THE ARYAN PATH

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

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STANDARDS OF LIVING

During this month the devotees of Gautama, the Enlightened One, will observe the thrice sacred festival connected with the Great Reformer and Philanthropist. Born a prince, Gautama gave up his crown and took to the begging bowl—an event which has not only a moral but also an economic significance. While he wandered with that bowl, begging his food, he fed—and continues to feed—millions of hungry minds.

We are hearing these days of famine spreading in Europe and increasing in Asia. In most reconstruction plans first place is given to economic considerations and, when the raising of the standard of living is mentioned, multiplying the wants of the consumer is implied. The masses must be taught to consume more to meet overproduction; and production must increase to give employment to all. This foundation (which has already proven too weak and worthless to uphold the Temple of Culture reared on it) is the exact reverse of that which the Buddha preached and promulgated. "Raise your standard of life," He said, "by rising above sensuous existence; by inclining, not towards myriads of gadgets, but towards true ideas, peace and strength are born."

It is sometimes not realised that even the intimate followers of the Buddha numbered thousands; that the Sangha was a very large organisation and that the number of householders who practised His economic principles was even larger. Diminishing the wants of physical life, while increasing the resources of the mind-soul, people prospered; in some three centuries, Buddha's practical philosophy became manifest in the splendid empire of Asoka.

Modern civilisation has been growing weak and weaker in the Will-to-do-Right, hypnotised by so-called principles of the young "science" of Economics. Will not some minds among the "leaders" of the world catch the inspiration from the Science of Life which Buddha taught—from His profound wisdom about the standards of living?

THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL STATUS OF INDIAN WOMEN IN VEDIC AND MEDIÆVAL TIMES

[**Pandita Kshamabai Row** is a modern Sanskrit poet of distinction, the author of *Shankar-Jivan-Akyanan*, a biography of her father in Sanskrit verse, of *Satyagraha-Gita* and of *Uttara-Satyagraha-Gita* which won her honours recently. Here she takes up a subject of great interest to all who recognise the treatment accorded women as an index to the culture of a people or an age. This essay was prepared as a lecture which was given at Bombay on 12th March 1945, under the auspices of the P. E. N. All-India Centre.—ED.]

We are going to traverse a vast expanse of several thousand years in search of the cultural and social status of Aryan women during the Vedic and the mediæval ages. The first period dates back as far as 1500 B.C., *i. e.*, about 3445 years, and the second, as far back as 500 B.C., that is, to 2445 years before the present time.

During the Vedic Period the Aryan woman enjoyed a life of the greatest liberty—liberty of thought and liberty of action. And, in spite of her great freedom, she is said to have brought as much credit to herself as to the society she lived in. That was the epoch of the Vedas and the Upanishadas. They served as model scriptures for moulding the moral backbone of society and thus formed its cultural background. During this almost prehistoric period, every opportunity was given to the Aryan woman for her cultural development. At every function, religious, social or educational, she took a leading part along with men and, being free from the shackles of the rigid customs which were introduced later, she was held in the greatest esteem. That was the epoch when the Aryans, fired with martial spirit, put life and soul into warfare. That was why it was every woman's greatest ambition to be blessed with a son who would be a hero one day. In the *Rigveda* we read the following verse :

Brhad vadema vidadhe suvirah ;
Tathā cha Brhaspate suprajā vīravanto vayam syām patayorayīnām.

It means : " O Lord of Learning, bless us with heroic progeny and great wealth ! " From this and other hymns in the *Rigveda* it is obvious what great importance both men and women gave to a male offspring, and to valour. It is also evident that a woman was not considered inferior to man in thought, deed or character. Young men and women met frequently without the slightest restraint on their movements. So also, on festive occasions such as weddings, musical entertainments and other public functions, woman was man's co-organiser and she lec-

tured before large audiences. This great advancement in the cultural progress might have been the result of co-education. Love marriages took place frequently, girls choosing their partners in life without the intervention of their parents or guardians. Some hymns from the *Rigveda* clearly indicate that girls married at a mature age. Until a girl had finished her education and achieved mastery over one of the sixty-four arts, she was not considered eligible for wedlock. The foremost of the sixty-four arts were singing, dancing, painting, acting, sewing, embroidery, house decoration, skill in making one's toilet, gardening and cooking. Instruction in schools and other institutions was imparted only in Sanskrit, which was the mother-tongue. Girls were initiated with the sacred thread and were made to study the Vedas as assiduously as boys.

Thus, with this great opportunity of acquiring knowledge of higher subjects, women proved themselves equal to men in every branch of culture. Some women achieved proficiency as preceptors, others, as great teachers, while a few, engrossed in the Vedanta and other philosophical studies, embraced spinsterhood for life. These were known as *Brahmavādinī*. Some others composed Vedic hymns as brilliantly as men and were known as *Mantradraṣṭrī*. The most famous women amongst them were Ghosā, Viśvavārā, Lopāmudrā, Godhā, Apalā, Romesha and Śaśvatī. Similarly amongst the Brahmavādinī the most illustrious were Súlabhā, Vadavā, Prāthiteyī, Maitreyī, Gārgī and Kāśakrtsnī and others. Sulabhā was known to hold priceless wordy warfares with the great philosopher Janaka, and Maitreyī, discarding beautiful clothes and jewellery, so dear to a feminine heart, became a Yoginī in search of Nirvāna. The talented Gārgi composed beautiful and subtle hymns relating to the most abstruse principles of philosophy. The greatest of ancient philosophers, Yājnavalkya, used to be dumb with amazement at Gārgi's genius. Kāśakṛtsnī, after mastering Pūrvamīmāmsā, attained great fame by her most abstruse work and deserved to be included among the greatest of Mīmāmsakas. This great work *Kāśakṛtsnī*, called after her own name, was very widely read by women who were also known as Kāśakṛtsna. The memory of these learned women is kept fresh even to the present time by Brahmanas while reciting daily the Brahmayajña-tarpaṇa.

That was the period of home life and the fact that the woman was called man's better half was not merely a compliment to her ; she was really considered indispensable to her husband in all sacred rituals. This is confirmed by a verse in the *Śatapatha Brāhmana* :—

Ardho ha va eva atmano yajjāyā.

That is, " A wife is her husband's half. " Thus, in all the most important religious performances of *Yajña* the wife's presence was essential to a

man. No *Yajña* was complete without the wife repeating Vedic hymns by the side of her husband. A bachelor had no right to perform a *Yajña*. The wife, sitting by the side of her husband, offered oblations to the sacred fire morning and evening. Sometimes, without expecting men's help, she performed *Sitāyajña* during the harvest time. Besides these, she performed other Vedic rituals as well.

The first and most important duty a girl was taught by her parents or guardians was correct hospitality to guests. A girl had an equal right of inheritance in her father's property with her brothers. Like married girls, unmarried girls also received a share in their father's heritage.

Amongst the higher classes, such as Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, mixed marriages took place frequently, and although a marriage between any of these classes with a Shudra woman was not prohibited, such unions were extremely rare. Girls being married at a mature age, there were hardly any child widows. A widow's giving birth to a child was sanctioned by the Shastras. This was known as the *niyoga* custom. Thus the Vedic age is rightly called the epoch of independence.

Now let us turn to the period between 500 B. C. and the end of the ninth century A. D., which in India is known as the mediæval age. During this epoch, the Aryans enjoyed peaceful times after the strenuous martial period of the previous centuries, owing to which the Aryans had had a close connection with various other Asiatic countries and their sphere of activities had extended considerably. On account of intermarriages with other nationalities many new problems presented themselves to the leaders of society. In the religious, cultural and social fields of their activities new customs came in and therefore many new laws had to be enacted to regulate the conduct of the people.

The initiation of girls with the sacred thread and the consequent course of studies continued for some centuries. Many women, as in the Vedic times, getting regular instructions in the Vedas and the Upanishads, distinguished themselves as before, but gradually a change crept in. The system of co-education having been dispensed with, no separate schools for girls were started. Boys were sent to great Rishis for their education, but the parents did not think it wise to send girls out of their homes for education, with the result that the opportunities of imparting higher education to girls became fewer and fewer. As there were not sufficient institutions for girls, most of them were educated at home by their father or some other relative. Girls from the higher classes, having better facilities, received the best education. Many women of the time distinguished themselves in the ethical and philosophical sciences.

During that period there was a wave of new religious doctrines such as Jainism and Buddhism. Some

women, embracing either of these new faiths, took a leading part in propounding their principles and doctrines. Women of the highest society, however, clung fast to the Vedic form of religion. This is authenticated by various incidents in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. For instance, before Rama set out into exile, he went to bid farewell to his mother, Kaushalya. She was at the time offering oblations to the sacrificial fire and reciting the Vedic mantras. This is indicated by the following verse from the *Ramayana:*

Sā kṣoumavasanā hṛṣṭā nityavrata-
parāyaṇā
Agnim juhoti sma tadā mantravat-
kṛtamaṅgalā.

"She [Kaushalya] intent on carrying out her daily vow, and clad in white silken garments, was offering oblations to the sacred fire and reciting mantras."

Similarly there is another incident about Maruti, the great monkey ally of Rama. Having at first failed in his long and strenuous search for Sita, he said to himself: "She must be by the river-side, performing her evening *sandhyā.*" And with this decision, he approached the river and found Sita there, engrossed in the evening *sandhyā*. This shows that the Aryan women never neglected their Vedic form of worship, even in their greatest adversity.

During this epoch both Jainism and Buddhism, being at the height of their glory, wrought drastic changes in the social status of Aryan women. A great many of them embraced Jainism with intense fervour. Others made a deep study of the Jain Sastras and preached their tenets with ardent faith. As women were not allowed in the Buddhist Viharas, some spent their life in meditation. The great Buddhist work *Theri Gatha* is said to have been compiled by fifty women. Of these, thirty-two were spinsters and eighteen, married women. The rise of Jainism had both good and bad effects on the Aryan women. Both these religions, specially Buddhism, extended great freedom to them but, renunciation being the chief principle of both, contempt for woman became deep-rooted in man's mind. Their missionaries declared her a "thorn, death and hell." Even Gautama proclaimed everywhere: "Woman is deceptive. Close your eyes and do not look at her." Woman was considered a great obstacle in the path of spiritual pursuits and without renouncing her there was no hope of Eternal Bliss. Such being his advice to those who sought Nirvana, woman was denounced more and more.

Vedic lore being absent from Jainism, the Vedic religion stood on the brink of extinction. In order to ward off onslaughts from these two religions, some learned Aryans tried to protect the Vedic religion by various means such as establishing a simple and sacred form of sacrifice and other rituals. And subsequently, Dharmasutras and śritis were composed to regulate the various social and religious functions connected

with the Vedic form of worship. And although these new works were at first meant only for the higher classes, in course of time they established their sway throughout India. During this epoch, Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas intermarried. Marriages between any of these classes and Shudras and even the servant class were frequent.

Owing to the intermingling of Shudra women with Aryan families, the traditional Vedic culture of women was declining rapidly. These uncultured Shudra women not knowing how to recite the Vedic mantras, it became impossible for men to perform a *Yajña* jointly with their wives. Consequently, there was a lapse of these Vedic rituals; and, as women were denied the sacred thread, great masters of Dharma-shastras seriously set about depriving them of their birthright of the study of the Shastras and of performing a *Yajña*. Thus, gradually their social and religious privileges became fewer and fewer. And, before the end of the third century B. C., woman was completely deprived of the right of studying the Vedas or of performing the rituals of *Yajña*. All this was the result of her first being deprived of the sacred thread. With the cessation of her Vedic education, the facilities for even her general education vanished rapidly and in course of time woman remained almost uneducated. She had by now not only lost the place of honour she had once held, but was considered on the same footing as a Shudra. This is exemplified in one of the introductory verses in the *Mahabharata*:—

Strīsūdradwijabandhūnām trayī na srutigocharā,
Iti bhāratamākhyānam krpayā muninā krtam.

