



Point out the "Way"—however dimly,  
and lost among the host—as does the evening  
star to those who tread their path in darkness.  
—*The Voice of the Silence*

# THE ARYAN PATH

---

VOL. VII

MARCH 1936

No. 3

---

## EAST AND WEST

This month we publish in our series, "The World is One," a group of three articles bearing on the important subject of the existing differences between the Orient and the Occident, and their possible reconciliation. There is a clash in points of view. A variety of causes has been at work, of which conflict between ideals of human progression and perfection is a fundamental one; another cause as potent, but more apparent, is that denoted by the term, colour-bar.

The Oriental views the universe mystically; mechanistic philosophy makes a greater appeal to the Occidental, who looks upon material well-being as the symbol of spiritual unfoldment. This is well brought out by our esteemed contributor, Luc Durtain, Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and a distinguished author of many volumes.

The acute problem of the colour-

bar, which excites to fever heat large groups on every continent, is treated in the second, and very thought-provoking article by Mr. W. E. B. Du Bois. This world-famous leader of the Negroes of the U. S. A. refers to India's "temptation to stand apart from the darker peoples." This view, as well as others, needs to be considered from the Indian standpoint, and we hope to publish in an early issue of THE ARYAN PATH an article giving such expression from the pen of a well-known Indian authority.

The writer of the third article, Mr. Miller Watson, is a Scotsman who went to Brazil when he was aged eighteen and who for many years has studied intimately the natives of that land. His article strikes an encouraging note, for it seems that Brazil is on the way to realize the brotherhood of men, if it has not already done so.



# THE WORLD IS ONE

---

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;  
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth!

## I.—THE CLASH OF IDEALS

### ANALYTICAL WEST AND SYNTHESIZING EAST

A geographer, a mathematician who looks at space, can speak of East and West and oppose one to the other. But how is it still possible to-day, in the pure realm of thought, to set the ideals of these two phases of humanity in hostile alignment against each other? This brings to mind the picture of a being who instead of acting and thinking as a whole, would be the prey of quarrels between the left side and the right side of his body; who would make his two hands fight against each other, when they are meant to work together on earth and to reach up together towards the stars.

Are we not in a period when any one event affects the whole world, from the advertising of an automobile or the market rates of oil and coal, to the spreading of a scientific process or a style of literature? Who is surprised, now, to see our planet, surrounded by waves it has learnt to emit, radiating into infinity its jazz and Stock Exchange quotations, just as the sun radiates its chromosphere?

The situation is the same for what concerns each one of us. Physics has revealed in each atom a kind of solar system, a central star and its

planets. Through our thought, penetrating deep into our organs built of so many atoms and molecules, we seem to see them group themselves into constellations and star clusters. The awe which the sight of the night sky inspires in the heart of man, the spirit finds when contemplating the truly cosmic architecture of the body.

A mystic conception, this architecture, multiple yet one? Doubtless. Nevertheless, deeply interwoven with reality. May it teach us to look without ambition and without hatred, but with serenity, at the territory of nations, the frontiers of peoples! We must penetrate beneath the appearance of states and continents, beyond the divisions of race, in order to find our foreign brothers and join our thought to theirs.

\* \* \*

Gaze from afar at the opposing fragments of our world civilization? We must step far back. Things always surround us too closely. To go on, further on, to pass beyond, isn't that the very way of thought? Better than depth, a side view gives their real significance to things and it is not mere idle talk that perspective is an image of destiny.



Leave Europe ? There is one road which Europeans have been taking willingly especially for the last fifteen years, that to the West.

The European who for the first time, passing the Statue of Liberty, rides on the calm waters of the Hudson, beholds a magic sight. Cubes, towers, storied pyramids, piled up, rising to heights at which man is not accustomed to see his dwellings, all seem to offer the very acme of civilized effort. If the traveller arrives at night the sight is even more impressive : the lights of the Woolworth Building and the Empire State, the glass crown of the Telephone Buildings, seem in the darkness almost to reach the zenith, a region which in Europe only clouds and constellations haunt.

A stupendous impression. This gift, so immense at first, fills the soul. We must admit it, American architecture is one of the great successes of the world, one of the essential innovations of art. However, the visitor soon has a vague feeling opposed to his first impression, the feeling of having lost something. It is not only proportion which he no longer finds. Such wilful effort, such despotic lines ! Some independence, deep within him, apprehends defeat.

We must speak the truth. This fever of construction sometimes ends in the creation of peculiar and tyrannical laws. We need recall neither the Prohibition of yesterday nor the alarming control gained by the Blue Laws. Misuse of power—misuse of matter too ! A childish faith in figures and mechanics, in the pointed shapes of steel. . . Beyond

the seas they willingly cultivate a feeling of pious respect, of worship for machines and metal.

I shall never forget a visit to the psychological institute of a well-known university. It was cluttered with pincers, cylinders, wheels, and endowed with those tests which, in America, seem designed to select the most superficial and the most tritely standardised intelligences. That institute seemed to me, from the point of view of the soul, to be a place deserving neither gratitude nor help, but to be like the worst, the most mediocre of hells.

In short we find, in the American, the will to create we know not what of superhuman, to build something big and absolutely new, upon a spot swept absolutely clean.

What ties can lie heavy upon a new people ? Those of time and those of space ; their origin and their land.

Any mortgages which could burden the American soil have long since been destroyed. First that immemorial mortgage which the primitive race represented. The Red Indians have disappeared before the Pale Faces. Disappeared from the Atlantic to the Rockies, those prayer-painted faces on which a half-circle meant the dome of the sky ; white and red zigzags, lightning ; green stripes asked for rain ; and the inter-crossed colours of the cardinal points made magic to bring about a change of wind. Gone the symbolic dress, the ritualistic head-dress and the dances which for centuries had permitted the hunting people to communicate with the genii of the forest. On the very spot where, a century



ago, a young man used to come to meditate for a whole day, according to custom, sitting on a rock, naked, fasting and praying, contemplating the silent horizon, to-day a "marvellous" progress has multiplied the world of machines: telephones, radios, elevators and central heating.

It is true, however, that before the primitive tribes were annihilated for ever, observers and ethnographers arose. An ingenious solution to the problems of minorities! By a miraculous process of preserving and compression, next to which the discoveries of the Chicago factories are but child's play, this troublesome Indian people has finally been entirely enclosed within a few library shelves.

Let us not blame any one people for this plundering and massacre. Only the pride and avidity of the white race are responsible. . .

The *élite* of America knows this: that *élite* which, although very limited in number and whose tendencies are peculiarly opposed to those of its own country, none the less occupies such an important place in the thought of our world: one of the most generous and, the most intelligent groups that exist, one of those most open to all the breezes of the spirit.

\* \* \*

The white race, that mould—leaven, if you prefer a nobler word—acquired ages ago new characteristics, I had almost said, a peculiar virulence, when coming from Asia, its native land, into Europe. A second change of soil, from Europe to America, has curi-

ously modified, and intensified some of its qualities. One could almost believe it a new race—"the bifurcation of the white race" whose drama I have attempted to describe.

The chasm, which the Atlantic opens between the two principal "cultures" of the white leaven, seems to threaten the world with a break which would be fatal. Thence, what does the current of facts and ideas which America and Europe exchange, represent? Another Gulf Stream, destined to make the spiritual climate more temperate and the two continents more inhabitable.

Thus seen from beyond the seas, the arts and sciences take on a new face, more aggressive, and they run the risk of breaking the supreme tie which binds the New World to the Old, instead of uniting the two parts of Occidental humanity.

But a break even deeper reveals itself on the other side.

\* \* \*

We have just travelled towards the West: the great road of the territory inhabited by the whites. Another and more ancient road stretches from our lands in the opposite direction, towards the Orient, reaching back to our very roots.

Don't take that leap all at once, that leap familiar to dreamers. Like a man who wishes to glean, by the way, the aspects of the scenery, stop half-way to look back at Europe. Lean for a moment on the parapet of the extreme tip of the black continent—Djibouti, last port of call.

You have rolled along through



the desert, among thorny brambles iron-grey in colour. You have experienced the mirage which raises glittering vegetations in the horizon, constructions soon in ruins. The town, the hard, real town you have visited also—arcades, flat roofs, salt-pits, dazzling in their rigid lines. You are now somewhere on a beach filled with the deep odours of excrement and mire. In their dark and motley draperies, Negroes pass, strangely fragile limbs, smiles of a lost Paradise; a man with a burden, a woman with a child on the hip. Listen to those unknown words which gestures render so lucid. Don't move. Watch life unfold itself. You penetrate little by little into a picture of the Quaternary Age, complete with its joys, its aims, its sanctions, its injustices. Filled with this strange picture, raise your eyes: towering high upon the sea, ships, European giants, machines, geometry, algebra. . . . What are they doing here? What are they bringing here? The question, once raised, haunts you. It will reach its full intensity and importance in Asia.

Go beyond Ceylon, that eternal crown of jewels floating off India, like a buoy before a drowning man. Go beyond the Sunda Isles, drops of green dough which the god of the tropics seems to have dropped from his finger tips on the ocean. The same question arises here also. What have we brought over here?

Visit wharfs and counters, rice fields and plantations, new factories and ruined temples; ask of facts and faces, of gestures and silences. It is a tremendously difficult task.

The answer differs at every street corner, at every cape, at the frontier of each government or each race, perhaps it differs with each group of ten. If we forget men and ideas, to consider only things, the whole amount of junk which Liverpool, Marseilles or New York pours upon Asia, the solution is easier. Bazar goods, cottons, hardware? But all that existed before the coming of the white man, in other forms, nobler and truer! What have we brought to those men of Asia, what material things which they lacked? The phonograph perhaps: the records whose sounds we hear so often, issuing through the green shafts of the banana trees and palms as we approach the most primitive group of huts.

"You whites," I was told by an Anamite journalist, "you have destroyed not only many lives but our very motives for living. What have you brought us in exchange? Your toys: cannons and airplanes? Oh! firecrackers and kites were quite sufficient for us. The printing press? We had it before you. Really, what have you brought?"

"At least this," I answered. "If you who were short-sighted and astigmatic have a clear sight, if your teeth are cared for, if your liver is not too large, if your children are healthy, you owe it to Occidental medicine and its direct importation."

"Yes, that's true, you have brought us that." He was silent, then: "But you have brought us something else—yourselves. Yes, all of you whites, something that we had not invited."

Let me evoke another memory of



Asia ; of a most primitive Asia, that of nakedness, of glass beads and of immense forests, such as we can still see in Laos.

I remember my arrival one night, at the edge, still tropical, of one of those high and cold plateaux. A friend had accompanied me from the last European residence to the first native village. The "patriarch" of the village, the "phoban" and the chiefs, notified beforehand, were waiting at the entrance. As we drew near, they fell on their knees, face down, offering us candles and flowers. However common that tribute may be there, that worship of the white man made me feel more ashamed than I had ever been in my life.

I stepped aside from this group, my heart heavy. Beyond the huts, an immense scenery. In the background, beyond the dark foliage, far away Mekong reflected the red glow of twilight. As I was coming back, I saw a pale and trembling child lying on the naked breast of his mother. I bent over. Enlarged liver, huge spleen, and on that childish face the look of indifference which marsh fever always brings. I took a quinine bottle from my pocket and, shall I acknowledge it?, at that moment I was reconciled to the colour of my face.

\* \* \*

Does the art of constructing and of healing hold a preponderant place in human effort? Alas! can we forget the deplorable progress which the West has made in the art of killing? The power of stupidity, the infection of madness, are, as we know by experience, forces, real

indeed.

The world is very ill and it is not enough to turn only to Occidental science.

Remember in how few cases in the East even the most powerful thought is divorced from solicitude for mankind. Whether it be in Confucius or Meng-Tseu, a high Hindu poem or a Japanese romance, speculation in the Orient likes to bow down before knowledge. There action seems absurd if it is not also directed towards the good of the individual and society. The Whites have an entirely different point of view. What are the two spiritual characteristics of the white race? One, reason, free from every practical consideration, reason for reason's sake, "pure reason": the other, action, aimless and without restraint, that is, action for action's sake, "pure action." These forces, new in the world and truly wonderful, have established the rule of the white race over the others, at any rate for the present. They have also—much greater victory—ended in the conquest of the universe by man.

But by using such abstract gifts, by exercising only absolute thought and absolute action, which mutually opposed in their extremes escape the original nature of man, the Occident seems, within the last hundred years, to have strangely forfeited its power of synthesis. It has lost sight of what is inextricable and real in the world. Little by little it has got away from the true realities.

Is the universe but a spectacle offered to knowledge? In such a



vision, the lines of causes and relations could scarcely be traced and, moreover, the universe would remain pointless. An aim is needed to give it depth. Discover everything, keep everything, but to everything add its human consequence, just like fate: the acknowledged aim of art, the secret principle of science.

It is for the soul of the Orient—that soul which embraces the very

ends of reality and all that lies in metaphysics, ecstasy and ethics—it is for it to realise this synthesis of the future; a synthesis of our Occidental learning, too specialised and too diversified; a synthesis of our activity which too often remembers that we have a thousand hands and forgets that we have but one spirit; the true synthesis of man and his planet.

LUC DURTAIN

## II.—THE CLASH OF COLOUR

### INDIANS AND AMERICAN NEGROES

The great difficulty of bringing about understanding, sympathy and co-operation between the Negroes of America and the peoples of India lies in the almost utter lack of knowledge which these two groups of people have of each other.

First of all, the Negroes, taught in American schools and reading books and articles by American writers, have almost no conception of the history of India. It practically has no place in our curriculum and references to that great past which every Indian knows bring no intelligent comprehension on the part of the Negroes in America.

On the other hand, the knowledge which educated Indians have of the American Negro is chiefly confined to the conventional story spread by most white American and English writers: ignorant black savages were enslaved and made to do physical labour which was the only thing they could do. They were finally emancipated by a benevolent government and given every aid to

rise and develop. Much of this aid was mistaken, as, for instance, the bestowing of the right to vote, and proved a hindrance rather than a help. To-day these Negroes are contented labourers occupying that lower sphere for which they are especially adapted.

