout every province of the land.

Socially the first point that strikes one, as one reads, is the curious position held by the Brahmin. It is very evident that this is as yet by no means fixed. No duty with which an audience was already familiar would be so harped upon as is that of gifts to and respect for the Brahmins here. We notice too that the caste is not yet even fixed, for Draupadi is represented at her Svayamvara as following the five brothers, when she and everyone else imagine them to be Brahmins. Nor is this a detail which requires explanation or apology, as does the marriage of one woman to five men. No, at the date of the last recension of the Mahabharata, a marriage between Brahmin and Kshatriya is well within the understanding and sympathy of an audience. It is however fairly clear that the promulgation of the work is bound up with the success of the Brahmins in impressing themselves and it on the public mind. It was entrusted to them, perhaps by royal warrant—even as in the story of Damayanti another story is given to them to carry forth of her father's capital—to spread far and wide, depending on the alms of the faithful for payment. And we are constrained at this point to ask, "What up to this moment had been the characteristic work of the Brahmins as a caste?"

But there are notable exceptions to this constant

commendation of the Brahmins to the consideration and charity of their hearers. On looking closer, we find that there are many passages of no inconsiderable size in which the Brahmins are never mentioned. And this feature gradually establishes itself in our minds as a very good *differentia* of the more modern additions. It would appear that in its earlier versions the poem contained no forced mention of this particular caste, and that, in making the final recension, some care was observed to maintain the purity of the ancient texts, even while incorporating with them new matter and new comments.

The most important question of all, however, is one on which a new reader will find it hard to imagine himself mistaken. This is the question as to who is the hero of the last recension. Undoubtedly the Mahabharata, as we have it, is the story of Krishna. It is difficult to understand how the theory could have been put forward that the final editing had been Shaivite. On the contrary, Mahadeva is represented as speaking the praises of Krishna, while, so far as I am aware, the reverse never happens. This could only mean that Hinduism, as it stood, was here, in the person of Shiva, incorporating a new element, which had to be ratified and accepted by all that was already holy and authoritative. The Krishna of the national story is indeed Partha-Sarathi the Charioteer of Arjuna—most probably an earlier hero of Dwarka and the war-ballads—but every effort is made, by calling him Keshava and the slayer of Putana, to identify him with that other Krishna, hero of the Jamuna, who appears to have been worshipped by the cowherds, a people still half-nomadic as it would seem, who must have been established peacefully in India some centuries before his time.

Was Krishna Partha-Sarathi, then, the deliberate preaching of the Gupta dynasty to the (at that time half-Hinduised) peoples of the south side of the Jamuna? Was he a hope held out to the democracy, a place made in the national faith for newly imperialised populations? Was

it at this period that the play of the Mahabharata was deliberately established as an annual *Pandava-lila* in the villages of the south, while to Krishna Partha-Sarathi especially temples were built in Dravida-desh? In any case, there is abundant evidence half a century later, when we pass to the reign of Skanda Gupta, the grandson of Vikramaditya, of the hold which the Krishna of the Jamuna had obtained over the hearts of the imperial house of Pataliputra at Bhitari.\* In the district of Ghazipur to the west of Benares is still standing a pillar which was raised by the young king on his return from victory over the Huns in A.D. 455. He hastened to his mother, says the inscription, "just as Krishna, when he had slain his enemies, betook himself to his mother Devaki". The pillar was erected to the memory of his father: it may have marked the completion of the requiem ceremonies postponed by war, and in commemoration of the victory just gained by the protection of the gods. It was surmounted finally by a statue of the god Vishnu. This statue has now disappeared, but we may safely infer that it was of the form still common in the south of India as that of Narayana. It was probably made in low relief on a rounded panel, and depicted a beautiful youth with a lotus in his hand. In the following year 456 a great piece of engineering, so far west as the Giranar Hill, was completed and consecrated by the building of a temple of Vishnu.

Seven hundred and fifty years earlier, in the year 300 B.C., Megasthenes had noted amongst Indian religious ideas that "Herakles is worshipped at Mathura and Clisobothra". Was this latter the Hellenic pronunciation of "Klisopura," Krisopura, Krishnapura? And is it to be identified with Dwarka, persistently identified with Krishna throughout the Mahabharata without any very satisfactory reason being stated—or with some other town near Mathura, since destroyed?

\* Vincent Smith. *Early History of India*, pp. 267-8.

Now this same Herakles is a figure of wonderful interest. We must remember with regard to the period of which we are now thinking, that Greece was but the remotest province of the Central Asiatic world, and in that world the youngest child of history. Her myths and religious systems had chiefly a Central Asiatic origin, and Herakles of Mediterranean fame was doubtless pre-eminently of this order. Probably little ever finds its way into literature of the human significance to human souls of any given religious system, or more particularly of the ideas connected with an ancient god or hero. We may depend upon it that Herakles of Hellas, when he was worshipped by the common folk, had more in him of the Christ who saves, more of the Krishna, lover of man, than any of us now could easily imagine.

It may be that Krishna, slaying the tyrant of Mathura, forms but another echo of some immeasurably ancient tale, held by future nations in common, ere the Asian tablelands or the Arctic home had poured down new-born breeds of man on the coasts of Greece and river-banks of India. So at least must it have seemed to Megasthenes, making up his despatches for Seleukos Nikator. And 700 years go by, it appears, before a Gupta emperor, who has just annexed Western India with its capital of Ujjain, commissioned the editing anew of the national epic of the north, causing it to teach that this Cliso—Kriso—Krishna of the Jamuna is no other than a certain Partha-Sarathi, known this long while to Northern and Vedic India as the exponent to his disciples of all the secrets of the Upanishads. Are we to take it that the Aryan teacher cries, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you" to the tribes whom he fain would Hinduise?

Readers of the Bhagavata Purana will note that the Jamuna life, that is to say, the Heraklean element in the story of Krishna, is crowded into his first twelve years and that after this he is represented as *being sent to learn the Vedas*. That is to say, it is at this point that he is

Hinduised as the Incarnation of Vishnu. Obviously, after this had been done, many of the incidents of his childhood might have a Hindu interpretation reflected back upon them.

How great is the beauty of that divine childhood! How warm and throbbing the sense of personality that speaks in every line of the Mahabharata! In spite of the English dress, how wonderful the power and passion with which both Epic and Purana tell the tale of Krishna! How rude yet grand this ancient world out of which in its unsuspecting simplicity, in its worship of strength and heroism, comes the story of the Lord slaying demon upon demon, elephant, wrestler, tyrant, all. Centuries, may be millenniums, will go by before the tender Hinduising interpretation will be added to each incident, "and then, offering salutation at the feet of Krishna, the soul of that evil one went forth unto bright places, for ever the touch of the Lord brought salvation, even unto those whom He appeared to slay".

Like children long ago on the Greek islands, and children and men in German Scandinavian forests, or like the peasants of today in Icelandic log-houses, so have the Indian people all down the centuries listened to wonder-tales of a hero who was vulnerable at no point save on the soles of his feet; of mortals who went armed with divine weapons; of that strong one who could gulp down the forest-fire like water; of the woman who peeped and saw between her eyelids; of madness sent by the gods upon whole peoples whom they would slay; of dooms and destinies and strange heroic whispers from the twilight of the world.

But nowhere, it seems to me, does the enthusiasm of the story carry us so completely away as when we read at last of the ascension of Krishna into heaven. Here we are dealing with nothing prehistoric. Here we have the genius of a great Hindu poet in full flight. All that the ecclesiasticism of the West has done in fifteen centuries to

place the like incident in the Christian story in an exquisite mystical light, half-veiled by its own glory, was here anticipated by some unnamed writer of the Gupta era in India, in or before the year A.D. 400, ending the story of the incarnation on a note of mingled love and triumph:

“And He the Lord, passing through the midst of Heaven, ascended up into His own inconceivable region. Then did all the immortals join together to sing His praises. The gods and the Rishis likewise offered salutation. And Indra also, the king of Heaven, hymned Him right joyfully.”

## THE FINAL RECENSION OF THE MAHABHARATA

WE may take it then, for the sake of the argument, that the final recension of the Mahabharata was the literary *magnum* opus of the reign of Chandra Gupta II of Magadha, known as Vikramaditya of Ujjain (A.D. 375 to 413), and the source of his great fame in letters. We may also take it from the evidences seen there that he deliberately organised its promulgation by missions in the Dravidadesha, or the country of Madras. But, if all this be true, what may we suppose to have been the means employed by him for the execution of so vast an undertaking? Undoubtedly the work of compilation must have been carried out in Benares by a council of scholars under the control of one supreme directing genius. If Professor Satis Chandra Vidyabhushan be correct (as I should imagine that he is) in his suggestion that the name of Devanagari, as applied to one particular form of Prakrit script, means of Devanagar or Benares,\* the question then arises: Was the promulgation of the Mahabharata the occasion on which it gained its widespread fame and application?

The possible date of the Ramayana suggests itself at this point as a subject for examination and decision. For my own part, trying the question on grounds other than that of language, I would suggest that the first part of this work was written *before* the Mahabharata was finally edited, and that it opens up a long vista of years during which Ayodhya had already been the principal Indian capital. The hypothesis is thus that the Ashokan capital of Pataliputra was succeeded by Ayodhya, and this again succeeded, under the Guptas by Pataliputra. I am assuming that the *Uttarakanda* portion of the Ramayana was

\* See *Indian World*, November, 1906.

written later, according to what is said to be the tradition of the islanders of Bali and Lombok, east of Java. The fact that a synopsis of the Ramayana, as it then stood, is given in the Mahabharata, even as Kalidasa's Kumar-sambhava is epitomised in the Ramayana, points possibly to some literary convention of an age when books were necessarily few. One cannot help feeling that it is the political greatness of Ayodhya and Pataliputra, each in its own period, that leads it to preach a new religion in the form of a definite incarnation of Vishnu—in the one case Rama, in the other Krishna. And if this be true, it lends an added interest to the fact that the worship of Sita-Rama has now its greatest following in the Dravida-desh. We may take it perhaps as a law that a religion is likely to survive longest and with greatest power, not in the region of its birth, but in the land to which it is *sent* or *given*. An exception is found in the worship of Shiva, which is still dominant in Benares.

If the date I have suggested as that of the final compilation of the Mahabharata be correct, it would follow that the great work must in the doing have trained a vast number of scholars and critics. It must also have called together in one place (doubtless Benares) an enormous mass of tradition, folk-lore, old records, and persons representing various kinds of ancient knowledge. All this would constitute that city an informal university of a most real and living type, and it might well be that the learning and research of which to this day it is the home was the result of the revival thus created under Vikramaditya of Ujjain.

Of the Gupta age as a whole (A.D. 326 to 500), we find Vincent Smith saying:

“To the same age probably should be assigned the principal Puranas in their present form; the metrical legal treatises, of which the so-called Code of Manu is the most familiar example; and, in short, the mass of the ‘classical’ Sanskrit literature. The patronage of the great Gupta

emperors gave, as Professor Bhandarkar observes, 'a general literary impulse,' which extended to every department, and gradually raised Sanskrit to the position which it long retained as the sole literary language of Northern India. . . . The golden age of the Guptas, glorious in literary, as in political history, comprised a period of a century and a quarter (A.D. 330 to 455), and was covered by three reigns of exceptional length. The death of Kumara, early in 455, marks the beginning of the decline and fall of the empire."\* And again :

"The principal Puranas seem to have been edited in their present form during the Gupta period, when a great extension and revival of Sanskrit Brahmanical literature took place."†

The revision and re-editing of records thus described would be an inevitable result of the royal recension of the Mahabharata, supposing that to have taken place, nor is it necessary, in my own opinion, to mass the writings in question together as "the principal Puranas", for it is possible to trace a serial development of the Hindu idea, which makes it easy enough to distinguish chronological periods in Pauranika literature, with a considerable approach to definiteness.

With regard to the Mahabharata itself, if the theory suggested as to the date of its last recension should be finally accepted, it will, I believe, prove not impossible so to determine its different strata as to be fairly sure what parts were added in the Gupta period, and by the Gupta poet. We must remember that Indian students might easily qualify themselves, as no alien could, to apply the tests of language and theological evolution. This and similar work might easily be undertaken by literary societies. And I would suggest—in accordance with a method already widespread in Biblical criticism—that students' editions of the texts might be printed, in which the ground of pages and

\* *Early History of India*, pp. 267-8.

† *Ibid.*, p. 19.

paragraphs should be of various colours, according to their supposed periods. The paper of indeterminate passages might be white, for instance, the ancient yellow, the Shavite green or pink, and the additions of the Gupta period blue in tint. Or students might carry out this somewhat elaborate undertaking for themselves by means of washes of colour. In any case, such a device would prove a valuable mode of presenting to the eyes at a single glance the results of considerable time and labour.

• Some points in the relative chronology are easy enough to determine. The story of Nala and Damayanti, for instance, by the exquisite prayer of Nala—"Thou blessed one, may the Adityas, and the Vasus, and the twin Ashvins, together with the Maruts, protect thee, thine own honour being thy best safeguard!"—betrays the fact of its origin in the Vedic or Upanishadic pre-Pauranika period. The story of Nala and Damayanti is one of the oldest of Aryan memories, and the mention of the man's name first may be a token of this. The atmosphere of the story is that of the India in which Buddhism arose. The king cooks meat, and his wife eats it. The gods who accompany Nala to the Swayamvara are Vedic gods. There is no allusion throughout the story to Mahadeva or Krishna. There is, on the otherhand, a serpent possessed of mysterious knowledge. And the Brahmins are represented as servants, not as governors, of kings. One of the next stories in that wonderful *Vana-Parva* in which Nala and Damayanti occurs, is the tale of Sita and Rama. And third and last of the series is Savitri. This sequence is undoubtedly true to the order of their evolution. Sita is the woman of sorrow, the Madonna of serenity. And Savitri, which is late Vedic, and referred to in the Ramayana—showing little or no trace of Shaivite or Vaishnavite influence, save perhaps in the mention of Narada—is the fully Hinduised conception of the faithful wife. Her birth as the incarnation of the national prayer is an instance of the highest poetry. And the three heroines together—Damayanti, Sita, Savitri—

constitute an idealisation of woman to which I doubt whether any other race can show a parallel.

That such tales as the Kirata-Arjuniya, again, belong to the Shaivite recension, there can be no question. Equally certain is it, that some incidents, such as that of Draupadi's cry to Krishna for protection, and Bhishma's absorption in Krishna on his death-bed, must belong to the Gupta version. The rude vigour of the gambling scene, however, and the old warrior's death on the bed of arrows, as well as the marriage of five Pandavas to one queen, would appear to come straight out of the heroic age itself.

It would greatly aid us in our conception of the genius and personality of that unknown poet who presided over the deliberations of the Council of Recension, if we could say with certainty what touches in the great work were his. Was he responsible, for instance, for that supremely beautiful incident, according to which, up to a certain moment, the wheels of Yudhishtira's chariot had never touched the earth? If so, the world has seen few who for vigour and chastity of imagination could approach him. But not alone for the purpose of literary appreciation would one like to divide the great poem into its component strata. We are familiar with the remark that while the things *stated by* works of the imagination are usually false, what they *mention* is very likely to be true. It is the things mentioned in the Mahabharata that demand most careful analysis. Of this kind are the various references to the cities of the period.

Although the centre of the events which the work chronicles is supposed to lie at Hastinapura or Indraprastha in the remote past, we are made constantly aware that the poet himself regards the kingdom of Magadha as the rival focus of power. Jarasandha may or may not have lived and reigned during the age of Krishna and the Pandavas. What is clear is that the last compilers of the Mahabharata could not imagine an India without the royal house of Rajgir. The same fact comes out with equal clearness in

the Bhagavata Purana and possibly elsewhere. Now this is a glimpse into the *political* consciousness of the Gupta period. It shows us Northern India, then as now, dominated by two governing forces—one seated near Delhi, and one within the region today known as Bengal ; and it shows unity to be a question mainly of a coalition between these two. Two hundred and fifty years later than Vikramaditya, India is again ruled by a strong hand, that of Harischandra. But his capital is at Thaneshwar, near Kurukshetra. Thus the shifting and re-shifting goes on, and the great problem of modern times, that of finding a common sentiment of nationality, in which Hindu and Mohammedan shall be knit together equally, is seen to be but a new inclusion of an age-old oscillation of centres, whose original cause may perhaps be deep-hidden in the geographical and ethnological conditions that gave birth to India.

Why, again, is the scene of the telling of the Mahabharata laid, theoretically, at Taxila? This place, situated to the north-west of Rawalpindi, would appear, from the age of Buddha onwards till the coming of the Huns more than a thousand years later, to have occupied much the same place in Indian parlance as the University of Cordova in mediaeval Europe, and for much the same reason. The city was a university in the time of Buddha, as witness the youth who went there from Rajgir to learn medicine. It lay on the highway of nations. Past its very doors streamed the nomadic hordes of invading Scythian and Tartar, both before and after the birth of the Christian era. Long before that it had given hostelry and submission to the Greek raid under Alexander. In mediaeval Europe, similarly, medicine could be learnt at Cordova, because there was the meeting-place of East and West. In the Moorish university African, Arab, Jew, and European all met, some to give, others to take, in the great exchange of culture. It was possible there to take as it were a bird's eye view of the most widely separated races of men, each with its characteristic outlook. In the same fashion, Taxila in her day

was one of the focal points, one of the great resonators, as it were, of Asiatic culture. Here, between 600 B.C. and A.D. 500, met Babylonian, Syrian, Egyptian, Arab, Phoenician, Ephesian, Chinese, and Indian. The Indian knowledge that was to go out of India must first be carried to Texila, thence to radiate in all directions. Such must have been the actual position of the city in the Hindu consciousness of the Gupta period. Had this fact anything to do with its choice as the legendary setting for the first telling of the Mahabharata? Did Vikramaditya regard the poem, perhaps as a kind of Purana of India herself, as the national contribution to world-letters? Or are we to look for the explanation to the name Takshashila only (= Takshakashila?), and to the part played in the first volume by the great serpent Takshaka?

Supposing the year A.D. 400 to be rightly chosen as that of the final compilation of the Mahabharata, and the city of Pataliputra as the scene of its commissioning, it follows that the poem may be taken as an epitome of the Bengali civilisation of that period. We do not often realise how ample are the materials now in existence for a full and continuous narrative of Bengal. Sharat Chandra Das long ago pointed out that the city of Lhasa is a page taken out of mediaeval Bengal. In the influence of the Bengali architect, Vidyadhar, in laying out of the city of Jaipur in the reign of Sewai Jey Singh in the first half of the eighteenth century, we have evidence of a later date as to the greatness and enlightenment of the Bengali mind throughout its history. Those streets of Jaipur forty yards wide, that regard for air and the needs of sanitation, that marvellous development of the civic sense, are not modern and foreign but pre-English and Bengali in their source and origin. But to my own mind the Mahabharata is in this matter the master-document. Taking Vikramaditya as the reigning sovereign, we see here a people thoroughly conversant with civic and regal splendour. How beautiful and full of life is the following description of a city rejoicing:

“And the citizens decorated the city with flags and standards and garlands of flowers. And the streets were watered and decked with wreaths and other ornaments. And at their gateways the citizens piled flowers. And their temples and shrines were all adorned with flowers.”

There is need here, it should be added, of a history of *books* in India. What were the first manuscripts to Mahabharata written on? When “the three Vedas” are referred to with such clearness and distinctness, how does the writer or speaker conceive of them? Is the picture in his mind that of a *book* or a *manuscript*; and if so of what composed? Or is it a choir of Brahmins, having as many parts and divisions as the Vedas themselves?

Behind all the exuberance of prosperity and happiness, moreover, in this poem, stands the life of reverence and earnest aspiration; the ideals of faith, purity, and courage, which pervade all classes of the people alike, and are the same today as they were under the empire of Pataliputra. As regards his ideal of learning, a young Bengali scholar of today belongs still to the culture of the Gupta period. A knowledge of Sanskrit from the ancient Vedic to the fashionable literary language of the day; an acquaintance with certain books; and the knowledge of a definite scheme of metaphysics, logic, and philosophy may be taken as the type of scholarship then. And very few are the Bengali minds that have yet reached a point in the assimilation and expression of a new form of thought and knowledge, which would make it possible to say that they are of another age than that of Vikramaditya. Of that new age science is to be the pivot and centre, and there can be no doubt that the era of science, with its collateral development of geography and history, will directly succeed that of the Guptas, with its Sanskrit literature and logic in Bengal. In order to pass from one type so highly evolved, however, into another which shall give the people an equal place in Humanity, it is necessary that the moral and ethical standards of the race shall grow, rather than relax, in strength

and stability. The meeting line of periods is a time of winnowing and of judgment in the history of nations, and many are the souls to be scattered like chaff.

It is clear from many of the allusions in the life of Krishna, as told both in the Mahabharata and in the Puranas, that He directly, in most places, supersedes the Vedic gods. In the moment of his Ascension it is Indra who hymns Him. And already at Brindavana He has successfully preached the Law of Karma in opposition to Vedic sacrifice, and has succeeded in bringing Indra low in the ensuing contest. This new religion of Vishnu, indeed, like that of Shiva, belongs to a different class from that of the old nature-gods. The more modern are subjective. Their sphere is in the soul, and their power that of the highest ideals. Indra, Agni, Yama, and Varuna represented external forces, cosmic some of them, irresistible in their might by puny man, glorious, lovable, *but not of THE WITHIN*. They were supremely objective, even as to this day, in the Christian system is God of Father.

The story of Nala and Damayanti, coming as it does out of the earlier Vedic period, has nevertheless had its conclusion modified by the Gupta poets, in accordance with that amelioration of taste and manners which is inseparable from a great and long-established civilisation, and also doubtless with that high development of religious ideals which will always take place in India in periods of prosperity and power. We feel it artistically wrong that Kali (काली) should be allowed to depart, and Pushkara should be forgiven. But the subjects of the Gupta emperors had been for ages accustomed to peace and wealth, and in the general refinement of the period reconciliation was desired as the dramatic climax, not revenge. The story of Savitri shows the same trend of popular taste in somewhat different fashion. She triumphs over death—not by the heroic methods of the earlier maiden, who could appeal to the honour of the gods and meet with jovial and thoroughly benevolent treatment in return, but by sheer force of the

spiritual ideal. Born of prayer itself, prepared for the supreme encounter by vigil and fast, Savitri is no Vedic princess, but a tender, modern, Hindu woman. She belongs almost unconsciously to the coming era of subjective soul-staying faiths. The boisterous days of storm and fire and forest worships are now far behind.

Between these two ages, however, of the Vedic gods on the one hand, and the theological systems of Vishnu and Shiva on the other, there is in the Mahabharata and also in the Puranas to a less extent one anomalous figure. It is that of Brahma, the Creator, the benevolent four-headed Grandsire. Who was this Brahma? What is his exact significance? It might almost be stated as a law that in India there has never been a deity or a religious idea without some social formation behind it. What traces have we, then, of a Brahma-worshipping sect? At what period, and where, are we to look for it? Is there any connection between him and the story of Dattatreya? What is the history of his one temple and one image near Pushkar at Ajmer? Already, in the Mahabharata, He seems to be half-forgotten; yet if that work had been produced in the present age he would have received less mention still. Christians, who are accustomed to an organisation of the functions of Deity, as definite as that of any other judicial or executive department, imagine Him glibly correspondent to their own Creator. But it may be questioned whether this title is ever more than loosely applied in Hinduism. Each worshipper regards that Divine Manifestation who to his own heart is supreme, as the necessary Source and Fountain of Being. And everyone, again in a loftier mood, will tell us that the creation of a material universe is no part of the work of God at all.

An important date to settle is that of Kalidasa. If Chandragupta II of Pataliputra (A.D. 375 to 413) be really the famous Vikramaditya of Ujjain, it is difficult to see how Kālidasa can have been one of the jewels of his court. Hinduism would seem first to have formulated the idea of

Shiva, then that of Vishnu (as Lakshmi-Narayana), next that of Rama, and lastly that of Krishna. Between the theological conception of Lakshmi-Narayana and the concreted conception of Rama, Kalidasa appears to have lived. His imagination was greatly touched by the conception of the Trinity, which must have been newly completed in his time. Personally he was overshadowed by the idea of Shiva, and he was not without foresight of the deification of Rama. Hindu scholars should be able from these considerations to fix his date.

The glimpses which the Mahabharata every now and again affords us of the worship of Surya, or the sun, would suggest this rather as a royal than as a popular devotion. And the hypothesis is more or less borne out by the traces of his worship which remain in various parts of India. In Kashmir, in Orissa, and here and there in unexpected places, we meet with architectural and sculptural remains of it. But amongst the people it seems to have left few or no traces. Surya is counted academically amongst the Five Manifestations of the Supreme Being according to Hinduism, but devotionally, of what account is He?

These are questions that call for study and reply. Personally I believe that as our understanding of India progresses, we shall more and more be led to recognise the importance of place and history in accounting for those differentiations which certain common ideas have gradually undergone. It has not been opposition of opinion, but mere diversity of situation, which has been the source of the existing variety of sects and schools. Thus the deeper our enquiry goes, the more effectively shall we realise the overwhelming truth of the statement that amidst all her seeming complexity India is one, and the Indian People a single united nationality.

## THE RELATION BETWEEN BUDDHISM AND HINDUISM

“THERE was never a religion in India known as Buddhism, with temples and priests of its own order.” These words of the Swami Vivekananda appear to myself the finest postulate of any clear study of the question laid down as the title of this paper. Socially Buddhism in India never consisted of a church but only of a religious order. Doctrinally it meant the scattering of that wisdom which had hitherto been peculiar to Brahmin and Kshatriya amongst the democracy. Nationally it meant the first social unification of the Indian people. Historically it brought about the birth of Hinduism. In all these respects Buddhism created a heritage which is living to the present day. Amongst the forces which have gone to the making of India, none has been so potent as that great wave of redeeming love for the common people which broke and spread on the shores of Humanity in the personality of Buddha. By preaching the common spiritual right of all men whatever their birth, He created a nationality in India which leapt into spontaneous and overwhelming expression so soon as his message touched the heart of Ashoka, the People’s King. This fact constitutes a supreme instance of the way in which the mightiest political forces in history are brought into being by those who stand outside politics. The great Chandra Gupta, founding an Empire 300 B.C., could not make a nationality in India. He could only establish that political unity and centralisation in whose soil an Indian nationality might grow and come to recognise itself. Little did he dream that the germ of that Indian solidarity which was to establish his throne on adamant foundations lay, not with himself, but with those yellow-clad beggars who came and went about his

dominions, and threaded their way through the gates and streets of Pataliputra itself. Yet time and the hour were with him. He builded better than he knew. From the day of the accession of this Chandra Gupta, India was potentially mature. With the conversion of Ashoka she becomes aware of her own maturity. Nothing appears more clearly in the mind of the great Ashoka than his consciousness of the geographical extent and unity of his territory, and his sense of the human and democratic value of the populated centres. We find these things in the truly imperial distribution of his decrees ; in the deep social value of his public works—roads, wells, hospitals, and the rest ; and, above all, in the fact that he published decrees at all. Here was no throne-proud autocrat, governing by means of secret orders, but a sovereign, publishing to his people his notion of that highest law which bound him and them alike. Never did monarch live who so called his subjects into his councils. Never was there a father who more deeply gave his confidence to his children. Yet without the work done by Chandra Gupta the grandfather and completed by Ashoka himself in his earlier years, in the long-repented conquest of Kalinga, or Orissa, this blossoming time of true nationality, when all races and classes of Indian folk were drawn together by one loving and beloved sovereign, would not have been possible. Ashoka owed as much to the political unity of India as to the wondrous vision which he had received from Buddha of all that it means to be a man, a human being, high born or low born, Aryan or non-Aryan.

But the question, Of what spiritual confraternity did Ashoka hold himself a member?—becomes here of considerable importance. To belong to a new sect does not often have the effect of opening a man's heart to all about him in this fashion. Sects as a rule unite us to the few, but separate us from the many. And here lies the meaning of the fact that Buddhism in India was no sect. It was a worship of a great personality. It was a monastic

order. But it was not a sect. Ashoka felt himself to be a monk, and the child of the monkhood, though seated on a throne, with his People as his church.

Similarly to this day there may at any time rise within Hinduism a great Sannyasin, whose fully-enrolled disciples are monks and nuns, while yet he is honoured and recognised as the teacher or Guru by numberless householders. The position of the memory of Buddha as a Hindu teacher, in the third century before Christ, was not in these respects different from that of Sri Ramakrishna today, or that of Ramdas of Maharashtra in the seventeenth century. In the two last-named cases, however, the citizen-disciples, Grihastha-Bhaktas, have a well-defined background in which they inhere. Hinduism is long ago a virtual unity—though that fact may not yet have been realised and defined—with its choice of religious systems to meet the needs of various types of character, and the great monastic Guru stands outside all as a quickening and spiritualising force, whose influence is felt in each alike. The citizen-Bhakta of Ramdas or Ramakrishna remains a Hindu.

In the days of Ashoka, however, Hinduism was not yet a single united whole. The thing we now know by that name was then probably referred to as the religion of the Brahmins. Its theology was of the Upanishads. Its superstitions had been transmitted from the Vedic period. And there was as yet no idea that it should be made an inclusive faith. It co-existed with beliefs about snakes and springs and earth-worship, in a loose federation which was undoubtedly true to certain original differences of race.

With the age of Buddhism all this was changed. The time had now come when men could no longer accept their beliefs on authority. Religion must for all equally be a matter of the personal experience, and there is no reason to doubt the claim made by the Jainas, that Buddha was the disciple of the same Guru as Mahavira. We know the age of a heresy by the tenets it contradicts, and in repudiating the authority of the Vedas, Jainism proves itself

the oldest form of non-conformity in India. And in the same way, by its relative return upon Vedic thought, we may find in Buddhism an element of reaction against Jainism. Only by accepting the Jaina tradition, moreover, as to the influence which their Gurus had upon Buddha, are we able to account satisfactorily for the road taken by Him from Kapilavastu to Bodh-Gaya through Rajgir. He made his way first of all to the region of the famous Jaina teachers. If, again, there should be any shred of truth in Sir Edwin Arnold's story (presumably from the *Lalita-Vistara*) that it was at Rajgir that He interceded for the goats, the incident would seem under the circumstances the more natural. He passed through the city on His way to some solitude where He could find realisation, with His heart full of that pity for animals and that shrinking from the thought of sacrifice, which was the characteristic thought of the age, one of the great preoccupations, it may be, of the Jaina circles He had just left. And with His heart thus full, He met the sacrificial herd, marched with them to the portals of Bimbisara's palace, and pleaded with the king for their lives, offering His own in their place. Whether this was actually so or not, it is certain that one of the great impulses of the day lay in the rebellion against the necessity of the Vedic sacrifice; one of its finest sincerities, in that exaltation of the personal experience which made it seem natural to found on it a religion. That a man's religious convictions must be the result of his own private realisation of truth is an idea so old in India as to lie behind the Upanishads themselves. But that such a realisation had a right to be socialised, to be made the basis of a religious sect, is a principle which was first perhaps grasped by the Jainas. It is this decision, thus definitely arrived at and clearly held, that accounts for the strength and certainty of Indian thought to this hour. For the doctrine that direct perception is the only certain mode of proof, and that all belief, therefore, rests on the direct perception of competent persons, is here unshakable; and

it is easy to understand how such an attitude, on the part of a whole nation, exalts the individual thinker and the mind of genius.

The world is now so familiar with the spectacle of the religious leader going out from amongst his fellows and followed by all who think with him, to found some sect which is to be even as a new city of the human spirit, that it can hardly think itself back to the time when this was a thing unknown. In the age of the Vedas and Upanishads, however, the spectacle had not yet been seen in India. The religious teacher of those days lived retired in the forest clearings and gathered round him, not a sect, but a school, in the form of a few disciples. Jainism, with its sudden intense revolt against the sacrificial idea, and its sudden determination to make its pity effective for the protection of dumb animals, was the first religious doctrine to call social forces to its aid in India ; in other words, it was the first organised sect or church, and by forming itself it invented the idea of sects, and the non-Jainas began to hold themselves in some sort of unity round the Aryan priesthood. Buddha in his turn accepted from Jainism its fearless pity, but not contented with the protection of the dumb creature, added to the number of those to be redeemed man himself, wandering in ignorance from birth to birth, and sacrificing himself at every step to his own transient desires. He realised to the full the career of the religious teacher as Jainism had made it possible, yet the doctrine which he preached as the result of his personal experience was in all essential respects identical with that which had already been elaborated in the forest Ashramas of the Upanishads, as the "religion of the Brahmanas". It was in fact the spiritual culture of that period brought into being and slowly ripened in those Ashramas of peaceful thought and lofty contemplation that pressed forward now to make the strength behind Buddha as a preacher. He declared that which the people already dimly knew. Thus, by the debt which he owes to both, this Great Sannyasin, calling

all men to enter on the highest path, forms the bridge between the religion of the Aryans, tracing itself back to the Vedas, and the religion of the Jainas, holding itself to be defiant of the Vedas.

Such was the relation of Buddha to his immediate past, which he himself, however, overtopped and hid by his gigantic personality. We have next to look at the changes made by him in the religious ideas of succeeding generations. Taking Buddha as the founder, not of a sect, but of a monastic order, it is easy to see that his social organisation could never be cumulative. There must in fact come a time when it would die out. No new members could be born into his fold. His sons were those only on whom his idea had shone—those who had personally and voluntarily accepted his thought. Yet he must have had many lovers and admirers who could not become monastics. What was the place of the citizen-Bhaktas, the Grihastha-devotees of Buddha? We obtain glimpses of many such in the course of his own life. They loved him. They could not fail to be influenced and indeed dominated by him, in all their living and thinking thereafter. Yet they could not go out in the life of the wanderer, leaving the duties of their station. He was their sovereign, as it were, monarch of their souls. But he was not their general, for they were not members of the army. That place belonged only to monks and nuns, and these were neither.

Whatever was the place of the citizen-Bhakta, it is clear that he would express in that place the full influence of the personal idea that Buddha represented. Not Indra of the Thousand Eyes, delighting in sacrifice, could ever again be the dream of the soul that had once loved Gautama. Calmness of meditation, light and stillness, detachment and knowledge, are now seen to be the highest powers of man. And this new realisation constantly reinforced by new admirers, will do its great work, not within the Buddhist Order, but outside it, in the eventual

modification of some other system. The conscious aim of the Order as such will be to maintain its first condition of purity, truth, and ardour. The unconscious aim of the world without will be to assimilate more and more of the overflow of idealism that comes from within it, more and more of the personal impress left by One in whom all men's aspirations have been fulfilled. From this point we can see that the Order itself must some day die out in India, from sheer philosophical inanition and the want of a new Buddha. But its influence on the faiths outside it will echo and re-echo, ever deepening and intensifying.

Those faiths were, as we have seen, three in number—(1) Jaina ; (2) Arya-Vedic ; and (3) popular unorganised beliefs. It would appear, therefore, that the citizen-Bhakta would necessarily belong to one or other of the groups. Already Jainism must have been a force acting, as we have seen, to unify the Arya-Vedic and the popular unorganised beliefs, giving its first impetus, in fact, to the evolution of what would afterwards be Hinduism, and this process Buddhism, with its immense aggressiveness for the redemption of man, would greatly intensify. Yet the period would be considerable before this influence of the Buddhist idea would be sufficient to make itself perceptible in Hinduism, and its emergence, when that period was completed, might be expected to be abrupt.

My own opinion is that this influence makes itself visible in the sudden advent of the idea of Shiva or Mahadeva to a dominant position in the national life. In tracing out the evolution of the Shiva-image, we are compelled, I think, to assume its origin in the Stupa. And similarly, in the gradual concretising of the Vedic Rudra into the modern Mahadeva, the impress made by Buddha on the national imagination is extraordinarily evident. Stirless meditation, unshadowed knowledge, fathomless pity, are now the highest that man can imagine of the soul. And why? For no reason, save that Buddha had gone to and fro for forty years after the attainment of Nirvana, and

the print of his feet could by no means die out in India! The caves of Elephanta in the Bay of Bombay are a cathedral of Shiva-worship. They contain, moreover, not only an emblem of Shiva which may be more or less modern, but also a great many carvings. And none of these has a greater interest and importance than that on the left side of the entrance, a bas-relief of Shiva, wearing beads and tiger-skin, and seated in meditation. It is Shiva: it is not Buddha. But it is the Shiva of the transition, and as such it is most significant.

For hundreds of years, then, before this emergence of Shiva as the main Hindu conception of God (which for a time he was), devout souls had loved Buddha and hastened with a special devotion to give alms to. Sadhus, without on that account suspecting for a moment that they were of any but the accepted Arya-Vedic household of faith. Less dependence on the great powers that dwelt beneath the mountain springs; less sense of the mystery of serpent and forest; an ever-deepening reverence for the free soul, for the Sadhu, for the idea of renunciation, this was all of which anyone was conscious. And yet in this subtle change of centres, history was being made; a new period was coming to the birth. Verily, those were great days in India between 500 B.C. and A.D. 200 or thereabouts. For the national genius had things all its own way, and in every home in the land the little was daily growing less, and the real and the universal were coming more and more prominently into view. Those were probably the days of Gitas made in imitation of the Buddhist Suttas. And this fact alone, if it be true, will give us some hint as to the preoccupation of the period with great thought.

“Thou that art knowledge itself,

Pure, free, ever the witness,

Beyond all thought and beyond all qualities,

To thee the only true Guru

My Salutation:

Shiva Guru! Shiva Guru! Shiva Guru!”

These words quoted as they are from the Upanisad may be taken as the key-note of this first period in the making of Hinduism. The national faith will form itself henceforth like a great white Shankha (conch-shell) coiled in broadening spirals about the Vedic pillar. The theological Ishvara believed in by the Brahmins is referred to vaguely but conveniently by themselves and others at this time as Brahma. He is the God to whom the sacrifices are made. But in the presence of Buddha and the memory of Buddha a new and higher conception begins to prevail ; and as time goes on, this higher conception takes name and form as Shiva or Mahadeva. Hinduism is thus born, not as a system, but as a *process* of thought, capable of registering in its progressive development the character of each age through which it passes.

It follows, then, that the heirs of Buddha-Bhakti, so to speak, in India, might be on the one hand Jainas, or on the other Shaivite Hindus. These were the two churches whose children might be born as if in the shadow of Buddha. And it is in accordance with this that we find Shaivism and Jainism subsequently dividing between them such places of Buddhist history as Benares and Rajgir.

One knows too little of Jainism to be able to estimate rightly in any detail its services to India, or its place in Indian history. Today, to the world outside, it appears as a gospel of mercy to dumb creatures and of devotion of the Saints. It has been said of it that, "it has netted India with shrines of pilgrimage", and assuredly, as one travels, one is struck over and over again with its constantly recurring prominence in past history. Kumbha Rana of Chitore, for instance, early in the 15th Century, is said to have been a Jaina. At any rate, he or some other king of the period, indisputably built a Jaina temple. It would seem on the face of it, as if it might be a faith that would appeal to heroic persons. But of the elements of this appeal, or the history of the gradual development of the faith as a whole it is difficult to learn enough to make

a clear demonstration. I have often suspected that there was once in Jainism a definite place for Buddha worship, so that a suddenly discovered love of Buddha might seem to a man a motive for betaking himself, with his whole family, into the Jaina fold. There is, in the Sone Bhandar Cave at Rajgir, an old four-sided Stupa, of perhaps the first century of the Christian era, which appears to represent Buddha in its four panels from a Jainistic point of view. In spite of the steeple-like form of the Stupa, placing it, I think, about the Christian era, it would seem—by the awkwardness of the standing figure, which is carved as a child would draw a man with feet apart—to be somewhat early. That it is Jaina or at least Jainistic one gathers from the fact that the man is naked. Indeed, this fact may be held to prove that the figure is not that of Buddha, but one of the Jaina masters. But the most striking feature of the representation is the ringing impress of the personality of the great teacher upon it; from the top and sides of each of the panels point hands, half-covered by branches of trees, as if to accompany the words "Behold the Man!" If the figure be, as one imagines, that of Buddha, it was clearly made by some member of a community in which his memory was still fresh. If it be not Buddha, it betrays a love and conviction which form the key to a whole religion.

## THE RISE OF VAISHNAVISM UNDER THE GUPTAS

There have been many Vaishnavisms, and any adequate history of the subject must make some attempt to take account of them all. Let us begin at the end, with the movement of Chaitanya in the fifteenth century. This would seem to have swept over Bengal like a fever. Wherever it went, it seized high and low alike. It availed itself of the severest learning, and yet penetrated at the same time to the hearts of the most ignorant and untouchable. It embraced and transformed all that was left of Buddhism. It established Brindavana as a great college of piety, holiest of Tirthas, and most notable of Ashramas. It ended outside Bengal by creating a new order of architecture, and inside her boundaries by forging a great vernacular on its anvil. And yet in the form given to it by Chaitanya and Nityananda it was a Bengali rather than an all-India movement. It centred in Radha and Krishna and the story of the Gopis. The contemporary movement in the rest of India selected for emphasis now this element, now that, in the older Vaishnavism. Here it anchored itself on Sita and Rama ; there it found and clung to some other rock. It ended by placing Lakshmi-Narayana on the altar of worship. It is Lakshmi-Narayana who is worshipped throughout Maharashtra and Gujarat. It is Lakshmi-Narayana that we find at Badri Narayana, in the valleys of that diocese. The older Satya-Narayana had disputed with Shiva the possession of the road from Hardwar to Kedar Nath, but it was the latest wave, the mediaeval revival, that captured the pilgrimage from Shrinagar to Badri.

Had there been a Lakshmi in the older Vaishnavism? If not, what determined her inclusion in this mediaeval renaissance? A thousand years of social history lie in the

answer to this question. It is an answer that can only be made definite by a detailed study of the different sects and orders of modern Vaishnavism, and a comparison of their beliefs, customs, and traditions. In this land of religious conservatism, we may rely upon it that the whole story of its own development is written upon the brow of the faith itself, for the first trained eyes to decipher. We may depend upon it also, that each phase and form of the central idea has had its own individual history, most likely preserved in it as an essential tradition. Nothing that survived has occurred by accident; nothing has been created out of wantonness, or out of an idle desire to be different from others. Ideas so born must at once have perished. The synthesis of Vaishnavism today is what it has been made by its own history.

One thing is somewhat puzzling. Why was the devotion of the Rajputani Mira Bai of so Bengali a type? It is the love of Krishna with which she is enrapt. It is Brindavana towards which all her wanderings tend. There was some strong and special bond during the Middle Ages that knit together Rajputana and Bengal. This is shown in the anxiety of Rajput princes for the recovery of Gaya from the Mussalmans. No history of Vaishnavism can be complete if it does not, on the one hand, account for its own differences as between Bengal and other provinces; and, on the other, explain the Chaitanya-like personality of Mira Bai.

To the Indian consciousness, this mediaeval renaissance was bound up with a strong movement for the assertion of the rights of woman as well as of the people. That the religious faculty of humanity is as much feminine as masculine; that woman has as much right as man to abandon the career of the household for the life of the soul—these are amongst the convictions that throned Lakshmi beside Narayana during this period as the centre of Vaishnavite worship. It may be, further, that they are part of the inheritance taken over by it from Buddhism.

The thirteen hundred women and twelve hundred men who were received into the congregation by Nityananda, at Khardaha, cannot have been altogether without precedent or parallel. Nor can they, with all their wretchedness, have failed to hold a strong conviction of the equal right of woman with man to play a part in the life of religion. And if it be true that they represented an old Buddhist order, bewildered by its oblivion of its own history, puzzled by the absence of a niche for it in the Hindu synthesis it saw about it, then it follows that this idea of the religious right of woman was of old and deep growth in the Indian mind.

Mediaeval Vaishnavism seems to have had its origin in the South, in the great teachers Ramanuja and Madhva-charya. In the Himalayas it has made a notable renewal of the relations of North and South. Both Kedar Nath and Badri Narayana must take their Mahants or Raouls from Madras, and though this rule may have begun with Shankaracharya, it must have been revitalised later. On the Vaishnava altars of the Dravida-desha itself, as also at Gaya, Narayana reigns for the most part alone. That is to say, He dates from an older than the Badri Narayana or Maharashtra stratum of Vaishnava doctrine. And this is right. It is in the missionary-country that the propaganda of a given moment finds its fullest scope. Thus a single phase of Hinduism, becomes a national religion in Burma and Ceylon. It remains but one element in a great matrix in the land of its birth. It is to the South then that we must go if we would learn of the older Vaishnavism. It is its religious organisation and its temple-ritual that we must study, if we would know what was the background from which sprang Ramanuja, or what was the heaven for which the mother of Shankaracharya yearned, if indeed the exquisite story of her death-bed be not a later Vaishnavite gloss.

Southern Vaishnavism is the Vaishnavism of the Gupta empire. It was the Vaishnavism that was spread

far and wide with the story of the Mahabharata. The *Pandava-lila* of the Southern villages, and the Pandava legends of the Northern Tirtha have a single chronological origin. They both alike belong to the culture that was promulgated during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries under the later Pataliputra Empire.\* Only in the South do we find temples in which the image of Krishna is worshipped as Partha-Sarathi, the charioteer of Arjuna, because only in the South does the Gupta influence remain to this day in its purity and strength. The Narayana image of the South now is the old Narayana—Satya-Narayana, as he was called—of Magadha. It is the same Narayana that was placed by Skanda Gupta on the top of the Bhitari Lat about A.D. 460, when he set this up with the double purpose of commemorating his father's Shraddha and his own victory over the Huns. It is the same Narayana that seems to have been carved so freely in Bengal under the Pal dynasty, after Gour became the capital.

“As Krishna hastened to Devaki,” says the priceless inscription on the Bhitari Lat, with the news of his victory over his enemies, so went Skanda Gupta to his mother.

A couple of times in the national epic itself Krishna is addressed by such titles as “Slayer of Putana”, showing, as does this inscription, that Mahabharata Vaishnavism, though mainly dependent for its central figure on the Krishna of the Bhagavad-Gita, was intended to include and confirm the story of Gokula and Mathura. How much of Brindavana episode there may have been in this original nucleus of the great tale it is for the critics of language and literature to determine. The relative ages of the Harivamsha, Vishnu and Bhagavata Puranas hold that secret between them. That the child Krishna was always the slayer of demons we may be quite sure. This aspect was of his very essence. Are divine beings not always known by their slaying of demons? It is only when the

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\* The reader is reminded that the fourth Century in English, is from 300 to 400 A.D., the fifth from 400 to 500 A.D. and so on.

fact of their divinity is firmly established in our minds that our attention can be claimed for their Gospels and their Gitas.

In an age of great education and general understanding of the essentials of the Faith, the throne of Pataliputra had to show that the older Shaivism was not the only form of religion that could ratify and popularise the sublime truths of the Upanishads. The Babe who had dwelt amongst the cowherds on the Jamuna-side had nevertheless been of royal Hindu parentage, and it was told of him that when the usurper had been slain, He was at once sent away by Devaki and Vasudeva to be instructed in the Vedas.\* Thus the grand personality, that towers above Kurukshetra and enunciates the body of doctrine which all India in the year A.D. 400 knew to be the core of Dharma, combines in Himself the divinity of the Indian Shiva, the virility of the Greek Herakles, the simplicity of the Judæan Christ, the tenderness of Buddha, and the calm austerity and learning of any teacher of the Upanishads. The great truths He utters were in the very air during the period when the Mahabharata was put into its present form under the patronage of the Gupta of Pataliputra. It was essential that the divine incarnation should give voice to the whole scheme of personal discipline and salvation, and that utterance forms in the present case the Bhagavad-Gita. The potential power that proved the background of the new faith is seen in the fact that the presence of Shalgrama, as the symbol of Vishnu, has been essential ever since to the legality of a Hindu marriage.

The tide of this Gupta Vaishnavism lifted and reinterpreted many already familiar elements of life. The image of Narayana that it made its own, was a natural development from the figure that the sculptors were at that time in the habit of cutting on the Stupas. The three little earthen mounds, placed side by side, that the common

\* See *Vishnu, Harivamsha, and Bhagavata Puranas.*

people were so apt then as now to make for adoration, were explained by the new movement as a symbol of Jagannatha, Lord of the Universe. It gave a like account of the prevalent worship of a sacred foot-print. It incorporated Buddha Deva in its own synthesis, as undoubtedly the tenth incarnation of Vishnu. It accepted and perpetuated the sanctity of Brahma-Gaya, as distinguished from Bodh-Gaya. And there and at other well known Tirthas of that period it endorsed the complex customs that have grown up—probably under the influence of Chinese and Tibetan pilgrims and merchants—of prayer for the dead.

Nor need we suppose that when the Mahabharata was first promulgated, Krishna shone so much alone as He seems to us to do today. To us the whole tangle of culture that bears the name of the Mahabharata appears largely as a setting for the Bhagavad-Gita. But on its first publication, it was almost equally impressive in all its parts. Bhishma and Karna and each of the Pandavas had his place and his glory in the national imagination. Nay, a complete map of the shrines and altars in Garhwal would show that even the poets who contributed fragments—as well as Vyasa, welder of the vast composition into a whole—were held worthy of special honour and enthusiasm.

Thus was established Vaishnavism, as woof upon the warp of Indian religion for the time to come. What was Shiva, we wonder, in the minds of those who knelt so eagerly at this period before the incarnation of Vishnu? Was He merely Nageshvara or Nilakantha? Had He yet become Ardhanari? Probably not; for if He had, it is difficult to see how He could have been superseded by Satya-Narayana, without Lakshmi, as was probably the case. And yet that the worship of the Mother was prior to that of Krishna tends to be shown by the argument of the Devi Purana, which is, that Krishna is Devi. Not yet had the giant mind of Shankaracharya arrived, to work upon the great conception of Shiva, and make of him Mahadeva.

In this question of religious ideas that formed the firmament in which Krishna rose we have a fruitful field of study. A great deal can be inferred from the stories that have gathered round the name of the divine cowherd. Brahma tests Him, to see if He is in truth an incarnation of Vishnu. Here the idea of Brahma as the creator has evidently not yet been supplanted amongst the Aryan classes, and yet the doctrine of the Trinity is implicit, for Brahma shows the assumption that Vishnu is His own equal. Krishna conquers the snake Kaliya, and leaves His own footprint on his head. Here is the same struggle that we can trace in the personality of Shiva as Nageshvara between the new devotional faith and the old traditional worship of snakes and serpents. He persuades the shepherds to abandon the sacrifice to Indra. Here He directly overrides the older Vedic gods, who, as in some parts of the Himalayas today, seem to know nothing of the interposition of Brahma. And throughout the Mahabharata, Shiva gives testimony to the divinity of Krishna, but Krishna never says a word about that of Shiva! That is to say, the divinity of Shiva was well known, was taken for granted, by both poet and audience, but that of Krishna had yet to be established. We shall find that in the ritual of the South the religious procession forms as important a feature as it must have been in the Buddhist Chaityas. Here we read of authoritative organisation in a period when such spectacles had powerfully impressed the pious imagination.

It would appear therefore that a great formative movement took place in the history of Vaishnavism when India was potentially united under the Guptas and when Buddhism had become so highly developed and over-ripe that the story of its origin was losing definiteness in the popular mind. This epoch saw the synthesis, under indisputable suzerain authority, of the doctrinal Krishna, Partha-Sarathi, speaker of the Gita, and the popular Krishna, the Gopala of Gokula, and hero of Mathura. The same period

saw missions despatched to the South for the preaching of this great consolidated faith, and the parcelling out of Garhwal and Kumaon, in the Himalayas, as pre-eminently the land of the Pandava Tirthas. This consolidation of the story and idea of Krishna was in all probability connected with the last recension of the Mahabharata, which was probably in its turn the work of an official synod of poets under Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II, Vikramaditya, between A.D. 330 and 455. We know for a fact that the succeeding Guptas\* were devoted worshippers of Narayana in His incarnation as Krishna, and that in this worship Krishna the son of Devaki, and Krishna the slayer of Kamsa, were joined.

Even this does not exhaust the story of Indian Vaishnavism. The Ramayana was written before the Mahabharata. Rama was the creation of an age, earlier, still more vividly Shaivite and still more conscious of the problems created by Buddhism than that of Krishna. And before the composition of the Ramayana, before even the rise of Shaivism there had been a still older worship of Vishnu. When the idea of the Trinity came in, with the idea of the exaltation of Shiva, Vishnu was at once made its second person. In all lists of the gods—Ganesha, Surya, Indra, Brahma or Agni, Vishnu, Shiva and Durga—He is named before Shiva. In this fact there must be history. Out of that history came the centuries of Vaishnavism which, in consolidated Hinduism of the ages succeeding Shankaracharya, formed one of the two strands of which the rope of the national faith was twisted. From the time of the early Buddhism onwards we may watch the growth of an organised Indian faith in which Shaivism and Vaishnavism are oscillating phases. A century of silence means only some episode to be recovered and recorded. Numberless must be the links between Shankaracharya and Chaitanya ; for it is part and parcel of the nature of things

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\* See Vincient Smith's *Early History of India*, p. 269, for account of engineering work in Kathiawar, with temple and inscription.

that the Hindu development shall proceed by a regular alternation from Shaivism to Vaishnavism and Vaishnavism to Shaivism, and that the epoch-maker, the Avatara, shall be born again and again.

## THE OLD BRAHMINICAL LEARNING

In following up the history of any one of the Indian vernacular literatures, one is likely to be struck with the fact that they take their subjects for the most part from somewhere else, from something outside themselves. They are organs of response, not altogether seats of creativeness; they give expression to something that they have first received. There is of course a layer of vernacular literature—socially the most rustic and plebian—which is the repository of the tastes of the people. Here the common motives of popular romance—love, hate, desertion, fortune, reunion, the favours of supernatural beings, the temporary triumph of the wicked, the unmerited sufferings of the good, and the “all happy ever after”—have free play, as in all countries and all ages. Even this stratum, however, in its main undulations, betrays the tastes that are characteristic of the higher walks of vernacular literature during the passing period. Persecuted beauty is made to go through the fiery ordeal by more or less far-fetched doubts cast upon its virtue, when Sita happens to be the popular ideal; and manly strength is put to tests that bring it into line with the fashionable heroes of the hour. Waves of influence seem to pass across the ocean of democratic poetry in each succeeding period, moulding its surface with less and less distinctness as the level of formal education sinks, but assuredly determining its main heights and descents.

What is the character of these influences? What is their central source of stimulus? What is that brain to which the literatures of the various provinces act as limbs and organs? Is there any main-spring from which all alike draw simultaneous inspiration? And if so, what is it, and where are we to look for it?

Such a fountain of energy and direction does certainly

exist, guiding and colouring the whole intellectual life of the Indian people from generation to generation. It is found in the ancient Sanskrit learning of the Brahmin caste. Here is that floating university and national academy of letters of which the various vernacular languages form as it were so many separate colleges. Here we can watch a single unresting course of evolution, and see it reflected at a certain interval of time, with a certain variety and tremulousness of outlines, in the poetry and letters of each of the provincial peoples.

The great national epics, the Mahabharata and Ramayana, are in Sanskrit, and stand to this day as the type and standard of imaginative culture amongst all save the English-educated classes. The story is learnt, and the personalities become familiar through village-plays and grandmothers' tales, and the constant reference of everyone about one from childhood upwards. But *quotation* can only be made from the Sanskrit, and, with the beautiful precision of mediaeval learning, must be accompanied by careful word-by-word translation into the vulgar tongue. This is the rule, whatever the caste of the speaker, though naturally enough we hear such references oftener from the lips of a Brahmin than from any other.

The translation of either of the epics into one of the minor languages usually marks a literary epoch. It is never a close or exact rendering. The translator allows himself almost as much liberty as Shakespeare in dealing with English history; and a very interesting comparative study of the ideals of different provinces might be made on the basis of the six or seven great names that could be chosen from amongst the authors of these variants. Tulasi Das, the writer of the Hindi Ramayana of the fifteenth century, is one of the springs and fountains of life to the people of the North-West Provinces; as indeed to all Vaishnavas of Northern India. He regarded himself doubtless, as only a reciter or interpreter of the great work of Valmiki, but he has carried out his task in such a

fashion as himself to hold the rank of a great original poet.

Yet the Mahabharata and Ramayana, with the long succeeding train of Sanskrit poetry, do not themselves form the subject of that severe Brahminical training which was the backbone of the old Indian culture. The supreme wisdom of the system is seen nowhere better than in the fact that poetry and the fruits of imagination are allowed to go free. Metre and the rules of prosody are studied in connection with grammar and Vedic enunciation, but the national sagas are regarded as more or less popular and easy, and left to the private reading of the student or to the more serious labours of professional minstrels, bards, and wandering tale-tellers. What an interesting inquiry might be carried out in India, as to the relative numbers of works of literary genius which emanate from the ranks of professional and amateur writers respectively! At any rate, it was not the epics themselves, but that world of thought and philosophy out of which they were born, that environment which presses upon and utters itself even now through both teller and hearers—it was this whose fires were kept so vigorously alight by the Brahmanical organisation of scholarship.

We do not sufficiently realise the fact that mediaeval Hindu India was organised round universities, instead of round political centres. Vikrampur, Nadia, and Mithila were the masternames of Bengali life and thought ever after the downfall of Gour and Rungpur as capital cities. Dacca and Murshidabad were centres of administration and finance. But for the sources of their intellectual and spiritual energies men looked to the seats of Sanskrit learning, not to the thrones of the Nawabs. Even Mohammedanism in its turn had to create its own centres of scholarship, and with its instinct for seizing on the elaborated achievements of Buddhism, it took Jaunpur, which remains today as the fount of episcopal authority for Islamic India. Vikrampur with its long Buddhistic history had enjoyed an intervening

period of importance as the capital of the Sens, or there might have been a like ambition to claim its prestige also for the foreign scheme of culture. We must not too hastily assume that this would have been a loss. The world has seen few types of courtly accomplishment and bearing so fine as that of the scholars in whom a knowledge of Persian was added to the ordinary Hindu training in Sanskrit. It was essentially a system of cultivation destined to turn out a man-of-the-world, and thereby how different from the severe depth and austerity of the Brahminic ideal! But it was very beautiful and delightful in its own way. The Persian education of the old Maulvis of Jaunpur gave a most finished appreciation of great literature. The Islamic scholar and Sanskrit pundit had this in common, that they were both mediaevalists, both devoted students of high poetry, both thankful to be poor if only thereby they might be wise, and both accustomed to spend a dozen years over a single book. It was the bone and marrow of the poem on which their hearts were set, and they often bred up a race of students in whom taste was unerring. Never have I seen the sense of literature so developed as in a certain Hindu monk, who in his childhood had learned Persian from an old scholar in Jaunpur. Mankind will be tangibly poorer when a few grey-headed men who live about Benares, Patna, and Lucknow, shall have passed away, and their sons, stepping into their vacant places, prove to be of a newer breed.

The Hindu universities of the past were distinguished each to some extent by its own specialism. Thus the South was great for the recitation of the Vedas. Even now, in the great temple of Conjeeveram one may imagine oneself in ancient Egypt, as one listens, in the early morning hours, to the fresh young voices of the choir-school in the distance reciting the ancient texts. And the whole of southern society assists in the concentration necessary to this task, for it is required that even laymen listening to the Riks shall, at the first sound of a letter or a syllable misplaced,

manifest violent disgust and distress. This may not seem like good manners, but it is most eloquent of the accuracy demanded in repetition. Similarly, Nadia in Bengal was noted for its logic. Here again, as in literature, the highest fruit grows in freedom. Few stay long enough at their lessons to take a formal course in Inference, yet 'Prove that there is a God!' remains for the whole world the grandest proof of assurance. Nasik and Punderpur in Maharashtra had each its own strong point. And for all—grammar, philosophy, and texts—the crown was Benares. Nor can the pre-eminence of the divine city be said even yet to have departed. There still are the great libraries with the scholars that pore over their treasures and compare texts day after day. There are the laborious schools of the pundits, with their pupils committing verses to heart in sing-song through the hottest hours. There are the grave and reverend professors of the highest ideas of the ancient wisdom, only too glad to lay open their treasures to any who will forsake all to follow truth. Still the poor scholars tramp their way here from all over India. Still on winter mornings one may come upon the student up before dawn, reading aloud to himself in the bleak shelter of some corner. He will go on doing this for twelve years at least, before he will be declared to have a knowledge of his book, and be fit to use his knowledge in the world outside. But by that time he will have the root of the matter in him, and the temptations of luxury and idleness will have ceased to speak to him.

But it is for the most part in the small country Tols in remote places, like Vikrampur with its hundred villages, that the Brahminic learning is built up. Here the great problem of the education and initiation of the comparatively young and unlearned into the path of higher inquiry is solved. When a student arrives at a Tol he is already of a certain age, which may be anything from fifteen to twenty-five. The only children there are the sons and daughters, the nieces and nephews, of the Guru or master. From old

men who were children of the family in these Sanskrit colleges we may still glean what we desire to know about the life there, for a commercial age has shattered the old learning and with it the system of institutions by which it was imparted. Men have not now that large sweet leisure, or that freedom from anxiety, which characterised the old times. Everything has now had its money value measured and assigned, and there is scarcely enough to fill the hungry mouths. A family cannot dispense with the services of one member who might be an earner. Learning did not necessarily in the old times make a man poor, for he might rise through it to great distinction and emolument. But it provided him with so many claims that it left him poor in the end, whatever it may have made him in the beginning. The students who arrived at the Tol paid nothing for the instruction which they received. It was sufficient that they were content to give their lives and labour. Their master was the treasurer of wisdom as well as her exponent. He found the means. There would sometimes be as many as a hundred scholars in a single Tol, and so great was the fame of Bengal for logic that men would come from the most remote parts of the country to join the training of a certain teacher. Intercourse could always be carried on in a Tol in Sanskrit. In one of these rustic colleges in distant Vikrampur, I have heard of two Mahratta students. Customs were made a little elastic to give the necessary margin to the two strangers, but they lived with their Bengali Guru and brethren for many a long year, and departed at last to carry their name and fame far and wide.

A man on his arrival, begging the Guru to take him as a disciple, was supposed to be already interested in some special line of study. He was then set to learn a given book. This had to be committed to memory, and also thoroughly digested and understood. The hearing of the recitation each morning included also a searching examination into matter and criticism. If the result were not satisfactory, the hint was given by suggestion that it should

be re-read, and then a visit would be paid by the master privately during the reading for special exposition and assistance, as soon as the other recitations had been heard.

The next stage in the day's work consisted of the lecture, when a new portion of the treatise that was being studied was taken in hand and expounded by the pundit. Such were the pursuits that occupied the hours of the morning and early afternoon. The glory and delight of college-life came towards evening, when the shadows began to grow, and formal work was over for the day. Then teacher and students together would set out for the afternoon walk. Across the fields they would proceed, in twos and threes, earnestly discussing the questions which had arisen in the course of their studies. Perhaps they would end by paying a friendly visit to another Tol in some neighbouring village. Or perhaps they would return home to find a bevy of visitors come to discuss with them. In deep disputation the evening would pass, food unthought of. And it was no unheard of thing that the guests should lie down at some late hour and stay the night, in order to rise up next morning and renew the fray.

It was in these discussions that the originality and powers of the students were really developed. They also show how essential it was that one Tol should be situated in a district where there were others. Sometimes the argument would assume excitement and almost the dimensions of a pitched battle. We feel this when we read the wonderful story of Chaitanya, who was at first a scholar of Nadia. There came to him in his days of Sanskrit scholarship a pundit from Benares, determined to worst him, famous as he was, in argument. The battle was felt to be the cause of Nadia against Benares, and sympathy was naturally quick for the home of the listeners. On the other hand the age and distinction of the strange scholar were such that for the young Nadia man to enter the lists with him at all was felt to be a piece of temerity. Thus parties were about equally divided—the old for Benares,

the young for Nadia—fairly ready to be swayed this way or that, as the contest might carry them. To us who read the tale, it is a foregone conclusion that Chaitanya was the abler disputant of the two. But we cannot forget that he was also the younger. Over and above this, he was at home. Under these circumstances we might have expected that some impulse of pity would tempt him to save the feeling of the older scholar. Nothing of the sort. The 'logical tournament has a chivalry of its own, but it is for truth, not for persons. Nothing must interfere with the effort to display the actual fact, and the assurance of this is closely bound up with the victory of one person or the other. So the debate proceeds remorselessly, without fear or favour, to its inevitable end in the triumph of youth and Nadia. And we may be assured that nothing would have been so bitterly resented by the pundit from Benares as any idea that his age or his fame or his well known achievements entitled him to be handled tenderly, as if with the gloves on.

But a system of high learning must have some points of contact with lay society. Especially is this the case when it is one of a nature that impoverishes its participants. There must be some means of gathering the sinews of war, in however scanty an amount. This need was met in India of the past by the fact that learning was looked upon as the brightest ornament of social life. No extraordinary marriage function in a great house could in those days be regarded as complete without its battle of the pundits. Invitations were sent out to members of rival schools to come and join their forces under the presidency and direction of such and such a Brahmin. The contest would take place in the presence of the whole polite world, who, though they could not have waged it themselves, had quite sufficient knowledge of the language and matter under dispute to be keen and interested critics of skill. Put thus upon their mettle, the combatants would wrestle, and at the end of days or hours, as the case might be, the victor was

declared. Sometimes the whole of the money-grant about to be made by the father of the bride would be assigned by him to the chief of the pundits. This would be for a signal and crushing victory. More often it would be a proportion of three-quarters, five-eighths, or even fifteen-sixteenths. Sometimes a man would indignantly refuse the award so graduated, feeling that it did not sufficiently recognise the fact that his rival had no ground left to stand upon. In this case a scholar of self-respect was willing to wait till he had driven the whole world to accept him on his own terms of all or nothing. As in the tournaments of European chivalry, the appearance of the unknown knight might at any moment occur, so here also one never knew whether some stranger of genius might not upset the best-calculated chances. The savant must be prepared to defend his own pre-eminence against all comers, and against every conceivable method, new or old.

But if this was the height of passion reached in such contests as took place in the presence of the comparatively unlearned, we can imagine what happened when scholars or Sadhus themselves organised their own conferences amongst themselves. These were announced and financed by princes or by towns, and from far and wide, from remote unheard of Tols, and from the libraries of palaces, as well as from all the great and famous centres, arrived the scholars who were to take part. And when the struggle actually began—ah! We have heard of the defeated taking a vow to starve himself to death, in his rage and mortification. We have heard of closely-fought sessions of many days at a stretch. And finally, when victory was declared, the conqueror, beside himself with the intoxication of success, would tear up the matting of the floor, in order to sprinkle dust, in token of contempt, upon the heads of grave and reverend adversaries.

In such occasions we have a glimpse of what may be called the post-graduate system of university-life. At places like Hrishikesh, we still have the remains of what have

been great scholarly centres for the meeting of the monks and Brahmins. In the Kumbha Mela, which takes place at Hardwar, Allahabad, and Nasik by rotation, we have one of the most ancient and most learned assemblies of learning. The men who play their part here are not neophytes: they are already ripe scholars, meeting for mutual edification. Nor can we deny that there may be history in the tradition which says that at Hrishikesh, Vyasa collected and divided the four Vedas. Great works of scholarship might well be carried out by councils convened in some such way.

Thus we have a suggestion of the twofold development of Sanskrit education, one that of the school or college, the other that of the university proper. This last was more or less peripatetic, but none the less definite and real for that. And the Brahminic schools, on the other hand, were numerous and exact in their constitution. The student who arrived at twenty would sometimes stay in the Tol till he was thirty-five, putting off the whole business of marriage and citizenship till his premier thirst for knowledge should be slaked. And yet were there "very few who arrived at Inference". In truth Inference like poetry was best left free. It was the crown and blossom of all a man had learnt. He had to study how to direct his argument with its "five limbs", which a modern world calls the major and minor premises of the syllogism. He knew what fallacies to guard against, and how many modes of proof were possible. It was better for him that, being trained in all this, he should be left to steer his own course, alike in argument and belief, when it came to the application of his knowledge. It was better for men at large that opinions themselves should not be imparted or directed, although, if they rested on obvious fallacies, it would be well to expose them. Let him pursue wisdom, and with all his getting let him get understanding. Knowledge and wealth, in truth, were rival sisters, at the best. They appeared to be good friends, but there was between them a deep

unspoken jealousy. Whoever paid honest court to the one would fail to win the unstinted largess of the other. On the other hand, each was compelled by the laws of courtesy to make a sufficient provision for her sister's worshipper. Thus the extremely rich man would not be an imbecile, nor the extremely learned left altogether to starve. There would be enough, but nothing over. Therefore let a man be clear from the first as to what he really wanted. Above all, let him never pursue after knowledge as a means to wealth. Gifts in the old days were largely made in kind. Hence there came into the Tol enough rice to feed the students from year to year, and yet the whole treasure of the Guru's wife would be a few silver ornaments and a supply of brass cookingvessels! Truly the highest labour for humanity is never paid. Indeed, unless the enthusiasm of his women-folk was as great as his own, it is difficult to see how the Guru could ever have kept a Tol at all. For the wife had to see to the cooking, and cleaning, and the nursing of the sick. Every disciple looked upon her as his mother, and the bond of reverence and affection was as real as that which bound him to his master himself. In the case of her being widowed, the disciples were responsible for her maintenance and protection. They must beg for her if need be. The relation was really one of a mother and her sons. Of this parental tie that bound the pupil to his master and his master's household we catch numerous glimpses in the poems and history of the Indian people. One of the first episodes in the Mahabharata is the story of Devayani, whose love gathered round the strange youth Kacha, the student-brother, who had come to her father to learn his mystic lore. He has come in truth from the land of the gods, to master the learning of men. And very solemnly and beautifully is that wisdom consecrated, as he gathers it, by being first put to the test for the aid and deliverance of his master himself. When five years are over, and Kacha must return to his own land, Devayani cannot believe that they are to be parted and

begs to be taken with him as his wife. But the disciple of her father regards her as his sister, and the idea is impossible to him. It is then that the beautiful Devayani curses him in her despair with the future sterility of the knowledge he has acquired. He accepts the curse in so far as it concerns himself, yet adds with a note of triumph, "But in him it shall bear fruit to whom I shall impart it!"