That is, since women, Shudras and wicked Brahmanas were not entitled to hear the Śritis, the great Muni Vyasa was gracious enough to compose the *Mahabharata*.

About that time, in order to give sufficient chance to girls to have at least a primary education, the marriage age of girls seemed about to be postponed but, as the study of the Vedas had been denied to them, it was thought useless to delay their marriage. So not only was the marriage age not postponed but the custom of early marriage was introduced instead. During the fourth century B. C. some of the great writers of Shastras decided that a girl should be married within three years of puberty. Later, in the third century B. C., it was decided that the marriage age should be within three months of that event and in course of time, according to the Śritis, a girl had to be married even before this change came into her tender life. Thus the custom of child marriage, being sanctioned by the Shastras, became a permanent institution. Marriage was considered woman's one and only goal in life. "Woman has nothing to do with the Shastras or the sacred mantras nor has she a right to officiate at a ritual," was what Manu the Law-giver declared. And in order to

prevent her from entering the Buddhist Viharas, the custom of child marriage was firmly rooted in the then existing society. This refers particularly to Brahmans who by then had established an ascendency over the other Aryan castes. Girls of these other castes, however, were married at a mature age and this custom survived a long time with them, as in the cases of princesses and Kshatriya girls. One gathers this from the various heroines in Sanskrit literature. Love marriage, which later took the form of *swayamvara*, came into vogue and, being recognised by the Smritis, was included amongst the eight forms of marriage. As it was approved of by all the four castes, gāndharva or love marriage was sanctioned by the Shastras.

During this epoch, although woman's education was in decline, girls from a few families receiving education at home distinguished themselves in literature and other intellectual pursuits. That some women of the highest society were learned is evident from Vatsayana's *Kamashastra*. Similarly, wives of princes and ministers, and even courtesans, distinguished themselves and some women shone out as poetesses. Amongst these was the famous Vijayankā. Ubhaya Bharati, the wife of Mandanamisra, achieved extraordinary success in literature, Mimansa and Vedanta. The Kshatriya wife of the poet Rājasekhara was a poetess. Some women, distinguishing themselves in medicine and astronomy, wrote important books on these subjects; others made a most diligent study of various arts, such as vocal and instrumental music, dancing and house decoration. And once again women began to command respect both in their homes and in society. They took part in the social and religious life of the time; some served in religious Maths, others in temples. Sometimes they joined their male friends on picnics, at festivals, and even in dramatic performances. Women of the highest society took part in social sports held in the public parks. Some women led an independent life, a few working in palaces as maids. Others, according to Megasthenes, served as kings' bodyguards. The poet Bana, in his *Harśacharitam*, tells us also of women taking to independent careers as torch-bearers and handmaids to princesses.

From the end of the twelfth century, women had to face many restrictions at social and religious functions. During this period, on account of the invasion of Mahmad Ghazani and others, there were again drastic changes in Aryan Society and women's love for Sanskrit was gradually vanishing; and along with that her education was again rapidly going down. Before the end of this century, known as the period of bondage, with the exception of a few Rajput women and Jain widows who could read religious books, there was hardly one woman in a hundred who could be called educated. Their ignorance made them blindly super-

stitious and slaves to custom and finally dragged them to a degraded position. There were other causes, also, which led to their degradation. Child marriage, already mentioned, was one of them. It had taken a firm footing in the Aryan Society. Vyasa, Parāshara and other writers of Śritis and Smritis advocated marriages of girls of eight and nine, and before the beginning of the eleventh century child marriage was recognised everywhere. This custom being followed by the higher classes, it spread like an epidemic amongst the lower classes. With the custom of child marriage, the number of child widows increased; widow remarriage was not sanctioned by the Shastras. From that time onwards a new hell of widowhood was created for the Aryan woman. Amongst most of the evils of widowhood which are only too well-known to us, was the custom of Sutee, and although not sanctioned by the Shastras it was kept up for centuries on account of the ignorance of women who were often encouraged by their menfolk; but fortunately this sad custom, along with most of the other evils disappeared with the passage of time.

Then, after a few centuries of complete darkness, a new era dawned for the Indian woman—the era of her re-entry into the temple of learning. In the middle of the nineteenth century a few learned men in various provinces opened schools for girls and before the end of the century Pandita Ramabai, Toru Dutt and others distinguished themselves as women of letters.

In the present times Indian universities produce girl graduates by the hundred every year but alas, very few of them are really interested in the old Sanskrit culture. If those who have not to think of their livelihood would only realise what a treasure of literature Sanskrit can offer them on any subject except modern scientific discoveries, they would find a lifelong field for research in various branches of learning, including the sixty-four arts. If there were more women Sanskritists, India's glory would be as great as it was in the Vedic times.

KSHAMABAI ROW

INDIAN CULTURE AND THE DRAFT HINDU CODE

[In accordance with our practice, whenever possible, of letting our readers hear both sides of a controversial question, we bring together here the conservative and the progressive points of view on the Draft Hindu Code now under consideration in India. **Rao Bahadur Sardar Madhavarao Vinayak Kibe** of Indore is sure that the proposed codification of Hindu Law will spell the breakdown of traditional Hindu culture. **A. B. Gajendragadkar,** Professor of Sanskrit at Elphinstone College of the Bombay University, on the contrary, welcomes the proposed legislation as promising to remove the great discrepancies now existing in Hindu law as applying to different parts of British India and incidentally redressing not a few injustices.

The Draft Hindu Code proposes to codify for the first time those sections of Hindu Law with which the Central Legislature is competent to deal. Hindu Law rests primarily upon the sacred texts as interpreted by the Courts. There has been agitation for more than a decade, by various organisations, for a general revision and codification of Hindu Law and for a higher legal status for women. The Draft Hindu Code is the work of the Hindu Law Committee appointed by the Government in January 1941.

For the benefit especially of our foreign readers we may outline a few main items of the Draft Hindu Code. Briefly, it provides, for all Hindus in British India, a common law of intestate succession. It removes the sex disqualification, giving a woman half the share her brother gets in their father's property and twice his share in their mother's. It gives a woman, moreover, the same rights over her property, however acquired, which a man has over his. The Code in addition makes monogamy the law, as it is already the general practice, removes caste restrictions on marriages, allows either a civil or a sacramental marriage and for the first time permits divorce under certain circumstances, while not making it easy. All must welcome the greater confidence in womankind and the will to even-handed justice which the Draft Code bespeaks. There is no question, however, that the changes contemplated by it are both fundamental and far-reaching. It is in the interest of all that their import should be evaluated thoughtfully in advance and the inevitable consequences of such legislation weighed.—ED.]

I.—BY RAO BAHADUR SARDAR M. V. KIBE

In almost all the Indian States the culture, tradition and manners of the Hindus are preserved almost unaltered. Under the influence of the compact with the paramountcy of a Western Power, some of the base things, which had soiled the surface of the culture, have been

obliterated, but the structure of Hindu society is mainly preserved. The expression "Oriental splendour" is applicable to happenings in the Indian States only. The best in the Oriental culture can be found only in them.

The Draft Hindu Code prepared for the Central Assembly is the greatest conceivable attack on Hindu culture. It will not only affect the subjects of the territories over which it is intended to prevail, but it will also govern subjects of the Indian States. Its authors and protagonists are ignoring this patent fact.

Hindu Law is not a law made by any legislature. It has no political or state boundaries. It is a personal Law. It has been evolved. Any revolutionary change in it is bound to dislocate society and undermine culture. Like the Mohammedan Law, Hindu Law is a traditional Law governing the lives, property and culture of the persons and families of the people. The latter has no single authoritative book; the former is based on the Koran and the old traditions. Although it too has been modified by legislatures in some respects, no fundamental departure has been allowed. The culture of the Mussulmans, to whatever nationality any follower of Mohammed may belong, has been uniform, outward changes in matters like dress and the growing of hair on the face being overlooked.

There being no one single book on which the Hindu Law is based, changes have been easier to make in it. The British Ruler proceeded boldly to interfere in it. But, as in the abolition of Sati, it was shown that the practice abrogated was opposed to the Vedic text. The greatest agitation was raised against the Age-of-Consent Bill. The opposition maintained that it was a direct interference in the custom of the people, which would affect the Hindu culture and was opposed to the injunction of the Smritis. Although the apprehensions of the opposition as regards the culture have proved well-founded, yet the supporters of the measure succeeded in showing that the injunctions in the Smritis were not uniform and that the practice as disclosed in the Vedas did not favour the consummation of marriages at an early age. The Sarda Act enacted later had no such support, yet it did not raise a storm so strong as before.

The framers of the Hindu Code have been at pains to show that the changes in the law which they propose to effect have the sanction of texts prevalent before, or even now, in one or another part of the country. The introduction of uniformity is their main aim and their potent claim in favour of the changes.

It is a question whether this uniformity is desirable, in view of the long-standing differences in the cultures in the Eastern and Western parts of India. But the more important question is whether it is possible, under the present political jurisdictions of India, to have one uniform law. As has been pointed

out, Hindu Law is not territorial but personal and yet the application of it may be and is different in different jurisdictions. To demonstrate by a glaring instance, the adoption of a daughter's son has been declared by the Privy Council to be illegal, but it is allowed in Indian States. Here territorial and personal application of the law combines. Courts in British India do not disallow a daughter's son adopted in an Indian State from claiming property situated in British India. Perhaps the question has not been tested or, more probably, it is covered by the doctrine of *factum valet.*

But will the law of inheritance which the Code now seeks to change prevail in Indian States? It seems not. Apart from its merits or demerits, to make it effective the framers of the Hindu Code have made such fundamental changes as would not only affect the culture of the Hindus but would completely annihilate it. Besides, instead of making the law universally applicable in India, it will create islands throughout the country. Even taking inheritance, at present there are two broad schools, those of Western India and Eastern India, known as the Bombay (including Gujarat and Southern India) and Bengal respectively. No political or administrative divisions or jurisdictions come in its way. This will not be the case for the Hindu Code as envisaged in the Draft, because it will be legislation by a Government, paramount though it may be.

The Code begins with a definition of the Hindu, which in the present weakened state of the Hindu culture and in view of its inherent weaknesses is bound to destroy what remains of it. The definition lays down that any child brought up in the Hindu culture shall be Hindu. It is obvious that this will be without any regard for the parentage. The Code allows both Anulom marriage, which is held to be legal by some High Courts, and the Pratilom form of marriage which has stood condemned for centuries. Nothing is surer to destroy the Hindu culture than this legislation. This, along with the definition, will be a deathblow to culture and religion, supported by the authorities hitherto, from the Vedas downwards.

The proposed enactment that the Gotra of a girl shall not change on her marriage, which is laid down to justify giving her a share from her father's property, shows the mentality of the framers in playing ducks and drakes with the fundamentals of the Hindu Law. If they wished to be logical they should have proposed that there would be no change in the Gotra of a boy on his adoption into another family. Had they done so, it would have meant the end of the custom of adoption.

Perhaps the greatest distinguishing fact between the Mitakshara and the Dayabhaga schools was that the former laid restrictions on the disposal of the ancestral property, while the latter allowed freedom to

the head-man in that matter. This distinction has affected the lives of the people in these two different parts of India, which are governed by the two above-mentioned schools or systems of law or their off-shoots, such as Mayukha under Mitakshara ; to abolish the difference for the sake of uniformity will be a violent change and such an attempt has previously led to difficulties. Since the subjects under the respective jurisdictions of the Central and Provincial Legislatures are defined and are separate, difficulty has already arisen with regard to enactments on the succession to property made by the Central Legislature, which can only legislate for property of a particular sort. The law does not govern agricultural property. When this is so for British India, where such a consequential complication can be remedied by enactments in Provincial Legislatures, what about the States? No such remedy exists in the case of Indian States, except the distant eventuality of all the hundreds of States enacting the same law.

