# 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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## "THUS HAVE I HEARD"—

In these days all States call themselves democratic: some are capitalistic, others are totalitarian, others still are welfare States. Consider the true meaning of Democracy: although freedom and democracy are so much talked of, no nation in the world today is truly democratic, for, in our concern for the mere political implications of the term, its inner, spiritual significance is overlooked. In a true democracy foremost thought should be given not to rights and privileges but to duties and responsibilities. Until and unless we change our basis of thinking and of acting and regard humanity as one great family and strive together for the enlightened freedom of each unit of that family, we shall continue to have counterfeit democracy.

What is it that makes democracy successful? Universal franchise, it may be said. But even in countries where universal franchise obtains, the will of the people does not prevail. And what is "the rule of the people"? No better words can be found to enshrine the ideal of true democracy than the noble words of Lincoln—"government of the people, by the people, for the people." It is easy enough to repeat these words; it is not so easy to grasp the great sentiments they enshrine.

The word democracy (derived from the Greek terms *demos*, people, and *kratos*, strength) means the strength or power of the people. It does not mean the rule of the people only in the political sense; it means the strength of the people to express their will in action—wise action. It implies that supreme power is vested in the people that compose the State.

The three factors involved in Lincoln's definition must all be present if democracy is to succeed. In so-called democratic countries there are governments *of* the people, *i.e.*, the rulers are elected by the people themselves, but the prevailing discontent and discord bear testimony to the fact that they are not governments *for* the people. Democracy has failed because only the good of a few is taken into account, without regard to the good of other peoples.

The first and foremost requisite for true democracy is self-sacrifice. In our age when the idea of One World and World Government is gaining ground, we needs must take into account the good of the whole of mankind. True democracy, therefore, begins with the concept of fraternity, and only when this idea is accepted can we talk of freedom. It is through the idea of fraternity that people rule their own State and aid others to rule theirs.

True democracy, therefore, is rooted in the idea of equal opportunity for all souls, leading to the freedom of the individual soul. The aim of any truly democratic form of government should be to give its people opportunities to receive real self-education—the State educates its citizen for the State; it should educate him for cultivating his own nobility.

Though such ideal democracy does not prevail today, in ancient times, both in the East and in the West, under great spiritually inclined rulers and statesmen, democracy was a successful institution because its spiritual basis was taken into account. The people were then happy and prosperous, for the governments were of the people, by the people and, above all, for the people in a very real sense. So, for democracy to be successful, those at the helm of affairs in a State have to be sincere men, spiritually inclined, and democrats in their own individual lives, for the power of individual example is tremendous.

What part can each individual play in building a truly democratic State? Let each one practise true democracy in the primary unit where it can be practised, *i.e.*, in the home or the family. The home has often been looked upon as a miniature State. The State and the family are so closely linked that when the institution of the family becomes degraded the fall of the State results. The family is the sphere where qualities like affection, love, harmony, reverence for elders, protection of the young and so forth have full scope for development, and this enables people to participate in building larger democracies. Besides, in the home rights and duties, privileges and responsibilities go hand in hand.

So the importance of the individual as the builder of democracy has to be recognized. Each one, in order to make the task successful, has to control his thoughts, purify his passions, uproot his prejudices and radiate forth the light of the Soul.

Confucius says that "the ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom" in order to govern well their States, took as the starting point "the investigation of things" or "knowing the root."

Things being investigated, knowledge became complete.

Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere.

Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified.

Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated.

Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated.

Their families being regulated, their States were rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.

SHRAVAKA

# THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA IN THE BIBLE

[**Shri S. K. George**, a Christian whose liberal religious attitude is familiar to our readers, here traces that essential doctrine of ancient Indian philosophy, Karma, in the Bible. He thus shows how practical is the hope he expressed in his article, published in our March issue, "Christianity in Independent India": "Christianity in an Independent India might yet find its rightful place within Indian religion, might yet become truly Indian without ceasing to be Christian."

His strictures on the self-styled "Sanatanist" are just: clinging to old ritual and form is a hindrance to genuine religion. But the indubitable need for purification of current religious practices can be understood without postulating, as Shri George does, an evolution of religion rather like the supposed evolution of man from savagery to civilization. That mighty mind, H. P. Blavatsky, showed that the gross and superstitious element infects a religious tradition, more often than not, *after* a glorious period during the mission of a great teacher. The modern dogmatist, especially the priestly dogmatist, relies, not upon the ancient source, but upon later accretions, in his resistance to reform. The progress of religions, then, is in cycles; of which only the second part begins in grossness and superstition, ascending, under the guidance of true reformers, to pure faith and ethics. The first begins with a pure teaching, which sinks into that grossness and superstition in the hands of fanatical followers and interested priests. In fact, the great teachers rarely found religions, they aim rather at making the faiths of their time once again expressions of the one primeval truth, the one Wisdom-Religion of all times and places.—ED.]

The story of every religion is interesting for the line of progress that is to be traced in each. Nothing has discredited religion more in modern thought than the refusal to recognize this line of progress, than the identification of all religions with what is gross and superstitious in the origins of them all. The "Sanatanist" or conservative in religion, who would hold on to the entirety of religious tradition, who would jealously guard the fixed deposit of the faith delivered once for all to the saints, is as much to blame for the blight that has come upon religion as the undiscriminating modern critic who would "debunk" the whole of religious insight, its loftiest flights as well as its incipient gropings after Truth, as a fruitless search after a non-existent reality. The Fundamentalist Christian, who affirms the verbal inerrancy of the Bible from cover to cover ("And the covers too," exclaimed an ecstatic believer when another was making the assertion), has done more to call in question the worth of the growing apprehension of the Eternal through Hebrew and Christian channels than the rationalist who would condemn it all as a "lost illusion." The same is true of all

religious search and realization. They make sense only when the lines of their advance and growing illumination are recognized and the mind is kept continually open to fresh insights to be won into the unspent, deep resources of Ultimate Reality.

This is most clearly seen in man's conceptions regarding the nature of the soul and human destiny. The Hebrew and Christian religious traditions are noted, not for the intellectual satisfaction they give to ultimate questions, but for their strong ethical emphasis; not so much for the explanations they give, as for the power they confer on man to withstand and overcome " the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." The early Hebrews had very hazy notions about the destiny of the human soul after its earthly existence. They seem to have shared the early Greek view about a shadowy world of the dead in which there was no remembrance of God. " For...they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee," cried an early prophet. The only survival the early Hebrews believed in, or cared for, was the survival of the race. Hence the passionate longing for children, especially male children, to carry forward the race and to inherit the promises of God to the fathers. There was also the belief that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. The most sacred of their texts, the Ten Commandments, declared their God to be " a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." (*Exodus*, 20: 5,6)

But this conception of racial solidarity and divine justice failed to satisfy them in the face of continued national calamities. The significance of the individual dawned late on Hebrew thinkers as it did on other primitive races. The problem of individual suffering was courageously faced by the Prophet Ezekiel in the days of Hebrew exile in Babylon in the sixth century B.C. He asserted the justice of God and declared that if the Jews of his generation were suffering the woes of captivity it was because of their own wrongdoing, not the sins of their forebears. He controverted and contradicted the current proverb in Israel: " The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Speaking in the name of the Eternal, he declared: " Ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold...the soul that sinneth, it shall die." (*Ezekiel*, 18: 2-4)

Though this doctrine had its place and significance in deepening the sense of individual responsibility among the Jews, it failed to satisfy thoughtful minds exercised over the problem of unmerited individual suffering, which is a poignant fact of observation and experience. It is this problem that is dramatically

presented and grappled with in the Book of Job. Job, one of the three reputed righteous men of Jewish mythology, is the victim of dire affliction. Conscious of no wrong-doing on his own part to merit this terrible suffering, Job arraigns the justice of the Almighty in sending the same event to the righteous as to the wicked. What distresses him most is the consolation offered him by his comforters that his suffering is due to his own sins. This he vehemently repudiates, and their traditionally cheap arguments are equally condemned by the Eternal when He manifests Himself to Job in the end. But even the Eternal does not give any intellectually convincing or satisfying answer to Job's problem, although Job arrives at a profound acceptance of his lot as somehow justified in the inscrutable scheme of a Divine Providence that transcends human understanding.

In the course of his arguments Job throws out the gleam of a new hope that became increasingly clear in further Jewish thinking on the subject. This is the hope of individual survival in a future existence where the injustices of the present order will be rectified. "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another..." (*Job*, 19: 25-27). It was this hope of an after-existence, a resurrection of the righteous to rewards and of the wicked to everlasting punishment, that satisfied the more devout section of the Jewish people in the days of Jesus of Nazareth. This was linked up with Jewish Messianic hopes, the Messiah being looked upon as the agent of God in working out this divine righteousness in a new order of existence that he was to inaugurate.

Jesus Christ claimed for himself this rôle of the Messiah and accepted this scheme of divine justice, though the standards of judgment that he laid down were more spiritual and ethical than the racial ideas of the Jews. He refused to be drawn into discussions regarding the causes of human suffering and its theoretical justifications. Once he was specifically confronted with a case of unmerited individual suffering. A man born blind was presented to him and he was asked: "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" This question, implying that perhaps the man was expiating his own sins in a previous birth, is one of the few specific references in the Bible to the possibility of rebirth. Another such is the belief, widely held at the time of Jesus, that the Prophet Elijah would come again as the forerunner of the Messiah. Jesus did not directly answer the questions posed to him in both these contexts. He seems to have implied that John the Baptist had come in the spirit of Elijah, though this statement cannot be pressed to mean an ac-

ceptance of the belief in the rebirth of the old prophet. To the more direct question regarding the blind birth being the consequence of the individual's own sins, his answer was evasive. Jesus, like the Buddha, seems deliberately to have discouraged speculation on such matters. "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him," was his answer, and he proceeded to heal the man.

It has to be admitted that Christianity does not answer, is not primarily concerned with, questions regarding the ultimate origins of things or of the problem of evil in the world. It is fundamentally a manifestation of the power of God unto salvation, enabling its devotees, not so much to explain the riddles of life, as to grasp its nettle, to triumph over suffering and death rather than explain their mysteries. It does not, however, rule out speculation on these abiding problems of life, as is seen from the history of Christian thought, in New Testament times as well as later.

The great appeal of the doctrine of Karma lies in its emphasis on the rule of Law, of Dharma, in every realm and aspect of the Universe. This is unreservedly accepted in the best Christian thought of all times, although perverted notions of a personal God have nourished belief in a God who arbitrarily intervenes in the working of His providence. Such notions have received no greater condemnation than from St. Paul, who, writing to his disciples in Galatia, declared: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (*Galatians*, 6:7, 8)

This is the Eternal Dharma, the Law of Life, whatever its application be. All Indian thought, Hindu, Buddhist and Jain, has seen the working out of this Law in the doctrine of Karma and Transmigration, the individual soul working out the consequences of its Karma in a series of births, till it works out its own salvation through the various means of release provided by a redemptive providence. In its primary conception the doctrine regards life on earth as an unfailing process of growth and redemption, the successive births being regarded, not so much as punishments for wrongdoing, but as recurring opportunities for growth and fulfilment for souls which can and will find rest only in the Eternal Source of all life. This view is more satisfying than the prevalent, unthinking Protestant conception of the short span of a single individual existence on earth deciding the eternal destiny of an immortal soul. The Catholic doctrine of Purgatory is more in consonance with reason, though its underlying concept of life as a scheme of rewards and punishments administered and adjusted by a personal God according to the dispensations

of a divinely instituted, but none the less earthly, corporation, detracts from the sense of justice and law permeating the whole Universe.

But these are questions on which final and complete answers may be beyond the finite human mind. Christianity, like pristine Buddhism, wisely refrains from giving dogmatic answers to such speculative questions. Neither rules out human endeavours to search after and hold on to answers that conduce to the redemptive purposes of this vast Universe, which is permeated by the reign of Law in the lowest as well as the highest of its manifestations.

S. K. GEORGE

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# ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Thomas Jefferson, in stating the aims of the University of Virginia well over a century ago, put forward a noble ideal of academic freedom :—

> This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind, for here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate error as long as reason is left free to combat it.

A plea for leaving reason free to combat error was put forward by the distinguished American scholar, Prof. Howard Mumford Jones, in his recent talk at Wellesley College on "How Much Academic Freedom?" which is published in the June *Atlantic*. He brought out that academic freedom in educational institutions in the U.S.A. (as elsewhere) had sometimes been conditioned by the demand for theological or economic conformity. Those limitations had been shaken off, as far as the major institutions were concerned, with resulting invigorating of intellectual life on the campus, but today the fear of Communist ideological infiltration has resulted in new and serious threats to academic freedom. These come not only from National and State investigating committees but also from university administrators working on the simple formula: A closed mind has no place in the academic community. A Communist Party member must have a closed mind. X. is or has been a Communist Party member. Therefore X. has a closed mind and his services must be terminated.

Prof. Howard Mumford Jones, who for seven years headed the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, dissents vigorously from the idea that it is possible arbitrarily and *a priori* to "distinguish a whole class of persons whose minds are permanently closed on all subjects, and set them apart." It seems to him a mischievous principle, "laden with eventual disaster," as it must seem to any who are not caught up in the fear complex engendered by the present titanic struggle of ideologies.

Academic freedom, he irrefutably maintains, will not be nourished or protected by "exalting the morality of the state above the morality of the individual conscience" or by "assuming that all members of a party we hate are wicked and evil persons." Truly we have travelled far since Voltaire told Helvetius: "I wholly disapprove of what you say and will defend to the death your right to say it."

# THE ABORIGINES AND CHRISTIANITY

## A PLEA FOR TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING

[ This article by **Mr. Michael Sawtell,** a member of the Aborigines Welfare Board of New South Wales, throws a revealing light upon the havoc wrought among primitive peoples in the name of Christianizing them or civilizing them. It is topical for India, faced as she is with the problem of rehabilitating the tribal peoples within her borders while defending their traditional values against even unwitting exploitation, evangelical or other. It has a bearing also on the wider problem of harmonious relations between different racial or other groups living side by side but at disparate economic, social, religious or cultural levels.—ED. ]

It is perhaps almost impossible for people living in cities, who see and hear about only the detribalized aborigines who hang around the outskirts of country towns, to realize what wonderful men our tribal aborigines are, and how difficult it is to understand their tribal laws and religion. In fact, some people go so far as even to deny that our aborigines have a religion.

I think that I must now be one of the few white men left who have been privileged to live among aborigines in their true tribal state, entirely unspoilt and not detribalized by white influences. I first grew up with aborigine boys in 1900 on the edge of the Simpson Desert, and a few years later I was a "poddy dodger" away over in the wild Obagooma country, about 30 miles inland from Yampi Sound. There I had working for me a small family of bush aborigines, who protected me from the wild *munjongs*, that is, the wild cattle-spearing and man-killing tribal aborigines. During that time I learned a great deal more, from first-hand experience, about the tribal laws, customs and religion of our aborigines.