The great Akbar, in something of the same spirit, it is said, at a later date made attempts to win from the Brahmins of Benares a knowledge of the Vedic scales and cadences, but always without success. At last he determined on a fraud. One morning, shortly after, as one of the chief Brahmins went to bathe, he found on the ghat a Brahmin youth fainting with hunger, who said he had come far to learn from him the Vedas. The compassionate pundit took the lad home, and kept him as a disciple and son, and in course of time he fell in love with the daughter of his master and asked for her hand in marriage. The scholar loved the youth, who was of a most noble and promising disposition, and at the end of the training his request was to be granted. But the young man could not bring himself to carry his deception so far, and on the eve of his wedding-day he revealed the fact that he was a Mohammedan. The Brahmin did not withdraw his promise or his blessing. But he saw that the sacred trust of his art was broken, the purity of his line was to be lost for ever. And he insisted, it is said, upon dying by fire, as a penance for the twofold betrayal that he had unwittingly committed.

In the culture that characterised India then before the dawn of English education, we have seen that the severer forms of learning were an occasion of criticism and delight to non-Brahminical society, even as high musical skill is appreciated in Europe by all classes. But the finer flowers of literary culture were left to be absorbed and augmented spontaneously. Philosophy, logic, and even the chanting of ancient texts might be corrected and regulated, but

creativeness was accepted as the grace of God, the only safeguard put upon it being that, as the man trained in reasoning could not be misled by false argument, so the man trained in any fine and arduous form of mental activity could not admire what was wanting in nobility and beauty.

So elaborate an organisation argues authority of some kind at its birth. We see here a university system which must have been nursed and protected by powerful influence for many centuries. In this connection we cannot but remember that the glory of the great Gupta throne of Pataliputra, in the fourth and fifth centuries, was inextricably bound up, as that house deeply realised, with the fate of Sanskrit learning and literature. Those were days in which the decline of the Buddhist orders had not yet begun. For the moment, the great university of Nalanda was at the zenith of its power. It carried on its researches in a dozen branches of knowledge in Sanskrit. It was the state observatory, and constituted the official meridian ; for there, and there alone, we are told by Hiouen Tsang, was kept the state water-clock, which regulated time for the whole of Magadha. Its fame attracted students not only from all parts of India, but from the empire of China itself. It is told of Nalanda, in the family histories of Vikrampur, that it had five hundred professors, and that on one occasion at least the head of them all was a man from the village of Vajra-yogini in Vikrampur—so far back stretched the memory of the glory of scholars in an Indian pedigree.

Our last clear glimpse of Nalanda is in the middle of the seventh century at the visit of Hiouen Tsang. At the beginning of the ninth century again the curtain rises on the life and career of Shankaracharya. The stories told of the arguments and discussions by which he ousted Buddhist monks grown ignorant and illiterate, from the charge of sacred places, and handed them over to his own men, show that the system of Sanskritic culture was already

more or less complete. We cannot help believing that the organisation of Brahmanical learning must have been a reflection of a still earlier organisation of Buddhistic learning, that the life lived till the other day in a Bengali Tol must be an exact replica of the life lived in an earlier period in such places as the caves of Ajanta or Ellora. But in this system of scholarly contest, to the verdict of which the Buddhists themselves submitted so far as in defeat to render up the care of their sacred places to their conquerors, we seem to catch a glimpse of something older still, something dating from the primeval world itself.

The assemblies of the Sadhus and their public discussions of the debatable points, constituted an organisation already perfect perhaps in the Gupta period, and in the very prime of its influence and activity in the era of Shankaracharya. In Bengal the empire of Gour was to last undisturbed another four centuries, and to succumb in its entirety only to the genius of Sher Shah and the later Moguls. This empire of Gour deliberately linked with itself the ecclesiastical Sabha of the Kanauji Brahmins, who remained beside the throne as a kind of pontifical court, nursing institutions and deciding interpretations as long as the dynasty lasted. We cannot refuse to see in this strong and prolonged national independence the real reason for the high degree of elaboration attained by Sanskrit culture in Bengal. A geographical *cul-de-sac* is always the place to look for the integrity of customs and institutions elsewhere disintegrated by foreign conquest. According to this law, we might expect to find in the southern apex of Deccan, and in Eastern Bengal, traces of the past still vigorous, when in other parts they had disappeared. In the lingering memory of the life of the Tols and the learned combats of the wedding parties we have such a remnant of the mediaeval world, and it speaks with no uncertain sound. Mithila, Nadia, and Vikrampur were sparks from fire that had been Nalanda. Benares and Hrishikesh still remain to testify to us of a time when the

life of mind and spirit ranked above temporal good in the minds of the forefathers. They were parts of an immense conflagration of learning, which it should be the business of India's sons once more to set alight.

## A STUDY OF BENARES

EVEN in great places, we cannot always command the passive moments of rare insight. It was already my third visit to Benares when I sat one day, at an hour after noon, in the Vishvanatha Bazaar. Everything about me was hushed and drowsy. The Sadhu-like shopkeepers nodded and dozed over their small wares; here the weaving of girdle or scapu'ary with a Mantra, there a collection of small stone Shivas. There was little enough of traffic along the narrow footway, but overhead went the swallows, by the invisible roadways of the blue, flying in and out among their nests in the eaves. And the air was filled with their twittering, and with the sighing resonance of the great bell in the Temple of Vishveshvara, as the constant steam of barefooted worshippers entered, and prayed, and before departing touched it. Swaying, sobbing, there it hung and it seemed as if, in that hour of peace, it were some mystic dome, thrilled and responsive to every throb of the city's life. One could believe that these ripples of sound that ran across it were born of no mechanical vibration, but echoed, here a moan, there a prayer, and yet again a cry of gladness, in all the distant quarters of Benares: that the bell was even as a great weaver, weaving into unity of music, and throwing back on earth, those broken and tangled threads of joy and pain that to us would have seemed so meaningless and so confused.

A step beyond were the shops of the flower-sellers, who sell white flowers for the worship of Shiva across the threshold. Oh what a task, to spend the whole of life, day after day, in this service only, the giving of the flowers for the image of the Lord! Has there been no soul that, occupied thus, has dreamt and dreamt itself into Mukti, through the daily offering?

And so came to me the thought of the old minsters

of Europe, and of what it meant to live thus, like the swallows and the townfolk and the flowers, ever in the shadow of a great cathedral. For that is what Benares is—a city built around the walls of a cathedral.

It is common to say of Benares that it is curiously modern, and there is, on the face of it, a certain truth in the statement. For the palaces and monasteries and temples that line the banks of the Ganges, between the mouths of Varuna and Asi, have been built for the most part within the last three hundred years. There is skill and taste enough in India yet, to rebuild them all again, if they fell tomorrow. Benares, as she stands, is in this sense the work of the Indian people as they are today.

But never did any city so sing the song of the past. One is always catching a hint of reminiscence in the bazaars, in the interior, and in the domestic architecture. Here is the Jammu *Chhattra* for instance, built in the Jaunpur Pathan style, common in Northern India from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. Not far off again, we have a glimpse of a roof-balustrade that retains many of the characteristics of an Ashokan rail, so clearly is it a wooden fence rendered in stone. I have seen a pillared hall too, in a house looking out upon the Ganges, that might almost have known the two thousand years that its owners claimed for it. And here, in the bazaar of Vishvanatha we are treading still, it may be, that very pathway through the forest that was followed by the Vedic forefathers, when first they saw the sun rise on the East of the great river, and offered the Homa where the golden grate of Vishveshvara stands today, chanting their *riks* in celebration of worship.\*

Nothing holds its place longer than a road. The winding alleys between the backs of houses and gardens in European cities may, at no distant date, have been paths through meadows and cornfields. And similarly, in all

\* The allusion here is not only to the Sanskrit *Rik*, but also to the early Norse *riks* and *runes*.

countries, a footway is apt to be a silent record of unwritten history. But who shall recover the story of this little street, or write the long long poem of the lives and deaths of those whose feet have passed to and forth along its flagstones in four thousand years?

Truly the city, even as she stands, is more ancient than any superficial critic would suppose. It was here, at Sarnath, in the year 583 B.C. or thereabouts, that the great message pealed out whose echoes have never died away in history: "Open ye your ears, O Monks, the deliverance from death is found!" And the importance which the Deer-Park thus assumes in the life of Buddha, both before and after the attainment of Nirvana, sufficiently proves its importance as the university of philosophy of its own age. Three hundred years later Ashoka, seeking to build memorials of all the most sacred events in the history of his great Master, was able, as the recent excavations show us, to make a tiny Stupa with its rail in some cell, by that time already underground, whose site had been especially sanctified by the touch of Buddha's feet. We thus learn, not only that the Deer-Park of Benares (so called, probably, because pains were taken to keep it cleared of larger game) was important in the year 583 B.C. and again in 250 B.C., but also that it was sufficiently a centre of resort throughout the intervening period, to guarantee its maintenance of an unbroken tradition with regard to points of extremely minute detail. But it was not Sarnath alone that saw the coming and going of Buddha in the birth of the great enlightenment. Nor was it the Abkariyeh Kand alone that had already formed an important religious centre for ages before the early Mohammedan period. The very name of the Dashashvamedha Ghat and Bazaar commemorates a period long enough to have included ten imperial sacrifices, each one of which must have represented at least a reign. Probably throughout the Pataliputra age, that is to say, from 350 B.C. to A.D. 400, Benares was the ecclesiastical and sacrificial seat of empire. It contains two Ashokan pillars,

one in the grounds of the Queen's College, and the other, as we now know, at the entrance to the old-time Monastery of Sarnath. And we know with certainty that in the youth of Buddha it was already a thriving industrial centre. For the robes that he threw aside, perhaps in the 590 B.C., to adopt the Gerua of the Sannyasin, are said in many books to have been made of Benares silk.

But this is, in truth, only what we might have expected. For the water-way is always the chief geographical feature of a country in early ages, and the position of Benares at the northward bend of the river determines the point of convergence for all the foot-roads of the South and East, and makes her necessarily the greatest distributing centre in India. Thus she constitutes a palimpsest, not a simple manuscript, of cities. One has here been built upon another ; period has accumulated upon period. There are houses in the crowded quarters whose foundations are laid in mines of bricks, and whose owners live upon the sale of these ancestral wares. And there is at least one temple that I know of whose floor is eight or ten feet below the level of the present street, and whose date is palpably of the second to the fourth century after Christ.

If then, we may compare large things with small, Benares may be called the Canterbury of the Ashokan and post-Ashokan India. What Delhi became later to the militarised India of the Rajput and the Moslem, that Benares had already been to an earlier India, whose eastern provinces had been Buddha. At Sarnath the memory of the great Sannyasin was preserved by the devoted members of a religious order, either Buddhist or Jaina. At Benares the Brahmins laboured, as citizens and householders, to enforce the lesson that none of his greatness was lacking in the Great God. The Shiva, clad in the tiger-skin and seated in meditation like a Buddha, who is carved in low relief at the entrance to Elephanta in the harbour of Bombay was the Hindu ideal of the later Buddhist period. And so the Vedic city, through whose streets had passed the Blessed

One, became the sacred city of Shiva ; and to make and set up his emblem there—the form in stone of the formless God—was held for long ages after the same act of merit that the erecting of votive Stupas had so long been in places of Buddhistic pilgrimage. Nay, even now old Stupas remain of the early Pauranika period, and early Shivas of a later phase of development, about the streets and ghats, of Benares, to tell of the impress made' by Buddha on an age that was then already passing away.

But Benares is not only an Indian Canterbury, it is also an Oxford Under the shadow of temples and monasteries cluster the schools and dwellings of the pundits or learned Sanskritists, and from all parts of India the poor students flock there to study the classics and ancient rituals of Hinduism. The fame of Nadia is in her Sanskrit logic, but that of Benares is in her philosophy and Brahmin lore. Thus she remains ever the central authority on questions of worship and of the faith, and her influence is carried to all ends of India, by every wandering scholar returning to his own province. It is a mediaeval type of culture, of course, carried out in the mediaeval way. It takes a man twelve years here to exhaust a single book, while under the modern comparative method we are compelled to skim the surfaces of from twelve to a score of books in a single year. It follows that we have here a study of the contents rather than the relations, of a given work ; significance rather than co-ordination. But for this very reason the Benares-trained scholar is of his own kind, secure in his type, as fearless in his utterance of that which he knows as those other mediaevalists in a modern world, John Bunyan and William Blake.

But in Benares, as a culture-centre, even in the present generation, though it is fast vanishing, we have another extraordinary advantage to note. Being as she is the authoritative seat of Hinduism and Sanskrit learning, the city stands, nevertheless, side by side with Jaunpur, the equally authoritative centre of Mussalman learning in India. She

represents in fact the dividing line between the Sanskritic civilisation of the Hindu provinces, and the Persian and Arabic culture of the Mohammedan. And consequently she still has members of a class that once constituted one of the most perfect types of national education in the world, elderly Hindu gentlemen who were trained in their youth not only to read Sanskrit literature, but also to read and enjoy what was then the distinctive accomplishment of royal courts, namely Persian poetry. And the mind that is born of this particular synthesis—rendered possible in Benares by the presence on the one hand of the Hindu pundit and the neighbourhood on the other of the Jaunpur Maulvi—is not that of a great scholar certainly, but it is that of a member, polished, courtly, and urbane of the wide world. One of the most charming forms of high breeding that humanity has known will be lost with the last well-born Hindu who has had the old time training in Persian. No one indeed, who has seen modern and mediaeval culture side by side, as we may still sometimes see them in Asia, can doubt that the true sense of literature is the prerogative of the mediaevalist.

Benares, then, is an informal university. And like other universities of the Middle Ages, it has always supported its scholars and students by a vast network of institutions of mutual aid. It is no disgrace there for a boy to beg his bread, when love of learning has brought him a thousand miles on foot. Nor was it in mediaeval Leipzig, or Heidelberg, or Oxford. These are the scholars for whom our schools and colleges were founded. The wives of the burghers expected to contribute to the maintenance of such. And it is in Benares, only food that is wanted. In the dark hours of one winter morning, as I made my way through the Bengali-tolla to the bathing-ghats, I could hear in the distance the sound of Sanskrit chanting. And soon I came up to a student who had slept all night on the stone verandah of some well-to-do house, screened from the bitterest pinch of cold by carefully-drawn walls of common

sacking, and who now had risen before five, to read by the light of a hurricane lamp, and commit to memory his task for the day. Further on, studied another, with no such luxuries as canvas walls and paraffin lamp. He had slept all night under his single blanket, on the open stone, and the tiny Indian Bati was the light by which he was reading now.

Here is love of learning with labour and poverty. It is obviously impossible for these to earn their bread in addition to performing the tasks imposed by their schools. The spontaneous benefactions of rich nobles and merchants were doubtless enough in the Middle Ages—when religious enthusiasm was high, and the problem still limited—to maintain the pundits in whose houses the students lived. But in modern times the institution of the Chhattraṣ has grown up, and it is said that in the city there are three hundred and sixty-five of these. A Chhattra is a house at which a given number of persons receive a meal daily. Some give double doles. Some give to others beside Brahmins. Many have been themselves the gifts of pious widows, and a few of kings. But that it is the duty of the city to provide food for her scholars, all are agreed. Is not Benares, to these children of Shiva, Annapurna the Mother, She whose hand is ever “full of grain”?

How strange to think of an age in which men were grateful to those who undertook the task of scholarship, and felt that the nation must make itself responsible to them for necessaries of life, instead of striving to strangle their love of learning at its birth, by penalising it with high fees, and writing “Failed” against as many names as possible in the entrance lists!

But Benares is more than the precincts of a group of temples. She is more even than a university, and more than the historic and industrial centre of three thousand years. The solemn Manikarnika stands rightly in the centre of her river-front. For she is a great national Shma-shàna, a vast burning-ghat. “He who dies in Benares attains

Nirvana." The words may be nothing but an expression of intense affection. Who would not love to die on those beautiful ghats, with the breath of the night or the morning on his brow, the sound of temple-bells and chanting in his ears, and the promises of Shiva and memories of the past in his heart? Such a death, embraced in an ecstasy, would it not in itself be Mukti, the goal? "Oh Thou great Jnana, that art God, dwell Thou in me!" Such was the vision that broke upon one, who bent from the flower-seller's balcony to see evensong chanted by the Brahmins round the blossom-crowned Vishveshvara. And never again can that mind think of God as seated on a throne, with His children kneeling round Him, for to it the secret has been shown, that Shiva is within the heart of man, and He is the Absolute Consciousness, the Infinite Knowledge, and the Unconditioned Bliss. Which of us would not die, if we could, in the place that was capable of flashing such a message across the soul?

All India feels this. All India hears the call. And one by one, step by step, with bent head and bare feet for the most part, come those, chiefly widows and Sadhus, whose lives are turned away from all desire save that of a holy death. How many monuments of Sati are to be seen in Benares, one on the Manikarnika Ghat, and many dotted about the fields and roads outside! These are the memorials of triumphant wifeness in the hour of its bereavement. But there are other triumphs. Clothed and veiled in purest white, bathing, fasting, and praying continually, here in the hidden streets of Benares dwell thousands of those whose lives are one long effort to accumulate merit for the beloved second self. And if the scholar be indeed the servant of the nation, is the saint less? The lamp of ideal womanhood, burning in the sheltered spot at the feet of the image, and "not flickering", is this, or is it not, as a light given to the world?

Benares, again, is an epitome of the whole Indian synthesis of nationality. As the new-comer is rowed down

the river, past the long line of temples and bathing-ghats, while the history of each is told to him in turn, he feels, catching his breath at each fresh revelation of builded beauty, that all roads in India must always have led to Benares. Here is the monastery of Kedarnath, the headquarters of the southern monks, which represents to the province of Madras all the merits of Himalayan pilgrimage. Here again is the ghat of Ahalya Bai Rani, the wonderful widowed Mahratta Queen, whose temples and roads and tanks remain all over India, to witness to the greatness of the mother-heart in rulers. Or behind this we may see the Math of Shankaracharya's Order, the high caste Dandis, whose line is unbroken and orthodoxy unimpeached from the days of their founder, early in the ninth century, till the present hour. Again, we see the palace of the Nagpur Bhonsles (now in the hands of the Maharaja of Darbhanga), connecting Benares with the memory of the Mahratta power, and further on, the royal buildings of Gwalior and even of Nepal. Nor is everything here dedicated to Shiva, Shiva's city though it be. For here again we come on the temple of Beni-Madhava, one of the favourite names of Vishnu. Even Mohammedan sovereigns could not submit to be left out. For secular science is embodied in the beautiful old Man-Mandir of Akbar's time, with its instruments and lecture-hall, and the Mussalman faith in the towering minarets of Aurungzeb's mosque.

But what is true of the Ganges front becomes still more clear when we pass behind and consider the city as a whole. Ranjit Singh made no separate building, but he linked Vishveshvara irrevocably with Amritsar, when he covered its roof with gold. Zemindars of Bengal, Sirdars of the Punjab, and nobles of Rajputana, all have vied with one another in leaving temples and shrines, charities and benefactions, dotted over the Pancha Kosha.

Or we may see the same thing industrially. We can buy in Benares, besides her own delicate webs, the Saris of Madras and the Deccan alike. Or we may go to the

Vishvanatha Bazaar for the carpentry of the Punjab. We may find in the same city the brass work of Nasik, of Trichinopoli, and of the Nepalese frontier. It is there, better than anywhere else in India, that we may buy the stone vessels of Gaya, of Jubbulpur, and of Agra, or the Shivas of the Narmada and the Shalagramas of the Gumti and Nepal. And the food of every province may be bought in these streets, the language of every race in India heard within these walls.

On questions of religion and of custom, again, in all parts of India, as has been said, the supreme appeal is to Benares. The princes of Gwalior dine only when the news has been telegraphed that the day's food has been offered here. Here too the old works of art and religion, and the old craftsmen practising quaint crafts, linger longest, and may still perchance be found, when they have become rare to the point of vanishing everywhere else. Here the Vyasas chant authoritative renderings of the epic stories on the ghats. And here, at great banquets food is still considered only secondary to the reciting of the scriptures. Surely it is clear enough that as in the Latin Empire of City and of Church the saying grew up, "All roads lead to Rome," so also in India, so long as she remains India, all roads, all faiths, all periods, and all historical developments, will lead us sooner or later back to Benares.

A city in such a position, possessed of such manifold significance, the pilgrim-centre of a continent, must always have had an overwhelming need of strong civic organisation. And that such a need was recognised in the city during the ages of its growth, we may see in many ways. No mediaeval township in Europe gives stronger evidence of self-organisation than we find here.

"The mediaeval city," says the great European sociologist Kropotkin, "appears as a double federation: of all householders united into small territorial unions—the street, the parish, the section—and of individuals united by oath into guilds, according to their professions; the former being

a product of the village-community origin of the city, while the second is a subsequent growth, called into life by new conditions."

This is a master statement which can at once be applied here, if only we dismiss the European idea of *labour* as the main *motif* of this city's growth, and substitute the Indian equivalent of religion and learning. Labour is present here of course, and has flourished, as we know, in this spot, during at least three thousand years, but it has never reared its head to become a predominant and independent factor in the growth of Benares. This central significance, this higher element in the federation, has been supplied here, by the presence of priests and pundits, monasteries and poets, bound to each other, not by professional oaths, but by the invisible and spiritual bonds of caste and tradition, and religious bonds—by Hinduism, in short. Not the craftsman, but the Hindu carrying the craftsman with him, has made Benares what she is, and here in this city we have the picture of one of the finest things that the Indian faith—uninterfered with by foreign influences, and commanding the enthusiastic co-operation of the whole nation—could produce. It is no mean achievement. On Benares, as it has made it, the Hindu genius may well take its stand. By the city of Shiva it may well claim to be judged.

It is, however, when we turn to the first element in Kropotkin's analysis of the city that we find Benares to be most completely illuminated. In a pilgrim-city, we cannot but think that some mutual organisation of householders for self-defence must have been a prime necessity. The policing of such a city was more than usually important. What were the arrangements made for sanitation, for ambulance, for hospital-service, for the clearing-out of vagrants? These things may not in the Middle Ages have been called by these names, but assuredly their realities existed, and such necessities had to be met. Householders united into small territorial unions—the street, the Para.

And is not Benares filled with small courts and alleys, divided from the main streets by short flights of broad steps, each crowned by its own gate? Is it more than thirty or forty years since each of these had its own guard or *concierge* and was closed at night to be opened again in the morning? In many cases, of course, the massive doors themselves are now removed, but the pillars and hooks and hinges still remain to bear witness to their old function. In other instances they stand there, still, pushed back against the wall, and one pauses a moment as one passes, to ask in a reverie, "When was this last shut?" These portals to each little group of important houses are a silent witness to the order and cleanliness of Benares as the Hindu made it. Just as in Edinburgh, as in Nürnberg, as in Paris, so here also, the consideration of wealthy houses thus barred in at a certain hour after dark, was responsible for the freedom of its own space from uncleanness and violence. It must undertake the connection between its own sanitation and the underground sewage system of the city, which was similar in character to that of ancient Pataliputra. It must be responsible for the proper alleviation of such suffering as fell within its limits, and its members must duly contribute their full share to the common burdens of the city as a whole. But when we come to the gates of the Para or section, of which some still remain, guarded by their watchmen outstanding in the bazaars, we understand the full importance to the mediaeval mind of the question of civic order and of a strong but peaceful civic defence. For here, within these gateways, we find the shrines of Kala Bhairava, the divine *Kotwal*, who perambulates the city of Shiva night after night, with staff and dog, who is worshipped by sentinels and gate-keepers, and who has the supreme discretion of accepting or rejecting at his will those who fain would enter within the sacred bounds. Of the divine *Kotwal* every city-watchman held himself as minister and earthly representative. And in this worship of Kala Bhairava, the Black Demon of Shiva,

we may read the whole history of the civic organisation of Benares in the Middle Ages.

The modern age was later perhaps in arriving, here than elsewhere. But arrive it did, and its work when it came, here as elsewhere, was to multiply problems and to discredit the solutions that had been discovered by slow ages of growth. All that strong rope of self-defence, twisted of so many strands of local combination and territorial responsibility, with which Benares had been wont to meet her own needs, was now done away. The communal sense was stunned by the blow, for the fact was demonstrated to it *ad nauseum* that it was itself powerless against strong central combinations of force. Thus the old self-jurisdiction and self-administration of the civic group was banished. And at the same time, the railways connected Benares with every part of India, and made it possible to pour in upon her daily as large a number of diseased, infirm, and starving persons, as may once have reached her on foot, or in boats, in the course of a year.

Thus a forest of needs has grown up in modern Benares, of which the past generations with their common sense, their spontaneous kindness, and their thrifty municipal management, knew nothing. The dying still come here to die, but it is now so easy to reach the city that they are often also the utterly destitute, and lingering illness, hunger, and suffering, on ghats and road-sides, is scarcely compatible with the Hindu love of humanity and decency.

Poor working-folk come, when the last hope has failed them, trusting that the Great God will be their refuge in His Own City. In the old days, when Benares was a wealthy capital, these would have made their way to some house or Para inhabited by well-to-do townfolk from their own district, and through their kind offices work would sooner or later have been found. But now they find themselves amongst strangers. The music of temple-bells is the only sound familiar to them. Priests and fellow-worshippers are alike unknown. And they find, in the sanctuary-

city may be, that they have but fled from one despair to another.

Or the poor student comes here to learn. In the old days he would have found house-room, as well as food, in the home of his Guru, or of some wealthy patron, and if he fell ill, he would have been cared for there, as a member of the family. Today the number of so-called students is great, and possibly amongst them the indolent are many. For certainly temptations must have multiplied, at the same time that the moral continuity of the old relation between distant homestead and metropolitan Para has been lost. In any case, even amongst the most earnest, some of these poor students have, as we have seen, to live in the streets. And when illness overtakes such, there is none to aid, for there is none even to know. The Chhattras are certainly a wonderful institution, showing unexpected power of this ancient city to meet the needs of her own children. But the Chhattras cannot offer home and hospital. And these also are sometimes needed.

And finally there is the case of the widowed gentlewomen who come to Benares to pray for their dead. As with others, so here also, there is in many cases but slender provision. And yet, nowadays they cannot come to friends, but must needs hire a room and pay rent to a landlord. Nor can we venture to pass too harsh a verdict on the capitalist who evicts his tenant—though a woman and delicately nurtured,—when the rent has fallen too long into arrears. For he probably has to deal with the fact on such a scale, that the course is forced upon him, if he will save himself from ruin. More striking even than this is that fear of the police, which we find everywhere amongst the helpless, and which drives the keeper of the apartment-house to dismiss its penniless inmates when near to death, lest he should afterwards be arraigned in court for having stolen their provision!\*

Prostrate, then, under the disintegrating touch of the

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\* See Appendix I, p. 199.

Modern Era, lies at this moment the most perfect of mediaeval cities. Is she to become a memory to her children after four thousand or more years of a constant growth? Or will there prove to be some magic in the new forces of enthusiasm that are running through the veins of the nation, that shall yet make itself potent to renew her ancient life-streams also? Sons and daughters of a National India, what have ye in your hearts to do, for the ancient cities, left ye by your fathers?

## BODH-GAYA

THERE is a mischievous tendency to misread history, in the case of Bodh-Gaya, which cannot be too quickly ended by the spread of accurate knowledge on the subject. The idea that there were once in India two rival religions, known as Hinduism and Buddhism respectively, is a neat little European fiction, intended to affect Asiatic politics in the way that is dear to the European heart. It cannot be too often repeated that there never was a religion in India known as Buddhism, with temples and priests and dogmas of its own. Neither was there a religion called Hinduism. The very idea of naming and defining Hinduism was impossible, until after the Mohammedan era, and cannot in fact be considered ever to have been accomplished until the famous oration of the Swami Vivekanandā at the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 was accepted and authenticated by the whole of India. It is then, absurd to think of Buddhism in India as superseded by Hinduism, at a definite moment in its career. and the care of the Bodh-Gaya temple passing from the one sect to the other. That is to say, the supposition would be absurd, were the whole attitude of mind which it involves not so extremely uneducated. As a matter of fact, the village and temple of Bodh-Gaya form a historical monument so extraordinary, being a record of human faith absolutely continuous during a period of almost twenty-five centuries, that there is nothing in the world of its own kind to approach it in value. We are able today to trace the position of the house of Sujata,—a village-woman who gave food to Buddha on the eve of the Great Enlightenment :—we can gather an idea of the ancient village, forest, tank and river : we can point to the actual spot on which

grew a certain tree ; all at a time between five and six centuries before the birth of Christ. There is a tree on the west coast of Norway which is mentioned in the Sagas. But the Sagas were not written till the eleventh century A.D. The city of Athens has a history as sustained as that of Bodh-Gaya, but the city of Athens has had political significance. Jerusalem may be even older, but the Israelitish tribes have had to surrender to other Arabs their right of guardians. Bodh-Gaya is unique of its kind. It is unique also in the intimacy and detail of its personal revelations. Few reliquaries thrill us like the long masonry structure, marked with nineteen lotuses, that covers a portion of the pathway inside the rails of Ashoka. "Buddha," we are told, "for seven days after the Illumination, did not speak. He walked up and down here in silence and at every footstep a lotus blossomed." Do we not understand the story? The world has become a poem, when at last we find ourselves at the foot of the Tree—growing behind the high altar, and within the rails,—that is, in good sooth, the spiritual centre of Eastern Asia today. Or, we may, if we will, trace the gradual growth of the Buddhist world, from the Tree—the dead Tree and the Tree miraculously restored,—in the cameo-pictures of Ashoka, through the memorials—Chinese, Japanese, Siamese, Burmese, Sinhalese, which are the accretions of ages about the spot.

But too little is known in India of that Buddhist world, and the relation of its different parts to one another. Buddhism is divided, many of our readers may be surprised to hear, into two Schools, the Northern and the Southern. To the Northern School adhere China, Japan and Tibet ; Ceylon belongs to the Southern. If we imagine Hinduism deprived of caste ; with the same good-natured tolerance of images and image-worship of all sorts ; with the same exaltation of meditation ; and the same inclusion of all sorts of strata in the religious consciousness, from the Nihilism of the philosopher to the doll-pujas of the child, we have a clear picture of that Northern

Buddhism, to which Japan belongs. It is practically the same thing as the nexus of Hinduism. The Southern School, on the other hand, is by no means of the character. Sinhalese is related to Sino-Japanese Buddhism, as an extremely puritanical and protesting sect might be related to Hinduism. It is strictly philosophical in its tenets, and this implies that it excludes, instead of including, popular worships. Perfection is its goal. The word God is to it a superstition. It will thus be seen that while Japanese or Northern Buddhism might be trusted to comprehend the Southern sect, the opposite could never be the case, and authority given to Sinhalese Church would be of the nature of a disaster to the Sino-Japanese world, which would have the right to claim that an invidious standard of Buddhist orthodoxy had been created. Indeed, the inborn feeling between the different schools is comparable to that which exists between Christians, Catholic and Protestant. The children of Japan are brought up to glory in the fact that they were born in the "Mahayana" or Greater Vehicle,—and to think, sad to say, a little contemptuously,—of the unfortunates who belong to the Lesser Vehicle, the "Hinayana" or Southern School. These things being so, and indeed they could not have been otherwise, we can easily see the advantage that it has been to Buddhism, to have its central holy place in the hands of a people whose sympathies were commensurate with their own most comprehensive thought, without being identified in any way with their sectarian animosities. To the Hindu, on the other hand, few things can be such a source of pride as the hospitality and courtesy shown to foreigners by the Giri monks of Bodh-Gaya. There is a royal character in the entertainment offered, for no sooner is the guest installed than the Mohant—strict Hindu ascetic as he is himself—sends to enquire whether he desires meat or wine, urging him to express his wishes without hesitation. It is clear that the Abbot of Bodh-Gaya represents a dynasty accustomed to receive ambassadors. And is it

not true? Is not the religious pilgrim, coming from abroad, in some sense an ambassador? And is not the courtesy here extended in the person of the Mohant, the friendliness and welcome of the whole of the Indian people to the sister-nations of Asia?

Few subjects of historic investigation are more directly stimulated by a visit to Bodh-Gaya than that regarding the personality of Shankaracharya, and his relation to the thought and teaching of his immediate predecessors. In treating of Buddhism and Hinduism as rival sects, thoughtless and more or less illiterate persons, show their failure to realise the immense distance of time that separates Shankaracharya from Buddha. It is much the same mistake as would be committed were a historian of the Church of Rome to treat the Jesuit and Benedictine Orders as rival sects,—the fact being that they were formed at different times to meet different needs, and co-exist in perfect harmony. Buddha called the goal *Nirvana*. Shankaracharya named it *Mukti*. But these were only two different names for the same thing. Shankaracharya made himself recognised as the leader of his day by sheer force of superior scholarship and spirituality, and it was absolutely natural from the current point of view, that he should take special steps to guard and preserve the—then probably neglected—temple and shrine of Bodh-Gaya. Of how it has been preserved, India may surely be proud. The offering of sweet balls and the saying of certain texts at the foot of a particular tree may seem meaningless to the modern mind. The unlearned men and women who practise the rites, may themselves be unaware of the historic link that they are perpetuating. But these kindergarten methods are the only possible means by which the memory of a great epoch could be preserved by the people. Was there ever, then, a religion like Hinduism, in the pains which it has taken to preserve the fly in clearest amber? That Buddha was so loved by the disciples of Shankaracharya that to memorialise him has become an integral part

of modern Hinduism, is a striking fact, possible only in Asia, and therefore never understood by European students. To them Nagarjuna, Ashvaghosha, Bodhidharma, were all the apostles of an idea consciously rival to that of Shankaracharya and would have destroyed or been destroyed, if possible. Very different was the exclamation of a Japanese Buddhist priest who was visiting Bodh-Gaya for the first time,—“At last I understand Shankaracharya! He was simply another Nagarjuna!” This needless to say, is the true view, and the more so that it requires the whole of Asiatic culture to make it intelligible. The temple of Buddha at Bodh-Gaya then, is the heart of a perfect tangle of worships, just as it might have been, had it been situated in China or Japan. Here we may see how Shaivism and Vaishnavism formed the bifurcating stems into which the tree of popular religion divided after the Ashokan period. The diamond throne of Buddha—the famous “Thunderbolt-stone”—co-exists with the Vishnu Pada, and the temples of the Mother and of Shiva, and as we pass from one to the other, we recover the whole sequence of religious thought, throughout a period of many centuries. And, perhaps most significant of all, we are struck by the difference between the Adwaita of the East, which guards and protects every form of symbolism, and the Protestantism or the Unitarianism of the West, which is apt to be exclusive or condemnatory of everything that it regards as superstition. The true heir of Buddha or of Shankaracharya will protect and encourage the worships of others, knowing them all as so many means by which the great realisation may be attained.

Still one other point, however, makes Bodh-Gaya of supreme value today to the Hindu people. The modern consciousness has made many things inevitable. It necessitates the recovery of the historic relation of the various parts of Hinduism. But from most Hindu temples, the modern Hindu,—unless indeed he goes in disguise,—is shut out. This is not so at Bodh-Gaya. There the tradition

of the Math has been the responsibility of protecting the worship of foreigners. All, therefore, that can be demanded is that one come in reverence, and the modern Hindu is as welcome at the altar itself as the most conservative of the orthodox. Not only do the monks invite him to enter, but they feel responsible for feeding him, while he remains to worship. This fact makes Bodh-Gaya a great national as well as religious centre. The role that Puri aspired to play, and could not, has fallen now to her. Here, all the children of India, even the disciples of the Prophet, may enter and offer salutation. For the heart of the Buddha—was it not wide as the world? And shall the gates of His house be shut against any of His brethren?

## APPENDIX I

Ending paragraphs of the original appeal captioned as below, published in the *Footfalls of Indian History* as 'A Study of Benares'

### BENARES AND THE HOME OF SERVICE

SUCH are a few of the circumstances which attend the transition from the mediaeval to the modern. Of old when the local consciousness strove with a difficulty too great for it, it was wont to find its higher but companion element come to its aid. The great mother-heart of Hinduism was stirred to compassion by the civic need and knew how to intervene. And as long as the strait put upon territorial resources stops short of actual destruction, this must happen. Where the local sense of pity, or power to plan and help, is inadequate, the religious must step in. Where religion alone would go destitute, the city must support. When the day comes that both alike throw up their hands in despair, and ceases to make an effort, the end will have come, and desolation will be seen at the very door.

It was in face of such facts as are here enumerated that a group of young men banded themselves together in the year 1900, to form a sort of Brotherhood of mercy, for the aid of sufferers in Benares. They ranged themselves under the name of Sri Ramakrishna and were visited and blessed by the Swami Vivekananda, on that stay in the city which proved to be his last journey, in the year 1902. One of these very men remains yet, faithful to his post, working on steadily day after day for the object he was amongst the first to recognise. And one has fallen by the way, having died of small-pox caught in nursing a patient. But today the Home of Service is served, and workers are sent from Belur Math, Howrah, and all are either Sannyasins

or Brahmacharins. The work is arduous. One man acts as Secretary, librarian and compounder. Another feeds and nurses the patients. A third begs rice from door to door, and again, at other doors, distributes relief, or visits the poor. One monk is in charge and responsible for the work as a whole. And there are three servants, a cook, a sweeper and a visiting housemaid, or a Jhee. With these small means the results arrived at may be judged from the report which follows. They are already such that the need for extension is pressing.

It is felt that aged persons who seek shelter in Home ought not to have to be housed in the same room as the sick, which is now necessary. Infectious diseases too, such as Cholera and Phthisis, ought certainly to have wards to themselves. At present, such cases are only admitted in extreme emergency, yet there is no other refuge open to them save the Chowkaghat Hospital, which is beyond the sacred limits of Kashi proper, and where dead bodies, to the horror of Hindus, are said to be disposed of by sweepers. The advantage of being tended in the last hours by those of our own faith, who will administer the last rites with loving care, as if they were themselves the sons of the dying, assuredly needs no arguing. The devoted workers of the Home of Service also feel that they must have means of accomodating small-pox and plague. They want an operation-room for surgical cases. They desire to have quarters for the poor and aged, and for many cases which at present have to be nursed in their own homes, under the worst possible sanitary conditions. And finally, they require a library for the workers themselves, and for such patients as are able to use it and a better dispensary.

A promising piece of land for these buildings has been secured, and what is now wanted is the sum of 21,000 rupees. For the regular maintenance of the Home and its Service, the workers look forward, in the future as in the past, to monthly and yearly donations and subscriptions.

In asking for such help, I cannot feel that the Home

of Service is exactly begging for charity. Rather it is calling for co-operation in undertaking a common responsibility. Every Hindu is interested in maintaining the beautiful traditions of Benares as the sanstuary-city, and in aiding her to cope with her civic problems. Moreover, every district has had a share in thus overloading her generous shoulders.

The Ramakrishna Home of Service, then, represents a spontaneous effort of the higher federation of Hinduism to come to the assistance of the local, or communal, or purely civic consciousness, in an age of crisis and transition. Its birth is in religion, but its goal, as befits the modern world, is civic. Religion inspires, but does not limit its activities. The brotherhood seeks to serve the city. And there is plenty of evidence in the following pages that the Moham-medan is not left out of the scope of its mercy. In the fact that such service arises and arises spontaneously, we find a proof of the undying strength of the Motherland. In the aim it proposes to itself, we read the adequacy of the Sanatana Dharma to every phase of the development of civilisation. And I for one believe with all my heart that that self-same power which has pointed out to those heroic young souls the work so sorely needed at their hands, will not fail to bring also to their door the means of its sure accomplishment. Reader, whoever you are, are you willing to help?



CIVIC IDEAL AND INDIAN  
NATIONALITY



## A DAILY ASPIRATION FOR THE NATIONALIST

I believe that India is one, indissoluble, indivisible.

National unity is built on the common home, the common interest and common love.

I believe that the strength which spoke in the Vedas and Upanishads, in the making of religions and empires, in the learning of scholars, and the meditation of the saints, is born once more amongst us, and its name today is Nationality.

I believe that the present of India is deep-rooted in her past, and that before her shines a glorious future.

O Nationality, come thou to me as joy or sorrow, as honour or as shame! Make me thine own!

## A PRAYER FOR FREEDOM

Bethink thee how the world did wait,  
And search for thee, through time and clime.  
Some gave up home and love of friends,  
And went in quest of thee self-banished,  
O'er dreary oceans, through primeval forests  
Each step a struggle for the life or death.  
Then came the day when work bore fruit  
And worship, love and sacrifice  
Fulfilled, accepted and complete.  
Then Thou, propitious, rose to shed  
The light of FREEDOM on mankind.

Move on, Oh Lord, in thy resistless path  
Till thy high morn overspreads the world.  
Till every land reflects thy light,  
Till men and women, with uplifted head,  
Behold their shackles broken, and  
Know, in springing joy, their life renewed!

# CIVIC IDEAL AND INDIAN NATIONALITY

## THE CIVIC IDEAL

CITIES are the schools of nationality, even as a nation is made up of all its citizens. It is in the service of the small unit that the power to become a critical factor in the larger is for the most part won ; by that knighthood which is the guerdon of civic contest that souls fearless and unstained are selected for the leading of a nation's advance. In the history of no people, at any period in its development, has there ever been time to spare for one wasted life. Such a life immediately becomes parasitic upon Humanity, and thereby detracts from that energy on which there are but too many other calls. The fact that in the modern world whole classes of people fail to recognise this fact, shows only that we have not yet any adequate idea either of the demands to be made on the individual by a perfect civic life, or of the problems that await solution by the energy of such life. It would only be, indeed, by the finest possible development of every man, woman, and child in a whole country that such an ideal could be made manifest, and this is a spectacle which the world has never yet seen.

The Indian prince, idling in a motor, or following the fashions of a society which neither he nor his have initiated or can control ; the American millionaire, spending outside his country the sums concentrated in it by the organisation of Shudra-labour ; and the European aristocrat, absorbing into his own interest all the privileges of all classes, in every place and society ; all these appear equally unsuspecting of the fact that Humanity has a right to make any higher claim on a man than that of the fulfilment of his own selfish caprice. Yet there are in the world at any given moment so many evils that might be removed, so many sorrows that might be mitigated, so many tasks that need not be left undone, that if all of us were to respond in the highest degree to the greater exactions of the race, the progress made would only very slowly become apparent! Verily, in all eternity there is not room for one moment of viciousness, of weakness, of idleness, nor amongst all the nations of men, for one human parasite!

In India at the present moment, we are learning, however slowly, to decipher the new laws that are to dominate and evolve our great future. As a community, our task, up to the present, has been to maintain all that we could of the past. Suddenly, however, all this is at an end. We have entered upon an era of formulation of the new. 'By the past, through the present, to the future!' says Auguste Comte. That is to say, it is by the scrutiny and understanding of the past, and by taking advantage of the power it has accumulated in us, that we become able so to direct our own action as to create for ourselves and others the loftiest future. The yet-to-be is as a vast unexplored territory of which we are charged to take possession. That age which is discovering nothing new, is already an age of incipient death. That philosophy which only recapitulates the known, is in fact a philosophy of ignorance. It is because in our country today great thoughts are being born, because new duties are arising, because fresh and undreamt of applications are being made of the ancient culture, that

we can believe the dawning centuries to be for us. If the Indian mind had not been giving daily promise of extended conquests, if it had not been feeling out constantly towards a new dimension, we could have hoped nothing for ourselves. But it is doing these things. The mind of our civilisation is awake once more, and we know that the long ages of theocratic development are perfected, while before us lies the task of actualising those mighty ideals of the civic and national life by which the theocratic achievements of our fathers are to be protected and conserved. We are now to go out, as it were, into the waste spaces about our life, and build there those towers and bastions of self-organisation and mutual aid, by which we are yet to become competent to deal with the modern world and all its forces of aggression. The bricks lie there, in abundance, for our work. The elements abound, in our history, our literature, our traditions, and our customs, by which we can make of ourselves a strong and coherent people. It needs only that we understand our own purpose, and the method of its accomplishment. As the architect builds to a plan, so is a nation fashioned by its own dreams. And he who knows this, knows also how to use his power of dreaming. The very doctrine, that everything in life is the work of desire, would teach us this. For it follows as an inevitable inference that the world is changed by those who best know how and what to desire. It may even be, after all, that there is no castle in the world so formidable as a well-built 'castle in the air'!

But the elements of nationality are civic and to these civic components it is that the individual stands most directly and most permanently related. The man who would not stir a finger to help his village to the recovery of grazing-rights is not the man to bleed and die in the country's cause. The man who will not suffer some slight risk and discomfort for national good, is not the man to whom to entrust the banner of an army. By civic duty we are tested for national responsibility. By the widening

of the smaller accomplishment, we immeasurably extend the possibilities of the larger. It might be said, however, that we have at the moment but little idea of what is meant by the civic life or the civic ideal. This is true ; nevertheless we have but to give the words our close attention, and undoubtedly the day will come, when, for our love and faith in them, we shall be ready to die.

Of our two great epics it may be said that while the pervading interests of the Mahabharata are heroic and national, those of the Ramayana are mainly personal and civic. It is more than likely, indeed, that Valmiki's poem sprang out of a deliberate wish to glorify the beloved city of Ayodhya, by painting the mythic history of its earliest sovereigns. The city, and everything in it, fills the poet with delight. He spends himself in descriptions of its beauty on great festivals. He loses himself in the thought of its palaces, its arches, and its towers. But it is when he comes to paint Lanka, that we reap the finest fruit of that civic sense which Ayodhya has developed in him. There is nothing, in all Indian literature, of greater significance for the modern Indian mind, than the scene in which Hanuman contends in the darkness with the woman who guards the gates, saying, in muffled tones, "I am the city of Lanka."

We have here what is the fundamental need of the civic spirit, that we should think of our city as a being, a personality, sacred, beautiful, and beloved. This, to Rama and his people, was Ayodhya. This, to Ravana and his, was Lanka. And Valmiki could look with both their eyes, for he, in common with all the men of his great age, was in the habit of relating himself instinctively to his home, his sovereign, and his group.

Even in European languages, the power of clear statement with regard to such subjects as we are now discussing, is very unequally developed. In English, for instance, there is no single word to connote the civic community, the human equivalent of the city, that corporate life that

has built for itself, on the chosen spot, in accordance with its own ideals and aspirations, the home we see. The French word *commune* bears the sense we seek to convey, but it may seem to some of us too deeply tinged with political and historical associations. It may be—who knows?—that in some Indian language will first be formed the audible symbol to express the human and social aspect of the civic unit in its purity! Certain it is, that when the thing begins to be apprehended, the word will be created. Great movements fashion their own men, and ideas make their own language.

The city as a whole is but a visible symbol of this life behind it. Nor does this mean only of the life *at present* behind it. It is determined by the sum of the energy of all its creators, past as well as present. There is even, in a sense, an ideal city, in which the labours of all future builders have to be taken into account. Why is Lucknow different from Calcutta, Bombay from Benares, Delhi from Ahmedabad? Looking for the answer to such a question, do we not perceive, finally and conclusively, that the seen is but the sign and symbol of the unscen, that the material is but the masks of the spiritual, that things are but the precipitate of thought? Why is Paris or Rome so different from Amritsar? The history of ages and continents lies in the answer to that question. The highest visible symbol of human aspiration may perhaps be an altar. The most perfect visible symbol of our unity is undoubtedly a city.

The city is something more than the aggregate of the homes that compose it. These homes are themselves grouped according to a certain pattern, in observance of unwritten laws of order. Houses and gardens scattered at random would promise but a short future to the space of ground on which they stood. Peoples may differ widely in the degree of their civic development, the magnificence of their public buildings and the like, but in the orderly evolution of a single street or lane, we have the tacit admission of the presence of the guardian spirit of cities, and

the promise of her future benediction, should it be invoked. Beyond this, there may be beauty of design. In Paris, almost every great roadway ends in a large space of lamps and gardens which forms in itself the centre of a star ; and almost every avenue, forming its ray-like vistas, leads to some prominent building or memorial. So, as we stand in the Place de la Concorde we look up the great roadway of the Champs Elysées to the Napoleonic Arc de Triomphe, where it crowns the gentle elevation in the distance. Or so, from the gilded statue of Joan of Arc, we may look into the Place de la Concorde itself, with its obelisk and its statues, and the watching circle of cities. Scholars say that only a hunting people,—accustomed to scan many of the forest-glades for the quarry from a single centre, would express themselves naturally in so stellate a design. And certainly in the Indian Jaipur, we have the rectangular plan of the rice-fields reproduced, with their intersecting paths.

But, however this be, it is clear that as the city is more than an aggregate of private homes, so the commune represents a grouping that transcends the family in complexity and importance. The past, present and future of the family are bound up in its caste and occupation ; but the commune may embrace all castes ; it transcends all. It seeks amongst all alike for its sons, its lovers, its servants. It imposes no restriction of destiny or birth. The scavenger who serves well the civic ideal of cleanliness is a better citizen than a Brahmin, if the latter serves only himself. Not caste alone, but also the church, is to be forgotten for the city. Hindu and Mohammedan in this relationship are on one footing. Not only differences of religion, but those also of race, of language, of age, and of sex, are to be lost in unity of citizenship. All these elements of diversity are but so much fuel for the fire of joy amongst brethren. The reader of Scott's "Anne of Geirstein" will realise that there is no nationality in Europe stronger than that of Switzerland. Yet this tiny country is divided

between three languages and two religions! The pariah village is as precious to the southern town, as the temple close with its rows of Brahmin houses. The school, the university, and the playground for the babies, are everywhere as essential as the council of the elders. The Mohammedan peasant is every whit as dear to *Bhumia Devi*, the Goddess of the Homestead, as the Hindu workman. All Humanity is necessary to the heart of Humanity, every single soul of us to the great whole; and best of all in the complexity of the civic unity, is the individual mind enabled to grasp this fact. What we call public spirit is simply the reflex in a given personality of the civic consciousness. That is to say, public spirit is the expression of that character which is born of constantly placing the ego, with the same intensity as in the family, in a more complex group. There thus come into being new duties and new responsibilities, and the ideal of civic integrity towers above all the lower and more private achievements of the kindred, or the clan.

What, then, is the fundamental bond that welds so many and such various elements into the single, communal personality? Does it not lie in the equal relation of each of these to the common home? There is no motive in life like the love of the dwelling-place. The spot on which a city stands is in truth a great hearth-place of human love, a veritable altar of spiritual fire. Guarded by a rude rock, on the slopes overlooking the sea, stood Athens. Nestling in a cup amongst her seven hills lies Rome. Nestled about her islands, they built Paris on the Seine. But of what dreams, what poetry, what prayer, what love and triumph did not each of these become the centre! The gods themselves were pictured, fighting for the chosen soil. Pallas Athene guarded Athens. Rome thought of herself as the eternal city. And in Paris, only the other day, the hand of Puvis de Chavannes has painted for us the beautiful legend of St. Genevieve, and we learn that deep in its own heart the most modern and worldly of cities cherishes the

faith that in high heaven, amongst the saints is one who intercedes for it!

But why travel so far afield for instances of the idealising of the abode? What of Benares, built about the Vedic hearth, that today is the golden grating of Vishveshwar? What of Allahabad, with her thousands of pilgrims, bathing in the sacred waters of the Ganga-Jamuna? What of Chitore, with her cathedral-church of Kalika,—Kangra-Rani, Queen of the Battlements? What of Calcutta, where appears Nakuleshwar, as guardian of the ghat of Kali? From end to end of the peopled earth, we shall find, wherever we look, that man makes his home of a surpassing sanctity to himself and others, and the divine mingles with the domestic fire on every hearth.

## CIVIC SYMBOLISM IN MEDIAEVAL EUROPE

This, then is the conception behind all civic development, the beloved communal personality dwelling in the sacred home. What the religious sect has been to the Indian youth of the past,—the mother who sends him out to do great deeds, the theatre that witnesses his achievement, and awards to him applause,—that the village, the country-side, or the city, must be in the future. Henceforth, it is our home that is supremely sacred to us, our home in which lies our hope. Henceforth, all born of one birth-place are brethren. Henceforth we are neither Mussalman nor Hindu ; neither orthodox nor reformed ; henceforth we are all Indian, all workers together for the *Swadesh*, sons of a common motherland.

But the history of the beloved is to all men a spring of wonder and delight. The life-story is the one sure and perfect expression of the individuality. Character is the brief epitome of history. That history cannot sleep, but remains ever dynamic, is a truth as true of all humanity as of the individual, as applicable to the city as to the nation at large. What we have once been, it is always within our power to recover and take our stand upon, again.

It follows that no sooner do we begin to concentrate our attention upon the civic ideal, than the history of that ideal itself becomes unspeakably precious to us. We watch its emergence under different forms from age to age. In all alike, we witness the unmeasured strength that is wielded by man in combination. "I believe in the infinite power of human fellowship!" becomes the ejaculation on the lips of those who work. Co-operation is now seen as the highest duty. It is realised that if empire represents the combination of the few for the exploitation of the many, nationality, as its antithesis, demands the co-operation of all for the equal good of each. And all great and sincere

forms of self-organisation, such as follow on the apprehension of national and civic ideals, have the effect on the individual who accepts them, of deepening immeasurably his personal power.

Any small German bath-town, with its *kurhaus*, will furnish a modern example of this. We find here a city, or even a village, in which no single family perhaps would be rich enough to live with splendour, possessing nevertheless, a communal palace, the property of all. A small fee, or even more modest subscription, gives any who will the right of entrance. There are a few good servants to be seen in the well-ordered rooms, but no police. For the building is the *home* of the whole community, owned by itself, for its own benefit; not a privilege extended to it, on condition of obedience! Libraries, reading rooms, writing-rooms, and great salons for the refinements of social intercourse, open one into another. The same roof covers concert-rooms, lecture-hall, opera house. And by the combined efforts of their competent members, the people of a German municipality will often, in the course of the year, have the opportunity of hearing the finest music, the severest science, and the most learned art criticism in the world, at their own *kurhaus*. So can combination raise the power of the individual to its third and even fourth dimensions! But the *kurhaus* is even more than a culture-centre, making the whole of a little township into a virtual university. It enables every act of hospitality given by those whose private resources might be inadequate to shelter itself under the mantle of the civil dignity. The young woman, living the life of the solitary student, on enforced plain fare and high thought, is thus not altogether unable to mix with her equals. The refined and frugal home is not without its intellectual luxuries. And above all, every class of the community has the opportunity of coming into living touch with every other.

Throughout Continental Europe, again, we are impressed by the *Place* (French, *proplahss*), as the visible evidence

of the civic unity. The *place* is an open space, with flowerbeds, with statues, and may be with a fountain, round which, as the centre of the city, are concentrated its large public buildings. In Bruges (in Belgium) we have the Hotel de Ville (town-hall), the Palais de Justice (High-Court), and an ancient Chapel of the Holy Grail, all grouped together in one priceless historic spot. Elsewhere, the market hall will confront cathedral and town buildings. In Paris, the Isle of St. Louis, with its old world palaces, stands as it were, at the knees of Notre Dame, parallel with the Louvre and the site of the Tuileries. Or, in the Place de la Concorde, the statues which symbolise the great cities of France, watch, in a silent circle, the scenes of the mightiest events of her past. And perhaps few things in the Europe of today are of more pathetic significance than the fact that in some important towns, the railway station and the general post office form features of the central *Place!* How eloquent is such an arrangement of the fact that home has been abandoned, in favour of a world of going and coming: a temporary foothold for the bird of passage!

Civic ownership is an obvious solution of many of the problems presented by the costliness of modern taste, and the vastness of the experience necessary to the modern sphere of thought. This is the fact that speaks in the museums, picture-galleries, and libraries which are the glory of so many English-speaking cities. The paintings that the people have lavished on its walls make the Free Library of Boston, Massachusetts, the most notable civic building of America. The Town Hall of Manchester in England has been glorified similarly by the local history of the city in the magnificent renderings of Ford Madox Brown. Within the entrance of the building sit the white marble statues of those two men of science, whose names are the glory of Manchester—while yet we are told that of these very two Joule lived so retired a life that on the day of the opening of the hall, no one remembered to send him an

invitation! And finally, the great hall contains one of the finest organs in England, by means of which the people are feasted on music weekly. Liverpool, again, boasts in her civic centre, the great array of free library, picture-gallery, museums, town-hall, and even cathedral, in close proximity.

Such are some of the triumphs of the civic spirit in the most noted of the modern ganglia of commerce and labour. They are a kind of democratic university, made for the people by the people, out of their own mind and heart, as all that the people use and enjoy has a right to be. But they are not that serene and organic self-expression of all the people, and all their sentiments, which we find in certain earlier phases of the evolution of the city. In mediaeval Europe, nascent nationalities found themselves cradled in the shadow of the Church. And it is not unfit that in London and Brussels, the cathedral crowns the hill, even as Rome is gathered about the portals of the Vatican, while streets of shops and warehouses radiate in all directions from the given centre.

We rarely recall to ourselves all that the cathedral or the parish-church meant, in the building, to the people of Europe. We are reminded of it again, when we are confronted by some great Indian temple, with its synthesis of occupations and significance. A dozen little industries flourish in its shadow. It has its collections of plates, jewels, and manuscripts. The wrestler, the Panda, and the sweet-meat-seller are as vitally-related to it as the Pujari-Brahmin. And the arts that went to the making of it, were innumerable! It was even so, in the great ages of their construction, with the cathedral and churches of Europe. The mason, the stone-carver, the artist in metal, the wood-carver, the glass-stainer, the organ-builder, the weaver and embroiderer are but a few of the craftsmen who were needed for this task. In the building of a cathedral lay the birth of the true city, for all occupations were there gathered together, in due relation and ardent co-operation.

It was natural that when it had been builded, the parish church should form the civic centre ; that town-business should be transacted in its porch, and that a proclamation should not be regarded as duly published till it had been pinned on its doors and read from its pulpit. In a sense, the very conception of the city lay at first in its relation to that larger life of mind and spirit which was symbolised by the church. The town gathered round its bishop and his cathedral, could regard with some indifference, in the strength of its numbers, its organisation, and its fortified walls, the feudal castle of prince or baron that kept the outlying country-folk in awe.

We must remember that while Christianity is composed doubtless of Asiatic ideas, yet the advancement of its interests lay, throughout the middle ages, in the hands of that race which had inherited the Roman power and habit of imperial organisation. It is the consciousness of this Roman organisation behind it, which to this day so differentiates the religious thought of Europe from its Asiatic compeers. It is this also which accounts for the beauty and splendour of Christian worship, the strength and narrowness of some of its most cherished convictions, and the dread and dislike which it inspires in those who are not of its fold. To outsiders, Christianity appears less as a faith than as a church, an imperialism at it were, of the mind. Now in the thirteenth century of Europe, men's political relations were ill-defined. The dwelling place might fall under one jurisdiction or another, according to the victory of baron or duke. But the continent was netted, from end to end, with bishoprics and parishes, and every man knew how he stood to the church. Thus the group of merchants and burghers could stand upon this relation. It gave them unity and an individuality. The church was the natural growing-centre of the city.

It may have been that the building of cathedrals in the thirteenth century gave a great impetus to the growth of the city guilds. It is certainly true that the boroughs

or town-ships were gradually freeing themselves from the grasp of warring feudal potentates. And these facts, with others, must have contributed to that great outburst of civic energy, which, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, *created* the magnificent *Hotels de Ville* of France and Belgium. Here was the home of the craft-guilds. Here were kept the town archives. Here was dispensed the civic hospitality. Here, often, were collected great works of art. The commune had become conscious of itself as an entity. In the German Margruce and in the English Durham, indeed, we have instances of the identification of the town with the church, in a small state ; for the bishops of these were also princes, bishops-palatinate ; and it would be interesting to study the effect of this identification on the evolution of the city. But for the most part, the cathedral, abbey, and college of the thirteenth century were succeeded by the *Hotel de Ville* or town-hall of the fourteenth and fifteenth, and these by the evolution of nationalities in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth. Till finally, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, came a blind Samson, a thunderbolt of Indra, by name Napoleon Bonaparte, who playfully pulled down all the pillars of the past, trying to unify Europe with his civil code, and thereby led each people to the sudden realisation of what it had assimilated through centuries of experience. The nations of the West became aware of themselves.

It is ever thus. The day in which we think a people have become new, is almost always the moment in which the scales fall from their eyes, and they suddenly see to what goal they have been approaching, through ages of silent growth and struggle. Napoleon did not *make* nationalities in Europe. That was done by languages, by history, by poetry, by cohesion of communities amongst themselves, and sharp definition as between them and others. But Napoleon provoked their self-realisation. He was the sharp reagent that moved through the colourless fluid, and caused the formation of dense precipitates.

Nationalities were potential in Europe before he came. When he had gone, they were inevitable.

What cities have learnt in the past, the nations of Europe have yet to learn. Great combinations of men exist for the sake of the life of the human mind and spirit, not the reverse. One great truth found and given, one beautiful dream dreamt and made visible, would be enough to justify the whole existence of a people. It is in science,—the advancement of the human knowledge,—in art—the democratising of beautiful vision—and in religion,—the largeness of the soul's bread—that we find the goal of cities and of nations. Man has a body, in order to develop his mind. He has not a mind, as the West appears at present to assume, in order to compass the good of his body. The sanitation and even the adorning of a town would be nothing, unless the life of its people could overflow, freely and spontaneously, into the building of temples of the human spirit. And as with cities, so with nations. The luxury which results from a division of spoils is as much an incident of war, as the destruction of a farmstead. The peace of death that reigns in a town under martial law, or under police-rule, is as truly the result and promise of battle as the booming of the cannon or the wringing out of indemnity. And war is no function of Humanity. It destroys the nation that wages it as assuredly as that which suffers. Today Europe is covered with a series of armed camps, miscalled nationalities. Today aggression seems to Western peoples the one proper corporate activity. That this, if it were true, would be but childish and base, it is for the wiser East to teach. But it is not true. It is a grotesque parody of truth. And this lesson will have to be enforced, not by the weakness, but by the strength, of an Eastern people.

## CIVIC IDEAL IN CLASSICAL CITY—POMPEII

It is after all, in the cities of classical Europe that we might expect to find the most perfect and unconfused expression of the civic sense. For *religion* meant to the Roman neither more nor less than the sum total of those institutions and ideas which serve as a binding-force, to unite together, *to tie together*, groups of men. Thus nothing was so vital to him, nothing was in so real a sense his Dharma, his essential ideal, as his conception of the city-state. Compared with him, even the Greek was Asiatic and theocratic. The Acropolis or the mausoleum, the university, the temple, or the tomb, far out-topped, in his case, the sanctity of court and market-place, of home and commune. But to the Roman, on the contrary, the open Forum—built in a fashion not unlike that of an elongated mosque,—where citizens assembled to discuss public affairs, to hold meetings, and to celebrate festivals, the open Forum was at once the heart, brain, and lungs of the civic organism. Here men entered as citizens; here they heard the public news; here they made their political opinions felt. The Forum was at once an informal senate and a club, and it was the one essential feature that made the sum total of a group of buildings surrounded by walls into that something more which we name a city.

Clearly, however, if we want to study the classical city in detail, the ideal means of doing so would be to discover one which had been arrested at that particular stage in its development. Rome herself has become since then a city of priests and churches. She is the cradle of Christianity, not classical at all. Marseilles was never more than colonial, and is now post-mediaeval and modern. By a strange catastrophe, however, which we dare not call good fortune even for archaeologists, a catastrophe that happened one summer day more than eighteen hundred years ago, one

such city has been preserved for us under precisely these ideal conditions. It is now more than a hundred and fifty years since the long sleep of Pompeii, under the ashes of Vesuvius, was disturbed. From the 23rd of August in the year A.D. 79 till 1748, the peasant ploughed and reaped, gardens blossomed and orchards flourished, in the soil above the ancient streets, and none knew or dreamt of the awful drama that had once been enacted beneath their feet. Today, most of Pompeii stands uncovered within its walls, and if one enters by the ancient *Porta della Marina*, the gate towards the sea, and goes into the little museum on the right, one finds record enough, the more vivid in that it is unwritten, of that hour of sudden death. There are students who can decipher the whole story of a human soul from a specimen of a hand-writing. There are others who do the same, by the palm of the hand or the sole of the foot. But here, in the museum at Pompeii we find a surer means of divination than any of these. In the solid mass of fine ashes which fell over the doomed city on that awful 23rd of August, numbers of people were buried in the act of flight. And in recent excavations it has been found possible to make casts of several of their bodies, by filling the form in which they had lain, with plaster of Paris. The bodies themselves, it must be understood, have been carbonised and long ago disappeared, but a kind of shell was formed round each of them, under the pressure of the hot ashes, and into this hollow shell, plaster could be poured, so as to take the exact place of the corpse that once lay there. This is the origin of the figures which lie in the cases down the length of the museum. The forms are naked, for the reason that the clothing must have caked in the ashes and formed part of the mass about them.

Never were seen symbols at once so graphic and so tragic. It is the very act of death we see before us. The human mind has smitten its own indelible record of one brief moment, on the only writing surface that is absolutely within its power, the prisoning body. Oh what sentences

are these! They reveal the past of the soul, as well as the dread moment of inscription. Here is a man, who has fallen backwards with his hands thrown up; on the breathless lips we hear the gasp of despair, and from the sightless eyes see flashed back the last picture they saw, the horror of the blast of fire that met him from before, even as he found his knees buried in the rising dust below. Here again is a woman, unaccustomed to struggle. She has fallen forward and her head is pillowed on her arm. Like the man, it was death she met in her hurried flight. But she met it with something like resignation. Her whole attitude speaks of submission, of sweetness, of grace. Surely at the last, there was a touch of peace. It may be that she was the last of her household, that the safety of her children was assured. It may be she was comforting some other, showing someone about her how to die. Indian women, also, have met deaths as terrible with this gentle acceptance, or even with exultant triumph.

But we leave these graphs of the spirit stamped upon the human body, and proceed to examine that other record, the city itself, built by generation upon generation of men, through nigh upon a thousand years. In form it was of a type familiar enough to us in India. Conjeeveram to this day, or even the Hindu quarter of Calcutta, can furnish us with something very like it.

The Street of Abundance and the Street of Fortune were indeed, as their names imply, full of rich men's houses. But they were narrow; as is natural in sunny climates, where light is desired to fall subdued between the houses. They were so narrow that two chariots could not pass, as the deep ruts for a single pair of wheels bear evidence. But they had footpaths, and perpetual stepping-stones across the roadway, from one to the other, tell tales of the heavy summer rains. They show us another thing also: that probably the chariots were driven in every case by a pair of horses. There was no entanglement of traffic, however, such as is known to us, for people did not drive hither and

thither in the city, but only in or out of it, and the ways to other places were definitely laid down and mapped,—the gate to the sea, the gate to Herculaneum, and so on, and vehicles went always in a single known direction. In the Street of Mercury we have a couple of memorials which tell us much, arches built in commemoration of visits paid to the town by Caligula and Nero. They tell us in the first place of a couple of days of civic festival. The same arches would be made by ourselves with bamboo wands and flags and flowers, and pulled down in a day or two, and the occasion forgotten. They were in these cases made of stone, intended to be eternal. And truly, two thousand years later, they will still be able to revive the uproarious scenes of those two days of pleasure! But they tell us still more. They reveal to us the whole character of the city. It was a week-end place, a city of pleasure, a garden-city—not using that term in the decorous modern sense! Caligula and Nero were the most profligate of Roman Emperors, and doubtless, in coming to Pompeii, and being received there with enthusiasm, they came unto their own. We can imagine that ancient tales of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroyed in fire by reason of their wickedness, were not without their application to the case of Pompeii. And yet the beauty of the situation, of the culture of the inhabitants would always offer the possibility of a lofty enjoyment also; and Cicero, we are told, retired to his house there to write.