This false knowledge and lack of knowledge in the two groups are now emphasized by the modern methods of gathering and distributing news. To the editors of the great news agencies, Indians and Negroes are not news. They distribute, therefore, and emphasize only such things as are bizarre and uncommon: lynchings and mobs in the Southern States of the United States, dialect and funny stories; and from India, stories of religious frenzy, fights between Hindus and Mohammedans, the deeds of masters of magic and the wealth of Indian princes.

To this is added deliberate and purposeful propaganda, so that from American newspapers Negroes get



no idea of the great struggle for freedom and self-government which has been going on in India, or of that deep philosophy of the meaning and end of human life which characterizes the Indian nation. They only hear of what England has done to develop India and to keep the peace.

On the other hand, few Indians know of Negroes able to do more than read and write, of the Negro literature that has been growing and expanding for seventy-five years, and of the leaders who have done their part, not only in the development of black men, but in the development of white America.

To all this must be added the almost insuperable bars of religious difference. Negroes have long been enmeshed in a veil of sectarian Christianity which regards all peoples as "Heathen" who are not Christian, and all Christians as suspect who are not Protestants, and no Protestant as a candidate for Heaven unless he believes in the Trinity and the "Plan of Salvation."

The Indian, also, finds it difficult to conceive of intelligent men who have no real knowledge of either Buddha or Mohammed, and no religious philosophy that forms a part of their real life.

Much of this lack of knowledge and misapprehension might be avoided if Indians and Negroes had a chance to meet and know each other; but they are at opposite ends of the earth and, so far as American Negroes are concerned, deliberate and other difficulties are put in the way of their meeting. It is difficult for an American Negro to get the

English Government to *visé* his passport for a visit to India and if the *visé* is obtained, usually it is under pledge to limit his words and activities. The accommodations offered by steamships often involve racial discrimination, while the cost of such trips is of course prohibitive to the mass of Indians and Negroes.

On the other hand, a number of Indians visit America; but unless they are as wise and catholic as my friend, the late Lajpat Rai, they are apt to see little and know less of the twelve million Negroes in America. First of all, they meet a peculiar variation of the Colour Line. An Indian may be dark in colour, but if he dons his turban and travels in the South, he does not have to be subjected to the separate-car laws and other discriminations against Negroes in that part of the country where the mass of Negroes live. This public recognition of the fact that he is not a Negro may, and often does, flatter his vanity so that he rather rejoices that in this country at least he is not as other dark men are, but is classified with the Whites.

This, however, applies primarily to the Indian with money enough to travel and live in comfort. If he should try for employment or for citizenship or any economic status, he would find the tables quite turned, and that, while an African Negro can become a citizen of the United States, an Indian of the highest caste cannot.

All this is of course but the foolishness and illogic of race discrimination and most intelligent Indians would only need to be reminded of



it to insist upon opportunity to see and know American Negroes. This was certainly the case of Rabindranath Tagore and many other prominent Indians who have visited America.

Indian visitors must, of course, remember that they will have to make some special effort to see the Negro world. It is a world largely apart and organized; in its churches, industry and amusement, largely separate from the white world. It is not easily penetrated by strangers, except in lines of commercialized entertainment. The Harlem cabarets do not, for instance, represent Negro life, but are simply commercialized investments of white men with Negro music and entertainment.

On the other hand, for visitors who wish to know Negroes and try to carry out their wish, no great difficulties are encountered. The Negro churches always welcome visitors, and Negro organizations are glad to give them opportunity to speak and to ask questions, and even Negro homes are open to sympathetic strangers.

In the North, such intercourse is easy and normal. In the South, it is more difficult; and in the South some eight million of the twelve million of the American Negroes live. But even there, through the universities and colleges and the private and public schools, through churches and homes, necessary contacts may be made.

The percentage of visitors between these groups must always be small, but a vast amount of work can be done through literature and especi-

ally literature directed toward the masses of these two peoples. The best effort in this line is Lajpat Rai's *United States*; he seeks not simply to write a conventional history of white America for the information of coloured India, but gives a quarter of his space and intelligent interpretation to the Negro problem in the United States. He could do this because, during his enforced exile from his native land, he gained wide acquaintance with American Negroes and travelled over much of the United States. It is unfortunate that American Negroes have not made a similar study of India to orientate the thought of the people concerning the problems of that land.

There are in the United States one hundred or more weekly newspapers circulating among Negroes, of which eight or ten have considerable circulation. It would be an excellent thing if contributions from India, explaining the history and problems of the land, should appear in these papers; and on the other hand, the press of India ought to welcome a number of Negro contributors with explanations of their situation here.

Despite the difficulties, there must be greater conscious effort to get these groups into sympathetic understanding. Indians appeared in the four or five Pan-African Congresses which were held and which were of course only tentative efforts toward a greater ideal. In the future, congresses including Indians and Negroes ought to meet periodically, not necessarily for action, but for understanding, and especially for



emphasizing the fact that these people have common aims.

It is this fact, or the failure to recognize it, which causes the lack of knowledge and understanding between these groups. To most Indians, the problem of American Negroes—of twelve million people swallowed in a great nation, as compared with the more than three hundred millions of India—may seem unimportant. It would be very easy for intelligent Indians to succumb to the widespread propaganda that these Negroes have neither the brains nor ability to take a decisive part in the modern world. On the other hand, American Negroes have long considered that their destiny lay with the American people; that their object was to become full American citizens and eventually lose themselves in the nation by continued intermingling of blood. But there are many things that have happened and are happening in the modern world to show that both these lines of thought are erroneous. The American Negroes belong to a group which went through the fire of American slavery and is now a part of the vast American industrial organization; nevertheless it exists as representative of two hundred or more million Negroes in Africa, the West Indies and South America. In many respects, although not in all, this group may be regarded as the leading intelligentsia of the black race and no matter what its destiny in America, its problems will never be settled until the problem of the relation of the white and coloured races is settled throughout the world.

India has also had temptation to stand apart from the darker peoples and seek her affinities among whites. She has long wished to regard herself as "Aryan" rather than "coloured" and to think of herself as much nearer physically and spiritually to Germany and England than to Africa, China or the South Seas. And yet the history of the modern world shows the futility of this thought. European exploitation desires the black slave, the Chinese coolie and the Indian labourer for the same ends and the same purposes, and calls them all "niggers."

If India has her castes, American Negroes have in their own internal colour lines the plain shadow of a caste system. For American Negroes have a large infiltration of white blood and the tendency to measure worth by the degree of this mulatto strain.

The problem of the Negroes thus remains a part of the world-wide clash of colour. So, too, the problem of the Indians can never be simply a problem of autonomy in the British commonwealth of nations. They must always stand as representatives of the coloured races—of the yellow and black peoples as well as the brown—of the majority of mankind, and together with the Negroes they must face the insistent problem of the assumption of the white peoples of Europe that they have a right to dominate the world and especially so to organize it politically and industrially as to make most men their slaves and servants. This attitude on the part of the white world has doubtless softened since the World War. Nevertheless, the



present desperate attempt of Italy in Ethiopia and the real reasons back of the unexpected opposition on the part of the League of Nations, show that the ideals of the white world have not yet essentially changed. If now the coloured peoples—Negroes, Indians, Chinese and Japanese—are going successfully to oppose these assumptions of white Europe, they have got to be sure of their own attitude toward their labouring masses. Otherwise they will substitute for the exploitation of coloured by white races, an exploita-

tion of coloured races by coloured men. If, however, they can follow the newer ideals which look upon human labour as the only real and final repository of political power, and conceive that the freeing of the human spirit and real liberty of life will only come when industrial exploitation has ceased and the struggle to live is not confined to a mad fight for food, clothes and shelter; then and only then, can the union of the darker races bring a new and beautiful world, not simply for themselves, but for all men.

W. E. B. DU BOIS

---

### III.—THE EMERGENCE OF HARMONY WHERE RACES MEET—AND MINGLE

The population of Brazil is composed of the descendants of about ten different nationalities and races, living in perfect accord as one people. This is interesting in view of the fact that extreme nationalism and race consciousness are becoming more and more a feature of the present day.

I have no doubt that Herr Hitler would be sadly disappointed to find that the son of a pure "Aryan" German, born in Brazil, has the same language, the same education, the same outlook and, to some extent, the same ideals, as the Brazilian son of a "mere" Portuguese. The much vaunted superiority of the Nordic race does not seem to maintain itself when living in close contact with the "inferior" Latins or Negroes.

The population of Brazil is mainly descended from Portuguese, Dutch,

French, German, Polish, Italian, South American, Indian and Negro stock, and yet the people live as one nation, with no greater difference in their individual outlook than could be found in the outlook of various British individuals. The culture of the German-Brazilian is not German; it is Brazilian. And the culture of the Portuguese-Brazilian is not Portuguese; it is Brazilian also. And all these people of various races have but one country and one hope—Brazil.

One of the opinions which I formed most definitely during ten years' residence in Brazil is that race really means very little, and that men can live as brothers if they wish to do so. I found that I could detect no essential difference between, for instance, a Brazilian of Portuguese descent, and a Brazilian of Polish or German descent. Having an eye for



physical features I could sometimes tell a man's race from his appearance, but I can remember no instance where a man's ideals, culture, or morals distinguished him as being of a particular race.

As I have already said, I found individual differences just as I might find individual differences in Britain, but the people of Brazil are one in fact if not in race. An Englishman is no better than a Spaniard in Brazil unless he proves himself the better man. His race counts for nothing, unless it be for a certain eccentricity which makes him live apart in his own colony as is the way of Englishmen alone of all the peoples who settle in Brazil. But that is because the Englishman holds himself aloof and apart by force, as it were. But if the Englishman would mix with the other people, as occasionally he does, he would dissolve in the Brazilian melting-pot of races.

Even the Negro is the absolute equal of the white man, if class by class is judged. The poor Negro is the equal of the poor White. And the rich Negro is the equal of the rich White. And if anyone doubts the Negro's ability to equal the white man, I would mention that some of Brazil's best doctors, surgeons, lawyers and men of letters, are of Negro race. And some of these Negroes are international authorities in their particular spheres. Negro surgeons and Negro mental specialists have lectured in German Universities, and no one will deny the high standard of medical science to which Germany has attained. I would venture to say that in no country is veterinary

science more progressive than in Brazil, and many Brazilian "vets" are Negroes.

To read a list of the members of the Brazilian Government would disclose names of many nationalities, but to listen to these members speak in Congress or Senate would disclose nothing of their race. The good amongst them have but one ideal—Brazil; and the bad have the same ideals as bad politicians the world over—personal fame and gain. But where is the difference in race?

I remember speaking to my wife of an office boy who had been employed some years previously by me. She asked if he were a Negro, and I replied that he was of Portuguese race. Some minutes later I remembered that he was really a Negro! And to make the matter more interesting, I had been picturing the boy as white in my own mind. In other words, colour means so little that it is possible to forget a man's colour.

If you ask a Brazilian his nationality he will always reply "Brazilian." He will never tell you he is descended from Portuguese, or Germans, or Italians unless you ask him particularly. He is a Brazilian and the race of his fathers is a minor concern.

Brazil is a living proof of the possibility of the brotherhood of men. He who denies this brotherhood has not seen Brazil. If the leading men of every country could but spend a few years in Brazil, we might look for a better and more peaceable world.

MILLER WATSON



## A HUMANIST LOOKS AT MYSTICISM

[ **John Hassler Dietrich** has been since 1916 minister of the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis ( U.S.A. ). In earlier life he had been a pastor in the Reformed Church, in which denomination he had been brought up. During the six years he held this appointment, he studied Darwin, Huxley, Spencer and Fiske, which study so completely altered his views on life that he would not defend himself against a charge of heresy brought against him in 1911 by the church authorities. He then joined the American Unitarian Association. In 1918 he delivered a series of addresses on "Humanism—A New Faith for a New Age." He was the first minister to use the term "humanism" as best suited to his interpretation of the religious life.

In this article he shows how Mysticism could help the humanist and enable him to fill a gap in the existing system of humanism.—EDS.]

In discussing the relation between Humanism and mysticism, it is necessary to understand what we mean by these terms; and yet they are difficult to define in a few words. Humanism is a term used in a number of different ways, but here in America there is a definite movement in religion which goes by that name, and it means a religion which aims at the enrichment of human life on earth through intelligent human effort, working in conformity with natural processes. It rejects a belief in God or any kind of purpose in the universe (except in man), and relies upon intelligent co-operative human effort to transform both the individual and common life of man into something joyous and worthy. In other words, it declares that men and women have nowhere to turn for help except to themselves and to one another, and believes that within themselves and in their natural and social environment they may find powers sufficient to achieve the good and happy life, or at least to greatly improve the present situation. To this end it seeks to preserve all the

human values thus far attained and to develop man to the highest point possible within the margin of human capacities and environing conditions. In short, it is man-centred rather than God-centred, and aims at the enrichment of human life rather than at the glorification of God. It depends therefore upon purely natural methods, which of course repudiates every form of divine revelation or power.

On the other hand, mysticism believes in God or some Universal Spirit, with which during some unusual experience, called ecstasy or illumination, individual souls may merge or become identified, resulting in a conscious oneness with God or reality and thereby gaining knowledge of cosmic laws and truths above and independent of sense perception. This definition may not be satisfactory to every one, but if we examine the writings of the great mystics, we are forced to accept it. They all believed, with varying degrees of intensity of course, that they had direct contact with reality. They all had certain periods of ecstasy or illumination when they felt



not only in harmony with God or reality, but actually identified with and part of Him, and through this identification were able to absorb knowledge. So I think we can conclude that pure mysticism means the consciousness of identification with God or reality, and through this experience access to truths above and beyond sense experience.