I have been misunderstood in what I have said about our aborigines and Christianity. I have the greatest admiration for what the missionaries do in teaching the bush aborigines crafts, in educating them and in caring for them in every way, but I very much doubt the wisdom of trying to convert our aborigines to orthodox Christianity. When, moreover, the missionaries look upon the aborigines' religion as "pagan," whatever they may mean by that, they, unconsciously of course, do a great deal of harm.

A man needs to be something of a philosopher to be able to understand another man's religion. Then there is always the moral problem of just how far we should, under the cover of offering an easier way of living, interfere with the religion of our aborigines. The zealous missionaries will assert that Christianity

is the one and only true religion. The old man of the tribe will think the same about his religion, although he lacks the ability to express himself; for our tribal aborigines have no power of what we call discussion. They never argue, for their religion is purely dogmatic. The old men of the tribe appreciate what the missionaries do with their children and their other services, but they go down to the grave in sorrow when they see their sacred rock holes desecrated, the young men of the tribe not properly initiated and the young women of the tribe making unlawful marriages. The old men look upon these marriages as incestuous and they hold up their hands in horror and say, "Too wrong, too wrong." These young missionary-trained aborigines are quite safe while they are under the care of the missionaries in the stations, but let them visit the towns, and see how far their newly acquired Christianity will protect them from the vices and temptations of our "Christian" civilization.

To understand our aborigines better, we must know that they are probably the descendants of the ancient Dravidians, who came over to Australia from India many thousands of years ago, when, it is thought, Australia was connected to Asia by land. Therefore our aborigines are more Eastern than Western in their thought. Our tribal aborigines are pantheists. To them the bush is alive and innumerable voices speak to them. They would understand Shakespeare's Puck and Ariel and the glorious 19th Psalm better than most white people. The most important tenets of their religion are a belief in reincarnation and their complicated and strict, wise marriage laws. Destroy their belief in these laws and you kill the aborigines.

In every tribal hunting ground, there are sacred rock holes, where, they say, the "dream children," that is, the spirits of departed aborigines, now in the form of young children, play and sing, waiting for an opportunity to reincarnate. The pregnant women of the tribe visit these sacred places and hold *corroborees* inviting the "dream children" to enter them and thus be reincarnated through them. No tribal woman ever says that her child was born at such and such a place; she says, "My child caught me (that is, entered me) at such and such a place." By the way, a full-blooded aborigine child, when it is born, is not black but pink, and the palms of its hands and the soles of its feet are as white as yours and mine. The old people of the tribe look the child over to decide who it was in the previous life, and then its name is whispered. Our aborigines are great patriots, they are tied to their ancient tribal grounds. They always hope to die on their own hunting grounds; for then their "shade" can go back to its sacred place again; if not, they are lost souls living among hostile spirits. And now the old people of the tribe are sad, for the young pregnant

mothers, who now are Christians, no longer visit the sacred rock holes, and the "dream children" play and sing in vain for opportunities to re-incarnate. I had a long confidential chat with Albert Namatjira about all this. Albert is a nominal Lutheran but he still retains many of his tribal beliefs. When I first met Albert, I said to him, "What skin are you?" Our aborigines cannot or do not say "kin." To ask a man what "skin" he is, is the proper form of tribal salutation. When you know what "skin" or totem a man belongs to, you know how to act towards him and he will also tell you, if you are a stranger, which women are taboo to you and at whom you must not look. So, when I asked Albert what "skin" he was, he knew immediately that I understood aborigines and replied, "The carpet-snake skin." That is how my life was protected in the wild Yampi Sound country nearly 50 years ago. I never looked at the *geegull* or taboo women.

Our tribal aborigines have a deep sense of reverence and awe. In the good season when game is plentiful, most of their time is taken up in sacred *corroborees.* They are never weary of preparing during the day, by painting and decorating themselves, for the long *corroborees* at night. They have a great store of legends and myths, much the same as our Old Testament, that are told to them by the old men of the tribe. I have had them told me while on watch at night with the sleeping cattle: *e.g.*, how the Magellan Cloud is an emu with its head hanging down, and how the Milky Way is a track over to a sacred rock hole.

Go to any mission station in Australia and you will see charming young full-blooded aborigine women who are thoroughly domesticated, can read and write, listen to the wireless, are interested in white women's fashions and are engaged in translating the Bible into their own dialect. On one occasion I saw some of these translating the Gospel of St. John into their dialect. Without any wish to be cynical, I asked myself if they could possibly understand the most metaphysical book in the Bible. Now, whom are these young women going to marry? The missionaries hope that they will make Christian marriages with mission boys. But they may not, for these girls have read and heard all about the delights of the towns and hope to marry white men or half-caste boys who will be able to take them into the towns. These girls are safe while they are under the protection of the missionaries, but, when they visit the towns, they see white women smoking, talking unreservedly to men, going into the hotels and drinking with them, in short, doing everything that they have been told not to do. They get the shock of their lives. It seems to them that the white woman who is not a missionary has no guiding rule of life, and it strikes them that she has more money than the missionaries. Thus these un-

sophisticated aborigine women are all too likely to fall into the hands of certain white men and thus the problem of detribalization has begun. Still, there is the law of compensation; for, even if these young women do have children in an irregular way, they will know better how to care for those half-caste children than ordinary camp women.

Here I suggest that the missionaries might allow the aborigines to retain their belief in reincarnation and suggest to them that the soul reincarnates progressively from aborigines up to white bodies. There is Scriptural authority for the belief in reincarnation, for Jesus hinted that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah and there are other references in the Bible. There is always a tendency for detribalized aborigines to seek mates of a lighter cast and, the more intelligent and the better educated they are, the more pronounced this tendency grows.

I plead for tolerance from my Christian friends and ask them to see how wonderful Nature's laws are at all stages of soul growth. I ask them to try to see the truth that there is in the black man's religion; for our aborigines in their native state have many beliefs and customs that are analogous to those of Christianity: for instance, the young man's making *corroboree* is analogous to Christian Baptism. They pray or sing for the "shades" of the dead. They also know and understand every aspect of psychology. They practise telepathy. I have seen proof of all this. They also believe in healing by the laying on of hands and I have actually taken part in this *corroboree*. With the old men, I have placed a young boy suffering from malaria on the ground and then laid my hands upon him with the old men and chanted. While we sang, one of the old men would pretend to suck out of the boy's stomach a small stone, which he had secreted in his mouth. Then he would say to the boy, "See what the Irrawally put into you and I have taken it out of you." (The Irrawally is the Evil Spirit.) The boy would then ask, "True?" and we would all shout "*Dingarra, Dingarra,*" which means "as true as true can be," and a cure would be effected. So psychology is not so modern after all.

Our aborigines are not fools. Do not think, because you see a tribal aborigine naked, dirty and all covered in ochre, that he is necessarily stupid or ignorant, for he also is in his own way a philosopher, though he cannot communicate all this to you. Tribal aborigines also are keen psychologists, for they are able to judge the character of a strange white man at a glance, but they are wise and keep their own counsel. I most humbly suggest that the Christian Church must learn not to condemn the aborigines as "heathens," but to understand them.

MICHAEL SAWTELL

# ADVICE TO A YOUNG POET

[We are publishing in two instalments, in successive issues, the illuminating and practical advice offered in this article by **Bhikshu Sangharakshita.** The several thoughtful essays from his pen which have appeared in our pages have been on religion and philosophy, but this article shows, as he himself has written, "how often the qualities of the poet are identical with those of the mystic, and how near Poetry often is to Religion." The reader will not be surprised to learn that this English Buddhist monk, who has for the last several years made India his home, is himself a poet. He is, in fact, as he has written us, "a poet who became a bhikshu, not a bhikshu who has become a poet." This article, he tells us, "arose out of some discussions with my friend Shri Sachindra Coomar Singh, a young Nepali poet," and we are sure that it will be of value to other younger brothers in the art of Poetry.—Ed. ]

## PART II

The qualities which the young poet should develop are not only interrelated, so that the cultivation of one leads indirectly to the cultivation of others, but they are also linked serially, so that each springs naturally into existence out of the very abundance of the quality preceding it. Observation flowers into Sensitiveness, and Sensitiveness ripens into Sympathy. The mind of the young poet is at this stage replete with vivid impressions of form and colour : his heart responds immediately to the subtlest nuances of feeling ; the horizons of his soul have widened until he can begin to say, with Sir Edwin Arnold, "Forgoing self, the Universe grows 'I.'" But, before the work of poetic creation can begin, the richly diverse products of these three qualities must be mingled and fused as elements are fused in a crucible, the dross of irrelevancies purged from them by fire and the imperishable poetic essence extracted. The crucible is *Solitude* ; the fire, *Reflection.*

Without some degree of solitude reflection is impossible and without prolonged reflection no great work of art was ever brought forth. The poet needs solitude as the lungs need air. By Solitude is meant not so much physical loneliness as inner isolation, for the time being at least, from all that does not directly concern the process of poetic creation. Physical withdrawal from normal human activities and interests can be included in the definition of solitude only to the extent that the latter is dependent on it. In the urbanized and industrialized societies of the present age this is with increasing frequency the case. Without withdrawing externally from the hurry and bustle of modern life the poet may not be able to find

the internal solitude necessary for the progress and perfection of his work. At the same time, the necessity of earning his livelihood—on its own level a no less urgent problem—again and again draws him back from solitude into society. In a world wherein Poetry as a profession is no longer recognized or remunerated, the young poet has to find a way of life which will enable him to provide for both the lower and higher necessities of his nature.

The religious mystic, to whom opportunities for solitude are as necessary as to the poet, can find them in the solemn hush of monastery or hermitage; but corresponding facilities are not offered by an indulgent society to the poet. Perhaps it is just as well they are not. Opportunities for sympathy are no less precious or necessary to him than opportunities for solitude and it cannot be denied that through the complex network of mutual ties and obligations woven in the course of earning a livelihood they are most easily and naturally secured. Having already refused to allow Sensitiveness to open for the young poet the portals of the ivory tower, it would be strange if we permitted Solitude to usher him through them. The kind of solution which we envisage should not be unbalanced or one-sided; it should exemplify poetically what Baron von Hügel said of the spiritual life:—

> The great rule is, *Variety up to the verge of dissipation: Recollection to the verge of emptiness*: each alternating with the other and making a rich fruitful tension.[1]

The extremes of variety and recollection, dissipation and emptiness, of which von Hügel speaks, correspond to the extremes of sympathy and solitude between which the young poet has to pursue a middle path and for both of which we have urged him to provide opportunities in his life. As circumstances will tend to force him into the first extreme, and as opportunities for solitude are in modern times the rarer of the two, we shall, however, consider the problem from one side only and, after enunciating a general rule, put forward a few more detailed suggestions with regard to the cultivation of solitude.

The general rule is negative in form, and consists in the simple reminder that the young poet should not embrace any means of earning his living which does not grant him regular periods of respite from its preoccupations. The longer and more frequent such periods, the more congenial will the employment generally be to him. Prospects of financial gain (above what is actually needed for the maintenance of himself and his dependents, if any), hopes of worldly advancement and considerations of social prestige, the poet must, no less than the contemplative, brush resolutely aside. The temptation to commercialize

[1] *Letters from Baron Friedrich von Hugel to a Niece.* Edited with an Introduction by GWENDOLEN GREENE. London, 1928, p. xxi.

his literary gifts must be no less uncompromisingly resisted. This is not to say that he should refuse to accept payment for his work; for in this field, as in any other, the labourer is worthy of his hire. But the poet should not resort for his livelihood to journalism, or to the production of novels, short stories and newspaper articles from motives predominantly commercial. Should he prostitute his talent in this way he will eventually lose even his poetic integrity. He cannot divide his literary character into two separate personalities. The more money he needs, the more work he is compelled to produce; the more work he produces (beyond a certain point), the more slipshod it becomes; slipshod work results in a general lowering of standards and this, in the end, will vitiate even the quality of his poetry.

If the young poet desires an avocation which, while not unconnected with his literary interests, will nevertheless involve no degradation of his art, he perhaps cannot do better than adopt an academic career and teach languages and literature, history or some other humane subject. Otherwise, farming or bricklaying is preferable to journalism. For it should not be thought that a poet is necessarily unfit for manual labour or incapable of practical activity of any kind, or that the sensitiveness of his heart has in any degree impaired the dexterity and usefulness of his hands. The annals of Poetry are no more wanting in the names of politicians, statesmen, administrators, engravers, apothecaries, ploughmen, doctors and traders than in the names of writers and teachers.

Matthew Arnold's famous description of Shelley as a "beautiful and ineffectual angel" is applicable to no other poet of equal stature and is less than fair to Shelley himself. The popular picture of the poet as a long-haired, effeminate and incompetent creature was never more than a late-19th-century caricature of a group of minor poets and is now less true than it ever was. There is nothing in the poet's constitution to prevent him from swinging a pick or handling a shovel and such a means of livelihood may be, for some, no less conducive to the pursuit of Poetry than any other. The sole question which the young poet, as such, has to ask himself regarding any form of employment is: Does it give me opportunities for solitude? If it does, he can, as a poet, ask of it nothing more.

It should not be thought, however, that the suggestions we have offered are an infallible and universally applicable solution of the problem of solitude. The poetic temperament is rarely amenable to the rules of reason. Even though the young poet succeeds in finding work which provides him with opportunities of withdrawal from the world, of experiencing those periods of inner isolation so necessary to the progress of his art, he may find that his creative moods refuse to synchronize

with office hours or college vacations; that just when his whole being cries out to be alone, to be free to concentrate on the shaping of a poem, some trivial detail of the daily round claims his attention.

Contrariwise, he may spend weeks and months in apparently ideal surroundings and yet feel his heart as dust and his soul incapable of producing even the thinnest trickle of inspiration. The wind of Poetry, like other winds of spirit, bloweth where it listeth. Again, there are social obligations and family ties to be considered. Like the mystic, the poet has often felt them to be a hindrance and, like the mystic, he has often not hesitated to snap them when they have become too constricting. The mystic's renunciations of such obligations and ties is usually recognized and approved by society; but the poet's repudiation, being much more haphazard and unsystematic, is usually regarded as evidence of a disposition to immorality, though, as D. H. Lawrence says, "the true artist [or poet] doesn't substitute immorality for morality. On the contrary, he *always* substitutes a finer morality for a grosser." To all these problems we can offer no cut-and-dried solution. All that we can do is to reiterate the necessity of solitude and leave the young poet to make provision for it, in the light of our suggestions, as amply as he can.