It does not need the Street of Tombs—where the so-called graves are only monuments covering repositories for cinerary urns—to remind us of the similarity between the civilisation of Rome and that of high-caste Hinduism. The houses themselves consist of rooms built round an outer and inner courtyard. In the most perfect of all that have yet been discovered, the home of the Vetii, the inner courtyard, and the kitchen with its clay-built stove and metal *dekhchis*, are eloquent of this similarity. In the middle of the outer court is found in every case a small marble tank, built doubtless for ablutions of face and hands or feet. In the

inner court of the Vetii, which may have offered hospitality—who knows?—to emperors on their visits to Pompeii, there is a multiplicity of small raised basin fountains, probably used for this purpose as well as for ornament. For actual bathing, we have a fresco of the bath of Diana, which shows that a vase of water to be poured over the person, was as much the method of the Pompeian as of the Hindu. And there were also the magnificent public baths, of which those of the Forum must have constituted the most fashionable club-house of the city. Especially was this true of the tepidarium, or middle hall, where bathers who had already put off the outer garments could sit or stand for warmth about a large bronze brazier which acted as a hearth, while they prepared themselves for the bath by using the oils and essences taken from the niches in the walls. In the streets outside are laid bare the metal pipes, stamped in relief with the names of the makers, by which water was conveyed to houses and baths from the town-reservoirs. But in the streets, too, we find water-troughs with raised drinking-fountains, offering refreshment to man and beast. And in one case the stone edge is worn where the hands of generations of drinkers have rested, as they leaned over it to fill their cups at the tap and drink. Ah! the pathos of such silent witness to the busy life that once filled the empty world about us. Here in the market-hall, when it was first excavated, was found a little heap of fish-bones, where the stall of fried fish had been, and where already a number of people had eaten, on that last dread day, before its tragic noon. The ruts worn deep in the paved roads by the wheels of carts and chariots; the snake approaching a nest of eggs, that we see so constantly painted on the walls as a warning to passers-by that these streets are sacred to Aesculapius, the God of hygiene and cleanliness; the notice, again, painted on the walls in red letters, as the equivalent of the modern poster; it is by such trifles as these that the deepest emotion of Pompeii is conveyed. Life, common, everyday, vivacious, duly compounded of

the trivial and the great, brought suddenly to a stop—this is the spectacle that we have before us, the spectacle of one bright summer morning unexpectedly made eternal by death.

There were shops in these streets scattered up and down amongst the residences. And it is interesting to think for a moment of the kinds that could not be preserved. Obviously stores of cloth would be destroyed. Nor can we imagine the steps of the public buildings without their country-people bearing baskets of fruit and flowers, and vegetables from without the city. Of these, however, there necessarily remains no trace. But the bakers' shops are there, with their ovens, and their millstones ; even, in one case, with their loaves in the closed oven, carbonised but intact. And the oilshops remain, though the oil is long ago dried into the empty vessels. And the wine-shops abound. Truly was Pompeii a city of temptations! Yet the Indian visitor may be pardoned a touch of pleasure when he finds the wine-*chatties* set deep in built-up mud, in the corner of the tavern, even like *dahi* and lentils in a Calcutta bazaar!

But it is in the Basilica and the Forum, however, that one arrives at the classical significance of Pompeii. There was an older Forum, small and triangular in shape, containing a significant little Temple of the Thunderbolt, and the fall of a meteor may well have been the original reason for building the city on the chosen spot. But at the time of its historic catastrophe the town had much increased, and had built for itself a new and larger forum. A long open space in the middle is surrounded on three sides by a columned pavement, and at the far end, facing the ring of deep-blue mountains in the background which forms the glory of the site, a temple of Jupiter stands on a tremendously high platform, the altar of public sacrifice. Here we can see the citizens pacing up and down, or meeting in earnest groups to discuss or gossip. Here we can see the couriers come in, with public news, from Rome. Here,

in the middle, the orators addressed the crowds. Or here, again, the citizens thronged, whatever their personal creed or habits, to watch, on appointed days of public festival, the slaying of the sacrificial bull. Immediately adjoining is the Basilica, or High Court. Again we have the same plan of buildings, but the aisles here were probably roofed, and the nave alone left open. And here, to judge from the magnificence of the appointments, it would appear that the legal and judicial aspects of life absorbed as large a share of the intellect of Roman, as of modern civilisation. At the end may be seen the great statues and the sacred symbol of justice which screened from public view the high cell or apartment in which the judge listened to opposite pleadings and sentenced the accused. In the cell below this daisied chamber, the prisoners awaited their turns, while the door at the bottom of the short staircase was guarded doubtless by a couple of men-at-arms. Outside, the aisles of the Basilica formed a kind of cloister—or Bar Library—in which the rival lawyers met, walked and talked.

In its religious aspects, the life of Pompeii was confused enough. Here is the temple of an Egyptian deity, here again of a Greek. The two-faced image of Janus, native to the soil, is confronted by the new-fangled worship of the Emperor. Who knows but the hope spoken in Christianity had been whispered behind some of these roofless walls, ere there arrived the hour of their destruction? Religion appears to be largely, with these Romans, an act of reverence to the ancestors, a wise pact with the powerful Infinite to guard the home. But when we come to their public buildings, and to the organisation of their public life, to their theatres and their fencing-schools, their monuments and their statues, their court of justice and their forum, we have reached a stronghold which they hold with no uncertain grasp. In Civic Organisation, in the Civic Consciousness they are supreme, these, doughty Romans; and when they become a circle of predatory peoples, theocratic countries, alarmed for their own survival, may learn

at their feet of that efficient self-organisation which is the beginning of strength. Wherever the seed of India has been blown, it has grown up into world-faiths: wherever the seed of Rome has fallen, it has raised up mighty nations. Its action may lie in terror ; its reaction produces strength.

## CIVIC ELEMENTS IN INDIAN LIFE

The essential condition for the development of a strong civic spirit lies in the maintenance of the communal life and consciousness, and this condition is fulfilled nowhere else in the world as it is in oriental countries. This is to a certain extent the result of climate. Life, in the clear air and under the cloudless skies of India, is necessarily passed much in the open air. That the street is a kind of club, the very architecture, with its verandahs and stone couches, bears mute witness. The family-homes stand ranged behind the great open-air *salon*,\* like a row of convent-cells, for the stricter members of the choir. Sometimes there are added evidences of the larger social grouping visible to the eye. Bhubaneswar has its great tree in the midst of the parting of three roads, and at any hour one may see there knots of talkers of one sort or another, seated at ease beneath it. Conjeeveram is like a city out of the old Greek or Assyrian world, so wide is the roadway that leads to the temple entrance, and so splendid the arch that spans it just before, eloquent, both, of communal worship and rejoicing. Nor are women in India altogether without their civic centres and gathering-places, though these are necessarily concerned chiefly with the bathing-ghat, the temple, and the well.

Such meetings, however, of the inhabitants of a single street, or the members of either sex, amongst themselves, are not in strictness reunions of the highest civic order. They serve indeed to keep before the mind of each member of the community that social unit which transcends the family. But that unit is still simplified by adhesion to a single religious doctrine or a single body of custom. It is

\* *Salon*—French for drawing-room, *baithak-khana*.

thus communal or parochial,\* rather than civic. It is after all, intellectually speaking, but as an assembly within the village. Now a city is made up of men and families from a thousand villages, and they are by no means of one faith alone, or even of one nationality. How complex is the typical city, we may be better able to judge, if we recall for a moment some of its more primitive examples. They stand always, as Kropotkin points out, at the crossings of the great highways. To see this, we have only to look at Benares, at Allahabad, at Babylon. To this day, all the railroads in India centre at Delhi.

The ideal city, then, is the meeting-place of shepherd and peasant, of merchant and artificer, of priest and pilgrim, of court and camp. It is the centre towards which converge streams that rise in all the quarters of the globe. It is a market-place and an exchange, a focus of wealth and industry, a hall of international council, and the quadrangle of a world-university. Babylon,—set on the great river that flows north and south, midway between Persepolis and Thebes, with her highways running to Damascus and Baalbek, to Arabia, and even to distant China,—forms a supreme example of the civic complexity. But Taxila must once have curiously resembled her, and ancient Thaneshwar, and glorious Pataliputra.

The fractional unit, then, is not the civic unity. The "quarter" is not the city. Yet it is, as we know it in India, a marvellously enduring fragment of an old-time unity, which carries with it, if we have eyes to read, a code of civic honour and a habit of civic fraternity. The village is a larger family, and a smaller city, and nothing can be more significant than the forms which its communal activity takes in India. The portion of the field that belonged to the Brahmin was tilled for him. The widow's digging was done by her neighbours. The schoolmaster and his wife were maintained by gifts. It is learning, we note,

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\* How instructive is the comparison between the English word *parish* and the Bengali *para*!

and the spiritual power, for whose maintenance the community concentrates its energy. To this day, there is no village in India, however poor, that will ask a stranger to visit it, in the capacity of teacher or thinker, without paying every expense of conveyance to and fro, in addition to the outlay incidental to the presence of a visitor. We have here the evidence of a vast civic culture, deeply rooted in historic habits.

The same truth is impressed upon us in another way, by the ease with which Indian towns exert themselves to show civic hospitality. Here we have substantial earnestness of the readiness to enter into larger organisation. There is no Hindu township that would present an address of welcome to a distinguished guest without the inclusion of Mohammedan names. Similarly, the Mohammedan district will make no representative deputation unless the Hindu residents of good standing are also to be found upon it. India is supposed to be sectarian, but no one ever heard of the members of one sect trying to exclude those of another from collective action! In such mutual courtesy and recognition, we have the largest possible basis for civic self-realisation of the highest order. It is by the study and understanding of our own cities, and their institutions, it must be remembered, that we shall be able to develop and build up our civic sense.

It has been said that the whole demand of citizenship lies in the claim that all the work of the city should be done by the people of the city. This is, as I cannot help thinking, but a defective summary of the duties of citizens. Surely they ought to rejoice together! Unless they meet now and then indeed with conscious thought of the one bond that securely unites them, amidst all their apparent diversities, the very spirit of citizenship will be likely to depart altogether, and leave them sundered. And this thought of kinship must be expressed in festivity. It has ever been in the history of man, that the realising of social unity found expression in joy.

This is the feeling that speaks in every triumphal arch that ends a village-road, and crowns a bathing-ghat, on the banks of the Ganges. This is the feeling that our fathers knew, when they instituted the practice of procession. Over and over again, in the Rig-Veda, the earth is referred to as "the sacrifice" round which the path of light makes a priestly circle, in the course of the year. It is one of the most beautiful and vigorous of similies. That of Auguste Comte which may be freely translated "The Earth itself is but the largest image, and space about it the infinite altar," sounds almost like an echo of the Vedic metaphor. But it reminds us of the beautiful procession of the images which are so characteristic a feature of life in Indian towns. As the light encircles the earth, so verily do these ceremonial pilgrimages girdle our boroughs and villages, nay, it is not only the worshipper of Saraswati or the commemorator of the Mohurram, who makes the circumambulation of the communal home. The whole Indian idea of enjoyment is communal, and even at a marriage, processions form the typical delight.

Let us not forget that at the heart of the circle lies the sacred object. Already there are rising amongst us, hereafter to be multiplied in number and deepened in significance, those other processions, symbolic of the idea of city and nationality. Already it is no uncommon thing to see the streets and lanes of a Hindu town filled with its singing boys who, carrying banners and instruments, are chanting prayers to no god or goddess, but intoning the sacred address to the Motherland, "Bande Mataram". Let us all remember as we watch them, that the city about which they march is the symbol of the nationality, that in her is the throne of the Mother Herself. The future will see more and more of these hymns and poems of place. It was a Mohammedan who composed that Ascription to the Ganges that every Hindu child in Bengal learns in babyhood. In doing so, he was the forerunner of a new era in literature. Even now we are only on the threshold of

that great age. But many who are young today will not have grown old before these things shall come to pass. To Indian hearts, Hindu and Mohammedan alike, high caste and lowly-born, woman and man, there will be no symbol so holy as, firstly, their motherland, and secondly, their city. The civic life will offer a conception as clear as that of family and home. The duties of citizenship will seem not less precious than those of Jati and Samaj. And the worship of place and sense of civic honour, dignity, and happiness will bear their flowers in each individual soul.

# THE PRESENT POSITION OF WOMAN

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

It would be useless to attempt any comparative study of human institutions, apart from the ideals of which they are the expression. In every social evolution, whether of the modern American, the Hottentot, the Semitic or the Mongolian, the dynamic element lies in the ideal behind it. For the student of sociology, the inability to discover this formative factor in any given result constitutes a supreme defect. To assume, as is so often done, that one people has moulded itself on a moral purpose, clearly perceived, while in the minds of others the place for such purpose, is blank, and they are as they have happened to occur, is purely anarchic and pre-scientific. Yet some such conception is only too common amongst those writers to whom we are compelled to go, for the data of racial sociology. This is an unfortunate consequence of the fact that, for the most part, we are only impelled to the international service of humanity, by a strong accession of sectarian ardour.

Another error, to be avoided in a comparative statement, is that of endowing the more or less antithetic ideals and tendencies which we do disentangle, with a false rigidity and distinctiveness. It is easy to argue backwards, from institutions to ideals, in such a way as to tabulate whole realms of poetry and aspiration inexorably closed to certain peoples. But ideals are the opportunity of all, the property of none ; and sanity of view seems to demand that we should never lose sight of the underlying unity and *humanness* of humanity. Thus, nothing would appear at first sight more fixed, or more limiting, than the polyandry of Tibet. We might well assume, *a priori*, that to look for certain standards and perceptions amongst a populace so

characterised were vain. That such a view would be untrue, however, is shown at once by Sven Hedin, in his recent work, *Trans-Himalaya*, where he tells of a Tibetan gentleman imploring him never to shoot the wild geese, for these birds are known to have human hearts, like men, they mate but once ; hence, in killing one, we may inflict on another a long life of perpetual sorrow. This one incident is sufficient to remind us of the high potentialities of the human spirit everywhere, however unpromising may be the results of a superficial glance. Again, we all know something of the marvels of constructive and self-organising power shown by modern Europe. When we look behind the symptom for the cause, we may feel impelled to the opinion that the master-fact in this regard is the influence of the genius of ancient Rome, acting first in the Empire, then in the Church, and lastly seen in the reaction of nationalities today. But of that fundamental Roman genius itself, it is increasingly difficult to make any statement that does not almost immediately commend itself to us, as equally applicable to China as the great leader of the Yellow Races. The actual difference between Europe and Asia, in spite of the analogy between Rome and the people of Han, may perhaps be found explicable on the basis of the differing place and materials on which these two instincts had to work. Perhaps the very foundation stone of sociological truth lies in that unity of humanity, which such considerations illustrate.

And lastly, we have to remember the widely differing values of different classes of evidence. It is important always, if possible, to make a people speak for themselves. Identical material may be oppositely handled, as all will admit, by different persons, but we cannot go far wrong, in demanding that in all cases original evidence shall have a wide preference, over the report of his personal observations and opinions, made by a foreigner. It would also be well to stipulate for the same rights of scrutiny, over even original testimony, as would be exercised by competent

persons in weighing evidence, with regard, say, to physical experiments or a case in a court of law. Statements made, even by the natives of a given country, with the direct intention of witnessing or ministering to some partisan position, will not, on the face of it, have the same value as if it can be shown that they were made with no idea of a particular question having arisen. For instance, we may refer to the matter of the position of the Chinese woman in marriage. We are assured by most modern writers of authority that this is most depressing. In theory, the wife is completely subordinated, while in fact, the man always exploits to the full the opportunity thus given him. That marriage can be brutalised is doubtless as true in the case of China as in that of England. All that we have a right to ask is, whether it has also the opposite possibility, and in what degree and frequency. I assume that we are all familiar with the relation between the general development of a society, and its impulse to recognise an individual poet, and accord him fame. Bearing this relation in mind, we shall be able to measure the significance of a couple of little poems translated by Martin, in his tiny posthumous work—*La Femme en Chine*. Of these, one may be given here. It is by the poet Lin-Tchi to his wife,

We are living under the same roof, dear comrade of  
my life.

We shall be buried in a single tomb,  
And our commingled ashes will eternalise our union.  
With what goodwill hast thou shared my poverty,  
And striven to aid me by thy toil!

What ought I not to do to make our names illustrious  
by my wisdom,  
Thus rendering glorious thy noble example and thy  
good deeds!

But my tenderness and my respect have told thee  
this every day.\*

\* Paris Sandoz & Frischbacher, 1876.

Is it not true that one genuine utterance from the heart of a people, is testimony that outweighs a whole volume of opinions, however honest, about them? The historical process, as manifested in different countries, may have led to the selection of various ideals as motives of organisation, but an open examination of data will make us very doubtful of statements that would deny to any nationality a given height of spirituality or refinement.

#### CLASSIFICATION

The first point to be determined in dealing with the proper subject of this paper, the present position of the civilised woman, is the principle of classification to be followed. We might divide women into Asiatic and European ; but if so, the American woman must be taken as European *par excellence*. And where must we place the woman of Japan? The terms Eastern and Western are too vague, and Modern and Mediaeval too inexact. Nor can we afford to discard half of each of these generalisations, and classify woman as, on the one hand, Western—whether Norse, Teuton, Slav, or Latin—and on the other Mongolian, Hindu, or Mussalman. Such a system of reference would be too cumbersome. Perhaps the only true classification is based on ideals, and if so, we might divide human society, in so far as woman is concerned, into communities dominated by the civic, and communities dominated by the family, ideal.

#### THE CIVIC IDEAL

Under the civic ideal—imperfectly as particular women may feel that this has yet been realised—both men and women tend to be recognised as individuals, holding definite relations to each other in the public economy, and by their own free will co-operating to build up the family. The *civitas* tends to ignore the family, save as a result, like any

other form of productive co-operation, and in its fullest development may perhaps come to ignore sex. In America, for instance, both men and women are known as 'citizens'. No one asks, 'Are you a *native* or a *subject*, of America?' but always, "Are you an American *citizen*?" The contemporary struggle of the English woman, for the rudiments of political equality with men, is but a single step in the long process of woman's civic evolution. It is significant of her conscious acceptance of the civic ideal as her goal. The arrival of this moment is undoubtedly hastened by the very marked tendency of modern nations towards the economic independence of woman; and this process, again, though born of the industrial transformation from Manual to Mechanical, or Mediæval to Modern, is indirectly accelerated, amongst imperial and colonising peoples, by the gravitation of the men of the ruling classes towards the geographical confines of their racial or political area. One factor, amongst the many thus brought into play, is the impracticability of the family as their main career for some of the most vigorous and intelligent of women. These are thrown back upon the *civitas* for the theatre of their activities, and the material of their mental and emotional development. Such conditions are much in evidence in the England of today, and must have been hardly less so in Imperial Rome. Nero's assassination of his mother might conceivably be treated as the Roman form of denial of the suffrage to woman.

Regarding the civic evolution of woman as a process, it is easy to see that it will always take place most rapidly in those communities and at those epochs when political or industrial transformation, or both, are most energetic and individuating. The guiding and restraining influences which give final shape to the results achieved are always derived from the historical fund of ideals and institutions, social, æsthetic and spiritual. It is here that we shall derive most advantage from remembering the very relative and approximate character of the differentiation of ideals. The

more extended our sympathies, the more enlarged becomes the area of precedent. If the Anglo-Saxon woman rebelling in England, or organising herself into great municipal leagues in America, appears at the moment to lead the world in the struggle for the concession of full civic responsibility, we must not forget the brilliance of the part played by women in the national history of France. Nor must we forget the Mediæval Church, that extraordinary creation of the Latin peoples, which as a sort of *civitas* of the soul, offered an organised super-domestic career to woman, throughout the Middle Ages, and will probably still continue, as a fund of inspiration and experience, to play an immense part, even in her future. Nor must we forget that Finland has outstripped even the English-speaking nations. Nor can we, in this connection, permit ourselves to overlook the womanhood of the East. The importance of woman in the dynastic history of China for example, during the last four thousand years, would of itself remind us, that though the family may dominate the life of the Chinese woman, yet she is not absolutely excluded from the civic career. Again, the noble protest of his inferior wife, Tchong-tse, to the Emperor in 556 B.C., against the nomination of her own son as heir to the throne, shows that moral development has been known in that country to go hand in hand with opportunity. "Such a step," she says, "would indeed gratify my affection, but it would be contrary to the laws. Think and act as a prince, and not as a father!" This is an utterance which, all will agree, for its civic virtue and sound political sense, to have been worthy of any matron of Imperial Rome.

But it is not China alone, in the East, that can furnish evidence to the point. In India, also, women have held power, from time to time, as rulers and administrators, often with memorable success. And it is difficult to believe that a similar statement might not be made of Mohammedanism. There is at least one Indo-Mussalman throne, that of Bhopal, which is always held by a woman. Perhaps

enough has been said to emphasise the point that while the evolution of her civic personality is at present the characteristic fact in the position of the Western woman, the East also has power, in virtue of her history and experience, to contribute to the working out of this ideal. To deny this would be as ignorantly unjust as to pretend that Western women had never achieved greatness by their fidelity, tenderness, and other virtues of the family. The antithesis merely implies that in each case the mass of social institutions is more or less attuned to the dominant conception of the goal, while its fellow is present, but in a phase relatively subordinate, or perhaps even incipient.

The civic life, then, is that which pertains to the community as a whole, that community—whether of nation, province, or township—whose unity transcends and ignores that of the family, reckoning its own active elements, men or women as the case may be, as individuals only. Of this type of social organisation, public spirit is the distinctive virtue; determined invasion of the freedom of welfare of the whole, in the interest of special classes or individuals, the distinctive sin. The civic spirit embodies the personal and categorical form of such ideals as those of national unity, or corporate independence. Its creative bond is that of place, the common home,—as distinguished from blood, the common kin,—that common home, whose children are knit together to make the *civitas*, the civic family, rising in its largest complexity to be the national family.

The characteristic test of moral dignity and maturity which our age offers to the individual is this—of his or her participation in civic wisdom and responsibility. Our patriotism may vary from jingoism to the narrowest parochialism, but the demand for patriotism, in some form or other, we all acknowledge to be just. Different countries have their various difficulties in civic evolution, and these are apt to bear harder on that of the woman than of the man. The study of woman in America, where society has been budded, so to speak, from older growths, and started

anew, with the modern phase, in a virgin soil, is full of illustrations. It would be a mistake to attribute the regrettable tendency towards disintegration of the family, which we are undeniably witnessing in that country today, to any ardour in the pursuit of civic ideals. High moral aims are almost always mutually coherent. Weakening of family ties will not go hand in hand, in a modern community, with growth of civic integrity. Both the progressive idea of the *civitas*, and the conservative idea of the family, are apt to suffer at once from that assumption of the right to enjoyment which is so characteristic of the new land, with its vast natural resources, still imperfectly exploited. Various American states exhibit a wide range of institutions; domestic and political. Some have long conceded the right of female suffrage, while in others the dissolution of marriage is notoriously frivolous. But we may take it as an axiom that the ethics of *civitas* and family, so far as woman is concerned are never really defiant of each other; that neither batters on the decay of its fellow; but that both alike suffer from the invasions of selfishness, luxury and extravagance; while both are equally energised, by all that tends to the growth of womanly honour and responsibility in either field. Even that movement, of largely American and feminist origin, which we may well refer to as the New Monasticism,—the movement of social observation and social service, finding its blossom in university settlements and Hull Houses—is permeated through and through with the modern, and above all, with the American, unsuspectingness of pleasure. It is essentially an Epicurean movement—always remembering, as did Epicurus, that the higher pleasures of humanity include pain—not only in the effort it makes to brighten and enliven poverty and toil, but also in the delicate and determined gaiety of spirit of those engaged in it, who have never been heard to admit that the hairshirt of social service, with all its anxiety and labour, affords them anything but the keenest of delight to don.

## THE FAMILY IDEAL

The society of the East, and therefore necessarily its womanhood, has moulded itself from time immemorial on the central ideal of the family. In no Eastern country it may be broadly said—the positive spirit of China, and the inter-tribal unity of Islam to the contrary, notwithstanding—has the civic concept ever risen into that clearness and authority which it holds in the modern West. As a slight illustration of this, we have the interesting question of the sources amongst different peoples of their titles of honour. In China, we are told, all terms of courtesy are derived from family relationships. The same statement is true of India, but perhaps to a less extent: for there a certain number of titles are taken from the life of courts, and also from ecclesiastical and monastic organisations. The greatest number and variety of titles of honour, however, is undoubtedly to be found amongst Mussalman nations, who have been familiar from the beginning with the idea of the alien, but friendly tribe. In all countries, as well in Asia as in mediæval Europe, individual women, owing to the accidents of rank or character, have occasionally distinguished themselves in civil and even in military administration. If France has had her saintly queen, Blanche of Castile, China has had a sovereign of talents and piety no less touching and memorable in Tchang-sun-chi, who came to the throne in A.D. 626 as wife of Tai-tsoung: and military greatness and heroism have more than once been seen in Indian women. In spite of these facts, the *civitas*, as the main concern of women, forms an idea which cannot be said ever to have occurred to any Eastern people, in the sense in which it has certainly emerged during the last hundred years amongst those nations which inherit from Imperial Rome.

In the West today there are large classes of unmarried women, both professional and leisured, amongst whom the interests of the civic has definitely replaced that of the

domestic life. The East, meanwhile, continues to regard the Family as woman's proper and characteristic sphere. The family as the social unit determines its conception of the whole of society. Community of blood and origin, knitting the kinship into one, becomes all-important to it, as the bond of unity. The whole tends to be conceived of in Eastern countries, as the social area within which marriages can take place. That combination of conceptions of race and class which thus comes into prominence, constitutes *caste*, rising in its multiplicity into the *ecclesia* or Samaj. Throughout the art of Eastern peoples we can see how important and easily discriminated by them, is the difference between mean and noble race. The same fact comes out, even in their scientific interests, where questions of ethnology have always tended to supplant history proper. And in geography their attention naturally gravitates towards the human rather than the economic aspects of its problems. As a compensating factor to the notion of birth, the East has also the more truly civic idea of the village community, a natural norm for the thought of nationality. But left to themselves, undisturbed by the political necessities engendered by foreign contacts, Oriental communities would probably have continued, in the future, as in the past, to develop the idea of a larger unity, along the lines of family, caste, Samaj, and race, the culmination being the great *nexus* of classes, sects, and kinships bound together by associations of faith and custom for the maintenance of universal purity of pedigree. The West, on the other hand, though not incapable of evolving the worship of blood and class, tends naturally to the exaltation of place and country as the motive of cohesion, and thus gives birth to the conception of nationality, as opposed to that of race.

Racial unity tends to modification, in the special case of the Mussalman peoples, by their dependence on a simple religious idea, acting on an original tribal nucleus, as their sole and sufficient bond of commonality. Islam encourages

the intermarriage of all Mussalmans, whatever their racial origin. But it would be easy to show that this fact is not really the exception it might at first appear. The race has here, in an absolute sense, become the church, and that church is apostolic and proselytising. Thus the unit is constantly growing by accretion. It remains fundamentally a racial unit, nevertheless, though nearer than others to the national type. In the case of Chinese civilisation, again, the race-idea would seem to be modifiable by Confucian ethics, with their marvellous commonsense and regard for the public good, creating as these do, a natural tendency towards patriotism and national cohesion. Yet it is seen in the importance of ancestor-worship as the family-bond. The sacrament of marriage consists in the beautiful ceremony of bringing the bride to join her husband, in the offering of divine honours to his forefathers.

Amongst Hindus the same motive is evidenced in the notion that it is the duty of all to raise up at least one son to offer ceremonies of commemoration to the ancestors. The forefathers of an extinct family go sorrowful and may be famine-stricken in the other world. In my own opinion, this is only an ancient way of impressing on the community the need for maintaining its numbers. This must have been an important consideration to thoughtful minds amongst early civilised peoples, faced as they were by the greater numbers of those whose customs were more primitive. Only when a man's place in his community was taken by a son, could he be free to follow the whims of an individual career.

#### THE FAMILY IN ISLAM

The family is, in all countries and all ages, the natural sphere for the working-out of the ethical struggle, with its results in personal development. The happiness of families everywhere depends, not on the subordination of this member or that, but on the mutual self-adjustment of all. In the large households and undivided families of Eastern

countries this necessity is self-evident. The very possibility of such organisation depended in the first place on the due regimentation of rank and duties. Here we come upon that phenomenon of the subordination of woman, whose expression is apt to cause so much irritation to the ardent feminists of the present day. Yet for a permanent union of two elements, like husband and wife, it is surely essential that one or other should be granted the lead. For many reasons, this part falls to the man. It is only when the civic organisation has emerged, as the ideal of unity, that husband and wife, without hurt to their own union, can resolve themselves into great equal and rival powers, holding a common relation to it as separate individuals. The premier consideration of family decorum involves the theoretical acceptance, by man or woman, of first and second places respectively. In the patriarchal family—and the matriarchate is now exceptional and belated—the second place is always taken by woman ; but the emphasis of this announcement is in proportion to the resistance offered to its first promulgation. That is to say the law was formulated at the very birth of patriarchal institutions, when it sounded as if it were nothing more than a paradox. It is this fact, and not any desire to insult or humiliate women as such, that accounts for the strength of Eastern doctrines as to the pre-eminence of man. Semitic institutions, and especially the characteristic polygamy of Mussalman peoples, are a testimony to this enthusiasm for fatherhood at the moment of the rise of the patriarchate. To a fully individualised and civicised womanhood, the position of wife in a polygamous family, might well seem intolerable. Such an anomaly is only really compatible with the passionate pursuit of renunciation as the rule of life, and with the thought of the son, rather than the husband, as the emotional refuge and support of woman. Polygamy, though held permissible in India and China, for the maintenance of the family, does not receive in either country that degree of sanction which appears to be accorded to it in Islam.

It is at once the strength and the weakness of Islamic civilisation that it seems to realise itself almost entirely as a crystallisation of the patriarchal ideal, perhaps in contrast to the matriarchal races by whom early Semitic tribes were surrounded. In the spontaneous Islamic movement for progressive self-modification, which our time is witnessing, under the name of *Babism*, or *Behaism*, great stress is laid on the religious duty of educating and emancipating woman as an individual.

#### THE FAMILY IN CHINA

China, though seemingly less dependent on the supernatural for the sources of her idealism than either India or Arabia, appears to have an intellectual passion for the general good. She appreciates every form of self-sacrifice, for the good of others, but is held back apparently, by her eminently rational and positive turn of mind, from those excesses of the ideal which are to be met with in India. She judges of the most generous impulse in the light of its practical application. As an example, her clear conception of the importance of perfect union between a wedded couple, never seems to have led her to the practice of child-marriage. The age of twenty for women, and thirty for men, is by her considered perfect for marrying.\* Nor has any inherent objection ever been formulated in China, to the education of women. On the contrary, the National Canon of Biography, ever since the last (?) century B.C., has always devoted a large section to eminent women, their education and their literary productions. Many famous plays and poems have been written by women. And as a special case in point, it is interesting to note that one of the Dynastic Histories, left unfinished on the death of its author, was brought to a worthy conclusion by his accomplished sister.†

\* Martin.

† Prof. Giles, Lecturer at Columbia University.

The fact that a woman shares the titles of her husband, and receives with him ancestral honours, points in the same direction, of respect and courtesy to woman as an individual. We are accustomed to hear that filial piety is the central virtue of Chinese life, but it is essential that we should realise that this piety is paid to father *and mother*, not to either alone,—witness in itself to the sweetness and solidarity of family-life. I have heard a translation of a long Chinese poem on the discovery of the Vina, or Oriental violin, in which we see a maiden sigh over her weaving, and finally rise from the loom and don man's attire, in order to ride forth, in place of her aged father, to the wars in the far north. It is on her way to the seat of action, that she comes across the instrument which is the soul of song, and sends it back to her father and mother, that its music may tell how her own heart sighs for them day and night! All writers seem to agree in admitting that the devotion of children to parents here extolled is fully equalled by the love of Chinese parents for their children.

The essential part of the ceremonies of ancestral worship must be performed, in a Chinese family, by the sons. Woman may assist, it seems. But can never replace man, in this office. In the year 1033, the Dowager-Empress, acting as Regent, as a protest against the exclusion of women, insisted on herself performing the state worship to the ancestors, rendered necessary by the advent of a comet. This bold innovation proved, however, merely exceptional. Again, the rule that a child shall be born in its *father's* house in one of unbending rigour, in spite of the great liberality with which women are often allowed, after marriage, to revisit the paternal roof.\* These facts mark the memory of an energetic transition from Matriarchate to Patriarchate, which has failed nevertheless to obliterate all traces of the earlier. Chinese society ascribes the end of the Matriarchate, that is to say, the institution of

\* Dr. Arthur Smith, *Village Life in China*.

marriage, to the mythical emperor Fou-hi, some two and a half millenniums before the Christian era. In confirmation of the tradition, this Emperor himself is said to have been of virgin birth, that is to say, his mother was unwedded, a common characteristic of the ancient Chinese saints and heroes.\* A similar persistence of the memory of the Matriarchate, is seen in Southern China, in the prevalence of the worship of goddesses, and notably of Kwan-Yin, Queen of Heaven. It should be said that throughout Asia, the worship of goddesses is vastly older than that of gods, and may be held one of the best means of studying the Matriarchate. The Chinese ideograph for clan-name is a compound of *woman* and *birth*, a distinct relic of the period when descent was reckoned through the mother. And finally, the persistence of matriarchal influence is seen, not only in the frequent political importance of the Dowager-Empress, or Queen-Mother, but also in humbler ranks of society, by the vigilance which seems to be exercised by the woman's family, and even by her native or ancestral village, over the treatment accorded to her in marriage. According to Dr. Arthur Smith, it is this which is effective in staving off divorce as long as possible, and in punishing cruelty or desertion. Thus the woman's kindred enjoy a remarkable unwritten power, as a sort of opposite contracting part in the treaty of marriage, and exercise a responsibility and care unexampled in Europe.

Nor is pure idealism altogether unrepresented in the life of Chinese women. This is seen in the tendency of girls to take the vow of virginity; in the respect felt for women who marry only once, and in the public honours accorded to such as, before sixty years of age, complete thirty years of faithful widowhood. Both Buddhism and Tao-ism include orders of nuns, amongst whom the Tao-ist communities are said at present to enjoy the greater social prestige. A regrettable feature of these ideals—which may

\* Giles.

play a part however in impelling Chinese society forward upon the exaltation of the civic life for women—is the fact that girls sometimes band themselves together, under a secret vow of suicide in common, if any of their number should be forced into marriage. Writers on the subject attribute this reverence for the idea of virginity to the percolation of Indian thought, into China, and such may possibly be its origin. But it is easy to understand that it might have arisen spontaneously, from these high conceptions of womanly honour that are inseparable from the stability of patriarchal institutions, joined to that historic commemoration of the heroic women of the matriarchate which has already been mentioned.

#### THE FAMILY IN INDIA

In India, as in China, the perpetuation of the family is regarded as the paramount duty of the individual to the commonwealth. There is a like desire for male posterity, made universal by a similar rule that only a son can offer the sacraments of the dead to the spirits of his forefathers. But the practice of adoption is very frequent, and the intervention of a priestly class, in the form of domestic chaplains, makes this element somewhat less central to the Hindu system than to the Chinese, amongst whom the father is also the celebrant.

As throughout Asia, the family is undivided, and in the vast households of this type, domestic matters are entirely in the governancé of women. Servants are few in the inner or women's apartments, and even women of rank and wealth give more time, and contribute more personal energy, to the tasks of cooking, nursing, and cleansing, than we should think appropriate. Child-marriage, which, though decreasing, is still more or less the representative custom, renders the initial relations of the young bride to her husband's people, somewhat like those of a Western girl to her first boarding-school. But it is not to be

forgotten that the woman shares in the rank and titles of her husband, hence the path of her promotion to positions of honour and priority, is clearly marked out from the beginning. The advent of motherhood gives her an access of power, and this recognition culminates in the fact that in the absence of sons she is her husband's heir, and always the guardian of her children during their minority. As a widow, she has also the very important right of adoption. Personal property of a mother goes to her daughters.

Anything more beautiful than the life of the Indian home, as created and directed by Indian women, it would be difficult to conceive. But if there is one relation, or one position, on which above all others the idealising energy of the people spends itself, it is that of the wife. Here, according to Hindu ideas, is the very pivot of society and poetry. Marriage, in Hinduism, is a sacrament, and indissoluble. The notion of divorce is as impossible, as the remarriage of the widow is abhorrent. Even in Orthodox Hinduism, this last has been made legally possible, by the life and labours of the late Pundit Ishwar Chunder Vidyasagar, an old Brahminical scholar, who was one of the stoutest champions of individual freedom, as he conceived of it, that the world ever saw. But the common sentiment of the people remains as it was, unaffected by the changed legal status of the widow. The one point that does undoubtedly make for a greater frequency of widow-remarriages, is the growing desire of young men for wives whose age promises maturity and companionship. A very pathetic advertisement lately, in one of the Calcutta dailies, set forth such a need on the part of a man of birth and position, and added, "Not one farthing of dower will be required!" Probably this one social force alone will do more than any other to postpone the age of marriage, and ensure the worthy education of woman. It is part of the fact that Hinduism sees behind the individual the family, and behind the family society, that there is no excuse made for the sin of abandoning the husband, and deserting the

burdens and responsibilities of wifehood. If one does this, the East never plays with the idea that she may have fled from the intolerable, but holds her gravely responsible for all the ensuing social confusion. There was indeed a movement of religious revivalism in the fifteenth century—a sort of Hindu Methodism—which asserted the right of woman as equal to that of man, to a life of religious celibacy. But ordinarily, any desertion of the family would be held to be unfaithfulness to it. And all the dreams of the Indian people centre in the thought of heroic purity and faith in wifehood.

There is a half-magical element in this attitude of Hindus towards women. As performers of ritual-worship they are regarded as second only to the professional Brahmin himself. I have even seen a temple served by a woman, during the temporary illness of her son, who was the priest! Our prejudice, in favour of the exclusive sacramental efficacy of man, instinctive as it may seem to us, is probably due to Semitic influences. Even Rome had the Vestal Virgins! In the non-Brahminical community of Coorg, the whole ceremony of marriage is performed by women, and even amongst Brahmins themselves, the country over, an important part of the wedding rites is in their hands. A woman's blessing is everywhere considered more efficacious than a man's in preparing for a journey, or beginning an undertaking. Women are constituted spiritual directors, and receive the revenues and perform the duties, of a domestic chaplaincy, during the incumbent's minority, without the matter even exciting comment. A little boy is taught that whatever he may do to his brothers, to strike his sister would be sacrilege. A man is expected to love his mother above any other created being. And the happiness of women is supposed to bring fortune in its train. The woman-ruler finds a sentiment of awe and admiration waiting for her, which gives her an immense advantage over a man, in the competition for enduring fame. These facts are of course partly due to the intense

piety and self-effacement of the lives led by women at large ; but still more to the dim memory of a time when they were the matriarchs and protectors of the world. There is no free mixing of the sexes outside the family, in any one of the three great Asiatic societies—Chinese, Indian, or Islamic. But the degree of woman's cloistered seclusion varies considerably in different parts, being least in those provinces of India where the communal institutions of primitive society have been least interfered with by contact with Mohammedanism, and at its strictest, probably, amongst the Mussalman peoples.

#### THE ECONOMIC STANDING OF WOMAN IN THE EAST

Even a cursory study of the position of woman is compelled to include some mention of her economic standing. In societies where the family furnishes her main career, she is generally of necessity in a position of dependence, either on father or husband. Amongst Hindus, this is mitigated by a *dot*, consisting of jewels, given at marriage and after. This property, once given becomes the woman's own, not to be touched even by her husband, and in case of widowhood, if there is no other fund, she is supposed to be able to sell it and live on the interest. Amongst Mohammedans, a dower is named, and deeds of settlement executed by the husband at marriage. It is said that every Mussalman cabman in Calcutta has undertaken to provide for his wife a dower of thousands of rupees. To pay this is obviously impossible, yet the institution is not meaningless. In case he wishes for divorce a man can be compelled to pay to the uttermost, and God Himself, it is said, will ask, on the Day of Judgment where is the amount that he left in default. It is easy to see how this is calculated to protect the wife. The custom gives point also to the beautiful story of Fatima, daughter of Mohammed and wife of Ali, who was asked by her father what dower she would wish named, and answered, "The salvation of every

Mussalman!" Leaving her own future thus unprotected in the risks of marriage, God Himself would not be able to refuse her dower on the day of Judgment.

I have not been able to discover what provision is made by the Chinese, for a woman, in case of a long and lonely widowhood. Doubtless, in China as in India, the most substantial part of her provision lies in the solidarity of the family as a whole. If her husband's relatives cannot support her, a woman falls back upon her own father or brothers. As long as either family exists, and is able to support her, she has an acknowledged place. If she has sons, both she and they must remain with the husband's people.

The whole East understands the need of a woman's having pin-money. In China, it is said, the proceeds of cotton-picking, and no doubt also what comes of the care of silk-worms; in India, such matters as the sale of milk, cattle and fruit; and among Mohammedans, eggs, chickens, and goat's milk, are all the perquisites of the mistress of the household. Like the French, the Eastern woman is often of an excessive thrift, and her power of saving, by the accumulation of small sums, is remarkable. That the women require, in the interests of the home itself, to have a store of their own, probably every man would admit. Of course where the circumstances of the family are of a grinding poverty, this cannot be.

It must be understood that the present age, in the East even more than amongst ourselves, is one of economic transition. Fifty years ago, there, as a hundred and fifty years ago, amongst ourselves, the main occupation of all women, and especially of those of gentle birth, was spinning. I have met many a man of high education whose childhood was passed in dependence on the secret earnings of, say, a grandmother. Such a possibility no longer exists, and perhaps one of the saddest consequences, East and West, is the amount of unfruitful leisure that has taken its place. Instead of the old spinning and its kindred arts,

Western woman, as we all know,—owing to the growth of luxury and loss of efficiency—has become still more dependent on her husband than she was. The main economic advance of woman among ourselves, lies in the striking-out of new professions and careers by unmarried woman. This is not yet a factor of great importance in the East. In India, we have a few women doctors and writers; and a growing perception of the need of modern education, is raising up a class of teachers who are training themselves to assist in the spread of instruction amongst woman. Besides this, in a lower social class, the old household industries are giving place to the factory-organisation, and in many places woman is becoming a wage-earner. This change is, of course, accompanied by great economic instability, and by the pinch of poverty in all directions. It is one of the many phases of that substitution of civilisations which is now proceeding. This substitution is a terrible process to watch. It is full of suffering and penalties. Yet the East cannot be saved from it. All that service can attempt, is to secure that institutions shall not be transplanted without the ideals to which they stand related. Accepting these, it is possible that Eastern peoples may themselves be able to purify and redeem the new, transforming it to the long-known uses of their own evolution.

#### INCIPIENT DEVELOPMENTS

India, it should be understood, is the headwater of Asiatic thought and idealism. In other countries we may meet with applications, there we find the idea itself. In India, the sanctity and sweetness of family-life have been raised to the rank of a great culture. Wifehood is a religion; motherhood a dream of perfection; and the pride and protectiveness of a man are developed to a very high degree. The Ramayana—epic of the Indian home—boldly lays down the doctrine that a man, like a woman, should marry but once. “We are born once,” said an Indian

woman to me, with great haughtiness, "we die once, and likewise we are married once!"

Whatever new developments may now lie before the womanhood of the East, it is ours to hope that they will constitute only a pouring of the molten metal of her old faithfulness and consecration, into the new moulds of a wider knowledge and extended social formation.

Turning to the West, it would appear that the modern age has not unsealed any new springs of moral force for woman, in the direction of the family, though by initiating her, as woman, into the wider publicity and influence of the civic area, it has enormously increased the social importance of her continuing to drink undisturbed at the older sources of her character. The modern organisation, on the other hand, by bringing home to her stored and garnered maternal instinct, the spectacle of the wider sorrows and imperfections of the civic development, has undoubtedly opened to her a new world of responsibility and individuation. The woman of the East is already embarked on a course of self-transformation which can only end by endowing her with a full measure of civic and intellectual personality. Is it too much to hope that as she has been content to quaff from our wells, in this matter of the extension of the personal scope, so we might be glad to refresh ourselves at hers, and gain therefrom a renewed sense of the sanctity of the family, and particularly of the inviolability of marriage?

## THE MODERN EPOCH AND THE NATIONAL IDEA

The mind of India may today be held to have understood that the most important problem before it is the creation of a national idea. For this, there must be the awakening of a sense of history. But we must carefully distinguish between such an awakening, and the process of collecting *materials for history*. India is full of such material, just as she is overflowing with the elements of a powerful national feeling. But the one is not the other. A congeries of fragments, however vast, cannot constitute a whole. Long strings of words do not make a dictionary. And facts, archæological, sociological and economic, are not sufficient to stand in the place of history, however essential they may be to its construction.

What is required for the manifestation of a strong conscious national life? Is love of place, pride of birth, or confidence in past culture all sufficient? Neither any, nor yet all of these can ever be enough. In addition there must be the irresistible mind of co-ordination, the instinct of co-operation, the tight-knit discipline of a great brotherhood. Similarly in the making of history, it is the guiding ideas which are more important than the massing of correct detail. We shall become great historians, great singers of the song of a people's evolution, not merely in proportion as we are competent to adjudicate correctly the date of king or battle, but rather as we are able to reveal the essential features of the past and gather from them the prophecy of the future.

All histories, whether of communities or periods, have their central laws, without the recognition of which they are chaotic. Here we seek the story of the municipal ideal. Again we sit at the feet of a slowly evolving church. Now it is the idea of national, again of religious freedom.

Without these dominant, what would Flanders mean, or Italy, or the Dutch nation, to the human consciousness? What could restore the aroma of the thirteenth century, or the martial promise of the fifteenth, to European life?

Studying India, then, in the light of the national idea, what are we, similarly, to regard as the guiding laws of her development, the dominating factors of our interpretation? Are we to believe that she has been, as her enemies declare, always the home of a feeble and ignorant peasantry, given to womanish notions and womanish habits of jealousy and disruption, without power of cohesion or ordered political will, a folk ever prone to extend hospitality to the foes of their own brethren? If we disbelieve these calumnies, it lies with us to bring counter theories to bear upon the situation. No false belief was ever driven out by mere denial however clamorous. Poor theory must be worsted by good, weak case by strong, falsehood by truth. There is no question as to the side on which conquest lies. Knowledge alone is the condition of victory. It is the greatest fidelity to truth that determines who wins.

Not in history alone, but in history in common with every form of classical learning, Indian criticism has to be redeemed from the elaborate pursuit of trifles. It is common enough to find that the study of the Bhagavad Gita has become mere hair-splitting about a noun here or a preposition there. But this failure to see the forest for the trees cannot in any true sense be considered knowledge of the Gita. The power and habit of making large generalisations has to be recaptured by the Indian mind. And nowhere more so than in dealing with history.

There can be no doubt that the most potent factor in giving power of generalisation is a trained sense of contrast. And in this direction we realise the value of a knowledge of European history, to the mind that would create anew the knowledge of the East. As an explored and formulated idea, having found literary expression, the European is the only history that yet exists. Few things indeed can thrill

us more deeply with the greatness of the age that is dawning for India, than to realise even for a moment that her people have before, not behind them, the appropriation of the historical idea, *in its modern form*, with the consequent responsibility of writing, and singing for the first time the Psalm of the Past, the song of the national life. But even European history, in the form in which it reaches India, knows too little of the larger generalisations, too little, concretely and sympathetically, of the broad currents of tendency that underlie all events. Massing of contrasts is the first step towards knowledge; the idea of continuity comes second. Cuvier's doctrine of types precedes Darwin's theory of evolution.

If the massing of contrasts, then, be the process immediately before the student of Indian history, what is the first outstanding phenomenon that he should learn to grasp and define as a whole? Surely a definite and concrete idea of the *Modern Period* ought to be his first achievement. In a dim way the Indian student has known himself all his life, to have been born between colliding worlds. What has hitherto been a vague assumption must now become clear thought. What is the prime distinction of the Modern Period? There was an age when Hindu, Musalman, Christian were radically divergent, not only in religious hope and belief, but far more deeply, in daily habit, in ideas of artistic enjoyment and in the method of social and political outlook. Today, in proportion as any of these is "modern", so proportionately does he tend to approximate to a certain common type. Many of the sectarian peculiarities of custom tend to disappear. Literary ideals and political aspirations and subjects of interest are shared. The era is one of consolidation.

It is not sufficient to enumerate clearly and distinctly the characteristics and distinguishing phenomena of the modern epoch. We must also be able to analyse the series of events which have brought about this complex result. Why is the age one of consolidation, of internationalism?

Why do France, Germany and England grow more alike and not more unlike day by day? In what sense may it be said that each finds its culminating type in America? What is the ideal that dominates everything that is distinctively of the new day, whether it be an army or a manufacturing company or finance or amusement? What is the almost unconscious aim that drives men to judge of efficiency by numbers; that makes them travel in herds, with the speed of lightning, in gigantic world-ruts; that causes a constantly growing regimentation of work; an ever increasing elimination of special ability?

What we are content to call internationalism, we clearly owe to rapidity of locomotion, and that rapidity of locomotion to the discovery of the mechanical uses of steam and electricity. The modern epoch is at bottom the mechanical epoch. The machine is its ideal; the exploiting of increasing areas of force, its dream. In constitution and effort it is not so much immoral as un-moral. It does not produce; it avails itself of the production of the past.

And yet the modern epoch has its own point of greatness. It has organised knowledge in science—as it has organised the world of travel. It has organised information, too, in the daily press. By these means, it has to a great extent minimised the power of those priesthoods under which men were wont to groan. True, but at the same time it has made its own priesthoods, of journalists, or at worst, of journalistic censors, ready to enforce their orthodoxy on an ignorant world. The lives of the saints have given place to dictionaries and encyclopaedias, in the formation of libraries, and the change is charged with significance.

What, then, are the ideal requirements of such an age? Evidently an intellectual synthesis, which shall correspond to the external internationalism. Pre-modern epochs made one man Brahmin, another Kayastha and so on. Today every schoolboy must take a bird's eye view of the whole nexus. His own specialism must be self-chosen. So far does the world-consciousness tend to be the unspoken

background of the individual life that even the sweetness of home lies much in the sense of the vast without, from which it is a shelter and a refuge.

But the main necessity for visualising the modern epoch lies in the power which thus becomes ours to concretise other periods,—in Europe, the Classical, the Mediæval and the Renaissance; in India, the Buddhist, the Puranic and Mogul.

India has known two great periods of Nationality, the Buddhist and the Mohammedan. It happens sometimes to the students of ancient texts, to find a manuscript of no rarity written over some older and priceless script,—a copy of Euclid or Virgil for example, deliberately superposed upon an erased gospel. Such a text is called a palimpsest and it is the task of the scholar to decipher the earlier and dimmer of the writings. Similarly is the soil of India an immense palimpsest of the Ashokan and Mohammedan empires. In Bihar,—the ancient Magadha,—this is especially easy to prove. Here the tamarind tree deliberately replaces the peepul, the tomb of the Pir is placed on the height of the ancient stupa. The Mohammedan fortress is built on the site of the Ashokan capital. It is only when we really grasp this idea thoroughly that we can prepare ourselves for the study of the further question, the extent to which what we call Buddhism has actually influenced India as a whole. From the farthest south to the most distant north, we shall find its memorials here in buildings and relics of various sorts, again in a peculiar style of architecture, and yet elsewhere in names, doctrines, and folklore.

And with all this,—what *was* Buddhism? It was no sect, however large, no church, however liberal. It included a religious order. But Buddhism was, in fact, simply Hinduism nationalised, that is to say, Hindu culture plus the democratic idea. Hinduism alone, in its completeness, can never create a nationality, for it then tends to be dominated by the *exclusiveness* of the Brahmin caste, whose

*ideal* is naturally and rightfully its central type. Learning and austerity are the characteristic virtues of the ideal. Exclusiveness is its characteristic weakness and vice. It is only, therefore, when there is within Hinduism itself, a counter-centre to the Brahmin, that Hinduism can suffice to create a nationality. This counter-centre was found during the Ashokan period in the personality of Buddha, who was a Kshatriya by birth.

After the advent of Mohammedanism even this could no longer be sufficient, so that Akbar and Shah Jehan combining the ethos of Hindu culture with the Islamic idea of the Brotherhood of Man, became the representative figures of the new conception of nationality.

And today the last trace of religious and social prejudice is to be swept away, and the idea of nationality itself, pure, radiant and fearlessly secular, is to emerge in triumph, giving meaning and consistency to the whole of the preceding evolution.

This, or such as this, is the thread round which all historical research in India must crystallise, Ashoka and Akbar being the organic centres of the national idea in the past. In relation to these, and only in relation, our historical observations can be of value. For as surely as the descent of man is a long story of the gradual dominance of the many parts of the animal body by the specialised human brain, so surely does the history of the corporate life reveal a similar process of the growing co-ordination of parts in an organic whole.

## UNITY OF LIFE AND TYPE IN INDIA

Behind and within the unity of humanity, there is a stratification of man which is to the full as interesting as the tale of the formation of the sedimentary rocks. To the full as interesting, but not, hitherto, so clearly visualised. Race over race, civilisation over civilisation, epoch upon epoch, the molten tides of immigration have flowed, tended to commingle, and finally superposed themselves. And systems of thought and manners have grown, by the accreting of the burdens of one wave to those of another, and their blending into a whole, under the action of the genius of place. Behind ancient Egypt, how long and historical a spelling-out of elements there must have been! What a protracted process of adding race-syllable to race-syllable took place, before that brilliant complexus first emerged upon the human mind! Yet there was such a being as an Ancient-Egyptian, recognizable as a specific human unit, in contradistinction to his contemporary, the Phœnician, the Cretan, or the Babylonian. Or the same possibility may be seen in our own day in the fact that there is such a being as a Modern-American, diverse in his origins beyond and type that has ever heretofore appeared, and yet marked by certain common characteristic which distinguish him, in all his sub-divisions, from the English, the Russian, the Italian, who contributed to form him.

These miracles of human unification are the work of *Place*. Man only begins by making his home. His home ends by remaking him. Amongst all the circumstances that go to create that heritage which is to be the opportunity of a people, there is none so determining, so welding, so shaping in its influence, as the factor of the land to which their children shall be native. Spiritually, man is the son of God, but materially, he is the nursling of Earth. Not without reason do we call ourselves children of the

soil. The Nile was the mother of the Egyptian. The shores of the Mediterranean made the Phœnician what he was. The Babylonian was the product of river-plain and delta. And the Bengalee is literally the son of Mother-Ganges.

In every case, however, this unity induced by place is multiplied, as it were, by the potentialities of confluent race-elements. Man learns from man. It is only with infinite difficulty, by striving to reapply our powers in terms of the higher ideals of some new circle, to which we have been admitted, that we raise the deeds of the future above the attainment of the past. Water rises easily enough to the level once reached. How much force must be expended to carry it above this! The treaty successfully imposed on the world by some great statesman, serves only to remind his school-fellows of his old-time triumphs in playing-field or class-room. Many a brilliant general has been known to study his battles with the aid of tin soldiers. The future merely repeats the past, in new combinations, and in relation to changed problems.

Thus we arrive at the fundamental laws of nation-birth. *Any country which is geographically distinct, has the power to become the cradle of a nationality. National unity is dependent upon place. The rank of a nation in humanity is determined by the complexity and potentiality of its component parts. What any one of its elements has achieved in the past, the nation may expect to attain, as a whole, in the future. Complexity of elements, when duly subordinated to the nationalising influence of place, is a source of strength, and not weakness to a nation.*

India, at the present moment, in the throes of the passage from Mediæval to Modern, out of a theocratic into the National formation, affords an excellent field for the study of these laws. Many observers—aware that the Indian people today are proposing to themselves this transition—see nothing before them but disappointment and defeat. "What"! say they of this school, "Honeycombed as India

is by diversity of languages ; ridden by the weight of customs that are alike in no two provinces ; with a population drawn from races black, yellow, and white, and clinging with jealous persistence to the distinctive individuality of each element ; filled with types as different from one another as the Punjabee and the Bengalee ; divided at best into two, by the cleavage between Mohammedan and Hindu ; to talk of unity, in this seething variety, is the merest folly ! The idea of an Indian Nationality is simple moonshine !” Such opinions, are, in fact, held by most Europeans who have visited or resided in India : they are combined, moreover, with a genuine contempt for all who differ from them. Yet they may not be the only conclusions possible upon the facts, and it is generally granted that sentence is not well pronounced till both sides of a case have been heard.

The question arises then, is there any unity of life and type perceptible amongst the Indian people, which might sooner or later serve as the foundation for a realised Indian Nationality ? It is perhaps true that the Bengalee is the Irishman of India ; the Mahratta, the Scot ; the Punjabee, Welshman or Highlander, as we choose to name him ; but is there anything common to all these, and to others, that relates them to one another, as the central fact of Britonhood relates their Western counterparts ? On the existence or non-existence of such community of life and type must depend the ultimate reasonableness of Indian National aspirations.

The first treasure of a nation, geographical distinctness. India undeniably possesses, in an extraordinary degree. Around her feet the sapphire seas, with snowclad mountain-heights behind her head, she sits enthroned. And the races that inhabit the area thus shut in, stand out, as sharply defined as herself, against the Mongolians of the North-East, and the Semites of the North-West. Within this land, Aryan ideals and concepts dominate those of all other elements. There is a self-organisation of thought

that precedes external organisation, and the accumulation of characteristics in a single line, which this brings about, is what we mean by racial types. In India, the distinctive stock of ideas rises out of her early pre-occupation with great truths. Neither Jain nor Mohammedan admits the authority of the Vedas or the Upanishads, but both are affected by the culture derived from them. Both are marked, as strongly as the Hindu, by a high development of domestic affection, by a delicate range of social observation and criticism and by the conscious admission that the whole of life is to be subordinated to the ethical struggle between inclination and conscience. In other words all the people of India show the result of education, under theocratic systems, for the concern of churches is ever primarily with the heart. When Egypt was building her Pyramids, India was putting a parallel energy into the memorising of the Vedas, and the patient elaboration of the philosophy of the Upanishads. The culture begun so early, has proceeded to the present day without a break, holding its own on its own ground and saturating Indian society with standards of thought and feeling, far in advance of those common in other countries. A profound emotional development and refinement is the most marked trait of Indian personality, and it is common to all the races and creeds of the vast sub-continent, from those of the highest civilisation to those of the lowest and most primitive.

Again, the key-stone of the arch of family devotion, alike for Hindu and Mohammedan, lies in the feeling of the son for his mother. Whatever may change or fluctuate, here our feet are on a rock. There can be no variation in the tenderness and intensity of this relationship. In it, personal affection rises to the height of religious passion. It is this fact of Eastern life that gives its depth to our symbol of Madonnahood,—the child as the refuge and glory of woman, the mother giving sanctity and security to life.

Very closely connected, but not identical with this, is

the organic part played in the life of the Eastern household by the aged. A gentle raillery, a tender gaiety, is the link between them and members in the prime of life. This is one of the most beautiful features of communal civilisation, that the old are an essential factor in the family. There is here none of the dislocation of life that so often results, with us, Europeans, from the loneliness and infirmity of elderly persons. Their wisdom forms one of the most valued of the common assets, even while their playfulness ranks them with the children, and the burden of attendance is easily shared amongst the many younger women. India, with her memory of great leisure, is not easily vulgarised by the strenuous ideals that make a man feel himself useless amongst us when his working days are over. She knows that only with the ending of activity can the most precious fruits of experience come to ripeness. Cooks and blacksmiths may need the strength of youth, but statesmen and bishops are best made at sixty.

We have few classes in Calcutta who seem to us so rough and worthless as our Ghariwallahs or cabdrivers. They are Mohammedans for the most part, who have left their families in the country, and they are not noticeable, as a type, for self-restraint or steadiness of conduct. Yet it was one of these whom I met one day at the corner of my own lane, carefully, with an expression of ineffable gentleness, guiding an old Hindu woman through a dangerous crush of vehicles! He had jumped from his box, at sight of the blind and stumbling feebleness, and left his Ghari in charge of its small footman, or Syce. It was the Prophet of Arabia who said, "He who kisses the feet of his mother attains to Paradise." In devotion to the mother, and in chivalry for old age, Mohammedan and Hindu, high and low, in India, are absolutely at one. It is a mistake to suppose that even the religious demarcation between Hinduism and Islam has the bitterness that divides, for instance, Geneva from Rome. Sufi-ism, with its roll of saints and martyrs, contributes to Mohammedans a phase

of development which matches Hinduism in its highest forms. The apostles of either faith are recognizable by the other. The real divergence between the two religions lies rather in the body of associated customs, than in doctrines, which are not philosophically incomprehensible.

The Mohammedan derives his customs from Arabia, and from a period in which the merging of many tribes in a national unity was the great need: the Hindu bases his habits on his own past, and on the necessity of preserving a higher civilisation from modification by lower. In other words, the difference between the two deals rather with matters of household and oratory, woman and the priesthood, than with those interests out of which the lives of *men*, and activities, civic and national, are built. This fact is immediately seen wherever either faith is sovereign. Many of the highest and most trusted officers of a Hindu ruler will be Mohammedans, and, to take a special instance, I may say that I have nowhere heard such loyalty expressed for the Nizam of Hyderabad, as by Hindu members of his Government. In the region north of Benares, again where Mohammedanism has been tranquil and undisturbed for hundreds of years, there is something very near to social fusion between the two. A significant indication of this lies in the names given to boys, which are often—like *Ram Baksh*, for example—compounded of roots Sanskritic and Arabic!

With the exception of the word *magnetism*, there is probably no single term so vaguely used as *Caste*. Taking this, however, as referring to a series of social groups, each thoroughly marked off from all others, and united within itself by equality of rank, custom, and occupation, we shall quickly see that this institution is capable of proving rather favourable than the reverse to solidarity of the public life. All over India today, as of old in Babylon or Thebes, or Periclean Athens, the communal intercourse of streets and riversides stands out in bold contrast against the cloisterlike privacy of the home. This is partly due to climate, and

partly to the persistence, in this one country, of conceptions and associations which appear to us as classical. In this communal unity, there is no demand for social uniformity. Such matters, concerning only the intimate personal life, are relegated to the sphere of the family and the care of women and priests.

Caste is no concern of the school, the bathing-ghat, or the town. On this side, indeed, the word connotes little more than a rigid form of good-breeding. It defines the ground on which no outsider may intrude. To regard it as a barrier to co-operation would be about as relevant as to view in a similar light the fact that we may not ask a European woman her age. How absurd would be the statement that this rule of etiquette was any obstacle to united action! Granted that in eating and wiving a man consorts with his own, he may do what he chooses, and go where he will, in all other concerns of his life. Each caste is, in effect, to its own members, as a school of self-government; and the whole institution provides an excellent framework for labour-organisations, and other forms of socio-political activity. These facts, indeed, are so obvious to the eye that views them with the necessary breadth, that it is difficult to see how any other impression ever gained currency.

Many persons use the word unity in a way that would seem to imply that the unity of a lobster, with its monotonous repetition of segments and limbs, was more perfect than that of the human body, which is not even alike on its right and left sides. For my own part, I cannot help thinking that the scientific advance of the nineteenth century has enabled us to think with more complexity than this. I cannot forget a French working man, calling himself a Positivist, who came up to me some years ago, in a university-settlement in the West, and said, "Have the people of India any further proof to offer of the oneness of Humanity, beyond the fact that if I hurt you I hurt myself, and the other fact that no two of us are exactly alike?" And then, seeing perhaps a look of surprise, he

added thoughtfully, "for the fact that we are all different is, in its way, a proof of our unity!" The conception thus indicated, I have come to think an exalted one. My friend spoke of the organic, as distinguished from a merely mechanical unity, and for myself I find an overwhelming aspect of Indian unity in the fact that no single member or province repeats the function of any other.

Against the great common background of highly developed feeling, the Bengalee stands out with his suavity and humour; the Mahratta exhibits his grimness and tenacity. The one may glory in his imagination, the other in his strength of will. The Punjabee has the faultless courage, and also something of the childlikeness, of a military race. The Madrasi has the gravity and decorum of one whose dwelling is in the shadow of a church. The Mohammedan, wherever we meet him, stands unmatched for his courtesy and grandeur of bearing. And everyone of these, we must remember, responds to the same main elemental motives. With all alike, love of home, pride of race, idealism of woman, is a passion. With every one, devotion to India as India finds some characteristic expression. To the Hindu of all provinces, his Motherland is the seat of holiness, the chosen home of righteousness, the land of seven sacred rivers, "the place to which sooner or later must come all souls in the quest of God." To the son of Islam, her earth is the dust of his saints. She is the seal upon his greatest memories. Her villages are his home. In her future lies his hope. In both, the nationalising consciousness is fresh and unexhausted. That which Ashoka was, seated, two hundred and fifty years before Christ, on the great throne of Pataliputra,—what Akbar was, at Delhi, eighteen centuries later,—that, in the sense of national responsibility, every Indian man must become tomorrow. For this is the age, not of thrones, but of democracies; not of empires, but of nationalities; and the India that faces the sunrise of nations, is young and strong.

## THE TASK OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Young India is fascinated by the political spectacle in European countries: fascinated, and also perhaps hypnotised by it. She imagines, perhaps, that until she can reproduce the bear-garden of opposite parties, she has failed to emulate the vigour and energy of Western patriotism. This, at least, is the only excuse for that evil fashion which has made its appearance amongst us, of mutual recrimination, and mutual attack. Those who are fighting on different parts of the self-same field are wasting time and ammunition by turning their weapons on each other, instead of on a common foe. The fact is, young India has yet to realise that hers is not a movement of partisan politics at all, but a national, that is to say, a unanimous progression. There is no difference of opinion on national questions, amongst honest men, in India. Put Hindus and Moham-medans together on a Legislative Council. Have they not always to be reckoned with as a single opinion? Who cares where the Brahmin eats, or whom he invites to his dinner parties? Does he, and the Kayastha, or the Vaidya, or the Kshatriya, make opposite demands on the University Senate? As citizens, in the Municipality, is the good of one the good of the others or not? It is wonderful how long dust can be thrown in men's eyes, by talk that absolutely contradicts facts. It is wonderful how far the hounds can be drawn on a false scent. A large amount of mis-directed activity and confused political thought arises in India, from the mere fact that the political method here is largely imitative, and is apt to imitate the wrong things.

The one thing that strikes a first-time visitor to the Congress, for instance,—a visitor who goes with a determination to ignore preconceptions and judge as far as possible from facts,—is the extraordinary agreement of all the

members, from extreme right to extreme left. An old man in this corner considers it so ill-advised to make a certain pronouncement that he will retire from the body if its enunciation be insisted on. A youngster over there pooh-poohs this over-caution, and challenges the old man to express his disbelief in the principle asserted. As likely as not, the young man is in the right. But these are the disagreements, over which young India, looking on, is likely to lash itself into a fury of vituperation and despair! It is clear to every outsider meantime, that there is here no stuff of difference, whatsoever, and that, at such a computation the ship of the national movement in India must be manned by educated India, solid.

Thus the Congress represents, not a political, or partisan movement, but the political side of a national movement—a very different thing. It is successful, not in proportion as it sees its debates carry weight in high quarters, not in proportion as its views are officially adopted, but in proportion to the ability and earnestness with which it conducts its own deliberations, in proportion to the number which it can call together and make efficient in political methods, and in proportion to the information it can disseminate throughout the country on questions of national significance. If these fundamental facts be once clearly understood, it will matter very little thereafter what form the resolutions take in Congress, matters very little about an act of politeness more or less, or about the number of adjectives in a given sentence. For it will be understood that the real task of the Congress is that of an educational body, educating its own members in that new mode of thinking and feeling which constitutes a sense of nationality; educating them in the habit of prompt and united action, of political trustiness, of communal open-eyedness; educating itself, finally, in the knowledge of a mutual sympathy that embraces every member of the vast household which dwells between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin. between Manipur and the Arabian Sea.

This implies, however, that the main body of the army is not in the Congress, that the Congress as a whole is merely one side,—the political side,—of an incomparably vaster, though less definitely organised host. And by the antithesis, not opposition between the efforts of the two, progression is secured. Thus, corresponding to the Congress, the National Movement must have another, and non-political limb, as it were. But at the same time, it is clear that this non-political must have greater difficulty than the political element in defining to itself its own objective.

And yet a programme,—not a rigid platform but a suggestive immanation—is almost a necessity to it. What are the tasks that the National Movement has to face and in what order?

The task of all alike is one,—the education of the whole nation, in all its parts, in a common sentiment of unity with each other and with their soil. But it is a mistake to think that this education will in every case come scholastically. Reading and writing will facilitate it, but it will not wait for the schoolmaster. Already we have seen the women expressing themselves through the Swadeshi Tapasya. In national and civic existence this cause has given them a step onward and upward that will never be retraced. But while the appeal made to them sympathises so effectively by this cry of the Home-land, when made to the people themselves—the inarticulate, uneducated helpless masses—it must be by means of the industrial reconstruction which the Swadeshi Vow has necessitated. Practice first, theory afterwards. First, mutual love and loyalty, and secondly, all that ideas, all that instruction can do to give to that new-born consciousness of brotherhood, intellectual depth and steadiness. What the National Movement as a whole has to do then is to nationalise and vocalise two great areas of moral force that are at present nationally almost mute. These areas consist of the women and the peasants. Let every ten students in the city colleges band themselves together and take a vow to

maintain one missionary for this purpose. Let the missionary travel with the magic lantern, with the collection of post cards, with a map of India and with head and heart full of ballads, stories, and geographical descriptions. Let him gather together the women, let him gather together the villagers, let him entertain them in the garden, in the courtyard, in the verandahs, beside the well, and under the village tree with stories, songs and descriptions of which the refrain is always India! India! India!

We love that which we think of, we think of that which we know. First then we must build up a clear conception, and afterwards love will come of itself, and thus through the length and breadth of our vast country will go the thrill of the great thought, "This and no other is our Motherland! We are Indians every one!"