On the face of it, there would seem to be no possible relation between Humanism and mysticism, and yet a modified form of mystic experience is an essential part of and can make a valuable contribution to Humanism. The Humanist does not doubt the reality of these experiences, and being human experiences they should be of Humanist concern. He does, however, question the cause ascribed to them; that is, the experiences may be real, but they may have nothing to do with God or reality. He would rather accept the conclusion of the psychologists who, in so far as they have been able to analyse the mystical experience, have decided that it is an intense emotional state induced in a purely natural way. But even though the experience has a natural foundation, it does not mean that any knowledge gained at the time is useless. The state of relaxation induced by the experience is favourable to the production of valuable ideas. It is commonly recognized that sometimes an idea which could not be induced by persistent and intense effort appears suddenly and unexpectedly during mental relaxation. So even though the Humanist rejects the belief of the mystics

that they have been in direct communication with God, he accepts the possibility of knowledge gained in this way. And while he would reject also the mystic's attempt to soar beyond reason in his frenzied effort to reach the absolute and transcend sense experience, he recognizes that the mystical experience offers valuable hints for the accomplishment of purely Humanist objectives. It may be possible to achieve within the actual limits of the mind by similar methods a richer experience than the average person enjoys, and therefore he would recognize this mystical method as a way of extracting from life greater satisfactions than we usually attain.

In this effort, he would dismiss the more exaggerated forms which he considers more or less pathological, and think of those mystics who have not tried to soar beyond the bounds of their natural being, but who, within the limits of the human mind, have sought an intensity of experience that would give them a deeper sense of life and reality in times when religion was decadent as a result of corrupt institutionalism or cold intellectualism. For them religion was an inner experience, a personal inspiration, an aliveness to the real issues of life. And while even this kind of mysticism is subject to dangerous perversions and exaggerations, nevertheless religion is almost a useless appendage unless it possesses our inner life of feeling and imagination, and thus gives direction to our volitional nature. The greatest weakness of Humanism is



that it frequently lacks this inner conviction. It is essentially an intellectual movement without any real motivating power. It does not penetrate to the inner part of our natures from which conduct springs. After all, the purpose of the mystic was to identify himself with and lose himself in the object of his religion. In his case this object was God. Now the Humanist does not desire identification with God, but he should desire to identify himself with and lose himself in the object of his religion—the enhancement of human life. In other words, his religion would be a more vital thing if he could adopt the mystic's attitude toward it, possess it inwardly as a part of his psychic structure, in short, assimilate it until its expression becomes the motivating power of his emotional and volitional natures. What I am trying to say is that Humanism is over-intellectualized. It possesses much knowledge, but the knowledge does not possess it; that is, it has not become a part of its mental and emotional structure sufficiently to mould personality and generate action. Mere knowledge no doubt adorns life to a certain extent, but it does not become a powerful motive for conduct until it strikes deep into our emotional life, and becomes a very part of our innermost being.

I believe, therefore, that we Humanists might learn something from these mystics who aspired within the limits of the mind to identify themselves so completely with the objects of their religion. A little more of the mystic aspiration and fervour would add tremendously to

the significance of Humanist religion, which is in great danger of degenerating into a cold formula of intellectual concepts. There is no doubt that Humanism in adopting the scientific method has come into possession of an increasing body of sound knowledge, that it has been successful in diagnosing our more serious ills, that it has a well-defined vision of the goal toward which man should travel, that it is fully aware of the necessity of mankind itself transforming the life of society; but somehow it lacks the emotional drive to generate the concrete enthusiasms which are essential to making these things effectual in our individual and social lives. I believe this can be done only by achieving something of the passionate desire of the mystic to identify himself with the objects of his religion, to lose himself in the contemplation of these objects until they become a vital part of his psychic structure, affecting his emotional and volitional natures. When we strip mysticism of all its extravagances, its real meaning is the inward possession of great ideals and the transformation of character and purpose by the influence of those ideals; and in this sense, we should all be mystics, for it is only by this method that religion and morals have any transforming power.

Again, Humanism is in sympathy with what is frequently called the mystical attitude toward life. This may not fall within the category of real mystical experiences, although it is closely related. It usually means nothing more than the use of the imagination and emotion in



our interpretation of the world and of human life. It is the opposite of drab realism and matter-of-factness. It is a consciousness of the mystery and wonder of existence. It is that from which music and art, poetry and imaginative literature spring. It was the lack of it which Wordsworth had in mind when he wrote of Peter Bell:—

A primrose by the river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more,

and the presence of it which he expressed in his poem, ending with these lines:—

And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

This means living imaginatively and emotionally as well as intellectually and rationally; and it is a vital part of a well-rounded personality. By imaginative feeling we reach out to the world and seek to become conscious of our oneness with the whole of nature and of life. This is greatly needed in this materialized and mechanized world which is dominated by science and commercialism. Science represents the external approach to life, and mysticism represents an internal approach, which is also important. There are things in the world which cannot be understood only through the senses or by means of logical thought. They are "sensed" by the imagination and feelings, but they are just as real as the things we can see and handle. The danger here, of course, lies in the exaggerated importance of these faculties or in their abnormal functioning, whereby they may encumber one with a whole freight of ideas and interpretations which the circumstances do

not justify. Poets and artists are frequently dominated by their imagination and feelings, but business men and scientists whose lives are absorbed in facts and figures need to cultivate their feelings in an intelligent way. The ideal, of course, is a sane and well-balanced personality, capable of imagination and emotion as well as of clear thinking.

Humanism should try to retain some of the qualities of the mystic, especially in this sense of imbuing life with imagination and poetry. There is grave danger that we resolve life into a series of logical propositions, based only on factual observation. We are too prone to ignore the inner life of man in our eagerness to create a new social order, and thus smother the urge toward individual psychical needs. The Humanist should be aware of the presence of this urge and seek to cultivate it and thus recognize, as do other religions, that there is in the universe, including human life, something mysterious, something greater than the individual. He should cultivate a consciousness of his identity with the whole cosmic process, a feeling of oneness with the unending procession of living forms, especially a conscious unity with the whole mass of his kind. It is the business of religion, as John Dewey pointed out, to make us conscious of our identification with humanity at large, and to recognize our knowledge and faith and ideals as the product of the co-operative operations of human beings living together, to give us an understanding of our relations to one another and the values contained in those



relations. We are not only individuals, we are corporate parts of a humanity that extends into the remote past and will continue into a remote future. The things which we prize most in our civilization are not of ourselves. They exist by grace of the doings and sufferings of the continuous human community in which we are a link, and in which we must play our part. In short, we should recognize ourselves as component parts of the great body of humanity, in which we live and move and have our being; we should seek to attain that mystical experience of identification with the human race, to the adventure of which our individual lives are but fragmentary contributions.

More than anything else, the world needs this spirit to-day. No legislation, no new economic system, no changed industrial order, in and of themselves, will create this needed unity. The transfer of power from a self-seeking few to a self-seeking many will not help much, unless this new spirit fuses and inspires men with a new consciousness of the mystic unity that underlies all our social life. If as individuals we are so wrapped up in our own concerns, our private plans and personal ambitions, so content to be merely our private, separate,

exclusive selves, so blind to our essential unity with all other members of society, so oblivious to our vital place and function in the living body of humanity, we miss the greatest of all experiences—that of achieving the consciousness of our true oneness with the common life about us. To this extent much will be gained through the combination of Humanism and mysticism.

So while Humanism may not admit the claims of the mystics, it may at least recognize the methods of the mystics as the way to discover some of the favourable conditions of the abundant life. In the struggle for more and better life man needs, among other things, moments of quiet to free himself from the distractions and confusions of modern life and to reap the fruits of past experience and deep contemplation. And while in these moments he may not experience the "ineffable and unutterable" illumination of the mystical trance, he may achieve a sense of harmony with the whole of life, which inspires the normal person to an ethical and practical religious attitude, which brings peace and trust and humility to the individual, and reflects itself in a more wholesome and generous attitude toward his fellow men.

JOHN HASSLER DIETRICH



## LOVE AND DETACHMENT

### THE MYSTIC RECONCILIATION

[ **Irwin Edman**, Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University, New York, writes of the Mystic Way followed by Western Devotees. But as the Path is one for all, Professor Edman's conclusions are those of the Oriental mystics also. Detachment or *Vairagya* is that attitude of consciousness in which indifference to pleasure and to pain is achieved, by which illusion is conquered and truth alone perceived—EDS. ]

That the language of love and the language of mysticism are similar has been observed by historians of both poetry and religion. The soul, moving through ascetic discipline and intellectual concentration toward the absolute good, or through gradual steps of discarnate loveliness toward beauty, speaks in images borrowed from physical passion as (psychologists assure us) they are not unrelated to it. Plotinus speaks of the One as a lover speaks of his beloved, and the final identification with Beauty in Plato's *Symposium* is expressed in language usually more native to the poet and the lover than to the philosopher.

Mysticism, therefore, both to the mystics themselves and to students of their major utterances, has been studied as a peculiarly austere form of affection, but affection none the less. The Mystic Way has been identified with the way of the lover, and the mystic's goal with the object of love achieved. There is surely good reason for such an interpretation. The long line of mystical writers, East and West, have been poets of passion, whose intensity is purified of both grossness and distraction and is absorbed in objects at once immediate and ultimate. The mystic is in love with the ab-

solute, in comparison with which all minor goods vanish. His passion has carried him beyond the relative beauties of a changing world to a realm single and comprehensive, absorbing and clear. The steps toward the final vision and the endless, instant union with the Timeless One are stages in a passion at once increasingly vivid and increasingly serene. The end of the mystic's pursuit is a state where the thought itself is passion and the passions have become transmuted into cool lucidities of thought. Love (in the high deliverances of the mystic) sees with utter and ravishing clarity what it sees; what it sees it loves; what it loves it has become, and what it has become is the ultimate good in his enraptured revelation, identical with all being. The Mystic Way, in one sense, as we get it presented to us in quieter speculations of the Indian sages, or the lyric enthusiasm of St. John of the Cross, is a progress in love, in itself a gradual passage from lesser and illusory to greater and more genuine objects, a transition from confused and defeated intensities to a single intensity clarified and triumphant. The mystic tells us repeatedly he has found his way home, he has at last seen clearly,



has come to know his True Good. He no longer sees through a glass darkly, but now face to face. He has seen the Godhead, or become filled with it. He is one with the One, alone with the Alone.

The preceding paragraph is filled with echoes of many mystics. The last echo will be familiar to all readers of Plotinus, at once the most intellectual and the most enraptured of Western mystics. When Plotinus speaks of being alone with the Alone, he is saying something more than casually important in the understanding of mystics and mysticism in all ages. For there is one curious paradox in the history of the subject, which has not, I think, been sufficiently observed. For the Mystic Way is not simply one of love, it is one of detachment. And the passion that carried Plotinus or St. John to the ultimate is necessarily at the expense of objects of love passed, by willed abstention, on the way. To be at one with the One, one must have learned first to be alone with the Alone. There is a solitary and lonely prelude to ultimate absorption in the final good. And the mystic can make his eventual affirmation only after a path in which renunciation is his chief armour and his chief instrument.

The mystics themselves, of whom St. John of the Cross is in this respect a classic instance, have emphasized the negative aspects of the Mystic Way. And none familiar with the literature of the subject, or at all sympathetic with its motives, can be unaware of the Dark Night of the Soul, through which, as St.

John of the Cross puts it, the soul must first pass. That Dark Night is a dryness, a parching that comes when the spirit is first released from lesser objects and more transient commitments. One must break with the sources of distraction to the integrity of one's own being, before one is freed for direct communion with the ultimate objects of a clarified love.

It is this that accounts, I think, for the emphasis that mystics and philosophers as different as Spinoza and St. Bonaventura have put upon detachment.

As Spinoza says of his own pursuit:—

When I saw that all these ordinary objects of desire would be obstacles in the way of a search for something different and new—nay, that they were so opposed thereto, that either they or it would have to be abandoned, I was forced to inquire which would prove the most useful to me: for, as I say, I seemed to be willingly losing hold on a sure good for the sake of something uncertain.

One must cease to be a slave to partial and illusory goods before one can hope to know and to love, without confusion or blindness, perfect goodness, invariable truth or timeless beauty. So one may say without exaggeration that the Mystic Way may be studied, both in its literary expressions and in point of its psychological insight, not in terms of the history of the love which is its sustaining momentum or the object toward which it is moving, but in terms of the abstentions it feels necessary to make, and the objects it feels called upon to leave behind. There is a severity



about mysticism in its sincerest practitioners which is commonly forgotten, so much is attention centred on the mystic's own celebration of his final victory. The detachment of the mystic, where it is observed at all, is usually supposed to flow from the opposition commonly drawn in mystical literature between the flesh and the spirit. One must conquer the senses to leave the Spirit free; one must be quit of the body to leave the mind free from its trammels; one must flee the obsession of material things if one is to be absorbed by immaterial essences, timeless forms, and finally by Pure Being itself.

One need not accept the dichotomy between Flesh and Spirit or subscribe without reservation to the enmity between the two, to recognize the permanent insight contained in the distinction so familiar and so agonizing to those mystics endowed with both sensibility and vigour. The mystics have recognized the fact, patent enough to the sensitive spirit in the modern secular Western world, that the greatest enemy of the spirit, of an intense and concentrated perusing of things in their immediacy and in their ultimate import, is distraction. The sources of distraction lie precisely in those objects of love and attachment which at once diversify and dissipate the lives of the majority of mankind. The flesh is one of those sources of distraction because there is about it an importunity that is as narrow and deadening in the long run, as it is briefly liberating and alive. It is not that the mystic loves less the

flesh and the world than do others whose "live little senses are startling with delight." It is not that he feels less than a secular poet, "O, world I cannot hold thee close enough." But his fear lies precisely in the fact that the flesh may become too dear, and the world too much his obsessive and, in the end, stifling concern. His love has a longer range and a more difficult object. In the interests of both he must say No to those enticements of things and persons which make up the festival or the dream of living for most of his fellows. The sensuous surface of things, the comfortable furniture of affectionate or dramatic attachments which fill life with colour and meaning for most men, he must abandon. He must say, quite the contrary of Goethe's Faust, to the passing moment not to linger. The Mystic Way thus implies a moral philosophy, of which one half at least is renunciation. The visible beauties, the human seductions of this world half reveal, half cloud the ulterior beauty toward which the spirit is directed. The mystic feels the cloud may suffocate the revelation; one may pause at the prelude and never arrive at the goal. The fact itself is familiar to many others than mystics—to any one who has tried, in the midst of distraction, to accomplish an intellectual task, to any one who in the interest of a greater love has had to say a reluctant farewell to a lesser. One is bound by golden chains of longing and attachment to the normal grails of a rich and various life. Those chains must be



broken ; those minor grails must be abandoned.