Once the crucible has been prepared, the fire may be kindled beneath it. When the poet finds himself in solitude, in conditions favourable to the cultivation of inner isolation, the process of *Reflection*, of extracting the shining gold of Poetry from the drossy ore of experience, can begin. About this process we need say little. Not that it is unimportant, though. Bagehot indicates its position when he writes that one of the reasons for the rarity of great imaginative art is that "in very few cases is this capacity for musing solitude combined with that of observing mankind," and Wordsworth does likewise in his famous definition of Poetry as "emotion recollected in tranquillity." The word "musing" in the first quotation and "recollected" in the second both refer to the process which we have termed reflection. If we have less to say about this quality than the four preceding ones, it is not, therefore, because of its relative insignificance, but because of the obscurity and mysteriousness of this part of the poetic process. How, from his experience of life, from his observations, feelings and thoughts, he produces, like the musician, "not a fourth sound, but a star," is known only to the poet himself, and even he is rarely able to offer an adequate description of the process, to say nothing of giving an explanation of it which will satisfy the philosopher. His definitions and descriptions are usually figurative, and more often than not in the end themselves become poems.

It will therefore hardly be an occasion for surprise if the few words of advice which we intend to

offer the young poet on the cultivation of reflection are figurative rather than scientific in character. The fire of reflection must be kindled as often, and kept burning for as long, as possible. In one who is by vocation a poet this flame of slow, quiet musing is always present, however deeply it may be hidden under the ashes of external activities and events, and only waiting for the breeze of solitude to fan it into a blaze. This sacred fire of reflection the young poet must learn to tend as carefully as though he were a Zoroastrian priest, feeding it with the sandalwood of his thoughts, and stirring the ore of his experiences in the crucible of inner isolation until the fine gold of Poetry, separated from the dross of irrelevant circumstance, glitters at the bottom like a star.

Having offered our suggestions on the cultivation of the five predominantly emotional qualities which will enrich the content of his poetry, we shall now suggest to the young poet three predominantly intellectual acquisitions which will help give precision and definition to its form. None of these may be adequately designated by any single word; but they may be provisionally indicated by the terms Appreciation, Understanding and Technique.

The word "poet" means literally a maker and, like all other makers or craftsmen, the poet has to undergo a period of apprenticeship to those more skilled than himself in the gentle craft which he aspires to master. During this period of training he learns to know and appreciate the work of his predecessors. This *Appreciation* is not a mere spark produced by the cold collision of the flint and steel of criticism but a flame begotten on the tinder of his heart by the fiery seed of their greatness. Neither is it mere imitation. It does not, or should not, teach him the mannerisms, however magnificent, or the tricks of style, however effective, of "poets dead and gone." The chief function it has to perform is to fan into brightness the flame of his poetry with the mighty breath of inspiration which blows through their song.

Nor should it be thought that this breath can come only through the mouth of his native language. In these days of close international contact, if not always of co-operation, the poet, no less than other men, has to keep himself open to the impact of multitudinous influences. The English poet, for instance, must learn to appreciate, at least in translation, the best poetic work which has been done, not only in French, German and Italian, but also in Arabic, Persian and Chinese. No non-English poet, on the other hand, especially if he is working in one of the undeveloped minor languages of the world, can afford to neglect the unequalled riches of English poetry. Such a commerce between the languages and literatures, but especially the poetic literatures, of many times and lands will contribute to the growth of a newer

and more truly international kind of Poetry, which will embody the ideals and aspirations, not of any single race or people, but of humanity.

Though we have spoken only of Poetry, it should not be thought that we are implying any limitation of the young poet's appreciation to the progeny of his own peculiar Muse. The daughters of Clio and Euterpe must be as dear to him as the sons of Calliope and Erate. Without suggesting that every poet should attempt to follow in the footsteps of Blake and Rossetti—for mastery of two arts is more than twice as difficult as the mastery of one—it should at least be pointed out that the scope of Poetry is often considerably enlarged when the poet is familiar, not with Poetry alone, but also with the sister arts of Music and Painting as well. Poetry is a limpid mountain lake into which flow the streams of every branch of knowledge and invention. The greater the volume of such tributary waters that it receives, the deeper and fuller will its own waters become.

Among the many streams which feed the tarn of Poetry is that of Philosophy. Not that an academically adequate acquaintance with the subject is essential to a poet. But of the course of that particular channel by which they are connected he should have at least some knowledge. This channel is the Philosophy of Art or Æsthetics. Familiarity with the Philosophy of Beauty on the theoretical side will not ensure that his poetic work will be beautiful; but it will help give him an intellectual understanding of the metaphysical nature of Poetry and this *Understanding*, the second of the intellectual qualifications with which the young poet should be equipped, will strengthen the structure of his verse and, while it is incapable of making him a good poet, may be able, by sharpening his faculty of self-criticism, at least to prevent him from being a very bad one.

Not much more than this can be said of the third qualification, that of *Technique*, which consists in a working acquaintance with the details of Rhetoric and Prosody such as may be found in standard manuals on the subject. Such acquaintance may not be sufficient to set the young poet's heart on fire with the flame of inspiration; but it will at least enable him to be sure that the fuel is dry. Though the shortest, this is not necessarily the least valuable part of the advice which we have endeavoured to offer those who have apprenticed themselves to one of the most difficult and delightful of arts.

BHIKSHU SANGHARAKSHITA

# THEN—AND NOW

[**Shri J. M. Ganguli's** occasional thoughtful articles in our pages make their own contribution to the keeping alive in man of his spiritual intuitions, which has always been one of this journal's aims.—ED.]

It was a small nest, high in a tree. The branch was slender and it waved in the breeze, though I did not know that, nor had I ever thought of it.

When I first opened my eyes inside the nest I saw only a bright, slender figure bent over me, her eyes overflowing with tenderness.

I cried out in my first consciousness of a new and strange environment, but she took me up and warmed me under her covering wings. I looked around, this side and that, above and below, but she was all that I saw. The light streaming in from outside came to me reflected from her, but that outside light told me nothing about whence and how I had come there. I could remember nothing. I strained my eyes; I struggled with my limbs; I shrieked, perhaps from a sense of being encaged in an unknown place. She rocked me on her breast and in many ways diverted me from my nervous and lonely thoughts till in fatigue I went to sleep.

Such was my coming here.

* * * * *

I was getting used to my world and was feeling it. She nursed me, fed me, played with me and slept by me. My senses were awakening and my interest in my surroundings was growing; little things and trifles enchanted me. I altogether forgot the problem of my past and became merged in the present. If at times I felt lonely, she turned my thoughts away from the empty nooks and corners, away from the unspeaking, flat floors and ceilings, out into an expansive realm where, as she told me stories, I saw deities and angels, classical heroes and heroines, appearing and playing their thrilling and sparkling parts. Into such a world my vision peered, in it my imagination roamed and my thoughts dwelt. She woke me at break of day with a sublime, deeply-stirring hymn in praise of some Being, of whom I then could understand nothing, but the tune of that hymn is still in my ears. When the darkness of the night crept in she cuddled me to her breast for warmth and cheer. Out to the horizon she turned my eyes in the morning to the glow of the rising sun, and she tuned my ears to the morning songs of the birds, who were awake to receive the first rays when men were asleep and unconscious in the dark.

How vividly I recall those swiftly vanished young days when, away from the heat and roar of the world, I grew up! If I was sick she would sit day and night by me and would look so fixedly into my eyes that no disease could stand it. And she would read to me from the *Rama-*

*yana* and the *Mahabharata* and many great books of different lands and ages. When I felt restless she took me out for flights which gradually increased in radius and frequency till we started journeying through the country and saw cities, forests and dens, and travelled through winding valleys and across mountain ranges far and near. The more we wandered the more we loved to wander.

And thus I came in contact with the outside world. Thus I learnt to move shyly and weakly amidst cold things, strange beings, ununderstanding men and women. I learnt to learn; I got the impetus to stand and to work. But the deep centre of all interest was my mother, round whom my world of love and thought revolved. When I roved through villages and towns, passed through forests, climbed mountains or crossed the country, as I often did, I was never alone. She was with me at all places and at all times.

In all my journeyings forth, however, there was an ever-recurring attraction homeward. Homeward to our little nest, a dwelling as simple as could be, unpainted, undecorated, unnoticed by society, but one where the sun's glories were unobstructed, through which Nature's breath sang freely. Where two lonely, frail creatures sojourned in their passage through this world; where they looked to each other, in joy and sorrow, for inspiration and strength; where in the peacefulness of the night they talked and questioned the many why's and how's that stood rock-like behind their observations, their experiences and their comprehension of things and happenings.

Thus days, months and years rolled by. Thus it went on, and thus I thought it would ever go on. I cared not to inquire if there was a boundary to the present, or to judge if the evenness of passing time was not sloping down to a different future. Who reflects, who stops to discriminate and to ponder when the ship is sailing smoothly under the blue sky, days following nights and nights following days in chronological sequence and our hopes and fears, joys and depressions, measurements and calculations, keep us blind to events in the offing? Whom does it strike then to strain the eye toward the distant horizon to see if there is any speck of cloud gathering gloom and danger to hurl down upon us!

But one night the signal came. The earth shook; a storm blew, heralding the advent of *Kal* (Destiny) himself, who stood determined and inexorable at our little door. No wailing, no weeping, could halt his call, no argument could change even a dot in the terrible time-chart that he flung at his victim. My mother called me. What a voice that was! I shuddered. There were awful forebodings in the air. I looked up to Heaven; but I could feel that there was not the earnestness in my call that there had been

at times before. My mind was unsteady, my concentration was gone; my tongue and body quivered. For one moment at least, all my vanity and egoistic confidence were gone; for one moment my physical senses hid themselves in shame at their helplessness.

Thus it all happened. Thus the hand of the Inevitable struck and struck hard, as it sometimes does. And then the dark moments passed off through eternity, wherefrom they had emerged and whereinto they re-entered. My mother? Where was she? I closed my eyes in the chill of utter loneliness; I stretched out my hands to grasp hers, which had ever supported me. I moved in thought, as had been my instinctive habit as a child, to get into her warm lap.

But then an awakening came. The imaginary land wherein I had lived all this while, wherein I had been building nests, raising pillars of hope, weaving silken threads of love and affection, crumpled up and vanished as I opened my eyes. Tears rolled down, clearing the film from my sight, till a new light glowed in front of me which revealed little by little the chaotic vastness in which I had been foolishly drawing lines, picturing images and moulding shapes, ideas and notions. Mother? Who was my mother here where none was and none could be? My nest, my belongings, my treasures? What could they have been and what could they mean in the streakless void that was all round? My sweet pleasures, high hopes and freezing fears? How unreal they must have been! How queer the thought of them now struck me as being, in the Oneness enveloping all!

How I realized then that the personal sentiment linking my mother and me had prevented our "selves" from becoming untied, unfocused, all-sweeping souls! It is such attachment, such linking, which colours and blurs our vision, which produces the different illusions (*vikaras*), and which frustrates the inspiration that comes at times to lose and diffuse ourselves into the Common, the Wide and the Universal. It is such close concentration on the personal self which excites and gives power to the physical senses and generates longings and intoxication (*Moha*).

The warm tears continued to roll down, clearing my vision more and more and giving glimpses of a stupendous Reality. The chill of loneliness brought a momentary Realization that blew off all pain and sorrow, along with all joys and hopes.

And thus I sat up and looked out and gazed into the Beyond, into the Infinite Beyond.

I felt ever so light and free. I could fly on and across without a homeward pull, without a look back at a nest that had been but was no more. The thought that I had rested in peace and confidence in a tiny nest that could never stand a puff of wind made me laugh. That I could

have laboured to erect castles and storehouses on the crest of a volcano that could erupt any moment was amazing. Out of my senses I must have been when I was forming bonds and relationships of love and affection with images and shadows that did not exist and had never existed.

The moment of utter self-forgetfulness and effacement which came that night and brought a transient realization of the infinity of Oneness does not come and stay at my bidding; but it has unfettered my soul's power to spread out and has largely freed my feelings and sentiments from their hovering round my imaginary self. At times when I look back and reflect it seems that my mother-illusion, that had sustained me so long and so well since the opening of my tiny physical eyes, has now vanished to give an all-shaking realization which may sustain my soul better in its slow awakening and steady merging into the Absolute. And so, if I was happy with my mother then, I should be grateful to her now for shocking me by her exit into a sense of the Real. Then, as now, her whole thought and interest must have been for my good and benefit.

I am beginning to feel happy, perhaps happier than ever before. If there is little now to be drunk with or to be elated by, there is also little to cut me and to make me smart. I have seen through the meaninglessness of it all. All those things were only lights and shadows cast by my own self, hallucinations keeping me spellbound. Hardly do they excite me any more. As I sit and muse, the current of life and events passes by, rippling and waving, splashing occasional spray on me. But wait. Is a current of life and events passing by me? Is it not my own mind evolving and creating and turning and revolving its manufactures in an endless chain, in a moment of great stupefying self-forgetfulness?

When I see now someone laughing or weeping I smile a little; for I see that there is nothing behind joys and sorrows. Those who are laughing or wailing today must, like me, have built and stored and counted their treasures and embraced their loved ones in an eternal chaos, the consciousness of which comes at the moment of a great crash. I comfort the weeping one no more by weeping with him, but by asking him to rejoice over his emancipation from an enthralling attachment to an illusory Nothing. Similar had been my own case, but I emphasize my new-born experience. I too had love and affection which lifted me above the clouds at times and plunged me into dark depths at others. I too had objects which I treasured and adored, round which my vision circled. But without them now I am calm and peaceful. My narrow, bound feelings and sentiments and my short sight are spreading out free and wide, bringing in a new, far-reaching realization that demolishes differences between thing and thing and cuts through the varieties and

characteristics which generate likes and dislikes. "This is mine" or "This has been mine" no longer holds significance when I glance over the wide perspective where things are all unpossessed because they are all the same and because there is none to claim and to take. The incentive to grab and to possess no longer survives.

It is but non-understanding and eyes fixed on the ground which cause the feeling of want and the longing to acquire. When the soul spreads out, free from its bondage, it recoils from the thought of acquiring, possessing and burdening itself again. On the field of universality there is nothing to choose. When movement is unchecked, when freedom of action is not timed, there can be no impulse to stop. When the soul comes to itself it sees through everything, it possesses everything, because it forgets the old "I" that had been building and labelling different pigeon-holes in which to confine the same all-pervading air of the Eternal and the Universal. That is perhaps salvation, the *mukti* of the Soul that does not soar high into a heaven of angels or even of the great Architect, worshipped in temples and churches, but that plunges into its own fathomless depths; for nothing but its own Self, nothing but a Consciousness not perceivable by itself, now envelops it.

Such vision beyond the earth, beyond the horizon, comes at times when I look backward and forward. In such tremendous mental swings I lose hold of myself, and as an endless vista of the dissolution of everything stretches out before my far-seeing eyes a mighty stillness comes over me which takes away the incentive to what we are used to call work. What shall I do when everything is lying done before me? How shall I work when there is nothing to work with? It is all One and the Same and my gaze can fix upon nothing.