Here then we have one extreme of the task of nationalisation, to be carried out by that immense body of nation-makers to which every student and every educated man and woman in India belong by natural right. At the far end of this line are those whose task it is to carry the national colours to higher ground. Here are the original workers in science, in history, in art, in letters, sworn to let never a European pass them in this race for excellence, vowed, whatever be their task, to conquer in it or to die.

The question which arises here as to the nature and duties of the pioneer intellect is quite different from a similar question as applied to workers of the second generation. The great majority of the nation-making generation bear to missionaries and architects of that consciousness the same relation that the ordinary Grihastha bears to the Sadhu. They cannot live that life themselves, yet by their sympathy and silent support, they make the life a possibility. It is important then, that these should realise that the motto for the age is,—“Mutual aid, self-organisation, co-operation!”

The Grihastha wants a little of the courage of the martyr in vowing himself, not to a battle of the spirit but to a

determined worldly success. He wants perhaps a little of the venom of the cobra in undertaking and in financing national defence associations, farmer's aid organisations, co-operative credit enterprises. But first and last and above all, he needs to understand that it is by these movements, these undertakings, these studies, that education will actually be carried far and wide and that the Movement for Indian Nationality will gradually transform itself into the Indian Nation.

## THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

It is necessary to say, and I feel that it cannot be said too strongly, that in the Swadeshi movement the Indian people have found an opportunity to make themselves respected by the whole world. For the world respects that which shows that it is to be feared, and the one thing that is feared by all is strong, intelligent, and united action. We conquer a single elephant with ease. But where is the man who would attack a herd? The note of manliness, and self-help is sounded throughout the Swadeshi movement. There is here no begging for help, no cringing for concessions. What India can do for herself, that she will do. What she cannot at present do for herself will be considered hereafter.

To go deeper, it is the *duty* of the Indian people to refuse to the very utmost of their power to participate in that conspiracy of modern trade by which their own country and their own people are being impoverished in an accumulating ratio. Political exigencies do not create this duty. But political exigencies make it possible to bring it home to consciences that would otherwise have been difficult to touch, and by the force of common effort, to put new hope and enthusiasm into even the oldest workers. And there is no reason why the movement should fail in India. The fact that America could not maintain her own industries without a high protective tariff, the fact that no Swadeshi movement, resting on a purely moral and voluntary basis, could possibly succeed in any European country, is no argument against the success of such a movement amongst ourselves. To begin with, the man who has a choice of weapons by which to make his strength felt, may be indifferent to a particular kind, but the situation changes when that is all he has. His whole power of resistance, his whole impulse of self-preservation, is then concentrated

on its use. And the Swadeshi movement is all we have. In Western countries, moreover, there is a certain minimum line of comfort, below which people cannot go. But with us, there is no such line. The Indian power to abstain is without a limit. But there is even more in our favour. For, it cannot be denied, that while Eastern peoples have hitherto shown themselves to be weaker than Western in certain kinds of co-operation and self-defence, they have, throughout the whole course of human history, proved themselves vastly stronger in ability to unite for the affirming of a given idea, in self-surrender to a moral impulse, in the power steadily to endure all the discomfort and deprivation of refusal for the sake of right. Thus, the whole history of India fits the Indian people for a struggle in which there is no force to uphold the Dharma against the temptations of self-indulgence, of comfort, and of individual selfishness save that of the human will and the human conscience. It may be that no other modern country could succeed in this ordeal. Yet, even that would not condemn the holy land to fail. The Indian people have heard, so far, of nothing but their weaknesses. The time has now come when they should meditate on their own strength, and proceed to prove it. What about the wealth of self-control and self-direction, handed down by generations of austere and clean-living ancestors, and put out to interest in the steady routine of Hindu piety, day after day, and year after year? Besides, is it true that mankind always does the cheap thing? Is the human will really like water, always to be carried to the lowest available level, by its own momentum? If this had been so, how should we explain that great transition, by which Hindus once upon a time, ceased to eat beef? They were accustomed to the food, and liked it. It was convenient to kill cattle and feed a household, in times of scarcity. But an idea of mercy and tenderness, aided by the permanent economic interests of the civilisation, came in, and today, where is the Hindu who will eat beef? The Swadeshi movement

is the cow-protecting movement, of the present age. There will yet come a time in India when the man who buys from a foreigner what his own country man could by any means supply, will be regarded as on a level with the killer of cows today. For assuredly, the two offences are morally indetical.

Again, if it were true that man always took the easiest course, what society could ever hope to rise out of savagery? All our higher instincts, like cleanliness, refinement, love of learning, have been built up of refusals to go to the easy way, to take the cheaper of two results. Rather, is it true to say, that man is man in virtue of his inherent power to curb his grosser appetite and will, in favour of some finer and more remote purpose. Man is man in proportion only as he does *not* live the blind instinctive life of his first impulse, his immediate convenience, his individual self-interest, but a higher life of struggle against these primitive desires and their supersession by others which are subtler, less self-regarding, and further reaching. It is precisely in a matter like the keeping of the Swadeshi vow that the Indian people, especially, can find an opportunity to show their true mettle. Their civilisation looks meagre enough and poor enough, beside the luxury and complexity of that of the West. But if it, with all its bareness, should prove to contain unsuspected moral potentialities, if it should hide a power, unknown to others, of choosing right at any cost, then which will force the acknowledgement of its superiority, the magnificence of Europe, or the poverty of the motherland?

If we are told that no people will voluntarily buy in a dear market when they might buy in a cheap, we answer: *this may be true of Western peoples, educated in a system of co-operation for self-interest, and, at the same time, it may be untrue of the Indian nation, educated in a system of co-operation for self-sacrifice.*

I have spoken of this as a struggle on behalf of Dharma. But is this true? Is the Swadeshi movement actually an

integral part of the National Righteousness? The Mother-Church at least, has spoken with no uncertain voice. Like a trumpet-call has gone forth the Renewal of Vows at the Kalighat, in Calcutta. Throughout the whole country has been heard the fiat issued at Puri. Henceforth it will be held sacrilege to offer foreign wares in worship. Here and there we learn of personal sacrifice, such as that of the poor Purohiths in the Eastern districts, who volunteered to offer only Gamchas, or coarse towels, during the recent Puja, in cases where country-cloth could not be had in the ordinary quantity, though to do so meant a year of poverty for them. But there is human proof forthcoming, also. In the commercial quarter of Calcutta, as soon as the Boycott began, it was found that the cry of "Pick-pocket!"—hitherto, alas, of hourly occurrence of the pavements of the Burra Bazaar! was no longer heard. It had actually become unfashionable for small boys to be constantly subjected to the harassing attentions of the police, and the jail as a school for our children was falling out of use! On investigation the merchants concluded that the dexterous fingers of the little folk were now busily employed in rolling the leaf-cigarettes, or country biris, that had superseded the English.

During the National Celebration of the 16th of October, a Bengali Mohammedan was heard addressing a crowd of his fellows. "Brothers," he was saying, "a while ago, we could not earn four annas a day. You know that a man had to steal for his opium, and how many of us spend eight months of every year in prison, while our women ate outside their homes! But now, how everything is changed! Ten annas a day, with comfort and decency. No more stealing, no more prison, and our women cook for us and for themselves!" Of Calcutta it may be said that in all directions small industries have sprung up like flowers amongst us. Here are whole households engaged in making matches. Somewhere else, it is ink, tooth powder, soap, note-paper, or what not. There, again, is a

scheme for pottery, or glass, on a more ambitious scale. And this without mentioning the very staple of the country, its cotton weaving. Where before were only despair and starvation, we see today glad faces, and feel an atmosphere of hope.

Again, where people are habitually below the line of proper feeding, the first sign of a wave of prosperity must be the appearance of more food-shops. And in the Indian parts of Calcutta, these greet the eye on all sides, with a more varied assortment of better foodstuffs than of old. Hope has come to the people. A chance of self-help has dawned upon them. And we may lay a wager that when that season arrives, the plague returns will show how hopeless is the siege laid against the citadel of a higher comfort. For the truest hygiene lies in being well nourished. The best medicine is sufficient food.

Now what does all this mean? Could there be anything more pathetic than the joy of a confessedly criminal class at the cessation of a need for crime? In Europe, who have to deal with men who will not work, and commit crime, it is said, for the love of it. But can this be said of our "little brothers" of the Indian lower classes? Surely, if thereby one could give an opportunity to such sweetness and honesty and childlike purity of heart, as have revealed themselves through the unconscious lips of a Mohammedan workman, if one could thereby protect them, and aid them in their struggle on and up, one might be glad oneself to commit a thousand crimes and steep one's own soul in the lake of fire for ever. Oh voice of the Indian People, voice of the downtrodden, voice of the ignorant and helpless, speak louder yet, that we, your own flesh, may hear your cry, and know your innocent gladness, and join our hands and hearts with yours, in a common suffering and a common love! If it be true that by an attitude of rigid self-control we can help to turn jail-birds into honest men; give to children, who are now forced into dishonesty by the poverty of their homes, an education in

labour, and a sufficient provision for life, bring food to the starving, and hope to the despairing, and finally strengthen the people to withstand the attacks of disease, is there any question as to the Swadeshi Tapasya being Dharma? Let none talk nonsense about other lands! On Indian men and women is laid the responsibility of caring for the Indian poor. And let there never be forgotten the curse of the Gita on the man who does another's duty instead of his own. "Better for a man is his own duty, however badly done, than the duty of another, though that be easy. The duty of another leads into great peril." Let Manchester go! Let London go! It is for the Indian People to do *their own duty*.

But let us turn to the rewards of this Tapasya, if successfully carried out. First we must understand that no work was ever wasted. Every vibration of struggle brings its own result. When enough force has gone out, victory is the return. Ultimately, there is no such thing as defeat. A clear will frustrated, only becomes the clearer. Loss becomes then nothing but gain delayed. Again, victory depends only on effort, never on talk. All India is watching today the struggle that is going on in Eastern Bengal. Scarcely a word appears in the papers, yet the knowledge is everywhere. The air is tense with expectation, with sympathy, with pride, in those grim heroic people and their silent struggle to the death, for their Swadeshi trade. Quietly all India is assimilating their power. Are they not a farmer people engaged in a warfare which is none the less real for being fought with spiritual weapons? But let him who stands in the path of right, beware! Clearer and clearer grows the will unjustly thwarted. Sterner and sterner become they who are taught to depend on their own strength, and in all history there comes an hour when the merciless man trembles, and cries out himself on the mercy of God, to find it gone!

The first result of faithfulness to Swadeshi, is then, the power to be more faithful still. Here we find the value

of our difficulties. It is only a fool or a coward who tamely submits to opposition. The manly man feels that nothing else is so effective in forcing him to keep the fires of his own enthusiasm ablaze.

But the second result is much more tangible. The movement today is only in its initial stage. It cannot be allowed to end till it has stopped the whole of the commercial drain upon the country. Now if the impoverishment of India is a matter of the amount of an annual drain put out at compound interest, which it is, it follows that the amount saved by the Swadeshi movement, so long as the level gained is maintained, is turned into *prosperity at compound interest*. Every pice circulated in India represents a value periodically added, in an accumulating ratio, to the Indian soil. If the Swadeshi movement, then, can only be adhered to with firmness, we may even begin to hear, from the politicians of the Congress of an economics of hope, instead of an economics of despair!

What, then, of the difficulties of the Swadeshi movement? Apart from political opposition, which is, as has been said, rather a spur than otherwise, it has several serious obstacles to overcome. Amongst these I do not count that slight ebbing of interest which comes sooner or later in some degree to all things human, when the first eagerness of the multitudes is overpast. On the whole, this movement is rooted so deep in the trained habits of our women and our priests, that the tidal ebb is an extraordinarily small factor in the sum of action. And the whole of this is to be taken up and eliminated later, when the advance of the sea upon the land shall wash away the very shores themselves. No, the serious difficulties of the Swadeshi movement lie in the two great fields of Production and Distribution. The obstacle offered by insufficient production is understood by all of us. Indeed, it has been the strong and spontaneous union of efforts to bring production up to the required level, in which has lain the dawning hope and joy of all the workers. In Distribution, however,

we have a problem equally refractory to solve. For even when we know that a certain article is made in the country, we do not yet know where to obtain it. Or the shop at which it can be bought is apt to be inaccessible, or insufficiently supplied. The first Soap Factory started in Calcutta formed a notable exception to this rule. The sale of this soap was organised with as much care as its manufacture, with the result that it was immediately obtainable in the small quantities required for household use, at plenty of well-known places in Calcutta. Its success, therefore, was great and immediate. The same is not the case, however, with jams and chutneys, with Hindu biscuits, with ink, matches, note-paper, and other equally necessary commodities. Indeed, if the opportunity of purchasing some of these were a boon conferred on the consumer at as much sacrifice to the manufacturer as parting with a trade secret, it could hardly be more effectually withheld! Now this is extremely natural. It is only what was to have been expected. The channels of distribution, and the small shops,—which *are* the real distributing centres in every city,—have been so long in the hands of the foreign trade, that they require to be re-captured now, for their own. *Above all, these small shops must be captured by the Swadeshi.* For they take, to whole quarters, the place which the housewife's store-room plays to the family-mansion. The four-anna shop, or the four-pice shop, is the store-room of the poor. There the school-boy buys his ink, his stationery, and his pencils. There the housewife stops, on her road from the river, to purchase a gift or a utensil. It is here that our own soap, ink, paper, matches, toys, and the rest must be made to assail the eye in all directions. A place in the shop-window is the best advertisement. And only when this state of affairs has been brought about, can the Swadeshi movement really penetrate beyond the palace and the temple, into the remotest corners of villages and huts.

For this to be done, it will be necessary, either that

each small industry which is started shall employ an agent for the special purpose of attending to the distribution of its particular product, or that each town shall form a Swadeshi Committee, to keep a register of all industrial undertakings, and of the shops at which the products can be found, and also to promote the sale of Swadeshi, rather than Bideshi articles at the local shops. There is so strong an inclination in this direction all over the country, that a little organised propaganda, and a little well-directed effort, will go a long way in this direction. But we must be prepared to *sustain* those efforts. The system of commercial credit is such that the shops must be assisted as far as possible to disentangle themselves from the foreign trade, and this will take time, patience, and a deeper enthusiasm, than a moment can show.

There is, however, another difficulty, which makes the organisation of such *bureaus*, and their issuing of lists of approved shops, necessary. This lies in the practice of trade-forgery. Several articles have already appeared on the market, bearing marks and labels which have been affixed in India, while the goods themselves are of foreign make. To publish the names of these would, perhaps, constitute libel. Moreover, the offence will become more common. Obviously, the only way to defeat the fraud is by the publication of white lists, under the authority of trusted leaders of the Swadeshi movement. These leaders themselves, further, must be personally cognisant of the source of every article for which they vouch. It is our own fault if we cannot overcome so obvious a device as this. It *can* be overcome, but to do so needs patience and forethought.

The clear sight that shows us where to strike, and the strong love of our own people, the helpless, "the little children" of the Motherland, that is to make every blow tell, these, and these only, are the conditions that we want. Having these, we cannot fail. And we shall not fail. For all the forces of the future are with us. The Swadeshi

movement has come to stay, and to grow, and to drive back for ever in modern India, the tides of reaction and despair.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF NATIONALITY

The principle of nationality depends upon the fact that the supreme organic circumstance in moulding the destiny of man, is *place*. Those who, having a common region of birth, connect the work, the institutions, the ideals, and the purposes of their lives with that region and with their fellows, and those who, doing this, undergo a common economic experience, form a nation, with the duties, the responsibilities, and the faculties of a nation.

It has been said that man's only right is to do his duty. But this implies that his right is also to do his whole duty. And what is true of the individual is true of communities. The people of a country have an inalienable right to do the whole work of their country.

Regarded from this point of view, then, each man becomes, not an entity by himself, not a fragment of a family or class or sect, but *a free member of a great nation*. In this way, he has to learn to think and feel and act.

In the realm of thought, this means, that each man must recognise his birth-land as the supreme fact in his life, and must consciously bow himself to her influence, glorying in it, and striving to rediscover and realise it, in its essentials. In the realm of feeling, he must relate himself to the birthland and to all those who, with him, are born of her. The land and the people—India and the Indian nation. The heart of the nation-child, of the nation's man, must be a great sounding-board for the love and history and ideals of every province. Like the dome of the mosque, it must echo back in music all that is uttered beneath it, and every joy and every sorrow, every memory and every hope, of the Indian heart must find place there. Like a vast picture-gallery, the heart of India's child, must be hung with the beauties of the land, mountain and coast, river and plain, morning and evening, and the old life of

simplicity and orthodoxy—must all yield tribute of their pictures to love—and finally in conduct the man who carries himself as a member of a nation cannot afford to be as one who dreams. If all the work of the country is to be done by the people of the country, it follows that none can go for a moment unemployed. The light that lights the head of apostles, and shines in the fires of martyrs is about the man who understands. Energy, responsibility, and an insatiable longing for self-sacrifice are his.

All these, thought, feeling, work, devoted to a single end, make CHARACTER. Accepting the great purpose of nationality, and struggling to serve it with whole-hearted devotion, the man and the community become transformed. Their purpose is renewed, is clearly conceived, is still more earnestly served. Experience grows to wisdom. Wisdom is deeper assimilated. Character is stored up. And by strength of character, man can remove mountains.

“It is character that can cleave through adamantine walls of difficulty.”

## INDIAN NATIONALITY, A MODE OF THOUGHT

“All that we are”, says Buddha, in the opening words of the *Dhammapada*, “is the result of what we have thought. It is founded on our thoughts. It is made up of our thoughts.” Never could the truth of this sublime utterance be better exemplified than in India at the present day. We have before us the task of Nation-building. But our means of accomplishment consists solely, in the first place, of *thought*. By clear and direct thinking, we may hew a path through all the forest of our difficulties. By weak and confused thought, we can only defeat our own aim.

All men are at bottom the friends of *truth*. There is no vested interest that can make a man eternally inaccessible to the call of right. Do we not often see the son of a reactionary, working hand in hand with the *Swadeshi* leaders, striving by all means in his power to establish nationhood? What does this mean? It means that family and party and ease can make no permanent stand against *conscience*. It means that any man may be captured by the highest *truth*. It means that we are all alike one, in Dharma and in God.

The duty of all who understand the Indian situation today, then, is to *realise* those eternal verities on which the cry for nationality is based. If we are strong and clear ourselves, in the essential idea, none will be able to resist the love of the Motherland in us. We shall ourselves stand as its embodiment and appeal. Even the general of the opposing army will surrender to the power of our thought.

But no great Indian mind has ever believed in uncontrolled emotion, in indiscriminating use of force. Sattvic charity, says the Gita, is that which takes careful note of person, place and time. Good feeling, without this discri-

mination, is merely Tamas. Our thought about our country, our love and clinging to her, must be judged and sifted. We must retain all this in one place, and emphasise it in another, or we shall do our country nothing but harm, and what we thought was our patriotism, will stand demonstrated as our self-indulgence. Feeling must always be inwoven with thought. Love requires ever the illumination of knowledge.

But thought or knowledge alone, would be as defective as feeling alone, in coping with the Indian situation. Let us watch the fate of some high-spirited child, thrown into the care of stern and just guardians, who have no love for him. Some natural action, more or less mischievous or rebellious, calls down a severe reprimand. The reproof outruns the offence, and the boy's pride is wounded. He comes to regard the authorities as his enemies, and drifts into meaningless and unending antagonism. Everything forbidden by the guardian becomes a delight. Not seldom, a career of criminality has begun in such a way.

Let us suppose, however, that in the midst of his childish misdeeds the boy's own father and mother appeared suddenly on the scenes. Instead of feeling appalled at the wickedness of their son, they are delighted to hear of the strength and daring that his tricks exhibited. The lad responded to their warmth of approval, and strove to win more of it. In due time he becomes as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, or a Ram Mohan Roy, or a Dwarakanath Mitter.

Now the difference here between parents and guardians was not one of knowledge. The same facts were before both. But the guardians saw the child's action with the head, and the parents with the heart. The one took note of one element in the character, and the others were impressed by something entirely distinct. How often have we seen, in the course of the Volunteer Movement, the boys who formerly had been apt to demand the polite attentions of the police, as soon as they had to do work for

the motherland, became the best guardians of law and order!

In moral questions then,—which means in almost all *human* affairs,—events are determined in this way, by our own predominant thought and feeling, by our attitude towards various forces that go to make up the event. But it is a treachery to one whom we love, to look upon him through the eyes of an enemy. There are always two ways of looking at a thing. A certain occurrence is reported, and the crowd remarks: How disunited are the Indian people! But suppose the self-same incident had struck someone somewhere as showing Indian *unity*? Stranger things have happened. Would it not be clear that there must here be two different ways of approaching the spectacle? Many people can look at the haughty child with the eye of a judge, for one who can bring to bear on the case the heart of a father. Yet which is wiser? Which is, after all, more just? Which view has more truth? Viewed side by side with the records of criminals, the peccadillos of a small boy look very trivial, yet they may easily be converted into the driving-force that impels man to crime. We must take up the responsibility of judge and director out of that wider experience that can put the instance in its true light. It is not always the obvious interpretation that is the most correct.

Now we have to understand that India will be a nation, just as soon as she conceives of herself as a nation. All that she needs is the realisation of this *thought*. 'India is One' is the formula of nationhood for her. A mantra means a great deal when it has *realisation* behind it, though without this, it is not even as good as a juggler's spell.

India is one. How much of India is one? Just so much, dear friend, as can summon up strength to realise the fact! India is one. But she is so disunited! Is she? Look again! Look facts in the face. Break through all hypnotism. Fear not. Go deep down into the truth of things. It may be that you shall some day say that never

was there a country or a people so united, so woven together in all their parts, so fundamentally *one*, as this India of ours.

Is India disunited? She has so many castes! says one. And how could she ever be a nation, if she had not? Her castes are not her enemies. They are her children, from the Islamic point of view. Hinduism offered the tradition and the culture necessary to great unification. But today, from both these antithetic factors, it is necessary to disengage the common secular element that constitute nationality. Hinduism carries along with it agelong memories, adhesion of the people to the place, the Indian system of civilisation. And Mohammedanism possesses the trained feeling of democracy so essential to the national heart, the patriarchal culture of manners and personality, and a complementary idea, capable of enriching Indian poetry and religion in all directions.

A nation, a country, is no narrow or limited unit! It has room, and to spare, for all to which it can offer *love*! The Mohammedan's gain is not the Hindu's loss, but quite the reverse. The Hindu *needs* the Mohammedan: the Mohammedan *needs* the Hindu, if there is to be an Indian nation. The battles of the past have been merely the struggle to assert an equal strength. Like the border warfare of Englishmen and Scots, they have proved the wrestling matches of combatants who knew themselves for kinsmen. Each whetted his sword on the weapon of the other. Nothing is a better basis for friendship, than the fighting of brave men. Look at the British Empire. Is the ship's engineer quarreling with his fate because he is not the Viceroy? How could there be an Empire, if all its elements were statesmen? The ship's engineer is at least as necessary. But without his cheerful acceptance of the honour of his work, the responsibility of his place, he would be no help, no strength. A nation is a *complex* unity. Even a small village requires many castes. How shall there be a Nation without differences of social degree?

The Indian nation of the future is in need of every

element that we see ready for it today. The Hindu alone, without the aid of the Mohammedan, could never make a nation. From the time of Ashoka to that of the Gupta Emperors of Pataliputra, the Aryan organisation of society, which is always that of a university carefully graduated for the development and maintenance of a great scheme of culture, found itself confronted with the democracy of the Buddhist orders. In the time of Akbar, again, who dreamt of a national India.

Even the history of a struggle becomes a basis of unity, so soon as it is thought of in this way. To see a future task before the Indian Unity is already to be a lover of things Indian. The one word in a nation's heart is the name of the Home-land, the Swadesh. The song of the soil is murmured in all its dreams. Let Indians love and strive for the Indian good, and they are at once citizens, members of a nation.

Thought and love are the key to the whole mystery. It is 'good for a nation that "careers", as Toussaint L'Ouverture announced and Napoleon Bonaparte repeated, should be "open to ability". The motherland must recognise no caste, for that would prevent her availing herself of the best possible service. For this, the presence of a social formation representing democracy, is absolutely necessary. So far from recognising caste, indeed, education must be absolutely democratised, in order that all talents may be discovered, and the remaking of the *Swadesh* may proceed apace.

But the same man who in the Council Chamber or in the market-place is outside all caste, in his home or in the temple takes again his own place in an organised society. Here, a seeming paradox is resolved by clear thinking. Again, all castes are equal in Dharma. It is by the fulfilment of *swadharna*, one's own duty, not by the dignity of the task to be performed, that a man's social virtue is measured. The integrity of a scavenger may be more essential to the commonwealth at a given moment, than

that of an emperor. All tasks are equally honourable that serves the motherland. The complexity of a strong and cohesive national unity, is not its weakness, but rather its strength.

It is a mistake to think that India has not in the past been a well-organised nation. Ashoka, two and a half centuries before Christ, Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya, four centuries after Christ, and Akbar and his immediate successors, have all been men who understood the idea of Indian Nationality, and loved and worked for it. Today, it cannot be recovered till common man recognises in himself a love for India, and a responsibility to her interests, that formerly seemed to be the prerogative of emperors. Today, it is not a throne, but a nationality that is to save and keep the Motherland. But this thing shall be! It is true that all the materials for the building have been provided in abundance: but it is not true that they have never been wrought into a pile. The old-time Dharma of the great sovereigns, the code of piety of kings, of the Shanti Parva, represents the most beautiful product and expression of a nation's unity that the world has ever seen. It is not the picture of Rama, winning the allegiance of the tribes, that impresses us so much, as that of Valmiki, dreaming two thousand years ago, of the statesmanlike federation. In the time of the poet, the Indian people were accustomed to assume that they were parts of a great nation.

Let them but learn again to think in similar fashion. Let them seek by all means to realise the thought. In so seeking they shall but open their eyes to find their realisation true. We are a nation, as soon as we recognise ourselves as a nation. What? Is a village riot so serious a symptom in the body politic? The child stole sour mangoes, as his mother worked over the cooking fire, but it is not therefore proved that the child has all the instincts of a thief! Courage, my friends, courage. Let trifles take on their true proportions. Turn we to reckoning our

wealth instead of our poverty! Have we not love of village and home? Are not our rivers and mountains sacred to us? Why, then, shall we not have love of INDIA? It is not necessary that we should pronounce the word fellowship with wry faces. It is only requisite that we should kneel down and adore the common mother. So loving, so praising, we shall accomplish all else by implication. And once more it will stand demonstrated that "All that we are is the result of what we have thought. It is founded on our thought. It is made up of our thought".

## THE CALL TO NATIONALITY

Age succeeds age in India, and ever the voice of the Mother calls upon Her children to worship Her with new offerings, with renewal of their own greatness. Today She cries for the offering of Nationality. Today She asks, as a household Mother of the strong men whom she has borne and bred, that we show to Her, not gentleness and submission, but manly strength and invincible might. Today She would that we play before Her with the sword. Today She would find Herself the Mother of a hero-clan. Today does She cry once more the She is an hungered, and only by the lives and blood of the crowned kings of men, can Her citadel be saved.

Come forth O Ye crowned kings, come forth! Arise thou, great People, thou nation that art to be! Cast off the cerement clothes that bind thee.

The age has gone by in India, when one man could lead the People. Today, such are the conditions of the modern world, that all the people must bow to a single idea. The old world saw one king, and many million subjects. The new world has made a monarch of each of these. But with a sovereign's responsibility, a sovereign's power to direct the future, it is meet that the modern man learn also the one great thought that sways a throne, the one great law by which crowns have been lost and won,—the law, the thought of the Land's and the People's good.

So is born the call to Nationality. To the chirp said in the past, to the People as a whole say in this present, the fathers of our race, the gods of our land.

Be with us we have chosen thee

Stand steadfast and immovable,

Let all the people wish for thee,

Break ye the bonds of littleness that hold ye!

Throw off the shroud—Burst the death-bonds—Arise!

Behold beneath the pall the stirring and struggle of the long dead. The hour trembles. The evening itself waits hushed and awestruck. Long vanished nations moan and cry in their age-old slumber. About us on every hand are heard the voices of the past—"Arise! Arise!"

Hush! in this garden of the dead, the last long rays of sunset are about to flash up into the first of dawn. Already the night is over. Already our mourning is accomplished. Day is at hand. A new age opens, and from the lips of the Mother Herself we hear pronounced to all Her People, the Vedic Benediction of the king:

"Let not thy kingdom fall away,  
Be steady here fall not away,  
Be like a mountain unremoved—  
Stand steadfast here as Indra's self,  
And hold the kingship in thy grasp."

That the People be sovereign, that the People prevail,—this is the cry of Nationality.

## RACE OF THE VEDAS

The man who believes in nationality sees India to be young,—young, with a youth that bears in his heart the memories of five thousand years! India is, in fact, the *brahmacharin* amongst the nations—a stripling, full of vigour, ready for struggle, ardent, flushed with courage, conscious of powers within, undreamt of by the world around.

The work of Humanity is never lost. The nation that has been developing its civilisation during more than thirty centuries of sustained effort cannot fail to have won something not yet attained by those who have emerged within a thousand years from barbarism. That nation fears no ordeal. Is the struggle before it today, the first it has known? True, it is the struggle of a unification vaster and deeper than the past has dreamt of. But it is a unification for which the past has prepared it.

The men who join the army of today join it, not by ones and twos; but in marching order. Here arrive the Mahrattas, there the disciples of the Khalsa; here closes in the Mussalman's contingent, there join the Bengalees. Still another wing is made of Rajputs. This has been the work of history. India in the past has been a breeding ground of nations—a nursery of strong and royal races. India today is to become a great field of Nationality, a single giant unity, for which all the smaller unities of the past have been a preparation.

Each of these contributes to the all—its memories, its cities, its history, its learning, the types of men and manners it has evolved. And the all rejoices, that its wealth is great. For these things are grounds of union not forces of diversity and disruption. They are motives for co-operation, elements of a common enlargement—verily

nothing shall be potent to divide them that have one home and one interest!

Our history is not dead. It lives in us. History is only character writ large. Character is history in brief. At any moment may the strength that answered Govind Singh break out in the Punjabi. At any moment may the courage and power of Johar awake in the Rajput. Shivaji cannot die in the Mahratta. At any moment may the builder or the soldier stand revealed in the Mussalman. Our fathers made the land we dwell in. Shall we not renew her? History is dynamic.

What proof have we of our strength? We it was who brought the Vedas into India. We who thought out and wrote down Upanishads and Sutras; we who gave birth to mighty faiths, to Buddhism and Jainism, to Shaiva and Vaishnava and Shakta, we who brought forth great philosophies,—Kapila and Shankaracharya; we who produced literatures, who united ourselves with the peoples of the land, *and made India*, with her commerce and her great fame, and her place amongst the nations—and this strength has awakened in us once more. We are minded to set our hand to the remaking of our land—and that we may do this, we first proclaim ourselves a Nationality—we proclaim ourselves one.

What is the task before us?

Our first struggle is for the realisation and effective realisation of our own unity.

## THE UNITY OF INDIA

There is no subject more germane to our aims and purposes, than the much mooted question of the unity of India. India is so disunited, say those who do not love her. And India is one! answer her children and Bhaktas.

Let us, then, take the matter at its worst, and assume that the disunion and diversity of our Motherland is a fact. What is the line of thought that we ought in such a case to pursue? It is to be supposed that we do not wish to intensify the problem, but rather to solve it, to treat in such a way that it may grow less instead of greater, day by day. In the first place, it is open to us, to dwell on the many elements of unity which India already possesses. Her own civilisation, apart from foreign influences, is remarkably harmonious, throughout the length and breadth of the country. There is not even such diversity of language as people suppose. The old Motherland did not fail, amongst all the provisions that she made for her children, to evolve also for them a common tongue more or less universal in the North, and well known as a language of culture in the South. If, again, we take up religion, it is difficult to see the acute diversity of which people talk. The whole theory of Hinduism is one of a vast accordance of faiths, and a scheme in which even Islam and Christianity, strongly individual as they are, may find places.

Let us on the other hand, look at the problem with which other countries have to deal. Could Indian disunity be compared with that of America, or even England, who have to assimilate thousands of aliens every year? Could her linguistic variety be compared to that of Switzerland, when we remember the relative sizes of the two populations? German, French and Italian divide that little land amongst themselves and this vast India is practically covered by Hindi with its variations, and certain Dravidian

tongues, all linked together, as these are, by a common classic, and common social characteristics and ideas.

Unity is a thing of which it may be said that, whether it apparently exists or not, it must first of all be conceived of in the mind. All the greatest realities of life are primarily, in this way, concepts in the mind. They must afterwards be externalised, it is true, but their birth is in the mind. There they must be recognised and shaped. There they must be asserted. From this, they become external. We all know how true this is of the relations of the family. Does the wife allow herself to argue the question of her husband's character and loveliness? This would soon destroy the most perfect of relations. But she dwells only on the facts that support her own devotion. The rest she ignores, as so much waste material. It is of no consequence to her.

Similarly there is a very actual sense in which only the positive is true. Only the positive really exists. Just as, to the eye of affection only the sweet and beautiful has any real objective existence, so in many other things also, a like truth holds good. Harmony, and harmony alone is, in this sense, real, while discord and its elements are unreal. The whole of human society is built up along such lines as these. The passionate love of mothers for their children would soon be at an end, but for the great intensifying concept of the child's need and dependence which is read into every act and word, and makes the relationship firm and growing. In a parallel way, then, it may be said that only unity is true: that the opposite of unity is negative and therefore has no existence. It matters not what the senses report. Reality is conferred by the mind. The great life-giving concepts arise within and become apparent afterwards. We see that India is one, and she is one and shall be one. This thought with the note of joy and strength, is the duty of every nationalist to hold.

## ON THE INFLUENCE OF HISTORY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INDIA

### I

The problem which confronts India today is that of passing completely into the modern age. The present is an age of world-consciousness. Owing to the discovery of steam and electricity it is now possible for the least adventurous of us to explore the world. Modern trade has already done so, modern science is struggling to follow suit. The very drawing-room contains trophies from every country and every era. In fact, by each individual human mind, as by Humanity as a whole, the earth in its entirety is being visualised, geographically and historically.

This modern age is also an age of exploitation. For the most precious things, Europe has to go back to other eras, or to communities not yet modernised. The rugs of Persia and of Turkey, and needlework of Bokhara, the beautiful porcelains and the metal-work of the Church, all these things are demanded, but they have to be found like flowers growing in old-world gardens, secluded and apart. No sooner do the suburbs of the city extend themselves to include these gardens than they are straightway trodden down and ruined. Even the industries of Kashmir are growing vulgar, under the footsteps of the passing tourist. London is teaching drawing to the children in her board-schools, but why? In order that they may *understand* the works of Botticelli and of Michael Angelo. The dreams and faiths that made such work possible, *these* she cannot give. Everyone today can read Shakespeare, but where is a new Shakespeare to be looked for? Even the prayers that satisfy us most deeply, are they not the utterances of rapturous lives lived long ago in workshop or in cloister? In an hour may be we can patter off all the prayers of

Chrysostom and Teresa and Ignatius Loyola put together, but it would have taken years of concentration to have been the first utterer of one such word as theirs. The modern age is an age of exploitation, not of creation.

The modern age is an age of organisation. In the case of the machine, a screw here or a wheel there enables us to avail ourselves of vast areas of force, otherwise inaccessible. Similarly, the crowning temptation of the modern world is to treat human areas from the same point of view. We are apt to think of whole populations, as if the only question to be considered were of their usefulness to ourselves, to our comfort, our luxury, our culture. We have learnt to organise life and masses of men with the regularity and precision of machinery. We see this in shops and offices and factories, and we also see it in the government of empires, and in the constant annexing of slices of one country by the official classes of another.

The modern age is an age of the People. We are all familiar today with the questions of expediency and of responsibility which were hitherto the preserves of monarchs and of cabinets. Our habits are those of kings. Yet we are not kings. Our education is also of a kind which was once open only to the privileged. The exploitation of the people leads to the criticism of the people; the thought, the responsibility ultimately to the organisation of the people. The genius of Toussaint L' Overture announced, and that of Napoleon Bonaparte echoed, "All careers are open to ability", but had they failed to proclaim it, the decree must have gone forth sooner or later, for it is one of the master-notes of the modern world.

Such then are a few of the characteristics of the modern age. India is to a large extent mediaeval still. What does this imply? The Middle Ages were ages of *production* rather than *exploitation*. The strenuous dreamers dreamed by the light of more or less childlike beliefs. The masses of the nation were less widely informed than now, and vastly simpler in their aims and habits. Political

responsibility was somewhat of a monopoly. Each life, and each group, was more concentrated in its activities than is the case today. Science is the characteristic product of the modern world. Art was the characteristic product of the mediæval. Work was performed by hand, not by machinery. Hence it was slow, and productions could only be accumulated very gradually. Generation followed generation, therefore, in the attempt to furnish, or in the work of using, a single room. And for this reason an old farmhouse kitchen, in any part of the world, is universally admitted to be more beautiful than a modern drawing-room.

Most of us will feel that wherever it is possible to retain the mediæval and refuse the modern, it is desirable to do so. But in India the possibility is not open to us. The mediæval suffers here from a mortal wound. It has been wounded, in the first place, by the touch of trade. The mechanical productions of the West, quickly created, quickly worn out, rapidly succeeding each other, have driven out of the mind the patient accumulations of successive generations. Squalor and vulgarity, the two horns of the modern dilemma in taste, are now threatening the lovely old simplicity of India with increasing force. And this means that the crafts themselves are passing out of being,—the men of the craft-guilds, or castes, being starved, or turned into work for which they have neither desire nor aptitude.

Mediaeval India has been wounded to death, by Christian proselytism. "The simple faith of strenuous dreamers" persists to some extent, but it is more individual and less congregational, than it was. The women's lives are of the old world, and the men's touched, but not inspired by modernism, are out of all relation to them. The situation would already have been fatal to a people less profoundly moralised. As it is, it strains unduly even that character which is the organic upgrowth of three thousand years of faith and works.

And finally, mediæval India is under sentence of death, through the existence of those political connections which make the country an English-speaking territory. For good or for evil, the work of modernising has gone too far to be undone. India is now a figure in the twentieth-century mart of the world. As proud as ever, and as sensitive as ever, she is no longer isolated, no longer sure of herself, no longer satisfied with her specific achievements. Every country has a right to a scheme of things which shall not only provide incentive and ambition to her noble children, but shall also tend increasingly to call her meanest to higher aims. In India today, however, the meanest are frankly and revoltingly imitative. The noblest work against incredible difficulties towards ends that the society around can hardly comprehend. And the majority stand between, uncertain in what direction to bestow their efforts. Spiritually, morally, intellectually, and socially, we shall best understand the India of the present moment, if we conceive of her as bewildered and in doubt.

In order, then, to co-ordinate her efforts, it is clear that she has to face and carry through vast changes, which we may designate conveniently as the assimilation of the modern consciousness. That is to say, accepting the modern method of thought and expression, she has so to increase the content of the existing expression, as to prove herself equal, if not superior, to those other nations with whom she will thus be competing on equal terms.

Instead of merely learning modern science, she has to prove herself able to apply the methods of modern science to the solution of some of its unsolved problems. Instead of merely accepting other men's steam-ships and mechanical contrivances, she has to produce great inventors who will add to the convenience and potentiality of life. Instead of enjoying a foreign literature, she has to pour into that literature masterpieces of a new type. Instead of admiring national evolutions and heroic leaders in other countries, she has to consolidate her own forces and

bring forth her own heroes, to constitute an army of nationality on her own soil.

Perhaps in nothing is it easy to understand this, as in the matter of art. The old Indian school of painting produced very beautiful works of art. But the method and its continuity of effort have suffered destruction in the modern catastrophe. Thousands of young art students today are simply toiling along, in the struggle to put colour on canvas in the European way, in order to express thoughts and illustrate poems, in a fashion only would-be European, and not genuinely anything. It is clear that what we want here is workers who after a training in *technique* can catch and express a great inspiration of their own, in any manner whatsoever, that they feel to be adequate. It is clear that, in acquiring mastery of materials, what we really want is a great school of artists, a national art movement. And here it must not be *method* of work, but the message which is sought to be conveyed, that constitutes nationality.

In other words, all for which that country is precious will vanish out of the world, unless the children of the land can grasp the thought of India as India, and learn to live and work in expression of this idea alone.

There can be no doubt that one of the most important features of such an awakening would lie in a movement towards the study of Indian history. A man's face contains, for the seeing eye, his whole past. A national character is the *resumé* of a national history. If we would know what we are, or whither we tend, we must be made aware of our own antecedents. And the study of Indian history ought to possess unusual attractions for the Indian people, inasmuch as it is a history which has never yet been written, which is even, as yet, unknown.

Nothing, if well understood, can be more beautiful as a historic spectacle than the process of the Indian evolution. The orderly sequence of consolidation and individuation by which new elements are worked into the nationality in each age, is something that could never have been so

perfect, had the Himalayas and a forbidding coast-line not combined to isolate the experimental field.

Already there have been two Indias,—Hindu India under the Ashokan Empire, and Mogul India, under the House of Babar, and it remains for the people themselves to produce a third, the National India. All preceding or intervening periods are to be regarded as preparatory to these, as periods merely of the incorporation and elaboration of new elements. We are able to understand and state this, because it is today clear that history is dynamic ; it never dies. If a nation at any period reach great spiritual or intellectual achievements, these do not exhaust, they conserve and heighten the national vigour. The strength spent in physical orgy of any kind is indeed spent ; but the energy that shone forth as Vikramaditya and his brilliant court, represents so much gained for eternity by the nation as a whole. In this respect there is a polar difference between attainment and enjoyment. The effort to produce a great art, great science, or a world-religion, never exhausts a people. If they subsequently show exhaustion, we may be certain that a close search will discover forms of luxury and excess which occurring simultaneously sowed the actual seeds of premature decay. Water will always rise to the level it has once reached. Similarly, the height that a people may have once captured they can always achieve again.

For one thing, the past in this way patterns the future. It is not by imitation of foreigners, but by renewed apprehension of their own intention, renewed effort at self-expression,—in other words, by movements of national revival,—that nations rise. History is *ashirbad*,—the promise that the nationality makes to each one of its children. This is so deeply understood by the human mind that a church will be formed round any single character—Ali, “The Lion of God,” for instance, or Martin Luther, or Ignatius Loyola, or Chaitanya,—that is felt to mark an epoch of the race. It remains for India to show that the

passion which the past has seen men give to churches, with their sectarian calendars, will yet be seen concentrated on a nation in which the Saints of all sects find common canonization. Islam represents, amongst other things, the tendency to multiply to infinity the personality of Ali, and the equally wonderful personality of Fatima. Hinduism represents a similar hope for the characters of Savitri, of Buddha, of Sita, and perhaps of Shaunaka.

The calendar of the saints of the nationality, however, includes all these, and a thousand-more. Asaf-ud-daula of Oudh has his place there, side by side with Shivaji, and the story of the heroes of Rajput and Sikh and Mahratta peoples, cannot dim the shining of Akbar and Sher Shah. Do the Indian people doubt that they are a nation, with a national character of their own? Can they doubt, when they look back on their literature, on their epics, on their heroes, on their history? Could they compare the corresponding possessions of any other people with their own? Does the Indo-Mohammedan doubt his own power, his own part in a consolidated Indian nationality? What, when he reviews the glories of Indo-Saracenic architecture, or the records of his Indian sovereigns, Indian soldiers, and Indian chivalry?

No, History is the warp upon which is to be woven the woof of Nationality. Only in the mirror of her own past can India see her soul reflected, and only in such vision can she recognise herself. By the study of History alone, therefore, can she determine what are to be the essential elements of her own nationality when grown to its full height of manliness and vigour.

## II

When we compare the Empire of Ashoka with that of Akbar, we see a certain combination that distinguishes both, the combination of Hindu culture with the idea of democracy. The personal message of the Buddha falls upon the heart of a Shudra sovereign, in the one case, to give him the intellectual franchise of his age, and the result is an enthusiasm, at once of personal piety and of kingly opportunity, which the world has rarely or never seen equalled. In the other case, a less stable empire is built up on the basis of a personal temperament that makes for culture, and the Islamic idea of the fraternity of man. There can be no doubt that, coloured by these two master-facts, the delight of the four great Moguls in the throne of India, was comparable to that of Ashoka himself.

In the Indian nation of the near future, the democracy itself, enfranchised by the modern spirit, will play the leading part, and the idea of nationality will form the motive and inspiration.

India is a country born to be the instrument of ideas. There is nothing there which it is desirable to compass, that cannot be compassed by means of an educational process.

Now nothing is more desirable than the finding of some solvent for purely social crystallizations. The whole power of a barrier between two communities depends on the value which the members ascribe to it, and there is nothing like knowledge of facts for dispelling fictitious self-hypnotisms. For this reason, a really valuable History of India presupposes a certain training in sociology. When definite knowledge is available, partisanship falls gradually into disuse. It is better, surely, to *understand* caste, than either to praise or to vilify it. Here based upon race, there - upon occupation, and elsewhere upon period of immigration,

it is clear enough that its significance is manifold. A world of unwritten history and an encyclopaedia of folk-lore, are likewise contained in it. So multitudinous are its local refinements that it would take an archaeological department consisting of the whole people, merely to tabulate them. It is clear, then, that the limitations imposed by caste cannot be by any means uniform. But it is only in relation to the history of similar institutions, as they have existed in other countries, that we shall be able to deduce the law of the growth and development, with the warning or the hope, of Indian caste.

We can see that it is essential also to know where to dub a given institution matriarchal, patriarchal or primitive. It is further probably necessary to understand the way in which place spontaneously relates itself to work,—how river-bank or sea-board makes fisher folk, fertile plains peasants, deserts and uplands shepherds, forests and mountains hunters, foresters, and miners. With these definite conceptions in our minds, we may attempt to unravel the History of India. But even here more is necessary. How much can we know of India, if we know nothing of the world outside India? How shall we recover the truth about ancient Pataliputra, if we know nothing of Persipolis, of Petra, of Babylon, of China, and the international relations of all these? Or how are we to understand the growth and significance of Benares, if we have never studied Cologne, Chartres, Durham, or Milan? What will the history of Hinduism mean to us, if we have never considered that of Christianity. or of Islam?

Even in the study of the prehistoric, then, the comparative method is essential. If we would rebuild the India of early ages, we must be prepared also to build up and place beside it, Phoenicia, Egypt, Chaldea, and the rest. Degenerate moderns, we cannot explore the world without the aid of railways, but we need not think that our ancestors were like us. The international consciousness of early periods is one of the most fascinating subjects that could

be offered to a student, and certainly would well repay whatever labour he might spend upon it. Thus it is not only necessary that the Indian historian should have a grasp of sociological method, and of such facts as are known in regard to the development of civilisation ; it is also requisite that he should be thoroughly abreast of the research of his time as to the formation and movement of ancient empires. Here we enter upon something more like the firm ground of history. Archaeology is every day revealing more and more of the past, in Egypt, in Chaldea, in the old Empire of Hittites, in Crete and Knossos. India, whether pre-Aryan and Dravidian, or post-Dravidian and Aryan, was an integral part of the world and the epochs to which these belonged. Ashoka himself was a modern in his day, the heir of an immense, unrecorded, but not perhaps at that time unremembered, history. What has India herself to tell us of this past?

The idler may be satisfied to answer that already European scholars are at work upon these problems. They are not. But if they were, what answer would that be for the son of India to offer? European scholars are blind and deaf to many of the problems and many of the lines of work that Indian history opens up in abundance. But even if it were not so, he who answers thus, or puts forward the ability of an alien scholarship to write a true history of India, proves himself ignorant of the first conditions of higher research. The first and highest necessity of such work is *a heart, a passionate love, the insight of a child*. These things no foreigner can boast. Nor does the foreigner live in the world where constant brooding would enable him to catch those loose ends of the threads of history that lie blown by the winds of the common life. Half the history of India lies written in religious and domestic custom. What does the alien know of these? What does he know of tradition, of the proverbs of the race, of its etiquette, of its theology? Or, if all these were open to him, where would be the burning hope to teach

him unerringly the road by which to seek the significance of the past in the future?

The tale of her own past that the Motherland awaits, must combine the critical acumen of the modern, with the epic enthusiasm of the ancient writer. Remorseless in its rejection of legend, it must nevertheless know how to seize the core of truth that legend so often conveys. Supported and adorned by a knowledge of the external world, it must for its own part be the poem, the psalm, of the Indian country. And above all, it must not end with the past, but must know how to point the finger onwards to the future. It must be not only reminiscent, but also suggestive. It must not only chant the word "Remember" but also find ways of uttering the whisper "Determine!" It must not only be critical, but also fiery, proud, constructive. The foreign scholar writes annals, memoirs, chronicles, but can this Song of the Land be sung by any not of her own blood?

## THE NEW HINDUISM

Every new period in our political history creates a new period in Hindu worship. The ideas that surround us from our birth are like geological strata, piled one upon another, and each bearing the marks of the time in which it rose. A crisis so important as the present, must, in its turn, leave a deep impression on our religion, thought and customs. It is, of course, understood that the new, if it is to be persistent, must be constituted by a return upon the old. It must form a development, not an invention. This is why we do not notice that we are living in the midst of a new Hinduism. The new Hinduism is merely the old, finding new utterance and application. When we read the great pronouncements of Vivekananda, they are so like the words of our grandparents heard in our childhood, that we fail to remember that they are being spoken in the midst of a foreign people, and falling upon strange ears. This fact that our religion now stands before the world, demanding its rightful place,—determined to find the souls that belong to it, even if it have to seek for them to the ends of the earth—is in itself a revolution, of a most profound and searching character. It is a revolution, moreover, that no one dreams of denying. All the world admits that it has taken place. But true revolutions never stop with themselves. They are like the first circles formed on the water, when a stone is thrown. They go on and on, producing other circles. Similarly, every revolution is the source of rhythmic changes in the society in which it occurs, which go on and on, producing secondary and tertiary changes, to the end of the epoch, when they are swallowed up and re-energised by the nuclear forces of the succeeding age.

A movement of national dimensions must have a new philosophical idea behind it, which will, however, be new

in appearance only being really an immense dynamic concentration and re-birth of all that is already familiar to the people. In it, the nation recognises, with pride and delight, its own, the national, genius. Everyman knows that he and his ancestors have contributed to the making, developing and conserving, of this, the national treasure. A thrill of self-reliance passes across a whole people. Their feet tread firmer, their heads are held higher, they feel for the first time, the gigantic power that surges within them.

For fifteen hundred years, at least the Gita has been, amongst all our texts pre-eminently, the national scripture. Today it stands, like a new discovery, as the gospel of the national revival. But this newness is only an optical illusion, arising from the accident that today for the first time, we can compare it with the other scriptures of the world, and so view it in its wholeness. Seen thus, we find that it stands alone. Wherever we open it, we find it talking of the Presence that pervades all things, the One that throbs throughout the many, the vast and shadowy Infinite, that can not be named or measured, seen or touched, yet solves all mysteries, and bestows all freedom. Other faiths deal with fragmentary experiences, and symptomatic emotions; here alone we are on the ground of the all-comprehensive, the universal, the absolute. No wonder that a six weeks reading of it stirred the American Emerson to the writing of the greatest of all his works, the essay on the "Over-Soul". If the national intellect be capable, in many fields, of achievements as great as this in religion, where is the limit to the power of the Indian mind? "He that is with us is more than all the hosts of them that be against us."

But it is not only in religious philosophy, that the influence of the present age and its problems is likely to make an indelible impression. It will re-act also upon our ritual and ceremonial life. There is no doubt that Hindu worship needs badly some means of corporate and organised democratic expression. The little service that is held nightly

at the tree beside the Howrah Bridge, derives all its popularity from the fact that it tends unconsciously to supply this need. One great reason for the success of Chaitanya in Bengal, lay in the fact that his Sankirtans, with their singing and ecstatic dancing, afforded means of self-expression to the populace. Nor can it be doubted that the organised services of the Brahma Samaj are a great basis of their popularity.

All the parts of a Christian church are represented in a Hindu temple, showing that even the architecture of Christianity comes from the East. But the national genius of Christian peoples for organised co-operation has been reflected even in their worship, and the Nat-mandir, or choir, is placed, with them, directly in front of the sanctuary, or temple proper, while the nave, or court of the people is in front of the choir or Nat-mandir. The whole is bound together under a single roof, and the building narrows at the choir, so that it and the sanctuary stand alone, with the people before them, at their feet. The effect of this arrangement is that the building, from whatever point we view it, culminates in the altar and that the people, however far away they be, still form an integral and necessary part of every service and act of worship.

It is important that we also should evolve services in which the people are conceived of as an essential and unseparable factor, fully articulate, and taking a recognised part in an organised worship. For this, we must scrutinise our old rites, and try to restore to them their ancient complex meanings, of the ages before the priest alone became the repository and executor of sacramental acts. Doubtless this new tendency will affect our ecclesiastical architecture, in course of time. For us, however, at the moment, this is of no consequence, being merely an effect. What we have to think of, is the setting in motion of causes. Just as in the family ceremonies, different members of the family—the father, the mamma, the women, others, mother-in-law and sisters-in-law have each

their appointed function and individual part, so in this civic and national ritual of the future, different sections of the people must play their allotted parts. We cannot imagine a Service of Civic Praise here in Calcutta, for instance, in which possibly a Pradakshina of the municipal boundaries might be performed, and a great fire of consecration lighted, on some specially sanctified spot, unless all the various parts of Calcutta were fully represented. Nor could anything be grander than a great civic anthem in which the men of Bhowanipur, Entally, Burra Bazar and the rest, each section headed by their own Brahmins, should all chant separate stanzas, each ending in the united acclaims of the whole city.

The Pradakshina in an incipient procession, and the value of the procession, for purposes of communal ritual, is obvious. Lights, banners, Shankhas,\* bells, Bheris,† the carrying of flowers and branches, and the sprinkling of Ganges water, all have their place in such celebrations. India is the land of processions. It ought not to be difficult so to develop this rite, as to give it a new and unforeseen significance. The beautiful ceremonies of Hindu weddings are full of suggestions. The reciting of texts and litanies in antiphon, that is to say, by two parties of worshippers as question and answer, or in alternation, as responses, to sentences of exhortation by the priest, is a most impressive mode of democratic worship. The prayer-drama organises the worshippers, and creates a communal idea. In these ceremonies, the Indian earth, water, and banner ought to be the supreme symbols, winning all hearts, by their very simplicity and pathos. We shall not be able to return upon this subject. We therefore commend it to the consideration of our readers, calling for their universal attention.

\* Conchs

† Kettle-drums

## A THEORY OF FREEDOM

There is no such thing as absolute freedom for the individual, except in Mukti. Yet the individual has always striven for relative freedom in all directions. By this struggle for a freedom which he can understand, he makes himself ready for the supreme effort, by which he will one day gain the absolute liberty or Mukti itself. Each one of the minor forms of freedom is an image or symbol of that Transcendent Freedom, and as such has the same claim upon the reverence, even of those who do not understand it, as an image of God worshipped by others, has upon one who does not worship it. The man who gets freedom without striving for it is in so far, a lost soul, for he passes by the open door of Mukti.

There are two ways in which freedom of any kind can be manifested when it is present. These are renunciation and conquest. That which we would conquer, we must first understand. We have to enter into it, to wrestle with it on given terms, to offer our very lives to it and at last to win the victory. Every success has cost at least one human sacrifice. Mastery is a kind of freedom. We cannot defeat that which has us in its power.

Neither can we renounce what we have not conquered. We cannot be independent of a thing which is admittedly strong than we. In renunciation, we attain true freedom, for in renunciation we transcend strength as well as weakness. But of these two things there can be no question that one leads downwards into deeper bondage and the other outward into free air and liberty; nor can anyone be in doubt as to which does which. Conquest is an essential antecedent of renunciation. True renunciation of any thing is a step to Mukti.

A man struggles for freedom, which is mastery, all his life. If he does not do so, he is not a man. He may be a

clod or an idiot, a drunkard or a parasite. A *man* struggles and struggles to be free. Some strive for freedom for themselves alone setting up self-will or appetite in the place of their God. These are the criminals, the mad men, the failures of society. We find sometimes amongst such the nature of a child. To a child there is little difference between good and evil. He will as readily pursue the sense-gratification of robbing a pantry, as that of plucking a flower or catching a butterfly. He throws his whole heart into the effort of the moment and is, withal, full of love and loveliness. This class of child-souls furnishes the Jagais and Madhais of the annals of religion, the criminals who become saints. The true criminal is steeped in Tamas and egotism. He miscalls license by the name of liberty. License is not liberty for the simple reason that true liberty presupposes mastery. The profligate is the victim of his own vices. He lies helpless at their feet. He does not even enjoy his appetites. His life is spent like that of wild animal between ungovernable desire and ungovernable fear. He who would be free must first learn to govern. One who is uncontrolled is anything but free.

The free man is that man whose will is efficient. The first enemy that the will has to encounter is ignorance, the second is unbridled impulse. That these may be overcome, we submit ourselves, while the body is yet weak, to intellectual education and are initiated, at physical maturity, into the world of the ideals of our race. Such is the provision made by humanity in order that we may live strenuously, keeping the body beneath our feet; see the ideals unclouded by our own feebleness or by any grossness; and will efficiently for the triumphant achievement of the highest that we perceive. To toil, to see, to will and to attain, this is the four-fold debt that we incur to our forefathers by the very fact of birth. A man must strive, strive to the uttermost. And since without possible success there can be no intensity of effort he must often succeed. A man's striving must begin moreover as soon after the

moment when visions come to him as he judges fit. There can be no ruling, no dating, no circumscribing of his effort from outside. Human beings are born, by incessant work to increase their own faculty, by ceaseless striving to add to their inheritance. They are born to disdain limitation. It is decreed in the counsels of God that man shall be confronted by destiny only to defy and master it, that the impossible shall to him become the possible, the one inexorable law of human life is effort to the utmost.

There is such a thing as the body-politic. Even the body-politic, however, has to conform to the spiritual claim of individual man, his right, by hopeful struggle to find Mukti.

The political unit furnishes new and more complex objects of attainment to the parts of which it is made up. New rights, new tasks, new ambition dawn upon us in relation to our political position. Again, nothing must defeat the right of the soul to the utmost of activity, the utmost of sacrifice, my right to serve, my right to suffer, my right to love, on the highest and widest area of which I am capable, must be defeated by nothing in the world save the greater power of my brother to do these things with equal and added nobility. And if I find this in him, since it is the ideal that I worship and not myself as the embodiment of that ideal, I shall place his feet upon my head and follow him. For in him I find the ideal, more clearly than in myself. Nothing in the world has a right to interfere with knowledge working thus hand in hand with love. Brothers standing side by side as citizens and loyal children of a common mother must be impeded by nothing in working out their duty and offering their lives to her. If a man direct his political activities towards the interests of himself or a section of his people against the welfare of his country as a whole, he is a traitor and the whole weight of the body-politic has a right to oppose and thwart him. But if his work for a class be dominated by the love of his country, then it is harmonious with the national well-

being and is service and not treachery. A nation has the right to serve its country to the utmost. A nation moreover has this one duty alone. In serving its land, it raises itself. It fulfils its debt to humanity and to the world. It recreates its own mother. A child has a right to spurn and defeat anything that could come between him and his mother, anything that would prevent his serving her to the farthest limit of his own capacity, anything that would make him into servant or slave, in one house where he was born a son.

But we must study the position of the individual in relation to this task of the body-politic. The land must be served by the nation and by the individual as a part of the nation ; but not as divided from it and out of relation to it. This is the truth so clearly seen by our fore-fathers. This is the perception to which caste witnesses so strongly. It is true that we have forgotten the meaning of caste. We see it as the limitation or assertion of our rights instead of regarding it as the regimentation of our duties. It is always thus, in an age of degradation when a people become passive and fall into static decay. We ought to be thankful for any blow that might rouse us up from so sluggish a condition. If we translate rights into duties and apply the new word as the key, many a problem will be unlocked. By our organisation into castes, we the children of India, were at one time able to divide up our labours and responsibilities amongst ourselves, giving to each group the task best suited to its capacity more or less successfully but denying the right of none to his share of the household fire, to his own form of happiness and to his own mode of self-expression. Caste was also our school of self-government and gives us to this day a sense of the value to the community of our personal opinion and a measure of the *docorum* which is obligatory in its expression.

But all the castes put together will in this age constitute only the social expression of Hinduism and Hinduism is no longer conterminous with the national unity. That

now includes many elements once strange. Hinduism itself moreover, as befits a progressive unit has grown incalculably in its own size and complexity. It consists of a certain common fundament of orthodoxy plus the reforming sects of the Mohammedan period plus the reforming sects of the present period. All these parts have an equal right to the name of Hindu. And similarly Hindu, Jain and Mussalman have an equal right to the name of Indian. The national unity is built on place, not on language or creed or tradition, as some would have us believe, but on home. The interest of the children is one with that of the home, therefore they cannot be divided.

It follows that the task before us is to educate ourselves in the consciousness of our own unity. We have to saturate our own sub-conscious mind with the thought of it. We have so to make it a part of ourselves that we react instinctively on its behalf. Perfect harmony and mental cohesion of the body-politic is the necessary antecedent of political mastery which is another name for that relative good which we call national freedom.

There was an age when man had no family. He was incapable of the faithfulness and sustained co-operation that that institution demands. Today we are born with the family-honour in our blood. Even the youngest child quivers under an attack on father and mother, the feeblest resents the attack of an outsider on the members of the household. We are all loyal to the head of the house, all feel the delight of sacrifice for the good of the rest. Our ideals are the perfect wife, the stainless widow, the loving daughter. The mother is the central passion of her son's life. The grave tenderness of the father is the cherished memory of endless years. In the battle of life the struggle for self is transformed into the struggle for those we love.

An age will come when men shall be as tightly knit to the thought of country. Our feeling for the family is to be a gauge of our devotion to nation and motherland. By what we have already attained in the one, we can measure

what we must next attain in the other. We have received promotion in the school of self-realisation. Having learnt the lesson of the family, we have next to learn that of nationality. As the individual has become the instrument of the one, so he has now to become eager tool of the other. All that force which moves in him as the vitality of egoism has to find in him a transformation point where it is converted into force of patriotism. And that this may not constitute a mere term to the aggression of the wolf-like pack, it must be lifted and redeemed by a great and holy love. Love is the spiritual reality behind the symbolism of mother and child. Even the living human mother is only the outward and visible emblem of her own infinite love. Can we not see the still vaster love that finds expression as the Motherland? It is said that there is no tie like that which binds together all the children of a single marriage. Are we not melted into unity, then, by the common love of the common land? As the human brain converts the physical energy of food into the spiritual energy of thought, so must each Indian man become an organ for the conversion of the individual struggle for individual efficiency and mastery. Victory will remain in the end with that combatant in whom the highest mind and character are indissolubly united with the greatest love—*Yato Dharmastato Jayah*.

A vague emotion is not enough however. We must serve and suffer for the objects of our love. How we serve and suffer for the family? No purpose of unity is to be trusted that has not been hammered into shape on the anvil of pain as well as joy. How are we to provide for ourselves the necessary education? A child as we have seen, in order to be made free—to be enabled to will what he will, freely and efficiently—is put under authority and expected to engage himself in the struggle for knowledge. How are we to recognise this process in the struggle for nationalisation? We want to make ties outside the family as strong as family ties. How is this to be done? We want to create

that new ethics which substitutes the lines of co-operative organisation for those of unity of kindred. In what form can this be brought home to the individual? In what way can he be put in direct personal contact with the lesson he is to learn? What symbol can we deliberately create in order to catch for ourselves the end of the thread by which we may hope to unravel the secret?

The first lesson we have to learn is that of implicit obedience to rightfully constituted authority. This is not the same thing as obedience to one's father. There we have the tie of love creating an impulse to self-subordination. Here the father has delegated his authority without in any way transferring the affection that belongs to him alone. We soon learn, farther, that the obedience required of us by the external authority is the same whether our heart be in it or not. Perfection of obedience can hardly be realised in the case of one whom we do not respect. But rigorous obedience to one whom we respect but do not love is a very important part of a complete training. This lesson can be learnt in many ways through our relation to our school master, the employer, the captain of the ship, the station-master, the leader of an expedition and so on. Authority carries with it responsibility. We must learn to subordinate our self at a moment's notice to him of whose responsibility we avail ourselves. Authority without responsibility cannot be considered here since it is unlawfully constituted and amounts to spiritual anarchism. Lawful authority is permeated and regulated by its own responsibility, we cannot concede the one without conceding the other. And implicit obedience is the reverse of the medal, the complement of the quality, the other extreme of this pair of opposites.

He who obeys best rules best. He who rules best is most perfect in obedience. Here we come to the question of the quality of true obedience and therefore to that of the education it demands. A slave cannot obey. He only does as he is forced, a very different thing. Virtue in the slave may demand wrong doing at the bidding of his

master, a thing intolerable to the human conscience. His struggle for moral freedom may demand of him a crime. "When I was in slavery," said an American negro, "I always stole. *It was my only way of feeling free.*" True obedience is unbroken but it is free. It is not exacted by force ; it is rendered wholeheartedly by those who perceive that ruled and ruler are working together for a common end, collaborating in the demonstration of a single principle which commands their mutual assent. Obedience which is not this, either in fact or in potentiality is not worth receiving. It is a fact that no man of ungoverned impulses can successfully exercise authority. One who wishes to bear rule has first to possess himself of certain amount of self-control. True obedience is founded on respect for character. It follows from the mutualness of this object that the highest forms of rules theoretically are those in which subject and sovereign occasionally change places. From this point of view the republic is the supreme political form. There are other aspects of the question, however, which make a permanent monarchy practically desirable. England and some other western countries have compromised very ingeniously between these two institutions by the establishment of what is known as constitutional monarchy, where the actual government is in the hands of the people through their political parties and the advisory Cabinets, while the necessities of symbolism and ritual are met by the royal house in which the sovereign himself represents national stability and unity, behind the fluctuations of party.

The political system in England is only the crown of an immense life of disciplined and co-ordinated co-operation. It is in this, giving them their immense capacity for democratic organisation at a moment's notice, that the actual superiority of Englishmen lies and not in personal qualities. They breathe the atmosphere of this disciplined co-operation from their very cradle. They study it on the cricket field and in the football team. They are broken into it

by the fag system. Every small boy when he arrives at school becomes the fag of a big one who acts as his protector against all others though he bullies and thrashes him and makes him fetch and carry for himself like the veriest slave nor is there any sense of social rank in the choice of fag and his guardian. The big boy may be the son of a tailor and his fag the son of a peer. They know no other relation during their school years than that of master and slave. Once the relationship is established, the heir to an earldom has to black the boots of the son of his father's shoe-maker without demur. The very fact of sending a boy of ten or eleven away from home to live amongst boys who are not of his own kindred shows the value which the English place on the life that lies outside and beyond the family. The boy who lives at school has already begun to make his own way in the great world apart from his family. He early learns the reserve and privacy that belong to the deeper emotions. He cultivates a whole new series of relationships and practises the courtesies and restraints as well as the daring and personal pride that are due to these. He is in fact an individual beginning to catch a glimpse of his own powers, dreaming great dreams as to his own future and gaining experience daily in the exercise of his personal freedom. The fault of the training lies undoubtedly in the brutality and unscrupulousness which it is apt to engender. It breeds men who may be left in safety with our silva, but are utterly without restraining morality about the political rights of others. A man who has been through an English boys' school is apt to think that might is right and that to what is not material and concrete the laws of morality do not apply. That these are the faults of their education the whole of the history of their country shows.

Yet strength is good and civic and national unity is good ; public order based not on force or fear, but on the mutual respect and goodwill of ruler and ruled is also good, nay, even essential to mankind. What is known as political freedom is not perhaps the absolute goal. Yet it is a

relative duty of such dignity and rank that without it men are not altogether men, just as we cannot conceive of one utterly incapable of the virtues of the family attaining to Mukti. It is through perfect manhood that we achieve that which is beyond humanity and perfect manhood includes the citizen and the patriot. "The weak cannot attain to *that*" say the Upanishads.

In that community which is made one not by ties of blood and alliance but by the infinitely subtle and spiritual bond of the common love for the common home, a man must play his part. Freedom within the nation is not freedom to enter into this duty or remain outside ; it is freedom to make obedience or authority our own, according to that for which we are best fitted. And freedom for a nation, amongst the comity of nations is to stand unfettered in its quest for self-expression.



**HINTS ON  
NATIONAL EDUCATION IN INDIA**



# HINTS ON NATIONAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

## PRIMARY EDUCATION: A CALL FOR PIONEERS

**W**E all know that the future of India depends, for us, on education. Not that industry and commerce are unimportant, but because all things are possible to the educated, and nothing whatever to the uneducated man. We know also that this education, to be of any avail, must extend through all degrees, from its lowest and humblest grades. We must have technical education and we must have also higher research, because technical education, without higher research, is a branch without a tree, a blossom without any root. We must have education of women, as well as education of men. We must have secular education, as well as religious. And, almost more important than any of these, we must have education of the people, and for this, we must depend upon ourselves.

