

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*

VOL. XII

MAY 1941

No. 5

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

On the 6th of this month the Poet of modern India attains the age of eighty. Born in 1861 in a family already known for its cultural and mystical tendencies and brought up by his venerated father, the great Brahmo Samaj leader, the pious and learned Debendranath Tagore, the poet has not only lived up to and upheld the good name of his house, but has made it known in the four quarters of the globe.

A cycle of 19 years seems to predominate in the poet's present incarnation. If we go by the old Brahmanical institution of the four stages into which human life is divided we find each of these to be of 19 years' duration. At the end of the Brahmacharya stage Rabindranath experienced the first great inspiration which started him on a poet's career; he began to write profusely. He entered the Grihastha Ashrama in 1883: he married and

enjoyed the felicity of home life for nineteen years. In November, 1902, Mrinalini Devi cast off her body, just after accompanying her husband into the Vanaprastha stage, begun at Santiniketan in December 1901. This separation and the grief which it caused were profound experiences, deepened by the death of his eldest daughter in 1904 and of his youngest son in 1907. But dwelling in the forest of loneliness, Rabindranath continued his labours, creating poems, stories, dramas; and more, he wandered in the wilderness of civilization, visiting the Western hemisphere where his genius was not only recognized but appreciated and admired. But all that work and all those travels were a preparation for the fulfilment of a great mission connected with the last stage of his life, the Sannyasa ashrama. From 1902 to 1921 the forest-dweller became known to the forest of modern

civilization; but in 1921—once again in December—was started the Vishva-bharati—his idealized university “where the whole world meets in one place.” Again a period of 19 years and we come to 1940, during which ill health compelled him to give up active work.

Through all the stages, as student, householder, recluse and as a renunciator-servant of humanity he continued to exercise his creative genius, entertaining, enlightening, uplifting, an ever-increasing number. Thousands enjoy Rabindranath’s poetry but not an equally large number attempt to gain the benefit of the philosophy he expounds. For example, few are the young men and the young women who endeavour to experience his exaltation by applying this teaching :—

“The longer I live alone, within myself, on the river or in the open country, the more clearly I see that there can be nothing finer or greater than the simple and natural performance of the ordinary duties of everyday life.”

And these words are written by one who loves Nature so abundantly, who sees her beauty and feels its bliss so keenly as to exclaim :—

I ask for a moment’s indulgence to sit by thy side. The works that I have in hand I will finish afterwards. . . . Now it is time to sit quiet, face to face with thee, and to sing dedication of life in this silent and overflowing leisure.

In the flights of imagination which

keep the body silent he feels deeply, but even he needs the occupation of duties, plain and simple, to realize the real depth of those feelings. How many are the poetic expressions of the feeling felt but not actually realized :—

Day after day he comes and goes away.—He does not speak what he has in mind; he only comes and goes away.

The eternal struggle between light and darkness, between sense and soul, forms the theme of many a noble passage and we know of readers who, perusing these, exclaim: “What is all this? What does it all mean?” In proportion as we experience the struggle within breast and blood do we truly understand the many statements which make up the story of that greatest of all wars, which Rabindranath records. How can one who has never experienced the two natures at work in himself comprehend the significance of a simple sentence in *Stray Birds* :—

My wishes are fools,
They shout across thy songs, my
Master; let me but listen.

If Rabindranath Tagore was able to fight the carnal, to hear the tones of the divine in him, it was because his love for humanity, his ardency to serve his fellow-men, was great. It is love of the Divine that urges man to touch the hem of Its garment but it is love of humanity

which enables him to realize the Great Presence.

We truly meet God when we come to Him with our offerings, and not with our wants.

And as Deity is omnipresent, man's love for It, to be genuine, must express itself in Universal Brotherhood. With a poet's insight Rabindranath wrote to his friend C. F. Andrews in 1913 :—

This race problem is I believe the one burning question of the present age; and we must be prepared to go through the martyrdom of suffering and humiliation till the victory of God in man is achieved.

Though a poet and a philosopher, Rabindranath never failed in the duty to denounce political wrong, or to labour constructively to uplift the lot of the suffering villager and to overcome the more abject moral limitations of the hybrid mind of the townsman. He has tried at every turn to live up to his own saying :—

Man is true where he feels his infinity, where he is divine; and the divine is the creator in him.

Having lived a very full life, creative within and serviceable without, but realizing that his own spiritual realizations are not the summation, he repeats this refrain in many places :—

The song that I came to sing remains unsung to this day.

I have spent my days in stringing and unstringing my instrument....

I live in the hope of meeting with Him; but this meeting is not yet.

Immortality on earth is assured to this poet-philosopher, for his writings (from *Crescent Moon* which delights the child-consciousness to *Sādhanā* which energizes the adult-mind) contain universal truths, some of them of real and rare value. If poets serve the people, the duty of the latter to their inspirers is to spread the message their words and their ideas contain. *Kavi*, the Sanskrit word for poet, carries with it the profounder conception of a teacher of wisdom, which the English equivalent does not. The Sage-like quality of the true *Kavi* marks the writings of modern India's Poet, who has given to his country and to the whole world ideas which will reverberate for a long time to come in the world's atmosphere, evoking human gratitude and human praise. May he, in the silence of retirement, frail in body but clear in mind, catch at least some of the heart emotion which his noble gift inspires in so many. We salute the Builder of Vishva-Bharati !

21st March, 1941.

THE SOCIAL VALUE OF MYSTICISM

[Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee, who heads the Department of Economics and Sociology of the University of Lucknow, is deeply interested in the subject of mysticism, on which he has written before in our pages as well as in his book on *The Theory and Art of Mysticism*.—ED.]

Mysticism may be described as the art of inner adjustment by which man apprehends the universe as a single, integral whole. Our senses are so constituted, as a result of biological selection, that we can see the world only as a series of divided, discrete phenomena. Science and ordinary experience give us a knowledge of the multiplicity of life and of the world. Mysticism, which is the essence and the core of all religions, seeks to supplement this knowledge of the parts with the knowledge of the whole. Wholeness is Holiness. In Wholeness we find the essence of the Values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness.

As man's knowledge of the external world in its divisiveness and variety is built out of the raw materials of his defining, outward-directed senses, so it is his kinæsthetic and organic senses which are the original elements in the apprehension of the world as a continuum, a unique and significant phase of his mental life. Man's intimations of Wholeness or Holiness which organise themselves into such emotions as those of faith, harmony, peace and joy are connected with his

kinæsthetic and organic experiences. These latter are specially significant in mystical contemplation and apprehension.

Man's experience of Wholeness or Holiness, therefore, suggests a fulfilment of vital and mental processes. One who cannot obtain such fulfilment is an abnormal creature; his mind and his personality are seriously warped. He shows a grave deficiency and incompetence and even experiences distress.

In all imaginative creations and experiences there are higher and lower grades. There is good and bad poetry as there are higher and lower forms of art. Similarly there are higher and lower forms of mysticism. Through starvation and dulling of the senses, through the use of narcotics and drugs, through isolation in the gloom of a cavern or in the solitude of a hill or a forest where social activities are completely suspended or, again, through the experience of intense cutting pains or of physical delights man has sought Wholeness by the simplification of his mental life. This is the lower mysticism. But this should not blind us to the clarity, the syn-

ergy and the unbounded joy of the higher mysticism.

Like the physical processes, exercises of suggestion and of auto-suggestion are often used by mystics to promote bodily and mental poise. It is believed by psychologists now that hypnotic methods exercise important and beneficial effects on the functioning of the lower nervous system and that a slight degree of dissociation may assist some of the higher thought processes. As meditation deepens, the earlier expedients of self-hypnosis, suggestion and feeling, unmediated by thought, are given up. The mind seeks deliberately to control and to direct emotion, will and imagination. Thus the mystic gradually arrives at a synthesis of his diverse urges, stresses and conflicts that arise from the depths of his unconscious.

Naturally, therefore, man's ardent desires and passions become the proper vehicles for reaching the Whole and the Holy. Mystical experience derives its zest from the fundamental urges and desires, loyalties and allegiances in man's ordinary routine of domestic and social life. Man's impulses of resignation and obedience, his friendship and parental devotion and even man-woman love become religiously fashioned and organised. Mysticism then becomes as spontaneous as the affections and the joys of domestic life themselves. For the Sufis and Vaish-

navas worship is woven in the pattern of ardent and vital human love relations. The boundaries of a romantic passion and man-God relationship vanish. With the Sufis, as Jami stresses, earthly love serves one to raise himself to spiritual love. God as the Beloved becomes the essence of Infinite Beauty and Joy. Many of the mediæval Christian mystics described themselves as being rewarded by the most intimate favours of the Christ as the Bridegroom. The relation to a personal God is, indeed, described in most religions in the fervent language of human impulses and desires "clothed with flesh and blood." More often the mystical union is affirmed in the most passionate language of man-woman love. It is in this manner that the love born of the human body matures in an infinite love, in which the lover, the beloved and love itself disappear in a vivid synthetic experience of the entire gamut of feelings and attitudes that surge in the human breast.

The mystic thus seeks God as a friend and a companion, as father and mother, and even in the tenderest man-woman relation. "Man seeks a perfect friend, father, or mother in that Being by whose ordination he is made more or less to depend on such relationships." Each human and social relationship thus becomes a symbol, first, of approach to the deity and then is

realised as the deity itself through an incessant and deliberate interpretative process. As the mystic constantly interprets and renews the symbol, ritual or belief, the symbol drains fully his subconscious and represents the fullness of his personality. Thus God presents Himself to the mystic in "His human shape" in order that man may live and commune with Him as he lives and communes with his fellow-men.