* * *

I wake up. My senses pounce upon me. I vainly try to hold on to my dream of the great emancipation. The dream perhaps was not long. Flesh and blood goad me again and bring pain, excitement and intoxication. But I have had a taste of release from this earthly bondage which that night's havoc brought before my tearful eyes. I move and jump and run and laugh and work, perhaps, as before, but that cannot keep me blind to the light that streams, even though only occasionally, through the now perforated cover on my soul.

That is where they part—"Then" and "Now." Often do I feel shaky and nervous as weakness comes again and physical cravings and old-time longings return to blow me down; but no more can they keep me in their grip long, for I have heard the call from far beyond and have seen a flash that has exposed the nothingness of this, of that and of all finite things.

J. M. GANGULI

# POINTERS TO A SHARED TRADITION

[One need not accept all **Mr. John Garway's** premises or all his illustrations to recognize the value of his fundamental thesis, that resemblances in myths and legends handed down by peoples now widely separated point to once closer ties between them. The evidence is overwhelming for the sameness of primitive religious philosophy and a once universal language of symbolism. Without claiming to exhaust the deep philosophical meaning enshrined in ancient symbols with their several keys, Mr. Garway makes some thought-provoking suggestions in the hope of making men recognize their ancient ties of race and culture.—ED.]

The great potential bond of union between East and West, and wider still, that lying in the word Aryan, badly needs recognition in order to heal some of the rancour of the day. Mankind would benefit by a return to last century's more brotherly view, when it could be written of its racial character :—

> The weight of scientific opinion would seem to be (that)...the tales which form the basis of many [Gaelic] poems are...of Eastern origin, Gaelic variants brought hence in the far-off time with the migrations of the Aryans.[1]

Today's view that Aryan stands only for cultural relationship is misleading; social science in its ultra-materialistic ways has become inhuman. At this distance in time it may not be possible to prove physical traces, but it is equally impossible to deny that they may once have existed. Just as family history customarily looks back to a single ancestor, disregarding the myriads of less conspicuous ones, so might we racially do well to copy the habit; even if it were a solitary Aryan who had brought his culture to our land, and who had handed down his traditions through a native-bred family, nevertheless it would furnish a link with others of the kind. Let attention be focused on resemblances, leaving the differences to fall into their proper perspective.

The following outline of the early race reflects many a familiar legend from many lands; but two particular sources deserve mention. One is the "language of birds," an ancient expression. In the same way that various bodies of men in modern life are known by the badges they wear —such as the Kiwis (New Zealanders), the Springboks (South Africans), the Choughs (Cornwall Light Infantry)—so among the Aryans, tribes were known by their animal emblems and sects of wise men by their birds. The philosophy of these "birds" or sages was couched in fanciful metaphor, apparently for guild secrecy; but when it is unravelled it discloses delightfully simple yet profound thought. Its recurrences in widely separated coun-

[1] Dugald Mitchell, in his Introduction to *The Book of Highland Verse*.

tries serve as pointers to the original land whence it sprang.

Here it must be remarked that the race's primitive simplicity in material life must not be confused with primitive intellect. On the contrary, these earlier Aryans were extremely advanced. There is reason for belief that the crudeness of their physical welfare was deliberate, on the analogy of :—

> Those who have cunning implements ...have cunning in their hearts....It is not that I do not know of these things; I should be ashamed to use them.[2]

The early Aryans are to be pictured as *sadhus*, though without their austerity, men of fully developed intellect but content to live life simply. No traces of material culture would be left by such a race.

Another source is Western heraldry, much of which is the survival of Celtic symbolism, the same "language of birds" in pictorial form, handed down (so it would seem) through tattoo marks, that likewise would leave no trace. Intricate devices mentioned in Celtic poetry or carved on stones, and found also in Eastern antiquity, reappear in mediæval heraldry; nor are they ignorant copies, they bear their traditional significance. The retailers of this lore seem to have been the bards and minstrels, and the Heralds before their English incorporation; it survived orally in some measure even to the 17th century.

Briefly, the Aryan race lived in the hills south of the Caspian where, as archæology has corroborated, the first known civilization existed. It stretched to the Caucasus; and such indications as the old Indian pilgrimages thither, the suggestion of one scholar that Egypt's *Book of the Dead* is practically a guide to the Caucasus, and the tradition of descent from Noah of Ararat, all point to that area as the common birthplace. There the Aryans dwelt in a commonwealth of seven nations, whose emblems form the subject of many a myth and many a custom—the Ram, the Bull, the Horse, the Lion, the Stag, the Goat and the Wolf or Hound. Each secular ruler bore his animal's name as title (like the Italian "Boar of Tuscany," or William "the Lion" of Scotland), and wore its mask and skin as insignia, the source of the creature-headed figures of Middle-Eastern antiquity and the crests of Western heraldry.

Their outstanding feature was their philosophy. All Nature they believed to be ruled by a Divine Mind, at first located by them in the Earth but later, and at a very early period, in view of the Moon's regular course and its effect on the tides and on "lunacy," regarded as in the heavens. This creed has been beautifully expressed by Virgil :—

> In the beginning, the earth, and the sky,
> and the spaces of night,
> Also the shining moon, and the sun titanic
> and bright

[2] Chuang Tze's anecdote of the Gardener, quoted from H. A. Giles's translation.

Feed on an inward life; and with all things mingled, a Mind
Moves universal matter, with Nature's frame is combined.[3]

Next, when after long observation the regularity of the Sun's course had been determined, and in view also, perhaps, of the connection between sunshine and happiness, the seat of the Divine Mind was transferred to the Sun; but the change, together with a demand for the removal of abuses, occasioned a great war between holders of the rival beliefs. This war ended in a harmonious reconciliation, characteristic of the race. Both Sun and Moon were accepted as the Heavenly Twins, with a united device fashioned of the Sun within a crescent Moon. This is found from Britain to China, on Celtic coins and as the Chinese pictograph for Light; sometimes the Sun is replaced by a Star, as in the famous Muslim emblem, assigned also to one of the Wise Men of Christianity. It stands for the Harmony of Reason, an idea common to all creeds.

Concurrently black and white—night and day, the domains of the two "lights"—were linked in a number of myths and devices, the most fascinating of which is the black and white onyx in the Jewish High-Priest's breastplate, which can be identified with the Twins and "Light." These mementos of the first Great War serve as reminders of its peaceful outcome, the principle that all differences can be reconciled through generous common sense.

In the creed of Mother Earth the wise men had been "Serpents"; but to accord with the newer concept of the Divine Mind in the heavens, they became "Birds." Under their administration flourished the Golden Age, of wisdom and of justice. They taught a magnificent philosophy of simple ideals, that ran: Happiness is the sign of a healthy mind; it should therefore be our goal; it is attained universally when mankind is guided by Reason. It behooves every man, therefore, to cultivate Reason. That has two components, Knowledge and Good Judgment, the latter being the product of an impartial (unselfish) mind.

Accordingly their teaching was formulated as eight principles:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Perfect Reason | —the aim in life. |
| Knowledge<br>Good Judgment<br>Selflessness<br>Generous-mindedness | —the way to it. |
| Bodily Health<br>Simplicity in living | —for physical needs. |
| Determination | —to accomplish them all. |

These eight principles have passed into many lands in diverse forms; one slightly altered version is the Eightfold Aryan Path.

In their figurative terms Reason was spoken of as "Light," meaning the light of mind; and many emblems were used for it, chief among them the Sun, and the Arrow or "shaft" of light, together with a whole host of derivatives, the lan-

[3] *The Æneid*, vi, lines 725-8, Bowen's translation.

guage of poetic imaginative minds. Their philosophic theology is well described in the Greek Megasthenes' account of Indian sages :—

They hold that God is light, but not such light as we see with the eye, nor such as the sun or fire ; but God is with them the Word—by which term they do not mean articulate speech, but the discourse of reason.[4]

An identical belief was held in Celtic Britain, where the Deity was spoken of as pure mental light.

Such were the principles of the early race ; but, as so often happens in human nature, practice fell short of the ideal. With the discovery of copper smelting, as a ready means for making tools, weapons were forged ; and a period of bitter civil strife ensued. This culminated in the geological catastrophe known as the Flood, when, according to Welsh legend, an inland sea was let loose. (As an example of racial tradition, it is enlightening to read of the building of Noah's Ark recorded as one of the three great exploits of the Island of Britain.) The aftermath of the Flood was a great dispersion of the Aryan race. At first the wandering "birds" went no further than neighbouring lands ; but during the succeeding ages they spread almost to the ends of the earth, taking with them their legends about "bringing fire from heaven." Fire is still a ritual gracing Indian marriage, and was a symbol in the doctrine of Light.

Opinions will differ as to how far legends and customs denote the spread of Aryan blood, or how far merely of culture. The writer inclines to the view that the migrating sages married in the lands they reached ; their philosophy was one for a happy life, not for ascetic penance. There can be no assertiveness ; either wishful thinker or cynic may be right or wrong. Common sense suggests that the happier view is the better.

Mt. Meru has always been remembered as the race's old centre, Meros being but a confusion of name. Its continuance in Europe is worth notice. There were the Merovingian tribe, from whom sprang the first Frankish dynasty, founded by Clovis (*cf.* the later French Kings' hereditary style ; Louis or *Lleu-ys*, "The Light-folk"). There was Moravia, (German *Mähren*) with its eagle shield ; while the same name figures as Moray in Scotland, and Murray, whose coat of arms shows stars, another emblem of "Light." In Wales it was at Mureif, legend tells, that the Eagles used to gather every May-day to forecast the year's events—the good old times when Parliament met one day a year only ! Likewise the name is found in Merope, King of Cos, who turned into an Eagle, and in Merope who became one of the Seven Stars. Those Seven go by diverse names, among them the Seven Kids, and sometimes seven birds of various kinds ; they

[4] *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian.* By J. W. McCRINDLE. Chuckervertty, Chatterjee and Co., Ltd., Calcutta. Reprint of 1926, p. 121.

mark revivals of the Seven Kingdoms by emigrant peoples, and are milestones along our race's long journey through Time.

One more typical tradition to be mentioned is that of Prester John, the curious figure with a sword in his mouth appearing on the arms of Chichester diocese, and sometimes mistaken for Christ, whom a heraldic manuscript calls "one of the Magi." His proper name was said to be Ung. Legend runs that he was descended from Ogier the Dane, and that he penetrated into North India, dividing it among his followers; this amounts to the tradition that the Aryans who entered North India were Ungs, the Scandinavian term for Danes being Ings. The difference in vowel sound is immaterial. The sword in his mouth is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,"[5] the very characteristic of Indian thought noted by Megasthenes.

Such is the story told by the Language of Birds. Its field is vast; for, let it be remembered, legend has it that Solomon had been "taught the speech of birds"; an Egyptian wise man "knew what the birds of the sky...said"; a Greek sage was "acquainted with the chirpings of birds," and more than one Celtic hero after roasting a dragon's heart found he could understand the language of birds. Only modern civilization ignores it; but then, Authority would frown upon students who roasted a college don and ate his heart, even in the name of Knowledge!

In that language also is written our wise aim, the eight principles of Happiness. They are to be found in many unexpected places—in China, personified and distorted, as the Eight Immortals; in the Bible, spoken of as the Eight Beatitudes; whilst among the Celts they seem once to have existed as Eight Worthies. In them is to be found a bond not only of race but also of creed; they are the way to peace, the age-old Aryan Path.

JOHN GARWAY

[5] *Ephesians*, vi. 17.

# NEW BOOKS AND OLD

## ART AND LITERATURE

*Tibetan Religious Art.* By ANTOINETTE K. GORDON. (Columbia University Press, New York; Geoffrey Cumberlege, London. 104 pp. 93 illustrations. 1952. $10.00; 63*s.*)

This handsome book is a notable example of American scholarship, for Mrs. Gordon is familiar with the religion, the art, and even the language of Tibet. Although most readers of THE ARYAN PATH will not need her exposition of Buddhism and Yoga, they are likely to learn much from her interpretation of Lamaism or, as the Tibetans term it, The Religion. The book contains many illustrations. As the author points out, all the art of this strange land is religious, and we find here some highly complicated designs and sculptured figures. There is also a slightly pathetic photograph of the present Dalai Lama—a boy.

Mrs. Gordon tells us that religion entirely permeates Tibetan life, and that no enterprise is undertaken without consulting the Lamas. Despite her enthusiastic admiration for Lamaism, we shall probably continue to feel that it is a form of Buddhism much adulterated by belief in magic. Are not the well-known *mandalas* magical designs? Again (as in the art of ancient Mexico) a good many of the figures here reproduced are horrific and fearsome. However, the author states that these furious deities are angry only with evil-doers.

The elaborate detail, whether in paintings or in metal figures, makes this art not easy to photograph, and to appreciate some of the illustrations we need the help of a magnifying glass. To comprehend all the under-meanings we certainly need the help of Mrs. Gordon. We know, from having watched oriental dancers, that there is significance in every posture, every use of the fingers, but this ritual dancing (and this religious art) will not yield up its meaning to guesswork or intuition. We must either be brought up with it or rely upon so knowledgeable a writer as Mrs. Gordon.

CLIFFORD BAX

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*The Enduring Art of Japan.* By LANGDON WARNER. (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, U.S.A.; Oxford University Press, Geoffrey Cumberlege, London. xiii+178 pp. 92 illustrations. 1952. $6.50; 42*s.*)

We may hope that it is a sign of a happier age that an American, ignoring Pearl Harbour, should give us a remarkably sensitive and enthusiastic survey of Japanese art. Incidentally Mr. Warner has also provided some interesting glimpses of Japanese history. His book contains 92 illustrations, some of them carvings in wood, some paintings of delightful temples and (as a surprise) certain landscape photographs placed side by side with brush-pictures of the same scenes. These brilliantly show that economy of line which is so characteristic of Japanese painting. Wisely, in my opinion, Mr. Warner has not included the colour-prints of Hiroshige, the "Old Man Mad About Painting," and their rivals, because to most of us these prints have always been familiar.

The author, like Lafcadio Hearn, obviously delighted in the charming aspects of Japanese civilization—and they are many indeed. Moreover, he adroitly holds our attention by indicating the events which were happening in Europe at the various times when these works of art were being produced. For instance, his first chapter deals with the art and history of Japan in the eighth century, a period when we Europeans were decidedly uncouth.

He also describes the effect of Buddhism and Shinto on the folk of that distant island.

Sometimes I think that the arts, even more than religion, have been the most civilizing influence in our quarrelsome world. They have provoked no wars, no atrocities. If we have any discrimination at all we can instantly rejoice in the craftsmanship of ancient Egypt, China, Japan or India. Indeed, their arts put us in touch with the souls of remote people and remote ages. They can make us true Citizens of the Earth.