Our civilisation has never been backward in bringing to the notice of the individual his responsibility to the society. There is none so poor that has never tried to feed the starving. From this time we must recognise the still

greater urgency of giving knowledge. There is no other way of making the unity of our country effective. If one class of the people derive all their mental sustenance from one set of ideas, and the bulk of the population from something else, this unity, although certainly present, cannot easily be made effective. But if all the people talk the same language, learn to express themselves in the same way, to feed their realisation upon the same ideas, if all are trained and equipped to respond in the same way to the same forces, then our unity will stand self-demonstrated, unflinching. We shall have acquired national solidarity, and power of prompt and intelligent action. In this very fact, of universal education, the goal will have been attained, and none could succeed in turning us back.

Nor need we regret that we fall back, for this, upon our own strength. Education for the people is, in the first place, reading, writing and arithmetic. As long as we carry the burden ourselves, there need be no juggling with the geographical distribution of languages. But for artificial intervention, Orissa, Bengal and Bihar might now have been talking a single tongue, using a single script, quoting from a great consolidated literature. We must do all we can, for the simplification of the language-problem, and for this, nothing could be so effective as our own feeble action, infinitely preferable to the centralised, mechanical organisation.

Another advantage in our own effort is, that it alone can be a permanent force. It depends upon no outside influence. Let the centralisers come and go, and change as they will, the initiative that resides in the nerve-ends themselves, remains in tact, can never be infringed.

We have to build up this idea of the sacred duty of giving education to the people as one of the elements of our civilisation. Already we have the idea of giving alms. The one is only an extension of the other.

In most western countries, it is required that every young man, when his education is complete, shall give three,

four, or five years to military service. He goes into barracks, is regimented, and drilled, makes a unit in the standing army, and passes out, usually, when his term is ended, an efficient soldier, to remain, for the rest of his life, ready at any moment to join in the armed defence of his country.

What we have to do, is in like fashion, to organise the army of education. Why should it be thought impossible that every student, when his own education is over, should be called upon to give three years to the people? It is of course understood that just as the only son of a widow is in the west excused military service, so one whose earnings are absolutely necessary to others must be excused the educational service. The villagers, on the other hand, would easily maintain a single student, living amongst them as a school-master. And when his own three years were over, it is to be supposed that he could, from his own old school or college, arrange for another to take his place. Some would learn to love the simple village life, and elect to live and die, poor school-masters. Most, however, would serve the years of their vow, and pass on, returning to the city, to bear their part in the life of a more complex community. On the one hand, the duty of teaching, on the other, the duty of maintaining, so teacher and taught make the perfect social unit. And so the great masses of the people might be swept within the circle of articulation. It takes thirty years to make a whole people literate, even supposing that an idea like this were carried out in its fullness. But with it we must not neglect the Asiatic device that makes every morsel of social service self-supporting and self-propagating. India never forgets to wing the seed that she has brought to ripeness. Along with the teaching must go the awaking of responsibility for further teaching. "Alms to the teacher", and "Knowledge to the people", must be converse truths, taught at one and the same time.

No central organisation could arrange a scheme like this. Only by a common impulse of the people and the

students themselves could it be made a reality. But it is not impossible. The initial thought comes, it is true, from the city, but once sent out, all depends upon the number of lives that can be laid upon its altar. All must always in the last resort depend upon this, the quantity and quality of human life that can be sacrificed to it. Without men's lives, no seed of the mind germinates. How many will give up comfort, place, opportunity, ease, even perhaps their whole life, for this, the elementary education of the Indian people?

## PAPERS ON EDUCATION—I

The education that we give our children inevitably expresses our own conception of that synthesis of which our lives form a part. Thus, the American school will consider itself incomplete, until it has found out how to initiate the youth into mechanical processes. The Australian school will probably strive to lay the foundations of agriculture. The schools of a scientific age will recognise the importance of science, and those of a classical revival, that of dead languages. It follows that two different ages will never repeat each other exactly, in the matter of education, for the simple reason that in different historical epochs, nations select different branches of training, as of central necessity to their children, only, in reality because they are paramount factors for the moment, in the national life.

In Bengal, for instance, under the Sanskrit Renaissance of the Guptas, a knowledge of the Sanskrit language and literature became the distinctive mark of a gentleman. A thousand years later, a man in the same position had to be versed in Persian also. Today, English is the test. Thus a similar mental and social dignity is attained by changing means, at different epochs.

Fortunately for the civilisation of India, the Hindu has always clearly perceived the mind behind the method, as the thing with which education has fundamentally to deal. It is this which, in spite of so many catastrophes, has, in the past, saved the Indian genius from destruction. And it is this which constitutes *its* best security for the future. Just so long as the Brahminic system of directly training the minds of the young to concentration persists, will the Indian people remain potentially equal to the conquest of any difficulty that the changing ages may bring them. But once let this training be neglected or lost, and in spite of purity of race, the vigour of the Indian mind

would probably fall to a level with that of modern peoples in general, waxing and waning with the degree and freedom of self-expression that the passing period might permit them. At present—owing largely to the peculiar psychological discipline, received by girls as well as boys, along with their devotional training—the most salient characteristic of the Hindu intellect is its reserve of strength, its conservation of power. As we read the history of the country, we are amazed at the unforeseenness with which geniuses occur, and the brilliance of their isolated achievements. The Indian Bhaskaracharya in the twelfth century, envisages the fact of gravitation with as unflinching a conviction—though social conditions do not lead him to so clear an enunciation—as the Western Newton, in the seventeenth. A race of women, cloistered and secluded, blossom forth suddenly into a Chand Bibi. Within the last twenty years, in spite of universal clerkship, we have given to the world men who have enriched humanity in Religion, in Science, and in Art. The invention of smokeless powder, and improvements made in surgery, are extended *applications* of knowledge, merely. India has shown herself potent to add to knowledge itself.

These things are some indication of the sleeping power of the Indian mind. They are the chance blossoms that show the living-ness of the whole tree. They tell us that what Indian people have done in the past, that Indian people can do in the future. And if it be so, then we owe this undying vitality to the fact that whatever may have been the characteristic expression most prized, at any given moment, our forefathers never neglected the culture and development of the mind itself. The training of the attention—rather than the learning of any special subject, or the development of any particular faculty—has always been, as the Swami Vivekananda claimed for it, the chosen goal of Hindu education. Great men have been only as incidents, in the tale of this national effort, to achieve control and self-direction of the mind itself.

It is not here, then, in the object and nature of the inner psychological process, that Western educators have anything to teach India. Instead of this, the superiority of the West lies in her realisation of the value of great united efforts in any given direction,—even that of self-education—and in the particular synthesis which, as she may think, it is necessary for the educational process to reflect. Thus, India may, all things considered, be capable of producing a greater number of geniuses, per thousand of her population, than Germany: but Germany has known how to bring *the German mind* to bear on the German problem! That is to say, she has organised the common, popular mind, and to this organised mind she has presented the riddle that is to be guessed. Let us think of the mental weight and area, the material quantity and power, so to speak, of the thought thus brought in contact with the question she wants answered. What is that question? Very probably it is strictly relative in its character. We may perhaps assume, without injustice, that it is the prosperity and well-being of Germany and the German people, only. This is no impersonal, no absolute goal, such as that Renunciation and Mukti which India proposes to her children. Quite true. And yet, to the mind and soul of the individual German the prosperity of his country will appear as an impersonal end. Even the Hindu has to begin climbing towards renunciation in the abstract, by first practising self-suppression, for the sake of others, in the concrete. Even to the Hindu, the thought of the family is apt to be the first, as it were, of “those altar-stairs that slope through darkness up to God”. Those dependent on him, he will say if we ask him, are a trust put into his hands, as a means whereby to work out his own Karma, and reach true discrimination. And why should the German not feel the same thing about his own country? Why should this not be to him the last great step in “the altar-stairs” of life?

Supposing that it is so, the individual of each nation must be able to pursue the studies necessary to the earning

of a livelihood, with the idea before him of a noble devotion to the cause of his people as a whole. Not cherishing this idea, he would still have had to prepare himself for a life of earning—even the Hindu has to do that!—with the difference that he could not then have put into his training or his service all the ardour of motive, or all the lofty imagination of which he is capable. There is nothing so belittling to the human soul, as the acquisition of knowledge, for the sake of worldly reward. There is nothing so degrading to a nation, as coming to look upon the life of the mind as a means to bread-winning. Unless we strive for truth because we love it, and must at any cost attain, unless we live the life of thought out of our own rejoicing in it, the great things of heart and intellect will close their doors to us. There is a very definite limit to the distance a man can go, under the impulsion of a worldly motive. But if, on the other hand, his very love for those dear to him, is on a plane so lofty and so true that it presents itself to him as a reason for being and reaching the utmost possible; if he knows that the more he can realise, the better will it be, if not for his own immediate family, yet for that wider kindred that he calls his country, then his public spirit is of a quality to give him wings. It adds freedom, not bondage. It becomes an achievement, not a limitation.

In this matter, India may have something to learn from the West. Why should we limit the social motive to a man's own family, or to his own community? Why not alter the focus, till we all stand, aiming each at the good of all-the-others, and willing, if need be, to sacrifice himself, his family, and even his particular social group, for the good of the whole? The will of the hero is ever an impulse to self-sacrifice. It is for the good of the People—not for my own good—that I should strive to become one with the highest, the noblest, and the most truth-loving that I can conceive. It may even work out to my own personal destruction. It may lead to my swimming across the flood, to carry on the work of the telegraph-station, or leaping into

the pit of death, for the rescue of a comrade. Either might be fatal. Shall I leave my family to struggle with poverty, unprovided? Away with the little vision! Shall we not eagerly die, both I and they, to show to the world what the Indian idea of duty may be? May not a single household be glad to starve, in order that a nation's face may shine? The hero's choice is made in a flash. To him, the larger vision is closer than the near. Within an instant, he strikes for eternity, strikes and is done. In concentrating the German mind on the German problem, Europe makes a hero out of many a common man. This also is a form of realisation.

We have to think, then, of the concentration of the Indian mind on the Indian problem. In order to do this, we are not asked to abandon that older system of training the mind itself, and rendering it familiar with absolute and universal considerations, on which, as already said, so much that is distinctive in Indian power and culture has depended in the past, and must depend in the future. But whereas, at present, the great bulk of our popular mind is pre-occupied with schemes of instruction, for the purpose of earning individual livelihoods, we now desire to consider the best means for bringing about a conscious unification of that mind, in order that we may be better able to compass thereby the common weal, the good of the whole. This substitution of the common good for the particular good—with the result that a higher level of individual good is rendered possible!—is a process whose practicability is evidenced in Europe herself. It is not on special personalities and rarely-equipped faculties that the course of European history depends today, so much as the weight and power of common mind that has been unified and released, to work on certain given tasks. It is so released, and prepared for such release, by the form and quality of popular education. It is for us, then, who are Indian, to see what are the essentials of that education, with a view to appropriating its benefits to India and the Indian people.

## PAPERS ON EDUCATION—II

In a perfect education, we can easily distinguish three different elements, not always chronologically distinct. First, if we would obtain from a human mind the highest possible return, we must recognise in its education the stage of preparing it to learn, of training it to receive impressions, of developing it intensively, as it were, independently of the particular branch of knowledge through which this is done. Of the very existence of this phase of the educational process, many are unaware.

Secondly, in all historic epochs, but pre-eminently in this modern age, there is a certain characteristic fund of ideas and concepts which is common to society as a whole, and must be imparted to every individual, who is to pass, in his mature life, as efficient. This is the element that is supposed in the common acceptance to be the whole of education. It bulks the largest. It costs the most labour. It is the process that it is most obviously impossible to eliminate. And yet it is really only one of three elements. And strange to say, it is the very one which is least essential to the manifestation of what we call genius. Never was there a period in the world's history, when this aspect of education was so large or imperative as today. 'Geography, history, algebra and arithmetic, all that makes up the worry and fret of childish life,' as some one said, 'are in reality the key to a glorious city. They are the franchise of the modern consciousness. Carrying them, a man has a basis of communication with the whole wide world of educated minds.'

But thirdly, these two elements taken together, in their highest degree (and it is quite possible to be taken as 'educated', on a very modest allowance of the second, only!) will only prepare the mind for real education. They are nothing more than preliminary conditions. They are by

no means the essential itself. Having them, the mind has become a fit instrument. But of what? What shall be its message? What is to constitute the burden of its education? What is it that so much preparation has prepared it for? The third element in a perfect human development sweeps away the other two. It takes note of them only by implication, as it were, in the higher or lower fitness of the mind itself. The man meets his Guru, and devotes himself to a perfect passivity. Or he surrenders to some absorbing idea, which becomes the passion of his life. Or he takes up a pursuit, and lives henceforth for it, and it alone. The phase of the one has succeeded to the phase of the many. Regarded as a mind, the man has become a full human organism. He now stands a chance of contributing to the riches of humanity as a whole.

It is characteristic of India that it is the third and highest of these three elements that she has observed and analysed, allowing the other two to occur by accident. It is equally characteristic of the West that it is numbers one and two that she has observed and analysed, allowing number three to occur by accident!

Yet all three have their science, and certainly the last is not without it. Egoistic response to stimulus, constant mental activity, much restlessness and intellectual change of appetite, loud self-assertion, argumentativeness, and desire to manifest power, are apt to be the characteristics of a healthy second stage. But when the Guru comes, or the idea that is to dominate the life is apprehended, there may be a keen initial struggle, but after it there is a period of profound apparent quiet. To see the thing as it appears to the mind of the master, is the one necessity. To serve him, acting as his hands and feet, as it were, in order that one's mind and heart may be made one with his; to serve him silently, broodingly, with the constant attempt to assimilate his thought, this is the method. Throughout this period, there is no room for rebellion. Eventually the Guru emancipates: he does not bind. It would be a poor service

to him, if we felt compelled in his name to arrest the growth of an idea. Eventually we have to realise that the service to which he has called us is not his own, but that of Truth itself, and that this may take any form. But in the first place it is essential that we begin where he left off. In the first place, emptied of self, we have to labour to give expression to that idea which has struck root in us through him. In the first place, we must understand that the whole significance of our own lives depends, first and last, on their relation to his life.

The Guru may have remained hidden, and the disciple may stand in the blaze of the world. But every word, every gesture, will point the way to that secret sanctuary, whence comes his strength. For the greatest energy is imparted by the sense of working for the glory of another. No man could be so nobly ambitious for himself as his wife could be, for him. The very fact that it was for himself would undermine his sense of loftiness and inspiration. No disciple can win the same joy from spiritual vanity, as from the enthusiasm of Gurubhakti. No son can feel so eager to make his own name famous, as he will be to magnify that of his father. These are amongst the deepest secrets of the human heart, and they form the area that India has chosen to explore. It is in this way that greatness is made.

It is difficult, however, in modern times,—and speaking in a sense more or less worldly,—difficult to recognise greatness, unless it speaks in the language of the second educational element. There is a certain fund of information which is more or less essential to the development and manifestation of modern personality. It is interesting to enquire, What are the essentials of this fund of information? But before we can enter into this, it may be advisable to consider the matter more as a whole. We can see that unselfishness is the real distinction of *fine persons*, of what Ramakrishna Paramahansa might have called *Vidyavan-lok*. In this sense, a peasant-woman may be greater than a

reigning queen. Even in intellect, the farmer's wife may be the greater, for she may have keenness of judgment, discrimination, mother-wit, and a hundred powers in which the woman of rank and power is by no means her superior. Are the tales of the world's worships not of shepherds and dairy women, of carpenters and camel-drivers? But we can see that a mind whose field of activity is limited to some remote or obscure pursuit, has not the same chance of making its power felt, as one that is able to deal with those counters that the world as a whole recognises. Some Bhutia lad may be potentially a great poet, but he is likely to live and die mute and inglorious. The Homers and Shakespeares of history are partakers in the world-culture of their time.

And intellectual formulæ may be made a great help to moral development. We know that we ought to restrain our individual anger and impatience. But it is undoubtedly easier to do so, when we know something about the size and distance of the fixed stars, and can take refuge in the thought of the vastness of the cosmos. The growth of character can be much aided by intellectual activity, besides requiring it in its maturity as a means of self-expression. We do not want to identify the mere drill of learning to read and write, and the memorising of a few facts conveyed by that vehicle, with the idea of culture. We are well aware that even literary culture might easily be greater in some illiterate Indian villager, familiar with *kathaks* and *mangol-gayens* than in the most accomplished passer of examinations. But we do not wish, on the other hand, to forget that it is a duty to develop our intellectual powers. No Hindu, who wishes to fulfil his obligations to the *jana-desha-dharma* (जन-देश-धर्म) can afford to neglect any opportunity of learning that he can possibly make for himself. This is the daily sacrifice to the Rishis and it is as binding on women as on men.

By emphasising the third educational element, are made the poets and scholars of the world. The idea before

which we are passive, that we may absorb it, the idea that fills our lives henceforth, the idea to which all our education has only been preparatory, this is the idea that is spirituality itself. Our self-subordination here is renunciation. Our enthusiasm here is an apostolate. It matters nothing about the form of expression. Our whole character is bathed in the river of this intellectual passion to emerge new, radiant, self-restrained, and self-directed. The only sin is to expect a return to ourselves, in riches, or honour, or fame. But the man who has really entered into the great life of ideas is not long held back, or seriously embittered by this childishness, for the energy of his pursuit dominates him, and excludes even himself from his thought. Palissy the potter was such an idealist. So was Stephenson, who invented the railway engine. Newton, boiling his watch instead of the egg, was a third. A nation stands or falls, in the long run, by the number of such souls that she is capable of producing, out of the rank and file of ordinary education. What about India, in this respect, today? Let the army of her poor scholars answer! Let the capacity of her people for universal ideas answer! Let the trumpet-call of Adwaita, on the lips of Vivekananda answer! Science, art, history, the crafts, business, the development of men on planes external and internal, all these are but so many different expressions of That One. Through any of them may come the flood of light, the shaping and moulding of character, the infinite self-forgetting that means the goal itself. To have a chance of this, the idea must be stated. The ideal must be consciously held. Common education must be revered as a sacrament, making the opportunity for this exaltation and consecration. And if we once grasp these things, we shall see that we have no choice, that the education of all, the People as well as the classes, woman as well as man,—is not to be a desire with us, but lies upon us as a command. Humanity is mind, not body, soul, not flesh. Its heritage is in the life of thought and feeling. To close against any the gates of the higher

life is a sin far greater than that of murder, for it means responsibility for spiritual death, for inner bondage, and the result is ruin unspeakable. There is but one imperative duty before us today. It is to help on Education by our very lives if need be. Education in the great sense as well as the little, in the little as well as in the big.

### PAPERS ON EDUCATION—III

Our conception of education must have a soul. It must form a unity. It must take note of the child as a whole, as heart as well as mind, will as well as mind and heart. Unless we train the *feelings* and the *choice*, our man is not educated. He is only decked out in certain intellectual tricks that he has learnt to perform. By these tricks he can earn his bread. He cannot appeal to the heart, or give life. He is not a man at all ; he is a clever ape. Learning, in order to appear clever, or learning, in order to earn a livelihood,—not in order to become a man, to develop one's own manhood and manliness,— means running into this danger. Therefore, in every piece of information that is imparted to a child, we must convey an appeal to the heart. At every step in the ascent of knowledge, the child's own will must act. We must never *carry* the little one upwards and onwards ; he must himself struggle to climb. Our care must be to put just so much difficulty in his way as to stimulate his will, just so little as to avoid discouragement. When, within and behind the knowledge gained, there stands *a man*, there stands *a mind*, then the task of instruction can be changed into one of self-education. The taught is now safe : he will teach himself. Every boy sent abroad is sent, on the understanding that he is in this sense developed. He is thrown into the moral ocean to battle for himself with the waves of difficulty and of temptation. We *assume* that he is a swimmer. But what have we done to ensure it ?

There is one way, and one way only. It is, throughout the early years of education, to remember that there is nothing so important as the training of the *feelings*. To feel nobly, and to choose loftily and honestly, is a thousand-fold more important to the development of faculty than any other single aspect of the educational process. The lad in

whom this power is really present and really dominant, will always do the best thing possible under any given circumstances. The boy in whom it is not present is liable to confusion of the will, and confusion may mean only error, or it may mean demoralisation.

Very few parents and teachers amongst us at present have thought much of the pre-eminent necessity and importance of this training of the heart. What is it then that we trust to, for our children, in a fashion so blind? We trust, more or less unconsciously, to the general action of home, family, religion, and country, on the conscience and the emotions. It is the immense moral genius of the Indian people as a whole that has really formed so many fine men out of the students of the past two or three generations. And it is the crucial importance of this element in the environment that makes the foreign educator so undesirable. Our own countryman, however unversed in educational theory, is likely to be in harmony with our highest emotional life. His chance words will touch the keys of spiritual motive, where the best-intentioned foreigner with all his efforts, is liable to fail. The man who could not deliberately awaken the great formative influences, may do so by accident, if he and we are sufficiently of one world. The chance is very small that a stranger will even dream of the need for doing so. It is almost true that the worst of ourselves is a better school-master for us, than the best of another people.

Having once recognised the law, however, we are no longer at the mercy of circumstances. The home can see to it that the school builds up the child. Even an ignorant mother, by teaching her boy to love, and to act on his love, can be the finest of educators. It is this that makes so many of our great men of today attribute so much to their mothers. The old education of the girl, by the *brata*, is full of this appeal to the heart, as the only sound basis of education. But modern education, in its first inception, ignored this factor altogether, and thus produced faculty

out of relation to its environment. Henceforth, the Indian people will not repeat this error. Henceforth they will understand—indeed they have understood for several years past—that even schooling has to justify itself to the conscience of the schooled, by the great law of sacrifice, and that this law here is, the development of the child for the good, not of himself, but of *jana-desha-dharma* ( जन-देश-धर्म ) or, as the western would phrase it, the development of the individual for the benefit of the environment. ‘Why are you going to school?’ says the mother to her little one, at the moment of parting. And the child answers, in some form or other, growing clearer and more eager with growing age and knowledge. ‘That I may learn to be a man, AND HELP!’ There is no fear of weakness and selfishness for one whose whole training has been formed round this nucleus.

This, the desire to serve, the longing to better conditions, to advance our fellows, to lift the whole, is the real religion of the present day. Everything else is doctrine, opinion, theory. Here is the fire of faith and action. Each day should begin with some conscious act of reference to it. A moment of silence, a hymn, a prayer, a salutation, any of these is ritual sufficient. It is not to the thing worshipped, but to ourselves, that our worship is important! Any symbol will do, or none. It is for this that our fathers have bidden us worship the water of the seven sacred rivers, or the earth of holy places, the footsteps of the Guru, or the name of the Mother. All these are but suggestions to the mind, of the *jana-desha-dharma* ( जन-देश-धर्म ) to which we dedicate ourselves, whose service is the motive-spring of all our struggles. “No man liveth to himself alone”. In proportion as we realise this, can be the greatness of our living. In proportion as it is our motive, will be the reality of our education.

## PAPERS ON EDUCATION—IV

Education in India today, has to be not only national, but **NATION-MAKING**. We have seen what a national education is—a training which has a strong colour of its own, and begins by relating the child to his home and country, through all that is familiar, but ends by making him *free of all* that is true, cosmopolitan, and universal. This is the necessary condition of all healthy education, in all countries, whatever their political position or stage of development. These general statements are as true of England and France, as of India, as true in happiness as in adversity.

The need for special attention to nation-making, however, is a question of the moment, a matter of those temporary vicissitudes through which a country may be passing, in a given period: It is always easy, by common consent of responsible persons, or by the sound communal instincts of a healthy people, to select out and emphasise, for a definite purpose, any elements in a general education that may be thought desirable. All our institutions have arisen in some such way. The need of purity was first brought forward, in our customs, at some time when loss of civilisation was a pressing danger. The regulation of marriage was a device deliberately intended to prevent mixture of race, in a period that had to face this as a possibility. Similarly, a people who need above all things the development of a national sense, can make special provision for developing the necessary elements of thought and character, throughout the education of their children.

National feeling is, above all, feeling for others. It is rooted in public spirit, in a strong civic sense. But these are only grandiloquent names for what may be described as organised unselfishness. The best preparation for nation-making that a child can receive is to see his elders always eager to consider the general good, rather than their

own. A family that willingly sacrifices its own interests to those of the village, or the street, or the town ; a household that condones no act of dishonesty on the part of public servants, out of consideration for its own comfort or safety ; a father who will fling himself at any obstacle, in the cause of honour and justice for the people, these are the best and strongest education for nation-making that a child can have. The wild-boar, small as he is, throws himself upon the horse and his rider, never doubting his own capacity to destroy both. This is the courage of the man who attacks public evils. This is the object-lesson by which a child can best be trained. Hunger for the good of others, as an end in itself, the infinite pity that wakes in the heart of an Avatara, at sight of the suffering of humanity, these are the seed and root of nation-making. We are a nation, when every man is an organ of the whole, when every part of the whole is precious to us ; when the family weighs nothing, in comparison with the People.

China in Asia, and France in Europe, are the two countries that have best known how to make the public spirit into religion. This is the fact that made Joan of Arc a possibility. A peasant-girl in a remote village could brood over the sorrows of her country, till she was possessed by the feeling that "there was much pity in Heaven for the fair realm of France". An idea like this was like the compassion of a Buddha, and nowhere but in France could it have been applied to the country.

We must surround our children with the thought of their nation and their country. The centre of gravity must lie, for them, outside the family. We must demand from them sacrifices for India, Bhakti for India, learning for India. The ideal for its own sake. India for the sake of India. This must be as the breath of life to them. We must teach them about India, in school and at home. Some lessons must fill out the conception, others must build up the sense of contrast. Burning love, love without a limit. Love that seeks only the good of the beloved, and has no

thought of self, this is the passion that we must demand of them.

We must teach them to think heroically. They must be brought up to believe in their own people. Few stories are so moving as that of two English youths who were killed by an angry mob in the Punjab, dying with the words on their lips, "We are not the last of the English!" Similarly we must learn to draw every breath in the proud conviction, "We are not the last of the Indians!" This faith our children must inherit from us, along with all other forms of stern and heroic thought. It is a mistake to think heroes are born. Nothing of the sort. They are made, not born; made by the pressure of heroic thought. All human beings long at bottom for self-sacrifice. No other thirst is so deep as this. We desire destruction, not prosperity, and the good of others.

Let us recognise this. Let us make room for it. Let us emphasise it, and direct it towards one single Bhakti. Let love for country and countrymen, for People and Soil, be the mould into which our lives flow hot. If we reach this, every thought we think, every word of knowledge gained, will aid in making clearer and clearer the great picture. With faith in the Mother, and Bhakti for India, the true interpretation of facts will come to us unsought. We shall see the country as united, where we were told that she was fragmentary. Thinking her united, she will actually be so. The universe is the creation of mind, not matter. And can any one force in the world resist a single thought, held with intensity by three hundred millions of people? Here we have the true course of a nation-making education.

## PAPERS ON EDUCATION—V

The reconstitution of a nation has to begin with its ideals. This, because in a nation three primary elements have to be considered, first the country, or region, second, the people, and third, the national mind. Of the three, the last is dominant, and all-directing. By working through it, we may modify or even re-create either or both of the other two while their influence upon it is comparatively feeble and indirect. Mind can re-make any thing, however inert or rebellious, but a rebellious mind, what can reach? It follows that in national *reconstruction* there is no other factor so important as education. How is this to be made national and nationalising? What is a national education? And conversely, what is un-national? And further what kind of education offers the best preparation for the attempt to solve the national problems? What type of education would be not only national, but also nation-making?

Education has to deal with various factors, the imparting of special processes, the assimilating of certain kinds and quantities of knowledge, the development of the man himself. Of all these it is the last which is incomparably the most important, and in the man, it is again his ideals which form the critical element. It is useless to attempt to teach a man anything which he does not desire to learn. It is absurd to try to force on him an advantage which he resists. Education is like mining. It begins with the ideal, it builds first at the top.

New ideals have to be approached through the old. The unfamiliar has to be reached through the familiar. It may indeed be questioned whether there is such a thing as a *new* ideal. There is an ideal and there is a form through which it is expressed, but when we reach the ideal itself, we have reached the eternal. Here, all humanity

is at one. Here, there is neither new nor old, neither own nor foreign. The limiting forms are some old, some new, but the ideal itself knows nothing of time. Yet the expression 'new ideals' has a certain meaning. European poetry, for instance, glorifies and exalts the betrothed maiden. Indian poetry equally idealises the faithful wife. Both are only customary forms through which is reached the supreme conception, that of holiness in woman. Obviously, however, it would be futile to try to lead the imagination of an Indian child to this ideal, through the characteristically European conception, and equally foolish to try to lead the European child through the prevailing Indian form. Yet, when education has done its perfect work, in the emancipation of the imagination towards great and gracious womanhood, it is clear that there will be an instant apprehension of this ideal, even in new forms. The poetry of Tennyson and Browning will at once be understood as its highest and best, by the trained and developed heart and yet it would have been a crime to try to bring up the Indian child on it. Equal would be the folly of trying to educate the European child on Sita and Savitri instead of Beatrice and Joan of Arc, although the same child when grown up, may well test the depth of its own culture by its instant sympathy with the Eastern heroines.

A national education is, first and foremost, an education in the national idealism. We must remember, however, that the aim of education is emancipation of sympathy and intellect. This is not often reached by foreign methods. But in the exceptional cases of a few individuals it may seem to occur; and better emancipation through the foreign, than bondage through our own! By this fact of the attainment of the universal, must the education ultimately stand justified, or condemned. To emancipate the greatest number of people most easily and effectively, it is necessary to choose familiar ideals and forms, and in every case, it is necessary to make progression absolutely continuous, so that there be no sharp incongruity amongst

the elements of early experience. Such incongruity begets confusion of thought, and this confusion is educational chaos. A national education then, must be made up of familiar elements. The ideal presented must always be first clothed in a form evolved by our own past. Our imagination must be first based on our own heroic literature. Our hope must be woven out of our history. From the known to the unknown, from the easy to the difficult, must be the motto of every teacher, the rule of every lesson. The familiar is not the goal ; knowledge is the goal : trained faculty is the aim. An education that stopped short at the familiar would be a bondage instead of an emancipation ; a mockery not a reality. The familiar is merely the first step. But as the first step, it is essential.

Geographical ideas must be built up first through the ideas of India. But they must not stop there. A knowledge of geography would be singularly rustic, if it did not include a clear concept of the world, as a whole. And even this is not sufficient. There must, in a complete education, be a release of the geographical faculty, an initiation into geographical enquiry, an inception of geographical research.

Similarly of history. The sense of historic sequence must be trained through India. To that, every thing else historical must stand related. But the history of India must be only a stepping-stone to constantly-widening circles of knowledge. The history of Mongolian, Semitic, European and African peoples ; their civilisations and their movements, must all be followed up. And the crown of this training will be found in the power to interpret anew the old facts, to perceive fresh significance, and unthought of sequences, and to gather from the story of the past the dynamic forces of the future.

So much for the historical education. It must never be forgotten that nationality in culture is the means, not the end. There is a level of achievement where all the educated persons of the world can meet, understand and enjoy each other's associations. This level is freedom.

Intellectually speaking, it is Mukti. But it can be reached only by him whose knowledge is firm-rooted in love for mother and motherland, in tender memories of childhood and the early struggle after knowledge, and in an unshakable assurance that the face of God shines brightest and His name sounds sweetest, in the village of his birth.

## THE PLACE OF FOREIGN CULTURE IN A TRUE EDUCATION

There is a great difference between a child's relation to his own family and to that of the great man of the village, in which he may be kindly received. Let us suppose the child's own father and mother and family, to be blotted out, and nothing substituted for them save the more formal terms of a guest in the richman's house. What a blank the emotional life of the child has become! His feelings have no natural root. The sense of the world has no centre within himself where he can rest, and feel that he has found the home of the soul. The external is not in organic continuity with an internal, in his life. Nothing can ever again equal, for any of us, the sense of being enfolded in the old old associations of our babyhood, in the arms where we lay, in the hour of our first awakening to the world, our childhood's home.

Every outer ought to be a direct branching out from some inner. The mind that is fed from the beginning on foreign knowledge and ideas, not rooted and built upon the sense of intimacy, is like the waif brought up in the stranger's home. The waif may behave well and reward his benefactor, but this is apt to be the fruit of an intellectual notion of duty, not because, loving him, he could not help it.

Can foreign learning then ever be so deeply grafted upon the stem of a man's own development that it forms a real and vital part of his intellectual personality? We might as well ask, Is there no place for the king or the zamindar in the mind of a child who has his own father and mother?

Again, there is the question of our relation to what is foreign, when our own culture is perfect. There is such a thing as the emancipation of the heart. For instance, we

cannot imagine a cultivated person, of whatever nationality, not feeling the beauty of the Taj. Nor can we imagine a cultivated Hindu—whether he knows English or not, failing to enjoy some beautiful old wood-carved Madonna of Europe. The appeal of the highest poetry is universal. One of the supreme blossoms of culture is taste.

We notice here that the man coming to admire the Taj is not a learner but is already mature. The Indian standing before the Madonna is not going to imitate her. He is there only to enjoy. This distinction is vital. In a true education the place of foreign culture is never at the beginning. All true development must proceed from the known to the unknown, from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the near to the far.

In all learning we should try to give knowledge, only in answer to enquiry. This is the ideal. If we could attain it perfectly, every child would grow up to be a genius. But how can there be curiosity about truth that is not within our world? If we could realise how complex a process is the growth of knowledge in a child, how the question that school must answer, awakens in him at some unforeseen moment, at play, on the road, at home, in the family, then we should also understand that every branch of thought in which the full activity of the mind is to be looked for, must be knit up with the daily life. The American child can learn truthfulness from George Washington: the Hindu had far better learn it from Yudhishtira. The Hindu man may be thrilled by Shakespeare's Brutus. But he can appreciate him only in proportion as his own childhood has been fed on heroic political ideals that he could understand in his own home, and in the Mahabharata. There is no such thing in education as a pure idea. Pure ideas are attained by Paramahamsas. The ideas of the child are inextricably entangled with the things he sees about him, with social institutions, and with his own acts. Hence a foreign medium of education must first be translated by him into the weird and wonderful forms, characteristic of

his ignorance, and only after this, if it be so lucky, has it the chance to emerge as knowledge at all.

The difference here between knowledge and the results of knowledge, is vital. Knowledge in one. In pure knowledge, and therefore in science, there can be neither native nor foreign. Emotion on the other hand, is entirely a matter of locality. All form is purely local. Every man's heart has its own country. Therefore art, which is form infused with emotion, must always be strongly characteristic of the place, the people and the mental tradition, whence it has sprung. While the beautiful is one, and art the unveiler of the beautiful, that art must nevertheless always be distinguishable as of this area or that. Knowledge is a duty, art is an enjoyment. For this reason we should give infinite searching of heart to the question of the place that foreign art may hold in a true education. And by art let it here be understood that we refer, above all, to poetry, with its exotic forms of feeling ; drama : sculpture that is guided by canons that are not ours ; music that we do not understand ; and architecture that is modern, and apt to be cheap and gaudy. This not deeply and intimately *understanding* is of the essence of the whole question. We are insincere when we strive for a thing, not because we already love it, but because we believe that it ought to be admired. And this kind of insincerity may creep into any action or opinion, even into so simple a thing as the choosing of a jewel, to make one's own character and personality seem vulgar and shoddy. 'Imitation', says Ruskin, 'is like prayer ; done for love it is beautiful, for show, horrible.'

But have we no right to seek to extend our modes of feeling and forms of expression? This question may be answered by a reference to architecture. Fergusson points out in his great work that when the architecture of a people is great and living, they are all the better for accepting and assimilating minor elements of foreign origin. It matters very little, he tells us, whether the jewelled mosaics of the Indo-Saracenic style were or were not Italian in their origin, since

India made of them something so singular in its beauty and so peculiarly her own. It is clear however that she could not have done this from the standpoint of an architecture that was itself a vague experiment. Because she knew thoroughly well what she liked, in her own building, therefore she knew what would be a beautiful ornament upon it. The dazed builder of today, working in forms with which he is unfamiliar, is by no means so fortunate, when he adorns them with crazy pottery or with monstrosities in the shape of artificial rockeries and many-coloured foliage!

Certainly we have a right to increase the area of our emotional experience. But, if we are sincere in this, it will be done only a little at a time, and as a result of toil and pain. Not by chattering about love, even though we do it in rhyme, can we become lovers! It is the delicacies, the renunciations, and the austerities of the great sentiments through which we extend the area of our experience, and not the gross caricatures of an easy pleasure-seeking. And there is none of us who seeks to have the sword in his own heart.

In all directions we find that only when deeply rooted in the familiar, may we safely take up the unfamiliar. In proportion as we rightly analyse the known, rightly distinguishing, even in what is familiar, between the ideal expressed and the form assumed, in that proportion will it open for us the book of the whole world. But in any case the man who does not love his own, the man who is not clear as to what is his own, will never be received by any people as anything more than half a man.

How much this comes home to one when one sees the futile efforts made by Indian parents to send their boys out into foreign countries to master the details of scientific industry! The seedling that has no root is transplanted to the wilderness for its growth! How clear it is that the one thing of all others that was necessary was a rooting and grounding in its own environment! In other words, before the lad left India, he ought first to have acquired the

methods of science. Then, in the light of these methods he should have learnt all that India could have taught him, of the particular industry he was going out to master, in its simple and primitive *Swadeshi* form. Having weighed the primitive industry against his own modern schooling, having become aware of the gap between the two, having read all that he can find ; having even experimented in so far as is possible, then let the lad be sent out, when his own mind is quivering with enquiry. Only when curiosity is already awakened, have we the energy to proceed from the known to the unknown.

I heard of a student who went to a foreign country in the hope of learning from some firm how to make the printers' ink. Naturally enough, factory after factory refused him, and he had to return to India, having wasted his own efforts and his father's money, without the knowledge he went out to seek. This instance was particularly flagrant, because by India and China long ago was invented the very idea of durable inks, and because the knowledge of these is still so far from lost, that any manufacture of *Swadeshi* ink begun in a back lane today, can drive out of competition at once an equal quantity of the foreign writing-fluid of commerce. It follows that an Indian lad seeking to invent some form of printers' ink, with a moderate amount of intelligence and technological information, has a far better start than, fifty or sixty years ago, had the people from whom he now proposes to beg or steal. The whole trouble and loss arose in this case from a misconception of the place of foreign knowledge in a true scheme of education. It has no right to be, save as capstone and finial to a genuine, honest faculty and experience of indigenous growth.

Of course while this is said, and the ideal laid down so glibly for the individual, one remembers, with a pang, the ordeal that India as a whole has had to face. One remembers the unprecedented influx of foreign knowledge and foreign criticism, from the early decades of the nineteenth

century onwards—an influx that has lost her many a mind and many a character that should have been amongst the noblest of her sons—an influx that only an extraordinary national integrity and self-determination could have enabled her to survive so long. While we remember this with fullness of comprehension and compassion, however, it is only the more binding upon us to walk warily in the matter of individual development ; for only by the bone and muscle of the individual, can we do aught to set right the wrong that has been done the whole.

Even in science, apart altogether from industry, it will only be those men who believe themselves to be inheriting and working out the greatest ideals of the Indian past, who will be able to lay one stone in the edifice of the national future,—if there is to be such an edifice at all. Not by the man who is working for his living, and wants it increased, that he may keep his wife and child in respectability and comfort ; not by the man who counts the cost ; not by the man who holds something back ; not by the man who strikes a bargain with ideals will the path of Indian science be 'blazed' through the forest. Ashoka was the conqueror of Kalinga, and therefore the enemy of some of his people, till the bar sinister was wiped off his scutcheon by the message of Buddha, and he felt himself a man, and an Indian man, with a right to rule in greatness over his own empire. Even so will he who carries the torch of modern knowledge to the India of the future, be one who feels himself enfranchised of the whole greatness of Indian spirituality. That river of renunciation that courses through his will, must find its ocean indeed in Science. But Science will not stand suspect of that Bhakta as less than the highest truth. Two things will contend in him,—the passion for truth, and the yearning over his own people in their ignorance. There will be no time for thought of Mukti in that heart. Has the soldier thought of Mukti when he follows his captain to the breach? A fire of sacrifice, without let or limit, will be the life that achieves

this end. The form may be modern ; the name of science may be foreign ; but the life, the energy, the holiness of dedication will be Indian and know themselves for Indian. So to cease from the quest of Mukti is Mukti itself. Viewed in the light of such an impulse how mean and pitiful seems the effort at self-culture! The whole body of foreign knowledge can be assimilated easily by one thus rooted and grounded in his relation to his own country.

The anxiety for a theory of the right place of foreign culture too often clothes a mere desire for foreign luxury. With regard to this whole question, a man cannot have too severe a standard of self-respect. There was a time when men were born, either ravenous individuals, or at best, with the instincts of the pack. Today we cannot imagine a child in whom family honour is not a primitive instinct. It may be that ages will yet dawn in which the thought of motherland and countrymen will be as deeply inwrought in the human heart. To the men of that age how might the question look of the place of foreign luxuries in noble lives? Why should we not be 'anachronisms of the future', using only what belongs to us or ours, by right of toil or moral conquest? Some standard of self-restraint and self-denial in these matters is demanded of every individual by his own need of moral dignity. The code that would use to the utmost not only all its opportunities but also all its chances, this code is too likely to turn Indian men into European women! Effeminacy is the curse that follows upon indulgence, even innocent indulgence, in foreign luxury. Friovolity, in moments of crisis, is the bane of the effeminate. One of the noblest of Christian adjurations lies in the words, "*Let us endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ ;*" and again the sublime exclamation, "Quit ye like men! Be strong." The inability to endure hardness, the inability to be earnest, the inability to play the man, either in action or devotion, in life or in imagination, these, if no worse, are the fruits of the tree of a luxury to which we have no right.

In the last and final court, it may be said, Humanity is one, and the distinction between native and foreign, purely artificial. The difference is relative. In a man's own country are many things foreign to his experience. With many a foreign luxury he has been familiar from his cradle. Morals, also it may be answered, are entirely relative. The difference between life and death, between victory and defeat, between excellence and degradation, are all entirely relative. By walking truly with discrimination through the world of the relative, do we grow to the understanding of such abstract and absolute ideas as the unity of Humanity. That unity makes itself known to the soul as a vast enfranchisement. It is never even dimly perceived by him who has taken the half for the whole, the outcast from human experience, the seeker after foreign ways and foreign thoughts, whose shame is his own mother,—*the man who has no native land.*

## THE FUTURE EDUCATION OF THE INDIAN WOMAN

Here in India, the woman of the future haunts us. Her beauty rises on our vision perpetually. Her voice cries out on us. Until we have made ready a place for her, until we throw wide the portals of our life, and go out, and take her by the hand to bring her in, the Motherland Herself stands veiled and ineffective, with eyes bent, in sad patience, on the Earth. It is essential, for the joyous revealing of that great Mother, that she be first surrounded by the mighty circle of these, Her daughters, the Indian women of the days to come. It is they who must consecrate themselves before Her, touching Her feet with their proud heads, and vowing to Her their own, their husbands', and their children's lives. Then, and then only will she stand crowned before the world. Her sanctuary today is full of shadows. But when the womanhood of India can perform the great Arati of Nationality, that temple shall be all light, nay, the dawn verily shall be near at hand. From end to end of India, all who understand are agreed that the education of our women must needs, at this crisis, undergo some revision. Without their aid and co-operation none of the great tasks of the present can be finally accomplished. The problems of the day are woman's as well as man's. And how idle were it to boast that our hearts are given to the Mother, unless we seek to enshrine Her in every one of our lives.

Indian hesitation, however, about a new type of feminine education, has always been due to a misgiving as to its actual aims, and in this the people have surely been wise. Have the Hindu women of the past been a source of shame to us, that we should hasten to discard their old time grace and sweetness, their gentleness and piety, their tolerance and child-like depth of love and pity, in favour of

the first crude product of Western information and social aggressiveness? On this point India speaks with no uncertain voice. "Granted," she says in effect, "that a more arduous range of mental equipment is now required by women, it is nevertheless better to fail in the acquisition of this, than to fail in the more essential demand, made by the old type of training, on character. An education of the brain that uprooted humility and took away tenderness, would be no true education at all. These virtues may find different forms of expression in mediæval and modern civilisations, but they are necessary in both. All education worth having must first devote itself to the developing and consolidating of character, and only secondarily concern itself with intellectual accomplishment."

The question that has to be solved for Indian women, therefore, is a form of education that might attain this end, of developing the faculties of soul and mind in harmony with one another. Once such a form shall be successfully thought out and its adequacy demonstrated, we shall, without further ado, have an era amongst us of Woman's Education. Each successful experiment will be the signal for a circle of new attempts. Already there is longing enough abroad to serve the cause of woman. All that we ask is to be shown the way.

Important to education as is the question of method, it is still only subordinate to that of purpose. It is our fundamental motive that tells in the development we attempt to give our children. It is therefore the more urgently necessary that in the training of girls we should have a clearly understood ideal towards which to work. And in this particular respect, there is perhaps no other country in the world so fortunately placed as India. She is, above all others, the land of great women. Wherever we turn, whether to history or literature, we are met on every hand by those figures, whose strength she mothered and recognised, while she keeps their memory eternally sacred.

What is the type of woman we most admire? Is she strong, resourceful, inspired, fit for moments of crisis? Have we not Padmini of Chitore, Chand Bibi, Jhansi Rani? Is she saintly, a poet, and a mystic? Is there not Meera Bai? Is she the queen, great in administration? Where is Rani Bhowani, where Ahalya Bai, where Janhabai of Mymensingh? Is it wifehood in which we deem that woman shines brightest? What of Sati, of Savitri, of the ever-glorious Sita? Is it in maidenhood? There is Uma. And where in all the womanhood of the world, shall be found another as grand as Gandhari?

These ideals, moreover are constructive. That is to say, it is not their fame and glory that the Indian child is trained to contemplate. It is their holiness, simplicity, sincerity, in a word, their character. This, indeed, is always a difference between one's own and an alien ideal. Impressed by the first, it is an effort that we seek to imitate: admiring the second, we endeavour to arrive at its results. There can never be any sound education of the Indian woman, which does not begin and end in exaltation of the national ideals of womanhood, an embodied in her own history and heroic literature.

But woman must undoubtedly be made *efficient*. Sita and Savitri were great in wifehood, only as the fruit of that antecedent fact, that they were great women. There was no place in life that they did not fill, graciously and dutifully. Both satisfied every demand of the social ideal. At once queen and housewife, saint and citizen, submissive wife and solitary nun, as heroic combatant, both were equal to all the parts permitted them, in the drama of their time. Perfect wives as they were, if they had never been married at all, they must have been perfect just the same, as daughters, sisters, and disciples. This efficiency to all the circumstances of life, this womanhood before wifehood, and humanity before womanhood, is something at which the education of the girl must aim, in every age.

But the moral ideal of the India of today has taken

on new dimensions—the national and the civic. Here also woman must be trained to play her part. And again, by struggling towards these she will be educated. Every age has its own intellectual synthesis, which must be apprehended, before the ideal of that age can be attained. The numberless pathways of definite mental concept, by which the orthodox Hindu woman must go to self-fulfilment, form, to the Western mind, a veritable labyrinth. So far from being really uneducated, or non-educated, indeed, as is so commonly assumed, the conservative Hindu woman has received an education which in its own way is highly specialised, only it is not of a type recognised as of value by modern peoples.

Similarly, in order to achieve the ideal of efficiency for the exigencies of the twentieth century, a characteristic synthesis has to be acquired. It is no longer merely the spiritual or emotional content of a statement that has to be conveyed to the learner, as in the mythologico-social culture of the past. The student must now seek to understand the limitations of the statement, its relation to cognate ideas and the steps by which the race has come to this particular formulation. The modern synthesis, in other words, is scientific, geographical, and historical, and these three modes of knowing must needs—since there is no sex in truth—be achieved by woman as by man.

Science, history and geography, are thus as three dimensions in which the mind of the present age moves, and from which it seeks to envisage all ideas. Thus the conception of nationality—on which Indian efforts today converge—must be realised by us, in the first place, as a result of the study of the history of our own nation, with all its divergent elements of custom, race, language, and the rest. The civic sense, in the same way, must be reached by a study of our own cities, their positions, and the history of their changes from age to age.

Again, the nation must be seen, not only in relation to its own past, and its own place, but also in relation to

other nations. Here we come upon the necessity for geographical knowledge. Again, history must be viewed geographically, and geography historically. A great part of the glory and dignity of the ideally modern woman lies in her knowledge that her house is but a tent pitched for a night on the starlit world-plane, that each hour, as it passes, is but a drop from an infinite stream, flowing through her hand, to be used as she will, for benediction or for sorrow, and then to flow on irresistibly again. And behind such an attitude of mind, lies a severe intellectual discipline.

But even the proportion which the personal moment bears to space and time, is not formula enough for the modern spirit. This demands, in addition, that we learn what is to it the meaning of the truth, or science, the fact in itself. This particular conception of truth is perhaps no more absolute than others, current in other ages, but it is characteristic of the times, and by those who have to pass the world's test, it has to be understood. Yet even this marked truth, thus thirsted after, has to be held as only a fragment of an infinitely extended idea, in which Evolution and Classification of the sciences play the parts of history and geography.

Nature, the Earth, and Time, are thus the three symbols by whose means the modern mind attains to possession of itself. No perfect means of using them educationally has ever been discovered or devised by man. The spirit of each individual is the scene of a struggle for their better realisation. Every schoolroom embodies an attempt to communalise the same endeavour. Those who would transmit the modern idea to the Indian woman, must begin where they can, and learn, from their own struggles, how better to achieve. In the end, the idea once caught, the Indian woman herself will educate Indian women—meanwhile, every means that offers ought to be taken. The wandering *Bhagvata* or *Kathaka*, with the magic lantern, may popularise geography, by showing slides illustrative of the various pilgrimages. History, outside the Mahabharata

and Ramayana, might be familiarised in the same way. And there is no reason why simple lectures on hygiene, sanitation, and the plants and animals of the environment, should not also be given by the wandering teachers to the assembled community, with its women behind the screens. Pictures, pictures, pictures, these are the first of instruments in trying to concretise ideas, pictures and the mother-tongue. If we would impart a love of country, we must give a country to love. How shall women be enthusiastic about something they cannot imagine?

Schools large and small, schools in the home and out of it, schools elementary and advanced, all these are an essential part of any working out of the great problem. But these schools must be within Indian life, not antagonistic to it. The mind set between two opposing worlds of school and home, is inevitably destroyed. The highest ambition of the school must be to give moral support to the ideals taught in the home, and the home to those imparted in the school—the densest ignorance would be better for our women than any departure from this particular canon.

In making the school as much an essential of the girl's life, as it has always been of the boy's, we are establishing something which is never to be undone. Every generation as it comes will have to carry out the great task of the next generation's schooling. This is one of the constant and normal functions of human society. But much in the problem of Woman's Education as we today see it, is a difficulty of the time only. We have to carry our country through an arduous transition. Once the main content of the modern consciousness finds its way into the Indian vernaculars, the problem will have disappeared, for we learn more from our mother-tongue itself, than from all our schools and schoolmasters. In order to bring about that great day, however, the Mother Herself calls for vows and service of a vast spiritual knighthood. Hundreds of youngmen are necessary, to league themselves together for the deepening of Education in the best ways amongst

women. Most students, perhaps, might be able to vow twelve lessons in a year to be given either in home or village, during the holidays—this should hardly prove an exhausting undertaking—yet how much might be done by it!

Others might be willing to give themselves to the task of building up the vernacular literatures. The book and the magazine penetrate into recesses where the teacher's foot never yet trod. The library, or the book-shelf, is a mute university. How are women to understand Indian history, if, in order to read about Buddha or Ashoka, about Chandragupta or Akbar, they have first to learn a foreign language? Great will be the glory of those, hereafter, who hide their ambition for the present, in the task of conveying modern knowledge into the tongues of women and the People?

Seeing that this first generation of pioneer work must needs be done mainly by men, on behalf of women, there are some who would scoff at the possibility of such generosity and devotion. But those who know the Indian people deeply cannot consent to this sneer. Life in India is socially sound. Civilisation is organic, spiritual, altruistic. When the practice of *sati* was to be abolished, it was done on the initiative of an Indian *man*, Ram Mohan Roy. When monogamy was to be emphasised as the one ideal of marriage, it was again from a *man*, Vidyasagar of Bengal, that the impulse came. In the East, it is not by selfish agitation, from within a party, that great reforms and extensions of privilege are brought about. It is by spontaneous effort, by gracious conferring of right from the other side. Or if indeed woman feel the pinch of some sharp necessity, some ill to be righted, is she not mother of man as well as of woman? Can she not whisper to her son, in his childhood, of the task to which she assigns him? And shall she not thus forge a weapon more powerful than any her own weak hands could wield? Such a woman was the mother of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and such was the inspiration that made him the woman's champion.

But one word there is to be said, of warning and direction, to that young priesthood of learning, to whom this generation entrusts the problem we have been considering. Education can never be carried out by criticism or discouragement. Only he who sees the noblest thing in the taught can be an effective teacher. Only by the greatness of Indian life can we give a sense of the greatness of the world outside India. Only by the love of our own people can we learn the love of humanity—and only by a profound belief in the future of the Indian woman can any man be made worthy to help in bringing that future about. Let the preacher of the New Learning be consecrated to the vision of one who resumes into herself the greatness of the whole Indian past. Let him hope and most earnestly pray that in this our time, in all our villages, we are to see women great even as Gandhari, faithful and brave as Savitri, holy and full of tenderness as Sita. Let the past be as wings unto the feet of the future. Let all that has been be as steps leading us up the mountain of what is yet to be. Let every Indian woman incarnate for us the whole spirit of the Mother, and the culture and protection of the Homeland, *Bhumia Devi!* Goddess of the Homestead! *Bande Mataram!*

## THE PROJECT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

The changes that have made Hindu education a Western problem completed themselves on the day when the declaration of the English Empire constituted India one of the countries of the modern world.

Till then, from a remote antiquity, the geographical isolation of the peninsula had been the opportunity for the evolution of a singularly perfect form of society. And the education of the individual, in adaptation to the structure of the community, was well understood.

There was full scope for all classes in competition with each other, a reasonable standard of comfort was attainable, and its definition generally accepted; and the training which was to enable each man and woman to distribute the life-effort in due proportion between self and the social organism, had stood the test of time.

Today, all this is changed. Ever since 1833—when the East India Company's Charter was renewed, on condition that it ceased to carry on trade or manufacture, *i.e.*, ceased to foster and develop the industries and exports of that country as against home—India has stood out in the full current of world-commerce. And, like some ancient treasure that could not bear contact with the air, her own arts and wealth have crumbled to dust and been carried away by that stream. Her mysteriously lovely cottons are still to be bought in the land of Venice and Genoa, but they are "old, very old", nowadays. The one foreigner—Shah Jehan—who ever had the genius to see what might be done with the humble native crafts of mosaic and stone-cutting, and the munificence to do it, has had no successor. Aniline dyes are displacing the brilliant beauty of Oriental colors by the same sequence which is substituting English for Hindustani, and is tending to supplant the national

treasures of Sanskrit, Hindi and the Dravidian tongues with the ephemeral literature of the nineteenth century of Europe.

Change is inevitable, even desirable ; but change need not mean decay. It is easy to see that India is still in the first shock of the modern catastrophe, not having yet realised even the elements of the new problem, much less having had time to evolve methods of solution. It is also plain that if the present pause in the national life is to prelude a process of restoration and development, rather than of disintegration, this can only be determined by some scheme of education which shall enable the people to conserve all that they have already achieved, while at the same time they adapt themselves to the needs of the new era.

The weaver's brain is not idle, as his shuttle flies to and fro on the loom, nor can he be set to this task without the co-operation of every part of his society. So, wherever characteristic industries exist, characteristic schemes of philosophy and cosmology, national epic cycles, bodies of speculation on abstruse subjects, and other accumulations of heightened individuality, must also occur. This is pre-eminently the case in India, where contributions to mathematics, astronomy and other sciences have been of the greatest importance in the past, and are likely to be so again. Any education, therefore, that shall effectually meet the Indian need of self-adaptation must produce amongst other results, at least in the higher castes, an increased national self-consciousness, a sentiment of the vigour and responsibility of a young people, and an attitude of friendship and promise towards the other peoples of the world. To produce an Oriental in whom Orientalism had been intensified, while to it had been added the Western conception of the Cause of Humanity, of the Country, of the People as a whole, Western power of initiative and organisation, Western energy and practicality—such an ideal should inspire our energy of culture in the East.

[It will be noted that this "conservation" of national

achievement" is not in any sense that of the antiquarian or the pedant who would strive, with a kind of refined selfishness, to retain the picturesqueness of things as they were.]

Towards such ends, the steps that have already been taken by the Government and others, where not actually misguided, have been merely preliminary. But all have been eagerly welcomed by the natives of the country. Their indebtedness to the educational missionary is something that the Indian people never forget, and from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin the names of great members of this profession, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, are held in loving and grateful memory. To this day, every Hindu student at the University of Calcutta is required, by the tradition of his own people, to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of David Hare, the Scotsman, who a hundred years ago, founded the school that has since developed into the university; died of cholera, caught in nursing a pupil through the illness; was refused burial in christian ground, for his rationalistic tendencies; and was finally carried on the heads of his own boys, and lovingly interred in a spot that stands today within the College railings. Every act of that little closing ceremony is eloquent to him who understands Hindu expression of passionate devotion and gratitude. It is the etiquette of India to entertain a guest according to his customs, whatever the trouble and cost; and this delicate honor shines through the fact that burial—a thing abhorrent to the Hindu—and not cremation, was the fate of David Hare. Then, again, actual contact with the dead was not deputed to those hirelings, who are amongst the lowest of the low, but was borne by high-caste youths themselves, at considerable personal risk. It is an inhuman thing to analyse an act of love, but we need to know the associations that lie behind this, in order to appreciate the demonstration at its true value. And further, reverence for tombs and relics being excessively Mohammedan, nothing could be more significant than this

present habit of paying visits to Hare's tomb, of the depth of the impression made on the municipal imagination by this apostle of secular education.

Yet the days of David Hare, and many a great school-master, were long over before the preliminary dispute—must the new code be dominated by the Eastern or Western classics?—could be decided by statesmen in the interests of a national form of instruction. It was settled at last, by Lord Dalhousie's adoption of Sir Charles Wood's scheme in 1854, by which existing native schools were recognised, inspected, and aided, while an acquaintance with the Vernacular in the first place, and English in the second, was made the great purpose of study. At the time, this was felt to be a wonderful solution of the question. But in the years since 1854 it has dawned upon all of us that education is not altogether a matter of words, nor even of information, and actual experience of its results has led the majority of English officials to be entirely dissatisfied with things as they are being done.

Yet in what direction changes are to be made is not clear either. The cost of teaching in Bengal is kept down rigorously to something like twenty-nine cents (or one shilling and two pence half-penny) per head per annum. Obviously, there is no margin here for expenditure on scientific laboratories, or manual training-schools!

On the other hand, in a population so large as three hundred millions, the course once entered on can never be retracted, though it may be modified in direction, and results have to be reckoned with, however unexpected, in kind. The Unification of India, as Sir William Hunter pointed out, through the half-penny post, cheap railway travel and the popularity of English education, is one of the least foreseen of these. It will readily be understood how dangerous in many ways to the best interests, alike of rulers and ruled, is such unification, reached, as it is apt to be, through the cheap and vapid Europeanism of mere reading.

Thus far, all that has been said applies to boys equally with girls. When we come to consider the latter, however, as a separate problem, we are met by new considerations.

Oriental women are much more tenacious of custom, and of the old form of training, than the men. Like women of the old regime in other countries, they are all required to marry—without, in their case, the alternative of the protection of the Church—and that early. Economic causes have postponed the usual age of this solemn betrothal nowadays, to as late as twelve years. The period between the ceremony and the day of entering the mother-in-law's household, at about the age of fourteen, is supposed to be divided by the little bride in visits alternately to the old home and the new.

Should the husband die during these years, the girl is as much a widow as if she had already taken up her abode with him, and social honor makes re-marriage equally impossible. Cases of this kind constitute the class known as "child widows." Their lives henceforth become those of nuns. They are expected to embody a specially high ideal of austerity and devotion. But in return for this they meet with the approval and respect of all about them, and not—as has so mistakenly been supposed—with hatred and contempt.

If all goes happily, however, the bride at twelve becomes a wife at fourteen, and passes into a position of duty and responsibility in the home of her husband's mother. Up to this time she has been a petted and indulged child. [The over-tenderness of the Hindu family for the little daughters who are to leave them so early, is a fruitful source of difficulty in the schoolroom.] At this period, all that might strictly be called education begins for her, and the wonderful dignity and savoir-faire of the Hindu woman's bearing is a sure witness to the training of the careful mother-in-law.

Translated into terms of deeper simplicity and poverty, we have the Bower of the old Feudal castle represented in

the women's apartments of a Hindu home today. It is not tapestries and embroideries that employ our maidens, indeed, but the more homely matters of house-cleaning and cooking, the milking of the family cow, and the bringing-up of children. There are likely to be many girls of an age, in the household, as wives of brothers and cousins, and their relationship to the older ladies of the family culminates in the deference paid to "the mother," who is in her turn mother or wife of the chief of kin. Certainly no old poem or romance was ever perused more eagerly by the fair dames of the days of chivalry than are the Indian Epics and Puranas within the Zenana. Even the parties of strolling minstrels who sang and acted in the Castle hall have their parallel, for in the spring evenings it often happens that a Ramayana-party is given, and seated behind screens on the courtyard verandah, where they can see without being seen, the ladies listen to the ever-old and ever-new story of the wanderings of Sita and Rama in the forest.

Such innocent pleasures, however, are growing less frequent, for the modest means that were necessary to secure them are yearly diminishing. The men of the Indian higher classes are sinking into a race of cheap English clerks, and are becoming more and more incapable of supporting their numerous dependents. New activities, calling for enterprise and power of combination will have to be opened up by them, if this state of things is to be retrieved. And, in such an epoch of reconstruction, the sympathy and co-operation of the women will be absolutely necessary as a social force.

It is obvious that their present education is largely a discipline rather than a development. Yet it has not altogether precluded the appearance of great individuals. Witness, amongst many others, that widowed Rani of Jhansi, who emerged from her seclusion in the days of the Mutiny, to make proclamations, issue a new coinage, cast cannon, and finally to die in battle with us, at the head of her own troops.

Sporadic instances of this kind nevertheless, serve rather to show the virility of a race than to prove the rightness of a system of training. It is undeniable that if we could add to the present lives of Indian women, larger scope for individuality, a larger social potentiality and some power of economic redress, without adverse criticism, direct or indirect, of present institutions, we should achieve something of which there is dire necessity.

Now, thanks to the efforts of Christian missionaries and others, two kinds of education are within reach of some—the three R's as taught in the primary school and a university degree. As the orthodox usually seclude their daughters after marriage, the school-course in their case, has to end at ten or twelve. In the case of Christians, the Brahma Samaj and Parsis degrees are quite commonly carried off by women! But taking these, and all similar instances into consideration, the total number of girls in Bengal who receive formal instruction is only six and a half per cent. of the population. And Bengal is said to be in this respect the most advanced province.

There is, therefore, a great need. We are also agreed in some measure as to the character of the answer. The question that remains is, How and where can we make a beginning in offering to Indian women an education that shall mean development adapted to the actual needs of their actual lives?

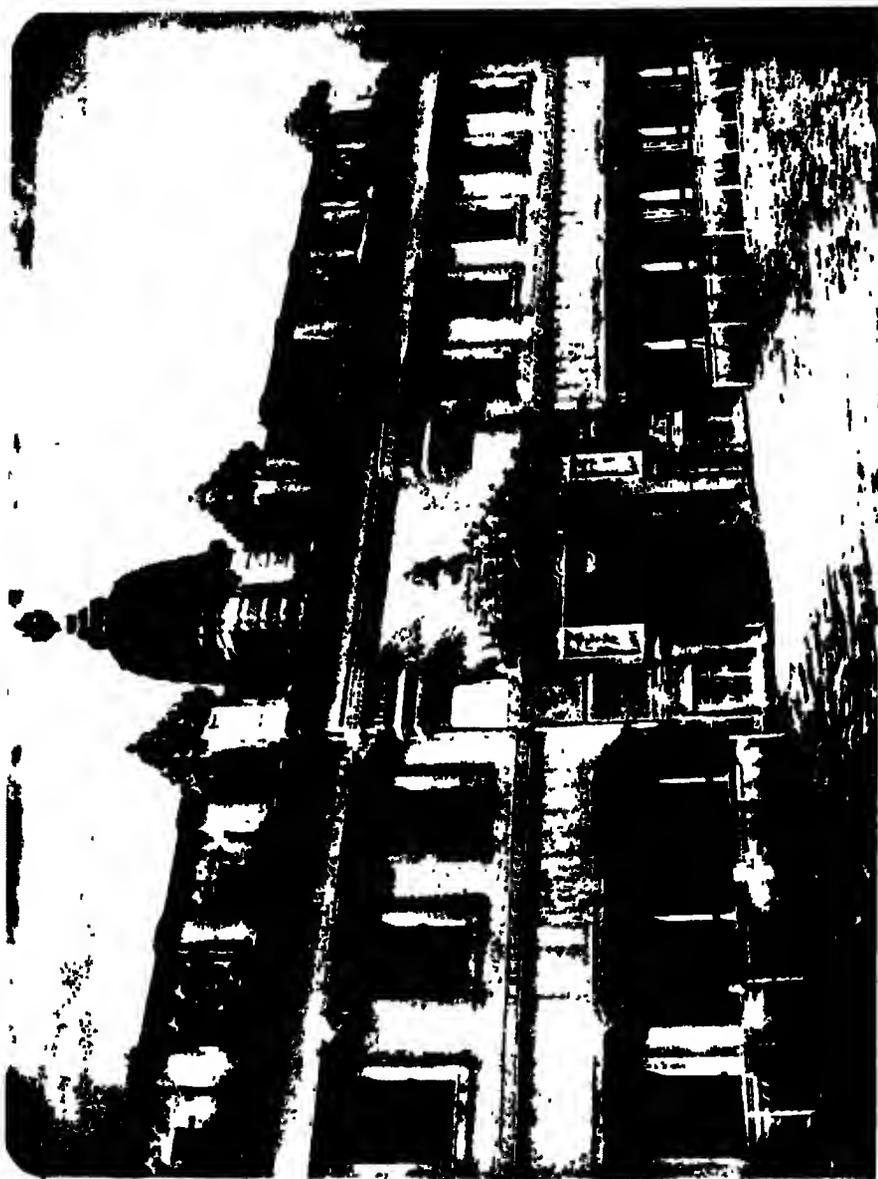
It is after careful study and consideration of such facts as these that the project of the Ramakrishna School for Girls has been formed.

We intend, if we succeed in acquiring means, to buy a house and piece of land on the banks of the Ganges, near Calcutta, and there to take in some twenty widows and twenty orphan girls—the whole community to be under the guidance and authority of that SARADA DEVI, whose name has been lately introduced to the world by Professor Max Muller in his "Life and Sayings of Ramakrishna."

It is further proposed to add to this establishment a



THE FIRST SCHOOL BUILDING — 1899



THE PRESENT SCHOOL BUILDING

scholastic institution in which the best manual training can be given.

The school course is to be founded on the Kindergarten, and is to include the English and Bengali languages and literature, elementary mathematics very thoroughly taught, some elementary science very thoroughly taught, and handicrafts, with a special bearing on the revival of the old Indian industries. The immediate justification of the last subject would lie in enabling every pupil to earn her own living, without leaving her home, by a pursuit which should be wholly ennobling.

But the school is to have a second function. The widows—whom we may reckon as from eighteen to twenty years of age—are not only to be useful in giving the true Hindu background and home-life, but amongst them we look to organise two or three industries for which promising markets can be opened up in England, India, and America. Amongst these, the making of native jams, pickles and chutneys, is to be included.

Supposing our effort to be in every way successful—supposing, above all, that it approves itself to Hindu society as in no sense *denationalising*—it will probably be possible slightly to defer the day on which we ask each child to choose for herself the life of marriage or of consecrated national service. For those who choose the first, we shall hope to provide ways and means that are entirely creditable. With any who may prefer to devote their lives to unremitting toil on behalf of their country and her womanhood, we shall expect, after an extended education, and using the older women as guard and protectors, to start new Rama-krishna schools in other centres.\*

\* *The following paragraphs were in the original project published in America in 1900.*

Such in brief is the scheme.

To carry it out, making proper provision at the same time for the health and salaries of skilled western teachers, will require \$30,000, with an income in addition of something over \$3,000 a year. Of this sum, less than \$1,500 are already collected, \$1,000 being the gift of Mrs. Francis H. Leggett, of New York.

It is not necessary to say that any additions to this amount, large or

Let me say, in conclusion, that I trust I am seeking to divert no energy or gift from the near duty to the far. In these days of international commerce and finance, we are surely realising that only World-Service is true Home-Service. Already, we seem to be answering Walt Whitman's sublime question in the affirmative—

“Are all nations communing? Is there going to be but one heart to the globe?”

SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY  
SISTER NIVEDITA IN THE WEST IN  
CONNECTION WITH THE FOREGOING

1.—Have you renounced your country and nationality?

*Ans.*—Certainly not. Why should I? [Could work done for India find a stronger motive than the fact that I am an English-woman?]

2.—Have you given up its religion, Christianity?

*Ans.*—No. I have stated many times that I am one of *Three Christian* members of the Order of Ramakrishna, now resident in India. The other two are Captain Sevier [of the English army] and his wife.