Man is so culturally conditioned that even such an ardent desire as love is felt by him in the context of his cultural *milieu*. He feels the *nuances* of love that the poets of his land have felt and described for him. Similarly the different symbols or kinds of allegiance which mysticism seizes and inculcates play a significant rôle in the development of man's sociality. Man's religious symbols have woven through the ages the pattern of social bonds and brought about social integration. Mysticism has been an indispensable aid to the social process, the integration and fixation of social values.

Contrasted with this is a type of impersonal mysticism often wrongly described as Nature worship. Imaginative minds seek to develop the sense of the Infinite by communion with Nature which leads up to Nature's God. Nature mysticism is thus found in almost all religions and cultures. Man betakes himself to the solitude of the seashore where

he hears the waves constantly lapping the rocks or to that of the mountains where winds sigh and wild birds call. Thus he achieves complete absorption in and kinship with Nature, feeling himself a part of the sun and of the moon, of the procession of the seasons, of the fragrant flowers at dawn or of the cry of the peacocks during the rain. In Richard Jefferies, Thoreau, William Blake, Tennyson and Wordsworth we find the appreciation of nature and spiritual contemplation merged in each other. In the lyrics of the world's greatest mystical poet, Rabindranath Tagore, we similarly find a deep comprehension of the unity of life born of the poet's penetration into the heart of Nature, not merely in her tranquillity and serenity but also in her active and agitated aspects. In the Zen school of Buddhism in Japan the mystic is the nature lover; his æsthetic enjoyment transforms the face of nature into "the sermon of the Inanimate". To the disciple who approaches the Zen master for his lessons, he would point to the rising and the setting of the sun, to the falling flakes of snow in winter, to the crying of the monkeys and the mountain-deer or to the changeful moon. Zen meditation has given us not merely a spontaneous and real comprehension of Nature in the full mystical sense, but also some of the finest poems and landscape-paintings in the world.

If urges, desires, loves and æsthetic delights lead one to the conception of the universe as unbounded joy and serenity, as a perpetual play of the creative spirit or as the manifestation of infinite charity or compassion, or, again, of eternal sacrifice or righteousness, the intellect also wants to soar to its full and majestic heights.

This leads us to the highest types of mystical consciousness which an ardent devotee can reach. The mystic's mind now deliberately frees itself from all feelings and sentiments, including religious and moral ones, and from all concepts and symbols, which now drop into their very insignificant, very human places. What remains cannot be reached by word or concept, but is a profound clarity, a unique insight of Wholeness or transcendence beyond the reach of any relativity or reference.

That is the silence of the Buddhist, of the Neoplatonist or of the Vedantist. Most aptly was this state of consciousness indicated by the Buddha, when he reached his own *nirvana*:-

" In seeking for salvation I reached in experience the *Nibbana* which is unborn, unrivalled, secure from attachment, undecaying, unailing, unlamenting and unstained. This condition is indeed reached by me which is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, beyond the reach of mere logic, subtle, and to be realized only by the wise. "

The Neoplatonist description of the flight of the Alone to the Alone is similar and noteworthy.

There are many facets of this Silence. Now it cherishes the Void—simply not Anything, without any reference. Now it cherishes the Full, and sees in every form and expression the Full. Now, again, it seeks the absorption of the soul in a pantheistic exaltation in Nature. In every case the mystic reaches a state of consciousness where even the categories of unity and universality do not suffice to comprehend it. The aspirations of society, the *nuances* of mind and the pulsations of life are here eternally banished.

Such are the various *nuances* that all express the common experience of non-theistic, impersonal and acosmic mysticism, that of an inward continuity of Self and the Universe, an undivided unity, beyond existence and beyond knowledge, beyond the stirrings of life.

But man is not all meditation or introspection. He desires and loves. He hopes and aspires. He strives to serve his fellow-man. As he comes back from the majesty and the isolation of his selfhood to human and social relations, it is these which become now transmuted for him into the seats of the eternal, the good and the beautiful.

As the mystic again and again asks himself: " Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer ?

Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry ? ” the concrete becomes for him the universal. Man, society, every link that binds one to his fellow-man becomes the essence, the very substance of the eternal values. Between society and religion there now develops a give-and-take which has no end.

Society demands man's zealous and consecrated service when he feels the abiding presence of the Person of Persons in all human relations. On the other hand, as he serves society with all his charity, his love and his goodness, society rises into greater harmonies and concords, and deepens and expands his intuitions of charity, love and goodness. The mystic derives his faith and his energy from social experience and aspirations. But as the candle of the mystic vision burns brightly, serenely and steadfastly amidst the storms and the tempests of social life, it illuminates society with new

vistas of love and fellowship, with new insights of good-will, which mankind has not yet experienced. The mystic vision is the light that never was on sea or land; society is the oil and the wick which keeps it burning with ever-renewing brightness. The oil and the wick are the common elements in world religion, mankind's universal experience of the true, the good and the beautiful. May it not be that when modern science and politics have stressed so much the local and the particular and brought about the present disruption of the unity of mankind, the mystic has a doubly significant rôle today in his enterprise of securing for the mind its true hygiene as the basis for renewing the mind's real vigour, clarity and sweep and for restoring man's sense of the oneness of humanity as the vital equipment of the social order of the future ?

RADHAKAMAL MUKERJEE

“ Mrs. Sultana Fyze uttered a note of warning that education should not be confused with Western sophistication, and that paint, lipstick and foreign modes of dress were unsuitable to modern women. ”

—*The Bombay Chronicle*, 7th April 1941

CITIZENSHIP IN GREEK PHILOSOPHY

[What can we learn from how the pioneer democracies in Greece solved their problems? Professor Benjamin Farrington finds their social and political solutions wholly inapplicable to our current difficulties. "*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*" He condemns particularly their acquiescence in the institution of slavery, but have we grounds for smugness about freedom from slavery today, when whole nations have passed under the yoke, when wage slaves abound and slaves to the lower tendencies in man are many and the free men few?

Dr. P. T. Raju of the Andhra University, the author of *Thought and Reality: Hegelianism and Advaita*, examines the lessons of the Greek city states from a typically Indian stand-point.—ED.]

Admiration for the Greek city-state is universal. A picture of life under it has been preserved for us in a literature of unsurpassed brilliance. Poets and historians have told us with what ardour and with what success the citizens defended it against Oriental despotism. Marathon and Salamis are numbered among the decisive battles of the world. We are all taught to believe that if the Persians had then prevailed freedom would have perished from the earth.

But not only did poets and historians celebrate the glories of the city-state. Not only did the citizens in arms defend it. The two philosophers generally regarded as the greatest thinkers in the ancient world, if not the greatest of all time, applied themselves to the problems of citizenship in the city-state, analysed the merits of the various types of constitutions which were

devised to embody and to protect the rights and the duties of the citizens, and sought to determine the best. No wonder, then, that it is often confidently asserted, and still more often tacitly assumed, that political philosophy, like many other things, may best be learned from the Greeks. The *Republic* of Plato has become the favourite study of adult education classes. It figures in the curriculum of teachers' training departments. Supplemented by the *Politics* of Aristotle it forms a large part of the university courses which fit our ruling class for the duties of empire.

The purpose of the remarks that follow is not to throw doubt on the claims of these two books to be ranked among the masterpieces of political philosophy. It is rather to enquire whether the conception of citizenship there elaborated can be of assistance to us in solving the

problems of our own day and generation—and to suggest that it cannot. For the understanding of history the political treatises of Plato and of Aristotle are priceless keys. Montesquieu said of them :—

“ Il faut réfléchir sur la *Politique* d' Aristote et sur les deux *Républiques* (that is, the *Republic* and the *Laws*) de Platon, si l'on veut avoir une juste idée des lois et des mœurs des anciens Grecs. ”*

And the advice is sound. Those works illuminate the fourth century B. C. of Greece as few periods in history are illuminated. But their value as sources for policies that can be applied directly to modern problems is another question.

It is not simply that practical politicians are justifiably suspicious of the value of untested political speculations. There is no need to waste time on this point, though there is a relevant *mot* of the historian Polybius on this topic which readers may be glad to have recalled. In his estimate of the respective merits of the constitutions of Sparta, Carthage and Rome, he pauses to launch a sarcasm against the champions of Plato who wish to bring his *Republic* into the comparison. This, he says, is as incongruous as if one should wish to enter the statue of an athlete in a race with living men. But apart from any such objection

as this, equally applicable to all Utopias, there are difficulties in the way of our deriving political wisdom from Plato or Aristotle which are more fundamental, and which derive from the fact that political philosophy is not concerned with a world of timeless ideas. It is not something that can be worked out in one age and applied mechanically in another. Political philosophy is in its very essence relevant to a historical process. Accordingly, to look to Plato and Aristotle for the solution of contemporary problems is to deny the reality of time and of change. Enthusiastic advocates of the claims of classical civilisation may be excused for falling into this error. It has nevertheless been exposed by many thinkers.