The subjects of Indian States, the rulers of which have not interfered in the Hindu Law, will be governed by it and not by this Code. But the subjects of States have close relations, links and properties in both the States and British India. What will happen to them is a question which can better be imagined than described.

The State of Baroda has a Code governing the Hindus but it has not made such a violent change as the abolition of the joint-family system. It has no doubt legalised Sagotra or Sapravara marriages, but although the prohibition regarding them has the support of some texts, yet it is clear that that prohibition is based more on superstitions and sentiments than on any scientific truth. What Pravaras are has never been convincingly explained, while the fact that the Gotra has nothing to do with lineal descent, is clear from the fact that a person from one Gotra can be adopted in a new one. Any eugenic complications are safely guarded against by the rule approved by Yajñavalkya, to avoid marriage within seven generations in the father's and five in the mother's line.

Justifiable changes have been effected in the Hindu law, as by the Right Hon. Dr. M. R. Jayakar's Gains of Learning Act or Dr. Deshmukh's Acts, but even though they do not prevail in Indian States, they do not cause such complications as would this Hindu Code. Above all, they do not violently or drastically affect the Hindu culture.

Similar changes have been made in the Mohammedan Law too, but no Government would dare to change the fundamentals of Mohammedan law and culture as this Act proposes to do with regard to the law and culture of the Hindus. If a Code is required, Sir Hari Singh Gaur's book could be utilised, as it is by the Courts even in Indian States.

The Draft Hindu Code—because it cannot bring in any uniformity, even if, for the sake of argument, it

were conceded to be desirable; and especially because it will destroy the Hindu culture—should not be proceeded with and should be resisted by those wishing to preserve their culture.

M. V. KIBE

II.—BY A. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR

The draft of the Hindu Code, prepared by the Hindu Law Committee under the distinguished chairmanship of Sir B. N. Rao, has been circulated to elicit public opinion. All right-thinking people will extend to it a cordial welcome.

The reason why the Draft Hindu Code deserves support is that it represents a commendable and, to a great extent, successful attempt to conform to the true spirit of Hindu Law, *viz.*, development and progress suitable to the changing times. Students of ancient Sanskrit literature on Dharmaśāstra, such as the Smṛtis, the Sūtras and especially the commentaries on these and the Nibandhas, know that the true spirit of Hindu Law consists in its adaptability to changed circumstances. The History of Dharmaśāstra literature tells us that Hindu Law has all along been changed and developed so as to suit the requirements of the new order. This is clear from the fact that, though Hindu Law is supposed to be based on the same Smṛtis and Sūtras, different schools such as the Mitākṣarā School and the Dāyabhāga or Bengal School together with their sub-schools have arisen with regard to it. Different social conditions prevailed in different parts of the country. Distinguished jurists living in those different parts clearly saw that the ancient texts required to be interpreted in a particular manner so as to conform to prevailing conditions. They therefore wrote commentaries on the ancient texts, or semi-independent treatises, embodying therein the required changes in the ancient law. These works became authoritative within particular territorial limits and gave rise to the two main Schools and their subdivisions.

Further, the very fact that we have more than one Smṛti and Sūtra, holding many a time conflicting views, shows that the later writers must have composed their works either to supplement or to modify the previous rules, so as to make them accord with changed conditions. All this shows that modification, development and progress, such as are necessitated by changing and changed conditions, form the very essence of Hindu Law. It is therefore a mistake to suppose that Hindu Law is static and that it is sacrilege to try to modify it. Such an idea proceeds from ignorance and is belied by the whole history of Sanskrit Dharmaśāstra literature.

The present-day Hindu Law is more case-made than Smṛti- or Sūtra-made. It is only on rare occasions

that the interpretation of ancient texts forms the subject of discussion in law courts. What usually happens is that cases are decided, not on the authority of ancient texts, but on that of previous judicial decisions. For almost all the topics of Hindu Law have, some time or other, become the subjects of judicial decisions and are found discussed in the various law reports. Under these circumstances the ingenuity of lawyers consists in distinguishing one previous decision from another and in showing how one previous decision or another is or is not applicable to the case in hand. All this results in making the law static and bars its further development and progress, which are so necessary with the advance of time. It is precisely because case-made Hindu Law has a tendency to become static that the necessity has arisen of formulating a Hindu Code, embodying all the changes that modern conditions have made desirable.

There are two other reasons why a new Hindu Code has become necessary. First, case-made Hindu Law has almost superseded the ancient Smṛtis, Sūtras and Nibandhas. This is not realized by orthodox people who swear by the ancient texts. The most authoritative Smṛtikāra of modern days is the Privy Council. But this Smṛtikāra has no initiative in legislation. He rests content with pronouncing judgements on points that are brought before him. He is therefore of no use in the matter of the development and progress of Hindu Law. Different High Courts represent subordinate Smṛtikāras of modern times. On many points the decisions of Indian High Courts are conflicting, like the rules in ancient Smṛtis and Sūtras. Therefore in order to secure unanimity of rules on many topics of Hindu Law a new Code is necessary.

Secondly, leaders of Hindu society have long realized that reform in Hindu Law has become peremptory in more branches than one. They therefore try to bring it about by piecemeal legislation. Not being experts in law, these enthusiastic reformers are unable to diagnose correctly the far-reaching consequences of their legislation. The result is that sometimes great confusion is caused in the existing law by such well-meant but ill-framed legislation. The Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act is a case in point. It has introduced revolutionary changes in the law of succession and coparcenary. Lawyers assert that this Act is likely to give rise to many complicated problems and cite it as an example where enthusiasm has outrun discretion. A Hindu Code framed by experts has thus become necessary in order to avoid the possibility of such imperfect legislation at the hands of laymen.

The Draft Hindu Code has evoked opposition in several quarters and the Committee has been received with black flags in some places. This need not cause surprise or discouragement to well-wishers of

Hindu society. Two things deserve note in this connection. First, Hindu society is by temperament conservative and generally opposed to all change in existing conditions. The cry "Religion or Culture in danger," raised albeit honestly by ignorant, narrow-minded reactionaries, easily appeals to rightist elements thereof. Numerous changes have been introduced in the ancient Hindu Law by Acts of Legislatures. But one can recall no occasion on which the particular Act did not excite opposition from the conservative sections of Hindu society.

To take a few notable illustrations. When in the thirties of the last century Lord William Bentinck abolished the inhuman custom of Satī, it is recorded that sections of Hindus opposed the measure on the ground that it interfered with a sacred, time-honoured, traditional custom. When the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act was passed in 1856, it met with opposition on the ground that widow-remarriage was against the Smṛtis and that the Act amounted to unjustifiable interference with the Hindu religion. The same futile cry of "Religion in danger" met the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1928. When again the Hindu Gains of Learning Act of 1930 was enacted, reactionaries confidently predicted that it would sound the death-knell of the joint-family system. Even now a bill in the Legislative Assembly, which seeks to legalize marriages between persons belonging to the same Gotra, is meeting with the familiar cry of "Religion and culture in danger!" It will thus be seen that measures, which were regarded and have proved to be beneficial, had excited opposition when they were first introduced. The Draft Hindu Code is no exception to this general practice of Hindu society.

Another characteristic of Hindu society is that it readily becomes reconciled to and adopts changes which it first had opposed. I very well remember when the Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as the Sarda Act, was on the anvil, some Sanātanists had actually threatened Satyāgraha. What an idea, to marry one's children at a tender age as a protest against the Act! But when the Act was actually passed, nothing happened. Orthodox Hindu society will accept reforms which are forced upon it. It will not rise to the occasion and welcome changes which time has made necessary. I have no doubt that, when the Hindu Code becomes law, the same unthinking people who are now opposing it, will come forward and say that the changes introduced by it are after all not against the spirit of Hindu Dharmaśāstra.

Another objection to the Hindu Code is that, whereas at present different schools prevail in different provinces of India, the new Code would be uniform for all Provinces, which is considered to be far from desirable. Here one has to observe that the only justification for the authority of different schools in

different provinces has been the prevalence of different conditions therein. With the spread of Western education and civilization India is fast becoming uniform. The unification of the land under the supreme authority of the British Crown has given India a new idea of unity, an idea that from the Himālayas to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Calcutta she is one indivisible nation, an idea she never had had during her long history of five thousand years. It is therefore quite in the fitness of things that one uniform Code should be framed to become applicable to all Hindus in the country.

But what about the Indian States? It is contended that the Indian States have preserved the ancient Hindu culture intact and that if the new Hindu Code were made applicable to them, this culture would be destroyed.

There are several inaccuracies in this contention. First, the proposed Hindu Code is not intended to apply to subjects of Indian States. They therefore need entertain no fear of their culture being destroyed by it. Secondly, the statement that Indian States are the repositories of ancient Hindu culture would not be admitted by many. In fact, if some of the happenings which are peculiar to the Indian States are to be regarded as symbols of Hindu culture, the earlier this culture is destroyed, the better for Hindu society. Thirdly, some States like Baroda already possess their Hindu Code, which in some respects goes further than the proposed Hindu Code of British India. Therefore, the pretence that the Indian States have preserved Hindu culture intact does not hold water. And lastly, culture, which in easy terms means a special mental attitude of society, can never remain intact or unchanged. Culture must change and develop with the advance of the times. Culture which is regarded as remaining intact or unchanged is no culture at all.

It is a strange irony of fate that subjects of the Indian States should come forward to oppose the proposed Hindu Code, which really has nothing to do with them. Political leaders often wish that Lord Dalhousie had painted the whole of India red at one bold stroke. That would have effectively served the cause of India's unification. For everybody realizes what a terrible drag the Indian States are on India's political progress. When one sees opposition from Indian States, such as has appeared in the case of the Hindu Code, one cannot but join in the wish of political leaders.

It is not my intention to go into the details of the Draft Hindu Code. In my opinion it does not go far enough. This is perhaps because the shrewd framers thereof, anticipating opposition, have exercised great caution.

It is not possible that this Draft Hindu Code will come for consideration before the present Legislative Assembly. Let me hope that when at the end of the war a new Legislature is formed, it will accord to this Code a favourable reception and help to make it a law.

A. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR

RACISM AND WORLD UNITY

[The distinguished critic and essayist **R. L. Megroz** makes out here a strong case against racism, of which the colour bar is one expression. Dr. Cecil Roth, as long ago as October 1934, exposed in our pages the fallacy of claims to racial purity, calling history and logic to witness to so considerable a degree of admixture of blood in past generations that "there can be no German in whose veins Jewish blood does not run, and few Jews who are absolutely free from any Gentile admixture." The identity of our physical origin can admittedly make no appeal to the human heart, but proving it to the reason is a necessary step. But racism is only the most conspicuous at the moment of the many walls misguided men have built to hedge themselves in, to shut all others out. Ingrowing nationalism, exclusive creeds, caste barriers and rigid social or economic strata all create and foster divisiveness; the world's urgent need is Unity.—ED.]

Among the problems which all the peoples of the world are vitally concerned with none can be more important than the antagonisms caused by racial quarrels. There is irony in the fact that the consensus of scientific knowledge strips the old conception of "races" of all reality. Sufficient is known to provide the fullest evidence in support of the belief that there is only one race, local variations being due to a more than average prevalence of certain marked characteristics. The significance of such local variations consists only in certain physical and mental traits due to environment and culture. Moreover, in any one group with such characteristics as, say, the people of Northern Europe, there are as wide differences between individuals among them as there are between them and the people of another group, let us say the people of Northern India. The scientific knowledge of the nature of human species, however, has not yet made much headway against old prejudices, nor, it is to be feared, has the realisation of the evil thing these can become when exploited by a fantasy-ridden people like the Germans, who biologically are almost as mixed as any nation on earth.