There are, of course, mystics who are caught, ironically enough, in the processes of negation, who arrive at a coldness in the empyrean without ever achieving the final triumph, or discerning the ultimate flame, or being warmed by it. To withdraw, to renounce, to abandon, these things are necessary and are prerequisite. But withdrawal is a kind of death ; negation, in itself, and for itself, a kind of destruction. *It is not enough to have seen beyond the family, the class, the senses, the affections. Denuded of these, one may be not a naked spirit, but a corpse. Detachment is the condition of absorption, but only the condition, not absorption itself.\**

The loneliness, the isolation, the coldness of detachment may be all for nothing, and may indeed be nothing, if there is not a flame that carries one to something, a flame that is itself something and something ultimate. There is thus a reconciliation necessary between love and negation, and this reconciliation the noblest and the profoundest of the mystics have found. One must, as Spinoza pointed out, find where one's true good lies, and lesser goods may contribute to it by the way. The senses, the affections, the obligations of social life may themselves be avenues rather than obstructions to the ultimate. They are at once intimations and reminders ; they are goods in themselves and suggestions of goods and mean-

ings beyond them. It is possible to remain in the world but not of it, and to be at once—St. Teresa is an instance—a good citizen and a spiritual mind, a partaker in the affairs and events of one's society, and a saint. The capacity for love, where it is a genuine capacity, is aroused by a thousand incitements and opportunities in the panorama of experience. That capacity may be dissipated in its exercise, may be lost in the trivia by which it is aroused and on which it is expended. But the mystics have reminded us that one may keep one's flame pure and steady ; and, in the interest of a final rapture, one must bank one's fires. A measure of detachment is required, but in negation one may quench the very materials of the love which alone can carry the spirit to the ultimate. Perhaps only by refusing to let one's self be carried away by subsidiary goods can one ever hope to be one with the Good. One must let finite objects have only finite attachments, if one is ever to feel the pulse of sympathy with infinite good. But out of love for finite values comes the initial movement toward immortal good. The mystic, where he has managed to achieve it loves, without being lost in them, the colours of mortality, but manages to retain his uncorrupted and ultimate affection for that finality of which all other goods are a suggestion and a gleam.

IRWIN EDMAN

\* "If thou art told that to become Arhan thou hast to cease to love all beings—tell them they lie. If thou art told that to gain liberation thou hast to hate thy mother and disregard thy son ; to disavow thy father and call him 'householder' ; for man and beast all pity to renounce—tell them their tongue is false."—*The Voice of the Silence*, translated and annotated by H. P. BLAVATSKY.



## THE SEARCH ETERNAL

[ **Dr. Paul E. Johnson**, Professor of Philosophy at Hamline University in St. Paul ( Minn., U. S. A. ), at one time lived in China. In this article he wants the distracted and depressed mind of to-day to adopt the way of " the discoverers who have sought not in vain." Those who have found are still teaching the True Way of Life, the Aryan or Noble Way of which the *Gita* and the *Dhammapada* and *The Voice of the Silence* speak.—EDS. ]

Man is by nature a seeker. There is an urge within him that will not be still. Every nerve is set for action, every heart beats out the restless cadence of life. We are a frantic human race, darting and double-crossing in a whirl of confusion. Each seeks his own desires by every path that lures him on. The whole range of varied activity we call civilization is engaged in the task of fulfilling these insatiable wants. Yet underneath this superficial striving lie deeper motives. Can there be any pattern of unity in the diversity of our desires? In the maze of conflicting interests is it possible that we are all seeking the same goal? We seldom tell others; we hardly know ourselves. Some are more urgent than others, some know what they want while others do not, some are easily satisfied while others grow old in discontent. Such is man's restless pursuit. Forever uncertain, he goes about hunting for the elusive answer to himself. Forever inadequate, he continues groping after the larger fulfilment of this fragmentary existence. The deeper meaning of our incessant exertion is that we are seeking something greater than ourselves, something to worship.

I do not presume that such an observation will pass unchallenged.

The claim that man is incurably religious has been too often debated to escape the controversial. While the attempt to crowd all life's vagrant wanderings into one straight and narrow path is obviously a sweeping generalization, our view is an assertion incapable of final proof. And yet it is probably as significant as any assertion that has been made about our common lot. That a fair share of mortals seek something sublime to inspire and elevate sordid existence, reveals an important fact about the capacities of human nature. If groping lives seek something greater to complete their painful partiality this exposes an urgent human need that is not to be denied. If man remaining unsatisfied by lesser goods hungers persistently for something to worship, this becomes a vital concern to every true seeker of the good life. For herein will be found the lost secret of happiness. Historical investigation reveals the nature of this quest.

The Egyptian civilization which flourished along the Nile six thousand years ago was concerned with the search for God. Kingdoms were known by their gods; dynasties and rulers assumed names compounded with the names of their deities. The obelisks were called



"Fingers of God" pointing man upward; the pyramids were constructed as "Favourite Abodes" inviting the presence of God with men. Entering these ancient tombs we find the walls of chambers and passages inscribed with hieroglyphic text, preserving such prayers as this:—

Hail to thee great God, Lord of truth. I have come to thee my Lord, and am led hither by thy beauty . . . Behold I come to thee. I bring righteousness and expel for thee sin . . . Thy son comes to thee, enfold thou him in thine embrace. He is thy bodily son forever.

When the multiplication of deities and the strife of mythologies became unbearable in the Imperial Age, Ikhnaton moved away from Thebes and established a pure monotheistic faith at his new capital. Fragments of hymns found here reveal something of the rare beauty, universalism, and inspiring discernment which affirm "Thou art the father and mother of all that thou hast made."

In the Euphrates Valley, another civilization flowered and perished. Cities built five thousand years ago filled up with debris after the Babylonians departed, were overlaid with the accumulated dust of ages. Modern excavations have uncovered a number of these buried cities, and reveal their streets converging like the spokes of a wheel upon the central point where stands the temple. Around these temples gathered the important functions of their culture, shrines for worship, courts for administration of government, schools and libraries for education. Clay tablets found in the city libraries record, in cuneiform text, religious narratives and

litanies current in those times. The following excerpt from a penitential psalm indicates the earnestness of this ancient search for God:—

O Lord, my sins are many, great are my misdeeds...I have sought for help, but none took me by the hand; I wept, but no one came to my side. I cry aloud, but no one hears me. In anguish I lie upon the ground and look not up. To my compassionate God I turn, I sigh aloud...O Lord, look upon me, accept my prayer...O Lord, thy servant, cast me not down. In the miry waters take me by the hand. My God, my sins are seven times seven. Forgive my sins! Forgive my sins! I will bow humbly before thee. May thy heart like the heart of a mother be glad; like the heart of a father to whom a child is born, may the heart be glad!

Four thousand years ago, the sons of Han were tilling the soil, irrigating the fields, and plying their boats along the Huang Ho and Yangtze rivers. Heaven loomed large in Chinese destinies, from the legendary period to the twentieth century. The ruler of China was traditionally known as "Son of Heaven." He was chosen and permitted by Heaven on good behaviour as the representative of Heaven on earth. It was he who cast up the first furrow each Spring, at the signal of the heavenly seasons. It was he who purified himself in the Hall of Fasting and, standing upon the marble Altar of Heaven, lifted his arms in supplication for his people. The following prayer from the oldest literary record of China (Shih King), gives some hint of the religious hope that rises out of despair:—

O great God Almighty,  
Why has thy mercy been withheld?  
Why send down death and famine



Destroying all through the kingdom ?

. . . . .

O thou far-off Almighty God,  
Who art called our father and mother.

Soon thereafter came hordes of Aryan settlers down across the steppes of Asia to find a new home along the Indus. They were simple agriculturists, yet to them nature spoke a divine language. They and their descendants lived constantly in the presence of the divine, until they became the most religious of peoples. The religious quest of India began simply, without temples or priesthood, in spontaneous out-reaching to the wonderful forces interplaying around them. The earliest literature of India records some of the hymns of that Vedic period, revealing the aspirations of these seekers.

Thou art our guardian, advocate, and friend,  
A brother, father, mother—all combined.  
Most fatherly of fathers, we are thine,  
And thou art ours. Oh ! let thy pitying soul  
Turn to us in compassion when we praise thee,  
And slay us not for one sin or many.  
Deliver us to-day, to-morrow, every day.

About this time another line of seekers takes up the march. There are no more dramatic scenes in the whole course of this planet than the history of the Hebrews. A band of nomadic wanderers come out of the wilderness, enter the land of Canaan, settle down to pastoral and agricultural life, make a covenant with their God, pass through recurring cycles of sinning and repenting, honouring and rejecting their prophets, winning and losing kingdoms. Hurlled into captivity, scattered over the face of the earth, persecuted unto this day, they yet hold undaunted faith in the One God and his chosen people. Their literature is

eloquent with the joys and sorrows—the gains and losses, the blessed visions and cruel mockeries of their quest:—

As the hart panteth for the water brooks,  
So panteth my soul after thee, O God.  
My soul thirsteth for God,  
For the living God ;  
When shall I come and appear before God ?  
Why art thou cast down, O my soul ?  
Why art thou disquieted within me ?  
Hope thou in God ; for I shall yet praise him ;  
His presence is salvation.

These glimpses from different cultures may indicate something of the romance of religion. The records of religion bear more than literary or historical interest. They present the mystery of invisible power, the adventure of human search for divine treasure, the drama of man wrestling with his destiny. Many religions have passed off the stage of active affairs and gone down to oblivion in the ruins of extinct culture. And still the search goes on. From these ancient sources arise the eleven living religions which claim in their communions seven-eighths of the world's population. Without ignoring the multiple differences that separate these religions one from another, we must see how they labour in a common cause. When viewed in perspective, all religions are one in their human search for divine good. Every genuine religion shares in the mystery of power, the adventure of treasure, and the wrestle with destiny. In the religions of the world meet the highest aspirations of men across the ages of time and deserts of space.

The dramatic suspense lies in the uncertainty of this quest. Man plays for infinite stakes, with his eternal destiny in the balance, and the out-



come is shrouded in mist. Deceived by a false show of illusory appearance, man persistently demands a pathway from the unreal to the real. Distressed by cruel mockeries of insatiable desire, he hungers desperately for that which can truly satisfy his needs. Fear mingles with hope as he skirts the rim of failure and success, tasting the bitterness of defeat and the stimulant of victory. Can mortal toilers win a life worth living, or must the prize forever just elude our grasp? The urgent fact is that we are in imminent danger of failing. The search for God appears to be man's greatest failure. "O, if I knew where I might find him" is not the faint cry of a lonely shepherd on Judean hills; it is the chorus that echoes down the valleys of history.

Shall we then give up the quest? Shall we renounce forever the hopes that rise within us? Shall we accept our fate as sealed, our defeat as final, our quest as futile? We might curse God and die, or fly into a rage of destruction, or live in an endless depression of despair. But what of it? Only the terrible madness of sadistic delight. What is the use of self-

torture and self-pity? Are not the ashes of bitterness antidote enough without becoming addicted to the poison? If there is a way out it is worth any cost. If there is a gleam of light through this gloom it is worth following. If any one has a way of life that works in these times let it be explored exhaustively. If any one honestly finds hope in a God of salvation, that hope is a pole star to orient and guide life by. And even as many mariners have by the light of a star located their position correctly and held their course truly to a desired haven, so have adventurous seekers for God found "a more excellent way" and held a steady course through lashing storms to their destination. In every age there have been great discoverers who have sought not in vain, but who have found that reality they called God. And finding, they have come to life worth living—life marvellous in beauty, harmony and peace. This is evidence enough to continue the quest for God, hope enough to renew hope, success enough to invite enlarging success to the true seeker.

PAUL E. JOHNSON



# THE SONG OF THE HIGHER LIFE

## VI.—THE YOGA OF RENUNCIATION

[Below we publish the sixth of a series of essays founded on the great text-book of Practical Occultism, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Each of these will discuss a title of one of the eighteen chapters of the Song Celestial. The writer calls them "Notes on the Chapter Titles of the Gita"—but they are more than notes. They bring a practical message born of study and experience.

This particular study is on the fifth chapter, entitled *Sanyasa Yoga*.

**Sri Krishna Prem** was the name taken in the old traditional manner prevailing in India by a young English gentleman when he resolved to enter the Path of Vairagya, renouncing his all, including the name given to him at birth. He took his tripos at Cambridge in Mental and Moral Sciences and is a deep student of Indian philosophy. Away from the world but serving it with faith he lives in the Himalayas, and is esteemed highly for his sincerity, earnestness and devotion.—EDS.]

Renunciation of actions Thou praisest, O Krishna, and then also (karma) yoga. Tell me decisively which of the two is better.

The Wisdom which is now filtering into the consciousness of the disciple is not the intellectual knowledge of the schools, the knowledge which holds firm to the part as if that were the whole, but a unifying wisdom which fuses the broken lights of the mind into a living unity which the unaided intellect cannot reach. No one who has reached this stage can view the seated majesty of the Buddha without *knowing* in his soul that renunciation alone gives peace. But neither, when he contemplates the many-faceted figure of Krishna, warrior, statesman, lover, friend, can he refuse his soul's assent to that marvellous symbol of the Divine action, free and unfettered in the very midst of the cosmic whirl.

The interpreting mind asserts that these are incompatible ideals and with facile logic seeks to lead the disciple to one side or the other ;

but he must cling, instead, to the inner wisdom of his soul which will teach him how these seeming irreconcilables are in reality two aspects of the same truth. He truly sees who sees that the true meaning of the renunciation of actions that is taught by the *Sāṅkhya* is the same as that of the action taught by the *karma yogis*. For, in truth, words are but fingers pointing to the moon and, though the mind clings desperately to its analytic hold upon the finger, the Soul reaches out intuitively to That which lies beyond.

True renunciation cannot be attained by any sudden wrench of the will, even though, when it does come, it may seem to appear with all the swift glory of the lightning. "Without yoga, renunciation is hard to attain to." As long as there is the feeling of a separate self, so long true renunciation is impossible, for it is the personal self which is the seat of attachment, being but the hypothetical or illusory centre of the bundle of attachments, likes and dislikes that make up the so-called



self of man.