There is, for instance, a famous page in Hegel in which he speaks of the impossibility for the modern spirit of finding complete satisfaction in an early philosophy. He pays his tribute to the greatness of Plato and of Aristotle, but observes that philosophy itself has passed beyond them. He protests that a modern Platonist, Aristotelian, Epicurean, Stoic, is an impossibility—as impossible, and as absurd, as if a man should wish to return again through youth to childhood. Those who seek to revive ancient philosophies, he protests, are like those who bring mummies among the living, only to

* “We have to reflect upon the *Politics* of Aristotle and the two *Republics* of Plato if we want to have a correct conception of the laws and the customs of the ancient Greeks. ”

find that in the midst of life the mummies dissolve in dust. And if this is true of metaphysics, it is still more obviously true of political philosophy. Montesquieu correctly divined the importance of Plato and of Aristotle: they enable us to understand the past. Comte, himself engaged in the creation of the modern science of politics, paid high tribute to Aristotle, but said of his *Politics*:—

“ This treatise could not possibly disclose any sense of the progressive tendencies of humanity, nor the slightest glimpse of the natural laws of civilisation; it was necessarily occupied by metaphysical discussions of the principle and form of government. ”

De Tocqueville, directing his powerful analytic intelligence to the spectacle of American democracy, felt himself so hampered by the traditional wisdom that he was tempted, as he says, to burn all his books.

What these great men have in common is their sense of the historical process. For them Plato and Aristotle are superseded, not because modern men have better brains, but because the modern world is a different place. Things change: political theory must adapt itself to the change or become academic and unreal. But none of these critics of traditional wisdom analysed successfully wherein the change lay that separated them from the ancient world. They could see that the

scale of things had altered, that whereas Plato and Aristotle had thought in terms of independent city-states of five or ten thousand citizens, it was now necessary to think in terms of political communities of tens of millions. They could see that the character of the social structure had altered, that the ancient world had rested on the distinction between the citizen and the slave, while the modern world proclaimed the rights, not merely of the citizen, but of man. But the true cause of the change of scale and of social structure was hidden from them. That was left for Marx to reveal.

According to him, the main force determining the character of society in its various phases is the mode of production of the material values necessary for the maintenance of life. In ancient society, when man's control over his environment was slight, the price of the maintenance of the few in comfort and leisure was the forced labour of the many. Ancient political philosophy is wholly governed by this consideration. Aristotle alone will be referred to in the next paragraph, but what will be said of him applies also to Plato.

According to Aristotle, the problem of political philosophy is to find out what form of association is best for the leisured class. This class will always be small, and its members alone are true citizens. It

is, he says, generally acknowledged that in a well-ordered state the citizens should have leisure, and should not have to provide for their daily wants. The difficulty is to see how this leisure is to be attained. The difficulty is circumvented by the doctrine, already implicit in Plato, that nature has produced two types of men, the natural masters and the natural slaves. The distinction is like that between male and female. Nature *would like*, he says, to make this distinction physically obvious, but does not always succeed. This, however, does not deter him. The acquisition of slaves, he goes on, is a branch of war or of hunting. It is justly practised against men intended by nature to be slaves but not aware of, or obedient to, her intention. They and wild beasts may be hunted down. Some, philosophers even, have doubted whether nature has made the slave different from the free man; and questions have accordingly been raised as to whether a creature by nature a slave, if such exists, has any virtue. The answer is that he has not virtue in the true sense, nevertheless he requires just so much virtue as may prevent his failing in his task through indiscipline or cowardice. That is to say, he can aspire to virtue only in his relation to his master, not in his own right. The same holds true for the artisan. The virtue he requires is the same as that required by

the slave, and he attains to virtue only in proportion as he becomes a slave. For the slave exists by nature, but not so the artisan. An artisan is not a citizen, at all events in a well-ordered state. For no man can practise virtue who is living the life of a mechanic or a labourer.

Such is the gist of the argument, for the most part verbally quoted, of the first two books of the *Politics*. Thus is the foundation laid for the subsequent discussion of the merits and defects of the rule of the One, the Few, or the Many; of tyranny and true kingship, oligarchy and aristocracy, democracy and mob rule. It can be seen at a glance that the whole theory of citizenship is based on the existence of the slave. "Those", says Aristotle, "whose means exempt them from personal toil have overseers who look after their slaves. This leaves them free for politics or philosophy." There can hardly be room for doubt of the kind of philosophy this leisure would produce. It could not, for instance, be a philosophy which would deny the naturalness of slavery, for slavery was a *sine qua non* of the existence of a class capable of philosophising. And, of course, the metaphysics of Aristotle bears all over it the imprint of the society from which it sprang. It is the world view of a leisured class, divorced from production, and thereby divorced from educative contact with the material

world.

It is obvious that such a conception of citizenship is only indirectly of value for the modern world. It reveals the origin of an attitude to labour which still survives. But if we ask what is the gulf that separates our world from that of Plato and of Aristotle, the answer is the industrial revolution and all that led up to it, the coming of the machine age, the enormous extension of man's control over his physical environment. It is this that has made our problems different from those that faced the ancient world. Aristotle was concerned with the correct employment of the leisure of the few. For us the possibility exists of securing adequate leisure for all. Aristotle was concerned with the reduction of the working population to the level of slaves. For us the possibility exists of so lightening and distributing the burden of toil that all may be free. Aristotle taught that a free man was degraded if he practised any of the crafts of the artisan. We regard the

acquiring of manual skill as part of true education. Aristotle was concerned with the problem of governing men: the workers, he said, should be kept down but not ill-treated, a distinction difficult to maintain in practice. We can envisage a society in which the struggle need be only of man against nature, not of class against class. For Aristotle science meant contemplation, or curiosity. For us it is not a luxury of the few, but the means of our deliverance from the burden of grinding toil and poverty, the means of our mastery over our material environment, the file that cuts off from man's limbs the fetters of crude material necessity. And in this new setting his problems of the virtue of master and of slave, of thinker and of worker, of citizen and of non-citizen are all transformed. Political terms acquire a new content. And we find, like de Tocqueville, that to try to think with the old technique of political analysis is to shackle our minds.

B. FARRINGTON

II

Does ancient thought have only a historical value? Professor Farrington's downright rejection of Greek thought and the Greek conception of citizenship as absolutely useless for our times suggests that we may better burn our past and begin anew. In contrast to this view we are reminded of Whitehead's opinion that

the history of philosophy may be treated as a series of foot-notes to Plato. Just as in India the whole of Indian philosophy, except perhaps Buddhism and Jainism, constitutes the Upanishadic tradition, so the whole of European philosophy, except a few realistic and nominalistic systems, forms the Platonic tradition.

Even if so wide a generalisation be protested, Western idealism at least is undeniably Platonic. Muirhead's *Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy* brings this out very clearly. Even many realists, for instance the critical realists of America, have much that is Platonic in their philosophy. And if so much of philosophy is in general Platonic, can political thought, which is applied metaphysics, be without any Platonic and Greek elements?

It is true, as Hegel says, that the modern spirit cannot find complete satisfaction in any early philosophy. The times are continually changing. In no modern civilized country does a generation live in exactly the same conditions as the preceding one. Our knowledge is growing and our outlook is widening. And as every philosophy bears the imprint of the times in which it is born, it does not satisfy succeeding generations. But to say this is one thing; and to conclude that therefore early thought can have no use for us is another. Is not Hegel himself a Platonist in that his system of categories corresponds to the world of Platonic Ideas? Is he not to Kant what Aristotle is to Plato in maintaining that the universals or Ideas do not inhabit a separate world but are to be found in this world itself? Nay, even the Marxian philosophy is recognised to be inverted Hegelianism. The Neo-idealism of Croce and Gen-

tile is Hegelianism in which the Absolute is made identical with or immanent in history.

True, Plato and Aristotle did not produce works like those of Frazer and Westermarck. Their knowledge was very limited when compared with that of contemporary scholars and thinkers. It did not occur to them that the problems of ethics and of politics could be explained by the use of the historical method. And hence Compté's judgment that in Aristotle we do not find any sense of the progressive tendencies of humanity and of the natural laws of civilization. But, even then, in their understanding of the laws that govern the transition from one form of government to another both Plato and Aristotle have shown an insight that is admirable even now.

True, what Plato or Aristotle understood by democracy is not precisely what we understand by it. And what they understood by tyranny is not the tyranny that we have now. Their democracy is of a few thousands, ours of many millions; their tyranny is of a single man over the rest, ours of one religion over others, of one nation over others and of one race over others. The forms of democracy, like those of tyranny, are changing but their fundamental nature and principles remain the same. And in understanding and analysing those, Plato and Aristotle have not been excelled.

The external conditions that determine the course of civilization and of culture have not been so well investigated by Plato and Aristotle as we could have wished. They have not understood the full importance of the economic, geographic and other factors that mould the course of civilization. As Mr. Farrington says, they did not foresee what political forms the changes in the production of goods would lead to. And it is left to Marx to interpret the history of civilization from that stand-point. But to say all this does not mean that the analysis of society given by Plato and by Aristotle is absolutely useless. They analysed society in their own way, and their society is based certainly on the Greek society of their time. So far as their analysis took into consideration elements of an ephemeral nature, accidental aspects which society possessed in their time and place, it may not be of use to us. But human society as such possesses a structure in the understanding of which Plato and Aristotle have shown great acumen. Mr. Farrington refers chiefly to the views of Aristotle. But Plato's analysis of society into three classes on the basis of the three divisions of the soul is most illuminating and useful. We may find fault with him for making the divisions rigid; yet we may accept his analysis if we modify it. Similarly, Aristotle's insistence on slavery is

wrong, and its usefulness belonged only to Greek society and not to ours. But these features of their thought are only incidental. We may object to a soldier caste or a labourer caste. But we cannot object to choosing men with certain qualities as soldiers and men with certain other qualities as labourers. What birth and heredity were supposed to decide then, tests of intelligence and character are performing now. We have now better and surer ways of selecting people for the different vocations. But in our understanding of the nature of society and its relation to the individual, the aim of life and how society furthers it, we have not gone beyond Plato and Aristotle.