The pernicious nonsense published about the mythical "Nordics" as the super-race was already being compiled by propagandists long before the second world war was started by the insane Hitler and his associates. Houston Stewart Chamberlain was at it in 1910 (*The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*). And although there has been a chorus of condemnation of the Nazi revival of the German race propaganda, plenty of people in the West, especially in Britain and the United States, cling illogically to various forms of the same prejudice.

This year (1944) two enlightened books by American authors have

been published which reveal how serious the problem remains. *Race and Rumours of Race* by Dr. Howard W. Odum tells the lamentable story of the increase of racial tension during the war, especially between the Negroes and the Whites in the United States. *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*[1] by M. F. Ashley Montagu includes this theme and surveys the racial question over a wide field; and he stresses, as his title indicates, the known facts that rob the term "race" of its former meaning.

Biologists and anthropologists are beginning to study more carefully the results of "mixed" unions, such as between White and Brown or Black people, and the evidence so far flatly contradicts popular notions that the offspring of such unions are degenerate. What is observed is that seedy individuals of low economic status often form such unions, simply because, as in South Africa, there is a violent social antagonism and those who form such unions are usually already social outcasts. It is noteworthy that in Brazil there has been, over a prolonged period, a constant and big-scale mixture of white and coloured people without friction and without ill effects. When we are looking for explanations of these different situations we might do worse than take the line followed in an excellent little pamphlet, *What About Race?*, published in London for the Workers' Education Association. It is No. 2 of a useful series for popular education called "Topics for Discussion." Here are two of the Questions and Answers in the pamphlet:—

What are the reasons for the colour bar?

Chiefly political and economic. In New Zealand, where the native Maoris are too few to compete seriously with the whites or to form a large pool of cheap labour as in Africa, there is intermarriage and equality. The same is true, more or less, of the Red Indians in the United States. The colour bar against Negroes is far stricter in the Southern States of the U. S. A., where they are more numerous, than in the North, where they are few.

Can mental differences be measured?

According to some "Intelligence Tests" the white races come out top. But as they were devised by and for white people and assume the background and mental habits of the white man, this result is not surprising.

It might be added also that there have been too many intellectually brilliant coloured scientists and artists for any such generalisation to hold water. The differences in level of development and direction of ability are entirely due to environment and training, to "culture" in fact and not to "race." Thus it is that the serious differences between peoples are more often to be found in the form of national cultures than in the physical characteristics, and where it is not so, as in the United States, it is because one group has a different economic status and

[1] Reviewed in THE ARYAN PATH for February 1945.—ED.

culture, as different as a separate nation.

Now differences, as such, are all to the good, for world unity does not mean that we should seek uniformity in all things. This is one of the important points made much of by Mr. Ashley Montagu in the book I have mentioned. While showing that cross-breeding is biologically sound he does not put this as something to be deliberately aimed at, and says :—

It has often been argued that racial enmities between men will disappear only when all physical "racial" differences between them have been obliterated. This is a fallacious argument for the simple reason that the real source of "racial" hostilities is not physical but cultural.

It really ought not to be necessary to harp on such incontrovertible truths today, but unfortunately a lot more educational propaganda is needed, not merely among the supposedly stupid "masses" but among their rulers and many "educated" people. If any further kind of proof were needed of the irrelevance of "race" to the ruinous antagonisms that have disturbed the world, let anybody consider the bitter hostilities in Europe between the warring peoples where racial characteristics are inextricably mixed not only between the nations but inside the nations.

Let me conclude by quoting from an admirable little book published in London in 1942—*Race and Racism*, by Ruth Benedict, an American anthropologist of distinction :—

The racist cries are raised not because those who raise them have any claim to being pure races, but because they do not; in other words, because today several ethnic groups occupy one city or one state, or states that share in one civilization are engaged in nationalistic wars. Hence comes the paradox that has been so often pointed out : that it is the most mongrel peoples of the world who raise the war-cry of racial purity.

R. L. MEGROZ

MACHINES

The machine saves labour and creates problems. It does both too swiftly for man to grasp their final significance. It breeds leisure without solving the problem of how to use it best. It disturbs the balance between work and idleness. It upsets centuries-old ways of life. A report that in liberated Ukraine a woman was honoured for having harvested two hundred and sixty acres in five days with a Combine Harvester moves Mr. John Stewart Collis to reflection in *Time and Tide* of 30th December. The machine, the culmination of human effort to do things easily and swiftly can save time, but for what ? And it destroys the joy of creative work. It promises to create a "Leisure State" for people "mentally unfit to be idle." Mr. Collis finds the Combine Harvester

from a utilitarian point of view...absolutely splendid. But a utilitarian point of view by itself is a fatuous view. If we are capable of serious thought, that is thought in terms of humanity, of human needs, of human psychology, of human happiness, we cannot fail to see that the Combine is excellent only for the employers of labour, for a few labourers and for Vera Panchonko who harvests two hundred and sixty acres in five days.

If this is true in the West it is a thousand times truer in India, with its under-employed and underfed millions.

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

A TELLING BRIEF FOR BROTHERHOOD *

[The seventeen articles and speeches of Pearl S. Buck brought together in this small volume carry on her valuable service to mutual understanding and respect among the peoples of the world. In accordance with our policy of presenting side by side whenever possible the Eastern and the Western points of view, we bring together here two reviews of the work, by a British and an Indian writer—**J. P. Hogan** and **Cyril Modak**. We allow free expression to our contributors, even when their views run counter to our own. The striking contrast between the reactions of these two reviewers will have served a useful purpose if it sends the reader to the book itself to form his own opinion.—ED.]

I

One may as well let Mrs. Buck speak for herself:—

> In the midst of the war there is beginning to grow something new in the hearts of the peoples of all nations. The peoples are impatient for the war to be ended because they feel something new is ahead, an experience which they are eager to begin. What it is none knows, for the stirring of rebirth is not yet a knowledge so much as it is an instinct.

How, one may ask, has Mrs. Buck access to the hearts of the peoples of all nations? And surely, if there is such a unity (not to say a terrifying uniformity) in these billions and trillions of hearts, the war itself is something of an anachronism? Surely, for that matter, if such solidarity of heart is manifest, then life itself is redundant? For what is life but tension, and taking and giving, and the manifold *differences* between individuals? I am I, and thou art thou; and we manage to go on living at all only because I, being different from thee, can give thee something which thou hast not; and thou, being different from me, canst give me something which I have not. To hell, then, with this cheap solidarity of the American dream, which has no basis in fact, and would mean death to humankind if it had.

What has some basis in fact is what we observe for ourselves and what we know in our own hearts. The average soldier or civilian, for instance, craves only for a return to the *status quo*, to the lighted streets of 1939, to security of a kind within his own home and in his familiar surroundings. He is not stirred by the glimpse of "something new" ahead, and would not desire it if he were. As for the thinking, the aware, the conscious soldier and civilian, they, poor devils, dread the future. They have no reason to believe that "the peace" will be other than retributive; and they have every reason to believe that, compared with 1945, the Versailles Treaty of 1919 will seem an essay in justice and loving-kindness. They know that Poland, for whom the war was ostensibly begun, is as much in jeopardy as in 1939; they see a Polish government in London and another Polish government in Warsaw—and draw their own conclusions. Meanwhile, the military are not blind to the "immense possibilities" of the

* *What America Means to Me.* By PEARL S. BUCK. (Methuen and Co., Ltd., London. 6*s*.)

flying bomb and the jet-propelled rocket "in future warfare." From all this, multiplied a hundredfold, they might justifiably conclude that the unthinking man's craving for the comparative security of 1939 is a dream and Mrs. Buck's "rebirth" an imbecility. But let Mrs. Buck continue:—

> Victory for the peoples in this war is necessary, for the peoples must be free or the rebirth will not come.

But how can "the peoples" have victory? If Britain wins and Germany loses, does that mean that 45 million John Smith's "win" and 80 million Hans Schmidt's "lose"? What rubbish! The British government wins; the German government loses; but all the John's and all the Hans's are where they were before (if they survive at all, and if they are not maimed in body as well as spirit). But even if victory for "the peoples" were possible, how could they all be victorious together—Chinese and Japanese, Russians and Americans and British and Germans? "The peoples must be free." Free of what? Free from what? Free for what?

I have not yet reached the end of Mrs. Buck's first paragraph, and I have still notes enough in front of me to fill an issue of THE ARYAN PATH with destructive criticism such as the foregoing. Let me conclude then by saying briefly that this book purports to deal with political and social problems of primary importance and immense magnitude, and that Mrs. Buck with her large-hearted American idealism constantly rushes into private sanctuaries where an angel would fear to tread, that she attempts to build international skyscrapers on foundations as insubstantial and unrealistic as those I have cited, that idealistic fantasies are even more remunerative in American journalism than in European, and that her book is, at bottom, simply a collection of articles which have appeared in popular magazines. She is, primarily, a best-selling novelist, and when such begin to let fly about world affairs, past experience tells us what to expect.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Buck claims to have spent the first half of her life in China. All the more shame to her then that she should be able to visualize so complacently the wretched brave new world of the future:—

> We know that swifter ships and more ships than ever before will be daily, hourly, crossing the seas. We know that in the skies the great airplanes will be speeding from people to people....

And so on. What a prospect! The ocean littered with world-touring American journalists; the very heavens locust-ridden with planes bearing American millionaires to Paris for the week-end! And what a pity that when Mrs. Buck was in China she didn't take the trouble to read a book some thousands of years old, the *Tao-teh-ching* by Lao-Tzu (who probably didn't get paid for writing it). Therein she would have read:—

> Without going out of the door
> One can know the whole world;
> Without peeping out of the window
> One can see the Tao of heaven.
> The further one travels
> The less one knows.
> Therefore the Sage knows everything
> without travelling;
> He names everything without seeing it;
> He accomplishes everything without
> doing it.

An American woman reading the *Tao* in a room alone brings East and West together more effectively than a library full of books like Mrs. Buck's.

J. P. HOGAN

II

The title is liable to be misunderstood. The book is not the intoxicated chatter of a chauvinist. It parades none of the arrogance of "Right or wrong—my country!" Pearl Buck is certainly proud to be an American but she is proud of that American tradition which is characterized by forthrightness, friendliness and a passionate love of liberty and equality. And such a tradition is worth being proud of. Indeed, only when Americans are really proud of this tradition rather than of the fabulous wealth of America or of the lesser things in American life, will the American nation rise to its full stature in the eyes of the world. For then America will stand up, undaunted by the frowns of kith and kin, to demand that the next peace shall ensure world-friendship, not colonialism; forthrightness, not diplomatic duplicity; and liberty for all, not domination by a few.

She speaks from the depths of her heart, and what she has the courage to say, and the gift to say so well, must find a responsive throb in the hearts of all sincere men and women the world over. She does not preach. She does not sit in the scorner's seat. But she constantly tries to put herself in the position of the aggrieved party, Negroes, Indians, Chinese and so forth, to feel what they feel, to voice their unspoken thoughts and their unuttered ambitions. That she often succeeds is the true measure of her greatness, and her greatness must be embarrassing for many who are dwarfed by the weight of Empire.