Psychologists can tell us how this "self" is gradually built up in the originally "selfless" infant, how it expands and becomes more complex with experience, how strains in the imperfectly integrated experience may sometimes distort and split it into two or more separate "personalities," and how these may be welded into one again by harmonising the conflicting stresses. Truly do they teach, as the Buddha taught long before, that in all this there is nothing immortal, nothing permanent, no hard changeless centre in the ever-changing flux of experience which could in truth be called a self. This self that we prize so dearly and to which we subordinate all is a mere emptiness, the empty heart of a whirlpool, a mathematical point which changes its position, not only from year to year, but even from hour to hour, as a man shifts from his "business" integration to that which is manifested at his home or his club.

Therefore does Sri Krishna teach that the disciple must utterly destroy the false sense of self, realising in all that he does, "speaking, giving, grasping," no self is involved; only "the senses moving among the objects of the senses."

But a whirlpool is real even though its centre be empty, and Life is real though lives are devoid of permanent selves. There is a Life that is the Light of men, "a Light that shineth in darkness though the darkness comprehendeth it not." That Life, the *Atman*, is the Self of all beings, the very Breath of the Eternal of which the *Rig Veda*

says: "the Only One, the breathless, breathed by Its own nature; apart from It was nothing whatsoever."

It is that One Life which is the life of all beings, that One Self, if it may be called a "self," which is the inmost heart of all. In that Life alone can immortality be achieved, and only when it is realised that it is in the bosom of that Ocean of Light that all these whirlpools of activity have their being, only then can the disciple "place his actions in the Eternal" (verse 10) and, in renouncing the illusory finite centre, achieve that renunciation of attachment which leaves the actions free and divine.

The disciple must, then, learn to divest himself of egocentricity. He must no longer act for the separate self but for that Self which is in all, which means, in practice, that, seeking neither gain nor fame, he must work for the welfare of his fellow-beings. Body, mind and senses will act as before but their actions must no longer find their meaning solely in the point within them but in that mystic Circle whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere.

When he has achieved some success in this yoga of disinterested action the disciple will notice a change taking place within himself. Instead of the elusive personal centre, the empty and featureless point of reference, he will perceive a Light shining where before all was darkness, will hear a Voice where previously all was silence.

Having renounced all (desire-prompted) action with his mind, the Inner Ruler sits blissfully in the nine-



gated city of the body, neither acting nor causing to act.

For the centre within is only illusory when considered as an independent self, a monad separate from all others. In reality the "point" within is a window, a point of view *through* which the Eternal One as subject looks out upon Itself as object. Just as a window, empty in itself, is yet a focus through which the all-pervading sunlight can illumine the world of objects, themselves but other forms of the energy we know as light; so is the self a focus through which can shine the Light of the One Consciousness illumining the objective world which is the other aspect of the Great *Atman* or Universal Mind.

This Light, differing in no way from that which shines through the innumerable foci which constitute the world of beings, is the real Self and, as stated in the text, it dwells blissfully in the body, neither acting nor causing to act. Serene in Itself, It is untouched by the good and evil deeds of the personality and constitutes a fortress in which the disciple can take refuge, unharmed by the tides of battle, and yet in no selfish isolation, for he will be one with all that is.

This inner Self, however, as is shown by the use of the word "*vibhu*," the all-pervading one (verse 15), is not to be regarded as an eternally existing monad, separate for each disciple. In all the worlds there is nothing eternal but the one *Brahman* and to consider the "inner point" as a separate self, even if a "higher"

one, is to attempt to repeat on a higher level the unwisdom which sets oneself over against others.

As long as this delusion of separateness exists, so long is "wisdom enveloped by unwisdom." When, however, this clinging to separate existence is abandoned, the disciple is able to pass through the inner door of the heart and to enter a realm in which he is one with all, and in which the wisdom light of the one *Atman* shines forth unobstructedly, revealing the Supreme, the nameless Eternal. All names are based on the discriminating analysis of the mind, and how should names be given to that which is one and indivisible in all? Therefore have the sages referred to It merely as "That," that Reality from which the mind turns back together with the senses, unable to comprehend.

This is not the first knowledge which the disciple has had of "That." Long before, in chapter two, he had his first intuitive glimpse of It, though at that time, It presented Itself to him merely as the Unmanifest, the unchanging background of all that is. Again, at the stage represented by chapter four, he perceived It a little more clearly as the mysterious source of all the action in the world. Thus, circling round in spiral progress, he gets ever nearer to clear vision and, now, peering through the open "inner door," he sees that the Eternal is the same in all, in learned Brahmin and in despised outcaste, in animals as in men. Stainless and equal in all is the Supreme Eternal *Brahman*, and the disciple



who has seen that Light *sees* that it is the merest folly to suppose that It can be affected by the good or evil deeds of men. As the pure sunlight is not affected by the foulness of objects that it falls upon, so the *Brahma* Light is not touched by the differences in the bodies which It illumines. This is a plain fact which all who care to may see for themselves and he who has seen it will of necessity look with a very different eye upon his fellow beings. Behind all the masks, beautiful or repulsive, is the one Clear Light, and no longer can he think of men as beings to be praised, criticised or condemned. His gaze centred on the Light, his one thought will be how to help It shine more clearly through the obstructing bodies and, acting with that in view, he will gradually achieve in practice that abandonment of self-prompted action which constitutes the true renunciation.

On this Path action and vision go hand in hand, and that is why the teachings of the *Gita* alternate between knowledge and action in a way so baffling to the purely intellectual man. Purified and disciplined action opens the inner eye and grants the vision of the highest that the disciple is yet capable of seeing. But that vision must not remain a mere private ecstasy. It must be translated into action and so built into the personality before another range of vision can present itself to the inner eye and the way be opened for yet another cyclic advance.

A casual reading of this section (*e. g.*, verse 17 or 24) might suggest

that the full attainment is being described or, at least, that it is now possible for the disciple to go "straight through," as it were, by the longed-for short cut. But it is not so. The disciple at this stage is as one who has got his head through the inner door but whose body is too big to follow. Once again the vision must be translated into practice. His body, the personality, must be so refined by vision-lit action that it will cease to be an obstacle to his passing right through; and, though these verses may describe the condition of attainment, yet are they meant but to encourage the disciple and to help him keep before his mind the Goal to which tend all these weary strivings and disciplinings of the self.

And so, firmly attached to the Light that he has seen behind the phantoms of the senses, he must strive to live in the Eternal, to realise in practice the stainless balance of the Reality and cease to be whirled away by the pleasant or painful "contacts of the senses."

Sensations will still come and go as before but the inner vision he has achieved will give him a new power of withdrawing from them even while experiencing their pleasure and pain. What characterises pleasure and pain is not any quality in the sensations themselves so much as the psychic attraction or revulsion that takes place within. When, through his grasp of the Light of the Eternal, the disciple is able to master this inner revulsion, he finds that the pain sensations, though unchanged in themselves, have, in some quite indescribable way, become "differ-



ent," have lost their power to storm his being or to lead him to blind reaction, though of rational and controlled response he is more capable than ever before. No longer are they masters, smashing their way brutally into the consciousness, demanding instinctive reaction as a right, but mere phenomena to be observed, studied and deliberately attended to at will.

The teaching about the control of desire that was given at the end of the third chapter now begins to bear fruit. Previously the disciple had no means of dealing with unwelcome sensations but stoic endurance of them, and no method of resisting the surging waves of desire but the method of the personal will, a method which must have failed him many times and which is inadequate at best. Now, however, the position is different. He has only to use his will to establish himself in the inner fortress and, for the time being at least, desires will drop dead before his eyes like butterflies killed by frost as they emerge from a warm house. True, they will rise again from the dead, and again have to be faced, but a great gain has been achieved in that, instead of the grim setting of the teeth of the personal will that was before necessary, only that relatively small effort of will is needed which may enable the disciple to take up his position in the fortress, and, once he does so, victory is assured.

But any surging up of personal pride at this stage will ruin all. Great as is the achievement that has been attained, the power of slaying desire at will, much has yet

to be accomplished before the *Brahma-Nirvāna*, the utter "blowing out" of personal desire in the calm Light of the Eternal, is reached; before the disciple will become a *Rishi* and be able to echo the triumphant words of the Buddha :—

Now art thou seen, O Builder.  
Never again shalt thou build house for me. Broken are all the beams and sundered lies the ridge-pole. My mind is set on the Eternal ; extinguished is all desire.

Pride implies duality and all duality must be rooted out forever. Therefore the disciple is reminded (verse 25) that it is not as a personal refuge from the sorrows and pains of life that he must enter the fortress. The Brahman is One and the same in all and only he who has developed the all-embracing compassion of a *Bodhisattva* can attain the Supreme Enlightenment of a *Buddha*.

Nevertheless, great is the achievement of him who has got even so far as this. If only personal pride can be suppressed, the disciple's further progress is assured for "the *Brahma-Nirvāna* lies near to those who know the *Atman*" (verse 26), and who are able, in consequence, by the method outlined, to "disjoin themselves" from desire and anger. The next chapter will indicate a method which will enable the disciple to leap his consciousness across the gap that still separates his conscious mind from the Ocean of Light beyond. Here it should be noted, however, that it is only to him who has reached this point, to him who has seen through the inner door to the Light on the Other Side,



who has mastered his lower self and who is "intent on the welfare of all beings," that the *Brahma-Nirvāna* lies "near at hand."

For him who has not trodden faithfully the Path so far, it is quite useless to attempt to flash the consciousness into Enlightenment by any meditative *yoga* for, if anything at all results from his premature practice, it will only be in the nature of dangerous mediumistic psychisms, neurotic dissociations of the personality, perhaps even insanity itself.

But for the fit disciple, for him who has controlled senses, mind and

*buddhi*, who is free from all selfish aims, who has cast away desire, fear and anger, desire for any enjoyment, fear of any consequences and anger against those who obstruct his progress, who has seen, though as yet only through the "door," that eternal Krishna who is the One Self of all, the One for whom the Cosmic Sacrifice was undertaken, the Great Lord of all the worlds, the *Lover of all beings*, for such a one all doors stand open, his further progress is assured and speedily will he attain the Peace, the Peace that only Enlightenment can give.

SRI KRISHNA PREM

But stay, Disciple. . . . Yet one word. Canst thou destroy divine COMPASSION? Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal.

The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which Is the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE. . . .

Now bend thy head and listen well, O Bodhisattva—Compassion speaks and saith: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

Now thou hast heard that which was said.

Thou shalt attain the seventh step and cross the gate of final knowledge, but only to wed woe—if thou would'st be Tathagata, follow upon thy predecessor's steps, remain unselfish till the endless end.

Thou art enlightened—choose thy way.

—*The Voice of the Silence*



# NEW BOOKS AND OLD

## TELEPATHY AND CLAIRVOYANCE\*

### AN EXPERIMENTAL ENQUIRY

Dr. J. B. Rhine's attempt to investigate, under strict laboratory control, the possibility of *perception through other than the known physiologically recognised channels* of communication with external reality, must be welcomed as an adventure in comparatively new spheres of psychology. A critic is not bound to endorse his conclusions or his mode and method but Dr. Rhine's work reaches the public with striking credentials. William McDougall writes a "Foreword" and Dr. W. Franklin Prince an "Introduction." The Boston Society of Psychical Research accepted it for publication.

Dr. Rhine's work is "Psychical Research" but, to avoid confusion and overlapping, he substitutes the term "Parapsychology"; and to indicate the other branches of knowledge involved, he would have "Parapsycho-physical, Parapsycho-pathological, and Parapsycho-literary fields as well. Parapsychical also is included under the comprehensive generic "Parapsychological."

"Extra-Sensory Perception," abbreviated into E. S. P., is the subject-matter of the work. Two questions are attempted to be answered: "Is there E. S. P.?"—"What is E. S. P.?" (p. 15) After a survey of the "historical background," Dr. Rhine gives a brief general account of his investigations followed by a description of the "earlier and minor" experiments. Trance-telepathy experiments were the first to be tried. Later trance was dispensed with. Cards on which numerals 0 to 9 had been stamped, and those on which a circle, a rectangle, a plus sign, a star, or wavy lines had been drawn, were given in closed envelopes to members of college classes, and they were asked to guess the marks on the cards. This basic procedure

of card-guessing was followed with eight individuals and the points scored are statistically tabulated, and the data are properly evaluated.

The third part is devoted to an explanation of the facts presented and hypotheses suggested. "Chance" and "fraud" must be eliminated in view of the intellectual and scientific integrity of the parties who have conducted the experiments. "Incompetence" also is ruled out. Since sense-contact was eliminated in controlled experiments, the hypothesis of unconscious sensory perception must be rejected, as must the hypothesis of rational inference. A new type of energy is revealed in E. S. P. The Radiation theory of Physics must fail as no decline of intensity with the square of distance is observed as in Miss Turner's Pure telepathy at a distance of 250 miles. E. S. P. is a "spaceless function" (p. 171). E. S. P. is the outcome of concentrated attention. It is a total-response of the organism without a localised sense-organ of reception (p. 178). From the psychological approach, E. S. P. resembles sensory response rather than rational, yet not restricted to a localized sensory apparatus; it seems to suggest the mind's independence of material conditions (p. 198). Dr. Rhine finds that E. S. P. may be a basic capacity for any parapsychological occurrence. In relation to biology, he seems to view E. S. P. as an innate capacity having survival value (pp. 218-220). The most important conclusions are that E. S. P. can be demonstrated under laboratory conditions and that it seems to indicate "dematerialization of the mind" under specific conditions.

To do the fullest possible justice to Dr. Rhine's investigations, within the

\* *Extra-Sensory Perception*. BY J. B. RHINE. (Faber and Faber, London. 12s. 6d.)



obvious limits of a critical review, I have epitomized the data collected, the method employed, and the conclusions reached. I shall now subject the main argument of the work to critical examination from the standpoint of Indian Psychology, the methods and conclusions of which are embodied in Sanskrit texts which are as yet a *terra incognita* to most Indian workers and to practically all Western investigators. Their systematic study has yet to be attempted.