It is true that the community of slaves and of labourers was looked down upon and was conceded practically no rights. It was thought that such a class was an absolute necessity to produce food for the citizens who only were fit to realize the highest aim of life. Aristotle's mistake did not lie in presenting such an aim of life. It lay rather in not presenting it as the aim of life of the labourer also. It may perhaps be objected that in that case every one would be philosophising and society would go to ruin. But Aristotle could not have meant that the Greek citizen should be an idle thinker. He had the duties of running and defending the State. If speculation consists

with such work it can consist with tilling and handicrafts as well. Aristotle did not see this truth. But the great Andhra poet Potana, who preferred the toil of the cultivator to the luxuries of a court poet, knew better.

The mistake of Plato and Aristotle lay, then, in not extending the ideal life to all members of the state. For what else do the Western democracies deserve censure? They preach government of the people by the people in their own countries but they want to rule other peoples and consider it their duty to rule them. But does this render the principles of democracy false? No. The ruled nations want extended to them the principles of government which the ruling people recognise for themselves. The enrichment of the soul which society can give to the individual—this is what is wanted by every man. But it was withheld from some by Plato and Aristotle. Had they recognised this mistake, their political ideas would have presented a somewhat different appearance. For the consequences that follow from such recognition would have altered their political systems. Yet their understanding of life's ideal which can be realised only in society, of the real nature of the relation between the individual and society, of the basis of social structure, can never be completely rejected. These fundamental facts they quite thoroughly

understood. Whenever human society reacts to external environment, it is the structure as a whole that reacts. It is the same in every human society and will remain the same for ever. It is society in its spiritual phase.

If we do not accept such a spiritual basis for society, we have to think that both man and society are the mere products of external circumstances. The times are changing; society must change. Ideals change, the sources of wealth change, the means of production change; and so must society. Like evolution in nature, which introduces alterations in species, destroys one and creates another, social and political changes alter the structure of society, destroy old forms and create new ones. And the individual and his society stand helpless, absolutely passive and completely overwhelmed by the brute forces of nature.

To paint such a picture of man is to take too poor a view of him. It is recognised by almost all thinkers that man is not a mere product of the environment, but that his environment itself is created by him. The doctrine of natural selection does not hold true in his case, for nature itself or the environment is selected by him. So much is meant when it is said that unlike the other species man is a conscious contributor to the course of evolution. But in this selection by what principle is he

guided? The principle by which nature is guided in its selection of the species is ability to survive in the struggle for life.

But the principle by which man is guided in his selection of nature is not his simple existence but the ideal of life which he frames for himself. And this ideal, unless we think that man has ceased to be spiritual, remains the same from the time of Plato. The industrial revolution is certainly an important event that stands between us and Aristotle. But man has reacted even to this change with the same ideal in view. Hence the recent outcry that the moral nature of man has not been able to cope with the progress of science. The very stability of man on earth, the maintenance of his prestige and of his superiority to other creatures, depends upon his

hold on this spiritual ideal. Hence, though we often hear of a change in the scale of things, we should not mistake it for the lowering of the spiritual ideal and the raising of the material. Spiritual values will ever remain the higher. And Plato and Aristotle were the first to recognise the importance of the rôle which spiritual values play in political thought. The value of their thought for us, as already suggested, lies in their discovery of the true foundation of society. For the reason that they allowed and advocated slavery we should not dismiss their philosophy as useless; we should demand, on the other hand, the recognition that the ideal of life is the same for every man everywhere, a universal application of the principle which, Plato and Aristotle thought, was to govern the life of only a privileged few.

P. T. RAJU

“To-day my one last hope is that the deliverer will be born in this poverty-stricken country, and from the East, his divine message will go forth to the world at large and fill the heart of man with boundless hope. As I proceed onward, I look behind to see the crumbling ruins of civilization strewn like a vast dung-heap of futility. And I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in man. I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter in his history after the cataclysm is over and the atmosphere rendered clean with the spirit of service and sacrifice. Perhaps that dawn will come from this horizon, from the East where the sun rises.”

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

14th April 1941.

REBIRTH—A RATIONAL EXPLANATION

[In this article Jaideva Singh, M. A., of the Department of Philosophy of the D. A. V. College, Cawnpore, examines the doctrine of reincarnation from the stand-point of its inherent reasonableness, and shows its appeal to the intuition of many a philosopher and many a poet of the West.—ED.]

Rebirth is only an expression of the law of continuity. We experience at least three different states every day. There is the waking state in which, along with our desires and feelings, we have an experience of the external world; we perceive objects out there in space; we handle things; we run and drive; we fight and kill. Then there is the dream-state in which we have a different experience. The senses by means of which we contact the solid things of the external world have ceased to function. From the stand-point of the experience of the external world, we are as good as dead. But we have not ceased to be; we are still alive in the world of desires, feelings, images and thoughts. In the dream-state, we still love and hate; we still fight and kill; we sometimes solve problems; we sometimes compose poems. We have a rich and varied experience in the dream-world. In the physical world, we are then as good as dead; in the mento-emotional world of dream, we are still alive. When we say, "Dreams are unreal," we say so only from the stand-point of our experience of the physical world. I dream I have become a king, am

living in a grand palace. I wake to find myself in a poor hovel with hardly anything to eat and I remark, with a sigh of disappointment, "How unreal are our dreams!" But *as an experience in the dream state*, it is perfectly real, and it is *my* experience, not Paul's or Peter's.

Now take the state of dreamless sound sleep. We are not conscious of any object there, but it does not mean that our very consciousness has ceased to be. Were it so, we could not connect the experience of yesterday with that of today. So in all the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep, there is a continuity of our life, though the experiences in the three states are different. In a way, we have a foretaste of death and rebirth every day.

It is generally supposed that when the physical body is dissolved at death, we cease to be. The materialist believes that our experiences are determined by and limited to the senses only and as the physical body and the senses are dissolved at death there is no more experience and our life comes to an end; we are like the flame of a candle that is snuffed out

of existence by a mere passing gust of wind. And it is generally asked, *where can we be and what can we be after our death?*

We are so used to locating everything in the outer visual and tactual space and taking only that for reality which is perceptible to our senses, that a reality which does not fulfil these conditions ceases to be real for us. That this is an irrational position will be evident if we reflect a little on our dream experiences. I am sleeping in a cosy bed in Benares and dreaming that I am enjoying a drive in London or flying in an aeroplane or sailing on the Atlantic. Where am I? In Benares or in London? Obviously in Benares while I am awake, in London while I am dreaming. Our space and time experiences of the dream state are not the same as those of the waking condition. It would be foolish to demand that our experiences of space and time when we are free from the limitations of our senses and of the physical body should be the same as those when we have these limitations. Even so it would be sheer cussedness to demand after the death of the physical body an answer to the question "Where?" in terms of physical space.

And *what can we be after death?* Why? *What are we during sleep?* Desire, emotion, thought? If our desire, emotion and thought do not cease to be during sleep, surely they

do not cease to be after death, which is only a longer sleep. Life after death is not meaningless. Just as in our physical life, first we take in food and then two other processes are necessary for our growth, *viz.*, assimilation of the nutriment and elimination of the waste, even so for the evolution of our soul two processes are necessary, *viz.*, an earthly life during which we gather experiences, and a life after death during which, being free from the limitations of the objective life, we reflect and contemplate and thus assimilate the experience that we have gathered in our earthly life. That is how we grow; that is how we evolve. The purgatory and heaven that theologians speak of are not simply superstitious jargon; they correspond to the stages of the elimination of the waste and the assimilation of the solid nutriment that we have gathered in our life on earth. When we have assimilated the experiences of our life on earth, we are reborn to gather further experiences. Life is not a mechanical process; it is teleological. The world is not a cruel joke; it is the opportunity of the soul. It is the school where we gather experience. We go on having an earthly life so long as we do not realize our final destiny. So long as we are engrossed or lost in our experiences, so long we have rebirth. Only when we rise above our experiences and realize our true selves

are we free from the round of births and deaths.

Modern dynamic psychology lends weighty support to the doctrine of rebirth. Our thought, feeling and desire are not something static; they are dynamic. Being dynamic they are causal factors. Psycho-analysis has proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that our mental activities are causal. Since our desires are causal, they try to bring about their own realization. We have some experience of the dynamic nature of our desires both in our waking experiences and in our dreams. All our activities are prompted by desire and even in dreams our desires tend to realize themselves. Even so when we have desires or *Vāsanās* for the experiences of the world, they do not cease to be after the death of the physical body; they are still active and bring about their realization by bringing us down into an environment suited to their fulfilment. The mystery of rebirth may be clear to a large extent, if we understand the creative and dynamic nature of our desires (*Vāsanās*).

Sir S. Radhakrishnan puts it very beautifully: "There is such a thing as psychic gravitation by which souls find their level, *i. e.*, their proper environment." (*An Idealist View of Life*) So long as we are prompted by *rāga-dveṣa*, by attraction and repulsion, so long as we have *abhiniveśa*, the keen desire and

love for particular forms of life, so long do we come down to earth by the very dynamism of our desires to gather the experiences of these forms of life.