Her thesis is simple, as simple as American spelling! "Any new birth comes from a co-operative process, a fertilizing and a fostering." The Renaissance of the Middle Ages was the result of the action of the East. The Renaissance of this scientific age was the result of the action of the West. The Renaissance that must take place at the end of this global war must be the result of interaction between East and West. And if this new birth is to be encouraged, East and West must freely understand each other, for real understanding removes fear, and when the one is not afraid of the other there will be mutual reciprocity and collaboration. Happy partnership is the only guarantee for freedom and justice and equality.

Maybe you have heard some of the stories about our boys in India. The one I like best is that one which some one tells about having seen a bunch of them out rickshaw-riding and having seen some of them take a rickshaw coolie and put him in his own rickshaw while they pulled him, just for fun.

When the White man becomes human enough to see that the Brown or the Black or the Yellow man is his equal and deserves to be put into the rickshaw for a while and be pulled along instead of being forced to do all the pulling, then, in sober truth, the millennium would have begun. Peace would reign with the sceptre of love and spread plenty on the smiling earth.

But with the jarring discord of Imperialist jargon sounding in our ears, with the deafening din of war and the strident cries of race-supremacy rending the air, what chance is there for Pearl Buck's voice to be heard? Her idealism is redolent of the fresh flowers of springtime. Her faith is the shining blade of a valiant crusader. All honour to her! But will her words carry conviction to those who hold the reins of

power and are allowed to hold these reins because they have sworn to protect, by fair means or foul, the vested interests of their moneyocracy ?

Be that as it may. Pearl Buck in her chapter on India has made ample amends for the wrong done to India by the scandalous pen of that un-American woman Katherine Mayo. And we rejoice that this world, torn with hate and greed and violence, has at least one woman who can boldly raise her voice on behalf of the disinherited of East and West. Indeed, if she could not be an Indian we are glad she is an American, glad and even proud ! For did Columbus not believe he had found India when he landed on American shores ?

CYRIL MODAK

POLITICAL ECONOMY: A THEOCRATIC VIEW *

This small book is particularly valuable now when global war has made it important that the fundamental problems of political philosophy should be clarified. The author is a brilliant thinker who expresses himself with dignity and clarity without being dogmatic or bitter. His classical books *The Degrees of Knowledge* and *True Humanism* explain his philosophy in detail, but in this brief essay he outlines his conception of the rights of human persons without going deeply into questions regarding the forms of political government. He believes that the monarchical and the aristocratic régimes are normally stages on the road to a mixed, basically republican régime, which should preserve the qualities of vigour and unity of a nation. He condemns the false philosophy of life which deified human free-will, and evolved a godless man whose sense of human values made him work only to accumulate wealth in the hope of enjoying material goods. He also condemns unequivocally totalitarianism in all its forms and lays down that

> a single human soul is of more worth than the whole universe of bodies and material goods....Society exists for each person and is subordinate thereto.

Political society is intended to develop conditions of life in common which, while insuring first of all the welfare, vigour and peace of the whole, would help each person in a positive manner progressively to conquer this freedom of expansion and autonomy, which consists above all in the flowering of moral and rational life and of those ("immanent") interior activities which are the intellectual and moral virtues.

The true philosophy of the rights of a human person is, according to Maritain, based upon the idea of natural law. This law which lays down our most fundamental duties, and by virtue of which every law is binding, is the very law which assigns to us our fundamental rights. It is because we are enmeshed in the universal order, in the laws and regulations of the cosmos and of the immense family of created natures, and because of the privilege of sharing in spiritual nature, that we possess rights *vis-à-vis* other men and all the assemblage of creatures.

This conception of natural law, as distinguished either from the law of

* *The Rights of Man and Natural Law*. By JACQUES MARITAIN. (Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., London. 5s.)

nations or the common law, is an important characteristic of the philosophy of Maritain. He seems to think that every time that a human person or a group of human persons rise higher in the scale of performance of their duties, they rise also in their own rights, dignity and status. It is the conviction of the author that natural law requires that whatever it leaves undetermined shall subsequently be determined, either as a right or a duty existing for all men by reason of a given condition of fact, or as a right or a duty existing for certain men by reason of the human regulations proper to the community of which they are a part. There is a dynamism which impels the unwritten natural law to flower forth into human law, and to render the latter ever more perfect and just, and thus the rights of the human person take political and social form in the community.

The philosophy of Maritain should appeal to many, though some may demur to his conception of a vitally Christian society or of the superiority of the Catholic Church. Very few would be prepared to accept Maritain's claims for the Catholic Church on the ground that "it insists upon the principle that truth must have precedence over error and that the true religion when it is known should be aided in its spiritual mission in preference to religions whose message is more or less faltering and in which error is mingled with truth." He does not claim for the "true" religion the favours of an absolutist power or the assistance of the soldiery, but he pleads for a theocratic conception based on the spiritual mission of the Church, and insists on religious orders to co-operate with the social-service and educational agencies of the civil community.

Yet, freedom of religion is of greater importance than the conception of truth in the spiritual sphere. In this respect the ideal of a universal religion which sees varying degrees of truth and spiritual strength in all religious systems, and which is supported by various systems of Indian philosophy and also by Theosophy, should appeal to a great thinker like Maritain. Spiritual values based on the natural law and moral behaviour, would certainly lead to the recognition of religion as the force within the State without giving preference to one sect or one religion. It is only spiritual values that can prevent the carnage of wars in godless civilizations. But the limitations of religion as a force in political life must be fully recognised, even as the brilliant author, in respect of economic life and the rights of working persons, asserts that "the idea of the economic State is a monstrosity," and insists that "economic and vocational groups must be considered as the organs of the civil community, not as the organs of the State."

At a time when peace programmes and postwar planning schemes are in great vogue and when the United Nations stand pledged to freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear, Maritain's programme of the "rights of man" is stimulating and inspiring. He mentions the rights of human persons as such, the rights of the civil person, of the social person and, more particularly, of the working person. Evidently the form of Government is of no importance if the minimum

rights are guaranteed; and it is no small consolation that the State is expected to provide "free of charge, depending upon the possibilities of the community, the elementary goods both material and spiritual, of civilisation." Maritain summarises his political philosophy in the following sentences:—

> The common good flowing back over individuals; political authority leading free men towards this common good; intrinsic morality of the common good and of political life. Personalist, communal, and pluralist inspiration of the social civilization; organic link between civil society and religion, without religious compulsion or clericalism, in other words, a truly, not decoratively, Christian society. Law and justice, civic friendship and the equality which it implies, as essential principles of the structure, life and peace of society. A common task inspired by the ideal of liberty and fraternity, tending, as its ultimate goal, towards the establishment of a *brotherly city* wherein the human being will be freed from servitude and misery.

The book provides a sound political background and will be appreciated by thinkers, administrators and laymen interested in the planning of a better world.

P. G. SHAH

ECLECTIC PHILOSOPHY AND THE ANCIENT WISDOM *

The problem of the unification of systems of philosophy into an eclectic scheme has always been associated in the Western world with Neo-Platonism, and is not unconnected with what Professor Gilbert Murray calls, in his *Five Stages of Greek Religion*, "the Pagan reaction of Julian's time, in its final struggle against Christianity." Historically, it is traced to the development of eclecticism in Alexandria in the third century A. D. under the inspiring influence of Ammonius Saccas, whose mystery name of Theodidaktos is evidence of the contemporary belief that he had divine wisdom revealed to him in dreams and visions, as did Jacob Boehme in his day. This Alexandrian tradition is important in that an attempt was made to reconcile also Buddhistic, Vedantic and Magian systems of thought and belief with the extant Greek philosophies. The chief aim of the founders of this School became one of the three objects of the nineteenth-century Theosophical Movement, namely, "to reconcile all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities." The Ancient Wisdom, in the sense which the term possesses in Mr. Furze Morrish's useful digest, and which preceded Alexandrian theosophy by long ages, reached our modern world of thought in the writings of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, and seems destined to survive every other religion and philosophy. It is from this point of view, perhaps, that many observers look upon the theory of fellowship through religion (as may be seen, for instance, in the programmes of World Congresses of Faiths) as a doubtful proposition, unless it be realized that there is a deeper Wisdom than can be found in sectarian faiths. None-the-less, irenical contact between exponents of different systems, which,

* *Outline of Metaphysics*. By FURZE MORRISH. (Rider and Co., London. 15s.)

in themselves, are fundamentally antagonistic because exclusive, may alleviate friction, and, to that degree, serve a purpose that may lead to understanding and toleration.

Mr. Furze Morrish is concerned, however, with a more specific objective than mere eclecticism. He is after an "academic basis for occult metaphysics," and he defines the task as one which will "(a) render the principles of occultism intelligible to a growing number of educated and cultured western minds," and "(b) co-ordinate those principles with the accepted standards of modern scientific and academic study." Even though we may report progress in the years that have elapsed since the heyday of nineteenth-century materialism, when Professor Tyndall relegated metaphysics to the domain of poetry and fiction, it will be conceded that Mr. Furze Morrish has an ambitious project in his mind. In his endeavour to elucidate an academic basis, he devotes Part II of his work to a history and classification of the occult and theosophical background of his *Outline*. All becomes grist to his metaphysical mill! His bibliography ranges from Mme. Blavatsky *via* the Adyar school of theosophical activity, represented by Mrs. Besant, Bishop Leadbeater and others, to the "Astro-Metaphysics" (horrid word!) of Alan Leo and Max Heindel, with intellectual giants like Swami Vivekananda and Dr. Carl Jung thrown in for full measure! His territory is vast, and he is bound to interest many readers in East and West; but some will question the whole basis of his edifice, with its contrasting architectural styles, and attach but little significance to his "occult" correspondences and diagrams, when these are viewed in the light of a common inheritance of truths which were, and still are, hidden from profanation under an adequate and ancient symbology.

What (it may be asked) have the principles of occultism to do with "educated and cultured Western minds," who appear to be perfectly satisfied with their own "universe of discourse"? Is it not a thankless, if not an impossible, task to co-ordinate those principles "with the accepted standards of modern scientific and academic study"? In his *Outline*, Mr. Furze Morrish mentions two Eastern Teachers, whose names have been associated with the work of Mme. Blavatsky. Shall we go, then, to those Teachers for answers to these questions?

In a communication received by the late Mr. A. P. Sinnett at Simla on October 19, 1880, we find the dictum

> that occult science has its own methods of research as fixed and arbitrary as the methods of its antithesis, physical science, are in their way....He who would cross the boundary of the unseen world can no more prescribe how he will proceed than the traveller who tries to penetrate to the inner subterranean recesses of L'Hassa—the blessed—could show the way to his guide. The mysteries never were, never can be, put within the reach of the general public; not, at least, until that longed-for day when our religious philosophy becomes universal.

In another letter of two years later received by Mr. A. O. Hume the statement is made: "Our laws are as immutable as those of Nature, and they were known to man and eternity before this strutting gamecock, modern science, was hatched."

Innumerable quotations to the same effect might be cited. Indeed, a large part of Mme. Blavatsky's writings con-

stitutes a survey of nineteenth-century religious and scientific thought in the light of Esotericism—a *corpus* of knowledge *sui generis*, though founded upon experimentation throughout untold ages, and capable of verification by those who are "prepared to pay the price." Is academic thought in these days, any more than it was in the last century, willing to pay that price? Is it even prepared to retrace its steps from the prostitution of scientific knowledge to destructive ends, or to assist in terminating the dichotomy of science and ethics?