3.—Do you not believe in a spiritual life? That is, the direct influence and help of the Holy Spirit upon our lives here.

*Ans.*—This influence and help of the Holy Spirit, as I believe, alone is life. Any existence which is not the constant and progressive realisation of this is the “unreal”.

small, as donations or subscriptions, will be most acceptable and useful. The Banker's Trust Company, of 10 Wall Street, New York, have kindly undertaken to receive the same, and to place them to my credit. I hope to keep all subscribers in touch with our community, as years go on, by sending receipts, accounts, and literary work, direct to them.

Very special thanks will be due to those persons who may undertake to form groups of our society in one place or another, for purposes of subscription. In their case money would be transmitted through them to the Bankers Trust Co., but receipts and accounts would reach subscribers direct from myself. Thus the duties of local secretaries are threefold—(1) to collect sums promised; (2) to lodge them with the Bankers' Trust Co. of New York; and (3) to send all names and addresses of subscribers straight to the Ramakrishna School, Calcutta, India—or, till that is established, to Miss Noble, care of Francis H. Leggett, Esq., 21 West 34th Street, New York.

4.—What is your purpose in establishing your school in India?

*Ans.*—To give *Education* [not instruction merely] to orthodox Hindu girls, in a form that is suited to the needs of the country. [I recognise that if any Indian institutions are faulty it is the right of the Indian people themselves to change them. We may only aim to produce ripe judgment and power of action. Also, I consider that we should confer a direct benefit on any Indian woman whom we could enable to earn her own living, without loss of social honor.]

5.—What class of women are they to teach?

*Ans.*—Unfortunately our first efforts must be directed to the higher classes. Eventually, I hope to reach all, partly through Hindu girls who will be eager to specialize in various social directions.

6.—Are they not educational schools only?

*Ans.*—What does this mean? I do not seek to convert any one to Christianity. Neither any Christian to anything else. Neither any Mohammedan to Hinduism or Christianity. Is this an answer?

7.—What are they to teach?

*Ans.*—1, 2—Bengali and English language and literature.

3—Elementary mathematics (very thoroughly)

4—(some one) Elementary Science (very thoroughly).

5—MANUAL TRAINING, beginning in the kindergarten and rising to the point of reviving old Indian industries and arts later on.

No. 5 is the backbone of the plan.

8.—Is not your idea a humanitarian one? To help the helpless and needy regardless of creed? And to teach no creed?

*Ans.*—I hope so.

But I would like to teach every one the greatest respect for everyone else's creed! Perhaps no one needs *this* virtue as we ourselves do. In India, my friends love me for my love of Christianity, and talk with me about it for hours together. Can we not show like sweetness and courtesy?

## SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INDIAN VIVEKANANDA SOCIETIES

Throughout the length and breadth of India, and especially perhaps in the Southern Presidency, one comes upon towns and villages possessing Vivekananda Societies. A group of students, fired by the glorious name, band themselves together with a vague idea of doing something to justify its adoption and then turn round to enquire—what?

What shall be the main duty of Vivekananda Societies?

In a Western country, the answer would be, Work!

In Protestant lands, there would perhaps be an effort to work and live in the city slums to assist in local sanitation, to carry on attempts at manual education,—such as wood-carving, or metal and glass work,—or athletic training, or even to organise amusements only, amongst those who were socially lower and less fortunate than the Vivekananda boys themselves.

In Catholic countries, the seven corporal works of mercy [feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, nursing the sick, visiting prisoners, harbouring the harbourless, burying the dead], would be the natural expression of energy of these societies, which would become in effect minor associations of some great religious order, relating themselves to the Order of Ramakrishna, for instance, as their Third Orders are related to the Franciscans and Dominicans, or as, amongst women, the Filles de Marie are affiliated to the Society of Jesus.

But India falls under neither of these headings.

She resembles the Catholic country, indeed, rather than the Protestant, but with this difference—that the virtues which the Church is striving to promulgate, she has long ago assimilated, and expresses in the natural course of her social life. To feed the hungry and give

drink to the thirsty, outside their own families, is part of the everyday routine of Eastern households. Bestowal of money or clothing on those who need is a duty regularly distributed amongst the wealthy. For roadside mercies we have only to note the Dharmashalas outside each village, the bathing-ghats on the river-banks, and the stone posts and lintels that enable the carriers to re-adjust his burden along every highway of the South. And with regard to the rite that corresponds to burial, only Indian lads themselves know how common it is for high-caste boys to undertake the bearing of the dead to the burning-ghat by way of honourable assistance to the poor. Asia is the Mother of Religions, simply and solely because she practises as obvious social functions those virtues that Southern Europe would be glad to ignore, save for ecclesiastical pressure, and that Northern Europe has been driven to regiment, as functions of state and township, in the winter of an extreme ungraciousness.

So it would be carrying coals to Newcastle, as we say in England, if the name of our great Guru were to represent merely an effort like this,—to religionise the already religious. What then of the first method of action? Why should not that be ours? Do we in India not require, as much as England or America, a greater equalising of conditions? the revival and extension of the arts and crafts? the universalising of athletics, especially in their old Indian forms of wrestling, club-whirling and stick-play, though not these to the exclusion of the modern cricket, football, tennis and drilling? the spread of technical industries? more sympathy and co-operation in their leisure between caste and caste?

Alas, we need all these things! Indeed it might be urged that the Swami's name represents, more than anything else, a transition from the one period, as it were, to the other, a transition which was already inevitable, but which has been rendered secure and non-disruptive by the fact that he combined in his single person the strength of

both the phases of society. For, his was that superconsciousness that alone seals the mission of the supreme religious teacher in theocratic civilisations and at the same time, he was full of the fearlessness and hope, the national Shradha and devotion to the people which must form the characteristics of those who are to re-make India. On the other hand, we must not forget that the form of work which we are considering is a free growth out of modern conditions of labour and education in Western lands. The formation of natural history clubs, of town-boys and villagers, to hunt for microscope-specimens on Sundays under the direction of some advanced student, would be to the full as delightful and desirable in India as in England. But, obviously, it could only be done by Indians with Indians and for Indians. Read the *Life of Charles Kingsley* or read even Mrs. Humphrey Ward's pleasant novel *Robert Elsmere*, and realise the overflow of the sense of union with people and soil, the overflow of strength and gladness that speaks in what may be called this beautiful, "vicarage-life" of England, so like the more modern University Settlement ideal. It is to be feared that without similar antecedents to make them untrammelled and spontaneous, efforts like these for our Vivekananda Societies would be at this moment merely parasitic and imitative. That the boys should devote themselves heart and soul to the creating of a great love of the People is what we need ; but that that love should be forced into a premature expression of itself in forms natural only to the foreigner, would surely be base and misguided.

But a more obvious objection to the adoption of such programmes by the Vivekananda Societies is the practical difficulty to be encountered in carrying them out. The members are for the most part students in schools and colleges. Their future depends on the passing of specified examinations at specified times, and so little are these ordeals related to the actual life of the country and the family that in order to be successful

a boy must devote his whole time and attention to the matter, suppressing himself completely, from eleven to twenty-one years of age. Amongst Indian men again, there are few who can live unto themselves. Almost all our youths are struggling with their school books, not for their own sakes, but in order to maintain their families, to lift the burden of aged parents, or widowed sisters, at as early an age as possible. It would rarely be practicable therefore for them, even had they the necessary wealth, to undertake, as mere leisure work, the extended activities of a London Toynbee Hall, or a Chicago Hull House, during their student-years.

Some kind of attempt to extend their own knowledge and that of the women of their households, on such subjects as sanitation, the properties of food, and the nursing of the sick, there might well be indeed. Other efforts to promote physical exercise in the old forms—so productive of special skill and muscularity—and in the new forms, so conducive to power of co-operation and organisation, there ought also to be. That these efforts should have a direct bearing further, on the welfare of the lower castes, is beyond doubt. Our best interests are involved in such an attitude.

But many of the Vivekananda Societies may feel that definite work for these ends is outside their present scope ; that the true task of a student is study ; that therefore the wisest course they can propose to themselves is a constant reading of the books of the Swami Vivekananda, with a view to assimilating his thought and expressing it later in their own lives. Those who adopt this method are likely to encounter two difficulties.

In the first place, they will be apt to neglect the forest for the trees. In reading the *works* of Vivekananda, they are liable to forget that behind all his books, all his utterances, stands the man himself, different from each, only partially expressed through the whole mass. But it is this man himself that they really need to understand and

appropriate ; his triumph that they require to realise ; his ringing cheer of hope and defiance that they should strive to make their own.

The second difficulty before the students is still more serious. There is a danger of turning the Swami's books into a new bondage, by treating every word of the text as sacred, and reading and re-reading constantly, till the brain is dazed and the ears are deafened and we lose all chance of understanding, even as the Christian child loses the beauty of the English Bible, or the Temple-Brahmin forgets the thrill of the Salutations. The Swami himself was a great incarnation of freedom. To sit in his presence was to experience an emancipation. He was nothing, if not a breaker of bondage. How then can a Vivekananda Society, in faithfulness to him, undertake to fasten handcuffs upon the mind? Is it not clear that only when our own thought is first active can we understand the value of his opinions and decisions? People who are already much troubled by questions about caste are prepared to appreciate his utterances on this subject in the Six Madras Lectures. Boys who are in love with their own land, and longing to conceive of her as a unity, will revel in the detailed knowledge and the dazzling succession of pictures contained in the Reply to the Madras Address. Only those who have themselves begun to enquire what Hinduism is, and who are baffled by the vastness of the enquiry the problem presents, will be in a position to comprehend the great speech at Chicago.

But, it will be asked, how are we then to get at the true significance of the Swami's utterances as a whole? Obviously, we must first tackle the questions that he tackled. In this way, our very difficulties will help us to understand his meaning. It has been well said that the true disciple is he who is caught heart and soul by the idea that caught his master, and proceeds to work it out, in ways that the master never thought of and might not even have approved. What was the idea that caught Vivekananda? Is it not

plain enough for him that runs to read? He saw before him a great Indian nationality, young, vigorous, fully the equal of any nationality on the face of the earth. To him, this common nationality—conscious of its own powers, and forcing their recognition on others, moving freely forward to its own goal in all worlds, intellectual, material, social, occupational—was that “firm establishment of the national righteousness (*dharma*)” for which those who love him believe undoubtingly that he was born.

But, it will be said, it was easy for the Swami to conceive of an Indian nationality. He was a great traveller. On the one hand, he knew India from end to end. On the other, he had seen most of the countries of the world. And nothing teaches like contrast. This argument is true, and points to the fact that one of the great duties of Vivekananda Societies should be the revival of the enthusiasm for pilgrimages. It is not Kedar Nath alone that we see by going there. How much do we not learn of India! How deep do we not go into the passion of the race for their beautiful Himalayas! How much may we not add to our power of thought and feeling by a single visit to Benares? Is not the definite and living knowledge of him who has performed the four great Tirthas well worth having?

It is, of course, quite impossible for large numbers of our youths to go abroad in order to awaken their own sense of home-characteristics. Nor would it, we may add, in the majority of cases be of the least use. Very few observers are competent to avail themselves of the extended opportunities of foreign travel, for in this field, above all, it is true that a man sees only what his mind has brought the power of seeing. The real question is, How can we educate ourselves to *understand* the contrasts and affinities between India and other countries?

One great means lies in the cultivation of the historical sense. “Every man”, says Emerson, “is a quotation from all his ancestors”. Every moment, in like manner, is a compendium of the whole past. We need not devote

ourselves to the history of India alone, or even chiefly. To know this, will become an imperious hunger in us, in proportion as our conception of the national process in other lands grows clearer.

Why not take the *Stories of the Nations* series of text books, and study the tales of ancient Chaldea, Assyria, Egypt? Why not trace out the origin and development of Islam, pondering over its immense struggles in Syria, in Spain, and around Constantinople? Why not interest ourselves in Persia, in Venice, in the history of the Crusades, in ancient Greece, if we can find opportunity not omitting China and Japan.

But we could go even deeper than these things, and study the nature of human societies and commonwealths themselves. Spencer's *Study of Sociology*, in the International Science Series, is a fine starting-point. It gives clear, definite lines of self-culture, which should be as the words of the Vedas to the earnest student. There are multitudes of works on Sociology, on Primitive Man, and on allied subjects, by many modern writers, such as Spencer, Lubbock, Tylor, Fiske, Clodd, and others, but most of the books of the first-named writer are too special for the purpose we are considering. Very important to the Hindu reader, by reason of the pride and confidence it inspires in his own faith, is Draper's *Conflict of the Religious and Scientific Spirits*,—a work on a merely European subject. Frederic Harrison's *Meaning of History*, and Congreve's *International Policy* are also specially commendable, though the extraordinary ignorance of the East which they manifest should be rather as provocation than as authority to Indian boys. And just as the enquiry into matters of orthodox interest may fitly end with an appeal to the Swami Vivekananda's books, to see what they happen to say on the subject, so this historical and sociological research has always, for India, a supreme court of appeal, in the Charge of Bhishma to Yudhishtira in the Shanti Parva of the Mahabharata. Here we have the utmost of

royal insight and wisdom concentrated upon the question of national well-being, and every student before he studies, should sit self-crowned, bearing the cares and responsibilities of kings amongst kings, that he may understand in all their actuality these words of the Indian sovereigns of old.

It is well-known however that all great ages dawn with a mighty wave of hero-worship. The enthusiasm that leads to the formation of the Vivekananda Societies themselves is an instance of this. History cannot be entirely philosophical. Let us plunge madly into the worship of great characters. Nothing could be more akin to the Swami Vivekananda's own spirit. He would spend hours in talk of Buddha or Sita or S. Francis or even perhaps of some great personage living at the moment in a foreign land. And he would throw himself into the very soul of the hero, never failing to throw the light of some new and startling interpretation upon character and narrative.

Why then should the Vivekananda Societies not get given members to discover all that is possible about, for instance, Akbar, or Rani Ahalya Bai, Pratap Singh of Chitore, the *Gurus* of the Sikhs, or Pericles, Saladin, Joan of Arc, George Washington, and then read papers, embodying their study? Or again, some special crisis in the story of a people might be worked up, Italy from 1820 to 1860, Japan before and after 1867, the French Revolution, the ancient struggle of the Greek against the Persian. These, as has been well said, are the *nodes of history*. They are a national education in themselves.

A useful method of work will be found to be that of common discussion. It is only by inducing the boys to study, argue, and think out for themselves the subjects and questions proposed that we can reach a free and living knowledge. At the end of an informal conversation or formal debate, as the case may be, passages might be read from the Swami's other books, by way of ascertaining some authoritative verdict. In some such way we might hope to be secure from danger of deadening the intelligence,

and degrading the opinion of the Guru, by making of it a new bondage.

For he is not the greatest teacher who can tell us most, but he who leads us to ask the deepest questions. Let us then prepare ourselves to ask questions, and as we return to the Swami's own works after each month or six weeks of such intellectual excursions, we may rest assured that we shall find them more and more luminous, till at last his whole personality stands revealed to us, because we have learnt to love even as he loved, to hope as he hoped, and to believe as he believed.

## A NOTE ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH

1. In all that you do, be dominated by the moral aim. Remember that Truth, in its fulness, is revealed, not only through the intellect, but also through the heart, and the will. Never rest content, therefore, with a realisation which is purely mental. And never forget that every act of our lives is a necessary sacrifice to knowledge, that a man who consciously chooses a mean or ignoble course *cannot* long continue to be a pioneer in the march of his fellows onwards. Only if we are always striving, in every way, for the highest that is attainable can we actually achieve anything at all in any path.

It has been said that "the great scientific discoveries are great social events." This is true of all advances in learning. We labour, even to win truth, not on behalf of Self, but on behalf of man and the fruits of our labour are to be given to man, not selfishly enjoyed. Better a low attainment generously shared, than a high vision seen by oneself alone. Better, because more finally effective to the advance of knowledge. The result of the struggle of the individual in our generation ought to be the starting-point of the race in the next.

2. Never be contented with the ideas and the wisdom which are gathered in the study. We are bodies, as well as minds. We have other senses and other faculties, besides those of language. We have limbs, as well as brains. Use the body. Use all the senses, use even the limbs, in the pursuit of truth. That which is learned, not only with the mind, by means of manuscripts and books, but also through the eyes and the touch, by travel and by work, is really known. Therefore, if you want to understand India, visit the great historic centres of each age. Turn

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Portion of a letter written to Radhakumud Mookerjee, published in *The Modern Review*, February, 1912.

over the earth and stroke the chiselled stones, with your own hands, walk to the sight that you want to see, if possible, rather than ride. Ride rather than drive. *Stand* in the spot, where an event happened, even if no trace of its occurrence is still visible. If you desire to understand a religious idea, reproduce as perfectly as you can, in every detail, the daily life of the man to whom it came, or the race to which it was familiar. To understand the Buddhist *Bhikshu*, go out and beg. To understand Aurangzeb, sit in the mosque at Delhi, and pray there the prayers of the Mohammedan. Or, if social formations are your study, be sure to *work*, to *experiment*, as well as to learn. Verify each truth, test each idea, that comes to you. Whatever you seek, bend every faculty on its achievement. What you believe, make yourself to it as dough kneaded by the baker, as clay worked by the potter, as the channel to the water of the river. Spurn ease. Never rest content. Make thought into sensation; sensation into experience; experience into knowledge. Let knowledge become character. Glory in suffering. By what your work costs *you*, you may know its possible value to the world.

3. Never forget the future. "By means of the Past to understand the Present, *for the conquest of the Future.*" Let this be your motto. Knowledge without a purpose is mere pedantry. Yet at the same time, the intrusion of self-interest upon the pursuit of knowledge, must be turned aside, as with the flaming sword. Purpose, moral purpose, others-regarding purpose is the very antithesis of self-interest. Refuse to be drawn into personal, social, or doctrinal disputes. Release the energy that belongs to these worlds, and let it find a higher function, in aiding you to your self-chosen goal.

4. And now comes the question of the scope of your work, the question of what you are actually to do. On two points I know you to be clear,—first, you are determined, whatever you do, through it to serve the Indian Nationality; and second, you know that to do this, you

must make yourself a world-authority in that particular branch of work. On these two points, therefore, I do not need to dwell.

With regard to the actual field of labour, it has long, I think, been determined amongst us that India's assimilation of the modern spirit may be divided into three elements, which She has not only to grasp but also to democratise. These are: Modern Science; Indian History; and the World-Sense or Geography,—Synthetic Geography.

5. Now in whichever of these you choose your own task, most of your intellectual *pleasure* must come from the others. If you were a worker in Science, you might read a good deal of History, in interesting forms, as recreation. And so on. One of the modes by which a line of high research becomes democratised is just this. The historical epoch, for instance, that is opened up by the scholar is immediately appropriated and clothed with flesh, by the novelist, the poet and the dramatist. Scott's novels have been one of the chief factors in the creation of the modern spirit. And you do not need to be told what poetry has done for the popularising of Buddhist research amongst the English-speaking peoples.

6. But whatever you do, plunge into it heart and soul. Believe that, in a sense, it alone,—this modern form of knowledge, young though it be,—*is true*. Carry into it no prepossessions, no prejudices. Do not try, through it, to prove that your ancestors understood all things, but manfully determine to add its mastery to the intellectual realm of your ancestor's descendants. I see this vice on all hands. People imagine that it is "national" to reply when told something new that ought to thrill them through and through, "Ah yes, I am familiar with that in Sanskrit, or from the *Mahabharata*, or from the sayings of such and such a *Sadhu*." And there their thought ends. This is pure idleness and irreverence. Such recognition kills thought, and coffins it: it offers it no home in which to dwell, no garden in which to grow! The man who would

conquer new realms intellectually must never look back, except to find tools. The man who would see Truth face to face must first wash his eyes in dew, unused by human kind. Afterwards, when the task is done, when you come home laden with your spoils, you may perform the great sacrifice of reverence. You may tally this and that, amongst your own discoveries, with this and that amongst the utterances of the forefathers, and find, in an ecstasy of reconciliation, that you have gone by the same road as they, only calling the milestones by different names. But, today, set your face sternly towards the tabulation of *difference*, towards the new, the strange, the unproven, and undreamt, you will prove yourself the true son of your father, not by wearing garments of their fashions but by living their life, by fighting with their strength. Concentration and renunciation are the true *differentiæ* of the Hindu mind, not certain subjects of study, or a pre-occupation with Sanskrit.

7. And now as to the subject itself. Already you have progressed in the direction of History and Indian Economics. It is to be supposed therefore that your work itself will be somewhere in this region. But side by side with your own specialism—in which you will faithfully do, with your trained habits, what Professor Jadu Nath Sarkar calls “spade-work”—do not forget to interest yourself in subjects as a whole. If you take up Geography, read History for recreation, but be a great geographer, like Reclus. If you take up History do not forget to read Reclus' Universal Geography, and every other synthetic work that you can find. The mind seeks energy by reposing in synthesis or unity, and uses the energy so acquired, in analytical or specialistic fields. Again if Indian History be your work of research, read the finest European treatises on Western History. They may not always be valuable for their facts, but they are priceless for their methods. Read Buckle and Lecky as well as Gibbon. And read the great Frenchmen if you can. It is said that Bossuet's short work on the

movement of History, written for a Dauphin of France, was the spark that set the soul of Napoleon on fire. I have not yet read it, but I hope to do so. I hope also to read Condorcet and Lamartine, and more than I have yet done of Michelet. About Comte, I feel unable to advise you. I believe fully that his has been the greatest mind ever devoted to History. But whether his treatment of the subject is as valuable as his conclusions, I am unable to tell you. For my own part, I have hitherto only been able to grasp a little bit at a time, and with regard to the thousands of questions that are in my mind, I cannot even tell whether he has given definite answers to them or not. Yet the two books that I have lent you, by an English Positivist,—“The Meaning of History”—and “The New Calendar of Great Men”,—seem to me, though very popular, yet extremely profound. As I have already pointed out to you, the short essays with which each division of the latter book is introduced, and the connectedness of the treatment of each life with others, are to my mind worth their weight in gold.

In Indian History, such a point of view is conspicuous by its absence. Some writers are interested in Buddhist India (if indeed we have any right to employ such a term) and some in various stages of Mahratta or Sikh or Indo-Islamic History, or what not. But who has caught the palpitation of the *Indian* heart-beat through one and all of these? It is *India* that makes Indian History glorious. It is *India* that makes the whole joy of the Indian places. I felt this when I was at Rajgir, and saw so plainly, shining through the Buddhist period, the outline and colour of an earlier India still,—the *India* of the *Mahabharata*. And the other day amongst the ruins at Sanchi, when a lady who had been in Egypt turned and said to me, “If you think so much of 2,000 years what would you think of 4,000?” I said “I care nothing for 2,000! Even Sanchi is but a heap of stones. *But this strength is in the Indian people still!*”

Are you the man who can catch this truth, and justify

it before the whole world by the mingling of stern scholarship, with poetic warmth? Better still, are you the man who can make India herself feel it? An Upanishad of the National History would make eternal foundations for the Indian Nationality, in the Indian heart, the only world in which the nationality can be built enduringly. Or do you lean rather to the economic side of your studies? If so, do not allow yourself to become a mere specialist on statistics, and still more earnestly guard yourself against being the one person in the world who knows all that is to be known about India's grievances, and knows nothing else. Every country and every community in the world has grievances, and grievances against certain definite other persons and communities also. To *think* of our mistakes and weaknesses as our grievances against another, is to postpone indefinitely the day of setting them right. The active, the aggressive, attitude is quite different. Accepting the past—and if you wish to be proud of some of your ancestors' deeds, you must be clamly prepared to suffer for others. The law of opposites will hold here, as elsewhere!—the question is, what is to be done next? Even the science of economics may be made moral, may be made constructive. The doctrine that man always does what pays him, is vulgar nonsense. In fact the highest men are rather attracted to the opposite extreme, of doing always what does *not* pay.

Ruskin, Wicksteed and the Fabians, amongst English writers, may help one to a true view-point for economics, for these have felt the wholeness of human interests, through the specialism. For the technology of the subject, you must read many books. But the morality and wholeness of human love, in it, you will share with very few, and those nearly always representatives of some *cult* or other, which teaches the love and service, instead of the exploiting and extermination, of human beings, as the highest and most permanent joy of man. There is however a third subject which you might take up, and feed from both your studies, of Indian History and Indian Economics.

I allude to *Sociology*, or the Study of Society. This term was the creation of Comte, but was popularised by Herbert Spencer, a very different person. Spencer and a host of other writers have gone into the subject, through the study of *Customs*, in which there can be little doubt that the history of society is chiefly written. Comte regarded it rather from the point of view of an organism having a meaning, a responsibility and a destiny. He saw the whole spirituality of man in every human being of every human race! And many writers have attempted to work out theories of society, by comparing those of men with those of ants and bees and so on.

King of modern sociologists is perhaps Kropotkin, with his book on *Mutual Aid* published by Heinemann, in which he works out the idea that mutual aid, co-operation, self-organisation, have been much stronger factors than the competition of fellows, in the evolution of the higher forms of life and in the determining of success for the community.

Now this is surely a line of thought and research, which is *most* important to the question of Nationality. In my own opinion, we are entering here on a new period in which *Mutual Aid, Co-operation, Self-organisation*, is to be the motto, and we want, not only determined workers, but also great leaders, equipped with all the knowledge that is to be had, and therefore capable of leading us in thought. Is it true that an industrial society represents the highest social formation? If so, is it equally true that it is always based upon an antecedent military? "From the military, through the active, to the industrial," some one said to me the other day. We stand here on the verge of great questions. Yet one thing would seem clear—only a people who are capable of industrialism, are capable of anything else. If the beginning determines the end, clearly the end also determines the beginning, the struggle to become fully industrialised is as high as the highest struggle that there is.

Even to write the History of India, even to set down clearly the problems which that history involves, I have

long felt that we must first have experts in sociology,—men who can at a glance assign to a social group its possible age in pre-historic chronology. We want after that, and combined with it, those to whom the History of the early Asiatic Empires,—Chaldean, Assyrian, Tartar, Pelasgian, Egyptian, Phœnician,—is an open book. And, lastly, we want those who are competent to look out upon the future and determine towards what goal, by what line upon the trackless ocean, the great ship of national well-being is to be navigated.

Are you to be a solitary student? Or are you one of those most happy and fruitful workers who can call about them fellow-captains and fellow-crewsmen to toil along the same lines and exchange the results of thought?

## A NOTE ON CO-OPERATION

As to what you can read. First, for what *part* of the national work do you wish to train yourself? I believe, if rightly carried on, India is now entering on a period in which her motto is to be—"Mutual Aid: Self-organisation: Co-operation."

If you will look into the matter you will see that most cases of oppression and corruption—where the advantage of numbers is so uniformly on one side, as here—could be met by *Organisation*. It is more difficult to do wrong to ten thousand men who stand solid and are intelligent, than to an isolated and illiterate person. Take the case of clerks in offices, of Government servants, railway servants, rate payers, peasants. Much could be done amongst all these classes by simple enrolment and united action. But everything depends in such cases on the organiser, who is usually the Secretary. Do you care to do such work as this? It is not merely for self-protection that the organ could be used, but for obtaining credit, tools, knowledge, co-operation and mutual aid of many kinds.

If this is the branch which you are to take up, you will find that the subject has a history and a literature of its own. Read up *Co-operation* in the Encyclopædia Britannica. Write to the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, 22 Lincoln Place, Dublin, Ireland, for their papers, and for advice and answers to definite questions. Read *Mutual Aid*, a scientific work, by Kropotkin, published by Heinemann. Study the history of Trade Unions. Study the history of Co-operation in Denmark. And study particularly the history of small countries, Norway, Sweden, the Hanseatic League, Motley's Rise of the Dutch Republic, etc. Make a small society for

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Portion of a letter written to a friend in Madras, published in *The Modern Review*, April, 1912.

reading and discussing these subjects. Indeed do this in any case. Share your own knowledge, and co-operate in extending and deepening it. Above all, think things out, and put your thought into practice, learning from your own mistakes. Organise a single group of people for some definite aim, and see how you get on. Organise a class for, say, legal aid. That ought not to be difficult. But I think it would be a better experiment to make than organising for a charity, an enterprise which we are all accustomed to attempting and failing in. Organise for a united struggle of some kind, against something definite.

Or do you want to specialise in politics? In that case you must study the Economic History of India,—and the Congress publications, together with the books of Dutt, Digby, Naoroji, P. C. Ray and others, with the speeches of Ranade, Gokhale, and so on, will be your best fare.

Or is it *India*? In that case, work at History and do not neglect the History and Geography of other countries besides your own. For remember, it is the national sense *in* the world-sense that we have to achieve. The structure of human society,—Spencer, Tylor, Clodd, Lubbock and others; the history of Early Empires,—Assyria, Chaldea, China, Persia, Egypt, Greece, etc., and for India,—Tilak's two books, Fergusson's *Architecture*, Cunningham's *Ancient India*, and other books. M'Crindle's collections, *Archæological survey reports*, etc., etc., etc. In this kind of reading, constantly reinforced by pilgrimages to the places of which you read as far as possible—you can find the materials for a history yet to be written.

Or will you serve the great cause through the Industrial Revival? In that case all that helps for co-operation should help you. And a different class of work is wanted.

Or do you care to undertake the work of getting modern knowledge written up in the vernaculars? What books have you in the Malbari tongue, in which *women* can read History? If you worked at this, in your own language, you would need helpers, an army of them. And then,

again, you would want the courage that is born of feeling that others were carrying out the same idea in other languages.

For this, we would need the heroic devotion of thousands, of our choicest graduates the country over, each choosing his own subject, and filling up a single space in your great roll. There is nothing that so much needs doing. Nothing that would bring more illumination with it. Here is a case of co-operation. Each man would give only a few hours of leisure daily. The rest of his time he would be earning his bread. Do you see?

But there are other causes. There is physical training, for example. This is much needed. And so on and so on.

In any case read everything you can lay hands on, by Frederick Harrison. His books are expensive, but worth their weight in gold. They are published by Macmillan.

## THE PLACE OF THE KINDERGARTEN IN INDIAN SCHOOLS

### I

The beautiful word *Kindergarten*—garden of children—is known today throughout the world. Unfortunately, the truths that brought it into being, are not equally familiar, or equally apprehended. The ideal child-garden would seem to be the home, with the mother as the gardener. And if all mothers understood the development of man, and knew how to make the most of their flower-world, this would undoubtedly be the truest and noblest school for childhood. Nay, so far goes instinct, and so much greater is feeling than learnedness, that a babe were better abandoned to the loving care of the simplest mother, than to the harsh knowledge of a soured and withered teacher. But as facts stand, the mother needs the teacher's knowledge of the aim subserved, while undoubtedly the teacher needs the mother's lovingness and care.

Great men work out knowledge, and give it to the community. Thus each civilisation becomes distinguished by its characteristic institutions. Nothing could be more perfect educationally than the *bratas* which Hindu society has preserved and hands to its children in each generation, as first lessons in worship, so in the practice of social relationships, or in manners. Some of these *bratas*—like that which teaches the service of the cow, or the sowing of seeds, or some which seem to set out on the elements of geography and astronomy—have an air of desiring to impart what we now distinguish as secular knowledge. They appear, in fact, like surviving fragments of an old educational scheme. But for the most part, they constitute a training in religious ideas and religious feelings. As such, their perfection is startling. They combine practice, story,

game, and object, with a precision that no Indian can appreciate or enjoy as can the European familiar with modern educational speculation. India has, in these, done on the religious and social plane, what Europe is trying, in the Kindergarten, to do on the scientific. When we have understood the *bratas*, we cease to wonder at the delicate grace and passivity of the Oriental woman. Where a child has learnt to stand before a plant, asking permission mentally to cut its blossoms, how shall the acts of the woman be rude or ill-considered? "O Tulasi, beloved of Vishnu," says the little maiden, about to gather the basil-leaves for worship, "grant me the blessing to take you to His feet!" and only after a pause does she begin to pluck.

The Kindergarten lessons of Europe, then, might be described as a series of *bratas*, designed to launch the child's mind on a knowledge of science. Like the religious *bratas* of India, they deal, in the first place, directly with concrete objects. These objects are introduced by means of stories. In the course of the lesson, or "play"—or *brata* as it might be called,—some definite act is performed repeatedly. And finally, in the highly-perfected lesson, the result is a game, consisting of a song set to music, to be sung by the children, henceforth, in action. These four parts, then, story, object, action, and the resultant game, make up the typical child-garden exercise. By their means, the mind of the learner is made to go through a definite sequence of experiences, on which a higher sequence may be constructed later. These four elements make up the child-world as a whole and in its parts. And the problem of child-education is so to use the typical *brata* as to initiate by its means in the learner, an ordered consciousness of place, time, quantity, form, causation, and the rest.

This form of lesson is based upon the observation of child-nature, as shown in children's play.

Our own ancestors, never at fault in matters of religion, seem to have understood the revelation made in play, sufficiently to use it for the foundation culture of soul and

feeling. The European thinkers and observers,—Pestalozzi, Fröbel, and Cooke—assuming that it is general knowledge of the world that makes man, turned to the same field of study, little children at play, in order to find out from it how the child might be made to acquire this knowledge, and gain a mastery of the world. When we have studied both forms of education, and know all that there is to be known about them, we shall probably be struck by this fact—that the Oriental is always trying to develop the child *within* and the Occidental to put weapons into his hands, by which to subjugate the *without*. It is another instance of the great truth that these civilisations are rather complementary to one another than ultimately antagonistic. And one can only hope that when the problem of general education has been solved for India, there will arise some one to put on eternal record for the world, the science of the Indian *bratas*.

The young of all animals play, and while this may often seem to us aimless and bewildered, we shall generally find on looking closer that the gambols and capers of infancy are at once a dramatisation of the past, and a forecast of the future. The play of kittens is a drama of the hunt. The kid revives the memory of the rocky mountains in which his forbears roamed. This expenditure of energy without immediate return is an overflow of health and strength. The starved have no spirit for play. But while not directly profitable, play is always educational. The cub or the pup is learning his future trade, by those unreasoning movements, repeated over and over again, during the period when he is still dependent for food on his parents. Young birds, by play train themselves for future flying or swimming or scratching of the soil. And the human child, similarly, teaches himself, from the beginning of his life, by spontaneous movements. Mothers know how many are the component efforts by which a baby learns to turn over in bed, to crawl, to walk, to speak. And all these efforts, undertaken wilfully, energetically, repeatedly, are

what we regard as play. Yet they are leading, slowly but surely, to the co-ordinated activities of manhood.

When the baby can walk and talk, his mother watches him less closely. Yet the old process is going on, with the same vigour as before, but on an ascending plane of mentality, making, destroying, frolicking alone, playing in groups ; digging, grubbing, modelling clay dolls, investigating mud, sand, water ; catching insects, fish, birds ; throwing balls ; flying kites ; whittling sticks, catching knucklebones, imitating weddings and funerals ; taming pigeons ; organising cricket and football ; in all this medley of pursuits, there is no confusion, but a certain definite sequence of progression, corresponding to the mental development of the age. This is nature's way of turning the whole world into the baby's school-room, putting the weapons of his sovereignty into the hands of the future king. Nature makes no mistakes. Under that benign rule, *all* the causes construe to bring into being *all* the effects. And the child's interest never flags. As hunger precedes healthy digestion, so enjoyment accompanies all these lessons. The attention is concentrated, the whole being is absorbed.

The whole of this, however, would in its totality make nothing more than a man of the Stone Age—a great chieftain, loved as a leader, mighty in the chase, resourceful, brave, tuneful and a lover of beauty, all this might be produced by Nature's Education, but it is difficult to see very much more. All the rest is the work of man on man, and is initiated in the processes that make up what we call education. Even in the Stone Age these higher elements were at work, or none of us would have emerged from it. Even in the Stone Age, man had his dreams, and woman her hero-tales. Old crones by the hearth-side stood for the children as weird embodiments of wisdom. There was always a super-world for Humanity, of imagination and symbol, of love and hope. As civilisation has grown more complex, this super-world has become more and more

definitely an object of aspiration, and enquiry has concerned itself increasingly with the initiation into it of each separate human being. Only with the full elucidation of this question, can there be real hope for man, for only with perfect knowledge of how to educate, can man be rendered independent of birth and inheritance, and stand some chance of being fully humanised. Every religion carries with it its own scheme of initiation, and expresses its own hope and pity for humanity in some form or another. And today, having entered upon the age of science,—that age in which secular knowledge constitutes Truth, and is held as sacred as all the scriptures of the past,—it behoves us to formulate, to the best of our ability, that theory of education, by which the human unit is to be *virilised* or initiated into the full powers of Humanity.

'Nature is conquered by obeying her', says Bacon, and to Pestalozzi,—the great educator who was created by the French Revolution, with its thought of the Rights of Man,—it was clear enough that the science of education could only be built up, on a keen and continuous observation of the laws of mind. Over and over again Pestalozzi refers to the modern problem as that of the "*psychologizing* of education". In this psychologizing, he made two great discoveries. First came the law that abstract thought has to be gathered from concrete experience. Second was the generalisation, that the child in its development follows the race. One hardly knows which of these two is the more important. In the first place, all knowledge begins with the concrete, that is to say, with the senses. Through the senses to the mind! never by ignoring or thwarting the senses, can we build up education. By *controlling*,—certainly! For control presupposes development, and training is only a larger name for it. But always from experience of the concrete, through the senses, to the power of abstract thought, is the great Veda of modern education. It is also the truth that underlies the use of the image in worship, and the *brata* in social culture.

It was on the basis of the laws thus enunciated by Pestalozzi, that his disciple, Fröbel, devised the Kindergarten. For years he watched the play of children, and analysed the subjects they had to learn, trying to connect the one with the other. Finally he invented the collection of toys known as his "gifts"; tabulated a certain number of materials, such as string, sticks, sand, chalk, paper, and others; and left on record a wonderful series of games and observations. All these things together constitute what is known as the Kindergarten system. It is a system in which all knowledge is supposed to receive a foundation in concrete experience and all work to appear to the child as 'play'. The 'gifts' consist of balls, building-materials, and tiles, for pattern-making. The 'occupations'—such as stick-laying, mat-weaving, paper-folding, colour-drawing, and so on—are of perennial interest, being in fact based on the primitive occupations of humanity. And these games which do not occur simply as parts of lessons, are for the most part observation of the crafts, or of natural phenomena, turned into action-songs. The flight of pigeons, the catching of fish, the sailing of a boat, the work of the peasant, are all subjects that may be described in games, which are often of great spirit.

In every case the educational value of all this depends largely on the particular qualifications of the teacher who is applying it. The Kindergarten as arranged by Fröbel, is perhaps a thought too complex, a shade too precise, altogether too "German", as one might say. It tends too easily to become mechanical, a hard and fast system, instead of a means to an end. The grasp of fundamental truths and aims, and a certain freedom and generosity in arriving at these, are far more important to the child-gardener than a full supply of material, and a knowledge of Fröbel's sequences. No two Fröbel schools are exactly alike. They will differ, not only in the detail of methods, but also in the dominant conceptions of the function of education. They will differ, also, in the extent to which

they avail themselves of the material that has been added—by Cooke and others, from the year 1865 onwards,—to the foundations laid by Fröbel, and the structure erected by him. But if, within the same country and a single village, the difference between various applications of the same principle can be so marked, it follows that the Kindergarten in Europe and the Kindergarten in India, ought to be two different things. And no one can create an Indian Kindergarten, save Indian educators ; for the system must be an efflorescence of Indian life itself, embodying educational principles that are universally true of man. One educator in Bombay, Mr. Chichgar by name, has made attempts during the last fifty years, to Indianise the Kindergarten, and in certain directions he has succeeded wonderfully. His own face and form are irresistibly suggestive of the typical educator, the creator of educational philosophy. He is curiously like the pictures of Fröbel, in appearance, a mixture of man and mother, both venerable. He has the divine witchery of calling the children to his arms, and he lives for his idea. Undoubtedly Mr. Chichgar has contributed an enormous number of elements of great value to the Indian Kindergarten of the future. He has concretised the study of number and quantity with great success. But he himself would probably be the first to point out that still further progress in generalising the Kindergarten is needed, and that the co-operation of every race in India will be necessary before the initiation of learning can be brought to perfection.

The Fröbel school, as we know it, is immensely costly. The idea has suffered from exploitation at the hands of trades-people, till it would seem as if one could not set out to teach a few babies without all sorts of large expenditure. Yet this is directly contrary to the ideal of Fröbel, who must have intended his educational material to be as fugitive and valueless as the broken pots and sticks with which children usually amuse themselves. A very good test for the Indianising of a given toy or occupation would thus

lie in finding some object which offered an educational equivalent, without cost. For instance, the first gift Fröbel offers the child\* is a soft ball of bright colour. Obviously, for this we must take the common Indian rag ball, and cover it with red, blue, or yellow, green, orange, or purple, cotton. But for a variant on this, we can offer a fruit or a flower, of the requisite tint, dancing on its stem. With these, let the child and its mother, or the children and their teacher, simply play. It is true that such balls cannot be made to rebound, but with this exception, they will serve all the purposes of a game, and by their means the child can acquire language, and act in collaboration with his fellows. For the rudiments of military precision and uniformity are imparted by means of "ball drilling" or ball-games. The most distinctive feature of the modern school is its class-teaching, as opposed to the individual study, and sing-song in chorus, of mediæval hedge-schools. And class-teaching begins with the united response of several to a signal, as in the case of Fröbel's ball.

Another point to be noted here, is that each perception of the child is to be followed by its appropriate word. First the thing or the act, *then* the name or word. We *feel* the rag-ball with the fingers, and pronounce it *soft*. But every word has its antithesis. 'Show me some thing not soft', asks the teacher, and the child raps on stone or wood, or what not, pronouncing it hard. Other parallels are found, and 'soft, hard', is realised and repeated over and over again. After knowing comes language, and each concept has its opposite taught with it. The ball is thrown 'up' then 'down'. The left hand and the right are learnt in one lesson. It is as easy to the child to learn the proper word, in this way, as any simpler substitute for it. We have

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\* Gift I.—Six soft coloured balls, blue, red, yellow, green, orange, and purple in colour.

Gift II.—Ball, cube, and cylinder, in wood, little used in Kindergarten. Chiefly academic.

Gift III.—Cube-like box containing 8 one-inch wooden cubes.

Gift IV.—Box of equal shape and size, containing eight blocks, half the thickness of the former, and twice the length.

reached the law: on the object follows its name, on the deed the word.

Fröbel gives a series of boxes, containing various kinds of bricks for building. These boxes are cubes in shape. The first is divided into eight smaller cubes. The second into eight brick-shaped blocks of equal size and shape; the third consists of twenty-seven cubes, some of which are divided diagonally into triangular halves and quarters; and the fourth consists of a cube made of brick-shaped blocks, divided in the same way. These four gifts, and especially the first two of them, are the back-bone of the Kindergarten. From them the child studies number, geometry, and the dividing of quantities. He listens to a history-story, and makes of them, characters in the tale. They are horses in the hunt; soldiers in battle; houses and ghats in geography; boats, wells, trees, towns, worlds,—everything by turns, and nothing long. Fixed and solid as is their form, they are absolutely fluid to the child's imagination, at once his treasure and his friends. But they are made of wood; and to describe their form is to imply the skill and precision that went to their making. They cannot but be expensive. For an Indian Kindergarten, therefore, they are out of the question, unless they could be reproduced in earthenware, by the village potter, and so far, I have not once succeeded in having this done, often as I have tried. A substitute for the building gifts is to my own mind, one of the crying needs of the Indian child-garden. In America, however, with this perplexity in mind, I found that theorists did not consider the building-gifts absolutely essential to the Kindergarten. Prof. John Dewey, indeed,—one of the most distinguished thinkers on these questions—had discarded them altogether, and made large wooden blocks in their place, setting the children free to play with these on the floor, after the common manner of the unschooled child, making trains and engines, and so forth. "The child does not get out of these gifts what we imagine that he gets," was his brief reply, when I asked him his reason for the

change. And a great English educator points out that these particular building-gifts are not the *only* way in which the child can be taught to think accurately, to count and divide and arrange. I have wondered, therefore, whether we might not make small Malas of dried nuts and seeds,—a ring of eight for the first building-gift, and of twenty-seven for the third—and use these for the number-concepts that could be evolved from the bricks. In such a substitute, we miss, of course, the definition of form, and we miss also the freedom of manipulation, that go with the toys of Fröbel's designing. But unless they can be imitated in half-baked clay, these last cannot be considered available, in India, on any sufficient scale.

## II

The whole of a child's time in a Fröbel School is not spent, however, in playing with balls and cubes. There is always the problem of teaching him those things that it is essential to his future he should know, without breaking the spirit of joyousness, or the habit of dealing with the concrete. There is also the question of physical exercise to be provided for. And further there is the need of children and primitive men to *make*, to *create*. The first of these necessities demands that reading, writing, and the like, should be Fröbelised, and included in the school routine. The second is met, in a special sense, by games and songs. And the third is the sphere of the *occupations*, in which some material,—like clay, thread, paper, beads, or what not,—is given to the child, and he is taught to make something of it. Only those who have tried, know the marvellous creativeness shown by the children, in modelling, in simple kinds of weaving, in making patterns with coloured chalks, and the like. And on the other hand, few of us have any idea of the intellectual epochs that are made for them by things they have done. The most distinguished man I know tells to this day of a great irrigation work, designed

and carried out by him at the age of nine, in a tiny back-garden. The joy with which he succeeded in arranging culverts to carry his canals under the path, is still a stimulus to him, still gives him confidence in himself, in the prime of his life.

These occupations were intended by Fröbel to connect themselves with the primitive occupations of the race. The disciple of Pestalozzi could not forget that each man is to come to maturity by running rapidly through the historic phases of humanity. And it must be this fact that makes the enthusiasm of the child over the occupations so great. When weaving is so simplified that little children can practise it, they fall upon it with cries of joy. It is given to them by Fröbel with strips of coloured paper, woven into a paper-frame, or mat, in patterns. It might also be done by weaving coloured string into simple frames of thin bamboo, after the fashion of the toy *charpois* sold in the bazaars. Or strips of coloured rags might be used, instead of string or paper. Or bamboo-shavings might receive different bright colours, and be used for the same purpose.

The delight of the children, and their absorption in this pattern-making, will indicate sufficiently its educational value, for it cannot be stated too often, in the words of Herbert Spencer, that appetite is as good a test of mental powers of digestion as of physical.

Mud, clay, and sand are another form of material by whose means children educate themselves. With them, early man learnt to build. Children, and above all Indian children, have a perfect genius for modelling, and this ought to be fostered and encouraged. Let two children make bananas of clay, and by comparing their productions, we shall quickly see which knew more, which observed better, which had proceeded further in thought. From this, we shall quickly learn to see the educational value of modelling, and the intellectual power which expresses itself in all art.

The genius of Fröbel is nowhere seen to greater

advantage than when he gives coloured paper to children, and leads them to fold it,—not only, by this means, teaching them an infinitude of geometry, about lines and surfaces, but also encouraging them to make a number of paper-toys. The delight of little children in working together towards a common standard of excellence, makes them pursue eagerly the purposes set before them. And only by trying it, can one begin to understand how much education can be indicated and acquired, by this simple means. The whole mental grasp and development of an individual goes to determine his success in folding a square of paper precisely in half, laying it straight, in its proper place on the table.

It is the scope which they offer to the imagination, that makes the little ones love these raw materials of activity, with so ardent a love. None of the costly dolls and other toys that are made by machines and sold in shops, have this power to rouse their interest and absorb their attention. The very crudity of the material is an advantage to the child, because it leaves so much to the mind. It only suggests, it does not complete. Children at play, like the worshipper at prayer, want suggestions of the ideal, not its completed representation. The work of the imagination is something to which we have constantly to invite the child, if he does not spring to it spontaneously. It is this which makes him declare, when he receives his first ball, that it is like a bird, a fish, a kitten ; and this first effort of the imagination is to be encouraged, never to be checked.

But an Indian village, far from railways, with its potter, its weaver, its brazier, and its jeweller ; with women at the spinning-wheel, and Gowallas tending the animals, is a perfect picture of primitive society. All the early occupations of man are there, and all the early tools. The potter's wheel, the weaver's loom, the plough, the spinning-wheel, and the anvil, are the eternal toys of the race. A child left to play in these streets, dramatising all the life about him, might easily make for himself an ideal Kindergarten.

The village itself is the true child-garden. There is a great deal of truth in this statement. It will always tend to be true in India, that great men for this reason, are born in villages, rather than in cities. And rather in mediæval than in modern cities. At the same time, we must remember that the village is a haphazard congeries of occupations, from the child's point of view, not an organised and directed synthesis, like the school. It is by dramatising the crafts, and repeating them in his own way, that the child educates himself, not by taking an actual part in their labour. If the second of these were the true mode of experience, some slave-child of a servant or a craftsman would stand a better chance of education than the little freeman of a higher class who flits hither and thither at will, and uses labour as a means of self-development, not as a passport to the right of existence.

It is most of all for the stimulus they give to the games, that the child has reason to rejoice in the presence of the village-crafts. A Kindergarten game, ought, ideally, to be a drama constructed impromptu out of a story or a description. It is a drama of the primitive type like that of the *Kathaks* in which one or two principal performers are supported by a chorus. The song is accompanied by such movements as dancing in a ring, hand in hand, clapping, or jumping. The subject may be drawn from nature, or the crafts, or family life. The farmer's labours of sowing, transplanting, and reaping; the drawing of water for the fields; the weaver at his loom, and the maiden at her wheel; the work of potter, brazier and jeweller; the flight of birds; the herding of cows; the life of the riversiders; the relations of parents and children, all these are good subjects. Mrs. Brander, in Madras, has collected the nursery-rhymes of the Tamils, and made them into simple child-garden games which are of great value in creating enjoyment, and giving co-ordinated action. The children stand in a ring and sing the couplet, with any gestures that may be appropriate. Then, perhaps, they take hands and

dance round, repeating it. Such games, of pure physical movement, deserve inclusion in the Kindergarten list. The well-known rhyme in Bengali, beginning, "*Tai, Tai, Tai, Mamar badi jai,*" suggests similar treatment.

The most serious and universally applicable aspects of the Kindergarten are discovered, however, so soon as we begin to consider the problem of initiating, through them, various kinds of knowledge. Without breaking the continuity of its concrete experience, the child has to learn the use of written language, Arithmetic, Geometry, History, Geography, various kinds of science and design. In leading its mind into the struggle with these different classes of facts, we are free to use any object or material that pleases us, or promises to illustrate the task before us. But certain principles must guide us. We must present the child with appropriate elements, that is to say, with elements that he can deal with. And we must lead him to learn, through his own deeds. I have often thought that a box full of little card-board tiles, printed with the letters of the alphabet, would be a more child-like way of teaching a child to read, than a reading book. The learning would be more rapid and more pleasant, if these letters were to be picked out and put together, like the pieces of a puzzle. Certainly writing comes before reading, just as speaking a foreign language precedes the easy understanding of it. Word-building,—the spelling of detached words—comes before the reading of sentences. And so on. Always the appeal to the senses. Always the learning by experience. And always joy, the hunger for more.

Many people fear that if work be always made delightful, children will be enervated, and become unable to do that which is distasteful and hard. But these minds have missed the whole meaning of the child-garden. The joy that the child feels there, is the joy of self-control, the joy of energy and absorption, the joy of work. It is an austere, not a libertine, delight. A well-trained Kindergarten child knows better than any other how to address himself to a

new problem, how to shoulder a heavy load, how to infer a principle, from the facts to be correlated. And this power has been gained by teaching him in accordance with his own nature, by watching the laws of his development, and seeking to run with these, instead of against them, by enlisting the activity and effort of the whole child, instead of fettering some faculties and dictating to others.

In other words, if the aim of the Kindergarten has been realised at all, Nature has here been conquered by obeying her.

## MANUAL TRAINING AS A PART OF GENERAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

If we are to make anything like a complete outline of the study known as Manual Training, for the use of Indian Schools and teachers, it will first be necessary to define very clearly the four stages into which a typical educational course may be divided.

For the purposes of this paper, then, we shall consider *Primary*, or Vernacular, or Village Education, as an essential part of a thorough education, and as lasting up to the age of eight, or at most ten years in the case of an Indian boy of the higher classes. During this period, the only language dealt with is the vernacular ; method of learning is of infinitely greater importance than information imparted. The child ought to learn to think, and discover, and also to create for himself ; spontaneous activity of mind and body has a value far beyond that of discipline ; and if any single formal system of teaching is to be taken as type and centre, it must certainly be the Kindergarten. *Secondary Education*, next, may be considered as covering in a boy's life, the years that lie between eight and twelve, or ten and fourteen, or thereabouts. During these years, the child probably begins the study of English, and recapitulates in that language the little that he may previously have acquired, of formal instruction in his own. It is to be hoped, however, for the sake of intellectual integrity and clearness, that the bulk of his education continues to be given in the vernacular, which alone, a boy of this age can possibly be capable of understanding thoroughly.

At twelve or fourteen, as the case may be, the lad will enter on what we may call his *High School Course*. This, in India today, is probably carried on almost entirely in English ; and while we may deplore this fact, we may possibly have to admit its necessity. For no Indian vernacular

can give any one freedom of communication throughout the whole country, and while Hindustani, or Urdu goes near to satisfying this test, English is still the more advantageous, in as much as it confers the lingual franchise, not of India alone, but of the world as a whole, and is, further, a *modern* language, by whose means can be obtained an exactness of thought which is the key to many languages and to almost all the culture, of the present age. In the High School stage of education, there is definite preparation for the work of colleges and universities, which is to come after. And the life's task is probably selected during these years. Nevertheless, our boy is not yet a man. He is still learning. His mistakes are not yet crimes. And the demands of a growing body for plenty of wholesome food and vigorous exercise, for light and air and abundance of pure water, ought to take precedence still of all other necessities, though it ought never to be dissociated from the still keener and manlier joys of increasing self-mastery and intellectual conquest.

And last of all comes the *College Career*, which begins at sixteen or eighteen and ends at twenty or twenty-two years of age, as the case may be. It is perhaps worth while to say here that in matters educational there is no substitute for time. It is a mistake to imagine that an education finished at twenty represents the enjoyment of an advantage over that which is finished at twenty-two. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the reverse is the case. Culture is at bottom a question of *growth*, of development, both of brain and body; and just as we cannot 'rush' a human being through an appointed cycle of physiological changes in a period of time arbitrarily determined, so we cannot act in the corresponding fashion intellectually. The best educated Indian man whom I have seen, left the village school at nine, and ended a second university career in England at twenty-six years of age. The more generous we can be about time, the better results we shall be able to show educationally, and the better worth-while it

becomes, to consider the question of educational methods.

At any rate, the recognition of Manual Training as a part of General Education leads to no cheapening or curtailing of the scheme as a whole. It is always, expensive, more or less, in any particular case, according to the form which is given to it and the completeness with which it is practised. And it always adds to the time required for education. In a Manual Training High School, in the United States, half of the total school time, that is to say, from twelve to fifteen hours a week, is given to drawing and other manual training occupations. Of these twelve to fifteen hours not more than five are assigned to drawing of various kinds, in some cases including clay-modelling and wood-carving,—an equal time is given to woodwork, as practised in carpentry and by the joiner—and another equal number of hours is devoted to metal work, that is, Vice-work, black-smithing, tin-smithing, and machine construction. At the Manual Training High School which is connected with the University at St. Louis, the combined courses in wood and metal are never allowed to take more than eight hours a week ; but in this case, freehand, mechanical, and architectural drawing are treated altogether as a separate subject, occupying another four or five hours.

Now it is not to be understood that these courses are added to the ordinary curriculum of arts with a view to fitting schoolboys for manufacturing or business careers. Undoubtedly, if a boy on leaving school wishes to devote himself to commercial work of any kind, his initiation into it is made easy, by the fact that he is already accustomed to bringing his mind to bear on kindred problems, and calling up all his intellectual resources to aid in their solution. Undoubtedly this is the case. But the argument for the necessity of Manual Training does not rest on such observations as this. It rests entirely on the nature of the human nervous system, and on known facts regarding the

correlation of brain-centres with the development of physical impression and expression. It is entirely from this point of view that we have a right to plead for its inclusion in the school-course. If it were only calculated to supply the factory and the warehouse with competent organisers and directors, the community might well insist on leaving to the mercantile classes, the responsibility of creating opportunities for a limited amount of such training. But those whose experience gives them a right to speak, will in every case maintain that, other things being equal, a boy who had manual training is in all ways the intellectual superior of him who has not. He has freshness and vigour of thought, due to the fact that he knows how to observe, and is accustomed to think for himself. He has daring and originality of purpose. And above all, his character is based on the fundamental habit of adding deed to dream, act to thought, proof to inference.

Over and over again in University register or syllabus do American educators insist upon this,—the purely *educational* purpose of manual training. Say the experts of St. Louis—"If the object is Education, the skilful teacher has no function except to teach.... In a manual training school, *everything is for the benefit of the boy; he is the most important thing in the shop; he is the only article to be put upon the market.* Even in manual education the chief object is mental development and culture. Manual dexterity is but the evidence of a certain kind of mental power, and this mental power, coupled with a knowledge of materials and a familiarity with the tools the hand uses, is doubtless the only basis of that sound practical judgment and ready mastery of material forces and problems which always characterises one well-fitted for the duties of active life. Hence the primary object is the acquirement of mental clearness and intellectual acumen." Even a lawyer should be a better lawyer, if he have had manual training.

The University of St. Louis goes on to point out that, ideally, manual training ought to have a general, rather

than a specific character, if its possible economic application is to have the widest range. "We therefore abstract all the mechanical processes, and manual arts, and typical tools, of the trades and occupations of men, and arrange a systematic course of instruction in the same. Thus, without teaching any trade, we teach the essential mechanical principles which underlie all mechanical trades." A very significant insight into the nature of the work done in the school room, is here afforded. There is a marked difference between the practice of a trade as such, and its use for educational purposes. If the two were the same, the object of manual training might be served by putting a boy into an artisan's workshop for a certain number of hours every week. But they are not the same. To learn to make furniture is not the same thing, by any means, as to acquire accuracy, facility, and executive ability, by working at the cutting and fitting of wood. To learn to make watches or clocks is not the same thing as to be disciplined and experienced in the use of wheels, springs, and pendulums, and to understand theoretically,—so that the mind can use the knowledge,—the physical resistance of one material or another. The educational value of modern industries can only be gathered from a generalisation of those industries, re-analysed into its educative elements. Such a generalisation has been made in America, with the result that a Manual Training High School arranges its course of work, according to the plan given in a table in the appendix, at the end.

That table has been in the main, extracted from an interview with Dr. Hanford Henderson on Technical Education in America and Japan, which was published in the *Hindu* of Madras, in April 1904. But reference to the Special Bulletin, (Whole Number 286) which has been published by the Bureau of Education, Washington D. C., giving synopses of the courses of study in eighteen Manual Training High Schools, confirms Dr. Hanford Henderson's in every particular as an accurate and representative abstract

of what is necessarily the time-table of all manual training courses at this stage of a boy's education.

From this American state paper, can also be gathered the details of an ideal course of Manual Training, extending over three or four years, for girls, of between twelve and twenty years of age.

In this case, the outlook of the work done, is upon art and home-life. The usual drawing, and some work in water-colours, cooking and domestic science (house-work), sewing, clay-modelling, and wood-carving, make up the first year's curriculum. In the second year we have drawing again, dress-making, clay-modelling, wood-carving, and work in ornamental cut iron. As an art, the last mentioned subject is spurious, consisting, as it does, of making pretty trifles out of curved bits of ribbon-iron, fastened together neatly by the pliers. But as an opportunity for learning design and mastering the use of certain important tools, it deserves consideration. In this second year, the practical teaching of cooking, is superseded by theoretical lessons on the chemistry of food and its preparation.

The third and fourth years simply carry these and similar courses into more advanced developments, and nursing of children and of the sick, first aid to the injured, and laundrywork find a place amongst the subjects which receive theoretical and practical recognition.

Two other parts of the education there are, further, which cannot be ignored by those who would frame manual training courses, whether for boys or girls. These are science and gymnastics. To attempt to give manual training, without some theoretic knowledge, however elementary, of Mechanics, Physics, and Chemistry, and without the deliberate culture of the powers of observation with regard to plants, animals, and the outside world generally, is like trying to divorce the hand from the eye, or both from the mind. And in the same way, the efficient schoolmaster cannot fail to recognise that his pupils have bodies, which ought, *as bodies*, to be recognised and developed. Football

and cricket are doing a fine work outside the school-house, but they are apt to serve the successful best. We want something which fulfils the test of a good lesson, by causing proportionate self-development of the highest and lowest talent at the same moment. In most English schools of the kind we are considering, this want is met by giving an hour or two in the week to military drill. And this we do, as well for girls as for boys. I could wish that the custom obtained in Indian schools! The instructor is usually some retired soldier, who, as "drill-sergeant", is glad to add something to his modest resources, and is often very popular with his pupils. When we consider on the one hand, how much the Indian people need to be disciplined in habits of co-operation, and in the mind and feeling of united action, and when we realise, on the other, the immense sub-conscious influence of orderly marching, wheeling, charging, forming squares, covering, doubling, obeying words of command with regard to imaginary weapons, and the rest, we cannot but believe that a great part of the Indian problem is capable of an educational solution, by this very simple means, in the school compound!

The next question which will occur to a practical Indian mind, with regard to the institution of manual training as a feature of general education, is its cost. I must confess that when I saw the manual training departments of some of the American High Schools, I was overwhelmed, at once with admiration and dismay,—admiration at the generosity with which the American people provide for their own educational needs, and dismay when I contemplated the possibility of Indian competition. The High School of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, contains, for instance, complete equipments of carpenters' benches, vices and tools; forges, furnaces, engines, and metal-casting apparatus. And all this entirely apart from the strictly Technical Department for which the Institute is famous. Here, during a time equivalent to a third of the school-week, everybody will be found, in his turn, with the

appearance of a strong and intelligent workman, gaining practical experience of such machinery as in India is only to be seen in a few ship-yards, mines, and factories. Can there be any doubt as to the advantage derived from such opportunities, or the desirability of creating the like here?

At the same time, if we only remember that the main purpose of manual training is, after all, *educational* rather than industrial, we shall see that, as we say in Europe, half a loaf is better than no bread. In other words, it is best to begin where we can. A union of two or three far-sighted Indian merchants, anxious for the future of industry in this country, would be sufficient to establish manual training high schools, and technical schools of the College Grade, in the capital of the different presidencies. And Indian Sovereigns might do likewise, each in his own State. But the impossibility of furnishing their schools with princely completeness, ought not to deter the rank and file of headmasters from considering simple means of giving useful manual training to their boys.

According to figures furnished by Dr. Henderson, a good manual training equipment for wood and metal work *without* machine construction, means a capital outlay of about 165 rupees per boy—*i.e.* Wood-work 75 rupees, Vice-work (metal) 30 rupees, Blacksmithing 60 rupees. For little more than 3,000 rupees, therefore, a school could be fitted for twenty pupils, in everything except machine construction, and as this twenty need take only five hours at most in any one course, the outfit would really represent sufficient for a school of one hundred and twenty boys,—or even more, if Saturdays, Sundays, and evenings, could be utilised for classes. It must be admitted that machine construction would be a serious blank in the programme; and yet, the advantage of having such an institution though suffering from this want, in every city, can hardly be realised. In the estimate given, moreover, we are considering only cost of outfit, and not that of maintaining the school, which

would depend on the salaries paid to teachers, rent, and other items varying locally.

It will have been inferred by this time, that the high school stage of education is the heart of the manual training idea, considered as an element in general culture. The studies which it covers, if carried to the college, or university grade, must be pursued with the definite purpose of preparation for future work. As such, they become normal courses—that is, a division of educational science,—or else take their place in the curriculum of civil or mining engineering which may be laid down by the particular university in question.

As a matter of fact, however, a boy who can afford during these years to qualify himself for a distinct industrial profession will be likely to choose, not a university, but a *Technical School* course.

It has been said that a man who is to take a high position in the world of industry ought to pass from the manual training school to the university, and after completing his general education there, return to the technical institute, and spend two years in special technical preparation. Such a piece of advice enables us to estimate the culture-rank of technical schools in the American sense. They are not simply schools for artisans. They are too costly. They are, in their highest classes, colleges for the chiefs and captains of industry. They are in fact to Labour, what the University is to intellectual culture.

With regard to the history of that idea which is embodied in the technical schools of America, and the polytechnics of the continent of Europe, we may take our facts from the report of an English royal commission published in the year 1882.

The beginnings of the modern industrial system had been due, in the main, to Great Britain. Factories founded on the inventions of Watt, Arkwright, and Crompton, were for many years, an English monopoly, and when about the year 1840, other European countries began to construct

railways and to erect modern mills, and mechanical workshops, they found themselves face to face with a full-grown industrial organisation in Great Britain, which was almost a sealed book to those who could not obtain access to her factories.

"To meet this state of things abroad, foreign countries established technical schools like the Ecole Centrale of Paris, and the polytechnic schools of Germany and Switzerland, and sent engineers and men of science to England, to prepare themselves for becoming teachers of technology in those schools.

"Technical high schools now exist in nearly every Continental State, and are the recognised channel for the instruction of those who are intended to become the technical directors of industrial establishments. Many of the technical chemists have, however been, and are being, trained in the German Universities. Your commissioners believe that the success which has attended the foundation of extensive manufacturing establishments, engineering shops, and other works on the Continent, could not have been achieved to its full extent in the face of many retarding influences, had it not been for the system of high technical instruction in these schools, for the facilities for carrying on original scientific investigation, and for the general appreciation of the value of that instruction and of original research which is felt in those countries.

".....The buildings are palatial, the laboratories and museums are costly and extensive, the staff of professors .....is so numerous as to admit of the utmost sub-division of the subjects taught. In Germany, the attendance at some of the polytechnic schools has lately fallen off, chiefly because the supply of technically trained persons is in excess of the present demand ; certainly not because it is held that the training of the school can be dispensed with."

These English commissioners speak strongly of the general culture and liberal education which is required of the masters and managers of great factories and other

industrial establishments on the continent of Europe. They speak of the knowledge which these men possess of the sciences upon which their particular industry depends; of their familiarity with new scientific discoveries; of their promptitude in adopting all the improvements, made either in their own country, or in the world at large, thanks to their knowledge of foreign languages, and of conditions of manufacture prevalent outside. In all this, we see that the strength of continental training may be taken as lying in its strong background of disinterested, scientific knowledge, and England's industrial distinction again, as dependent on her great workshops, which the same commissioners declare to be "the best technical schools in the world." The American annotation upon the English report, made in the year 1885, adds that in Russia the technical education ideas of the rest of Europe have been "expanded into schools which surpass in completeness of equipment and affluence of resources, any in the other countries of Europe, with the possible exception of the Ecole Polytechnique at Paris." And to this it may be added that on the *Mechanical* side of technical instruction, probably no other country can approach the great network of technical institutions spread over the United States today.

In these schools, a four years' course is offered in:—

- (a) Mechanical Engineering, that is, Machine construction;
- (b) Electrical Engineering, the making of Electrical Machinery;
- (c) Civil Engineering;
- (d) Architecture; and
- (e) The Physical and Chemical processes, constituting various industries and manufactures.

Thus, it is clear that the technical school is simply an Engineering College, and as we should expect, the student has to pass, at entrance, certain mathematical and general literary tests.

The best college of this class in America is said to be the Massachusetts Institute of Technology at Boston. But the enormous wealth of the Leland-Stanford University of California makes it probable that its Engineering department will quickly form a technical college of at least equal rank.

Before leaving this aspect of the subject, and directing our attention entirely to those forms of manual training which might be applied to the present moment to Indian educational requirements, there is one more point to be dealt with, and that is the provision made in America for turning out *teachers* for manual training high schools, and the question of how to use that provision for the organisation of such facilities in India.

With regard to the United States, Dr. Hanford Henderson unhesitatingly describes, as the ideal curriculum, a year spent at the Sloyd Training School in Boston, and then a second year at the Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York. After this, a tour of the school themselves,—of which the best are said to be in Chicago and Philadelphia,—would be an absolute necessity. And then, provided the men who receive the training be “thorough, not afraid of hard work, strong and alert in body, quick and broad in mind, and sympathetic and sincere in heart, the cause of manual training in India should be in secure hands.”

Even in America, a good deal of anxiety has been experienced by educators, as to the form which preparatory courses in manual training ought to take, during what we have here designated as the secondary stage in a complete education, that is to say, the years between eight and twelve.

To meet this need, simple courses have been arranged under such names as “card-board modelling,” and “Sloyd,” in which, with the aid of a few simple tools, boys and girls can learn to make easy objects in card-board or in wood.

To take card-board modelling first: Let a child be provided with a piece of strawboard, or white cardboard

printed in  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch chequers ; a stout penknife, pencil, measuring ruler, compasses, and india-rubber. Let the teacher, then standing at the blackboard, *dictate*, and draw in chalk on the board, with larger instruments, the lines and measurements necessary, in order to make, say, a square-folded envelope. This done, let him next explain along what lines the knife must be drawn sharply, to make an incision, and along which gently, that the card may afterwards be folded. This is done, and a square envelope has been modelled in cardboard.