And how delightful it is for a reviewer to find a whole-hearted enthusiast (as Mr. Warner is) and to learn much from his long stay in a land of, normally, charming people! Perhaps our planet would be more attractive if it were governed by artists, musicians and poets, for—provided that they are not mediocre egoists—they are quick to appreciate the beauty achieved by men of all races. I have never forgotten the Golden and Silver temples at Kyoto.

CLIFFORD BAX

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*Japanese Literature: An Introduction for Western Readers.* By DONALD KEENE. (Wisdom of the East Series. John Murray, London. x+114 pp. 1953. 5s.)

The latest addition to the famous Wisdom of the East Series is as fascinating as it is informative. This "Introduction for Western Readers" is a revelation to the ignorant. At the outset it is made clear that Japanese literature is no more an imitation of the Chinese, than Shakespeare's or Racine's works are imitations of classical literature. It is, incidentally, important to note "that the Japanese were writing novels of magnitude and beauty centuries before the Chinese" and that the Japanese theatre, far surpassing the Chinese, "ranks with the great dramatic achievements of the world."

Considerations of space permit only that readers be recommended, with every confidence, to make their own discoveries regarding Japanese Poetry, the Japanese Theatre, the Japanese Novel, and Western Influence. These chapters are, for the ignorant, gateways to a strange world.

Was it not Verlaine who said: "To evoke—that is the dream"? To one reader of Dr. Keene's book, it is the evocative power of Japanese poetry, Japanese art and the Japanese theatre which is of consuming interest. (It should be made obligatory for writers of "inventory" descriptions to read this book!)

> On the withered branch
> A crow has alighted
> —The end of autumn.

What could the greater detail of "Realism" (defined by Baudelaire as: "pettifogging attention to unimportant incidentals") add to that?

But Dr. Keene makes clear to us that this magic power of evocation is not restricted to Japanese poetry. He tells us that, in a Japanese painting, "the empty spaces are made to have as strong an evocative power as the carefully delineated mountains and pines." He also tells us that, in the Nō Plays, "the scenery is barely sketched, consisting usually of no more than an impressionistic rendering of the main outlines of the objects portrayed." To evoke is to invite imaginative collaboration.

Now and again, you read a book which makes you grateful to the author. This is one of them.

CLAUDE HOUGHTON

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*The Religion of An Artist.* By RABINDRANATH TAGORE. (Visva-Bharati, Calcutta 7. 27 pp. 1953. Re. 1/-)

A welcome reprint of the poet's contribution to *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, published years ago, this brochure proclaims the artist's faith in the "ideal of that Paradise which is not the mere outcome of fancy, but the

ultimate reality in which all things dwell and move."

And to paint such a paradise is the function of Art. For, as the poet observes: "Abstract truth may belong to science and metaphysics, but the world of reality belongs to Art."

G. M.

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*The Sword from the Rock: An Investigation into the Origins of Epic Literature and the Development of the Hero.* By G. R. LEVY. (Faber & Faber, Ltd., London. 236 pp. 1953. 30s.)

Epic poetry dates from the early dawn of civilization. Always the authentic epic is a monumental relation of events, of broad human interest, no doubt, but also with pointed relevance to a particular epoch, ethos and race. Conflict is of the essence of epic, as it is of tragic, poetry—but compellingly vivid narrative here takes the place of dramatic action. With the march of human civilization, however, while the base-plank of the struggle-pattern has remained the same, there have been significant variations in the scaffolding. The history of warfare shows how ruthlessness itself has assumed varying forms. Once it was of the Tamerlane brand; in 1914-18, trench warfare and U-Boat attacks; in 1939-45, *blitzkrieg* and the atom bomb. Likewise, the history of epic poetry reveals certain sharp variations determined by the climate of thought in which particular epics came into existence. Conflict is indeed the life-breath of the epic: but conflict between whom? And conflict of what nature? In the hazy dawn of civilization, the gods were very much in men's minds and bosoms. The epics accordingly dealt with the wars among the gods themselves; with the theme of creation, destruction and fresh creation; with gods made in the image of men, playing the human game of divided aims, aggressive actions and partial realizations. Miss Levy has made a painstaking study of myth and ritual in western Asia at the end of the Bronze Age, and she has been able, after a careful examination of archæological remains in central Turkey, to infer both the interactions of the races and the chief characteristics of the epic literature produced by these ancient peoples. If *Enuma Elish* is typical of the epics of creation, the Epic of Gilgamesh, the *Ramayana* and the *Odyssey* are cited by Miss Levy as examples of the second type. Here the theme is a "Quest," a campaign, an adventure, a god-descended or god-like hero—human in form and main faculties, though nearly divine in wisdom and power—careering through difficulties of all kinds, battling successfully with sub-human monsters, and claiming the crown of success in the end. Odysseus has to outwit the Cyclops before he can be reunited with Penelope; Rama has to destroy the Rakshasas before he can rescue Sita. As for the third basic epic type, Miss Levy names the *Mahabharata* and the *Iliad* as its prototypes. In these the struggle is between man and man—and between the "genius" and the "mortal instruments" within the hero himself. These men, although visibly human, are almost godlike in their stature, in the tone and temper of their minds, and in their capacity to create by their own exertions a new heaven or a new hell about them.

In her desire to force the great epics of the world into these three basic patterns, Miss Levy oversimplifies the stories and thereby deprives them of much of their significant human appeal. Rama equals Odysseus; Arjuna-Karna equals Achilles-Hector. There is more in these epics than the equations. Yet, as an attempt to trace the origins of epic literature and the development of the epic hero from very early times, Miss Levy's thesis merits high praise, and there is a neatness and a plausibility in her conclusions which must prove helpful to the student. In an important final chapter (the Epilogue), Miss Levy traces the main lines of development of the epic in Europe—how the

epic tradition, turning westwards from Central Asia, found new variations in Southern, Northern and Western Europe.

*The Sword and the Rock* is altogether a most scholarly and stimulating work, packed with detail, encyclopædic in range, and suggestive of new avenues of inquiry.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

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*My Best Mary: The Selected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*. Edited with an Introduction by MURIEL SPARK and DEREK STANFORD. (Allan Wingate, London. 240 pp. 1953. 15*s*.)

This selection of the letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley covers the life of a much-tried woman in its main events; her flight with Shelley, their marriage, the birth and loss of children, the tragic death by drowning of her husband, and the pathetic betrayal by friends to whom as a widow she clung perhaps too closely. Loneliness ate into her heart, impairing that creative power which had once produced *Frankenstein*; but though there were offers of marriage, no one could persuade one who had been loved by Shelley to accept a lesser man. It was, aptly enough, through a Shelley, her commonplace son, that she attained at last to comparative peace of mind: when Sir Percy married Mrs. Jane St. John he brought into the family a woman who was not only intelligent, but who adored to the point of idolatry the memory of Shelley.

Miss Spark and Mr. Stanford have usefully edited these letters for the general reader, but there are some omissions. Surely the "Brown" mentioned is Charles Armitage Brown, the friend of Keats? No example of Mary's handwriting is given; an example which might serve to bring the writer near to a reader. For instance, the tragic postscript to the letter to Medwin, July 29th, 1822 (the original of which is in the Keats Memorial House, Rome), gains in intensity when it is read, as given in Bulletin 3 of the Keats House *Bulletin*, in facsimile; reflecting in its wavering script, its erasures and blotted words, a woman's grief over the supreme loss. This, I feel, would have been of more value in bringing Mary alive than the stiff, conventional and over-familiar portrait given as a frontispiece. And why is there no index of any sort, not even that bare list of names which passes for an index in these meagre days?

The preface is good and informative, though marred by slangy expressions which, while imparting a certain liveliness to the writing, will inevitably "date" in a few years. In it the editors have given a fair-minded and clear-cut picture of a woman remarkable in her own right.

DOROTHY HEWLETT

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*Carlyle: An Anthology*. By G. M. TREVELYAN, O.M. (Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., London. 183 pp. 1953. 16*s*.)

Carlyle is out of fashion today. Why is this? Simply because it is the fashion, one is tempted to say, if one loathes, as I do, the contemptible business of literary *fashion*. In my youth I eagerly read all who could write. I loved them then. I love them now. (Pardon this personal and passionate note.) I never joined those who dismissed Macaulay because he was too readable and Carlyle because he was not readable enough. And I cannot join those today who denigrate Carlyle on account of his dubious "doctrines." That is only another of the many clever ways of being stupid. And it is also another way of saying that you don't care a button about art, that art means nothing to you, and that a few wretched "views" can turn you away from the majesty, the power, and the glory of an artist's achievement. Carlyle wrote *The French Revolution*. What does it matter what else he did or should not have done? He wrote *The French Revolution*. He bestowed upon it the poetry of history, the mystery of

history, the mystery of life. He saw history as the garment of God, and we, his readers, see God's foot upon the treadle of the loom. Carlyle was a great poet, a great mystic. That is to say *wonder* was for him the basis of religion. "Is anything more wonderful than another if you consider it maturely?" He wrote:—

> I have *seen* no man rise from the dead; I have seen some thousands rise from *nothing*. I have not force to fly into the sun, but I *have* force to lift my hand, which is equally strange.

Dr. Trevelyan has compiled an anthology from Carlyle's many volumes. How easy to write those words! —they *mean* that here is a great labour of love, a wonderful task of selection carried out by the best man in the world to do it—a work of imperishable value.

JOHN STEWART COLLIS

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*Eric Dickinson Anthology* (Hall the Publisher, Ltd., Oxford. 89 pp. 1952. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

This anthology is a memorial volume of Eric Dickinson's poems. At first reading his poems suggest an inspiration almost wholly literary and somewhat derivative in style. A closer examination, however, reveals the substratum of a deeply felt reality. He is disturbed by many griefs, by his own lapses, by the disappearance of "faith" and "loveliness" and by the presence of "untruth" and "the manacles of vile intolerance and greed." Even behind the vivid imagery and passionate utterances of his sonnets one senses an emotional conflict. And the tension remains unresolved except in one poem —"Laolus," a poem strongly reminiscent of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. In this poem Laolus comforts the "Stranger from the Wood of Broken Youth" (the poet himself) by saying :—

> What though they hurt thy pride and pour out scorn...
> Can they divest thee of thy soul's blue gems!
> Why need you fear them in their pigmy might,
> Their day shall be their day and not your year.

Dickinson's poetry belongs more to the Pre-Raphaelite tradition than to the modern period. He is not preoccupied with psychoanalysis or with formal experiments. Perhaps, this is why the poet was not recognized during his lifetime. Moreover he ceased to write poetry soon after his arrival in India in 1921.

Mr. Frank Howes, a close friend of Dickinson, has helped in the final selection and classification of the poems included in this volume. In his introductory essay, he gives a brief biographical sketch of his friend, but he makes one slip. He mentions that two of his Oxford poems are reprinted in this anthology; actually only one is printed.

MUMTAZ MOTIWALLA

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*Death Goes Hunting*. By CHRIS MASSIE. (Faber and Faber, London. 188 pp. 1953. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a satirical novel and therefore to be judged by the canons of that literary form. Since the days of its first master, Archilochus, satire has been employed in the pursuit of two objects, namely, to arouse in the reader a consciousness of his own personal moral shortcomings or ridiculous aspects, and of those defects and limitations in humanity *en masse*. The reader must be induced to chuckle at folly, or to recoil from the disgusting elements in human behaviour. And if neither object is achieved, then the satire, as satire, fails. Above all, the satirist must amuse. And a cursory glance at the great satires confirms this. The names tumble out, one after the other: Aristophanes, Lucilius, Juvenal, Petronius, Cervantes, Molière, and so on, down to our own age and Bernard Shaw and the late lamented George Orwell. None of these can be read without amusement. All steer well away from the flogging of an idea or the humourless preaching of a sermon. For it is possible to be amused

dryly by that which also disgusts by reminding us of our frailty, folly or sheer beastliness. Perhaps the most brilliant exponent of the satirical method in modern times was Samuel Butler, who used, with a vintage-dry humour, the inverted-mirror method; with George Orwell's *Animal Farm* as a rollicking exposé of the humbug of political ideologies.

Judged by the foregoing criteria, it cannot be said of Mr. Massie's latest novel—his 13th (*absit omen!*)—that he has performed this most difficult of all literary feats. This is the story of the wandering in an after-world city rather childishly named Troy, and in spectral form about this mundane solid earth, of a hanged murderer. From the first page to the last there is not a single gleam of humour, not a single chuckle. Worse, much of it suggests a half-digested philosophy and a groping after ideas not thought out with intellectual vigour. And there are passages when one feels that this is little better than the sort of thing that is written in coloured weeklies for boys.

I sum up against Mr. Massie's effort as satirist with regret, a regret best explained by anecdote.

Some time in the 20's I was handed a typescript by an unpublished author and asked my opinion. At this distance of time I cannot be sure whether this was *Hallelujah Chorus*, or some other early novel by Mr. Massie. But I recall, very vividly, the strong impression of literary merit and originality that the book gave me, and I recall in what terms of praise I spoke of it. I mention this because one does not gladly "slam" a book by a writer of Chris Massie's quality.

I did not want to judge this book hastily and so reread parts of it. In my judgment it fails for the reasons given. Its ideas are not thoroughly worked out. If the author sees human nature and human institutions as contemptible, he does not persuade us of it, since we are bogged down by the mumbo-jumbo of a ridiculous post-mortem terrain and society, which now and then can be described only as feeble in conception, and at other times as merely slightly absurd.

As usual the publisher's "blurb" over-praises the book, which cannot with any truth be said to be "a work of intense individual accomplishment" or "a satire on our national hypocrisy." Nor is it, as the "blurb" suggests, in any sense a "thriller."

Mr. Massie should turn his back on the after life, upon spectral murderers, and return to the familiar scene; for he is a writer of great talent, though here he reminds us that now and then good writers turn out poor work. In his case this is a great pity.

GEORGE GODWIN

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*Nanalal—Poet Laureate of Modern Gujarat : A Study in Creative Interpretation.* By BALCHANDRA PARIKH. Foreword by K. M. MUNSHI. (Hind Kitabs, Ltd., Bombay. 98 pp. 1953. Rs. 3/12)

This is a short appreciative study of Shri Nanalal Dalpatram Kavi, the most famous poet of Gujarat of the last half-century. The book is meant primarily for those who do not know the Gujarati language and this study gives a proper introduction to the poet, his times, his literary work, style and, above all, his idealism. Because of its academic value, the book is sponsored by the University of Bombay.