It may be asked, "If we are reborn why don't we have the memory of our previous lives?" It would be a sheer burden to remember every incident of the past life. The *experiences* of the past life are summed up in the *tendencies* of the present. Wisdom does not consist in an accumulation of facts and incidents; it depends upon the ability to profit by experience. It is this wisdom that we acquire by our life on earth. It is quite unnecessary for our evolution to carry with us a memory of the various incidents of every life. It would be helpful only to carry with us the wisdom that we have garnered in our previous lives, wisdom which is *summed up* in conclusions and deductions drawn from the experiences of those lives, which becomes part and parcel of our essential selves and which is *expressed* in the form of tendencies in the present life. Dr. McTaggart has given eloquent expression to this truth in his *Human Immortality and Pre-existence*:—

A man who dies after acquiring knowledge might enter his new life deprived indeed of his knowledge, but not deprived of the increased strength and delicacy of mind which he had gained in acquiring that knowledge,

and if so, he will be wiser in the second life because of what happened in the first. So a man may carry over into his next life the dispositions and tendencies which he has gained by the moral contests of this life, and the value of these experiences will not have been destroyed by the death which has destroyed the memory of them.

Modern Psychology has proved conclusively that there are certain experiences of our present life which sink into the unconscious, of which we remember nothing, but which continue to influence our character and life, all the same. If we cannot recall many experiences even of our present life, it should not be a matter of surprise if we cannot recall the experiences of our past life. As has been said above, it would be no use overburdening the memory of an individual born in changed circumstances with the details of experiences of a past life. What is required is only the wisdom that he has culled from the experiences of the past and that he carries into the present.

There are many who believe in an indefinite existence in the future. But this belief would be meaningless without positing an existence in the past. If life begins for every one of us at our birth, it must also terminate with our death. No argument for a future life can be advanced which is not also an argument for a life before. Pre-existence and existence after death must stand or fall together.

Spinoza says in his *Ethics* :—

It is impossible for us to remember that we had existence prior to the body, since the body can have no vestige of it, but nevertheless we have in our experience the perception that we are eternal. For the mind is sensible no less of what it understands than of what it remembers.

Lessing in his *Divine Education of the Human Race* touches the very core of the problem when he says:—

“ Why should not every individual man have existed more than once upon this earth? Is this hypothesis so ridiculous merely because it is the oldest? Because the human understanding, before the sophistries of the schools had dissipated and debilitated it, lighted upon it once? Why should I not come back as often as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge and fresh capacity? Do I bring away so much from one life that there is nothing left to repay the trouble of returning? Is this a reason against it? Or is it because I forget I have been here before? Happy is it for me that I *do* forget. The recollection of my former condition would cause me to make but a bad use of the present and that which I must forget now—is that necessarily forgotten for ever? ”

Then, the birth of a genius can be explained only by the hypothesis of rebirth. The principle of heredity as understood by modern science fails to explain it. How is it that genius suddenly appears in a family where there has been no trace of it before? To say that the genius may

have inherited the characteristics of some distant forbear in the dim past is only a face-saving device. There is nothing in the genealogical line of Shakespeare, Isaac Newton, Goethe, Mozart, or Śaṅkara to show that they inherited their genius from some remote ancestor. Surely, these reincarnating egos possessed their powers as an inheritance from their past lives. The differences that we notice among human beings are not due to the favouritism of gods or God but to the difference in soul age. Every capacity, every ability is *evolved* in the great school of life.

Evolution as taught by modern science is only a half-truth; for evolution only of forms without the evolution of the indwelling life is, properly speaking, not evolution at all, but only change. And the evolution of the indwelling life and consciousness is a most powerful argument in favour of rebirth. He who has not perfected his powers (and one life is too short for the perfection of man) must be born again and again and must, sooner or later, become perfected. It was in this strain that Rudyard Kipling sang:—

They will come back, come back again
As long as the red earth rolls,
He never wasted a leaf or tree,
Do you think he would squander souls?

Swami Abhedānanda rightly remarked in one of his lectures that evolution only explains the *process* of life; reincarnation explains the *purpose* of life.

Some of the poets have had intuitive belief in rebirth. That the Indian poets have expressed their faith in rebirth may be explained away as a result of the social and cultural *milieu* in which they were born, but the belief of the English poets in this doctrine cannot be explained away either as a mere cultural heritage or as a strange aberration. It is the utterance of the innermost depth of their soul. Tennyson, Browning, Rossetti, Longfellow, Walt Whitman, Rudyard Kipling and John Masefield have expressed their belief in rebirth so clearly that it cannot be mistaken for a passing rhapsody. I shall give only a few quotations:—

Browning says in "Rabbi Ben Ezra":—

Once more on my adventures brave and new,
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armour to
indue.

Rossetti says:—

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell;
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet, keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the
shore.

Walt Whitman brings out the significance of rebirth very beautifully in the following lines:—

I know that I am deathless.
I know this orbit of mine cannot be
swept by a carpenter's compass.
And whether I come to my own today or
in ten thousand or ten million years,
I can cheerfully take it now, or with

equal cheerfulness can wait.
 The clock indicates the moment—but
 what does eternity indicate?
 We have thus far exhausted billions of
 winters and summers.
 There are trillions ahead and trillions
 ahead of them.
 Births have brought us richness and
 variety.
 I am an acme of things accomplished
 and I am encloser of things to be.
 And as for you, life, I reckon you are
 the leavings of many deaths.
 So also Longfellow avows his
 faith in the ever-recurring cycle of
 life :—

Thus the seer with vision clear,
 Sees forms appear and disappear
 In the perpetual round of strange
 Mysterious change.

From birth to death, from death to
 birth,
 From earth to heaven, from heaven to
 earth,
 Till glimpses more sublime
 Of things unseen before,
 Unto his wondering eyes reveal,
 The universe as an immeasurable wheel
 Turning for evermore,
 In the rapid rushing river of time.

Hear finally the bugle note of the
 present Poet-Laureate, John Mase-
 field :—

I hold that when a person dies
 His soul returns again to earth,
 Arrayed in some new flesh disguise
 Another mother gives him birth.
 With sturdier limbs and brighter brain
 The old soul takes the road again.

JAIDEVA SINGH

“ He who believes that he transmigrates, after death, into the body of a
 beast or a plant is grossly mistaken; he is ignorant of the fact that the essential
 form of the soul cannot change, that it is and it remains human, and only
 metaphorically speaking does virtue make of it a god and vice an animal. ”

HIEROCLES

(*Commentary on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras*)

BUDDHISM UNDER EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

[It is high time that an adequate volume of protest be raised against the tendency to make the grand philosophy expounded by Gautama Buddha a kind of glorified materialism. Disproportionate emphasis is put on what the Enlightened One is supposed not to have taught rather than on what he actually taught. We therefore welcome this expression by Shri J. M. Ganguli whose article contains valuable thoughts.—ED.]

A foreign view-point with its own ideas and prejudices is always a handicap in understanding and interpreting the thought, the culture and the institutions of a country, particularly if such culture and institutions, descending from the long past, have a considerable time-lag behind the thought currents of the age. European scholars have all the more suffered from this handicap in comprehending Indian thought and culture, because of the radical difference in living conditions, in traditions, and in outlook on life between Europe and India. The essential human nature has, of course, been the same, but the trend of cultural evolution, due to several causes, known and unknown—climatic, regional and other—has influenced differently the drift of thought and the formation of outlook on life and on life's end. Europe has concentrated on the physical and outward elements of existence; but India, with the gradual realisation of their transient and volatile nature, and their ultimate unreality, has grown

discontented with those distracting elements and has turned inwards to discover truth and reality, absolutism and permanence, within the non-physical, not outwardly manifested Agency animating the world and its creatures.

The result has been that while Europe has, more or less, thought of the physical self, its needs and comforts, and has pursued the knowledge acquired through the senses, India has thought of renouncing the individual, desire-full self, and of subordinating the senses in order to awaken the subtler senses within and to perceive the Supreme Consciousness under external forms and appearances. That has made India not only reflective and meditative, but also devotional. Europe has argued and reasoned, analysed and rationalised on the strength of her physical experience, but has missed the truer experiences coming through the perceptions of the Spirit. The attitude of devotion, the mood to pray, the urge to surrender one's little self to the All-pervading Being

of which it is but a part—all that, Europe has generally failed to appreciate and to understand.

India has approached the Infinite, through prayer, devotion and surrender, as also through reason of the most dissecting kind, though she did not think of restricting the prospectiveness of that reason by assertive finality, but always kept its doors open to receive fresh light, corrective influence and expansive ideas.

This very significant bifurcation of the thought-current, and this different moulding of the mental attitude with the cultural evolution in India and Europe have not merely led to a different philosophy of life and of living, but have consequentially estranged what has been termed the mystical philosophy of India from the so-called rationalism of the Europe of the analytical scientific period following the Middle Ages. European scholars, therefore, in understanding and interpreting Indian thought and religious philosophy have shorn them of their mysticism, of their devotional texture, of their not easily intelligible metaphysical character, and of whatever did not come within the ring of their physical perception and mental conception. Under such shearing operations at the hands of European interpreters, Buddhistic philosophy has become almost a corpse of its old vital self. It has been reduced almost to a bundle of

abstract ideas and of dry reasoning circumscribed by artificial finiteness. Buddhism originated with the subtlest human perception of the things and ways of the world, of the sorrows and afflictions of its creatures, of the heart's inner discontent at the emptiness of material possessions, and of its revolt at the mad unthinking ways and tendencies of people hurting, killing, paining and tyrannising over others for false, unlasting selfish gains. It was the intensity of that perception which made the Great Prince renounce his throne and kingdom and fly into seclusion to surrender himself to deepest contemplation on the Great Mystery of the Universe, till the Revelation came.