The next lesson will perhaps treat similarly the construction of a box, and the lid for the box ; a photograph-frame ; a purse ; a book-cover or folded portfolio ; or what not. Solid forms of polygonal outline are treated next, the time soon comes when the children hasten to be beforehand with the teacher in suggesting new problems and working out the method of attack. And when this happens we know that education is actually being achieved, for, what is this but the simultaneous bestowal in each study of a new step to be ascended, and the will to mount?

Sloyd or school wood-work, is not so easy a matter to treat. It is necessary to have a special room equipped with suitable benches and tools. It is suggested that if the individual sloyd-bench be found too expensive, a strong table with vices attached, accommodating four pupils, may be used. Appropriate wood and the usual drawing instruments have next to be supplied, and these include pencils, rulers, and compasses. Amongst tools enumerated for this simplified woodwork, I find the plane, splitting saw, bit-brace, drill-bit, back saw, hammer, screw-driver, centre-bit, half-round file, turning saw, spoke-shave, cross-cut saw, knife, compass saw, sand-paper, and others. Sets of the necessary instruments including the table are estimated by the Sloyd Training School, Boston, Massachusetts, as costing something over one hundred rupees for four pupils.

Having made this expenditure, the teacher proceeds to utilise it by producing such articles as photograph shelves,

almanac stands, the seat for a swing, handkerchief boxes, glove boxes, small model carts, and so on. This work is supposed to provide for vigorous muscular activity, and to stimulate spontaneous creativeness.

Most of us will think, however, that such a statement stands self-condemned. It seems as if the adoration of mechanical ability were running away with the American educator. All this trouble and outlay, merely for the sake of antedating the manual school's benchwork by a few years! It would appear, too, that for the sake of learning the use of the latest thing in tools, the necessity for skill of hand tends to be minimised, and manual training courses, carried to a foolish extravagance by a wealthy people, may end by defeating the very object for which they were instituted. If India is to have manual training in her schools, it must be, obviously, by less elaborate means than these, and vigorous muscular activity will have to be sought in other ways than through "Elementary Sloyd," as organised in the given case.

The wise man, however, knows how to take a hint, even when he refuses complete direction, and simple educational courses might probably be devised, in which accurate measurement and constructive ability should be evolved gradually, in true relation at once to theoretic knowledge and concrete application in wood.

Boys of from eight to twelve, provided with hammer, knife, saw, and screw-driver, or with a single tool-box for a small class, might make many articles of household and personal use, with immense advantage to themselves.

All good teachers know how to test the value of their own instruction by the interest which they can rouse in their pupils. Even if we have not read Herbert Spencer's little book on "Education," we have probably considered and appreciated its main argument, namely that, as a healthy physical appetite seeks valuable food-elements spontaneously, and rejects those which are injurious; so a child who is being well-trained, loves those studies that he needs.

and hates those only which are bad, or are badly presented to him. In other words, the teacher who can maintain the interest of the boys is a good teacher. The lesson that delights a class is a good lesson. So the method of teaching even simple carpentry may differ in different cases, but the test remains,—if taught so that the pupils love the work, it is well-taught.

Thus we have considered the American system of Manual Training as a feature of general education. Says Professor William James of Harvard, in words which sum up the whole claims:—

“The most colossal improvement which recent years have been in secondary education lies in the introduction of the manual training schools; not because they will give us a people more handy and practical for domestic life and better skilled in trades, but because they will give us citizens with an entirely different intellectual fibre. Laboratory work and shop work engender a habit of observation, a knowledge of the difference between accuracy and vagueness, and an insight into nature’s complexity and into the inadequacy of all verbal accounts of real phenomena, which once wrought into the mind, remain there as lifelong possessions. They confer precision . . . They give honesty . . . They beget a habit of self-reliance. . . . They occupy the pupil in a way most congruous with the spontaneous interests of his age. They absorb him, and leave impressions durable and profound. Compared with the youth taught by these methods, one brought up exclusively on books carries through life a certain remoteness from reality; he stands, as it were, out of the pale, and feels that he stands so; and often suffers a kind of melancholy from which he might have been rescued by a more real education.”

“Citizens with an entirely different intellectual fibre,”—to produce these is undoubtedly the main purpose of all genuine manual training. It is a right and reasonable purpose, to which the means taken are well adapted.

But as we look at the actual scheme for the achievement of the end, adopted by American thinkers and teachers, we have to admit that there is also another and subsidiary purpose, of which the educational organiser is less conscious, probably; whose existence even he might perhaps be unwilling to acknowledge. But it is there. And

this is a desire to recognise and during school-years to recapitulate effectively within the school-walls, the main features of the great mechanical and industrial civilisation without.

Why should the high school stage of education include a course of study of all the modern industries *in extenso*, with their appropriate tools, and end in a year's work at machine construction, in which, as we are told, "we have the assembling together of all the other branches"? What does this mean, if not that the transition from tool to machine,—which has been made more or less anarchically by the societies of the West,—is to be bridged over, intellectually and morally, for the fully equipped individual of the future?

The necessity for manual training of some kind is rightly felt in America to be a fact inherent in human psychology generally, and in the psychology of education, in particular. But the *form* which manual training takes in that country is quite equally the result of the typical civilisation of the day. A well-educated man must have been trained in the use of his hands. True, and a well-educated man of the modern world, must also, in the course of this training, have learnt the fundamental principles of machinery, and its use. He must know the essential facts about the making of steam-engines to work the school pumps, dynamos, electric motors, and all the smaller machinery that can be built in any well-equipped commercial workshop. Not only the transition from tool to machine, but also that from steam to electricity, then, is foreseen and provided for intellectually before the boy is released from tutelage, to find or to win his own place on the world's battle-field. The wisdom and foresight of this principle cannot be disputed, and its application to Indian education is still more obvious. If America, with her workshops and dock-yards, her manufacture of machinery and her scientific laboratories, cannot afford to ignore the Mechanic Age in her school-rooms, how much less can India; for whom the immediate

(though not final) problem is of her own entrance into that age? We can imagine indeed, that a wise statesman of Indian blood might say to himself, "Let me only create during school-years, enough men who understand and can construct modern mechanism, and the future of the country may take care of itself." For it is undoubted that if the Indian nation possessed the necessary knowledge, the advent of the Mechanic Age could not be long delayed.

When we come to the study of the pre-modern phase of industry, however, we begin to understand what is the weak point in the American development. It is quite clear that those industries and implements which preceded the modern mechanical consolidation historically, should also precede it educationally. In the Secondary Education stage, then, every Indian village can furnish the elements of a better course in manual training than could be commanded in any American city. Such old-world material as the brick-klin and the potter's wheel, the spinning-wheel and simple handloom, the distaff and spindle for preparing wool, the dyeing vat, and the old recipes for vegetable colours, the brazier's fire and tools, the glass-blower's furnace, or even the split cane and dried palm-leaves of the basket-weaver's use, all these are capable of being turned to account educationally, by one who unites the knowledge of their use to a wide intellectual training, and a thorough familiarity with educational principles.

The student of history knows how in Ancient Greece the making and decoration of simple pottery of the Asiatic domestic order, grew into one of the most memorable of the world's arts. He knows, too, that China, carrying out a similar development of the "vase," along a different line, and arriving early at the invention of porcelain, has enjoyed a ceramic evolution entirely distinct and yet as nobly characteristic as the Hellenic. Nor does he forget the wonderful colouring and design of Delhi, Lahore, and Persia, in his study of baked clays.

Such knowledge on the part of the teacher makes it

possible to introduce clay, wheel, and firing-oven into the school-house as essential parts of a liberal, and not of an artisan's education.

The history of the great Indian art of cotton-printing, again, finds illustration in every village, and would give stimulus and encouragement to any child, in learning that use of the hands which constitutes manual training. Or the plaiting of dyed grasses, palm-leaves, and split bamboo might be made at once an occasion for carrying on a simple order of weaving, and for giving an outlook into the history of materials, articles of use, and even textile fabrics.

At first, and perhaps always, the only way to teach such arts would be by bringing the craftsman to ply his trade in the midst of the class, in the presence of a fine teacher who would know how to question, guide, and comment on the work done. And in such communion between humble worker and educated boys, qualifying themselves to become some day the leaders of their people, lies a union of worlds which is worth striving for. The old carpenter, or weaver, or potter, or what not, is something of Guru and something of ministrant in one, and through him his pupils may come into loving touch with a world which otherwise is likely to pass away, unrecorded, misunderstood, mourned too late.

We are supposing that the manual training of this secondary stage of education is to be given an industrial bent. It might equally well be made artistic. In that case modelling and design would be the principal subjects taught. The materials—rice-flour, vermilion, white and yellow earths—are found in every village and in every household. The subjects might vary from Alpana-patterns and Sari-borders, to cotton printing, incised tiles and dishes of black earthen-ware; and the wonderful modellings for door-ways and house-fronts, which are common in Benares and other old cities.

Decorative ability is as common in India as earth and water. Every humble builder has ideas and feelings about

architectural loveliness. Every woman can make beautiful patterns. Every child has an instinctive love for soft and delicate colour. And the innate power of modelling—of giving solid and plastic form to ideas of beauty—is incredible. But we have as yet no one who understands the value and relation of all these, so as to be able to call them into consciousness and self-direction. Such work might be initiated in the secondary school.

The object of manual training in this country will not be the *acquisition* of manual dexterity: this already exists, thanks largely, no doubt, to the habit of eating with the fingers. The object of the training, in India, must lie in the *intellectualising* of the existing faculty; in the power given to estimate rightly and to direct wisely the ability we already have; in the opportunity which can only come through concrete labour and experience to understand and contrast duly, the old civilisation and the new. If a boy could go through a whole course of this training, graduated, as has been suggested, from the first moment of education, in his fifth or sixth year, to the very end, in an Engineering University, elaborately fitted up, I do not hesitate to say that he would understand the past and the future of India, and be in a position to become a statesman, and a leader of society, different in maturity and balance of knowledge, from any that we have yet seen.

That education of the subconscious intellect which it is claimed that manual training only can effect, might well stand or fall by such a test. And the worlds of refreshment and delight which are hidden in it at all stages for the literary student, though not a main argument for the benefits which it confers, are upspringing witnesses at each step, to tell us that we are on the true path.

It is not necessary to do more than touch on the Primary, or Kindergarten stage of education. It was the great educator, Pestalozzi—the Saint of the sense of Humanity,—who discovered that only by modern “*Anschauung*,”—looking-at, or as he defined it, “sense impression,

thought germination, expression,"—and not by words, could knowledge be built up. Fröbel, the father of the Kindergarten, was Pestalozzi's disciple, applying the Guru's great principle to the early stages of a child's development. The Kindergarten therefore is neither more nor less than an attempt to begin every kind of learning with concrete experience, and the handling of wood, clay, wool, rags, paper, running water, pencil, colour, and other materials, in organised and purposeful ways, forms its most distinctive educational element. All this, without tools, leads up to the simple old tools of the race—wheel, loom, kiln,—in the secondary stage, as we have been considering it. On this, again, should be superposed the American development of mechanical-manual training. And if the organising of education in this fashion could only succeed in attracting some of our finest Indian intellects, I should not hesitate to prophesy that fifteen years hence the West would be seeking from India the means of giving manual training in the secondary stage of education, as India is now seeking from the West, the knowledge of how to give it in high school and college.

## MANUAL TRAINING IN EDUCATION— SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

The visit of Dr. Hanford-Henderson—the great United States specialist on manual training,—has made such an impression throughout the country on those who are wisely interested in the bettering of educational methods, that it is necessary to add from time to time to the information which he scattered broadcast while here.

Dr. Hanford-Henderson, as will be remembered, made a strong distinction between (a) industrial or trade-schools ; (b) manual training as a factor in general education ; and (c) technical education ; all three alike, as it should scarcely be necessary to point out, lying outside the range of distinctively scientific work. Of these, there can be no doubt that the most important, in the larger sense, is the second, namely manual training as a factor in general education. Regarding this, Dr. Henderson said :

“It soon became apparent that, as a scheme of intellectual development, it was too important to be omitted from the education even of those boys who were intended for the learned professions. From having a merely industrial outlook, manual training came to have a much broader educational purpose. It is now given all over America in the course of secondary education, not only in the High Schools but also increasingly in the lower schools, as a means of culture quite as much, or even more than, as a means to direct bread and butter making. *We invariably find that a manual training boy can do better work in mathematics and in other studies requiring original thought than one who has not this training.*”

But while manual training in schools is in this way so vastly more important than the question either of industrial or technical schools, it is at the same time hampered by the fact that it is not, like them, a means to direct money-

earning. In our Western industrial and trade schools, a girl or boy learns cooking, sewing, carpentering, shoe-making or what not, with the simple view of at once going out into the world and finding a place in that particular trade. Up to the present, in India, the caste-system has obviated the necessity of such schools by making a man's trade hereditary and the home of the craftsman an industrial school. The son of the jeweller or the Dhobi learns his life-task from babyhood, as we know ; and if new needs, which cannot be wholly supplied in this way, are making themselves felt today, still, the English work-shop or factory is at present doing the work of educating to some extent in the particular task required those whom it employs. And India has not as yet understood the necessity of organising craft-knowledge in that relation to modern science which we may regard as true industrial education. She will probably realise this necessity first in the direction of agriculture and some of the allied pursuits, such as silk-culture, market-gardening and so on.

Technical education is something whose need the higher castes in India are in a position at once to understand, and of which they have made every effort,—short of themselves creating adequate opportunities,—to avail themselves. Technical education has the advantage of offering a handsome livelihood to the man who has been so fortunate as to secure it. It is indeed astonishing that many of the Native States should not long ago have seen the inevitableness of having sooner or later to develop and organise themselves in a modern sense and sent out large numbers of young men to the technical schools of America, Japan and Europe, in order that when that time should come they might be in a position to give the work to their own subjects instead of to Europeans. There are so many tasks still undone in India, tasks which the Native States might easily take up on their own initiative, tasks of sanitation, of replanting of forests, of road and bridge-making, of canal-cutting and cleaning, of railway-making, and what

not, that there is still plenty of room for reform in this matter, plenty of time for Indian princes and men of wealth to show themselves statesmen, by taking the wise and far-sighted course.

Still, technical and industrial education could at any time be added to the national resources in the course of a single generation, on the sole condition of the existence of a guiding mind with a great enough ambition and command of sufficient revenues. Manual Training, as a factor in literary education is in a different position. It leads to no direct making of money, in the case of the boy trained. A Brahmin will not turn carpenter merely because he has had lessons in woodwork included in his school course. He will certainly, however, prove himself more manly and original in all that he undertakes, whether of thought or character. The indirect influence of manual training, that is to say, its educational value, is beyond prize. But its direct uses are not so obvious. And in proportion to its greater value is also the greater difficulty of incorporating it in the general educational scheme of an entire State. This is not merely a question of money and 'plant'. It is far more a matter of the degree to which the educational idea itself has been assimilated and a particular form of work made the means of its expression. And this is in its turn a question of time as well as personalities. Hence manual training in its first inception must take the form of an experiment at headquarters, as it were, and under the most favourable circumstances it requires a considerable period to become systematised and established. Manual training, again, is not cheap. On the other hand, as Dr. Henderson has pointed out, "the return is so valuable, both socially and economically, that the expenditure is justified a hundred-fold. A fully-supplied Manual Training School costs more for equipment than an equally fine classical school, but it need not cost much more to operate. It is in this case, as in so many others, the first step that costs."

The desiderata then being so great, it is a delightful surprise to find that the point on which Dr. Henderson has best succeeded in rousing Indian curiosity and interest is precisely this of manual training schools. And the question that naturally comes first is, "How can manual training be introduced into schools for the first time?"

In answer to this question, we have to remember that in the West, manual training is more in harmony with the exigencies of life and institutions than in the East. That is to say, custom itself creates a certain preparedness in the pupil. The great luxury of common life in England and America demands the power of mastering practical detail in every individual more or less. And this demand is aided and abetted by the strictness of the standard of public order.

Then, again, in the ideal education, the Kindergarten precedes and the play-ground accompanies the manual training stage of education. Cricket and tennis are no mean collaborators of the effort to attain manual skill, and, in England at least, the boy or girl who grew pale over books without attempting to take exercise; would be despised amongst school-fellows as lazy, or worse. Hard physical labour by way of pleasure, is perhaps the Tapas of the West, corresponding to the prayers and fasting of the East. And I cannot forget how on the last Charrok Puja day of the Swami Vivekananda's life, he announced to me, *apropos* of some games at Belur, that in future the Hindu's Charrok Puja ought to be spent in a gymnasium!

Let us then suppose a well-equipped Western school, duly provided with Kindergarten, play-grounds and fine teachers, what would be the manual training history of a boy passing through it? This is a practical question and will serve perhaps to display the character of a Western training better than any other method.

From the moment of entering the Kindergarten, the child is learning that co-ordination of faculty through hand, eye, and mind, that is afterwards to be carried so much

further in the higher schools. The materials used are simple and consist of such things as the little one would have been likely to seize on, in his own play,—mud, sand, paper, wool and small objects, hard and soft. But what seems so meaningless to us is a Sadhana to the childish mind. Every faculty is intensely concentrated while the fingers are trying to fashion a mud pot, or cut a paper flower; and if any one doubts that the pre-occupation is worth-while, let him try to teach to one child some simple fact, such as “the rose is red” in words only, and to another the same thing by bringing the rose concretely before him and then taking it away while he tries to reproduce it, say with coloured chalk and see which method goes deeper and produces more lasting effect!

At seven or eight years of age, however, even the most backward child leaves the Kindergarten. Yet he cannot at this early age be ready for the four years of parallel courses in wood, metal and clay, of which Dr. Henderson speaks in such detail. From this time till the boy or girl is ten, or twelve, there is need of some link with manual training, in order to feed the faculty that will then be required, without imposing a physical effort that there is not strength to meet. This is what is known as the transition or preparatory stage of the education. It is of course assumed that the whole course of teaching throughout the child's day is being made as largely concrete as possible, that geography, for instance, is being taught with sand and clay, for the modelling of relief-maps; that botany and national history are taught in such a way as to involve the use of pencil and paint-brush; and still there is need of something that subserves the sole end of developing the hand to quick and accurate measurement and in dealing with a gradually increasing muscular resistance and the brain to a rapid thinking out of difficulties in material. In American schools, this link is supplied by such subjects as cardboard-modelling and *Sloyd*.

In cardboard-modelling a child uses, as tools, a pencil,

a measuring-ruler, pair of compasses and a good stout knife. The cardboard itself, at first, can be chequered, that is, marked with printed squares. On this, the child learns to measure from dictation a small box and the lid for the box and then to cut there, making the necessary half-depth incision for folding edges and complete cuts for separate pieces. After the ordinary four-sided box, a pentagonal box, with its lid, is made, and then one form after another, till at last even the octagonal shape is made and mastered. After this, the child can take up small articles of daily use, an envelope, a stationery-stand, a toy, a purse and what not, and make them, as an exercise of free and spontaneous activity.

From the cardboard-modelling, he passes on to *Sloyd*, a simple but severely scientific and educational form of carpentering, which can be taught, in its elementary stages, almost in an ordinary school-room and requires a carpenter's bench and a few more expensive tools, a little later. *Sloyd* was systematised and worked out as an educational subject, some ten or fifteen years ago at a place called Naas, in Sweden. And to this day teachers have to go there for training and diplomas. A few Indian teachers might be sent to learn *Sloyd* and return to popularize it here, with great advantage. In the *Sloyd* course, a number of wooden objects called "models" are produced in miniature in the school-room. Amongst these may be, for instance, a pointer (a tapering stick very carefully made), a paper-knife, a pencil (not, of course, inserting the writing-point), a wooden tile or mat, a frame, a block in imitation of a book, and so on. In another course might be given more complicated forms, such as, a model of a folding blotting-book, a T-square, a candlestick, a small Chowki, a towel-rail, a window-frame, and so on. All these models, when planing and sand-papering are complete, are expected to be correct to so fine a fraction as one-sixty-fourth of an inch, so that the educational value of the course may be easily understood.

But although Naas is the head and centre of the

formulated course in *Sloyd* and its diplomas, there is no reason in the world why Indian school-rooms should wait for the permission of Naas in order to create their own course in this subject. Before *Sloyd* became the systematised subject that it is now, it must have gone through a long experimental stage in which (1) teachers themselves were learning the secret of carpentering ; (2) trying to adopt what they had learnt to the needs of the school-room ; (3) reducing their conclusions to that strict geometrical and numerical analysis which makes *Sloyd* what it is today. Why should Indian teachers not restore this *experimental* stage? Recognising the principles of the manual training involved, why should they not deliberately aim at creating an Indian *Sloyd*, as an educational course? For my own part, I believe that a few prizes and scholarships offered by some Native State,—with due tendency to prefer the State's own subjects, thrown open to the country as a whole,—would be sufficient to give birth to numerous most desirable attempts.

Public spirit in the West is, in this sense, highly developed and Governments and municipalities incorporate a new educational feature, only after it has been well tested and sounded by private persons. In America a rich woman, known as Mrs. Quinery Shaw, experimented in *Sloyd* training for two years at her own private cost, and then made over the results of her experiments to the State of Massachusetts, as soon as she had succeeded in proving the beneficial character of the work! Parallel efforts are made in India by occasional rich merchants, or by princes. But the activity needs indefinite extension. And we have not sufficiently recognised here that what one of us alone is not rich enough to do, five or six acting in concert, can. A group of townsmen, recognising their own children's need of deeper education, might surely make sacrifices for the sake of accomplishing such an end. They might support a promising young teacher in a modest way, while working out a necessary course ; or they might even,—

though this I do not think by any means a necessity in such cases,—go so far as to depute men to the West, for the sake of bringing back the results of Western experience.

It is clear that what is needed for this task is men who understand education in a broad sense. A certain intellectual and literary culture therefore is essential. But this by itself would be utterly useless, unless there is also some power of actual *doing*, some accuracy and dexterity of workmanship, and some slight mathematical bent.

It is in the first generation of such attempts that genius, or the fervour which amounts to genius, is most necessary. And I think, if I were an Indian prince seeking men to send West for training, I should look for them in art-schools, in architect's and engineer's offices, or even in medical colleges or scientific laboratories. Culture of mind there must be. But proved aptitude of hand is almost more a necessity still.

APPENDIX

Table showing a plan of the arrangement of the course of work in a Manual Training High School. (Ref.: Page 419, line 28)

Period.	DRAWING AND ART.	WOOD-WORK.	METAL-WORK
First year	Drawing: Freehand.	BENCH-WORK: Here a boy learns to master tools and materials and to do fine carpentering and joining.	VICE-WORK: Filing, cutting, and fitting of solid metal.
Second year	Mechanical. Architectural.	TURNING: The use of the lathes, production of round and spherical forms.	FORGING & BLACK-SMITHING: Sometimes including forms of beauty, as in wrought iron.
Third year	Clay-Modelling	PATTERN-MAKING: Wooden "forms" correct to small fractions of an inch for metal casting	TIN-SMITHING: All sorts of cans, lamps, cases &c. are cut out and put together.
Fourth year	Wood-Carving.	Wood-Carving.	MACHINE CONSTRUCTION: In this branch we have the assembling together of all the others.



**GLIMPSES OF FAMINE AND  
FLOOD IN EAST BENGAL IN 1906**



# GLIMPSES OF FAMINE AND FLOOD IN EAST BENGAL IN 1906

## I

### THE LAND OF THE WATER-WAYS

**I** HERE is no region, even in India, which was intended to compare, at once in extent and in fertility, with the wide-stretching delta-lands of East Bengal. Placed between the extreme mouths of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, from Calcutta on the west to Chittagong on the east, and Dacca and Mymensingh on the north, lies this vast triangle of country, measuring, as the crow flies, something like two hundred miles or more every way. And it is painted, on the surface of Planet Earth, in nature's most vivid pigments of green and blue. Green for the fields and forests, the palms and the gardens and the grain ; and blue, blue, blue, everywhere else, for the sky above and for the waters beneath. To those who know Holland, or even Venice, this land is full of subtle suggestions and reminiscences of distant beauty. For it, too, is a country snatched from the waters, though not by the hand of man. It, too, lies passive and half-expectant under the unbroken dome

of heaven. In it, too, the white sail may suddenly come into vision at any moment, across the distant meadows. And it, too, bestows that irresistible calmness of benediction that comes to the infinitely small in the presence of the infinitely great.

There are of course differences. This is a tropical Holland. The wide green flats are broken, not by stiff avenues of poplars and rows of wintry pollard elms, but by long irregular fringes of jungle, groups of cocoanut and betelnut palms, clusters of delicate bamboos, outstanding leaf-almonds here and there, with almost every branch of glossy verdure ending in a leaf like a scarlet flag, and lines of upright banana plants, hedging in the fruit and vegetable gardens of the homesteads. These last too, are, as is natural, strangely different from the prim farm-houses of the Dutch with their red tiles. From the river-front we see a large thatched roof, whose wide curving eaves overhang a cottage built apparently of something like basket-work, but in fact, of mats, woven out of bamboo-splinters. The rafters and posts of this simple structure are also of bamboo, and it may be that a single roof covers, not only the home, but also a small open barn, holding a couple of cows, while over the heads of these last is seen again a second storey with floor made of split bamboo, and filled with rice-straw, thus answering all the purposes of a hayloft. The floor, of the cottage itself, in any case, is made of clean silver river-clay, packed solid and tight and smooth. And a very good test of the wealth of the family lies in the height of this modest plinth. Within, the dwelling has in all probability a ground-floor, lifted a foot or two above this of mud, and made, like that of the hayloft, of split bamboo : and on this, with whatever they may be able to command of comfort, in the way of cushions, wadded sheets, and cotton carpets, the house-hold live. The one large room is often partitioned into two or three smaller. Always there is an open verandah outside which acts as the family reception-room. Almost always there

is some corner, either in but or ben, which is built off from the rest, and used as the cooking room. And in every house there are wooden and bamboo platforms overhead, which can be used either as store-cupboards or extra sleeping rooms, according as the special occasion demands. The little farm house, however, has no doorway of inferior dignity. Even when the front entrance is towards the river bank, it is nevertheless almost certain that the open verandah will be found on the far side, facing like a simple cloister, the interior of the little farm yard, on the two or three other sides of which are placed similar, but probably still less imposing, dwellings. Here, too, are the out-buildings and offices of the farm, the husking shed, the cow house, the dovecote, and the feeding place for ducks, with close at hand the herb and fruit garden. And the whole of this little group of reed-built chambers is enclosed and connected with the next like it, by the home-stead grove of palms and jungle-growth. It has its own boat, too, made of long narrow planks of palm wood, in which seven or eight people can sit in single file, so long as one or two remain constantly busied, baling out the water with which it is as constantly filling. And finally, this cluster of houses does not constitute a village. It may take twenty or more of such, thrown, like the links of a chain around and across the rice fields, to make a single village-community. Hence, in this wonderful country, it is sometimes possible, sitting in the low boat of the water-lanes, to say that the village includes more than the horizon.

In the riverside villages, again, the Chashas, or peasants, and the Majhis, boatmen or fisher-folk, dwell side by side. They are for the most part Mohammedans and only sometimes Hindus. But the two do not always live in separate villages. Nor is there any great difference between them in point of civilisation. A few hundreds of years ago all alike were Hindus, but to the low castes, Islam, with its message of democracy and brotherly love, offers a great emancipation. And in East Bengal these

must have been swept into the fold, whole villages at a time. The descendants of such converts have the title "Sheikh" prefixed to their names, and here they are all Sheikhs. But even now they appear like Hindus. Their widows are loath to remarry. They wear the unbordered Sari and cut the hair short, like the Hindu widow. They object to cow-killing, like the Hindu. Their children are trained, not in the knowledge of the Koran alone, but also in the stories of the old Indian Epics. And finally their homes are decorated with the same religious pictures and images as those of the Hindu. In other words, it is one race practising the forms of two different faiths, and even in India, blood speaks louder than creed.

They are a proud and self-respecting folk, these people of the villages of East Bengal, decent and thrifty in all their ways, as conscious as ourselves of subtle differences of rank and education, and full of the spirit of independence and self-reliance. It is not easy here to buy the trifle to which one takes a fancy. Permission to do so may be asked with all possible formality and ceremony, but the answer is invariably the smiling surrender of the object, as a gift. I have a little boatman's lamp of black earthenware, which came to me in this way. It is one of the loveliest things I ever saw, and its value in the village-markets is, I am told, one farthing. But though I offered sixteen times that sum, its owner would not hear of purchase, insisting instead on presenting it to me. Of a similar significance was my first encounter with the Barisal fisher-folk. In this land of canals, it is customary to use for conveyance a very fine and commodious Indian form of house-boat. The empty rooms, made of dark polished teak-wood, are scrupulously clean, and we bring our own rugs and pillows, and sit or lie on the floor for the journey. Outside, under bamboo arches, covered with sliding hoods of reed mats, sit the boatmen. And a few fishing-nets, or a spindle with its thread, or a small clay stove at which cooking is going on, offer at once the only traces of furniture, and the only

elements of picturesque disorder, to be seen. The crew consists of the men of a single family, from the grey-haired grandfather or grand-uncle to the youngest boy. The women have been left at home in the distant village, to tend the cows, and spin, and look after the gardens. There is something of the dignity of Homer's peasant-kings in such a scheme of life and work ; and I was a little diffident with the first boatmen I had accosted, in making enquiries as to whether the prevailing famine and rise in prices had made themselves felt severely by them and theirs. Their first effort was to put me at my ease. Gravely and kindly they took up the question. Work, they said, had become scarce everywhere. No one who could possibly do without it would employ labour at such a time. Everyone naturally was cutting his expenses down. They themselves, for instance, had lain to, at the little quay where we found them, for ten days past, and this was the first time they had been employed. Inevitably, therefore, things were a little difficult. But they had managed. Oh yes! they had managed. And they had no doubt that in some way or other they would contrive to go on. With this abrupt reserve, this lowering of the visor, so to speak, the subject was dropped, and could be pursued no further. Yet it was not that the new-comer had been rebuked for impertinence, but rather that all alike we had realised the sudden pain of the attempt to lay bare our necessities to others.

And everywhere in the famine-villages, I found the same thing. Here and there as we went about, we would come upon someone whose store of money or provisions was not yet wholly exhausted, someone who was still hoping that public charity would prove unnecessary to his little household. And wherever this happened the personal question would be skilfully evaded, and any discussion of the situation quietly refused. It is needless to say that this intense sensitiveness and delicacy of these Indian villagers played its own part in helping to deepen our

understanding of the prevailing desolation. Every story told, meant so much pride overcome.

Like a great net, then, made of cords of shining silver-blue, the water-ways—broad rivers, narrower canals or *khals*, and narrowest of all the little water-lanes—hold lovingly in their clasp this beautiful land, which throughout the historic period has been known as the “*Granary of Bengal*”. But the villages have a proverb. ‘With kings, with horned beasts, and with a river, a man may never be friends’. Much as the heart may go out in love, that is to say, there will surely come sooner or later, with such, a moment of treachery, when they will deal out death to him whom they have caressed. Alas, that this should have proved true of our lovely rivers of East Bengal, in this very year!

Already the villages had been many months in the grip of famine. For the chief Indian harvest of the year is reaped in January, and in this year of 1906 it was terribly scant. The rains twelve months ago, at the time of sowing, were too little. Moreover, in some of the more ocean-exposed districts there were salt floods, and the crops were ruined. Within a month or two of this year’s reaping, therefore, the long slow agony of starvation must have set in amongst the people. But it was borne in grim silence as long as possible, and only in the middle of June did the terrible word ‘Famine’ make itself heard so distinctly that the District Board of Backergunge was driven to open public works, and attempt to distribute gratuitous relief. The story of what the people had suffered in the meantime, will never be written, for it can never even be guessed at. And yet, as if the cup of their sorrows were not even now full, it became clear, on the breaking of the monsoon, that the rains this year were to be excessive; and finally, in the middle of August, that is to say, a month ago, the rivers, swollen by heavy rains and melting snows in the far north, suddenly broke their bounds, and the fair lands of Eastern Bengal became a world under water. In that condition they

remain today. Will it be a few days more, and will the floods subside with the moonless night of the month? Or will the south wind continue to blow and the waters stand as they are for a fortnight longer?

No man can tell. But one thing we do know, and that is, that sooner or later, whenever they go, the floods will have doubled the disaster created by the famine, and the problem that the people will have to face and solve, will for complexity and extent be past any man's imagining.

## II

### WHAT WE SAW

It was dawn on the 8th of September. One of those dawns of pearl and opal that come to us in the Indian autumn. The water-lilies lay open still, as they had lain all night long on the surface of the waters. Here we paddled up to a cluster, lying touching one another, as if with their heads on each other's shoulders, with golden hearts, and rose-tinged petals. And we counted them, and found them seven. Seven lilies open in the dawn! The air was cool but not chill, and full of quiet and fragrance. And all around us in every direction,—inwards from the edge of the river-current behind us, to the distant line of farmstead groves, and right and left, all the way from one dark jungle-border to another,—stretched the smooth silver water, pierced by the upspringing spears of the young rice, which here and there was so scanty that each upright blade was companioned by its own reflection in the water-mirror underneath. A world full of the joy of the senses,—not a gross or physical delight, but the silent inflooding of sense-rapture on the spirit,—for him whose body was fed, and mind at rest.

A world of sense-joy. Was that how it looked to the women yonder, standing up to their waists in water, to receive us, as we paddled and punted towards their dwelling place? Much sense-joy feel these others, think we, who have taken refuge with their children, from their fallen house, in the hay-loft of a neighbour, and are living there, more like birds than human beings—who can tell us these how many days? Nay, for these and their like, there can be no joy of the senses, for the present is to them a horror, and who knows what agony may await them in the near future?

Or it was noon, and in a distant part of the country, not very far in fact, from the city, we waded in water above the knees, or shot in the palm-boat across the rice-fields, finding our way from one farm-house to another. And still, in spite of the sorrow all about us, one could now and then only catch one's breath, and feel how wondrous, to him who was born amongst them, must be the brimful beauty of these rice-lands. Grey clouds, grey mists, grey waters, and drizzling rain, we seemed to be alone in a world-vastness, alone, alone. Suddenly a great wind would catch the jungle-belt about us, and all the mangoes and palms respond, moaning and wailing. Then again it would pass, and silence come once more, upon the infinite monotony of our level world, with the first sense back, of a fulness of something that was neither life nor death, but on the mystic borderline between the two,—perhaps including both.

Again the day and the place were changed, and it was evening. At sunset, we had made our visits of inspection, and now we were back in the single room—a bamboo hut, like all the rest of the fisher-folk's houses about us, but larger, and lined with corrugated iron—where we were taking shelter for the night. Only the two topmost steps at the front-door were above the water, and here, through hour after hour, one member of our party sat, watching the light of the waning moon upon the river, and bending every now and again to strike the water softly backward with his hands, whenever he saw the great snakes swimming towards the house, to enjoy what was probably their nightly feast on the rats and mice living beneath the platform-beds.

Such were some of the circumstances under which we visited the famine-districts.

It was only after considerable difficulty that I succeeded in persuading the good people of the city of Barisal, to show me something of the distress of the peasantry in their own immediate neighbourhood.

The whole modern world has been vulgarised, surely,

by the methods of sensational journalism. Is the idea of famine not to move us to compassion, unless at the same time we are shocked and revolted? Or is it not rather true that there is no pathos like that of the gradual sinking of heart which comes of many efforts and defeats: like the slowly-increeping doubt that paralyses struggle; like the agonised yearning of those who are still strong, over the children whom they cannot save? For it is the sorrow that we can imagine that cuts us to the heart. When we meet with gibbering starvation, clad in plantain-leaves for want of clothing, there is something in the spectacle that stuns the emotions instead of rousing them, and the help we extend is apt to be the result of an intellectual principle, rather than of deep and compassionate understanding. The same holds good also of one who sees too much of such wretchedness. For if misery is apt to brutalise the sufferer it is still more true that it deadens the witness. It is only, moreover, in proportion as we understand what constitutes the common weal and happiness of the victim, that we are able to make that sub-conscious comparison which enables us to gauge from his own point of view, the extent of the disaster that has befallen him. So it was not perhaps surprising, that I often saw tears in the eyes of the young Bengali men who accompanied me on my famine-rounds, when I myself was conscious of nothing but the gasp of horror. But the horror was overwhelming, and it was born, not so much of the stories of achieved or attempted suicides that met us at every turn; not even of the one extraordinary murder that, like some ancient sacrifice, had rung out across the islands in the month of July, and availed at last to bring the helping hand of brotherhood into this famine world; it was born of the *unrelievedness* of the blight that we saw around us. The pain of individual sufferers was far past any power of comprehension that I could bring to bear upon it. I had seen poverty in my life, plenty of it. I had known,—who has not?—the longing that would fain protect and bestow, but that the means are unhappily

denied it. But I have never experienced anything that enables me to imagine what it means, to be one, of what is officially declared to be eleven hundred thousand persons, all in the same district, who have not had a sufficient meal for months, and who even now are wholly dependent, for what they expect to eat, on a precarious charity. And although I have now seen with my eyes this awful sight, I cannot even yet imagine it. Surely it is better frankly to recognise this fact.

I propose, therefore, to confine myself to the stories of some of the simpler cases that came under my immediate observation, and to abandon any such effort as has often enough been made in the past, to describe the famine-crowds, or the miserable emaciated bodies of the hunger-stricken. Famine-crowds I saw, in the famine-districts, in plenty. And I could not blame the relief-workers,—rather I thought they deserved commendation,—for the fact that when some small help was given these, they demanded from them a hearty cheer. The very act of giving the pseudo-joyous shout was doubtless good for them, mentally, morally and physically. But I would rather not have heard it. There was something unutterably ghastly in the hoarse and feeble utterance that ought to have been so loud and bright, from the throats of these famished and starving people. It seemed much more natural, when words of hope and comfort had been spoken, to see them lift their hands spontaneously to their heads, and cry mournfully and piously with a single voice, “Allah send the day!”

There was, however, one case in the worst neighbourhood I visited, that contained in it some elements which made it possible of realisation. As we rowed up to a wretched-looking hut, in what ought to have been the humanly as well as physically beautiful village of ‘the Broken Lands’, there suddenly came to us, across the water, the unmistakable wail of the Hindu widow. We knew that the woman we were going to visit lived alone, with her four children ; but now we saw her standing outside her

door, with a group of sorrowing neighbours gathered round her. The story was soon told. She had been discovered, by the relief-workers, some six or seven weeks earlier, lying in a state of unconsciousness, on the floor of her cottage. Food, however, was given her, and she had gradually revived. Then the tale was heard, of how she, and her husband, and their four children, had been living for some days on leaves, till at last, in despair, the man had fled, hoping to find work and food for them, near a distant city. Gradually, by those manifold paths that cannot be named, along which news is wont to be carried in India, word had travelled back to the village that things were no better, in the district to which the man had gone, or at least that he had been unable even there, to find the help he sought. So much was known to everyone. But it was now evident that he had at last turned homewards again, desiring, in his despair to make his way back to his little family. He may have thought, in his ignorance that friends had been found for them, that death together was better than apart. But he was destined, alas,—never to see that little home again! News had this moment been brought to his wife, of the finding of his dead body, some few hours previously, in the jungle two or three miles to the north of the village.

I stayed long with the weeping woman, but what could I, or anyone, say to comfort her? Could I not feel, as well as she, the heart-rending anguish of the outcry “O my Beloved, if but I might have saved thee!”?

To my practical Western mind, there was something quaintly amusing in the awed tones in which the Hindu lads about me said, pointing to a certain house, and referring to the moment when the first unexpected relief had arrived there, “Here they were just about to sell a child”. For the first moment, the words suggested cannibalism, and my thoughts flew back to reports of the Siege of Jerusalem. Then the idea of slavery suggested itself, and the Assam tea-gardens, or the West Indian coolie-gangs were remembered, as more conceivable resources for Indian parents to

fall back upon. I turned to question the youth who had spoken, however, and found, as I might have known, that it was only a case of a household that had two children, where the idea had been entertained of "selling" one to a rich and childless man who coveted it. This did not seem to my more prosaic self so very dreadful, since the child would undoubtedly have met with adoration. Yet even this little incident, with the shock it occasioned on the one side, and the evident relief which the parents had experienced on the other, threw an added light on the strength of family ties amongst these village-folk, and helped one again and again afterwards to penetrate to the deeper sources of their pain.

The same secret was plain to read at another threshold. A mother and three children stood within the shadows of the doorway. Their cottage was so near the edge, as to be almost within the current, of the river. I have never seen human beings at once so feeble and so isolated. The borders of the bamboo mats were all rotted, and the surface of the plinth was itself a couple of inches under water. The family, we were told, had seen famine at its very worst. But, as one looked at them, one could not fail to be struck by the fact that the children,—three girls, or two girls and a small boy,—looked at least six times as well nourished as their mother. She was weeks further gone than they, in the process of starvation. Another moment, and some one dragged out the eldest son, a lad of twelve or fourteen, who had been hiding in a corner, that we might not see him, to be, like the little ones, unclothed. The boy's figure told the same terrible story as the mother's. It was the same revolting bee-hive skeleton that has been made familiar to us all in prints and photographs of famine-scenes. These two, mother and son, had been starving themselves for the sake of the weans. For my own part, I feared that little of the relief which was now regularly reaching the family, was finding its way to the mother at all. And the thought impelled me to break through a

superstition, by which, up to that moment, I had been firmly bound. We carried in the boat with us a couple of tins, one holding biscuits and the other almonds and dried figs, for we had not known at starting what difficulties we might encounter on our journey, or how many hours it might be, till our return. Now, however, seeing how this woman gave all her food to her children, and realising that she must be made to break through the habit, I put my hand into the box, and gave her a biscuit, saying "Eat it yourself, Mother! I wait here till you do!" She obeyed me, poor soul, for little option was given her. But we had to fill the children's hands also with nuts and fruit. And then I turned, with a feeling of guilt, knowing well the difficulty that I had now imposed upon our whole party. For we were followed, at some short distance, by many boats full of hungry-looking folk, and it would be but reasonable that these should crowd upon us, seeing that we had food, and clamour for it, perhaps upsetting our boats and their own, in their eagerness, not to be satisfied.

But was this what actually happened? Oh no! Not this, but something very different. It is true that they stretched their hands out, all of them, begging to have food given to them also, and pleading that they were very very hungry. So first we gave to all the children, a biscuit each. Then to the women. And last of all, to the men who were present, we gave one for each of the children at home, and finally, in each case, one for himself. But was there any clamour or disturbance after this? Were there the hoarse and menacing cries I had half expected of 'More! More! More!' Nothing of the sort. Indeed I do not know that anything I have seen in the villages has more impressed me with the pitiful realities of famine, than this fact that whole boat-loads of grown-up men and women turned homewards with the hurry and excitement of happy children, under the unwonted good fortune of having received one-eighth of an ounce of extra food a piece!

### III

## BARISAL

Never have I felt so strongly the oneness of the people, the world over, as a few days ago when I was allowed to begin my famine visits, by calling at one farm-house after another in the district on the opposite bank of the river to the town of Barisal. Some of these famine-stricken dwellings, belonged to Chashas, or peasant-labourers—men, that is to say, who are employed as farm-hands, at a daily or monthly wage. And there were besides these, the houses of the well-to-do tenant-farmers, brought low, like all the rest, in this year of desolation, by the very extremity of economic disaster.

For we cannot say in India, as we might perhaps in Ireland, that the higher classes live on one food, and the lower, on another. There is here no contrast, as of wheat and potatoes, so that one half of the village may experience the last pangs of hunger, while the other flourishes on the abundance of its own crop. All over the Gangetic plain and all over the Gangetic Delta (and it is convenient to speak of all the rivers of these parts, whatever their local names, as 'the Ganges') all classes alike live on rice. And when rice fails them, all alike starve. The employer of labour can, of course, hold out longer than the labourer he employs, in the battle against want. He ought to have something in the way of money and jewels. He has house, tools, furniture, and cattle that can (though it is to no one's interest that they should) be sold. He has even, if the worst should come to the worst, a larger credit. And he uses it to the utmost. If a man be found without resources in a year of supremely scanty harvest, we may be sure that it will prove to be because he has already parted

with home and land in the former years when ill-fortune was only growing upon him.

The labourer or Chasha, on the other hand, has nothing to give, save his own presence and companionship, to his wife and children, in facing want ; and when there is nothing to be done, this is the most heroic gift of all. I found one woman with several children, even on my first morning round, who had been deserted, not widowed, by a husband who was a labourer. "Deserted" we say, because the man had fled from the sight of his starving wife and bairns. But even now doubtless he is seeking food for them elsewhere, and there is no danger but he will carry it back to them and feed them, if he find it. The Indian workers tell us, with shamed look and faltering speech, that "desertion" has become almost frequent, since the famine began, and I smile somewhat grimly in reply, for I think of how different are the associations of the word, in western life.

The woman's way of expressing a like despair is not flight, but death ; and one shudders to think how many times this has been accomplished, or even how many people one has actually met—perhaps five or six within these three days—who have been rescued only at the last moment. But here I think it well to say that these famine suicides are never, in my opinion, the result of personal hunger. They are in every case due to the mental suffering caused by the need of others. Hunger itself ends mercifully in death, or unconsciousness, or some quickly run disease, and Indians of every rank can see it to its end like the veriest stoic. But who can listen with firmness, to the crying of his own children for want of food, who can watch day after day the increasing self-denial of the husband or the wife? Besides, there is the thought of one mouth less to feed, when all is ended, and of the burden made lighter thereby for the others. And who can tell what vague imaginings beside of sacrifice, or barter with the Gods, pass through the brain half crazed by bodily

weakness, under the promptings of a heart that can bear no more?

The first house that I entered, on this morning to me so memorable, was also the only one in which I at any time heard a man beg. But he had been demoralised by long illness. Although a relief-ticket had been granted to the house, the wife had no one to send to the city for the dole, and so they would have starved on, but for our timely visit. Perhaps, the main fact to notice in this case was that the famine of this year was for them only the culminating misfortune of a long series. For three or four years the man had been bed-ridden, and naturally he had become inured to self-pity and a habit of demanding. It is inevitable that that sense of outraged honour with which aid is accepted on a first occasion, should be overlaid by the feeling of bitter need on the second and third. Nor could one have the cruelty to wish it otherwise. I opened the morning newspaper on my return to Calcutta and turned eagerly to the famine returns for some nine different states and provinces. They ended with the sapient remark—"It is feared that in this province (referring to some distant place in the north), the people have become accustomed to relief and are disinclined to discontinue it." Such is an official (for it was not an editorial) comment upon one of the most terrible of human situations. But what does this mean? Are our hearts of stone? Could we really desire that those whom we help should experience every time again that same acute wounding of their pride that they knew at the first? Let us, rather, thank God that human nature is so constituted that such a degree of suffering is impossible. Since my visit to Eastern Bengal I have had the opportunity of comparing the people in this respect with those of another district nearer the capital, where famine and destitution have of late years become chronic. And I have learnt thus to measure the freshness of the impression of hunger by the shrinking from loss of personal dignity in the stating of need.

In one of the worst places we visited, famine itself, however, being new there, a crowd had gathered round the open window of the house-boat which we were using as our head-quarters. Through this open window, the young Brahmin lady who accompanied me on my journey, talked with the village women, gave a little boy a reading lesson, and in many kindly ways tried to make the time pass pleasantly and profitably for all. One knows, however, how insistent a crowd grows, and it was not without some terror that I came in, exhausted by hours of strenuous interviewing, and begged for a little quiet and rest. We all expected that it would be difficult to induce the women to go away. Their lives were so unusually empty! And in ours there was so much scope for interest and curiosity! But to our surprise, a few words of explanation and apology were all that was required! A delicate look of withdrawal passed with one accord over their faces, and waiting only to say "But do eat! Why don't you eat?" these people—themselves almost certainly hungry and at best insufficiently fed—left us, with courteous farewells, to enjoy an hour of peace, as those with whom self is forgotten, on behalf of the comfort of some cherished guest.

And yet, in the districts near the city of Barisal, the process of de-sensitising the finer nerves had not gone even so far as here. The gentle peasant-women and the strong and decent peasant-men, whom I met there in their own farm-houses, were willing to talk of their anxiety and their ruin, but they could, no more than ourselves, have made a direct appeal for assistance. For the sturdy independence and democratic pride that are characteristic of well-doing farmer-folk the world over, are certainly as great in East Bengal as anywhere. These people may be more refined than folk of their own rank in Europe, even as the Asiatic Madonna is in contrast with Dutch *Betje* or Bretonne *Francoise*. They are made somewhat passive, may be, by the presence of a tropical nature whose moods are not to be trifled with or defied. But peasants they are to the

backbone, and as such, one with their own kind, wherever one has seen it, whether in Norway, in Brittany, in Flanders or in France.

One home there was that I visited that morning, in which I would fain hope to have made permanent friends. Its mistress was a young woman, some few years widowed, whose grown-up son was the bread-winner of the family. At the hour of our visit, he was absent, seeking employment, and they would have nothing to cook that day, unless he should return with rice. Not that this was stated, or obtruded upon our notice. Rather, we came to understand the fact, when our visit was past. Meanwhile, we sat and chatted quietly in the closely-thatched verandah, and one noted a daughter of the household, a girl of twelve or fourteen, clad with the scantiness of the year's poverty, and sore of heart under the wound to her girlish pride. There was a greyhaired granddame too, who told us, not of the famine but of the deep abiding sorrow that all other pain was wont to renew in her—the memory of the deaths, long ago, of seven stalwart sons, who had each grown to man's estate, before, one by one, they left her, to wait alone for the word of Allah, ere she might see them again in Paradise. A widowed neighbour crept in to talk and listen, carrying a girl-baby in an extreme of emaciation, whom she was trying to nurse back into life, its own mother being dead. But centre of all, was the gentle mistress of the home. One could gather her past happiness from the story she told of the debts of the dead husband faithfully discharged, and by her sensitive shrinking from the thought of remarriage. Even as we sat talking, her son came back from the city and handed to his mother a bag containing some four pounds of rice, earned by two days of labour, carrying bricks on the river in a boat. Work, he said, was absolutely at a standstill. No one who could avoid it, would spend money on labour at such a time. And one gathered from his words the fear he did not utter, of the days when he must return empty-handed from such quests. What would then

be the fate of these helpless ones of his kindred who were dependent on him for food?

The cheery old Hindu gentleman who accompanied me in my visits, would not, however, allow any presentiment of coming evil. "Come, come Lakshmi! Fortuna!" He said soothingly to the mother, who, weakened by long fasting, was weeping quietly and silently. "We shall send you help—do not you fear! And better times will be with us shortly—There! There! Don't forget! The good days will come again." Like the captain of the ship in stormy weather, it was not to the women he would admit the anxiety that was weighing upon his own kind heart, with the thought of the awful month of October to November, when the money contributed by the country and the last rice held by the starving people, would alike be exhausted and heaven alone could tell where he would have to look for help.

The weeping woman dried her eyes and silently strove for self-control, for was this not the word of Aswini Kumar Dutt, and was he not even as the father of the people! And then with the prayers and blessings of the aged Rizpah ringing in our ears, we rose to leave, for the boats that awaited us. But down to the edge of the water-meadows came the women to see us off. And there with my last look backwards, I saw them standing, their hands raised in the attitude of prayer. And I knew that they, in their want and anxiety, were giving to us, well-fed and well-clothed, the beautiful salutation of their people, "Peace be unto you! Salaam-alai-kum"!

## IV

### MATIBHANGA

Our hosts in Barisal, however, could not be contented, unless we had a chance of seeing one of the worst neighbourhoods in all the green territory of the one-time "granary of Bengal", and this, they declared, might be found at Matibhanga, a village which we had already passed, on our way down the river, in the Khulna steamer. "There," they said, "are people clothed in banana-leaves and living on weeds."

As a matter of fact, of course, the people were clothed in nothing of the sort, for the first care of the relief-workers had been to put an end to such a state of things, by giving them fabrics, which though scanty, were nevertheless decent. Yet I met some at Matibhanga who had known this extreme of suffering, and I myself talked with one woman who was covered with a piece of old mosquito netting for sole garment.

The whole place was under flood, and the crowd who stood to receive us,—as we stepped from the comfortable river-steamer into the precarious-looking boats that were waiting—were waist-deep in water. Each one looked thinner and wanner than the last, and cries of "Mother! Mother! Give! Give!" were heard on all hands. It was when we saw their homes, however, that the real misery of their condition dawned on us. Most of them lived in a village that was separated from the main river by a dangerous backwater, and here we found ruined houses with thatches floating about amongst the eddies, and others that could last only a day or two longer, being inevitably doomed to give way then. Seven miles off, in the interior, said the relief-workers, we could see even greater need. But our time was short, and for myself I had seen enough. I cannot

pretend to have any fine taste in the shades of human misery. The prospect of death by drowning or exposure or inanition, or the fact that a mother is watching a child die, who might have been saved, if she had had proper food and medicine to give it, any one of these things is quite sufficient to convince me that the sufferer requires all that can be given. I make no distinction between bad, worse, and worst in such cases.

It was here in Matibhanga that I saw people living in haylofts—but haylofts open on three sides, and to English ideas, be it remembered, inconceivably small,—like birds in open nests. One of our boats floated through the cow-house underneath one of these, and remained there for shelter from the rain, so deep was the water that was surely and steadily sapping the foundations of the tiny tenement.

One of the quaintest and most pathetic sights about these flooded river-side villages, was to see the little bazaars, on market-days, laid out in open boats, since the shop-floors were now unfitted for this purpose. One can hardly describe the pitiful smallness of the stock-in-trade displayed in these boats, consisting as this would do, on such occasions, of a few cucumbers, or bananas or chilis, from distant cottage gardens not yet wholly under water. In Matibhanga, there was no market-day. But in the early morning, as we went our rounds, we saw a tiny shop following us in the distance, on a boat. We rowed up to it, determined to purchase whatever we could. But the wares, alas, were almost non-existent! A few dozens of dusty glass bracelets, fit for children of nine or ten, were the chief commodity, and even the bangles that seemed to be of white shell, were only a variety of the glass imitation. Then a few spices, a few ink-wells, half a dozen wooden combs, the whole little stock was worth perhaps an English shilling. With difficulty, we collected a handful of trifles and fixing our own prices, succeeded in handing over to the bewildered boatman the startling sum of eight annas. Then we caught

sight of something else and automatically questioned him, 'What price?' 'Don't say too little!' said one of the boys behind me, encouragingly, and thus adjured, he declared the value to be one pice each. We made it two and took a couple. But at this, the shopkeeper rebelled. Our subterfuge had been too transparent; and I do not know how his scruples were finally overcome.

How it may be in other countries, I cannot tell, but here in India the man who would go out on such an errand as mine, with any hope of success, must surround himself with persons known to the villagers. Nothing can be done with secrecy. And nothing effective can be done without respect and confidence for the existing leaders of society and opinion. By the time my stay at Matibhanga, therefore, was over, I was surrounded by assistants. No less than four of the officers of the relief-associations had arrived, to give me the advantage of their knowledge. And a couple of monastic novices of my own party,—one of them summoned from more eastern districts still, to make his report, and my young Brahmini girl-charge, accompanied me besides. Each one of all these was a sort of scout, helping in the gathering of facts, and in the forming of impressions, and I had the unexpected good fortune, moreover, to see amongst them the very man, a young doctor, who had been the first to discover the great need of Matibhanga in the month of July. To him, therefore, I turned, when my own visits were ended, and from him I requested an account of what he had found on his first arrival, and how he had come to hear of the place. He answered me eagerly, as one who at last finds an audience for the unburdening of the heart. He had arrived, he said, about the 20th of July. The floods had not begun till the middle of August; hence the houses, at the time of his first visit, still stood on dry ground. Only the rains had been excessive and the canals and water-lanes were full, so that long distances could be covered in the small boats of the country in a comparatively short time.

He had come, said the young doctor of himself, in company with a friend, commissioned by the people of a place called Pirozepore, who had been told that the neighbouring village of Nazirpore was in great need. At Nazirpore, they had heard of Matibhanga, left otherwise without a voice, and the two young men had come on at once. They reached the place at noon, and immediately took one of the small boats and began their inspection. Fascinated with horror, they went on from point to point and visited twelve villages in twelve hours. Not till midnight that night did they return to the shed which acted as their headquarters, and even then, in the middle of the night, it was only to send to the distant bazaar, and begin forthwith their first distribution of rice. They had brought only a small sum of money, but they stayed in the village a week, and went into debt personally for the relief they gave. Rice was not yet so dear at that time as it had since become.

“I had never thought”, said the young doctor, “to see such scenes. So many people were unconscious. Children were lying on the earth, unable to move. Mothers were crying. The people were in rags. There were no lights after dark. At eight or nine in the evening, we entered a house in which the children lay unconscious in the yard, and the mother with a baby in her arms, across the threshold. It was dark and I stepped on her. Then I struck a match and saw. Some of the women in the neighbouring villages were quite naked, and had to shrink back in the shadows that I might not see them. Three or four women with children had been deserted by their husbands. One of these had heard of Government loans to agriculturists and had gone out to apply for one. He was refused at Nazirpore by the Deputy Magistrate, and refused at Pirozepore by a higher official. So he brought no rice. But he was absent from the village for three whole days, and in his absence there had been no food at home. He returned and found the whole family unconscious. It was

at the time of my own first visit. I was called, and it took at least an hour to revive them.

“One morning at this time I came to a village situated on a swamp and found a number of women standing up to their throats in water, gathering unripe grain stalk by stalk. I offered them help and my boat. But they could not accept, saying ‘We are naked.’”

He had known personally of some thirteen deaths from starvation and one family in which the father, and another in which the mother had gone mad from anxiety. Finally, said the workers, they thought that since relief was organised, it could not be said that people had actually died of hunger in this neighbourhood, but there were at least 5,000 persons, who received sufficient only for one full meal in the course of three or four days.

As we had gone through these villages, I had noticed the impression of dismay deepening, on the face of the young monk who had been called to my aid, from the famine-relief centre at Noakhali. With his trained sense of poverty, he had realised after a couple of visits, the extent of the desolation in which we were now finding ourselves, and when I asked him how his own district compared with this, he answered that he did not think that there the destitution of the lower classes was so terrible as here, but the suffering of the middle classes was even greater, and was perhaps harder to bear, because of the secrecy that it involved. That this last was a feature of the distress, I had known, indeed, from the beginning. For I had been told at Barisal of a case in which relief had to be taken to a house at two o'clock in the night, by the workers.

Such then is the condition to which, in some greater or less degree, the larger part of the fair province of Bengal has been reduced today. For it is not to be supposed that the Delta alone is suffering from this need. Excessive rains have worked their own damage in the north and west also, and the scarcity of rice in what ought to be the grain-filled

land has driven prices up everywhere, and brought us all within the range of want. Nay, it is even feared that in distant Rangoon, where people have been parting too rapidly with their own rice to fill our bazaars, the pinch of famine may be felt within a month or two. Prices in Calcutta itself are rising rapidly, being already at double their normal height, and everywhere we are met by the question of the future. 'Watchman, what of the night?' is the one thought of the relief-workers. For the hungry cannot spare rice for seed. The water-ruined grain cannot grow to a full harvest. Is the gathering of the next year to be even as the gathering of last? If so, then, indeed, we may pray "God save the people!" For help there will assuredly be none within the power of man.

## THE COMMONWEALTH BASED ON RICE

Famine is social paralysis. A civilisation that has taken thousands of years to build up, may be shattered by a single season of it. For complete destitution of all classes together, in a given area, is apt to knock out the links and rivets of the social system. At the present moment, for instance, the farmers have neither money nor food, to give in exchange for labour. And without labour, the rice of next year cannot be saved, even to the extent that might still have been possible. Under such circumstances, it is clear that food given to the farmer and his peasants is not the same thing as food given to the farmer for his peasants. For in the latter case, the food not only nourishes: it also leads to the putting in of labour, necessary to the next harvest. In the East there may be a greater readiness to return to the condition of equilibrium when the shock is over, than in younger lands better known to ourselves. There may be. I do not know that there is, for I have not yet had the chance of seeing. But the difference can only at best be one of degree. Famine involves social disorganisation as one of its secondary, but most far-reaching effects.

For famine is many things besides hunger. True, it is hunger so keen that one man whom I know, spending some days in a district as yet unrelieved, could not sleep at night, for the wail of the famine-stricken in his ears. Hunger so keen, ah God! so keen! But it is more than this, as we have already seen. It is the extreme of poverty, bringing, amongst other things, nakedness, darkness at nightfall, ignorance, and unrepair in its train. It is poverty breeding poverty. Under its pressure the milk-cows are sold to the butcher, sometimes for eight annas or a shilling,

because their owners can no longer maintain them, and by the new master are killed immediately for their hides, at the value of which he bought them. When it comes, the seed of the next year is eaten as food, the savings of lifetimes are scattered to the winds. Economic relationships that seemed inherent in the social organism are broken to pieces.

But over and above even these things, famine is more. It is the very sickle of death, selecting its victims according to a certain invisible but predetermined order, and what that order is, it may be worth our while to enquire.

A few years ago there was a picture on exhibition in London, called, if I am not mistaken, "The Stairway of Life". At the top of wide-spreading steps, stood youth and maiden hand in hand, and then, diverging with each step downwards, towards the river of death at the bottom, one saw the same pair, over and over again, at the different stages of life. This picture has been constantly in my mind, as I have gone about the famine villages. Only, the river of death that I see with the mind's eye, is in flood, and at each step of the stairway stand the different grades of health and society, ranked according to the likelihood of their being swept off by the rising waters.

On the lowest, stand the beggars. For every Indian community has its quota of these. There is here no poor rate, and the hopelessly indigent and helplessly feeble must needs be supported by the informal charity of the village. Lonely old women they are for the most part, sunned and wrinkled under all weathers, and they stand at the steamer-gwhats, or in the bazaars, staff and begging-bowl in hand, not the least picturesque of all the picturesque elements that go to make up the Indian crowd.

Naturally, these are the first inhabitants of the villages to feel the sharp pinch of adversity, the first to throw themselves upon a wider reaching charity. Indeed the Bengali word for Famine, *Durbhikkha*, the 'hard begging,' gives us a wonderful picture of the disaster from

their point of view. It paints the beggars going forth in all directions, and wandering far ere they find scant food. Economic pauperism is a condition that only under very exceptional circumstances tends to bring out the highest and finest elements in human character, and these Indian beggars of the villages are neither better nor worse than their kind in other countries. Pithy and smart of repartee they sometimes are, and one cannot but be entertained when the grave assurance is given that the speaker dined yesterday on 'horse's eggs' (a Bengali colloquialism for no food), in the very face of the person, it may be, who provided her with rice. It is undoubtedly true also, that the beggar is spiritually twin-brother to the millionaire. For the minds of both these are concentrated upon the acquisition of wealth, in a degree impossible to any intermediate rank.

But the one lesson of my pilgrimage amidst the starving has been the immensity of the gulf that divides the humblest of citizens from these civic paupers. It takes a long series of scanty harvests to turn the poorest Indian householder into a beggar. Unless this is understood, we fail of the whole moral.

The next class to be reached by the rising waters consists of the single women, respectable widows, and girls of their blood as yet unmarried, who have no one to work for them, and must make their own living by husking the rice of the farmers, and preparing it for the city-markets. These are the gleaners of Asiatic village-life. For they follow after the reapers at time of harvest, and by gathering the grain that falls in their wake, provide themselves with food for some one or two months out of every twelve. Theirs is thus the unbought store. Indeed, it is difficult to see how money ever passes through their hands, for the labour they give at rich farm-houses is paid in kind rather than in coin, and probably a piece of cloth from the farmer's wife on the great festivals meets their need of clothing for the year.

One of the saddest notes in all the sorrowful cry of Matibhanga was the story of a little home in which an old woman and her young granddaughter,—both of this class of the gleaners,—were found together. The girl had fainted for want of food, and the grandmother was too weak to stir to her aid. But fortunately in this condition they were found by the relief-workers. Thus the flood rises step by step.

On the next level that it reaches, are the homes of the peasants, the farm-labourers. And last of the village-group, but central, and first probably to have seen afar off the rising of the waters, are the larger farmers and small squires or zemindars.

Besides these, however, who depend directly for the year's food upon the year's harvest, each in his degree. there are whole classes of others, who are indirectly but vitally affected. In the villages themselves there are the fishermen and boatmen. Although actively engaged in the supply of another kind of food, these are as much concerned as their neighbours in the question of the sufficiency of the year's crop of rice. Indeed in many cases they themselves rent and farm a patch of land.

Scattered up and down the districts, again, and in the small market-towns of the country-side, there is the sprinkling of intellectuals. There are the Brahmins, or village priests; the school masters; the people who have been employed on railway-staffs, small station-masters and others; clerks in village-firms and shops; letter-writers; doctors; and the like. To these people the directly agricultural classes are as the very steps on which they stand, and their support being withdrawn, the flood of hunger must needs swallow them all up, the more hopelessly and inevitably, since there are for them no intermediate phases of social degradation to be passed through. The peasant may perhaps, by a slow refinement of suffering, be transformed, first into a landless labourer. Then, on his death or desertion, his women-folk may become gleaners, instead of proud

mistresses of the farmstead. And finally one or all of the little household may conceivably be brutalised into begging. But, for a gentleman—and the village school-master or doctor or small squire, is perhaps more conscious of his pride of gentleness than any proud belted earl in all the West!—for a gentleman, when starvation comes, there is nothing for it but to hide his head and die. Thus, over the wide stretches of green country, the river of death has risen to the height of its flood-tide, and all the prosperity and joy of the little commonwealth are gone. The hive is robbed of its honey, those spoils of hope and cheer that were gathered in the sunshine and prosperity of the good years. And how shall the spiritless bees set to work again to replace them?

Still more secondarily and indirectly, but none the less really for that, all classes everywhere are affected by a famine. Here in the distant city of Calcutta, at the present moment, the rice that the poor eat has more than doubled in price. From three florins a *maund* it has risen to six florins odd. This means that in many and many a household, the ladies are living on one meal a day, in order to give to children and bread-winners what is essential.

To a people always on the verge of destitution, the slightest rise in the price of food-stuffs means indescribable keenness of suffering. Other foods can of course to a certain extent be substituted, but it is not easy for a people accustomed to rice, all at once to adapt themselves to wheat. The very idea that the change was made under compulsion acts as an obstacle. And even if it were otherwise, wheat itself, under the increased demand, is rising in value, almost equally with rice.

In Calcutta, then, food today costs twice as much as usual. But in Dacca and Mymensingh, the principal food-grain has gone up something like four times. The same weight of rice which in ordinary years cost four florins, is now being sold, in those markets, I am informed, at fifteen, that is to say, in exact figures, food has gone up from five

shillings, to eighteen shillings and eight pence for a given weight! Can anyone imagine what is the human meaning of this appalling fact?

How are day-labourers and workmen, builders, and weavers, and craftsmen, cow-herds and fisher-folk, or even small trades-people and merchants to buy food at all, at such a price?

Nay, how are those, higher in the social scale, who have to call into being the labours of these, how are they to divert money from the buying of food in order to pay the hire of the workman? If we turn only to the class of pensioners, we may see at once, that the pension remains at the old figure financially, while its buying power becomes from a half to a sixth of what it was.

But to go back to that peasant world which is alike the home and source of the wealth and the poverty of the land. How voiceless it is! How inarticulate! We have seen in the case of Matibhanga, that it was only by what seemed the accident of an accident, that our friend the doctor arrived there at all, on the 20th of July, in order to report to a distant city the condition of the peasantry. And what a degree of suffering had at that date been arrived at, we have heard in his own words.

And yet, even at such a crisis of starvation there was none who could speak, and make his voice heard, in the cause of his brethren! One man, it will be remembered, had heard of Government loans to needy agriculturalists, and had gone out of the village to try to obtain one. But he was refused at Nazirpore and refused at Pirozepore, and turned to make his way home again, having spent three days, and bought no rice.

After seeing the famine villages, the fact is impressed upon one that there are in the modern world, everywhere, two humanities, one the more or less illiterate rustics, who pay to the centre, on the other, educated and literate and city-bred, who are paid, in one way and another, directly or indirectly, from the centre. And between the two there

is a great gap. There seems to be no vital connection between the farmer-folk of country places, and the business and professional people of our twentieth century cities.

But in India the presence of a foreign bureaucracy adds immensely to an evil characteristic of the modern epoch.

It is as if the circulation of blood through the system were represented by the agricultural classes, and the circulation of blood through the lungs by the town-dwelling and town-educated, and as if between these, instead of the heart of the organism, energised by and responsive to the body as a whole, and vitally affected for good or ill by each influence that falls on any part of it, there were a mass of some intruded substance, ignorant of the needs, unfeeling of the vicissitudes of the body politic, and only vaguely simulating the functions of cardiac tissue. Is this what it means to have a foreign Government? Is such a state of things inseparable from the fact of an alien officialdom?

Have we here but an added proof of the eternal verity of the words, "He that is an hireling, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep?"

## VI

### THE PROGRESS OF POVERTY

How futile, when one has seen a famine, sound all discussions as to whether or not India in the past has known as great catastrophes! A fair mansion, standing on the side of a great river, suddenly falls in a year of flood, and what remain<sup>r</sup> of it henceforth is only a ruin. The house fell the moment the waters reached a certain level. Yes. But it would not have fallen at such a touch, only that during long years before, the underpinnings and foundations had been steadily sapped and undermined. The final calamity was only the last scene in a drama of disaster long proceeding in silence. And the house itself could never have been built under such conditions. That is the whole argument. The commonwealth was never built up under such conditions.