Shri Parikh ably and aptly describes the illustrious poet from the standpoint of the "growth and evolution of his potent genius through successive stages of its poetic development." Nanalal has a style of his own, which he calls *Dolanshaili*—the "Impassioned Rhythmic style," in which he has given us famous works like *Vasantotsava, Usha, Jahangir and Nurjahan, Jaya-Jayanta, Kurukshetra*, etc. He is a majestic *Rasa-Kavi*, a romantic poet, and the author calls him a visionary of beauty and "the veritable

child" of the great Sanskrit poet Kalidasa.

The author also points to the poet's perfect, superb and æsthetic portraiture of Indian womanhood in several of his works. The poet has shown an epic vision in his final great work, *Kurukshetra*, an epic poem on the battle-field which decided the issue of the war in the *Mahabharata*—the centre of the Aryan spirit—and which symbolically decides all world conflicts. This work in 12 books is the crowning glory of Nanalal.

Shri Parikh has displayed deep study of his subject and has given English translations of some of the poet's original lyrics. But, as Shri Munshi points out in his Foreword, "a sketch of the poet's life against the background of contemporaneous literary achievements of Gujarat" would have done a great deal towards the purpose of this work.

S. K. JHAVERI

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The Viswa-Bharati Granthalaya has done good service in publishing the following translations of Rabindranath Tagore's works, made by well-known Hindi writers and very well produced. It has projected translations of the poet's complete works and the rest will be eagerly awaited.

*Fulwadi* (116 pp. Illustrated. 1951. Rs. 2/12) and *Chaturanga* (115 pp. Re. 1/8), translated by Mohanlal Bajpai; *Do Bahnen* (127 pp. 1952. Rs. 2/12) and *Mera Bachpan* (110 pp. 1950. Rs. 2/4), translated by Hazariprasad Dwivedi; and *Nati Ki Puja* (87 pp. 1951. Rs. 2/-), translated by Bhagavatiprasad Chandola.

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# THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAM

*The Legacy of Persia.* Edited by A. J. ARBERRY. (Clarendon Press, Oxford; Geoffrey Cumberlege, London. xvi + 421 pp. Illustrated. 1953. 21s.)

The Legacy Series is already very well known as an authoritative source of information respecting the civilizations of Greece, Rome, Egypt, Israel, Islam and India, and of the period of the Middle Ages. A wise choice of leading authorities, who have presented this information in a manner both scholarly and readable, and of a format attractive to the eye and easy on the hand, has built for this Series a high reputation well deserved. In the new volume on Persia the same qualities are maintained, the clear and concise text and the delightful plates being a source of pleasure and satisfaction to the reader. After a brief but apt statement as preface by Professor Arberry, the whole panorama of Persian history is spread before us and the magnificence of her cultural achievements revealed. There is a rich variety in the 13 sections offered—Persia and the Ancient World (J. H. Iliffe), Persia and Byzantium (D. Talbot Rice), Persia and the Arabs (R. Levy), Persia and India after the Conquest of Maḥmūd (H. Goetz), The Islamic Art of Persia (D. Barrett), Religion (G. M. Wickens), The Persian Language (H. W. Bailey), Persian Literature (A. J. Arberry), Carpets (A. C. Edwards), Gardens (Hon. V. Sackville-West), Persian Science (C. Elgood), Persia as seen by the West (L. Lockhart), and "The Royame of Perse" (J. E. Heseltine). The most fastidious would find it difficult to quibble about so wide and generous a selection. Moreover, the book is provided with a select bibliography which, though short in itself, is the key to a thousand secrets, for most of the works cited contain in themselves further specialist bibliographies; thus, for instance, the earnest enquirer into the history of Persian science will find in *The Legacy of Islam* and the monumental *Introduction to the History of Science* by Professor Sarton (both listed) all his immediate requirements in respect of the mathematical and physical sciences, and these works

enlarge upon the section by Dr. Elgood, which for reasons of space concentrates upon specific features only. Of these features, the important Persian contribution to Islamic science is rightly stressed and defined by Dr. Elgood. Finally, there is a chronological table. This is extremely useful, for it is detailed and occupies some eight pages of the book. By its aid one may find all the significant events in the long history of Persia from the foundation of the Median Empire by Deioces to the accession of Muhammad Riza Shah. Possibly the inclusion of a map, as in *The Legacy of India*, might have increased its value still further.

To all those who love Persia, this volume will be a constant companion for many years to come. Its historical sections, competently and attractively written, show Persia's chequered story as she stood sentinel across the great caravan routes to the Farther East. We learn of her honoured place as a mother of new religions and the fountain of a higher mysticism. Her literature has always evoked a wonder and an enchantment, which are increased by the deeper understanding gained through reading this scholarly work. Finally, but not least, there are those other creations of the Persian genius—her miniatures, her carpets, her gardens—which collectively reveal fresh aspects of the national character. As the Persian wisely refrains from exposing his most intimate treasures to the vulgar gaze, only the diligent and sympathetic student can come to know him. *The Legacy of Persia* in the hands of such a student will transport him as on the wings of the *simurgh* beyond the barriers of Qāf.

H. J. J. WINTER

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*The Mysteries of Selflessness: A Philosophical Poem.* By SIR MUHAMMAD IQBAL. Translated with Introduction and Notes by ARTHUR J. ARBERRY. (Wisdom of the East Series. John Murray, Ltd., London. 92 pp. 1953. 5*s*.)

The works of the distinguished Muslim poet, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, are greatly admired by a small following in England. The present volume will be read with interest, but it raises obstacles. It advances a philosophy in verse. This is a dangerous form. Even Wordsworth could not manage it, and few are prepared to follow him upon his *Excursion*, and I fear that not many are ready to testify to the excellence of Bridges' *The Testament of Beauty*. The fact is there is little to be gained by dressing philosophy in verse: if it is read, it is for its poetry, which in this kind of thing seldom breaks in. It must be admitted that *The Mysteries of Selflessness* hardly promises well as a good subject for the Muse, and certainly there is something almost absurdly forbidding and humourless in the prose headings to the various sections—for example: "That True Solidarity Consists in Adopting a Fixed Communal Objective, and that the Objective of the Muhammadan Community is the Preservation and Propagation of Unitarianism."

But Iqbal was not only a poet. In an extremely interesting and unconventional Preface, Professor Arberry writes:—

> When the future historian proposes to analyse the causes that determined and conditioned the emergence of Pakistan, he will be bound to take into account the personality and writings of a man who is regarded by some as the creator, and by many as the principal, or a principal, advocate of the creation, of that great power.

That man, of course, is Iqbal, who was fired by a passionate belief in the Muslims as the first people on earth, and in their God as the supreme God of all. For Muslims hold to this kind of faith easier than Christians do now. But if we are wiser thereby, they are stronger.

JOHN STEWART COLLIS

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*Studies in Muslim Ethics.* By DWIGHT M. DONALDSON. (S. P. C. K., London. xi+304 pp. 1953. 27*s*. 6*d*.)

Dr. Donaldson will be remembered with affection in India for his work at the Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies at Aligarh. Scholars will recall his book *The Shi'ite Religion*, published in 1933. In the present volume, which is dedicated to "my Muslim friends and Christian friends of Muslims," Dr. Donaldson has written the first methodical and comprehensive history of ethics in Islam. He traces the development of Muslim ethics from pre-Islamic times (to set the scene), through the *Koran* and the Traditions, the early translators and philosophers, the ascetics and mystics culminating in the great Ghazali, the Persian poets, the 19th-century revival of Muslim scholarship, and so down to the present day. The extensive bibliography most usefully appended to the account is eloquent evidence of the wide and deep study that has gone into the making of this book. The discourse is illustrated by extensive quotations in translation from Muslim authors. This valuable book, the product of a very charitable and enquiring mind, will be welcomed by all interested in the noble ethics of Islam.

A. J. ARBERRY

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*Muhammad at Mecca*. By W. MONTGOMERY WATT. (Clarendon Press, Oxford. xvi + 192 pp. 1953. 18*s*.)

Sir William Muir was the last British scholar to write a full-length biography of the Prophet Muhammad, and that was nearly a hundred years ago. A comparison of his celebrated book with Dr. Watt's (which is to be followed by a second volume, *Muhammad at Medina*) illustrates clearly enough the progress in Islamic research which has taken place during the interval. A certain amount of new basic material, Arabic sources not accessible to Muir, has meanwhile been published and assessed; but it is in the handling of the evidence and its interpretation that the difference is most clearly seen. Dr. Watt constructs his learned biography against a background of Meccan politics and economics; in this sense he is a true *ibn waqtihi* ("son of his time"). This side of the story is lucidly and persuasively told, and rests upon substantial documentation. But the most original quality of Dr. Watt's thesis is his open-mindedness; he accepts in full the sincerity of Muhammad, and will have nothing of his European detractors. He accepts the validity of Muhammad's prophetic consciousness, and uses in reference to the message of the *Koran* the striking term "a creative irruption," by which he indicates that he is persuaded of its fundamental originality. Though this treatise is a little too erudite to make for popular reading, it is a most important and remarkable contribution to learning; it is a book which will command the respect, and in not a few particulars the admiration, of Muslim readers. It may be heartily recommended to all students of history.

A. J. ARBERRY

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# INDIANA

*A Short Introduction to the Essentials of Living Hindu Philosophy*. By FRANS VREEDE. (Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, Bombay. 71 pp. 1953. Rs. 3/-)

An astonishing sympathy with the characteristic Hindu attitude to philosophy pervades Professor Vreede's little book. In his Foreword he denies the validity of

> religious or scientific prejudices against so-called "primitive" forms of language and behaviour that, at first sight to modern man, seem antiquated modes of human thought and being,

and reminds the reader that Hindu philosophy is philosophy in the original sense of the word; that, as love of wisdom, it implies "some kind of actual realization in everyday life."

The title of this book proves a

perfect description. Professor Vreede keeps to the essentials, leaves scholarly disputes alone, ignores all but the living core of Hindu philosophy. He enters thoroughly into the original spirit of the institutions of caste and the four *ashramas*, distinguishing it sharply and concisely from the degraded current Hindu practice. He insists that the six *darshanas* are, not "systems of philosophy" in the modern sense, but what the Sanskrit name implies : points of view.

The writing is clear and untechnical, though the original Sanskrit equivalent for every important concept is given in parentheses, in a good, workable though not intricately precise transliteration.

But above all, once again, must be commended his insistence, embodied especially in the note on "Books to Read," that the Hindu philosophy is a way of life, not merely a form for discussion. Altogether, an excellent introduction.

It is sad to think that neither the enthusiasm nor the imaginative, broad-minded understanding shown in this book for their traditional philosophy are characteristic of Hindu society as we know it today. Hindu philosophy is living, for it is immortal. Why will not people drink of its fountain of life?

L. W. S.

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*Mental Health and Hindu Psychology.* By SWAMI AKHILANANDA. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 231 pp. 1952. 16*s*.)

Western psychology was utterly useless, because it was helpless in the practical fields, till the advent of Psychoanalysis and other depth psychologies. The hidden recesses of the mind —termed the unconscious and unknown to the academic psychologists—were believed to hold the secrets of all human behaviour. The new depth psychology is claimed to have proved its worth by solving many a baffling problem in the practical fields of human behaviour and human relationships. Particularly it seems to have helped in dealing with mental disorders of the more serious kind.

But there was felt to be something incomplete in the cures effected by the new methods. The conviction began to grow in the minds of serious psychologists that some important aspect of the human personality was left untouched by all the schools of psychology, individually and collectively. C. G. Jung after many years of psychotherapeutic experience confessed, in 1932 :—

> Among all my patients...there has not been one whose problem in the last resort, was not that of finding a religious outlook on life.... It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age had given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook.

This is an astounding revelation of the inadequacy of modern psychology. The Unconscious of new psychology stands in need of being supplemented by the Super-Conscious; and it is just this Super-Conscious that Swami Akhilananda offers to western psychology. The author of this book, who is at home with Western psychology, explains, not only theoretically, but pragmatically and practically how the Super-Conscious is an integral element in all human nature, and how through the awakening of its purer potentialities, through proper "discipline," the human personality can be fully integrated; and how the tantalizing mental ailments of modern civilization may be cured.

The book is unique. It is a marvel of clarity and accuracy. Any layman can read and understand it. And which layman is there today who is not deeply and anxiously concerned with problems of social adjustment: fear, frustration, anxiety, mental conflict, tensions; and above all of Peace? Let such men read Swami Akhilanandaji's book, and they will find true peace.

P. S. NAIDU

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*Women in the Sacred Laws*. By SHAKUNTALA RAO SHASTRI. (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. 193 pp. 1953. Re. 1/12)

Shrimati Shakuntala Rao has offered in this little work a timely and informative discussion of the changing position of women as in the Hindu law books from the earliest ones of Gautama and Baudhayana to the latest of Yajnyavalkya, Parasara and others. Independent chapters are given to Manu and the later commentators. As to women, beginning with full freedom and equal rights with men in the earlier ages as to marriage, divorce, property and to children, the lowering of their status the author traces to the practices of infant marriage, refusal of remarriage, *sati*, and denial of property rights. Shakuntala Rao thinks that Buddhism influenced towards the degradation of woman, as she was considered in it as a temptress. She thinks also that the sense of insecurity caused by foreign invasions, *e.g.*, of the Huns, Sakas, Scythians and later the Mahomedans, had much to do with this development. She gives many examples of inter-caste and even inter-racial marriages being approved. She concludes with a summary of the provisions of the proposed Hindu Code which appear, in the light of her study, like a restoration of the large and humane outlook of a happier age. Contemporary evidence is adduced from Kautilya and Vatsayana on woman's enjoyment of the rights of property, divorce and freedom in marriage. The teacher of the author in Oxford, Professor Thomas, has written a Foreword.

M. A. VENKATA RAO

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*The Bhagavad Gita and the Changing World*. By P. NAGARAJA RAO, M.A., D.LITT. (Sri Ramakrishna Seva Samiti, Ahmedabad. 160 pp. 1953. Rs. 5/-; 7*s*. 6*d*.)

This book consists of Dr. Nagaraja Rao's university extension lectures at Calcutta, Banaras and Madras, "slightly expanded" for publication. In spite of his attempt to unify them, however, the book remains a collection.

The first four chapters are given to an account and criticism of current secularist ideologies. Marxism, Scientific Materialism and Humanism are considered and pronounced inadequate philosophies. It would have been better, however, if the author had kept his discussions of these clearly apart.

In "The Gita and the Individual" the author points out that the *Gita* allows each worshipper to follow a path suited to his constitution. In this chapter he draws much upon the chapter "Religion and Temperament" in Aldous Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy*; but he forgets to add to his description of these different paths and his comments on the wisdom of such a teaching what Huxley does add to his:—

> The lower forms of religion, whether emotional, active or intellectual, are never to be accepted as final. True, each of them comes naturally to persons of a certain kind of constitution and temperament; but the *dharma* or duty of any given individual is not to remain complacently fixed in the imperfect religion that happens to suit him; it is rather to transcend it, not by impossibly denying the modes of thought, behaviour and feeling that are natural to him, but by making use of them, so that by means of nature he may pass beyond nature.