That was how Siddartha became the Buddha; and that was how, on the devotional meditation on the Unknown and the Eternal, Buddhism was founded, reared and developed. Look at the image of that great Thinker sitting with depthless vision in his eyes, lost in endless contemplation, motionless in unflinching devotion. That way he conceived and sought Nirvana. That way he drew out light from the darkness and gave it to the blind. He argued, reasoned, explained and postulated—but all that was done with the subtle consciousness of a trans-material Entity, the ultimate realisation of which was to him the great Nirvana. To fail to comprehend this inner

consciousness supremely influencing the Buddha, is to miss the track which he followed, and to be without the key to understand his philosophy and his teachings. Without that consciousness in you and without your heart vibrating with it, as Buddha's did, you cannot really approach him, nor can you squeeze out the nectar you seek from his teachings and sayings. To understand Buddha and to rise to his plane, sit before a stone image of him, in the coolness and serenity of undisturbed solitude, in his reflective pose, forgetful, for the time being, of the things around you, and meditate with half-closed eyes, as prayerfully and devotionally as he did, over the Inner Being within you and outside you, with abiding faith in the prospect of attaining Nirvana, when the sense of your and of all separate identities will be gone and when the great wheel of *Karma* and *Karma-phal* will come to a standstill.

But the European scholars have not looked at Buddhism from that view-point. They have wanted to weave a philosophy with Buddha's teachings and utterances, leaving out the devotional aspect of his life. Under this modern influence Buddhism has been weakening in its influence over and appeal to the human heart. The modern Buddhists read the Buddhistic literature, discuss and expostulate, but do not sit quietly and worshipfully to realise

Truth. Buddhism has been torn out of its devotional setting and reduced to mere abstract metaphysics superimposed on some precepts and ethical ideas. But faith and devotion are the essential ingredients of all religion, whereby it reaches the innermost recesses of the heart and makes the subtlest perceptions admissible there; and such faith and devotion arise and develop with increasing realisation and expanding consciousness, which produce also a prayerful mood.

Buddhism has been and can be no exception to that truism. The tendency to make it an exception under the modern sceptical and analytic interpretation has deprived it of its power to awaken ardour in the minds of its followers and to impart the happy sense of dawning divine consciousness. Out of and away from the influence of this tendency, where the masses have retained their devotional fervour, Buddhism is still living; it may be in attenuated form, but its life stream is still flowing; it is not dead and dried up as among those who have been unbalanced by that tendency. It is in that life stream, which is coursing through the unsophisticated mind of the Buddhist masses in Tibet or interior Burma, who worship and pray and pour out their feelings of joy and sorrow at the feet of the Buddha's stone idol, that the prospect of the resurrection of Buddhism

is present; and it is among those masses that, when the auspicious time comes, the Buddha will be born again, as in the past. All great teachers, world saviours and prophets have been born only in such an unsophisticated atmosphere, where the human mind has pulsated with religious fervour and has been sensitive to the ecstasy of feeling springing from ardent faith, surrendering devotion and tearful prayer. The next Buddha also can be born only in such an environment and atmosphere, and not within the jurisdiction of the learned Buddhistic societies, or within the purview of faith-bereft, dry analytical study and interpretation.

European scholars may have created interest in the religion of the Buddha among some intellectuals in distant lands; what they have carried afar, however, has not been the soul-stirring and life-revolutionising message of Buddha, but only

an Oriental philosophical curio to be comparatively studied with theological trends in other countries. That the world has thereby missed the deep voice and the heart yearnings of a great humanist, with all their fervid appeal, is no doubt true; but the greatest misfortune has been that even the traditional followers of the Buddha in India, and in Asia at large, are getting unmoored from their age-old religious anchorage and are ceasing to cultivate the internal spirit-realisation through outpouring devotion and feeling prayer.

If Buddhism has to be animated again with life and vigour it has to be endowed with the same old deep feeling and spirit of devotion which it originally possessed but which have been overlooked, unappreciated and discarded by the intellectuals of the modern age.

J. M. GANGULI

“ Monks, when ignorance leads the way, by the reaching of states unprofitable, shamelessness and recklessness follow in its train. In one who is swayed by ignorance and is void of sense wrong view springs up. Wrong view gives rise to wrong thinking, wrong thinking to wrong speech, wrong speech to wrong action, wrong action to wrong living, wrong living to wrong effort, wrong effort to wrong mindfulness, wrong mindfulness to wrong concentration, that to wrong knowledge, and that to wrong release. ”

Anguttara-Nikāya

THUS SPAKE THE LORD

[The recounting of an imaginary incident in the life of a great Teacher may be instructive and is legitimate provided it is frankly put forward as such and the spirit of that teacher is not departed from in either the rôle or the words ascribed to him. These conditions G. N. Acharya seems to meet in this imaginary interview of King Pasenadi's messengers with Lord Buddha. Into it he has woven threads from so many different sources that foot-notes to indicate whence this name and whence that phrase seem neither necessary nor advantageous.—ED.]

The noonday sun poured forth its prodigal warmth as our guides took us near to where the Lord was wont to be. The corpulent frame of Kumara-Kassapa, notable for varied eloquence, unaccustomed to such ardours, was wearied by the climb up the towering slopes of Simsumara Hill.

We paused on a ledge of rock and looked at the dark spots, caves cut, row after row, in the cliffs above us—homes of the dwellers of the hills. In one of these, the guides thought, the Lord was almost sure to be.

“ Nine nights had passed, O monks, since King Pasenadi the Kosalan had sent for Kumara-Kassapa and me and had charged us to go to the Lord to seek his help.

“ Thou knowest, Kumara-Kassapa, ” he said, “ how this country has been invaded by the barbaric Sakyans from the north. The robber-chief Brahmadata of Vesali, covetous of calling himself the monarch of Varanasi, has instigated the Sakyans to harry my country on that side. And while we are busy

with these, he is preparing to cross the holy Ganga to make war on us in the East. His messengers, crafty in speech and argument, go forth among the proud Sakyan tribes and say “ How has this graybeard dared to ask for the hand of a Princess of Kapilavattu ! How bear ye this insult ? We are brothers. Let us make this proud monarch taste of our arrows. ” And so the Sakyan hordes are overrunning our land while the robber-chief prepares a mighty army.

“ In this, our righteous war to defend our Freedom and our holy land, we have the sympathy of our great neighbour and son King Ajatasattu of Magadha. Even so of all the peoples of this Jambu-dweepa, the Angas, Kalingas, Panchalas, Machas and Surasenas. Yet Ajatasattu, his once impetuous soul now swayed by the teaching of the great Sakyamuni, has laid aside arms and, despite our urgent messengers, takes not the battle-field. So too the people of our tributary, Varanasi, recognising the benevolence of our

rule and dreading the Vajjians, yet refuse to take arms to fight for us. Go thou, therefore, to Sakyamuni—Supreme is he, the highest of men—and seek his help, to rouse the people to take arms. ”

“ And thou, Kevaddah, ” he said, turning to me, “ dear pupil of Mahasamana, go thou with Kumara-Kassapa, and help him in this. ”

To this I made reply :— “ Putting away the killing of living things, O King, Gautama the recluse holds aloof from the destruction of life. He has laid the cudgel and the sword aside, and, deprecating roughness and full of mercy, he dwells compassionate and kind to all creatures that have life. Thus does he live, a binder-together of those who are friends, a peacemaker, a lover of peace, impassioned for peace, a speaker of words that make for peace. And therefore, O King, is it vain to seek his help in war. ”

“ Not so, Kevaddah, ” the King made reply. “ Clear-eyed is the Lord. He sees that ours is a righteous war. We war not to kill, or from avarice, or to rob, but for the defence of the poor and the weak and the holy. So will he help us and call on his countless followers to support us. Go. And may you have a propitious journey ! ”

Thus charged by our King we travelled day and night for five days and arrived at Uruvela where the waters of the Yamuna mingle with

those of the holy Ganga. We found the monks living in great terror as the Vajjians had crossed the Ganga and as our people had fought them back, blood had flowed all around Uruvela, and the valleys and jungles of Simsumara, half a league away, had resounded with the noise of battle. But the Lord had left some days before. The monks could guess where he had gone, but knew it not for certain. We had to tarry four nights at Uruvela before it was safe for us to pass and then, setting out early with two monks to guide us, we went in search of the Lord.

And so, O monks, when it was still wanting an hour to noon, we climbed the last ledge and stood before a humble hut built in the shadow of a rock and there on the stump of an ancient tree sate the Lord with the sacred primal signs thirty and two.

He looked at us with eyes quiet with pity and said: “ Come, Kumara-Kassapa, and you too, Kevaddah, ” and as we saluted him and seated ourselves, he sat quiet in thought, stroking the head of a boy, who with eyes like those of a hunted deer, nestled close to the Lord at the sight of so many strangers.

After a long silence Kumara-Kassapa began : “ Bhagava, thou knowest, the barbaric Sakyans have invaded . . . ”

The Lord, slowly looking up, interrupted him, "Yes, I know. For three nights and days have I dwelt here and my old ears have heard the trumpet's clang, the foeman's braggart word, the clash of weapons that drank and dripped blood, the swish of cold steel as its cruel edge cut through human flesh, the groans of men murdered in their innocence; mingling, confused noises, tearing at my withered heart. Here was Sothiya, the grass-cutter, who was the hope, the only staff of this motherless boy, as of his aged parents. Three days ago he went out to gather wood for the cottage and has not returned. Here my poor boy and the feeble old parents mourn for him."

And the Lord was silent.

But Kumara-Kassapa remembering his duty to his King thus spake:-
"Lord, thou knowest all. It is no fault of our King. He seeks no Empire. Without your help we will be destroyed."