## I

Dr. Rhine believes that E. S. P. is an actual and demonstrable occurrence. In all the experiments the numerals and symbols stamped on the cards must have been familiar to the agent and to the subjects that participated. It is not difficult to see that when conditions of E. S. P. are controlled, sensory and telepathic forces may be eliminated ; but it is extremely doubtful if rational reflection and the concomitant of disciplined or random guess-work have been eliminated. The boundaries marked are known to the agent and the subject. Dr. Rhine says that rational reflection actually interferes with the positive scores in E. S. P. Still the stock of data from amidst which the subject is to identify a called card, being limited to certain figures and symbols within the cognisance of the agent and the subject, even assuming that telepathic conditions have been eliminated, reflection in an electric-flash manner may not have been successfully eliminated. Introspective testimony has not been advanced. If the subjects with high scores had indicated whether rational reflection had preceded their responses, there might be some evidence in support of the existence of it. It seems they could give nothing enlightening (p. 235).

Experimental procedure has been limited to card calling and guessing with eight major subjects. Subjects show preferences for agents. Zirkle did very well at once with Miss Ownbey, his fiancée ; Pearce did best with young lady agents (p. 135). E. S. P. scores diminish with the disintegrating influence of sodium amytal and rise with the integra-

ting influence of caffeine. These facts contribute to the lingering "impression"—I use the term as guardedly as Dr. Rhine does—that rational reflection is not yet completely eliminated. The subjects must have been anxious to maintain their reputation for high scoring with young ladies as agents, and this anxiety may well have quickened, in successful cases, rational reflection leading to correct guessing. I can equally well understand that for some subjects the agency of ladies might be inhibitory.

Experimental demonstration under laboratory conditions, which has such a fascination for European and American investigators, has its characteristic subject-matter in the handling of which alone it is successful. If extended beyond its legitimate boundaries, experimental investigation is weariness of flesh. Dr. Rhine refers to well-known parapsychological experiences reported by certain types of individuals, but none have been reproduced in the laboratory under controlled conditions. I take it Dr. Rhine and his collaborators hope to do so yet. As far as the present report is concerned, Dr. Rhine has not been able to reproduce in the laboratory any parapsychological phenomena other than card-guessing. Granting all that he claims for the 250-mile distance Pure telepathy experiments done with Miss Ownbey as agent and Miss Turner as subject, the difference between card-guessing and parapsychological phenomena, as premonition of approaching death, is so striking that doubts may well be held as to whether experimental investigation can account for such phenomena.

## II

Practically no Indian University boasts of facilities for psychical research, and no Indian critic has any right to question the validity of Dr. Rhine's experiments at Duke University. But to students of ancient Indian Sanskrit literature, Dr. Rhine must seem to be carrying coals to Newcastle. He emphasizes two major conclusions : One—E.S.P. is a demonstrable phenomenon ; the other—in E.S.P. the mind appears to "go



out" in apparent defiance of the laws of physics and physiology (p. 197). According to Indian psychology, perception is the outcome of contact operating in the following manner. Atma, the percipient or the subject, comes into contact with Manas—the mind. The mind comes into contact with Indriyas—sense-organs. The sense-organs come into contact with objects. The perceptual act involves a *rapprochement* among percipient, mind, sense-organ or specialized sensory structure and object. The contact is technically styled "Sannikarsha." When perception involves *rapprochement* among the constituents analysed, the contact (Sannikarsha) is what occurs in the ordinary course (Laukika). On the other hand, contact established through the operation of mind independent of the known channels of communication with external reality, is known as unusual, or extra-sensory, to adopt Dr. Rhine's term (A-laukika). Memory, productive and re-productive imagination also operate without the activating aid of sense-organs, but these have to work with material from previous sensory experience (Samskara). But the extraordinary perception *par excellence* is Yogic perception—developed through practices of sense control. In accordance with the degree of efficiency achieved in purified or rectified perception, Yogic, extra-sensory perception is divided into two types—Tattvika-Yogi-Jnyana and A-tatvika-yogi-jnyana. In the "Vibhooti-Pada" of the Yoga-Sutras mention is made of the phenomena of clairvoyance, telepathy and methods of developing extra-sensory perception.

### III

I must immediately add that there is no evidence in Yoga literature of any experiments with card-calling on the lines adopted by Dr. Rhine, nor is there any in support of Dr. Rhine's observation that the capacity for extra-sensory perception "is not learned or developed" (p. 195). Every human being is *entitled in theory* to enjoy the benefits of extra-sensory perception. The capacity is congenital. It can be developed to

remarkable degrees of perfection. The difficulty is that the methods of developing it are known only to a microscopic minority from among whom choice of the proper teacher (Guru) is to be made. So far the methods have been examined neither in Indian nor in European Universities under laboratory control. Indian Psychology maintains that the mind is overweighted with encrustations of countless past lives, and that the weight must be removed if the "going out" of the mind (p. 197) in defiance of the law of decline of intensity with the square of distance, is to be turned to advantage. Sensory structures limited to interception of stimuli within limited ranges are themselves a weight. The flow of mental energy through them secures work-a-day knowledge just sufficient for adjustment to environment. The weight should be lifted, the flow of mental energy directed inwards, and, the outward flow arrested by voluntary effort. (Chitta-writti-nirodha). Relaxation and concentration of attention are mentioned, but from these to Yogic methods of developing extra-sensory perception is indeed a far cry.

### IV

I desire to comment on Dr. Rhine's use of the expression "percipient's mind." Western psychology as developed on both sides of the Atlantic is completely unaware of the existence of "mind," as an independent entity. Who is the percipient? What is his "mind" which is said to be "going out" in parapsychological phenomena? What is the relation between the percipient and the mind? The jocular remark even to-day applies to Western Psychology that it lost first its soul, then mind, then consciousness, but has behaviour of a kind. If no laboratory evidence has been furnished in support of the independent existence of the mind it is unwarranted to speak of the "percipient's mind going out." Indian Psychology postulates the existence of mind as inner sense—Antah-karana) in its four-fold aspect—Manas, Buddhi, Ahan-kara and Chitta. The psychology dealing



with conditioned reflexes is hardly competent to isolate the mind and determine its contribution in relation to parapsychological data.

## V

"To the hunter, the warrior, the seaman . . . . . E.S.P., might serve in many ways to give man an important margin of advantage over his enemies . . . ." (p. 220). If the development of E.S.P. had formed part of military training, the fate and the fortunes of the War of 1914 would have been different. The observation is naïve. Our enemies may be expected to endeavour to cultivate their own E.S.P., as it is no monopoly of individuals or communities! Those who participated in the Mahabharata War did not use E.S.P.—this from internal evidence. Is Dr. Rhine's ambition to harness E.S.P. for the enrichment of the hedonic standards of existence?

Indian Psychology advocates systematic development of Yogic vision, extra-sensory perception for securing riddance of evil in the shape of an apparently endless series of births and deaths. I do not for a moment suggest that the claims and conclusions of Indian Psychology have been brought before the bar of laboratory investigation, mathematical probabilities and anti-chance index. Indian Psychology has hitched its wagon to a star, and *provided* (a tremendously significant proviso) Yogic methods are learnt and practised with the help and guidance of a systematic preceptor, E.S.P. can enable a person to become a blessed spectator of all time and existence, free from the sickening routine of metempsychosis.

## VI

Reduced to quintessentials Dr. Rhine's work shows that (1) E.S.P. can be or has been demonstrated under laboratory conditions in reference to Pure clairvoyance and Pure telepathy. (2) In this demonstration *eight* subjects co-operated, some of whom acted as agents as well. (3) The demonstration was on the basis of card-calling tests. (4) The scoring reveals a high anti-chance value

determined by mathematical calculation of probability grounded on statistical computation. (5) Finally, E.S.P., which is an instance of energy after all, constitutes a challenge to modern physics, physiology and psychology, in that it defies the laws of wave mechanics, those of specialised sensory structures and their adequate stimuli, and those again of conditioned reflexes.

Valuable and excellent as these data and conclusions are, they must leave many an Indian Psychologist cold. E. S. P. is not merely the parapsychological birth-right of every rational individual, but there is a sacred obligation on all to develop E.S.P. as leading to freedom from metempsychosis. I observed that Dr. Rhine would be carrying coals to Newcastle if his investigations were evaluated in the light of the postulates of Indian Psychology. I must admit however, there is a famine of coals in Newcastle just now. An average Indian philosopher or University man or even a writer of volumes on Indian Philosophy is blissfully ignorant of the truths, theories, and technique of Yoga relating to the development of E.S.P. (A-laukika sannikarsha-janya-Yogijnnyana). Contact with the values and methods of the West has generated indifference to and scorn of ancient Indian ideals of Yoga.

Laboratory demonstration is demanded for the acceptance of everything. An ancient Indian truth presented under conditions of laboratory verification reinforced by mathematical probability and anti-chance value may have greater chance of acceptance by Westernised Indians than in its indigenous setting. From such considerations I welcome Dr. Rhine's work. Western experimental psychology is bound to be a barren pursuit if its investigations are confined to guinea-pigs, apes, rats, etc. And if Indian psychologists repeat the jejune and stereotyped experiments with psycho-galvanometers, plethysmographs, etc., ignoring the fact that after all *not* animals but the mental constitution of *homo sapiens* is the fittest subject-matter for psychology proper,



they will be making no contribution to a solution of the many baffling problems of mental science. Profitable research in applied psychology should be directed to an investigation of E.S.P. and the technique of developing it explained in the literature on Yoga. I reject, as every rational inquirer would, spurious Yoga and pinchbeck Yogis. It will not after all be very difficult to sift the grain from the chaff. We are told by Dr. Rhine that E.S.P. scores rose high when Zirkle did very well with his fiancée, Miss Ownbey ( p. 135 ). Yoga discountenances matrimony. Emphasis is laid on celibacy ( Brahmacharya ). When a kind and sympathetic Guru instructs an energetic and enthusiastic

pupil, E.S.P. will develop better, according to Indian Psychology.

Dr. Rhine is careful to emphasise that he claims no finality for his work and that he just hopes to "interest, stimulate and challenge" his readers ( p. 234 ). The task of a critical reviewer is considerably lightened by that emphasis. I cannot speak for the West. I am sure Dr. Rhine's work will have a good reception in India as it seeks to afford experimental demonstration or verification of a basic and fundamental phenomenon of Indian Psychology—E.S.P.—which when developed and perfected effloresces into Yogic vision ( Yogi-Jnyana or Yoga-Aparokshya ).

R. NAGA RAJA SARMA

*The Prophet Child.* BY GWENDOLEN PLUNKET GREENE ( Longmans, Green and Co., London. 6s. )

This book is written with a real sympathy for, and understanding of, children, who according to the author best embody the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in which she finds inspiration. One is reminded of the statement in *The Voice of the Silence* that "the pupil must regain the child-state he has lost ere the first sound can fall upon his ear." The author remarks, apropos of children's simplicity of vision, so rare in later life, that "they truly seem still in contact with some different order.....We check and cut back these shoots of reality in the child, as though we feared the sight which searches through the appearance."

The book is very well written; there are passages of real beauty, sections of penetrating analysis. In many directions the author's naturally clear vision is allowed free sweep and the result is not only spontaneous but stimulating. The religious tone of the book, however, is typically that of the mystically inclined Westerner who has always regarded the four walls of orthodoxy as enclosing the whole of truth. A beautiful description of the interdependence of all souls is marred by the amazing assertion that

Christianity alone stresses this unity. And yet this seems less a wilful flouting of other faiths than a quiet ignoring of spiritual possibilities outside the Christian fold. We cannot support the writer's eloquent praise of the organized Churches, which are as numerous as castes in India.

Mrs. Greene deplores forcing children "into some kind of strait-jacket which pinions all that is vital in them," but fails to see that her own orthodoxy serves as just such a handicap to her otherwise clear thinking. She really does think, in spite of her sectarian strait-jacket; but the pattern of theology so dominates her thought that in spite of the stirring of the Divine in her own consciousness, which she describes so eloquently on pages 69 and 70, she yet clings to the fiction of a Personal God. The concept of imperfect man accepting and "enduring with patience" his weaknesses and sins is a degrading one. An unbiased study of Eastern scriptures, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, for example, the *Dhammapada*, *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Sayings* of Lao-tze and of Confucius, would make Mrs. Greene's next book more meaningful, but could she bring to them an open mind?

DAENA



*Irish Literary Portraits.* By JOHN EGLINTON (Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London. 5s.)

To Theosophists and mystics generally the Irish Literary Revival, which ran its course between the years 1886 and 1894, is an episode of keen, and even personal, interest; for the Dublin Lodge of the original Theosophical Society, which gave us so many writers of merit, was without doubt the chief fountain and focus of all that was spiritual and mystical in the Irish Renaissance, while the value of its contribution to the intellectual output of the day may be estimated from the statement of Mr. W. B. Yeats that it (the Dublin Lodge) "had produced more literature than Trinity College."

Mr. Eglinton—himself a writer of note—was closely associated with the Theosophical group in Dublin in its early days, and was also intimate with most of the writers whose work made the Irish Renaissance world-famous. In the present little volume he records his memories and impressions of W. B. Yeats, George W. Russell (Æ), Edward Dowden and George Moore.

In an essay on "Yeats and His Story" Mr. Eglinton describes the genesis of the mystical revival in Ireland. He writes:—

When Yeats left us at the High School, we did not quite lose sight of him . . . . The loan of a book by him to one of the boys at the top of the school was an event, as it turned out, of some importance in certain developments in Irish literature: this was Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, a book which captured the intelligence of half a dozen youths who were preparing to enter Trinity College . . . . I am quite sure that the Dionysiac spark was kindled about this time in Irish literature . . . . It was Yeats who, without knowing a word of Gaelic, penetrated to the esoteric world of Druidic magic . . . . It was from the East that Yeats snatched the clue to the interpretation of the Druidic culture; it was Theosophy which was able to supplement the scanty hints of the Druidic mysteries vouchsafed by Julius Cæsar, and to furnish a living system of arcane teaching. Yeats' early poems are in fact as full of Hinduism as of Celticism.