Dr. Nagaraja Rao seems to have found Huxley very sympathetic. On pp. 23 and 126 he quotes from *The Perennial Philosophy* without being aware, apparently, that he is quoting.

It is a pity that a book on such an exalted theme, expressing such a confident philosophical attitude, should be so poorly encased. Our author has not much feeling for words. Non-violence is called a panacea "for the *exasperated cry* of the world" (p. 128, reviewer's italics); and the travels of the Sage Narada in the three worlds are referred to as "all his globe trotting"! (p. 32) The continuity of exposition is marred by repeated dartings off from one quotation to another. There is much repetition and loosely

knit argument. The proof-correcting is remarkably bad.

The Index, prepared by Shri C. G. Viswanath of the Banaras Hindu University Library, is almost disproportionately excellent.

R. P. S.

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*Gita, Tilak ani Gandhi: Karmayoga ani Satyagraha.* By SHANKARRAO DEV, KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA, S. D. JAVADEKAR, *et al.* Marathi. (Navabharat Prakashan, Poona. 136 pp. 1952. Re. 1/-)

The Lokamanya's *Gitarahasya* and Gandhiji's *Anasaktiyoga,* two great commentaries on the *Gita,* are compared in this little book. The discussion hinges upon the teaching of the *Gita*: "He whose nature is free from egotism and whose power of discrimination is not blinded does not slay though he killeth all these people, and is not bound by the bonds of action." Tilak held this to justify actual war and slaughter by one of such qualities, when they were necessary for the protection of society. Gandhiji treated it as a statement of the liberating effect of detachment, but added that no incarnate mortal has such detachment; in fact, he claimed, on the basis of 40 years' effort to apply the teachings of the *Gita,* that detachment is not to be attained by one who does not practise truth and non-violence. The logic of the last is irresistible; for, as the late Shri Mashruwala points out, harmlessness is one of the characteristics of the divine nature, and it is not likely to be unfolded by one who does acts of violence.

The seven essays collected here discuss the question brilliantly, with constant reference to the actual sayings of "*Gita, Tilak ani Gandhi.*" But the occasional suggestion in the book that the emergence of Non-Violence is due to "progress" in our moral sensitivity since the days of the *Gita* sounds too complacent. Surely, the other suggestion, which also but less frequently appears, that it is simply the greater horrors of the consequences of modern war that are turning us away from it, is more realistic. After all, in the *Mahabharata* war, not only was no man unprotected by armour to be attacked, but no warrior was to attack one of inferior standing. How does our "blitzing" compare with that?[1]

These essays first appeared in the magazine *Navabharat,* of Poona, from October 1950 to October 1952. The prose is dignified and precise, redolent of a happier day of Marathi prose. A book well worth attentive reading and much reflection.

G. R. C.

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*Dvādaśaranayacakra of Śrīmallavādisūri.* Part I: Chapters 1-4. Edited by MUNI CATURAVIJAYAJI and LALCHAND B. GANDHI. (Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. CXVI. Oriental Institute, Baroda, for the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. vii+40+314. 1952. Rs. 12/12)

*Dvādaśāra-nayacakra* literally means a 12-spoked wheel of *Naya* and it is an important Jain philosophical work, dealing with twelve *Nayas* in as many chapters. *Naya* is the analytical one of the two forms in which the *Anekāntavāda,* or the Jain doctrine of the relativity or many-sidedness of Truth, is explained, the other form being the *Syādvāda.* A peculiarity of this work of Mallavādi, who flourished in the first half of the fifth century of the Vikram era, is that it is not available by itself but has to be restored from the fragments of the text quoted in the commentary of Siṁhasūri (first part of the 7th century of the Christian era), which is also published in the present volume. The first four chapters deal with the *Sāmānya* and *Viśeṣa,* criticisms of the Sāṅkhya doctrine of *Pradhāna* and the Buddhist idea of *Pratyakṣa,* and the *Jñānavāda* (Ch. I); the doctrines of *Asatkārya, Apauruṣeyatva,*

[1] For the rules of the war, see *Bhishma Parva,* Section I, verses 25-35.—G. R. C.

*Puruṣa, Niyati* and *Kāla* (Ch. II); the three qualities of *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas,* the problem of happiness and misery, the theory of causality (Ch. III); and the problem of God as the creator of the world (Chs. III and IV).

The lucid foreword by Shri G. H. Bhatt, the general editor, deals with the evolution of the doctrine of *Naya* and the chronology of the author and the commentator, while the Sanskrit Introduction by Pandit Gandhi culls all the biographical details in subsequent Jain works; gives an Index of authors and works cited or alluded to in the Commentary on the first four chapters and describes the two MSS. on which this edition is based. The editor and the publishers deserve great credit for bringing out this important book. They would do well to expedite the publication of the subsequent chapters of the work.

N. A. GORE

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*The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.* By M. S. PATEL. (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 288 pp. 1953. Rs. 5/8)

There is a great deal of very valuable and important matter in this book. The author is himself an enthusiastic advocate of Gandhiji's educational philosophy and has gone to great trouble to expound and elucidate it and to answer its hostile critics. Many points that are widely misunderstood are here made clear, such for example as the self-sufficiency theory, the relative importance of the individual and the community and the part to be played by manual work. There are valuable chapters also on the language problem, girls' education and the place of religion in education, as well as ones on Gandhiji's debt to his predecessors, the basic principles on which the philosophy and the scheme arising from it stand, and the working of the scheme in practice. It is of the first importance that the public in general and educationists and Government officers in particular should read all of this, mark, learn and inwardly digest it, if the prevailing ignorance and misunderstanding are to be dissipated. But unfortunately it is extremely unlikely that the book in its present form will be widely read by many of these. Being a university doctoral thesis it staggers under the usual weight of erudition required for such works. If most of the quotations could be cut out, leaving just a few of the most important from Gandhiji himself; and if some of the chapters dealing with essentially the same matter could be telescoped, the book would be reduced to less than half its present length and its readability would be increased a hundredfold. Dare one hope that author and publisher will do this?

MARGARET BARR

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*Dayaram Gidumal.* By T. L. MANGHIRMALANI. (Distributors: Navajivan Karyalaya, Ahmedabad. 46 pp. 1953. 12 As.)

This is a brief, unvarnished biographical sketch by his son-in-law of a saintly scholar and civilian of Sind, who made a deep mark on many individuals and public institutions, in spite of his ceaseless striving to reduce his personality to a zero. Dayaram Gidumal (1857-1927) was, indeed, in the words of B. M. Malabari, "a lotus of Sindh," a sage whose white robe was untarnished by the mud of materialism. Our present-day public men and civilians will do well to emulate his noble example.

A. B. C.

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*Glimpses of Truth.* By N. P. MEHTA; with a Foreword by SOPHIA WADIA. (Hind Kitabs, Ltd., Bombay. 128 pp. 1953. Rs. 4/-)

Shri Mehta has recorded his glimpses of the truth as they came to him, making no attempt at any special arrangement. The form is risky; for truth demands, to use a well-worn phrase, that we see it steadily and see it whole. Still, the book shows that Shri Mehta has dwelt long and earnestly on the right subjects; and, if we cannot accept many of his conclusions, why, it is no part of his aim to make us.

His tone is that of an intellectual confronted and undismayed by the limitations of the intellect, of one who hopes for, does not fear, the extinction of the separative personality. His objectives are the common objectives of spiritual endeavour all the world over. His psychology, on the other hand, is now and then distinctly unacceptable to the mystical tradition. For instance, from the need of being unafraid of untruth or passion, he infers that "the more you indulge in untruths, the more apparent will truth become." (p. 100)

Shri Mehta has glimpsed the end, and, on the whole, shown the necessary broadmindedness. He would benefit immensely from an attempt to organize his glimpses into a coherent vision. Many of them will have to be modified, and some discarded, in the light of the whole; but self-criticism is excellent for maturity.

The book is written fairly well, except for some echoes that might have been better as proper quotations: for instance, "Many are called, but few succeed" (p. 104). It is an ill thing for a man to trifle with the rhythms of the Bible.

G. R. C.

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*An Analysis of Resemblance.* By R. W. CHURCH. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 136 pp. 1952. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

Mr. R. W. Church deals concisely and lucidly with a problem of great interest for logic and metaphysics. Already in the ancient speculations about being and becoming we find an awareness of the problem and in modern times Hegel himself, fully conscious of his historical lineage, gave, with his dialectic of development and becoming, a new orientation to the old problem. The experience of resemblance is of course a commonplace of everyday life but, strangely enough, even these trivialities of day-to-day routine offer problems that baffle philosophical thought. What is resemblance, after all? Can there be exact resemblance? Can there be identity in difference? Maybe we are condemned only to raise these intriguing questions without ever being able to arrive at a definite answer.

Two great metaphysicians of the West, Leibnitz and Hegel, took the initiative and we cannot proceed further without settling our accounts with what they thought. The Law of Identity has fared badly at the hands of Hegel and Bradley affords, as Mr. Church says, the classical English variant. Mr. Church essays primarily to clarify the whole situation, to distinguish between different senses in which "resemblance" is used. He finds in Russell a failure to distinguish between "resemblances that are exact and resemblances that are analogous." Ultimately he is led to the consideration of the problem of Universals.

Mr. Church has mainly confined himself to a narrow field, to the elucidation of the problem itself, and has not given much attention to the bearing of this problem on the metaphysics of personality and other issues of metaphysical interest. But he has dealt with the problem with remarkable precision and ability.

S. VAHIDUDDIN

# THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

[We are publishing in two parts this essay, on a matter of topical as well as of perennial importance, which forms a chapter of a book in preparation by **Dr. Alexander F. Skutch,** a naturalist of Costa Rica. It was discussed at a specially convened meeting of the Indian Institute of Culture, Basavangudi, Bangalore, on December 4th, 1952, under the chairmanship of Shri M. A. Venkata Rao, evoking animated and thoughtful reactions from him and other participants in the discussion.—ED.]

## RELIGION AND CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

During the present century we have witnessed a rapidly growing awareness, first by men of special interests and then by a larger public, of the need of protecting the natural world in all its aspects. This "conservation movement" has become a mighty stream fed by multiple sources. Among the first to raise their voices in behalf of the wilderness and its denizens were those who loved the earth's unspoiled areas for the intangible values they offered—the beauty, the sense of mystery, the peace and the relaxation, the feeling of communion with forces older and more enduring than ourselves. Then there were those whose feeling of brotherhood with other forms of life was outraged by the persecution and wanton destruction of these. There were scientists who deplored the disappearance of rare animals and plants which they had never adequately investigated. There were hunters alarmed by the growing scarcity of "game." Finally, there were the agriculturists and economists who tardily realized that in the erosion and deterioration of soils, the wanton cutting of forests, the drying up of the watercourses, the pollution of rivers and the reckless exploitation of minerals, the material foundations of modern civilization were being undermined and destroyed.

It has for several years been evident to those who view the problem broadly that, in spite of the diversity of motives which inspire this concern for the preservation of the natural world, the objects of this solicitude—soil, water, vegetation and animal life—are all so closely linked by multiple interactions that, unless all are preserved together, all will be lost together. Thus there has been a growing tendency for these diverse interests to join in a single comprehensive campaign to protect all those manifold aspects of the physical world which we loosely lump under the term "Nature." There is, after all, only one kind of conservation, although it has many facets.

In all this recent agitation for the conservation of Nature, religion has been almost silent. Yet it was not always so. Man's earliest religions were intimately concerned with his relation to the natural world; and Oriental religions have ever supported the cause of conservation in a manner unfamiliar to us in Western lands. If we take a broad view of the development of religious thought, we find that it has passed through two distinct stages: The earlier cults were almost without exception religions of preservation; their aim was to ensure the safety and earthly prosperity of the tribe or nation; hence they could not ignore the natural foundations upon which the community's welfare depended. Although not forgetful of the soul's needs after the body's death, this was a subordinate motive in religions of this class.

There is evidence from many parts of the world that early man felt uneasy about taking the life of any form, whether animal or plant. This deeply rooted sentiment, doubtless springing from an instinctive recognition of the

fundamental sameness of all forms of life rather than from intellectual conviction, was rationalized in various ways, giving rise to beliefs which seem absurd to our colder and more critical modern intelligence. As in all discussions of religious matters, it is necessary to distinguish sharply between intuitions which spring from the very depths of our being and our largely unsatisfactory attempts to give a generally acceptable account, in rational terms, of these pervasive sentiments.

It is also important to keep in mind that man's treatment of other living things, including other individuals of his own species, has from the first been determined by several motives which are often in sharpest conflict. On the one hand there is sympathy with them as living beings more or less akin to ourselves, having wants and feelings somewhat like our own. Opposed to this, in the case of the lower kingdoms, has been our need to use their flesh for food, their skin for clothing or other products of their bodies for manifold purposes. And opposed to this again is the fear of vengeance, of the harm which these victims of man's material necessities may wreck upon him by natural or supernormal means.

In broad terms, we may recognize a religious motive, working toward the preservation of other forms of life, and the motive of self-preservation, which often leads to their destruction. The latter is included in that which in modern terminology we call the economic motive, which embraces not only the striving to get our basic necessities but also our attempts to satisfy that exaggerated acquisitiveness into which these primary vital demands have everywhere hypertrophied.

We who call ourselves civilized often find it extremely difficult to harmonize these two motives in our lives, the religious and the economic, the altruistic feeling which leads us to seek harmony with a larger whole and the egoistic impulse which impels us to feather our own nest regardless of the consequences to others. Primitive man experienced a similar conflict, which he strove to resolve with logic less penetrating than our own, with feelings less delicate and refined. His efforts in this direction were often ineffectual, leading to beliefs which seem absurd to us, to rites which strike us as stupid, grotesque, and often highly revolting.

If we view these rites as an alien onlooker they can only fill us with scorn and contempt; but if we recall that the savage, like ourselves, is striving to harmonize elements in his life which are perhaps radically incompatible, we shall look upon them with sympathy and understanding, with pity rather than with ridicule. Moreover, it is well to remember that that complete internal harmony, logical no less than emotional, which is so precious to the sage and the saint, is not an indispensable condition of the survival of man or of other animals. A balance of opposing attitudes, the ability to shift swiftly from one emotional state to another as external circumstances demand, is all that is necessary for the maintenance of life.

Primitive man's tenderness toward other forms of life was directed toward the vegetable no less than toward the animal kingdom. In particular those noblest of vegetable forms, the giant trees, so much statelier, older and more enduring than himself, inspired him with awe, reverence and wonder. The worship of trees was widespread among the European branches of the Aryan race, and among the Germans natural woods formed the earliest sanctuaries. The intensity of the feeling inspired by trees may be inferred from the severity of the penalty prescribed by the old Germanic laws for anyone who dared to peel the bark from a living tree. The culprit's navel was cut out and nailed to the spot whence the bark had been removed, then he was driven around and around until his entrails were wound about the trunk. Thus the offender replaced with his own vital parts the bark of which he had so thoughtlessly deprived the living tree.