Everything that one sees in East Bengal today is so much saved from happier times. Is it the pride and independence of fisher-folk and farmers? Is it the delicate hospitality of starving villagers? Both alike, if the present strain continue long enough, must assuredly give way to a sordid pauperism. They could never, under such disadvantages, have sprung into being.

No, the ruin wrought by fire, or earthquake, or tidal wave, may happen in an hour. But famine, on the scale on which we have seen it here, implies a long train of preparatory circumstances, with which a bad season, or a series of bad seasons, suddenly coincides, to work visible devastation. That a certain combination of bad seasons must necessarily recur, in every century or half century, will, I presume, appear a truism, to the mathematician versed in the doctrine of chances. And that an agricultural civilisation of three thousand years' standing should

be familiar with, and make provision for the fact of such a recurrence, will appear equally a truism to the student of sociology.

It is in accordance with this fact that the people of East Bengal have been in the habit of keeping always stored in their houses, some two or three years' provision of rice at a time. All over India, the family that is rich enough buys its rice for the month or the year, by the *maund*, even as in London, we buy coal by the ton.\* But the farmer was supposed never to encroach, for the purposes of the market, upon the store of grain that was to secure food to his household and dependents, not only during the current year but also during two scanty harvest ahead, should the country be so unfortunate as to experience these. Now those who have followed the story which I am telling, will at once perceive the necessity of this. The convention was etiquette. It was more, it was morality, Dharma, the national righteousness. But it was more even than these. It was plain commonsense. For we have seen that the farmer who cannot pay for labour even under the agricultural mischance of a bad harvest, (strictly parallel to a season of commercial or manufacturing debits instead of credits), must necessarily fall from the position of an employer of labour, into that of the employé or day-labourer himself. Instead of a farmer, he is now a Chasha or ploughman, merely. Food may return into the district, through relief associations or along the railways, but this is not the same thing as its returning into his hands. He has lost his social status, and it will be long before he can possibly regain it. The security of the farmer as a capitalist, depends, then upon this one thing, and upon it alone, that he keep in possession a three-years' supply of rice. In the district of Mogra Hat, in the close neighbourhood of Calcutta, where the houses of the peasants are built of more permanent materials than further east, I know of nothing

\* A maund, is about 80 lbs, i.e. more than half a cwt. It represents, as food, about one hundred and sixty days for one person.

more pathetic to see than the long array of village-granaries—many of them structures of an exquisite beauty—empty! And there, as I have been able to ascertain, not one has held even a month's supply of rice, for three long years!

The rise in the money value of food is sufficient to explain to us the impossibility for the East Bengal farmers, during recent years, of abiding by the injunction of the forefathers that they should keep rice in their granaries. They have lived in a world which regards it as more essential that they should keep money in their purse. And thus it is known to every one that the standard silver coin in India is called a rupee, and may be taken, for purposes of internal trade, as theoretically equal to an English florin. Now a couple of hundred years ago or so, in the days of the Mohammedan rulers of Bengal, there reigned one Shaishta Khan in Dacca, and this Nawab must have been good and great. Like Asaf-ud-Dowlah of Lucknow, his memory lives to this day on the grateful lips of all, Hindus and Mohammedans alike, who would once have been counted amongst his subjects. For he understood the true glory of the king of a nation of peasants, and he built a great gate in Dacca and closed it, and upon it,—it being a sort of agricultural *Arc de Triomphe*—he caused an inscription to be made, saying that the portals were never to be opened again till there should arise a ruler in Dacca who should do more for the people than he had done, inasmuch as he had made rice to be sold in the bazaar at eight *maunds* to the rupee, that is to say, at six English hundredweights for a florin!

But some one will say, if rice was plentiful, money was scarce, in those days. This is true. Still, the story gives us a starting point. For the gates were never opened after. None was able to outdo Shaishta Khan of Dacca on his chosen field of victory.

Twenty-five years ago, however, money was as accessible in East Bengal as it is today. There has been no great

difference in this respect between then and now. And in Barisal, twenty-five years ago, rice was bought at a florin and a quarter per *maund*. This is of course a great deterioration from the days of Shaishta Khan, but how does it compare with today's price, from six and a half to seven and a half florins for the same commodity, and the value steadily rising? Even ten or eleven years ago, rice was sold in Barisal for two florins a *maund*!

On some of the islands, again, in the district of Noakhali—slightly east from this of Backergunge with its capital of Barisal,—on some of these islands, only six years ago, there was such fertility, cultivation was so easy, and export, be it added, was so difficult and dangerous, that rice was sold at less than a florin a *maund*! It will be understood that under these circumstances money changed hands but little, while most of the trade and most of the labour was paid in kind, a fact which, in a peasant-world, is a sure sign of prosperity. It is not many years, indeed, since a man from one of these islands picked up on a roadside a roll of Indian bank-notes, worth altogether some three thousand two hundred florins. Neither he nor his neighbours had ever seen such curious pictures, but they considered them to be not without a certain beauty. So they were distributed amongst the villagers and pasted on the walls for decoration. Then the police came to hear of it, and the serpent entered this Eden. For the notes were traced to their actual owner, and a heavy reward taught the innocent islanders the value of money!

But what have been the causes at work to transfer the peasant's ambition from rice to silver, from a well-filled granary to a well-filled till? For unless the ambition had been so transferred, it is clear that the money value of grain could not have risen so rapidly. Six and a half to fourteen florins is a merchant's, not a farmer's price. That is to say, only when a province has been denuded, and all its food has to be imported, could the crop of the country reach such a value.

With regard to this question, it is perhaps sufficient to say that all over India a process is going on, in consequence of which the peasant has come to look upon money as wealth. And this process may be briefly indicated by the statement that rent and taxes have to be paid in coin. The foreign tax-gatherer, the foreign minister of the exchequer, know nothing of rice as the ultimate standard of value. To them, the precious metals occupy this place. And this is a fact which would tend of itself to impoverish the peasant, relatively to the other classes of the community, even if all the wealth of India remained within her own borders. The fact that it does not do so is too well-known to need repetition at this point. My present object is merely to examine whether there be any local or little-known circumstances which may recently have contributed in some special measure to undermine the prosperity of East Bengal, and so have prepared the way for the existing calamity. It is undoubted that the burden of taxation is too heavy. It will be objected that Bengal enjoys what is known as the Permanent Settlement, and that the amount of her taxation is consequently fixed. The answer can hardly be regarded as ingenuous. The Permanent Settlement has long been tampered with in the shape of cesses. There is the Roads Cess, and there is the District Cess, and of late years it would appear that the latter has been doubled. The District Board, moreover, are given to spending these revenues on the foreign ideal instead of on those works which would be appropriate to the needs and civilisation of the district. The latter requires, above all things, the maintenance and development of the water-ways. Now the Board does not consist of English members preponderantly, perhaps, but it is undoubtedly composed to a great extent of those who are nominees of the English, and known to be dominated by the English conception of things, which is, the opening up of the country by means of long roads and light iron bridges, all of which, practically, go to feed the foreign engineer and none of them to restore the

native fisheries. Over and above these impositions, again, the people feel, as being a real grievance, the fact that what they call 'Settlement Operations' have been fastened upon them during the last three years. That is to say, the Government has undertaken to examine into all outstanding disputes and grievances about landed interests, and to settle them once for all. Formerly, there were a couple of officers kept for this purpose, and it was possible for any landowner who desired an examination of claims that concerned him, to obtain the services of this small staff, for a definite fee. A few years ago, however, some one who to the people appears less wise than meddlesome, moved Government to undertake the settlement of all claims, whether the claimants desired an official verdict or not. The result was of course the fastening of a large body of settlement officers upon the country, and the occasioning of a vast crop of lawsuits, while to the humbler classes of those called as witnesses, the matter appeared simply as an added opportunity for the exactions of servants and petty retainers, in the form of tips, and for loss of time unspeakably precious to the agricultural labourer, in hanging about courts, waiting politely on the law's delay. Many undesirable forms of expenditure have thus undoubtedly contributed to bleed the fair territory of the granary of Bengal, till trembling already on the verge of exhaustion, she was little fit to bear the shock of a succession of bad harvests. Yet even so, it was not these which did the bulk of the mischief. A still graver economic evil than any of them has been at work for some years past, and of this I propose to give some description in my next article.

## VII

### THE TRAGEDY OF JUTE

A few sociologists, notably Professor Patrick Geddes and his school, have pointed out the necessity for studying the social significance of various agricultural and industrial products. Thus, if these men are correct, the change from the manufacture of wool to that of silk for example, by a community, is not by any means so simple as would appear to the careless eye. Each different material imposes its different conditions of labour, and has in a thousand ways its own characteristic necessities. Each article produced or manufactured, therefore, will be found according to these thinkers, if we study closely enough to entail certain human adaptations peculiar to itself. And this we may refer to as its *social value*.

To most of us, however, this point of view has not yet come in sight. We do not dream that there is any other standard of benefit to the worker or the consumer than the financial. And for this reason I hope to make extremely clear the story I am about to tell of Eastern Bengal.

Twenty years ago, in every cottage garden in Eastern Bengal, was found a patch, more or less large as the case might be, containing a tall dark herb, botanically intermediate between a mallow and a flax, known to us as jute.

The plant was grown by the peasants mainly for the sake of its fibre. This was very valuable in a country where rough string and bamboo are the chief building materials. There was also the supply of lamp-wicks to be thought of for the year. The leaves of the plant, moreover, when dried, were medicinal. And finally, in the case of the Hindu home, at any rate, it could not be dispensed

with, since it was required in certain of the year's religious festivals. Only last year I remember, on the night of our beautiful Eastern Feast of Lamps, as I went out through the lanes of our neighbourhood, being suddenly startled by a quaint little gathering of unknown objects, lying on the roadway in the middle of an awkward twist in a narrow street. A light not yet out, and a little smouldering straw, showed that I had come upon some altar of worship, and I turned to my companion for an explanation. The lad who was with me smiled easily and said: "Oh this is the A-lakhi Puja. It is written that on this night in 'some bad place', with jute sticks and these few things, we should worship the Power that shines through the Unluck". Strange predestination surely! through these several centuries has Hinduism been worshipping the Unluck under the symbol of jute sticks!

The plant was open to the objection which applies also in the case of Irish flax, namely, that the long stems had to be cut down, placed in water, and practically rotted, in order to get at the fibre, and this must always have made it an aversion to the Hindu. Still its economic value and the requirements of the faith were both imperative, and the quantity grown by each cottager was only such as he and his family would consume in the year.

About some twenty to twenty-five years ago, however,—owing to what chain of events I do not know, for I have not traced out the history of jute as a commercial product,—it seems to have been discovered by the outside world, and its value as a fibre must have been rapidly recognised. It has the advantage, as we all now know, of being easily woven into any one of a number of attractive looking materials, some of which resemble silk and other flannel. It has the further advantage, from the modern shop-keeper's point of view, that it will not wear long, and therefore necessitates that rapid succession of garments which change of fashion is in itself only another device for bringing about. And it is further said, that Bengal is the only

country in the world in which it can be produced. Here then was the tragedy incipient. Twenty years ago, it is said, the cultivation of jute made its appearance on something of a commercial scale in these East Bengal districts. At first, however, it spread slowly. But some seven or eight years ago it made a sudden advance, and today the culture of the plant is going forward by leaps and bounds. As one goes down the river from Khulna to Barisal, one sees on all hands the fields of jute alternating with the fields of rice, and this particular line of country is not as yet one of the worst infected. As one watches the boats being loaded it is always with jute, and even about Calcutta, hour after hour, day after day, the carts come pouring in along the open country roads, laden with their bales of jute. In this way the 'granary of Bengal' has been, and is being transformed into one vast jute plantation. The temptation to the peasant was, what it always is everywhere,—recklessness as to the future, in the face of a large financial reward, for jute at present brings him a good price. In the same way, as we all know, the peasants of Norway have denuded their beautiful mountains in many cases, of their forests, careless always of the interests of the future, in face of that crushing need of the present, which is the curse of the modern and especially of the poorer world. And in East Bengal the discovery of jute coincided with that other process, of which I have already spoken, by which the Commonwealth based upon Rice was being transformed inevitably into the Commonwealth based upon Money.

Such was the temptation, but in fact the bribe was a delusive one. For jute tends to exhaust the soil in which it is grown, and itself declines in value with successive years. It requires, for its successful culture, practically the same fields which are most favourable to rice. Thus the two crops cannot well be grown in rotation, since the soil will not afterwards produce such good rice, if indeed, any. Besides, as we know, though the peasant cannot, the high

prices will no longer be available, when the growth is once universally established.

This then is what has made the present situation so helpless. It is not only that there is no rice in the village. But far off, in lands from which the village might have drawn a supply, or at least from which some place accessible to it might have done so, there is no rice either. For these last few years, with increasing speed, all alike have been abandoning the old ideal of the conserving of rice, in favour of the new wealth-producer of the hour. Till today, even when relief was to be brought, there was nowhere from which to bring it, but distant Rangoon. So that the cry has gone out from Rangoon itself, that there also will famine be felt, if the present drain goes on.

Such is the state of affairs. Doubtless it is understood by no one. One does not want to accuse the jute merchant of any inhuman desire to enslave or impoverish these helpless countryfolk. He simply pursues the interests of his trade. But the jute agent is everywhere. At every bazaar and market he catches the ear of the unwary, who has not yet been drawn in, and bribes him, with the promise of high prices and the offer of free seed. It is not malevolence. It is merely ignorance coupled with self-interest. We may grant so much. And yet it is difficult to excuse the Scottish gentleman, Sir Andrew Fraser, who has been entrusted by his Government with the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Western half of Bengal, when we read in the papers here, as was wired to us by Reuter a week or two ago, that, addressing a gathering of merchants in Dundee, he assured them that he would do all that lay in his power to put the European manufacturer, through European agents, directly in contact with the jute-growing peasantry. Have we then no ideals left in England? Or may a man shamelessly announce to his friends and relations, in the hearing of the world, that he regards the outpost of honour and duty to which his country has accredited him as an opportunity for advancing *their* interests?

For it must be understood here that if the facts be as I have stated them, then the only remaining compensation that could be made to the Bengalee people would be to give *them* as large a share of the profits as was possible, and this obviously could only be done by continuing to employ Bengalee middle-men and agents as at present.

Thus the mysterious prescience of ancient faiths is justified. When the Roman Empire was but young, it may be, the simple peasants of the Gangetic Delta already worshipped the Power in the Unluck under the strangely-chosen symbol of the Jute-herb, and today, an arctic winter of starvation has spread its mantle over them, largely through the agency of this old-time acquaintance. But what are we to say, we others, who by our greed and luxury have written so many chapters in the Martyrdom of Man, as indigo, opium, india-rubber, and now jute?

## VIII

### THE GREATEST THING EVER DONE IN BENGAL

The energising effect of political vigour on all civic and corporate action was never better seen than in Barisal during the last months of the year 1906. The name of the place has become famous in India and in England, for the manly tone adopted by its people in protest against the partition of Bengal, the Gurkha occupation, and the methods of Fuller as Lieutenant-Governor. But few probably have realised that had it not been for this agitation, and for the determined spirit of co-operation evoked by it, thousands of helpless people who have now been aided and relieved, must have been swept out of the ranks of the living by the ruthless hand of famine during the past year. And the fashion in which they were saved, it may be worth while to place on record.

On the 19th of June, as I said in a previous paper, the District Board of Backergunge opened relief works for the people tentatively in order to test the reality of the persistent rumours about famine. On the 12th of July, the Lieutenant-Governor Sir Bampfylde Fuller,—ordering the closure of these relief works, on the plea that the matter was one for the attention not of local bodies, but of the Provincial Government—came down to Barisal to make a personal inspection into the state of affairs. It is difficult to understand how far this personal inspection can have gone, or what it can have meant, for in the first week of September, six weeks later, all official famine relief was closed, and the statement was made by the Government that famine was non-existent. In spite of some self-contradiction and certain conflicting admissions, to this statement, it may be said, the Government has since adhered—officially speaking, there is and has been no famine in

Eastern Bengal. Is this statement to be taken as malicious, or as a measure of the colossal ignorance of the persons making it, of the condition of these populations whose affairs they administer? It might be well, moreover, while I am at this point, to mention a rumour that persistently reached us, here in Bengal, during the latter half of 1906, to the effect that certain Madras officials had vetoed amongst the Madras people during the same period, the collection of funds for famine-relief in Southern India, on the plea that *as famine had not yet been declared by Government to exist, the organising of a fund on its behalf, was an act of sedition*. If this is true, it should be dealt with by the people themselves, and also by the supreme Government, in no half-hearted fashion. Is it possible that there exist persons so wrong-headed as to imagine that the declaration of a state of famine could ever be a function of Government? Canute, ordering the waves to retire, was making no more monstrous claim. *Famine is always, even under the least terrible of circumstances, declared by those who suffer it and by them forced upon the attention of Governments.*

The people of East Bengal fortunately refused, on the present occasion, to take the word of the Government, for the flourishing condition of things in their own midst. A thrill of horror had run through the whole district when, so early as January, a Mohammedan peasant who lived near Barisal walked into a police-station, and charged himself with the murder of his own three children. The man had been driven to frenzy, it appeared, by seeing the sufferings endured by his widowed sister, for want of food, and in his despair had committed this fatal deed. The youngest son, it may be added, was not killed, only severely wounded, and with care he recovered. The father's whole cry was, "Let me die! If I cannot earn food for those dependent on me, let me be hanged!"

This occurrence drew the attention of all the Bengalee people to the terrible state of affairs about them. But as

the crops were not exhausted till May, stray relief only was given. By that time, however, the need was understood. To every part of the distressed territory, the cities began to send help. The zemindars were themselves suffering from loss of credit owing to the famine, yet every nerve was strained by them to assist the peasantry. In Calcutta, children going to school saved their luncheon pice "for the famine" and every Indian school and office organised a fund. But it was in Barisal, that the most potent measures were adopted. Here the activity which the stress of previous months had awakened, at once flowed into these new channels, and in the town of Barisal a relief-organisation was opened on the 11th of June, which was able, with Aswini Kumar Dutt at its head, to scatter the young men of the city, and open relief centres through their means, in 160 different places in the district of Backergunge. Each centre moreover distributed relief in from 6 to 12 villages about it. And almost every village relief-centre had its own village committee, to superintend the work.

Amongst voluntary organisations, unrecognised by State or Government, and taking place spontaneously in face of the need with which they were to deal, this, for rapidity of formation, loyalty to its leaders, cohesion, and efficiency, might well, I think, claim to be unprecedented in any country. Funds poured in upon it, small when we consider the distress that had to be coped with, immense when we realise the almost unsought nature of the offerings. Altogether, in the course of the months that followed, and until the work closed in December,—Aswini Kumar Dutt and his workers were able to distribute 31,172 Rupees, 5,766 *maunds* of rice, and 3,510 pieces of cloth.

Altogether they had relieved 489,301 persons. The Government had given gratuitous relief to 27,357, and helped by means of Test works 15,483, a total of 42,840. The District Board had given gratuitous relief to 64,321, and helped with Test works, 101,340, a total of 165,661. It should here, however, be noted that duration and amount

of relief are important factors in estimating the amount of help given, and beyond the fact that Aswini Babu's organisation did not close till December 22nd, we have no figures under this head. This, I think, we have the right to regard as the greatest thing ever done in Bengal. Had the political agitation of the previous months ended with the withdrawal of Fuller, or had it been incapable of bearing fruit beyond the walls of the city, then the people of Barisal might have deserved the taunts which those who love them not have levelled against them. But the end of all politics is in the feeding of the People, and the soundness, sincerity, and appropriateness of this particular political movement has thus been attested to the full.

Yet it would be folly to flatter ourselves that because this was well done, therefore all was done. Many and many a district in East Bengal, has lain outside the reach of any organisation, in the direct throes of want. In one case which I have already mentioned, indeed, the cry of hunger could be heard all night long, from a great population—a state of things which I am only able to imagine, because I have seen mothers at Matibhanga, unable, in the early morning, to still the hunger-wail of their own children. Moreover, the middle and higher classes, who suffer secondarily and indirectly in point of time from the failure of crops, do not in the end have to endure any less than the starving peasantry. And these, only in exceptional cases and secretly, can be reached by relief-organisations. I have no doubt that at this moment (March, 1907), the sufferings of these classes are indescribable. For has not their turn come? It needs no mathematical demonstration, to enable us to see that this must be the case. The fact is patent and self-evident, and none will venture to contradict it.

It is not to be supposed, however, that the people themselves throughout Eastern Bengal, have been wholly passive. It is hardly to be imagined that a sturdy Mohammedan peasantry, capable of organised raids and brought to desperation by want of food—would tamely submit to

starve, outside cities whose supplies might be seized. Accordingly, in this East Bengal famine, "looting" as it is called, has become wide-spread. The people in various places have come down in their hundreds, on landing stages and ware-houses, and have carried off the rice waiting there for distribution. The numbers were in these cases so great that very few of the delinquents (if indeed we have the hardihood to call them so) could be captured by the police, but these, when brought before the magistrates, invariably answered, "Yes we have taken the rice. But we shall return it in Paush (that is to say, at harvest time)."

In one place that I have heard of, the English magistrate himself was a man of some heart. In this neighbourhood, a European firm of rice-dealers, whose ware-houses were filled with grain, announced their intention of putting up the price. In reply to remonstrances, including those of the magistrate, they stated simply that they were guided, not by considerations of sentiment but by those of "business", and that this was their opportunity for making a profit. The people, as it chanced, however, were not leaderless, and an intimation reached these valiant brokers that their warehouses would that night be looted by the populace. They, it appears, demanded from the chief official an increased police-force to meet the crowd. But he very properly declined to take any cognisance of an appeal based only on a vague threat, and ultimately designed to starve an already famine-stricken populace. And the result was that this firm found itself compelled to give its word to the people, not to raise the price of rice. Subsequently, a small deputation waited on them unarmed, to acknowledge their promise, and also perhaps to let them see what they might have expected, had they proved more obdurate.

It is a favourite theory of the ignorant, that famine is caused by this particular process in trade, of "engrossing", that is to say, of accumulating the required food stuff, and then refusing to sell it at any but an exorbitant price. Apart

from the fact that the opportunity to do this must in itself be the result of famine, I may say that so sapient an explanation is only heard in cities. I interviewed large numbers of the better class of peasant-farmers, travelling on the decks of the river-steamers, and amongst other questions, I asked their opinion on this point. They took little account of it, pointing out that on the neighbouring island of Bogga Bunder, where there was usually a store of rice, equal to twenty lakhs of *maunds*, there was this year barely two lakhs. This evil, they told me, did exist in cities, and played a great part in creating famine-prices there, but not in the country, and amongst those dealers who themselves belonged to the agricultural classes.

It is worth-while, perhaps, to say a word as to the methods of the famine-relief organisation. The work had its own inspector, its constant communication with headquarters, and its lists and registers. The manner of the young men who distributed relief was most tender and respectful; their sympathy for suffering, only too intense. In one case I found one of these workers removed but a short distance as it seemed, from the physical condition of the starving people about him, and discovered that he could not bear the idea while in the famine districts, of eating more than half of a man's daily allowance of food. So that, while he was bearing the heaviest of burdens, he was less and less sufficiently fed.

Undoubtedly India has to adopt these modern methods of enormous organisation. They ought never, however, to have become necessary. The old system, under which a few richer families would always remain in a blighted district, as organic sources of social aid and distribution, was far far finer. It is only the utter bleeding of such families and all their class to the last drop, that has impelled us upon the mechanical and overgrown methods of Europe. But every order carries within itself the seeds of its own decay. And this, which seemed the initiation of a mechanical social era, has actually resulted, as we see here,

in waking the sense of motherhood and protection in the heart of the city itself for the country-side.

The Indian boys correct more easily than we, the faults of European relief-workers. Yet the same superstitions weigh upon them at first. The prevalence of alcoholism in our societies has led to our idealising of a singularly unbeautiful and ungracious type of altruism. And this idealism we have succeeded, by means of criticism, in imparting to others. At Matibhanga I found a case in point.

Some small distribution of extra food or money was going on at our door, and I asked the workers not to pass over a certain woman whose miserable look had attracted my notice from the first, and whom I had heard say that she had not had a meal for three days. "It is false!" exclaimed the Secretary, as I stated this. "She must be quite dishonest! I myself gave her five seers of rice today!" The scraps we had to give, were given nevertheless—she had at least the same right as others. But it was long before I could break the spell that this confusion of thought had cast over my own mind. The woman had had five seers of rice given her that day. But this meant the relief of a whole family, doubtless for a week. It was probably true that she herself had gone hungry for three days. And how could she tell that the organisation would give her more? It had entered into no compact with her. Was she to trust it as God? Was it not her duty to put forward the case of herself and her children when she saw strangers who, compared to herself, were rich, and doubtless seemed like millionaires? Five seers of rice! Was this untold wealth, to a mother and a wife?

This is one of the evils that organisation breeds. The egotism that we might to some extent conquer in our own hearts, springs up again, into full life and vigour, on behalf of our huge insensate piece of machinery, and we tyrannise over a prostrate world, in its name. But this one feature of what in modern times we miscall charity is surely grim

enough to make the angels weep. The whole nervousness of the giver is lest he give too much. I have never in any organisation met one who was equally afraid to give too little!

## IX

### FAMINE PREVENTION

It was a school-master and his students, then, who organised the relief of Backergunge. For Aswini Kumar Dutt is nothing, after all, but the Barisal school-master. In Oriental countries, passing out of the mediaeval formation into the modern, the school and college are necessarily the spiritual centre. It is here that the clash of new ideas is felt. The difficulties under which the country may groan, here run some chance of being analysed and understood. The world of learning, moreover, is the modern equivalent for ancient churches. Only before God could Norman baron and Saxon peasant claim to be equal. Only in the monastery or the priesthood had they the remotest chance of meeting on common ground. Similarly, in Islam, the Turkish aristocrat may inter-marry with the Egyptian *fellah*. The faith makes all brothers. Here there can be no secret held by race from race. The faithful are the faithful: all without are mere Kafirs. In the Buddhist Sangha, in like manner, the low-born Emperor Ashoka found himself intellectually and spiritually the equal of the most exclusive, even as the meanest peasant entered there a world where none was his superior.

Under Modern Imperialism, the methods of exploitation are different from those of the past. Only outwardly is their garb the same. Empire always means the subjugation of one country by another. But the methods of this subjugation are different when Assyria subdues Judaea, or Spain Mexico, or Belgium the Valley of the Congo, from those employed by Rome in Gaul, or by Britain in India. In the last-named case, the subjection has become financial, and a growing exploitation proceeds along the lines of finance. Over-taxation, the building of railroads, the

destruction of native industries, and the creation of widespread famines,—these are so many landmarks, as it were, in a single process of subordination and exploitation. And a curious thing about it is that by investing his savings in English hands, anyone of a subject race may himself become an exploiter, either of his own or of some other people. The very ideal of the imperialist would be reached, therefore, when there was no other way for a man to invest with safety or with profit, save through the ruling race in some form or another.

This is a condition of things with which no church can deal. The Christian priest was able to restrain the Norman baron, in his relation to the Saxon churl, because the methods of that exploitation were within his compass to understand. When a man was hanged up by the thumbs over a slow fire, or his teeth were drawn one by one, to extort information as to his hoards, it was not difficult to see that all was not well. Even a peasant had brain enough to preach a better way. But the element of personal oppression, though not wholly absent, is minimised under the modern system, and while the clergy are now doubtless better educated, they are themselves amongst the exploiters. How can a bishop hold the glass up to Imperialism, when he himself has invested the hope of his own and his children's future in its ship?

It is clear that there is but one world,—the world of learning, of knowledge, of truth freed from racial bias—in which the People now can find the springs of self-direction and self-renewal. For the modern world has done good in one direction by making possible an idea of truth, common to all peoples and contributed to by all. The fact as it is, not as one or another of us would like it to be, is the image before which the modern man is required to kneel, the appeal to which he is expected to respond. Here and here alone, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor Scythian, bond nor free. In other words, what the church was to feudal peoples, that the school must needs be to

the imperialised. What the Christian Faith did for the English serf, that secular learning must do for the subordinated Oriental.

It is the school, moreover, and not the Parliament, which is to be the cradle of new social combinations. The school in British India has long stood un-moralised, because there was no central ethical imperative, round which could gather the new morality of the new era. But today, the central ethical imperative has been heard. Every student of every race and every province in India has caught the word of command "Arise and become a nation! Be the servant of your own people! Be a man of your own land!" They may blunder over the method of application. It may be some time yet before they even understand the call. But their attention is concentrated upon it, from end to end of the country, and great new births are afoot. The first of these will undoubtedly be a new morality. Already we are witnessing the signs of it, but as yet it is not fully aware of itself. For the first problem this new morality will grapple with seriously, will be the problem of famine, and the man who solves that will stand in the future history of India under the name of Kalki, the Tenth of the Avatars. The industrial revival, and the achievement of nationality, are mere departments of the great problem of famine, even as the newspaper and the Congress are mere departments of the school. The end of all politics, aye, and of all Dharma, as the Hindu deeply understands, lies in the feeding of the People, and this depends on the solution of famine. We have seen that the real cause of famine is less failure of harvests than exhaustion of stores. Failure of harvests must occur periodically. The question with regard to an agricultural country ought not to be, Is the harvest good? but, Could the peasantry stand another couple of bad seasons? In East Bengal, today,—to speak of that part of India for which I can best answer personally,—they have nothing wherewith to meet a single month of scarcity. This, then, must be remedied. But how?

Rice must again be accumulated, instead of withdrawn. A people are not prosperous unless they are growing in prosperity. A people are not prosperous, unless they are individually prosperous. A government surplus is no sign for, or against, the prosperity of a country. An army might possess itself of such a "surplus", in a country which it was devastating. Hackneyed phrases only darken counsel. We must try to discard these, and get back to facts. The basic fact is that an agricultural country in which peasant-homes are prosperous, established in prosperity, or prepared against reasonable strain of bad harvests, is a prosperous country; and an agricultural country in which the peasant is less secure than this, is not prosperous, though her lawyers sup on gold and her kings go decked in diamonds. The condition of the peasant is the only test, for the simple reason that it could never be to the interest of a Government, which depended upon his taxes, or a city that looked to him for its supplies, to kill him off, so that he paid no tax, and raised no rice, for evermore thereafter. To run a country in such a way that it falls into perpetual famine, on the slightest excuse, is, even from an imperialist point of view, to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. An Ashoka could never do this. An Akbar could never do it. It could only be done by those who avowedly possessed no permanent interest in the land.

But whatever the cure may be, it is obvious that the people themselves must find and apply it. In the present case it is clear that rice must be restored, and jute, if possible, driven out. The question would be less serious if the cultivation of rice were on the increase in the rest of India. But this is not the case. Contrary to what is popularly supposed, India is by no means an over-populated country. She is miserably under-populated, as any railway survey shows. She has room and potentiality for many times her present population of food-growers. It is probable, further, that the production of rice per head of the peasantry is itself decreasing. For it is clear that heavy

taxation tends to restrict cultivated areas, inasmuch as the seed-grain itself or the ploughing bullocks may have to be sacrificed, in order to find coin for the tax-gatherer. It follows that the most pressing of all questions is the restoration of rice in the peasant-economy. Associations might be formed in cities, for the promotion of rice-growing, and by them seed of the best quality might be distributed free. If it is worth-while for jute-merchants to distribute free jute-seed, it cannot be less so for rice-merchants in the interests of their trade, zemindars of their estates, and public-spirited citizens, out of love to their country, to give that of rice! The same organisations should undoubtedly send out agents to oppose the growing of jute. It should be taught with no uncertain voice that money is no substitute whatever for rice. The opposite is the error which is at the bottom of all our misery. *Money is no substitute for rice.* The Boycott which Bengal has declared against foreign goods, should be extended and deepened by this crusade against jute, and in similar ways. Capital should be lent at low interest, or given, for the buying back of tools and animals. In doing all this, there could not fail of a closer union between town and country. The students, who have already sacrificed so much, in so manly a fashion, to carry relief to the famine-stricken, would confer a still greater good on the same people, if they would establish their own homes permanently in the villages where they have now worked. If this were done, we should have in every such village-home a culture-centre, not unlike the western parsonage in the village of artisans. From this, to the village, would emanate knowledge and impulse towards the establishing of small industries. Here would be found advice from the man in times of perplexity, and help from the wife in crises of illness and need. To the city, on the other hand, such a home would be a source of knowledge, a link of union. It would be impossible, further, for famine again to reach the dread proportions it had assumed here last June, without a word being heard on the subject. We

should hear a good deal, indeed, on many other subjects. We should hear of a condition of things under which foreign engineering, with its bridges for road and rail, is fast checking the flow of the canals, destroying the fisheries, and turning the vast province of Bengal into a stagnant forcing-bed for malaria-germs. We should learn something of the opinions of the People themselves as to the difficulties under which they labour. We should inevitably see the organisation of small schools, the revival of spinning and weaving, and the growth of a new interest and joy in life. For nothing so struck me in the famine-villages, as the horror of watching death draw nearer and nearer, without anything to think of, save the degree of one's own hunger. And when I enquired, I found that already a village of Brahmins had petitioned for spinning-wheels and raw cotton, undertaking to *earn* all they required, if these were given. Such is the self-help of the People. I found, moreover, that there were a dozen minor arts,—such as the making of simple mats, and fish-traps, and the preparing of wild arrowroot,—which they were able to engage in, if materials were given them. But “it is useless”, says the proverb, “to begin to dig a well, in a house that is already on fire”, and a time of famine is not the moment for the initiation of a net-work of industries. This must be carried out before the scarcity has begun—and such a task could only be undertaken in some such way as I have indicated. If the Hindu race had been thoroughly commercialised, it is possible that these village-missions might be undertaken on a paying basis. Restored spinning ought to yield returns to an agent. There are fruit-trees to be grown. The date-palm, it is said, requires new treatment. The breed of cows has deteriorated, since all the Shiva's bulls were seized by the municipalities, and breeding calls for the attention of an educated class. But whether these things could be done with profit or not, one thing is sure. They need doing. They would constitute an essential extension of the *Swadeshi* movement itself. They are worth doing

even at a great outlay. They open to the doers one of the noblest forms of sacrifice and help.

Yet, let there be no mistake in this matter. A small step here or a small step there, may or may not be taken. But no restoration of an old-time prosperity is possible, if the people themselves continue to pay taxes beyond their power.

The peasant-races of India are not wanting in common-sense. They have not failed to understand this obvious fact, and a day will assuredly come when the country will take this matter into its own hands, and offer terms at its own discretion. That those who pay the revenue have the right to control the expenditure, is a doctrine that no Englishman could venture to deny. It is not a theory which he regards as revolutionary, but rather as the self-evident basis of all national existence, an inalienable right of man. As long as India is contented to *sit and argue* the question, he is perhaps but worldly-wise to take what he can and refuse concession. Argument is never dangerous. But if a day should come when she ceased to argue? If she suddenly declared that she cared nothing about theory, for three hundred millions of human beings had *determined* on a new arrangement? "Not our right, but our *will!*" if this cry were heard throughout the land? What could be said by the tax-gatherers then? What then? What then?



**LAMBS AMONG WOLVES**  
**MISSIONARIES IN INDIA**



# LAMBS AMONG WOLVES

## MISSIONARIES IN INDIA

“Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.”

‘Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes.’

‘Salute no man by the way.’

‘Eating and drinking such things as *they give*.’

‘Freely ye have received, freely give.’

‘Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves”

*Early Christian Mission Charges*

### I

THE line that says ‘The soul of Shakespeare could not love thee more’ goes to the root of the matter. Another critic of human life so completely competent as William Shakespeare has probably never been. And his tool, the instrument of his peculiar genius, was surely an abundant kindness, such as we call love, which enabled him to put himself behind each man’s nature, so as to swim with the current of his life, and not against it. Which of us would not have contemptuously dismissed Hamlet in actual life as a weak-kneed dreamer? Which of us would have distinguished between Othello and a vulgar murderer? But, once handled by the vast reverence of the master, the shallowest

dare not commit himself to such superficiality. It would seem as if the genius of the great dramatist has lain even more in his gifts of heart than in those of mind.

To read the life and effort of foreign peoples truly, we stand in overwhelming need of this Shakespearian nature. It is an accident of empire that the England which produced Shakespeare should require such persons more than any other country. It is past thinking that our great bard, who so nobly interpreted the sorrows and the indignation of the Jew, could have failed with his gentle vision to pierce the mask of the Chinaman, the Hindu, the African or the Red Indian, and to set them before us, clothed with universal humanity, men like ourselves, each less large than we in some points, but in others infinitely nobler.

No gift receives the homage of the East like the power of seeing transcendent oneness, where the senses tell only of diversity. The man who can do this in any great degree is called a Rishi, or soul of perfected insight. Such perfected insight it was that distinguished Shakespeare. He had the gifts to have been, had he lived in the wider opportunity of today, the Rishi of humanity, even as in our eyes he already is of human nature. For to him custom and circumstance and manner of thought were no more than a vast web through which the essential manhood of all men displayed itself in differing garb.

All important eras have left behind them their own poetry. The wandering bards of the early order produced the great race epics. The mediæval Church sang itself through the lips of Dante. With the dawn of the age of adventure Shakespeare sprang to birth. The period of which a century has gone by is as great in its own way as any of these. It sees life made universal. Never was human power so high ; never was the scope of the individual so extensive. Is there, then, no prophecy appropriate to such an hour? Where are the wandering minstrels, where the Shakespearian sympathy, for the stirring self-utterance of our time?

If it be the destiny of England to contribute anything towards such a work, and if, perchance, one verse of her world-poem be already written, we shall find it, I believe, in a book scarcely yet a three years old—Fielding Hall's 'Soul of a People'. In the appearance of one such study more glory has been shed on our country than by unnumbered successes of the military and commercial kind. Humanity needs hundreds of minds like that of the writer in question, and it needs them of all races, for the children of each nationality can see and express things that are hidden from the wise and prudent of all others. Unbittered, disinterested, witnesses to the facts of things are wanted—and something also of revelation must be added. Something of the function of the poet who sees through and beyond the deed to its goal, through the idea to the ideal. It is only the first step in science to have noted correctly the line of hairs on the chickweed stem, or the spots of colour in the orchis. There must have been a need or a danger to be met by one as by the other. And when this is understood it still remains to demonstrate their place in the drama of life as a whole.

What is true of flowers and beasts is not less true of man. Everyone, however unlearned, has a right to demand three things in the traveller's story: (1) accurate statement of fact; (2) careful elucidation of the meaning of fact; and (3) some attempt to perceive the law to which the fact and its intention stand related. The demand will be answered, of course, with widely varying degrees of ability, but it ought to be impossible to receive credit for an account that ignores any one of these factors.

The study that leads up to such work is by no means easy. Alone, amongst people of alien birth and culture—until we come to a glowing personal enthusiasm for them, at least—very little things will wound us in proportion to our sensitiveness. Not only must we be able to forget this feeling, but we must find out the positive meaning of omission or commission. Society, the world over, hangs

together in virtue of the good-fellowship and unselfishness of its members, not through their antagonism and mutual indifference. Virtue exactly represents, on the moral plane, the force of cohesion on the physical. To say, therefore, that to any people gratitude, or honesty, or modesty, is unknown, is simply to state an absurdity, and to prove one's self an incompetent witness. What is perfectly credible is that their way of expressing these instincts is unlike ours, and follows a divergent line of intention. A trifling illustration occurs to me. As Indian languages contain no words for 'please' or 'thanks', it is very commonly held by English people that the courtesy of gratitude for little things has no place in Indian life, and I had felt, as others do, the irritation of apparent negligence on such points. I learnt my lesson, however, one day, when a Hindu friend undertook to do something for me that involved a sacrifice, and I offered him warm thanks. I can never forget how startling was their effect. 'You gave me something back!' he said, evidently deeply pained as he left the room. Today, if any Hindu said 'Please' or 'Thanks' to me I should share the sensations of a mother whose children presented their compliments to her. The instance is small, but it represents hundreds of cases in which a little patience and faith in human nature would add unspeakably to our own wealth of expression and sympathy.

This truth becomes important on a larger scale. It is obviously absurd to constitute one's own national customs an ideal standard, against which every other country is to be measured. Hindu and Mohammedan women are not seen much in public, either shopping or visiting. We are: we enjoy our custom, and call it Freedom. Does it follow that the Eastern woman's restrictions constitute a grievance? Would it not be wise, in attempting to demonstrate this, to share as completely as possible the physical and emotional environment which have conditioned her habit? It is conceivable that, having done this, we should conclude that even in the climate of India or Persia more

muscular activity and greater social liberty would be of benefit to women ; but, unless our judgment were fatally warped by prejudice, we should at the same time reach the counter-conviction that a corresponding power of stillness and meditative peace would be a vast gain in the West.

But the argument supposes that our wandering minstrels have grown critical and didactic. Alas! we are forced to the supposition, for most of them now make pilgrimage from realm to realm with no notion of tuning their harp, and singing sweet songs in some strange lord's hall, thence to return, like St. Francis from the Soldan, with tales of fair welcome and hospitality, or with new songs in praise of the courtesy and large charity of the gentle heathen peoples. This is the tone, indeed, of Mrs. Flora Annie Steel, but this curious and unaccountable child of genius is not of the guild of the singers. Her stories are true instances of the spirit of minstrelsy sounding the note of a nature that loves because it must, and sings out of very gladness of the beauty of others. But Mrs. Steel is a strong poet from another time and class. Today's bards have done as their fathers did before them—turned missionary—and are devoting their best energies to forcing round pegs into square holes, destroying, in the process, poetry and mythology and folk-custom, as well as rare and beautiful virtues that they are too ignorant to appreciate. The same thing happened long ago, when emissaries from Rome trampled our Irish culture, lest it should make against the faith. It happened again in the past century, when the Scottish Highlands were rendered barren of their folk-tales by the efforts of the Kirk, now far too enlightened to countenance its own vandalism ; but the wild growths can never be replanted! It never happened so completely in Scandinavia, and, in this fact, probably, lies the secret of the national vigour of Norway.

For there can be no doubt that when all that ought to represent Art and refined pleasure and growth of imagination in a community turns Puritan, yoking itself to the

car of a single idea, and that foreign, the result is simply loss of culture. Of course, the May Day Festival has fled before the face of steam factories and streets at right angles, and the Board School inspector! But the people whom it has left are *less, not more*, well educated by that fact. Lists of European capitals and their sites will never make up to them for love of Nature, and joy in beauty, and eye for form and colour.

Not long ago an acute critic, comparing visits to England thirty years ago and now, remarked on the number of types common then that have since disappeared. We should look in vain now for a Mr. Pickwick or a Mrs. Poyser. We have organised the national character till it is as monotonous as its prototypes, the yard of calico and the daily paper. Those odd, whimsical, lovable, persons of a generation ago, rich in unexpectedness, full of human nature, with surprising mental areas of illumination every now and then, are gone. They belonged to another age and another way of looking at things. They belonged to a time when every man was closer to life and to the smell of ploughed fields than he is today, they could no more have reached their individuation in cities than could May Day, or Midsummer's Night, or All Hallow's E'en. Are we glad or sorry for such a happening? Shall we hasten to encourage the repetition of the process elsewhere?

## II

Surely, if missionaries realised, even in a general way, the 'lie' of such social phenomena, they would make fewer mistakes in their dealings with their clients, and we should hear less of the so-called criticism which at present disgraces the English language.

A Hindu father told me how he had allowed his little daughter to attend a school kept by two English women. At the end of eight or nine months he was examining the child as to her progress in reading, and found to his horror

that she had acquired the use of a large number of impossible epithets, which she employed freely in connection with the names of Rama and Krishna, two epic heroes who are regarded by most Hindus as incarnations of the Divine Being, in the same sense as Buddha or Christ. The man removed his child at once, and most of us will feel that the sense of loathing and distrust with which he henceforth regarded his English friends was richly deserved. For, whatever may be thought of the worship of Rama and Krishna as divine personages—and our estimates of this practice will be as various as our own creeds—we must at least recognise them as the national ideals, guardians of those assimilated treasures of aspiration and imagination that we call civilisation and morals. It is quite evident that were this function of the legendary heroes recognised, even a missionary would take the trouble to think out some theory of them as great men, which, like the Unitarian view of the Founder of Christianity, would leave much that they represent intact, and continue their service to social cohesion and amelioration. It is possible that in the particular case in question the fault did not lie with the English women in charge of the school, but with some low-class Christian servant or Eurasian student. But, if this were so, it is all the more clear that Christianity in India does not stand for social integration, but rather the reverse. For it is one of the functions of religious sects to put their followers in touch with the great formative forces of life about them. Whatever its faults may be, the Salvation Army does this, amongst ourselves. The virtues which it applauds may be elementary—sobriety, honesty, cheerfulness, for instance—but they are virtues which we all recognise as such. The men and women to whom it introduces its recruits may be crude sometimes of type, lacking many of the graces of the drawing-room, but they are good and earnest, however limited in range and ideal, and they make steadily for strong and hearty citizenship. On a very different plane, Comtism fulfils a similar function. It binds its

members into great cosmopolitan and cosmoæval groups, substituting world and race for the sect and party of a lower definition, but taking just their method of emphasising accepted virtues—the high intellectual passion for Truth, and the widest reaches of human sympathy—and following them up to the characters and ideals in which they all converge.

The sect that fails to do this, the religion that tells a man that all he has hitherto held to be right is really wrong, is bound to do social mischief—incalculable social mischief—since the learner is almost certain to infer that in like manner what he has hitherto held to be wrong is right. No wonder then that Christianity in India carries drunkenness in its wake, and that so many of those who can afford to choose will have any rather than a Christian servant.

India has had her own great religious and social reformers, had them repeatedly, continuously, abundantly. She has known no abuses which they have not laboured to remove. Ram Mohan Roy in the nineteenth century did not combat Sati more zealously than Nanak in the fourteenth. Mr. Benjamin Waugh amongst ourselves is no more eager a foe of infanticide than was the same teacher. Our Socialist friends do not work so unsparingly for equality as did Chaitanya of Nuddea in Bengal. And these men were no futile dreamers. Nanak founded the Sikh nation, and is a strong influence to this day. Chaitanya did more to Hinduise non-Aryan castes than any other single man that ever lived. Do the Christian missionaries wish to take a place in line with these in the national development? If so, while they stand for whatever religious ideas please them, let them relate themselves organically to the life and effort of India. Let them love the country as if they had been born in it, with no other difference than the added nobility that a yearning desire to serve and to save might give. Let them become loving interpreters of her thought and custom, revealers of her own ideals to herself even while they make them understood by others.

When a man has the insight to find and to follow the hidden lines of race-intention for himself, others are bound to become his disciples, for they recognise in his teachings their own highest aspirations ; and he may call the goal to which he leads them by any name he chooses—they will not cavil about words. Indeed, from such a standpoint, India is already Christian, perhaps, but her resistance to Western propaganda, varied by her absolute indifference to it, is infinitely to her credit.

It is strange to see those very disciples who were so solemnly warned when first sent out against taking money in their purse, or two coats apiece, it is strange to see these not only enjoying all the comforts of refined European life themselves, but hating and despising the people about them for their greater simplicity and primitiveness. It is the more extraordinary since their Master, if he were to reappear at their doors with all the habits and ideas of His Syrian birth about Him, would inevitably receive a warmer welcome and feel more at home with their Indian neighbours than with themselves. What was He but a religious beggar, such as we see on the Indian roadsides every day? How was He provided for? By subscriptions and endowments? Did He not rather wander from hamlet to hamlet, taking His chance at nightfall of the cottager's hospitality, or the shelter of some humble building? What had He to do with the comforts of existence? His were the long nights of prayer and meditation on the mountains and in the Garden. We send our religious teachers to the East to spend days and nights of worldly ease and comfort in the midst of a people who actually do these things, and the preachers have not the wit to recognise the fact, much less the devotion to emulate it.

Nothing could be more significant of all this than the criticisms that we hear poured out at every missionary meeting. Have we ever seen greatness of any kind that was not associated with the power of recognising one's own kinship with all? What made Charles Darwin? The eye

to see and the heart to respond to the great sweep of one infinite tide through all that lives, including himself. What made Newton? The grasp of mind that could hold the earth itself as a mere speck of cosmic dust in the play of the forces that govern us. Even the warrior, whose whole business seems to be antagonism and separation, becomes distinguished on condition only of his sense of union with his followers. And the saint or the poet never yet was to whom all was not human and all more beautiful than himself. To such men condemnation is not easy, slander is impossible. An orgy of sensation provoked by libel, be it of individuals or of nations, whether at afternoon tea or from a church pulpit, would seem to them unspeakable vulgarity. They could not breathe in such an atmosphere. Yet something of the saint, something of the poet, we might surely hope to find in those whose lives are given to spread a message of glad tidings in far-off lands. And surely there has been the sainthood of good intention. Has there been that of a noble execution?

If there has, why have these emissaries so rarely, on their return, a good word to say for those amongst whom they have been? Why, to take explicit instances, do we never hear from them of the strength and virtues of Indian women? Why only of their faults and failures?

Why have the missionaries created and left intact, wherever people were ignorant enough to be imposed upon, the picture of the crocodile luncheon of babies served up by their mothers along the Ganges banks? Everywhere I have met people who believed this story, and I have never heard of a professed apostle of truth who tried to set the impression right. Infanticide occurs in India, under pressure of poverty and responsibility, as it occurs in all countries; but it is not *practised* there any more than here, nor is it lauded as a religious act; nor is it, perhaps, anything like so common as amongst ourselves. There is no custom of insuring a baby's life for £5 when the funeral expenses are only £2, nor is there any infant mortality

ascribable to the intemperance of mothers in that country.

Why have we never heard from the missionaries of the beauty of Hindu home life, of the marvellous ideals which inspire the Indian woman, of the Indian customs teeming with poetry and sweetness?

Is the answer to be found in the preconceived idea which blinds the would-be observer, or is it the intellectual ignorance which keeps him unaware that there is anything to be observed? Or is it possibly a meaner motive still, the idea that if a true and lofty tone is taken, money will not be forthcoming to support his own career? I have had the privilege of listening to the accounts of three classes of persons who were supposed to be warm religious friends of the Indian people, educational missionaries, lady doctors, and modern occultists. Their statements were sincere and deliberate expositions of the outlook they had been enabled to take on Hindu life. I listened in vain for one strong word of appreciation for the problems which Indian society has undoubtedly solved, or a single hint that they understood the positive ends for which that country was making. In every case the conviction seemed to be that the dignity and hope of the speaker's own gospel depended absolutely upon showing the hollowness and rottenness of other forms of life. The last-mentioned exposition was easily disposed of. It was confined to a discussion of Sati, infanticide, and thuggism as the most representative factors of Indian experience which could be discovered; it also touched upon the worst sides of caste, and propounded the theory that England's responsibility to the East would be fulfilled when she had persuaded Oriental people to 'give up their ridiculous, old habits' and take to ways which occultists would consider more rational. From lady doctors we hear of the medical and surgical darkness of the Indian village—greater, if they are right, than that of parallel populations in England fifty years ago. One of the most offensive customs, to their minds, is that of

the isolation of a woman at the moment of childbirth. Now, whatever this custom shows—and it is not perhaps universally applied with the full consciousness of the reason that prompted it originally—it does certainly indicate a very elevated state of medical culture at some past epoch in Hindu history. The room in which birth takes place must afterwards be broken up and taken away. Hence a simple mud-hut is built outside the house. When once the child is born, for some days the mother may not be visited by any member of the household. She is attended only by an old nurse and whatever medical adviser may be called.

Is this treatment then so very inhumane? Yet it is exactly what we blame the Hindu people for not adopting in cases of plague and other infectious diseases. It is, of course, easy to imagine that rules of such a nature may often be badly, even stupidly, applied; but there can be no doubt that they demonstrate very clear and distinct ideas of bacteriology at their inception. All through the caste rules and regulations for bathing, run similar scientific conceptions, which astonish competent observers by their hygienic desirability. It is, of course, a pity that medical science everywhere is not up to the twentieth century London level; but in this respect India is not more degraded than England, Scotland, and Ireland themselves. There is no country district far from railways, strong in old traditions, and containing persons who have not had the inestimable benefits of Board School instruction, where, at the same time, doctoring is not done that the city hospitals and the London physician would refuse to countenance. But this fact is a phenomenon of ignorance (or good sense, as the case may be); it is not due to the wrong and vile nature of the Christian religion. It rouses sometimes our regret, occasionally our admiration, but never, with any justice, our contempt or hatred. One of the evils of our present organisation of skill is the complete inability induced by it to appreciate the value of tradition

and mother wit. It is easy to point out flaws in Indian village medicine, midwifery, and what not ; but how do we account for the great dignity and suppleness of the general physical development, and for the marvellous freedom of the race from skin blemish of any kind? This, too, in a country where the germ fauna is at least as dangerous as that other fauna of the jungle, which includes the tiger and the cobra. In urging these points I am not denying that modern science can aid, but only that it has no right to despise, village lore.

Every system, of course, mistrusts every other system. This is the superstition of party. To this fact I trace the phenomenon, detailed by the medical missionary sometimes, of men of sufficient means saying, 'If you can cure her for twenty shillings (probably ten rupees) you may do so'—alluding to a wife or some other woman member of the speaker's household. The Christian charity of the lady doctor rushes immediately to the conclusion that his wife's or mother's health is a matter of complete indifference to her client. *Ergo*, that most Hindu men are similarly careless. *Ergo*, that Hindu men hate and despise Hindu women.

*Supposing the anecdote to be the true*, and I raise this doubt advisedly, could reasoning be more absurd? It does not occur to the physican that her knowledge or honesty may be viewed with suspicion as against old and tried methods of treatment in which everyone has confidence.

It is impossible to deal at length with other and more wide-reaching charges. Caste, in missionary eyes, is an unmitigated abuse. They confine themselves to an account of its negations and prohibitions, ignoring all its element of the trades-guild and race-protection type. And, they say all this while every moment of their lives in India has been a ratification of that new caste of race-prestige which is one of the most striking phenomena of an imperialistic age. But if I were a Hindu I do not think that missionary criticisms of caste would disturb me much. I should realise that this was the form which the life of my people had

assumed, that in it was comprised all that the word honour connotes in Europe ; and that the critics in question had given no sign, as yet, of understanding either their own society or mine intelligently. The point that I should find seriously annoying would be their animadversions on the position of women in India. To prove that these can be very galling I need only say that in one speech to which I listened I heard the following thirteen statements made and supported: (1) That the Hindu social system makes a pretence of honouring women, but that this honour is more apparent than real ; (2) That women in India are deliberately kept in ignorance ; (3) That women in India have no place assigned to them in heaven, save through their husbands ; (4) That no sacramental rite is performed over them with Vedic texts ; (5) That certain absurd old misogynist verses, comparable to the warnings against 'the strange woman' in the Book of Proverbs, are representative of the attitude of Hindu men to their womenfolk in general ; (6) That a girl at birth gets a sorry welcome ; (7) That a mother's anxiety to bear sons is appalling, her very wifehood depends on her doing so ; (8) That the infanticide of girls is a common practice in India ; (9) That the Kulin Brahmin marriage system is a representative fact ; (10) That parents unable to marry off their daughters are in the habit of marrying them to a god (making them prostitutes) as an alternative ('the degradation of the whole race of Hindu women lies in the very possibility for any one of them of the life which a temple girl must live') ; (11) That Hindu wedding ceremonies are unspeakably gross ; (12) That the Hindu widow lives a life of such misery and insult that burning to death may well have seemed preferable ; (13) That the Hindu widow is almost always immoral.

To which, in like manner, the following replies may be made :

1. That the observer must have been incompetent indeed. There are few great relationships in human life

like that between a Hindu man and his mother. Hindus cannot even excuse Halmet for reproaching Gertrude. 'But she was his *mother!*' they exclaim, when all is said; and this little fact is very significant.

2. That the incompetence of the observer is evident once more. It is clear that illiteracy is the form of ignorance referred to. It is not true that women are deliberately kept so; but if they were, is their knowledge of housekeeping and cooking of no value? Is their trained commonsense worthless? Can a woman even be called illiterate when it is merely true that she cannot read and write, though at the same time she is saturated with the literary culture of the great Epics and Puranas? It is interesting to note that the best-managed estates in Bengal are in the hands of widows. Lawyers invariably respect their opinions. Rani Ahalya Bai was an instance of the same kind in the Mahratta country.

3. What this means I have been unable to find out. If it had been said that the husband had no place save through his wife it would have been more intelligible; for the Vedic view made the man a responsible member of the religious community only after marriage, and as long as both lived.

The whole motive of Sati, moreover, was that the wife's sacrifice might ensure heaven to the husband. Was the speaker perhaps thinking of Mohammedans? Even on their behalf I would repudiate the statement.

4. This appears to be simply untrue. Some of the greatest teachers mentioned in the Hindu Scriptures are women. And it is now many hundreds of years since the Bhagavad Gita was composed for the sake of bringing recondite truths to the knowledge of even unlearned persons, including women and the working-classes.

5. The speaker does not mention that every Hindu husband names his wife 'My Lakshmi' or 'Fortuna'.

6. This may be true in some cases, as it is in England and in all patriarchal societies. I know numbers of

families in which the opposite is true, and such an attitude is unthought of, as we expect to be here.

7. Generally speaking a Hindu woman's wifeness no more depends on her bearing sons than an English woman's. The need of a son can always be met in India by adoption.

8. Infanticide of girls did occur commonly at a given period amongst certain Rajputs, and amongst these only. It is in no sense a common Indian practice, any more than, if as much as, it is a common London practice.

9. Another instance of the same kind. Kulin Brahmins are a particularly high caste. If a marriage cannot be made for a daughter of this caste, her father may give her to any man of sufficient rank—and the marriage may be merely nominal, or may extend to making her once a mother: This is an abuse of caste. It concerns a very small number, however, and began to die the instant the modern organisation of information drew the attention of society to it. A leading orthodox Hindu, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, led the crusade against it. I should like to add that the custom is not, to my thinking, an abuse of the worst type—such as the desire of parents to make eligible matches for their daughters may lead to in all countries—since it is quite compatible with the physical vigour of the bride, and with her efficient discharge of whatever duties of motherhood may fall to her share.

10. The expression 'marriage to a god' is nowhere in use in Northern India. The statement bears its regional birth-mark on its brow. It is Southern and perhaps Western in application. We touch here on a new class of social phenomena—Indian prostitution customs. To say that it occurs to the respectable Hindu father to make his daughter a prostitute because he cannot find a husband for her, more easily than the same idea would present itself to an English gentleman, is utterly untrue. It is absurd on the face of it. The whole of caste is born of the passionate depth of the contrary sentiment. The chastity of women is the central virtue of Hindu life. 'The

degradation of the whole race of Hindu women lies in the very possibility for any one of them of the life which a temple girl must live.' This no more true of Hindu women than a corresponding statement would be of English women. There is a sense in which the pitfalls of life yawn before the most favoured feet. But it is a limited sense. If a Hindu woman once leaves her home unattended, without the knowledge and consent of her mother-in-law or her husband, she may be refused re-entrance for ever. But this is a witness to the severity of the moral code, not to its laxity.

11. 'That Hindu wedding ceremonies are unspeakably gross.' They are not so amongst people who are not themselves gross. Like the Church of England Form for the Solemnisation of Matrimony, they may sound a note in the music of life more serious and responsible than is to the taste of an afternoon tea-party. Colebrooke's 'Essays' give all the details and translations which will enable the student to compare the two rites. All that I can say is that I have been present at many Hindu weddings, and have been deeply touched by the beauty and delicacy of all the proceedings. There is a good deal of nonsense and teasing of the young bridegroom in the women's apartments, not unlike what happens on such half-obsolete festivals as All Fools' and St. Valentine's Days. On this occasion the youth makes friends with his future sisters-in-law. The fun is a little more exuberant than grave elders may enjoy, but it is one of the few opportunities of the kind which Hindu breeding permits to boys and girls. It requires vulgarity of mind to read more serious offences into it.

12. As to the misery of Indian widows, it is not too much to say that every statement yet made by a Protestant missionary has been made in complete ignorance of the bearing of the facts. Hindus are a people amongst whom the monastic ideal is intensely living. In their eyes the widow, by the fact of her widowhood, is vowed to

celibacy, and therefore to poverty, austerity, and prayer. Hence her life becomes that of a nun, and, if she is a child, her training must lead to the nun's life. It is not true that she is regarded by society with aversion and contempt. The reverse is the case. She takes precedence of married women, as one who is holier. We may regret the severity of the ideal, but we have to recognise here, as in the case of monogamy, that it indicates intensity of moral development, not its lack. It may bear hard upon the individual, but redress cannot lie in a lowering of standard ; it must rather consist of a new direction given to the moral force which it has evolved.

13. The last contention which I have noted is the most serious of all, and I have heard it repeatedly in England and America in the course of missionary descriptions. I need hardly say that I know it to be grossly untrue.

It is interesting to note that these thirteen statements fall into three different groups: (a) statements which are absolutely and entirely false—(1), (3), (7), (11), (13); (b) statements which are the result of misinterpreting or overstating facts—(2), (5), (12); and (c) statements which may be true of certain limited localities, periods, or classes, but to which a false colour has been given by quoting them as representative of Hindu life in the whole—(4), (8), (9), and (10).

The last group is the most important for two reasons: in the first place it has an air of seriousness and security which goes far to give credibility to the whole argument, and in the second it furnishes a complete exposure of the method of making up evidence.

In the case of (4) we have a quotation from an old catechism of many centuries ago: 'What is the chief gate to hell? A woman. What bewitches like wine? A woman', etc., made as if it were the most up-to-date collection of modern Indian proverbs. We see the use of the thing the moment we look at it, but the missionaries continue to quote it with their accustomed gravity. One

understands that in their eyes anything is justified that will warn the heathen of the error of his ways, but surely this poor little dialogue has been seriously overworked. I have never read a missionary publication on the woman question in which it was not used, and I have never met with a Hindu, however learned, who would otherwise have known of it. On investigation one discovers that sentiment of this kind was common in the monkish literature of the Buddhist period. It could probably be matched from the monastic writings of our own Middle Ages. In (8) we have an abuse which concerned one caste in the Rajput districts, used as if it were true of all castes all over India, and this in face of the terrible *tu quoque* which might be retorted against the accuser. It cannot be too clearly understood that India is a continent, not a country; and that to gather together the exceptional vices and crimes of every people and province within her borders, and urge them against 'India' or 'Hinduism', is about as fair as to charge a Norfolk farmer with practising Corsican vendetta, on the strength of the latter's being a 'European' custom. In (a) once more we have the sin of a small and high caste charged in a way to make it seem true of the whole country. Kulin Brahmins cannot be more than one in one thousand of the Bengali population, *and they exist only in Bengal*. We have also the deliberate ignoring of the way in which Hindus themselves have worked against the abuse.

And in (10) we have the sweeping-in of prostitution customs, without a word of warning, as if they were part of the respectable recognised life of the Indian people, and as if, in the possession of such a class at all, the Indian people were incomparably depraved. Do the missionaries really affect such innocence? If they do, at least let them observe the Indian fact accurately. In this custom of marriage to a god (or to a tree, as in Bengal), quaint as it sounds, there is a tremendous protecting fence thrown round girls. No Hindu man, however abandoned, will

outrage the unwedded maiden. Before these poor victims, therefore, can take up the practice of their profession, they have to go through a form of marriage. Hence the device in question. Can we make as good a statement for ourselves?

If the outrage were on the other side ; if Hindus had been in the habit of sending in their emissaries to convert us from the error of our ways ; and if these emissaries on their return had grossly abused our hospitality, had forgotten the honour of the guest and blazoned our family misfortunes to the whole world, had made harsh criticisms on us as individuals, because they had been allowed the opportunity of seeing us by the hearthside, when the formalities of public life were put aside—if, in fact, they had violated our confidence, what should we have felt? What should we have said? Yet their doing so would have been comparatively insignificant, for power and influence are in our hands, not in theirs. Probably no single fact has tended to widen the distance between the races in India like this of missionary slander. Certainly nothing has so deepened our contempt. For, say what we will, the only class of Europeans who have been admitted to Hindu homes at all, and have made a business of reporting what they saw there, have been Protestant missionaries medical and other. It seems as if to them nothing had been sacred. In all lands doctors and clergymen see the misfortunes of the home, and professional honour keeps their lips sealed. But here all has been put upon the market. Medical records (always unpleasant reading) have been detailed in public from platform and pulpit ; and the professional considerations that ought to have prevented such dishonour only intervene, if at all, to forbid the use of speakers' names in connection with statements made by them in full publicity to large audiences.

Another miserable fallacy remains. There are three classes of people whose opinions are quoted by missionaries in evidence of the sins and weaknesses of Hinduism. They

are: (1) Indian reformers; (2) Christian converts; and (3) any exuberant fool who has been discovered.

We all know how much the first kind of evidence is worth. Just picture the 'Woman's Rights' agitator comparing the positions of Eastern and Western women! How does she receive the suggestion that the Oriental has points of right and of authority which she cannot emulate? The idea is intolerable to her. Yet, only an hour ago, she may have been pointing out the bitter degradation of her own position, classed as she is in the voting lists with 'criminals, lunatics, and paupers.' It is evident that the anxious reformer uses language amongst his equals that he would be very sorry to hear taken *au pied de la lettre* by the would-be interpreters of his country's customs. He would be the first then to point out that the expressions he had used had a purely relative value.

Much more is this true of the utterances of the reformer who has lived for years blinded by the ink of his own gall. We know how in such cases there can be a growth of bitterness and perversity which isolates the thinker and makes his conclusions on social problems absolutely worthless.

Christian converts in India are isolated by the very fact of baptism. And the present generation, having been born Christian, have often little more than the missionaries' accounts of it for the life habits of their own country people.

It cannot be too widely understood that one writer like Mrs. Steel, or one disinterested student of Indian life like Fielding Hall in Burma, is worth all that has yet been contributed from all missionary sources put together. If it be too late to change the present generation of workers, surely it is only the more timely to demand on the part of English people such a standard of sympathy and culture that the missionary without a thorough and appropriate education for his task shall, twenty years hence, be a thing of the past.

## III

We have held up a double standard of the artistic opportunity open to the class we have been considering, and of the obligation of professional discretion. When we hear the banker publicly discussing his client's accounts, or the physician making known his patient's poverty and ignorance, we conclude that at least these people are not held as human beings, since service of their need has no more bound the server to keep their confidence than it would bind the veterinary surgeon or the dog doctor. But it is evident that if this last consideration is true, it is not, at any rate, conscious. The whole *raison d'être* of the missionary's position is a passionate impulse of human brotherhood. The idea that the souls of men are in eternal peril if they do not hear a certain tabulated historical statement may be true or false. It is sure that as long as such an idea appeals to conscientious people they are bound to make some missionary efforts; and the intention must approve itself to us as noble. But that sustained integrity which constitutes nobility of action is a vastly more difficult matter than this. At this point the missionary is hampered by the tradition of his class. A certain given interpretation of caste, of zenana, of the Indian intellect, is imposed upon him at the outset, and few minds could break through such preconception, even to the extent of fulfilling the first conditions of the disciplined student of phenomena. As artist and scientist, then, we must perhaps consider him lost.

There still remains the ideal of the religious teacher. Why should he not succeed in this? It is a part that admits of sectarian bitterness, provided only it be backed up by holiness of personal life in some form that we can understand. It admits also of intellectual ignorance, provided there be spiritual insight. Was not the strongest empire that the world ever saw converted by a few fishermen? The apostle need not be a scholar, he need not be an artist; he must be a saint.

It is here that we come upon the most curious paradox of all. Preaching an Eastern religion to an Eastern people, the ideals of the East are for once perfectly in place. It is a golden moment. Count Tolstoy may have difficulty in obeying the words of Christ literally while fulfilling the demands of life. But in India the one teacher who would be understood would be he who possessed neither gold nor silver nor brass in his purse, who had not two coats, neither shoes nor yet staves ; who saluted no man by the way, being too much bent on the errand before him and the repetition of the Name of God ; who would be absolutely indifferent to the consequences for himself personally, offering himself up in very truth as a lamb amongst wolves. Every door in that country would swing open before such a visitor, even if he railed against the family gods. The Christian ideal might be demonstrated successfully in India now, as it was in Italy in the days of St. Francis by the Begging Friars, for India has retained the ideal of such life even more completely than Italy ever had it. To the individual Christian, therefore, who is willing to accept the charge laid upon him, the way is clear. Let him go forth to the gentle East, strong in his mission, filled with burning renunciation, as 'a lamb amongst wolves.' There will be no room here for marrying and bringing up of children : no room for distinctions of rank or of race ; no room for anxiety about provision or gain.

Is this the ideal that the missionary follows? If not, why not? True, it is not the only useful career that he may adopt. An educator, who has deeply understood the problems of India, and is ready to help her to solve them in her own way, is perhaps even more necessary. The poet who makes two races love each other and their respective countries is worthy of all the admiration he excites.

But, has the missionary any right to claim the indulgence without the criticism of all these roles? Has he any right to be fanatical like the religionist without being

ascetic, like him? to be wanting in common-sense and accuracy, like the poet, without contributing joy and beauty? to be in receipt of regular pay and live a comfortable life, like the professional man, without any regard for the professional man's honour?

And, are the public, who have so long permitted this thing to be, entirely without blame? Let us demand something better, and something better must be offered. The appeal is to Caesar.