Even more interesting still is the essay in which Mr. Eglinton tells us about his association with Æ, whose biography he is, we understand, now engaged in compiling. When Yeats introduced the youth-

ful Æ to Theosophy and the wisdom of the East, the effect was like that of a spark falling upon tinder. Æ's latent mystic knowledge, obscured but not lost in his passage through the gates of rebirth, was at once reawakened. He became a member of the Dublin Lodge where "he soon became the life and soul of the little community." Æ had wonderful powers of expression and could talk as well as he could write and paint. We are given a vivid account of one memorable occasion when he and Eglinton sat till midnight on a tombstone in a little cemetery near Dublin, Æ narrating his visions and speaking of "the august world reached in meditation" while he smoked "pipe after pipe or twopenny cigars."

With his powerful and athletic memory he could fetch up the complete story of any novel he had ever read, and could repeat any poetry which had impressed him . . . . Literature was only one of his activities, and everyone agreed that he had it in his power to become a great painter . . . .

Of Æ's poetry, Mr. Eglinton writes:—

As a poet of ideas there is no poet of his time quite like Russell. Sometimes his verses are the expression, almost crude, of the beliefs which have rooted themselves in him: the best of them are the embodiment and often perfect expression of moral intuitions . . . . The poems tell of spiritual agonies and triumphant spiritual perceptions, and often the impression one receives is of a terrible sadness, for the attitude with which this proud soul confronts the universe has not infrequently drawn upon him a response, or laid bare an irresponsiveness, which would have crushed any but the most pertinacious conviction.

Mr. Eglinton has much of deep interest to tell us about Æ's activities as an economist and in Irish public life generally:—How he began by contemplating for Ireland "a resurgence of the old heroic spirit which would overthrow amongst other things the dogmatic religion now in possession of the Irish intelligence"; how later, as the result of direct contact with the practical problems of Irish life, his views were modified and matured into the politico-economic doctrine embodied in his books, *The National Being* and *The Interpreters*; and how, at last,



in his seventh decade, the trend of public affairs in his country was such that he

yielded to the instinct which has impelled most of Ireland's most hopeful sons to go forth from it—to begin life again as a poet and artist.

But, alas, since these words were written, death has intervened to prevent

or, may we say, to postpone this looked-for new beginning.

The last two of Mr. Eglinton's essays are concerned with Edward Dowden and George Moore, whose parts in the Irish Literary Revival were but secondary, not direct and creative like those of Yeats and Æ.

R. A. V. M

*Naskapi: The Savage Hunters of the Labrador Peninsula.* By FRANK G. SPECK (University of Oklahoma Press. \$ 3.50)

This is an interesting, even a sympathetic, study of the religious beliefs of an unimportant tribe of American Indians of the Far North. Except for the admittedly unproductive proselytising efforts of Jesuit missionaries, and contacts with white "civilized" fur traders, these Naskapi Indians for centuries at least have led an isolated existence. Curiously, though, they cling tenaciously, albeit without much apparent understanding, to such highly philosophical concepts as the impersonality of Deity, reincarnation, the possibility of communication with one's soul, the means thereto, and the significance of dreams.

Because these isolated people are now primitive, unprogressive and degraded, our scholarly author concludes that their spiritual beliefs must be judged accordingly. This is in harmony with the widespread but fallacious theory that

civilization progresses only ever onward and upward. The possibility of "descent into savagery" of a formerly civilized people is seldom given consideration, and yet who would expect the ignorant fellaheen of Egypt to-day to exceed or even to duplicate the glorious achievements of their forefathers?

The very fact that the Naskapi Indians hold to universal and highly philosophical concepts is almost certain proof that they are degraded remnants of some mightier race. Their isolation has to some extent protected their heritage of spiritual ideas, and it would be entirely wrong to consider the fundamentals of their conceptions as the result of merely the untutored gropings of savage minds. The author shows in an interesting manner the marked acceleration towards further degeneration since the attempts to infuse Jesuitical Christianity into the people. Disease, diminution in numbers, and chronic alcoholism are but some of the evil fruits of the Naskapis' contact with modern civilization.

W. D. T.

## ALLAN N. MONKHOUSE

We regret very sincerely the death of one of our most valued contributors, Allan N. Monkhouse. His first contribution to our pages, "Where East and West Meet," appeared in the second number of our first volume; and his last, "The Hero in Fiction," only in January of this year. He always took a most kindly interest in our magazine and wrote us very friendly letters. Allan Monkhouse seems to have united in no small degree business ability and literary

excellence. He wrote us once that for nearly thirty years he had been engaged in the Manchester cotton trade, and his work for an equal number of years on the editorial staff of *The Manchester Guardian* is too well known to require comment here. He was the author of several novels, and also a play wright. As a writer, he was singularly direct and lucid, and his death will leave a marked gap in the English literary world.



# THE LAND OF PSYCHE AND OF NOUS

*Charles Richet passes through the Gate of Death—Materializations and Spirits—Clairvoyance gains Scientific Support—"Lead the Life Necessary . . ."*

At the age of eighty-five the great experimentalist Charles Richet passed from mundane life, at Paris, on December 3rd, 1935. It has been said of him that he was distinguished, not alone as a biologist and psychologist but as a novelist and a poet also.\* Few of us may know him at first hand in the last two branches of achievement; but he is world-famous as the discoverer of Anaphylaxis, marking "a decisive advance in modern medicine";† while his thirty years' work in Psychical Research has its enduring record in a *Traité de Métapsychique*, of which more than one competent investigator would say with Mr. Stanley de Brath, his translator, that it has "established the claim" of its subject to "scientific status." These are weighty words, and that they have been weighed well beforehand by their user we may rest assured; for no man perhaps knows better than Mr. de Brath about the long range of evidence behind the findings of the French scientist. We know also that Richet termed Sir William Crookes and F. W. H. Myers his "illustrious friends and masters," affirming that they were "the first to trace the outline of the new science." But in 1920, when the epoch-making "Treatise" appeared, these pioneer witnesses had done their work and left it to the records

of the past. Richet—not alone but of singular eminence among many—led on the work and has left it now in the position which is claimed concerning it, by those entitled to speak. Having directed attention to one important point, there is another that is of no less consequence. It is well to establish Richet as first among peers in the "foremost files" of research and to remember in so doing those more than sixty years of earnest and productive inquiry which lie behind him; but as great a question is that for which he stands personally in the metapsychical subject, otherwise, the limits of its attained scientific status in his own view.

---

Mr. de Brath tells us that after "thirty years of experimental investigation" Richet "laid down as incontrovertible" the following "fundamental phenomena" of psychical science: (1) Cryptesthesia, being the faculty of supernormal cognition; (2) Telekinesis, or "mechanical action exerted at a distance and without contact" on persons or things; (3) Ectoplasm, defined as the formation of various objects—"clothing, veils and living bodies"—having "the semblance of material realities," and seeming in most cases to emerge from a human being. In other words the third division includes material-

---

\* *Light*, Dec. 12, 1935, p. 789.

† *Ibid.*



isations among undeniable scientific facts. It is proved therefore evidentially—the words are, “abundantly proven”—that at some *séances*, to use the familiar term, a living body, not that of the medium, issuing perhaps from behind a curtain, has manifested supernormally. There were, let us say, seven “living bodies” met together at a certain place and time, and presently there became a seeming eighth among them, which had not entered through any door or window, through any trap in ceiling or in floor. If these are authentic implicits concerning the third class of psychic phenomena, are we not face to face with a most amazing fact of the age? What or who is the eighth that has thus appeared among us? Now, the man who affirmed the authenticity of materialisations as his considered decision denied, to his very end, that doctrine of Spiritism which testifies, on the basis of the same alleged facts, that the human soul survives the mortal body, and that—under certain circumstances—the soul comes back. His proffered reasons not only may but must produce within us a profound dissatisfaction. Their unconditional dogmatism seems unworthy of him who was—as we are told—“resolute in refusing all unproven hypotheses.” (1) “The self” depends upon a brain which is reduced by death to dust. Who knows? Not even Richet, though he thought he knew. (2) After death, “man is no longer man.” Again, who knows, who knows? Not one of all—if any—who have voiced this dictum previously.

Prithee, Master of Experiment, what then is man? It happens that the Master answers, with yet another dogma. (3) “The reasonable soul and man are one flesh.” The earth may be flat after all, and the sun may circle round it: in the last resource, who cares? But if anything be false in all the range of affirmation, then that is this. What is man, once more, O Richet? That which can say unto itself: Out of my flesh I shall see God. That which is sphered in time and yet can contemplate *sub specie aeternitatis*. That which is learning to realise, since Richet wrote, (1) “that the soul belongs to the realm of Energy”; (2) that its “inanimate congeners are electricity, magnetism, heat, light,” and so forth; (3) that the soul draws vital being from the spirit, “which is potentially akin to the Divine Life”; (4) that body, including brain, is only “the soul’s material instrument in a material world.”\* In fine, there is that faith which is not apart from experience and has testified from time immemorial in many lands and tongues that “our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting”; that the soul “cometh from afar”; and that death is a door which opens into a great awakening. From this point of view it belongs a little to the accidents of things that Richet, once upon a day, wrote a great experimental tract on metapsychical subjects, in the course of which he testified to materialisations taking place at *séances*. We are not bearing testimony on our own part, or offering a thesis

\* *Light, loc. cit.*, quoting Sir Oliver Lodge.



in defence of Spiritism. With us it may be an open question whether from time to time, the dead return at séances. Whether they do or do not, Professor Richet made on December 3rd, 1935, his last and greatest experiment: and now he also knows.

Sir Lawrence Jones is not unfamiliar among us in the field of Psychical Research, and in other directions. He is also, and has been, a personal friend of Richet for something like forty years. In the course of a lecture delivered a few days after the French biologist's death, it was inevitable that he should refer thereto, more especially as he was speaking at the London Spiritualist Alliance to a large congregation of Spiritists and inquiring minds. They will have learned with no common interest that, after all the dogmas and denials, Richet—at least in the lecturer's view—believed in survival, and stressed it also when among "sympathetic people." It is suggested that he reacted to these after one manner, and after another to his colleagues, "the critical French doctors and scientists." An anxious desire on the part of Sir Lawrence Jones may not be entirely father to this interpretation; but it has almost certainly led him to formulate the position in too express terms. It is clear from the *Traité* that "spirit-return" was or would have been for Richet the most simple explanatory hypothesis of many psychic happenings; but

the irremovable difficulty was that "there are no spirits." Richet, however, was a rather frequent contributor in old days to the most important of French psychical journals;\* and it has to be admitted that from time to time therein the will to believe was present in his articles, not the belief itself. The situation is cleared up in this manner, and the departed scientist is exonerated also respecting an unintended charge of insincerity.

For the rest, the tenor of the time is changing, ever and continually. Dr. Alexis Carrel is another biologist, a Member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, and one who, like Richet, has been awarded the Nobel Prize. He has maintained all recently (1) that clairvoyance brings to those who possess it "a more certain knowledge than that gained through the sense organs"; (2) that thought may be transmitted from one person to another; (3) that it is not confined within time and space; (4) that a peculiar "psychical element" in certain individuals is "capable of travelling in time"; (5) that "clairvoyants perceive not only events spatially remote but also past and future events"; and lastly (6) that prayer is the sole condition indispensable to the healing recorded by the Medical Bureau of Lourdes.† Between Richet and Carrel it would seem that Psychical Research secures a full measure of its manifold demands. But the Spiritists

\* *Revue Métapsychique*. His account of recent experiments with Pascal Forthuny appeared in March-April, 1935.

† *Journal of the A. S. P. R.*, Sept., 1935, pp. 255-258.



long since have enjoyed the experimental faith of Lodge, as great a name as either. The walls of the materialistic Jericho are surely falling. There are some of us who are neither Psychical Researchers nor Spiritists and who look unto a later day when it may be a matter of speculative wonder as to all this pother and toil about scientific opinion on metapsychical subjects.

In all these psychic connections, it is not un instructive to note certain findings of an Emeritus Professor of Zoology at the Imperial College of Science, E. W. MacBride.\* On the basis of "cogent reasons," which cannot be cited here, he tends to hold that an Intelligent Power abides behind the Universe, and on the basis of Psychical Research he is disposed to maintain the immortality of the Soul in Man. It is presumably for these reasons that he searches Gospel Records and the teachings of Jesus Christ for something that belongs to Reality. We are left at the end, however, with certain unspecified precepts of Jesus as "the only cement which will hold society together." Few will believe in the binding power of this pallid residuum; but Prof. MacBride reaches his personal *terminus ad quem* and "most glorious conception of the Kingdom of God, so far enunciated," in a sentence of MacTaggart, the "Cambridge Philosopher":—

It may be that there is nothing in the Universe but love and lovers, and God is the love which unites them.

It follows that the end of all our quests and all our crosses is: "Thou and I together." He who can say, in his heart of hearts, *Tuus sum ego*, stands at the threshold of the Kingdom; but *est una sola Res* is that which gives the freedom.

The path to this inward realisation is mapped by the Theosophical dictum: "Those who lead the Life shall know of the Doctrine." it is true, beyond contradiction, of all truth, and always. *The Sola Res* is a touchstone also for many fashions of thought which seethe about us. We are not misled when Prof. MacBride talks about "the structure and laws" of an underlined *Reality*, applied to the government and welfare of the body politic. The Reality of *Sola Res* is not "confronted with dreadful biological problems" concerning "population and race." We may agree with Prof. Watkin Davies† that the "absence of universally recognised authority" lies at the root of the present chaos in the "contemporary world"; but we shall rest convinced that his suggested "impartial tribunal" could guarantee nothing, if only because those who are impartial are not of necessity, and for such reason, right. In fine, we shall not be deceived by the false title of René Fülöp-Miller's picturesque story of a "New Revolt against Reason."‡ It has been with us in protean forms through the Christian centuries. As regards its latest developments, the extravaganzas of Ricarda Huch, for whom reason "does but monkey

\* *The Hibbert Journal*, Jan., 1936, pp. 206-218.

† *Ibid*, pp. 194-205.

‡ *Ibid*, pp. 178-193.