In this instance, as with later laws

decreed for the protection of living things other than human beings, the modern reader is likely to remark that they imply greater respect for the life of an animal or a plant than for that of a man. This is to miss the essential point. Most legal codes, down almost to modern times, decree penalties which we look upon as pitilessly harsh for misdemeanours that we now regard as venial. The severity of the punishment was determined not so much by the magnitude of the crime as by the fact that it violated a tribal taboo or outraged the ruler's decree, with all the disastrous effects that might follow from disrupting the tribe's solidarity and exposing it to supernatural evils, or from undermining royal authority. It was not that animal or plant life was valued more highly than human life, but that, as in ancient Rome, the sanctity of law and custom, upon which depended the preservation of society, was placed above any individual life.

In that vast treasure-house of information on the customs and beliefs of primitive men, Sir James Frazer's *Golden Bough*, we find numerous instances drawn from all parts of the world of the sanctity, which in cultures long dead or fast disappearing, attached to living trees. Thus, before their conversion to Christianity, the Lithuanians worshipped trees and maintained about their villages or houses holy groves, where even to break a twig would have been a sin. They believed that one who cut a bough in such a grove would through some mysterious agent of retribution lose his life or at least be maimed in limb.

In north America the Indians along the upper reaches of the Missouri River revered the great cottonwoods that grew in the river bottoms and were the most imposing trees of the region. They would not cut these trees for the logs they needed, but depended for their supply upon such trees as had fallen of themselves. The Ojebways "very seldom cut down green or living trees, from the idea that it puts them to pain, and some of their medicine-men profess to have heard the wailing of the trees under the axe." The Wanyika tribe of East Africa believed that every tree was the abode of a spirit. The coconut palm was held in special reverence, and the destruction of one of these trees was regarded as the equivalent of matricide, because the palm gives men life and nourishment, as a mother her child.

Among numerous peoples, when a tree was about to be felled because needed for timber, special ceremonies were performed at its foot for the propitiation of the indwelling spirit, lest it take revenge upon the despoilers of its abode; or apologies were offered, and expressions of regret that human need should cause the destruction of the living tree. When the Toboongkoos of Celebes were about to clear a piece of forest to make a rice field, they built a tiny house and furnished it with food, miniature clothes and some gold. Then they besought the woodland spirits to quit the area of forest destined for axe and fire and to take up their abode peacefully in the dwelling that had been made and provisioned for their accommodation.

In these and numerous other examples that have been collected by ethnologists, the attitude toward the tree ranges all the way from friendly feeling, such as might be inspired by another sentient being, to gratitude toward it as a source of benefits and worship as the body of a spirit with great power for helping or harming men. Nearly always the motive for revering and protecting the tree is religious rather than practical; only rarely, as in the case of the Wanyikas' coconut palms, is the economic aspect prominent.

The deliberate practice of conservation as we now conceive it is rarely apparent in the primitive man's treatment of trees. But, whatever the explicit motivation, the practical result is obvious. Men who hold trees in awe and reverence, who must enlist the assistance of their priest or medicine-man in order to fell them without dire

consequences to themselves, who must make elaborate preparations for the accommodation of spirits dispossessed of their natural abodes, who perform expiatory sacrifices, or who at least approach the prospective victims of their axe in an apologetic mood—such men are not likely to destroy trees wantonly or without great need.

Such religious practices and quasi-religious sentiments result in the conservation of the woodlands so important to the continued prosperity of any society, whether of primitive hunters and food-gatherers or of modern city-dwellers dependent for their food upon large-scale, mechanized agriculture supported by an elaborate technology.

As to the beliefs upon which these practices are founded, should we not respect and even honour them as representing an earnest attempt to apprehend truths to which we, in the smug materialism of our age, are too often insensitive and blind? Whatever the faults and errors of our remote ancestors, there was one at least into which they did not fall: they did not, like so many of our contemporaries, suppose that all values are human values and that no other of the multitudinous goals toward which life tends is worthy of our reverence.

The animism which led primitive men to posit spirits in vegetables operated even more strongly in the case of animals, which move, see, hear, utter sounds and eat much as ourselves. This recognition of the essential similarity, in nature and in needs, of man and other animate creatures placed a restraint upon the wanton killing of the latter. In his summary of the religious belief of the South American Indians, Alfred Métraux stated:—

> Among the spirits that tend toward a greater individualization are the supernatural protectors of the animal species usually called the "Father or Mother of such-and-such kind of game or fish." In the myths these spirits are represented as particularly large specimens of the species, and, as a rule, they may take on human form at will....These custodians of the species freely permit the use of their protégés as food, but they do not tolerate their wanton destruction by man, and they punish severely hunters who kill more than they actually need to survive. In some cases, these guardians could be propitiated by prayer and small gifts, but the exercise of moderation and self-restraint was the best way to gain their favour. The notion of a protector of the species was strong in ancient Peru, where the supernatural custodians were identified with constellations to which prayers were addressed. Even in modern times the Indians of the Puna de Atacama believed that the wild herds of the vicugna were led by Coquena, a troll who punished men who hunted vicugna out of greediness.[1]

The modern city-dweller or farmer who, taking his high-powered gun, sallies forth to kill animals he does not need as food often imagines that he emulates his vigorous, self-sufficient ancestors of a remote epoch. He believes that he is giving free and salutary play to a deep-rooted human "instinct" which centuries of civilized life has been unable to eradicate, and that by so doing he demonstrates his essential hardihood and manliness. In equating this killing for "sport," without danger to himself and without jeopardizing his means of subsistence, to the indispensable hunting of his distant forebears, however, he does a profound injustice to the latter.

Our available evidence shows that primitive man rarely went out to the hunt in this offhand manner, for mere diversion. To him the killing of wild animals was a serious business, to be undertaken only in response to pressing vital needs and to be approached, in many instances, only after fasting or laborious ceremonial preparations which would ensure the success of the solemn venture, ward off perils from the hunter, and prevent consequences of the slaughter which might be disastrous to the clan. Doubtless in the excitement of the chase, when he pitted his strength, endurance and skill against some powerful or wily animal, the primitive hunter knew that ex-

[1] *Handbook of South American Indians*, Vol. V, pp. 565-566. (Smithsonian Institution, Washington. 1949.)

hilaration which comes from the exercise of well-practised faculties at their highest pitch. Yet the thrill that might be experienced in the heat of the chase was rarely the motive for undertaking this pursuit. The savage huntsman as a rule required more valid reasons for killing his victims.

Australia was until recently occupied by some of the most primitive races of mankind, for many of whom the kangaroo was the mainstay of life. A kangaroo hunt was not to be lightly undertaken, without due thought and adequate ritual preparation. The kangaroo men went first to a certain sacred spot which from ancient times had been the scene of this important ceremony. Upon a ledge of rock they traced with white gypsum and red ochre designs which represented the white bones and red fur of the kangaroo. Then to the accompaniment of solemn chants calling for the future increase of the kangaroos, some of the men opened their veins and let their warm blood flow over the sacred ledge with its painted symbols of the kangaroo.

Then followed the chase; and if one of the animals was killed, its flesh provided a meal shared by the whole group. Even such primitive savages are not "children of nature," thoughtless of the future. They believe that the maintenance of their means of subsistence depends upon their active endeavour, and are willing to pour out their blood to ensure a continuance of natural bounty. It is not the ineffectiveness of the means but the greatness of the intention and the soundness of the underlying thought which should in this instance arrest our attention and command our respect. A substantial proportion of man's religious practices, from the Egyptian cult of Osiris and the Brahmanical kindling of the altar fire, to the rain dances of the Arizona Indians, stems from this same pervasive belief that the maintenance of the providential order is dependent upon the ritualistic and symbolic co-operation of mankind.

"The savage," wrote Frazer, "makes it a rule to spare the life of those animals which he has no pressing motive for killing." His care to avoid the needless slaughter of other creatures had various motives, some of which appear sound to modern man, while others fail to impress him as valid.

In the case of large and dangerous animals, like the elephant, the bear, the crocodile, or the whale, there was the very real danger that some of the tribesmen would be maimed or killed by their powerful adversary. In some cases there was apprehension lest hunting should diminish the abundance of a species important to the clan as a means of subsistence, either through the natural diminution of the population by the removal of some of its members capable of reproducing, or because animals of this kind might be offended and henceforth avoid the hunters.

There was uneasiness that the dead animal's ghost or spirit might pursue and take vengeance upon the man who killed it, or that its living relatives might take up a blood feud and exact retaliation, as in similar circumstances the tribesman himself felt bound to do. There was sometimes evidence of genuine sympathy for the creature about to lose its life, or perhaps for its bereaved mother. Each of these perils and misgivings led to appropriate rites for the propitiation of the prospective victim, for the appeasement of its ghost, or for the multiplication of its kind.

ALEXANDER F. SKUTCH

(*To be continued*)

# ENDS AND SAYINGS

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

Monsieur Alain Daniélou, an authority on Indian music, lecturing on July 23rd at the Indian Institute of Culture, Basavangudi, Bangalore, brought out, with illustrations of recorded music, the variety and appeal of the religious music of the country. He mentioned the science underlying, for example, Vedic chanting, the symbolic significance of the number of notes used in each hymn, etc., remarking on the similarity of present-day Vedic chanting to that of antiquity, judging by the earliest notations available. Several other types of religious songs, mediæval and modern, were discussed and illustrated, as was also instrumental music of the temples.

The speaker referred regretfully to the lack of appreciation, in a materialistic age, of the Sanskrit songs. Their composers had transposed all emotions into hymns and, like mediæval Indian sculptures and paintings, led the consciousness to the divine. Indian classical music alone of the Indian fine arts had survived the catastrophic effect of the British advent, but he warned against the threat offered to classical music today by light music and cinema tunes. The decline of the music of the Near East had started in a similar way and today, he said, nothing remained of Turkish, Egyptian and Persian music, which was a great loss to world culture. Lest the democratization of the art lead to its destruction, Monsieur Daniélou urged a serious attempt by music societies or academies to save the classical standards.

The Chairman, Shri C. Bhaskariah, Retired Deputy Auditor-General of India, suggested that classical and light music might flourish side by side, but he warmly seconded the lecturer's appeal for the revival of Indian classical music. He drew attention also to the plight in which classical musicians had been left in free India by the ending of the former patronage of the Maharajas.

"Folk Songs from All Over the World" was the title of M. Alain Daniélou's second lecture. He classified the different types of music, cyclic, melodic, harmonic, etc., and indicated their regional distribution, illustrating with nearly 20 records the wealth and variety of folk music throughout the world. The Chairman, Rajasevaprasakta Shri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, brought out in his closing remarks the contribution which the mutual appreciation of each other's music could make to human brotherhood.

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Unfortunately for this country, "labour" tends to suggest "level of production" and "period of unrest" —an effect, as G. D. H. Cole pointed out, of abstracting labour from the labourer. Dr. Radhakrishnan made a perfect application of the philosophical principle underlying democracy in emphasizing to the Indian Merchants' Chamber at Bombay, on Wednesday, July 29th, that a labourer's capacity for a personal life was exactly the same as anybody else's; and hence, that the point of all reform of labour conditions was to prevent environment from frustrating these capacities. Freedom is not real to people who cannot realize "their completeness and stature." And the country as a whole is not really free while masses of people continue to be so frustrated.

We talk about liberation. We mean by liberation not merely freedom from political domination, but freedom from outworn social and economic past, freedom from primitiveness and backwardness which have spread over the villages of this country.

In a country where the "educated" class is cultured none of this should have to be said; for there employers and educated people generally would by their deeds say to the labourer what was said at the very first meeting of the very first trade union formed in India in 1918:—

> There are many among you who think that we people are something big, something special, something that you are not. I want you to give up that idea. There is no difference between you and us. When the Great War of Kurukshetra took place on the battle field Lord Krishna spoke to Arjuna and said that there is nothing in the whole universe that is bereft of Him. All human beings, men and women, are divine. There is God within each one of you and that God is your only helper, the only person who will bless you, instruct you, inspire you, show the way out of darkness unto light. You are all Gods; you are all divine.
>
> For that reason I once more appeal to you to get rid of the idea that you are a kind of low people with whom we will not associate. ....We want you to realize the fundamental spiritual brotherhood of mankind. We want you to recognize that you have something in yourselves which we do not possess, and similarly we have something perhaps which you do not possess. And therefore in mutual trust and friendship we want to work.... depend upon yourselves, and work with those who recognize your equality, your partnership in humanity...

Except with such brotherliness, the true patriotism Dr. Radhakrishnan described in his speech is not possible; for it rests on a friendly concern for everyone in the community to which we belong, on enthusiasm for their undertakings, on pride in their achievements. Neither liberty nor equality will come to people who have not realized fraternity.

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In his lecture on "Man's Ideas About the Universe," published in *Philosophy* (London), July 1953, Viscount Samuel considers some very important questions that lie in the borderland between science and philosophy.

The discovery in nuclear research of a barrier beyond which scientific certainty could not extend led some to suggest that universal causation was invalidated and chance partly ruled nature. Many philosophers, however, and some brilliant physicists, including Einstein and Max Planck, have rejected this deduction. Viscount Samuel also rejects it. And it would have been very odd for science to enthrone chance after so indignantly denying miracles in the name of natural law.

Then there is the old, old question of Ether. Viscount Samuel quotes an eminent mathematical physicist, Professor Dirac of Cambridge, as saying: "...with the new theory of electrodynamics we are rather forced to have an ether." Ether, as reinstated, will not be the old quasi-gaseous medium but a universal medium consisting of energy, rather as Sir Oliver Lodge described it to be in 1927. Viscount Samuel adds that it will have to be conceived as capable of two states—quiescent and active. These are only suggestions yet; but their approach to Eastern conceptions is recognizable. The quiescent and active states of energy are at least parallel to the (minor) periods of activity and *pralaya*. Only, in the ancient system, this single root of matter is not to be found immediately behind physical matter; there are other planes and states of substance between.

Another old question considered is the relation of Life and Mind, and Matter. He holds that neither can be reduced to the other, with which we heartily agree. But surely his radical duality will cause difficulties in explaining their interactions? The only satisfying next step would be to explain these two as aspects of such a single reality as Madame Blavatsky called SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the Mulaprakriti and Parabrahm of Vedanta.

Viscount Samuel's insistence is valuable that the present confusion of a multitude of philosophical, scientific and religious views is not all that can be achieved; a single "understanding of things as they are" and a "guidance towards things as they should be" are legitimately to be demanded from leaders of thought, though so far they have failed to provide them.

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