Another question of general importance is related to Mr. Furze Morrish's "Occult and Theosophical Background." Is there any common ground for the Theosophy of Mme. Blavatsky and, let us say, the "revelations" of Mrs. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater? To avoid any charge of bias, it may be advisable to bring forward the late Mrs. Besant as a witness in support of the view that an eclectic Theosophy of this nature is misconceived. In a magazine founded by Mme. Blavatsky in London, an article appeared in October 1891 (after Mme. Blavatsky's death) on "Theosophy and Christianity." It was written by Mrs. Besant, and in it she said:—

> Our only knowledge of the Wisdom Religion at the present time comes to us from the Messenger of its Custodians, H. P. Blavatsky. ...Her message remains for us the test of Theosophy everywhere....She always encouraged independent thought and criticism, and never resented differences of opinion, but she never wavered in the distinct proclamation "The Secret Doctrine *is*" so-and-so.

Controversy over details in this *Outline* may be left to individual readers; but only a superficial view will be able to conclude that Mr. Furze Morrish achieves his object. He has codified information of a metaphysical nature; but the soul of his labour is missing, for the scattered principles have no unifying basis in similarity of aim, purpose and teaching. As for Occultism, in any true sense of the word, there is here but *magni nominis umbra*. For the earnest student, the experience of a pioneer who forced her way into what Mme. Blavatsky called "the well-nigh impenetrable jungle of the virgin forests of the Land of the Occult" is there for his guidance and inspiration, and no room is left for ambiguity as to the nature of the perilous journey. For those who are influenced by "the accepted standards of modern scientific and academic study," notice has been given that if they should wish to slake their thirst for wisdom at the well to which the readers of this *Outline* are invited, they would be justified in coming as "pupil to master," and sensible in travelling free of the impedimenta too often acquired in the modern search for knowledge—preconceived notions, and the intellectual vanity that is so ready to believe that experimental science is a monopoly of Western minds and dates from the grant of a Charter to the Royal Society in the seventeenth century. Yet are we left with this verity and this assurance: Universal Brotherhood is not an idle dream, but a fact in the larger plan of Nature, visible and invisible, and, the door of the true Mysteries "is always opened to the right man who knocks."

B. P. Howell

Old Man in New World. By OLAF STAPLEDON. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 2*s.*)

This is another "peep into the future." The Old Man in question was born during World War I and is now nearly eighty—so the date is roughly 1995. Not so very far ahead. He is travelling to London by aeroplane to attend a great official celebration of nations who are now, one and all, in the greatest amity. He falls into conversation with the young pilot, and we learn the complexion of modern life and the story of its birth. It seems that they are now all getting on grand. The Young Man is a representative of the New Educational Policy which has been working for about twenty years.

During their conversation we learn what happened after War II. We won it, but we lost the peace again. America had the power and the money to rule over Europe and to bolster up the capitalist system. War III was due to start, the chief protagonists being Russia and America, when something happened. The propaganda "never really caught on, on either side" and "at the critical moment an extraordinary popular clamour broke out on both sides. A new hope in comradeship was born. Everyone downed tools and was ready to die for this new hope. They suffered imprisonment and death until the soldiers mutinied. The result was a whole-scale revolution in America and a change of heart in Russia.

How was this accomplished? Who supplied the ideal driving power, and who the organisation? The latter came from ex-airmen and oppressed workers who joined together as professional revolutionaries; while the necessary passion, heat and light were supplied by the *agnostic mystics.* They were the key architects of the New Jerusalem. The gospel which they taught "broke the spell of disillusion and spread like fire from heart to heart." And afterwards, by taking over the New Educational Policy, they "managed to open the eyes of the young" to the fact that men are in truth "instruments for the fulfilling of the spirit," with the result that the pilot who makes these remarks is now a representative of "the first undamaged generation and the first clear-sighted generation." And it is made clear that, wise in all things, he has already made the perfect marriage at the age of twenty-one.

They arrive in London and the Old Man witnesses the celebrations, which are in the form of a general parade of all nations in amity and unity—the kind of show which in Utopias is always found agreeable but in real life is secretly laughed at. The author, evidently feeling this, tells us that the proceedings were enlivened by a daring innovation. It seems that as the procession advanced it was accompanied by officially recognised clowns who, straggling on the outskirts, made fun of the parade, mimicking the gait and the expressions of the too earnest leaders. This innovation reaches its climax at the end when the President is making his speech to the applauding multitude. The Fool interrupts him and is allowed to address the meeting himself. "Happy, happy beings!" he cries. "But death dogs you. Conquerors of a world, but of a sand-grain among the stars! We are mere sparks that flash and die. ...After us our planet will spin for eons, and nothing

will remember us. Then why, why, why are we here?" After a suitable pause he says that we are here because we are the instruments of the Unseen that makes music with us through our loving, our creating and our thinking. Then the President sums up, and after thunders of applause there is a general dispersal.

It is quite a pleasant little fable. Very sound to lay emphasis upon the necessity of a whole-scale educational *policy*. The idea of the agnostic mystics is also good, however unfortunate the adjective, and undeveloped their theme. But the adolescent remarks of the fool are hard to bear.

JOHN STEWART COLLIS

Islamic Culture. By ASAF A. A. FYZEE. (International Book House, Ltd., Bombay. Re. 1/4)

This small volume is informed by a mellow tolerance that largely compensates in breadth for what the hypercritical might miss in depth. Principal Fyzee means here by Islamic Culture "the highest intellectual level or standard produced during some period of Islamic domination." It has always been the product of many minds, of various nationalities and creeds.

It is a fascinating story that he tells, a story that should be familiar, but is not, to every modern, heirs as all are to the great culture of Islam, which kept the torch alight during the night of Europe.

Mr. Fyzee sees the chief characteristics of Islamic Culture as the spirit of inquiry, the ideal of brotherhood, the sanctity of religion. Its achievements are too numerous to name.

It would be too much to ask of a book of the size of this to give the reader more. Several suggestions may be made, however, against the day when Mr. Fyzee amplifies his thesis in a full-length study. His cursory mention of the mystical side of Islam is tantalising. One hopes that he will bring out later the striking affinities of Sufism with mysticism otherwhere and otherwhen. One misses Dara Shikoh in the treatment of Mughal India. And Mr. Fyzee warns against underestimating the Indian contribution to Islamic culture. But has he paid full credit to India when he traces the "Arabic" numerals to this country, concedes that Mughal architecture is a synthesis of Indian and Islamic elements and that India has produced great theologians and a major language of Islam?

Mr. Fyzee writes that Islam obtained its chief legacy from Greece, and of the debt of Islamic culture to the Neoplatonists. But whence had Plato, whence had Plotinus and the other Neoplatonists, their doctrines? Pythagoras, whom Plato followed, brought to Greece the teachings of India. And Plotinus himself had visited India. When the Grecian and Neoplatonic teachings are thus traced back to India the latter's contribution to Islamic culture is seen as very great indeed.

PH. D.

The Life of Muhammad. By SUFI MUTIUR RAHMAN BENGALEE. (Moslem Sunrise Press, Chicago. $2.00)

The Life of Muhammad, as the founder of a great religion, undoubtedly requires interpretation in every age and yet I wonder if it is necessary to have such a large number of biographies from different points of view. The author of this book, for instance, says that biographies by Western authors, their scholarship and diligent research notwithstanding, are characterised by prejudice and bias. The real Muhammad is not known to the Western world, and he desires to write a book without prejudice and without bias. This reminds me, if I am not mistaken, of an opinion of Chesterton that a man without prejudice is an odious and colourless creature. The Western people might retort that the author is so prejudiced in favour of the Prophet that he sees nothing but good in the least of his actions.

The truth appears to be that it is impossible to write any book in an absolutely unprejudiced manner. Biographies of the Prophet can be divided, generally speaking, into those written by Muslims and those written by non-Muslims. In each of these classes, there is a variety of books depending upon the scholarly attainments and the literary accomplishments of different writers. And whenever a new biography of the Prophet appears, I, as an old diehard, am sorry that Ameer Ali is not alive to summarise in the space of some 200 pages his excellent work, *The Spirit of Islam*, which, in the opinion of many, is the finest biography of the Prophet for the general reader written by a Muslim.

The author is a Muslim Missionary and is the Editor of the only Muslim paper in the United States, *The Moslem Sunrise.* He has obviously written for American readers. The book is divided into seven chapters, the most valuable of which are on the character of Muhammad and his saying and doings. It will be found useful by American readers, although it is doubtful whether it would be much used in India. There is no attempt at transliteration, and to mention a matter of detail, the letter *q* is always followed by an unnecessary *u* producing the following queer results: Zurquani (p. 16 n.); Aquaba (p. 66); Nuquool (p. 93); Quayunqua (p. 113).

The book is a devout offering by a follower of the Qadiani sect to his leader and will perhaps lead to his spiritual exaltation. For the ordinary reader in India, it is impossible to say that it constitutes any important addition to the existing literature.

A. A. A. FYZEE

Struggling Heights. By H. D. SETHNA. (Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay 2. Re. 1/4)

Here is a score of poems, vibrant with the emotional intensity and intuition of genuine vision. If one may borrow from the poet's own phraseology to express the reader's response, Mr. Sethna's winged words are

A multitude of beauty
All compressed
Into one darkness, a sanctuary
Of deep vision
Where forms lay down
Their vesture,
All their day-renown
Is silenced
Into a blissful meditation.

For the poet has seen beyond the façade of things. To him his country

is the great mother in whose eye there shines "a titanic light that wakens the whole race," who is "of a proud courage and power to be free," in whose sorrow is lit up "the ancient beauty of Calvary," and for the sake of whose freedom "life has made a tryst with death." The Himalayas to him are the ancient seers who sing in silence.

Climbing the heights in the company of the poet, one has a vivid feeling of oneself having turned awhile a pilgrim to the shrine of the stars.

G. M.

Cyclone and Other Stories. By R. K. NARAYAN. (Indian Thought Publications, Mysore. Re. 1/8)

Between narrating a story and constructing it, the literary form traces an extensive arch with a vast variety of colours and effects. While, in the first, incidents flow in swift seeming inconsequence, in the second, the plot shows a marked logical coherence. If an easy casualness marks the first method, an artful deliberateness characterises the other. In neither case is verisimilitude sacrificed. Thus in this collection of eighteen short stories Shri Narayan covers the whole range between the extremes of the arch. Stories like "An Accident," "Iswaran," "A Hero" and "The Regal" on the one hand and "Such Perfection," "The Doctor's Word" and "The Roman Image" on the other seem to mark the two ends. Others are seen at various stages, proving how almost every bit of human experience has its own story value.

It is with this infinite range, variety and value of human experience that Shri Narayan seems concerned. He does not wrestle with great problems or make his stories media for platitudes. The endless patterns of human feelings and emotions, the immense variety of their fleeting lights and shades is enough grist for these eminently readable stories. The gaiety and garrulousness of some of them is as enjoyable as the grip and tension of some others is almost unendurable.

The stories deserve a more dignified cover and a better get-up.

V. M. INAMDAR

Paranormal Cognition. By LAURENCE J. BENDIT, M.A., M.D., D.P.M. (Faber and Faber, Ltd., London. 5s.)

Modern research into paranormal cognition, extra-sensory perception, the "Psi function"—all names for the activity of the psychic senses—often approaches some part of the Theosophical teachings. Yet the recognition of an existing science of occultism would prevent much fumbling over old ground, much confusion of words, and would afford safeguards against dangers not always realised. Dr. Bendit makes several excellent points—the distinction between the controlled use of the Psi function, and its instinctive, unregulated use, as in mediums and hysteriacs, causing disintegration of the personality; the fact that sense perception, physical or psychic, does not give understanding, and that the non-identification of oneself with impressions received through the psychic senses weakens their affective power. Dr. Bendit's theme is that man started from the plane of omniscience, and has to narrow his perception to a minimum before he can, as an individualised entity, broaden out again to omniscience. Sense perception, physical or psychic, will not give this. "Some day . . . perceptive cognition will subordinate to the higher function of the mind illumined from above."