"How comes it, Kumara-Kassapa, that you seek my aid? Know you not that for more than two score years I have wandered this earth teaching *Ahimsa* and now you want me to aid in this vast, savage, grim conspiracy of mutual murder?"

"Not so, Lord. Our King wants not to kill. This fight was forced on him."

"It was ever so. Did not King Pasenadi, grieved at the death of

his sister Kosala Devi, make repeated war on Ajatasattu, who, overcome by transgression, had deprived her lord, his righteous father, of life? Were there not then as many woes and as many streaming eyes till the King, hearkening to my appeal, ceased war and made peace with Ajatasattu by giving him his daughter in marriage?"

"Even so was it when Pasenadi's forefathers Vanka, Dabbasena and Kamsa made war on Varanasi till King Silavanta, saying 'There is to be no injury done to others because of me,' went forth from his house to a houseless life.

"I am sick, I am weary; talk not to me, Kumara-Kassapa, of Kings and their battles."

"Still, my Lord, let me again appeal to you. Would you like it that our chief city Savathi should be besieged and overrun by barbaric hordes? Would you like it that holy Ayojjha should know the cruel tread of enemy feet? Would you like it that twelve-leagued Varanasi should be sacked and its temples burnt?"

"Not so, Kumara-Kassapa. I should like it not that Savathi should come to harm or that Ayojjha should be sacked or that Varanasi should be burnt. Even so I should like it not, if Kapilavattu of the Sakyans were besieged and overrun, or if holy Mithila were sacked, or if Vesali were burnt and the monks of

Jetavana slaughtered. But the wheel of life must come full circle. If these things were to come to pass I would grieve; but never would I kill; for I see in the stream of life all beings, of good and bad colour, in happy or miserable existence, according to their Karma. ”

“ Do you not, then, wish for our victory, Lord ? ”

“ I wish not for anybody’s victory. Victory begets hatred, for the conquered is unhappy. Never in the world does hatred cease by hatred, hatred ceases by love. ”

And silence fell on us.

After a while, seeing the Lord preparing to go for his noonday bath, and mindful again of his duty to his King, Kumara-Kassapa spake.

“ Listen, Lord, ” he said, and as Tathagata sat intent and listened, he spoke of the goodness and valour of the King, of the virtue and the faith of his subjects; described how in Kosala, and even in conquered Varanasi, each man followed his pursuits peaceful and undisturbed; he spoke of God and men’s duty; of the heaven to which the souls of those dying in battle would go; set forth the duty of all brave men and true to fight for the defence of the country and with the eloquence of which he was master, besought once more the Lord to come to the King’s aid and to gladden his heart.

Having listened intently and long Tathagata said in a low voice and

with majestic mien, “ Why raise ye such questions: of the soul, God and the infinite, the jungle, the desert, the puppet-show, the writhing, the entanglement of speculation ? ”

And then the Lord showed how our fretting selves are not really separate beings but passing ripples on the stream of life. And that neither King nor Teacher can release us from the wheel of life. That only they who are a refuge unto themselves, betaking themselves to no external refuge, but holding fast to the Truth as their lamp, overcoming anger by kindness and evil by good—only they shall reach the topmost height; only they shall go through life unafraid.

And as the Lord spake, all those in the hut, all the living beings, all the world listened rapt and with humility. And when he had finished a silence fell on us as if all living things had ceased.

Then the Lord arose and as he was about to go out, Kumara-Kassapa, doing reverence at his feet, like all of us, asked in a subdued voice “ Lord, what shall I say unto my King, my beloved Sovereign ? ”

And thus spake the Lord :—

“ Not only to you but to all men Tathagata says:—

‘ If only men thus knew—This birth series is ill.

‘ Man should not his brother slay—grief is the slayer’s lot.’ ”

Thus saying, O monks, the Lord took up his bowl and staff and, grieving in his heart for man, went slowly away.

G. N. ACHARYA

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

THE CONCEPT OF GOD *

This small volume, slightly less than one hundred pages, would be a valuable addition to any scholar's library. It is by the author of seven historical publications, among them a history of the French Revolution—all written to counteract the modern bias towards "economic determinism" in the recital of social change. Dr. Mathews, who was President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America from 1912 to 1916, has an impressive record as Professor of Historical Theology and Dean of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago; since 1933 he has been Dean Emeritus.

While the intrinsic value of this book is considerable in its efforts to make the values of the original teachings of Christ conform with a rational philosophy and disciplined metaphysics, it holds its chief interest as the illustration of a very hopeful trend in modern theology. It would almost seem that in respect to dogmatism the old relation between religion and science has been reversed, for nowhere in Dr. Mathews's writings are assertions made which trespass on the legitimate realms of the physical and experimental sciences: nowhere does he present his metaphysical and moral arguments in any other frame of mind than that which requests thoughtful consideration. In varying degrees, the writings

of Reinhold Niebuhr of the Union Theological Seminary and the intelligent progressivism of the American publication *The Christian Century* indicate the same trend which Dr. Mathews so well illustrates. In these instances more intellectual tolerance is evidenced than in numerous works wherein scientific specialists pontificate on subjects outside their rightful jurisdiction, to come forth with nothing more significant than smug denials of the independent reality of mind and soul. The new religion of the Western world has rightly been named Scientism for, while its priests wear white robes instead of ecclesiastical garb, they none-the-less, in an authoritative and arbitrary manner, set the norm of opinion on the nature of man, law and evolution.

Dr. Mathews calls this new authority to account for the moral unconcern which it inevitably inspires, but he assumes that those who read his book have themselves reached the point where they see the necessity of a philosophy or a religion that can offer other rational support for morality than the "struggle for survival" and the law of expediency. Rather than preferring blanket indictments against modern science, he attacks the old anthropomorphic Christianity, for he holds traditional theology largely responsible for the one-sided development

* *Is God Emeritus?* By SHAILER MATHEWS. (The Macmillan Company, New York. \$2.00)

of Western science. God can no longer be a transcendentalized parent. Rather the word God must be recognized as a symbol of the unity of human life and of the interrelationship of its parts. Dr. Mathews is enamoured of the phrase, "the personality-producing activities of the universe," by which he means to suggest the on-rushing tide of nature towards the production of those exclusively human qualities which we symbolize by the words "soul" or "character". He feels that the word God, as a symbol, helps men to feel an individual and significant relationship with these processes:—

The term God is not existential but symbolical. Human life is seen to be the outcome of and dependent upon the personality-producing activities of the universe, and the term God enables men to use experience gained in the relation of human persons, both individually and socially, as means of reciprocal adjustment to such cosmic activity.

The question might well be raised as to whether the value of Dr. Mathews's book is somewhat diminished by the very use of the word God but it seems to this reviewer that by this means Dr. Mathews's writings will reach the ears of many who are conventional Christians for lack of a means to deeper understanding. This book, for instance, will lift the minds of divinity students immediately above the conventional modes of anthropomorphic thought, thus stimulating individual and constructive thinking in the fields of religion and philosophy. Although he holds that there is a value in meditation and in closely identifying man with the processes of cosmic activity, Dr. Mathews has little pa-

tience with that variety of supplication which destroys self-reliance:—

To wait inactively for God to do that which demands human co-operation is moral cowardice. To feel that individuals, social classes, and nations can co-operate with cosmic activities is more than a championship of religious inheritance. Any description of the will of God which is less than cosmic may be a tool of the demagogue and the reactionary.

Dr. Mathews's own concept of God is a truly liberal one, for he identifies it with the deity of Socrates and of Plato. He recognizes that the Christian religion, as "Churchianity," has been but a progressive reflection of a "social behaviour." He is uncompromising in his recital of the dangers attending inherited religious prejudices:—

The history of Western Europe illustrates only too plainly how organized religious antipathies may lead to war. Religious groups have too often opposed the extension of rights and sanctified social injustice. Any religion which champions an outgrown *status quo* as an expression of divine will becomes antisocial. As in the case of Russian ecclesiasticism, the will of God may be identified with a hostility to the extension of political rights and economic justice.

He is greatly concerned with the need for a rational basis for ethics and morality, and finds this not in a theological adherence to the doctrine of Christ as a personal means to salvation, but rather in intelligent determination of relationships between man and universal law, *i. e.*, cosmic processes. Further fundamental postulates of Dr. Mathews's own faith thus begin to emerge: (1) God as the symbol of a unity in essence and an interdependence in action between beings, although

he states that "whether or not one uses the term, God, is no test of his religious life." (2) Law as the natural activity of a universe in which deity is-all pervasive. (3) A concept of growth and evolution to supplant the Christian *status quo* of heaven and hell. He states, for instance, that

from this point of view immortality becomes something more than wishful thinking. Death is an episode, not an end. We can abandon pictures of Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory. . . An individual person whose centre of life is beyond the control of the animal survivals and who is at one with the personality-producing activities of the cos-

mos may expect some new and less animal mode of life as the next step in evolution.

It is of great interest to see how closely Dr. Mathews, in these fundamental tenets of his rational faith, approaches the teachings of ancient India and the Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky. If this book were alone in its field, it would bear less significance for the intelligent student of religion and philosophy than it does. As matters stand, it is a coherent and compact representation of the most helpful trend yet inaugurated in the name of Christianity.