God" and of Ludwig Klages, who calls it the "adversary of the soul," our answer is that scientific reason, and no other faculty, is beginning to discover its own limits. "It has become plain," says Fülöp-Miller, on his own part, "that the laws of reason do not run everywhere, and that beyond certain bounds other methods of cognition must be

found." What they are, and whether he has views concerning them, are other questions. There is of course the "intuition" of Bergson, and there are—or may be—those "most valuable cognitions" which are held to arise therefrom. Whether they will help us to formulate "valid laws" for the world of atoms and electrons is open to doubt.

A. E. WAITE

## CORRESPONDENCE

### SOCIAL REFORM BY LEGISLATION

I have read Mr. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar's interesting article on "Social Reform and Legislation" in the December ARYAN PATH. While I agree with the writer's main thesis that "religious and social reform, in order to be effective, must come from within as a spontaneous and natural growth, and not be forced from without," I am unable to understand his defence of the caste system which he describes as "the warp and woof of Hindu society." One curious thing about the caste system is that it lends itself to defence by any one clever enough to disentangle its pristine virtues from its present-day illogicalities. To refer to a past when caste was just a social device based on the principle of "division of labour," or to say that in ancient India caste was not incompatible with democracy, is sophistry, and argues not merely confusion of thought, but also a wrong perspective of Indian history.

Our knowledge of the working of the caste system in ancient India is very hazy. We can at best guess; and no educated person in India should, therefore, waste his time in defending a system of whose working in a remote past he knows very little, but to whose disastrous effects

on the wider national life of India to-day, no patriotic Indian can remain blind. All that modern research has been able to prove about the working of democratic institutions in our country in the past is that ancient India had evolved an extremely workable system of community government, with the village as the unit. It was a social technique based on what Mr. Dikshitar rightly calls "a harmonious interdependence of different classes and sections of society." My contention is that such a harmonious interdependence was possible either because caste did not imply then, as it does now, any idea of congenital inferiority or superiority; or even if it did, the majority of people accepted its inequalities as a divine dispensation against which it was sinful to rebel or even to protest. A state of mere economic interdependence, however harmonious, is not democracy as the term is understood to-day. Democracy is something more than mere social or economic harmony. Democracy recognises no barriers of birth. It tries to secure for each man, whatever his birth, the maximum opportunities in life for the highest fulfilment of his earthly destiny. A large degree of harmonious political or economic life is still possible without



our recognising that all men are born equal, that "a man's a man for a' that." Where this fundamental postulate of democracy is not recognised and acted upon, we may have at best a glorified co-operative society, for democracy is not merely a technique for achieving social or economic harmony, but a technique of free, equitable, creative human fellowship in all departments of life. That modern democracy has not achieved this ideal or that there are inequalities even in a "casteless" society, is no justification for the caste system. Mere political equality does not necessarily secure human equality, and it is the latter which the caste system denies. Mr. Dikshitar has no doubt proved that we had a fine system of representative government in ancient India. Even to-day we may be said to have a large measure of harmonious economic interdependence of different classes and castes; but can that be an argument for the caste system?

Mr. Dikshitar has repeated the platitudes about the necessity for helping the so-called untouchables by improving their economic status, etc. This patronising philanthropy towards the Harijans reminds me of the attitude of the old type of Christian missionary towards the so-called heathen. I do not deny that the orthodox Hindu is sincere in his desire to help the untouchables; so also is the Christian missionary. But in both cases there is an impenetrable wall which keeps apart the one who serves and the one who is served. I do not believe such patronising service has ever given that fine spiritual thrill and satisfaction which real human service untrammelled by caste, social or religious inhibitions, always gives. I know of orthodox Hindus who have given substantial contributions to work among the Harijans, but nothing could persuade them even to visit the village for fear of "pollution." I do not want any one to mistake what is mere impersonal humanity for a sense of human equality which the Hindu caste system denies. What the social reformer is up against is not specific instances of social injustice, but

the "caste mentality" which influences subtly and irritatingly the conduct of most of us towards one another. We all know, if we search our hearts, how many twists, complexes and inhibitions have gathered round the idea of caste and have a firm hold upon us. In South India this has given rise to social and political antagonisms which have poisoned the springs of organised life to an extent some hardly realise.

India is coming to the realisation of the futility and danger of the caste system as it operates to-day. Since we cannot restore it to its pristine purity, the caste system with its present excrescences must go. Any attempt to rationalise it will only weaken the forces of progress. The Hindu social structure has so changed that to reduce it to the simplicity of the ancient past is inconceivable. The caste system as a social or economic technique can work well only under conditions which it will be folly for us in the twentieth century to attempt to revive. The caste system represented ancient India's organised response to the needs of the age. But as needs and circumstances change, so should our institutions. There is something narrow and inelastic in a society honeycombed with water-tight compartments of social or economic vocations.

It is significant that nearly all the sophisticated defence and rationalisation of the caste system should come, at least in South India, from the Brahmins. Dr. Krishnaswami Iyengar's pronouncement on the caste system at the recent Oriental Conference held at Mysore is one more instance of this. To philosophise over the beauty of the ancient caste system and to discover in it the highest organised attempt of humanity to solve its social problems, is becoming the fashion; perhaps it is a natural reaction against the wholesale condemnation of our past which was common a generation ago. But these philosophical rhapsodies on caste have little value as sober contributions to either our knowledge of the past or our understanding of the present crisis in Hindu society. If we Brahmins put ourselves into the



psychological position of the masses of our non-Brahmin fellowmen to whose awakened consciousness the doctrine of Brahmin superiority must cause vexation or humility, then perhaps we can realise something of the anger and despair which recently made Dr. Ambedkar announce his desire to forsake Hinduism. It is difficult for the higher castes to understand this. As long as a social practice confers upon a group certain advantages and privileges, there will always be a tendency for that group, especially if it be enlightened and influential, to regard that practice as necessary to social good. It would have been difficult to convince the Roman citizen of the immorality of slavery; it will be equally difficult to bring home to the modern capitalist the evils of the industrial system.

As to Mr. Dikshitar's statement about social legislation, I am in general agreement with his views regarding the necessity for caution. But I cannot accept his implication that social reform is entirely the business of the people and not of the government. If that were so, even the few reforms enforced by past legislation, such as the abolition of *sati*, etc., would not have been possible. It is dangerous to generalise on such matters. It is always difficult to decide whether any contemplated social reform is necessary; and in a country like ours, where large masses are not articulate, it

is difficult to know whether public opinion is for or against any measure. But there is a limit to the policy of negative neutrality which we want the Government to adopt towards social reform. The State has as much responsibility as any of its citizens for the collective social welfare, and it is sometimes necessary to go in advance of "public opinion." A radical process of reform has become absolutely necessary again and again, "lest one good custom should corrupt the world." A powerful section in England thought the Reform Act of 1832 an outrage; vested interests in America opposed the abolition of slavery; and if a powerful minority (or even a majority) to-day persuades itself to see nothing radically wrong in the caste system, that is no reason why it should not be challenged by its age-long victims, whom a bigoted orthodoxy has always treated with unconcealed contempt, extending even to physical dislike and exclusion, or at best with patronising condescension. Of course no radical change can ever come about unless large masses desire it intensely and courageously. In that sense perhaps the time has not come for the State in India to undertake far-reaching social legislation. But in the meantime such of us as claim to be enlightened can serve the evolution better by not trying to rationalise social patterns that have outlived their utility.

*Madanapalle,  
South India.*

H. SUNDER RAO



## ENDS AND SAYINGS

“\_\_\_\_\_ends of verse

And sayings of philosophers.”

The Presidential Address of Sir Herbert Samuel to the British Institute of Philosophy will surely be read (*Philosophy*, January, 1936) with some enthusiasm by the student of Eastern Esoteric Science. Sir Herbert examines the “oldest of philosophical problems”—Reality—in the light of modern science, and he hopes that—

it may be that Science, Religion, and Philosophy—knowledge, spirit, reason—all three together, shall redeem and raise mankind.

Knowledge, spirit and reason are not happy terms; we would suggest sense, spirit and mind to be paired with science, religion and philosophy. In any case, “a synthesis of science, religion and philosophy” has been magnificently attempted by Madame H. P. Blavatsky who gave that as sub-title to her two volumes named *The Secret Doctrine*. The spirit of religion manifests itself allegorically in mythology, and as intimate, incommunicable experience to the mystic who, once again, has to resort to analogies and emblems to convey some idea of what he has realized. The study of both mythology and mysticism has been very partial and also, when undertaken, it has been from the materialistic standpoint. The fact that a man of the calibre of Sir Herbert Samuel did not, or could not, use the findings of modern knowledge in these branches is

indicative of the fact that they are far from correct and fail to enlighten or to inspire. Sir Herbert confines himself to synthesizing two instead of three departments of living culture.

—  
The address examines Reality from the point of view of the senses: there is the universe of objects—of the red rose and the green grass, of hot fire and cold ice. These are real, but science has revealed another aspect of this universe: these very objects are but a combination of atoms which are in their turn composed of protons, electrons, positrons and neutrons; yet more—that “universe is full of electromagnetic waves.” This second aspect of the universe of objects does not make the first unreal. Furthermore, in this universe we come upon objects in which take place certain phenomena about which Prof. Haldane says that “No degree of physical and chemical complication brings us in any way nearer to the phenomena of life or conscious experience.” Sir Herbert also quotes Professor Wildon Carr:—

The most exhaustive description of the constituent molecules, atoms, electrons, and the completest history of their assemblage, will not express the reality of the acorn. The chemist in his laboratory might conceivably assemble and fit into their exact order all the actual constituents of the acorn, but to synthesize



a real acorn he would need to create its past and endow that past with a directing power to determine its future.

Though science cannot explain—for it does not know—the phenomena of life or conscious experience, they are as real as the objects or their ultimate constituents. This “third aspect of the universe is a vital, mental, psychic aspect—call it what you will.” This third aspect does not deprive the first two of their own reality.

“All these aspects of the universe equally present reality. But this has by no means been the conclusion generally accepted by philosophers.” Sir Herbert says that “reality is also relative.” H. P. Blavatsky explained this very view, clarifying the mystery of the doctrine of Maya or Illusion, half a century ago. In 1888 she wrote:—

The Universe is called, with everything in it, MAYA, because all is temporary therein, from the ephemeral life of a fire-fly to that of the Sun. Compared to the eternal immutability of the ONE, and the changelessness of that Principle, the Universe, with its evanescent ever-changing forms, must be necessarily, in the mind of a philosopher, no better than a will-o'-the-wisp. Yet, the Universe is real enough to the conscious beings in it, which are as unreal as it is itself. (S. D. I. 274)

Maya or illusion is an element which enters into all finite things, for everything that exists has only a relative, not an absolute, reality, since the appearance which the hidden noumenon assumes for any observer depends upon his power of cognition. To the untrained eye of the savage, a painting is at first an unmeaning confusion of streaks and daubs of colour, while an educated eye sees instantly a face or a landscape. . . . Whatever reality things possess must be looked for in them before or after

they have passed like a flash through the material world; but we cannot cognise any such existence directly, so long as we have sense-instruments which bring only material existence into the field of our consciousness. Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached “reality;” but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya (S. D. I. 39,40).

Everything is relative in this Universe, everything is an illusion. But the experience of any plane is an actuality for the percipient being, whose consciousness is on that plane; though the said experience, regarded from the purely metaphysical standpoint, may be conceived to have no objective reality. (S. D. I. 295, 296.)

Esoteric philosophy, teaching an *objective* Idealism—though it regards the objective Universe and all in it as *Maya*, temporary illusion—draws a practical distinction between collective illusion, *Mahamaya*, from the purely metaphysical standpoint, and the objective relations in it between various conscious *Egos* so long as this illusion lasts. (S. D. I. 631)

In the same context Sir Herbert Samuel examines the concepts of Space-Time and Motion-Causation, wherein also he approximates the views of Eastern Psycho-Philosophy.

We have space only for the following which are the words of a Great Sage quoted by H. P. Blavatsky:—

The Present is the Child of the Past; the Future, the begotten of the Present. And yet, O present moment! Knowest



thou not that thou hast no parent, nor canst thou have a child; that thou art ever begetting but thyself? Before thou hast even begun to say "I am the progeny of the departed moment, the child of the past," thou hast become that past itself. Before thou utterest the last syllable, behold! thou art no more the Present but verily that Future. Thus, are the Past, the Present, and the Future, the ever-living trinity in one—the Mahamaya of the Absolute IS. (S. D. II. 446)

Sir Herbert says that "the world in this generation is crying out for a philosophic basis for its thought. It will not find it except in a philosophy which builds with the materials brought to it by science," but he includes psychic science and instances telepathy, hypnotism, water-divining:—

Apart from the impressions of familiar experience, philosophy must accept its materials from science, and as yet the materials dealing with the physical aspect of the universe are much more abundant than the materials dealing with the psychic aspect. Our present knowledge of the world of mind, and of life also, is perhaps comparable to man's knowledge of the world of matter in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is seen that there is a vast territory to be explored. Some pioneers have crossed the boundary and have brought back exciting accounts of what they have found. But the task of methodical exploration is only at its beginning.

All our present knowledge, all our present lines of inquiry, pushed to their furthest point, would still leave unexplained the fact of existence.

Now we await some discovery in the psychic sphere which may enable a number of confused and apparently discrepant phenomena to fall, quite

simply, into their places in an ordered scheme.

If "the universe is full of electro-magnetic waves" and if "every sensation that we have is transmitted electrically," then within the human constitution there must be a consubstantial body to act as a basis for perception of those waves. Our age sees the distant sun but not the air closer than hands and feet because of the consubstantiality of the eye and the sun and its absence between the eye and the air. Similarly, must not human consciousness have an instrument or vehicle to contact the electro-magnetic waves? Ordinary human senses are unable to see electrons; may there not be within the human constitution a kind of apparatus which would enable human consciousness to sense directly the world of electro-magnetic waves? Esoteric Philosophy or Wisdom Religion or Occult Science teaches the existence of such an apparatus, and in *The Secret Doctrine* it is named the Astral Body. The matter of which it is composed is electrical and magnetic in its essence. It is "contained and confined within the physical body as magnetism in magnetized iron." H. P. Blavatsky wrote:—

*The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter.*