W. E. W.

If This Were True. By J. D. BERESFORD. (Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

Mr. Beresford's novels invariably make us think—and hope—and sigh again. He doesn't write to entertain us, but rather to sting us into attempting a revaluation of values. The world is out of joint, and the cry is wrung from our hearts: "To what end?" Organized religion has failed us; science has abandoned the seeming certitudes of the nineteenth century and is increasingly dyed with mysticism; and the mere agnostic is fast becoming a bloodless anachronism. If matter and energy are ultimately interchangeable —what if they too are but emanations of a more basic force, say spiritual force? Were the "miracles" attributed to Jesus no more than cock-and-bull stories? What if they were, on the other hand, strictly true—what if they should be possible even in our own terror-haunted and frenzied times? The authentic Indian Yogi rests in the Spirit, lives by It and rules by It—and what is possible for one person ought to be possible for others as well. If only we could return to Christ—Christ undefiled by organized religion—all would be well. Love would reign in our midst, and discords would cease, and Beauty and Truth would become the daily impulse and law of our terrestrial life. Disease would be eliminated, desire would grow desireless, and—why not?—death itself would be checkmated. And we would all be like little children and enter the Kingdom of Heaven—and the Kingdom would be *here*, on *this* "bank and shoal of time"! Like Mr. Beresford's hero, Lewis Arkwright, we too stumble upon Christ in a vacuum—in the pages of this extraordinary novel!—and like him we are precipitately hurried farther and farther; and, as we touch the core of the "miracle," we almost accept it for the nonce. And we sadly close the book—and think—and sigh—and exclaim with the author, half-audibly:—"If this were true!..."

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Constipation and Dyspepsia. By SARMA K. LAKSHMAN. (Re. 1/8/- or 4*s.*); *The Natural Cure of Eye Defects.* By L. KAMASVARA SARMA. (Rs. 2/- or 5*s.*). (The Nature-Cure Publishing House, Pudukkottai, S. I. Ry.)

Nature is our foster-mother, but because so often we treat her as if she were our step-mother, the rhythm of our mutual relationship is broken and our body-mind suffers. Hence, physical disease and mental dis-ease. Most of the manifold physiological maladies of the modern age are rooted, therefore, in unnatural living. As Shri Sarma K. Lakshman truly says:—

> Disease is like a single incarnating soul or ego, having innumerable incarnations, and in each incarnation it has a different name and form, but every time it arises from the same cause. That cause is abnormality of the body-substance due to encumbering foreign matter.

Constipation is one of the curses and consequences of the present-day civilization and the parent of a brood of bodily disorders. It can be cured radically only in the natural way, through right living with its stress on "tranquil toil" and "righteous diet."

Crutches for the eyes, or glasses, are another bane of our mechanistic, medicine-minded age. Their increasing use is again due to unnatural living. Here too,

> the natural way is the only rational way, because it alone is based on the truth, that the body is an indivisible organic whole, and needs to be treated as such.

The authors are not mere theoreticians, they have prescribed practical curative treatment of the "fashionable" diseases under consideration, based on lifelong study and learnt from experience—that greatest of all teachers! And the treatment is easy and not so expensive as in several other systems.

G. M.

An Introduction to Philosophy. By W. A. SINCLAIR. (Oxford University Press, London. 5*s.*)

Mr. Sinclair performs very well indeed the task of "introducing" philosophy to the uninitiated. He does not attempt to summarize the wisdom (or folly) of the hierarchy from Aristotle to Whitehead as a less tactful mentor might have done: instead, he merely plants the seed of inquiry in the reader's mind and gives it the chance to grow through ten chapters. "If we start seriously trying to understand the world," he says, "we find ourselves having to try first to understand what we are doing when we understand." He insists from the start that the philosophic basis of all valuable inquiry is the continual and rigorous questioning of our "underlying assumptions," those often rickety foundations on which we struggle to erect the structure of our living; and he insists, too, on our recognizing the prime importance of this business of "the nature of knowing." He devotes two chapters to "The Traditional Explanation of Perception," travelling by way of Descartes and Locke to Berkeley's *reductio ad absurdum;* and after a perhaps rather academic tribute to the significance underlying Berkeley's contribution, turns to "Finding a Better Alternative," beginning with a contemporary interpretation of Kant in terms of "selecting" and "grouping" and establishing a reliable basis for further inquiry in a stimulating chapter, "What Is Truth?"

Here one's interest quickens as Mr. Sinclair's orbit touches our own. The word "integration" crops up; and for the first time in his life one reader at least suddenly realized that the professional philosopher moves towards the same goal as the mystic or the metaphysician. In these closing chapters we get the sense of having been here before, of having got back to where we started from by a circuitous and, it must be admitted, somewhat tortuous route.

> To increase our knowledge is not to place something where there was nothing before. To increase our knowledge is to alter for the better our ways of "selecting" and "grouping;" to notice what we did not notice before; and to notice it in ways which are new to us, and probably strange.
>
> The difference between the educated and the uneducated is not only that the educated are aware of, and respond to, more of the complex reality about us than the uneducated....[It] is that the educated see what they experience as fitting together systematically into a pattern which, while adequate, is reasonably simple and coherent, whereas the uneducated do not. The views of the uneducated on one subject remain uncorrelated with their views on others, thereby bringing confusion into their judgments and decisions on practical affairs, without their having any notion of this incoherence.

So it seems that what we have been concerned with all these years is—philosophy. The word seems almost archaic these days—or rather, the path of Descartes, Berkeley and that ilk seems a little overgrown with unnecessary nettles. We remember the words on the dial of Baudelaire's fingerless clock, "It is later than you think," and hurry back to Kierkegaard, Berdyaev, or whoever happened to hold our attention before Mr. Sinclair so quietly came into our room.

J. P. HOGAN

SHORT NOTICES

For Ever. By DALLAS KENMARE. (Burrow's Press Ltd., Cheltenham) Feeling as intense, even in retrospect, as its expression is delicate informs the dramatic monologues which make up this latest collection of Miss Dallas Kenmare's poems. They are pulse-quickening soliloquies of six women of history and of legend—sometimes truer than history—women who loved; and suffered.

Strangely, the title poem, beautiful in its imagery, suggestive in its postulation of a reincarnated Héloïse, subtly misses the complete convincingness of even the slighter "Laura" and "Ophelia." The transcendent transports of "Beata Beatrix" definitely lack reality.

Human love, now yearning, now tempestuous, is shown here dominated by the far horizons on which love's casements open, horizons high above which looms the mountain mass of Mystery impenetrable by the finite mind. "The richer life which love reveals" by the voice of the spirit is exalted above the urgency of body, heart and mind. "There is no death for a love whose home is beyond the stars." The poems all reach out for something beyond immediacy. Perhaps Miss Kenmare's truest intuition is that put into words remembered by the musing Héloïse :—

> You would have spared me sorrow, and in sparing would have denied me life.

For individual love at its noblest is still an *égoisme à deux*. Only suffering can universalise it in the all-embracing Compassion which is the crown of love. From these chastened musings on flown ecstasies one turns to Shelley's lines in *Julian and Maddalo* :—

> There is one road
> To peace and that is truth, which follow ye !
> Love sometimes leads astray to misery.

C. D.

Commonwealth of Tomorrow. By H. GOETZ. (Indian Periodicals, Ltd., 8, Nawab Yusuf Road, Allahabad. Rs. 3/-) Dr. Goetz brings a synthetic and reasoned historical perspective to his interpretation of contemporary world developments. Commonwealth is neither his blue print nor his prescription. It is, in the light of historical experience, the only immediate possibility. Politics has not in practice responded creatively to the changing dimensions of life, a failure which has rendered possible the attempt to perpetuate outmoded political doctrines and has finally resulted in conflict. Aggressive nationalism must yield place to cultural regionalism and zones of influence. The European nations must federate, not only among themselves, but also with South-East Asia and the North African Colonies. The world, although not yet ready for universal union, has now to step beyond the outworn concepts of nationalism and empire. That is the least necessary for safety and the most within the possibility of present achievement.

The distinguished author argues with world history at his finger tips. Wary of utopian dreams, he envisages here a possible prospect, necessary and safe. A realistic approach to the problems of the future that is bound to repay thoughtful reading, serving as a reminder to the idealist and, if so taken, as a friendly suggestion to the imperialist. Sir R. P. Masani introduces the author and the book in a very interesting foreword. V. M. I.

Srimad Bhagavatam : The Wisdom of God. Translated by SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Rs. 3/8) This is the Indian edition of Swami Prabhavananda's translucent rendering of part of the *Srimad Bhagavatam,* ancient Indian scripture *par excellence* of *Bhakti* or devotion. The American edition, brought out by Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, was reviewed in THE ARYAN PATH in August 1944. This Indian edition is beautifully got up, and its frontispiece with the Eternal Flutist surrounded by the kine, dumbly adoring him "with tear-dimmed eyes," is even more attractive than the frontispiece by Suzanne Miller in the American edition. Our congratulations to the publishers! E. M. H.

Shrimad Bhagawad Gita, with a Commentary by SHRIPAD DAMODAR SATWALEKAR. Trans. by VAMAN NARAYAN GODBOLE. (Swadhyaya Mandal, Aundh, Dist. Satara. Re. 1/-) Notwithstanding the existence of countless commentaries on the *Gita* one may welcome an attempt like this to expound the cardinal message of the *Gita* as directly concerned with the realization of the "Purusharthas" (Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha) an aspect on which sufficient emphasis had not been laid, even by classic commentators like Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva. The author calls Dhritarashtra an Imperialist and says the *Gita* could correctly be understood only in the light of Sanjaya's preaching to the Pandavas at his direction a sermon on peace and non-violence. He sees Arjuna's despondency as the reflex of this preaching. It is difficult to admit this argument. Careful perusal of Chapter 22 of the Udyoga-Parva (to which attention is drawn) proves that, far from being an insincere imperialist intent on creating in a Machiavellian manner psychological depression in the Pandavas, the old blind Dhritarashtra was trembling at the prospect of the inevitable destruction of his sons and clan. There is nothing especially novel about the *Gita's* dealing with the spiritual transformation of Nara into Narayana, the *Gita's* message being equality and equanimity or the identity of teachings of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the *Gita*—though the full-fledged doctrines contained in the *Gita* are not to be found actually in their metaphysical maturity in the Vedas. The author is to be congratulated on his interpretation.—M. A. RUCKMINI

Europe : A New Picture. By JOANNA SCOTT. (Rider and Co., London. 21s.) This work will be of interest to students of modern philosophies and sciences; but, apart from a fanciful interpretation of the individual functioning of the chief European nations, based upon researches of the late Dr. Eugen Kolisko, it has no relationship to historical or ethnological studies. We are told that Dr. Kolisko found "in the study of the twelve senses a key to the recognition of the characteristics of the different countries, which led him to find the connection between the peoples of Europe and the forces of the stars." The seven additional senses to those generally accepted are those of Life, Movement, Balance, Warmth, Speech, Thought and Ego. The whole book, in fact, is written in the light of the Anthroposophy of the late Dr. Rudolf Steiner, one-time General Secretary of the German Section of the Adyar Theosophical Society, whose personal "occult" communications

and instructions led to his rift with Mrs. Besant.

The point of view of the author may perhaps best be expressed, in this brief review, by her statement that the destiny of Europe was "to raise human thinking to its perfection." After that, it will not astonish the reader to find that, according to her chapter on "Seeds for a New World," she believes it was through Steiner's researches that the subject of reincarnation "was brought within reach of the reason, and specially within the sphere of practical observation."

All this is far removed from the thought that the Wisdom Religion is the inheritance of all the nations the world over, and it is difficult to see what useful purpose is served by the publication of these speculations in the consideration of European problems today. The Karma of "the fighting and trading West" is manifold in its operations!—B. P. HOWELL

Malnutrition. By NORAH CURTIS and CYRIL GILBEY. (Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, London. 2*s.*)

This small booklet is full of information supported by facts and figures about the Quaker relief work in Austria after the first World War and in Spain after the civil strife. It brings out some points which need to be borne in mind, particularly when relief on an unprecedented scale will be called for both in and outside the theatres of war. Experience has proved how difficult is the task of restoring normal economic life after the severe wartime dislocations, how the problems of peace are more difficult than the problems of war. Urgent relief of distress due to famine is comparatively easy but malnutrition is harder to fight. Overcoming it involves a slow process of recovery in which the stabilising of indigenous economy and production are more important than external relief ensured from without. Relief achieves its object better when it helps the distressed to help themselves than when it keeps them dependent on charity. These and many questions arising in the practical handling of relief operations are here presented and will prove of immense value to all who may be called upon to do similar work after the present war.—V. M. I.

We have recently received three publications of the Pakistan National Movement: *The Millat of Islam and the Menace of "Indianism," The Millat & the Mission,* both by Choudhary Rahmat Ali, and *The Founder of Pakistan* by Khan A. Ahmad. These three booklets constitute not so much argument in favour of a separate Muslim State as bitter diatribes against non-Muslims who, it is alleged, are determined to crush and enslave the Muslim population of India. No wonder, therefore, that the authors regard Indian unity as a mischievous myth. It is futile to cross swords with those that argue more with fanaticism than with logic. It is arguing in the face of history to maintain, as the authors do, after so many centuries, that Muslims are not Indians! Can we be led anywhere except to cultural chaos and political frustration by failure to realise our common culture, unity and hopes?

PH. D.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

" _____ ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

The inauguration of the Hindustani Culture Society at Allahabad on 25th March under the lead of Dr. Bhagavan Das, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and others will be sincerely greeted by all. The venture is vastly significant in that the promoters have adopted the right approach to the problem that faces the country. The political and economic problems of the country will solve themselves once the central fact of cultural unity is allowed to function. The need of the hour is therefore to perceive the rift which Indian cultural life today is developing and to adopt the right means of reconsolidating the age-old unity to which centuries of India's history testify. As the Society's statement of objects points out, " the rude shock of Western culture broke up this unity of medieval Indian life " and unleashed ideologies which today have brought about a conflict of opposing forces—" impulses of self-assertion and self-indulgence " on the one hand and " interests of fellowship and counsels of reason " on the other. The New Social Order in India can have no significance without a resolution of this essential conflict. The power which she needs can come only from a revivification of that unity. Rightly do the promoters of the Society believe that history, experience of affairs, and common sense teach us that power is generated only through good fellowship, social coherence, agreement on the fundamental values and ends of life. Where men's minds are united by identity of aims, their hearts throb in unison, and arms are strong ; on the contrary, where men do not agree on essential principles, and there is confusion in their counsels and conflict in the conceptions of life, the blood-stream runs sluggishly through the body-politic and the muscles of society lose their vital tension.

It is the power of this unity which the Hindustani Culture Society attempts to bring to present-day India by promoting an awareness of the fundamental values and the purpose of life, of the possibilities of altruism, of the unity of religions, of the reconciliation of the individual's and the nation's needs. Political in its demand for power, economic in its fight against mass poverty, social in its attempts at communal harmony and moral in its inculcation of the ideal of self-identification with the country's interests, the Society's task is as comprehensive as it is complex. With the right recognition of the historical processes of amalgamation and assimilation of the varied strands in India's long cultural history the Society envisages the emergence of a new cultural synthesis, a new and united way of life and outlook. Only in such emergence can India hope for harmony within and power without.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru is the President of the Society and the Vice-Presidents are Dr. Bhagavan Das and Dr. Abdul Haque. Nothing could be more convincing of the *bona fides* of the

move than the fact that four out of the seven other members of the Governing Body are distinguished Muslims.

The passage by the New York State Legislature of the Ives Anti-Discrimination Bill, making "economic discrimination, on account of race or religion, against any element of this State's nearly 14 million people an illegal and punishable act" is an important step in the right direction. It is reported that ten other States are following the lead in the matter.

The Negro problem has long been a sore spot in American democratic life. The persistence with which the American population has tried to keep the Negro in his place—a place economically submerged and socially ostracised—can have nothing to justify it. Wholly unreasonable prejudice has been responsible for the denial in practice of the human equality which the Negro enjoys in law. That should be an indication of the inadequacy of any legislation unaccompanied by strict and impartial enforcement. New York State promises this. But even benevolent legislation cannot ignore the fact that prejudices die hard and have to be fought through a slow process of proper education. The future citizens have to be kept free from notions of superiority or inferiority, economic or racial. The Negroes in America have a highly creditable record of achievement against odds. A recent example bordering on the spectacular is the widely admitted and most hopeful success which the young Negro conductor Dean Dixon has achieved with his orchestra of young men and women of both races. Mr. Dixon, a Master of Arts of Columbia University, who has served as guest conductor of the National Broadcasting Company's symphony orchestra, as also of the New York Philharmonic Symphony, won an enthusiastic reception from the press for his mixed orchestra's debut concert at Carnegie Hall. He is convinced, however, that "the Negro artist will achieve his future only as the Negro achieves his full stature as a citizen and a participant in the social and economic life of the nation."

Not merely antiquarian interest attaches to an assessment of the extent of ancient India's cultural influence on outside countries. Sir Richard Winstedt's scholarly contribution to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (Parts 3 and 4, 1944) lifts the veil from ancient cultural influences that flowed from India to the Malay world. The contacts reach back to the early centuries of the Christian era. Sumatra and Malaya furnished the nearest ports for the Indian maritime activities which brought more than merchandise. Third-century inscriptions in Annam and other evidence leading perhaps even farther back, the Saiva inscriptions in Cambodia, relics of the two schools of Buddhism, and many more bits of testimony rescue from oblivion a glorious chapter in India's ancient history. Islam came to Malaysia about the twelfth century and the freshness of the early influence was gradually lost before the white shadows crept across the South Seas. But it would, Sir Richard writes, be little exaggeration to say that the Malayan races

> till the nineteenth century owed everything to India: religions, a political system, mediæval astrology and medicine, literature, arts and crafts.

We welcome the inauguration late in February, under the inspiring lead of Shri D. V. Gundappa, of the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs in Bangalore City. At a time when in our country public life is vitiated by ideological conflicts, party loyalties and creedal and communal sympathies, it is well that more and more institutions should come into being with the express object of helping the public to make a dispassionate study of public questions. This non-communal and non-partisan association will undertake the education of the public in " the free, well-informed and conscientious exercise of democratic citizenship. " While the need for study and research is recognised, definite emphasis is placed on the practical effectiveness of the Institute in facilitating collaboration between students of public affairs. As Shri Gundappa explained in his inaugural address, the Institute will be

> a study-room for intelligent citizenship, an exchange-house of thought and information for men and women of public spirit, and an unofficial secretariat for all good and worthy popular causes.

The Institute has already started work in right earnest. Its publication, *All-India Union*, by Shri Gundappa in answer to the questionnaire of the (Sapru) Conciliation Committee provides a thought-provoking approach.

The Foundation Day of the Madras Sanskrit College, the Ayurvedic College and the Venkataramana Dispensary was celebrated at Madras on 15th March. Mr. Justice Patanjali Sastri emphasised in his presidential address the worth of institutions which attempted the preservation of ancient India's cultural values enshrined in the Sanskrit language. Recalling that those institutions had been founded to help Sanskritic studies to come into their own and prevent the gradual alienation of the younger generation from India's heritage, Mr. Justice Sastri brought out that

> today more than ever the world stands in need of the message of our civilisation and culture, which has its roots in Sanskrit literature and learning, a culture and civilisation which give us a colour and an individuality among the peoples of the world.

The solidarity of man and freedom from greed as the most important of all freedoms, he urged, formed the crux of the ancient message. He did not believe in a lasting peace until these twin principles were firmly grasped and built into international relations. But the gulf between ideals and life is wide.

The disfavour into which Sanskritic studies have fallen in India, alas, of all countries, is unfortunate, but none but the Indians themselves can be held responsible for that. Indians owe it to themselves and to the outside world not merely to revive the study of the ancient message—in which direction so much has been done in recent years—but to put the message into practice and demonstrate its significance. The Westerner as well as the modern Indian intellectual can justly demand a demonstration of what has too often been merely facilely enunciated. If we think the pattern of ancient Indian cultural life has significance for the modern world it can be better communicated to it by ourselves exemplifying its dynamic possibilities than by merely echoing the ancient texts. The modern world has a right to demand of the would-be physician that he heal himself.

Shri K. G. Mashruwala's message to the Students' Congress, Bangalore, in connection with the Summer Literacy Drive which it had organised, reiterates some fundamentals of rural uplift work. It is too often readily assumed that the villages have all to learn and nothing to teach. It is a mistake, Shri

Mashruwala reminds us, to approach the illiterate with "the notion that those who cannot read and write are wholly ignorant, or necessarily more ignorant than the literate or the well-read one." The reminder is salutary that what books contain is at best "the token coins and currency notes of knowledge and not the knowledge itself." Those who are not provided with the key which literacy offers may often know a good deal about "several matters, including even literature" which can be profitably learnt by the literate. He may be more at home in his world than we are in ours.

> He knows the nature around him better, his powers of observation are often keener, and his hands, fingers and other limbs of action are more developed, better trained and more under his control than those of many amongst us.

And incidentally, the ethical standards of the illiterate villagers *en masse* compare very favourably with those of the sophisticated city-dwellers. To go to the villagers therefore, "as seekers of knowledge as much as its distributors," does not involve a pose but the recognition, indispensable to effective village work, that the superiority is not all on one side.

More than fifty American authorities on child welfare recently testified before the U. S. Senate's Subcommittee on Wartime Health and Education. Most agreed that no single factor could be held responsible for child delinquency nor could a single form of control eliminate it. The Subcommittee was considering the formation of a national commission for children and young people, subsequently recommended in its report, which rightly indicates prevention as the soundest approach to delinquency. This programme of prevention starts in the home, which should provide the right environment, physical, mental and moral, for the unfoldment of innate capacities. But the community has a responsibility as well, to furnish education, recreation etc. A twist imparted to the child's unfoldment creates the problem child. "That which is good for children generally is also good for the prevention of delinquency." The proposed new Commission would co-ordinate the work for children already being carried on by several official agencies, including the Children's Bureau, the U. S. Office of Education etc. We are glad that the U. S. A. recognises the vast importance of "its greatest human asset," its school-age children. But when will India's children in their neglected millions come into their own ?

A recent proposal which will be widely welcomed is that of the National Education Association in the U. S. A. to sponsor a post-war educational conference to discuss how teachers in all countries can co-operate in promoting the conditions necessary for lasting peace. Educators from all over the world are to be invited to participate. Among the subjects to be canvassed are the possibilities for international relationships and co-operation between members of the teaching profession in different countries.

Modern India, with her last-century Western educational model and her overwhelming majority of illiterates might be expected to have more to learn from a conference on educational methods than to contribute to it. But India's fundamental tradition of the unity of the human family as of all life could powerfully supplement the ideological basis for the will to peace. Modern education is essentially analytical, centrifugal, emphasising differences, when the hope of lasting peace depends in no small part on synthesis and on the tracing of similarities and resemblances in ever-widening groups. Whatever educational programme can be worked out which will promote mutual understanding and sympathy, whether study of foreign literature, customs, faiths or art, or interchange of teachers and of students between countries, is to be welcomed as a step toward synthesis and recognition of the brotherhood of man.