HERVEY WESCOTT

THE RAMAYANA *

This book makes quite a fresh approach to the *Ramayana* which is taken up for study not merely as a religious book, but as a book of poetry having a universal appeal. In this respect, poetry is superior to religion. The religious character of the book is due primarily to the influence which Rama's life and character have had on Indian life. Rama himself nowhere makes any claim to being an incarnation of the God Vishnu. Only in one place is there any indication of something like this, when, rejecting the advice of his lieutenants against admitting Vibhishana, Ravana's brother, to his camp, he says, "A person has merely to say that he is mine once and I save him from all that exists. This is my vow."

The central figure of the poem is naturally Rama. He stands for a great human ideal. His conduct is throughout noble and magnanimous. He is the concrete embodiment of how one should speak and act in every situation, offending nobody and always doing right. It is but natural that human conduct examined under a microscope cannot be seen as perfect. The author has considered two criticisms against Rama—the Vali episode and Sita's ordeal of fire. He justifies Rama in both cases. But it is possible to take a different view and to wish that Rama had acted with a little more consideration. The readiness with which Vali apologizes at the time of death shows that persuasion ought first to have been tried with him; and, when

* *The Poetry of Valmiki : A Literary Appreciation of the Best Parts of the Ramayana.* By MASTI VENKATESA IYENCAR. (Published by the Author from Gavipur Extension, Basavangudi Post, Bangalore City. Rs. 3/12)

that had failed, Rama should have beaten him in a fair battle on equal terms.

Similarly, Rama's treatment of Sita at their first meeting after the defeat of Ravana seems very cruel. It is only the happy ending to the ordeal that relieves the tragedy of it. But in this incident, it must be said one supreme quality of Rama emerges—his self-control. He loved Sita and knew in his heart that Sita was pure although she had lived in Ravana's palace for a year. But the people would not easily think so and might misjudge his conduct if he was effusive in his joy at his first meeting with her. Although the war had been waged for her sake and he had shown extreme grief at their separation, he controlled himself, uttered cruel words, and only after she had been reconciled to the people through the ordeal, did he take her back. That morality is not only a personal but also a social affair is certainly a kingly ideal. The common people act after the manner of the great. And it is the responsibility of the latter that their conduct should be an open book for all to read and to follow.

The author has argued that the *Ramayana* is the oldest and the first great poem in Sanskrit. It has almost every poetic excellence, such as character depiction, description of nature, polished language, a pervading religious purpose, etc. But he has taken pains

to show that certain parts of the *Ramayana* are later additions and interpolations by interested parties. The *Ramayana* at its best is not surpassed by any other book of poetry, modern or ancient. Its defects are a certain disproportion or prolixity in description and the introduction of mythical elements, such as the notion of Ravana with ten heads and twenty arms, an army of monkeys conducting themselves on equal terms with men, Hanumana leaping over 1,200 miles of sea, an aerial car, etc. The author has his own explanations for some of these.

There is, however, no doubt about the author's main contention, that the civilisation represented in the *Ramayana* was of a very high order, and that the great virtues of all time—such as love of righteousness at whatever cost, indifference to the possession of property, a high ideal of sex purity, brotherly love and kingly duty—all these are inculcated in the poem in the popular form of a story which has attained, on that very account, the status of a religious teaching. The author has introduced the story itself in some of its most characteristic parts to the English-knowing public, and has kept up throughout an attitude of impartiality combined with sympathetic understanding and poetic appreciation. He has undoubtedly done a service to the ancient Hindu culture.

G. R. MALKANI

Studies in the Relationship between Islam and Christianity : Psychological and Historical. By LOOTFY LEVONIAN. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 6s.)

The author is Dean of the Near East School of Theology at Beirut. His theme is that for effective evangelism and mutual help it is necessary for Christians to understand the Muslim mind and to rid themselves of false notions regarding the history of Islam. The book accordingly falls naturally into two sections—one psychological and the other historical and religious.

More than half of it is taken up with establishing, from a study of the terminology used in Hebrew and Muslim writings, that the Semitic mind invariably thinks of spirit in terms of the physical and the concrete. This, according to our author, is so fundamental a quality of the Muslim mind that it accounts for practically all the difference and conflict between Islam and Christianity. One wonders, however, whether this is so much a peculiarity of Islam as a characteristic of all religions in the earlier stages. The conclusion from a study of ancient writings is sought to be further confirmed and illustrated by means of later Muslim teaching also. But if it is meant to argue that the Semitic mind can never attain to a conception of the spiritual free from all material associations, then where is the point of preaching Christianity to it?

The historical portion of the book does credit to the author's sense of fair play. He points out that the

notion that Muslim history is one of bloodshed is altogether false and that Christianity has been responsible for even more violence than has Islam. One appreciates this spirit of seeing the beam in one's own eye.

The religious aspect of the controversy between Islam and Christianity, however, is, as one might expect in the case of a missionary writer, not dealt with in the same spirit of sympathy and understanding. The emphasis laid by Islam on the transcendent and inscrutable nature of the Deity is taken as proving the non-spiritual conception of Islam (spiritual here, of course, being understood in the sense of personal). Whether such identifying of spiritual with personal on the part of our author is or is not a case of concretizing, or of understanding the spirit in terms of the concrete and the finite (another form of the very materialism of which he accuses Islam), a more sympathetic attitude might have led him to see that not all can be content with limiting the nature of the Infinite to what appeared in human form in Jesus. Whether the personal is a category in terms of which it is possible adequately to conceive of the Infinite is still a matter of dispute in philosophy. That being so, there is no reason why the Islamic view of the Deity as transcendent and inscrutable should be regarded as less adequate than the Christian view of the Deity as personal. If anything, untrammelled philosophical speculation, whether in the East or in the West, would appear to favour the view of the Infinite as non- or supra-personal.

The fact that brotherhood is recognised by Islam only amongst co-religionists is cited by our author to prove that Islam has no basic conception of the spiritual value of men whatever their religious affiliations. But it is futile to exult over Christian doctrine, even granting that the teaching of Islam in this respect is inadequate, for it is not doctrine that matters but life, as our author himself repeatedly asserts. Judged thus the Christian West must sit at the feet of Islam and learn to practise at least the brotherhood that Islam has

achieved—a brotherhood which transcends barriers of race and of colour.

The author, being an Oriental, has little of the superior condescending attitude of the Western missionaries to non-Christian faiths. He turns the search-light of criticism on Christianity itself and asserts that if Islam should become more spiritual so must the followers of Christ. The conversion he advocates is, therefore, not of Islam to Christianity but of both Muslims and Christians to true spirituality. In this respect his book has a genuinely universal appeal.

BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

Conscience and Liberty. By Robert S. W. POLLARD. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 2s. 6d.)

Nations, like the individuals composing them, finding their own moral houses lacking order, divert attention to the delinquencies of their neighbours. And prevarications which would brand us as unreliable witnesses assume the dignity of diplomacy and statesmanship under official approval. Restrictive laws making bywords of "conscience" and "liberty" are rushed through war-mad legislatures, and the public, having swallowed the appropriate dosage of sugar-coated propaganda, submit like lambs led to the sacrifice. Mr. Pollard follows the history of civil liberties from the days of Socrates, Galerius and Constantine through the Middle Ages and the Inquisition and lays bare the dangers which now beset us. His conclusion is not

unlike that of Madame Blavatsky, *i. e.*, "No lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old." Our author is unsparing in his denunciation of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1940 (See especially Chapter 7), which condemns us to live under laws strangely like those of Nazi and Fascist States. That so bold an indictment of government control over individual as over corporate life is allowed circulation is in itself a sign that *so far* Government is not exercising its full powers. But the danger of capital punishment for more or less minor offences is there, while already the right of *habeas corpus* has in many cases been suspended. Yes, Mr. Pollard's essay deserves careful study. His message is clear:—

On the conscientious objector of to-day depends in particular the defence of freedom of conscience, liberty of opinion and democracy.

D. C. T.

Hiroshige. By YONE NOGUCHI. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., London; Maruzen Co., Ltd., Tokyo. Memorial Edition. \$20.00)

The simplicity and dignity of the indigo-blue silk cover of this Chitsu case, decorated only with Hiroshige's signature and seal in gold, serves to put us in the right frame of mind to open this attractive folio with the greatest anticipation. And as we unfold the cover our heart rejoices again at the sight of the inside of the Chitsu case, lined with a fascinating triptych colour-print in indigo-blue, white and black, and the two beautifully designed and exquisitely bound volumes of *Hiroshige*. We have purposely dwelt on the format of the book for it deserves special commendation. It carries the mark of the artist's touch and of perfect workmanship.

But let us turn to the book itself. *Hiroshige* was first published in 1934. This edition is a new, improved and special one, brought out in commemoration of the 2600th Anniversary of the Founding of the Japanese Empire. The first volume comprises essays and commentary notes from the skilful pen of the distinguished Japanese poet Yone Noguchi; the second contains within its covers ninety-nine plates, selected pieces from the work of Hiroshige, "the master artist of moon, rain and snow."

Yone Noguchi, himself a son of Japan, a poet and an artist at heart, filled with genuine admiration for and true understanding of the art of his country, is well fitted to introduce the art of Hiroshige to the English-speaking

public. While it is true that great works of art speak a universal language which can be understood at all times by all men who have eyes to see and ears to hear, yet equally true is it that a knowledge of a country's literature, history, customs and traditions helps one to comprehend the artist's mind and to enter into the spirit of his art. Such a setting is provided by the author, who, with his stimulating text and delightful comments, prepares us to approach the prints from a true Eastern point of view and to enjoy them through the eyes of an artist. The tendency in the West is to think of nature as one thing and of man as something different. Eastern philosophy points out that they are indissolubly united.

We, Orientals, think that human beings are built with the same elements as those of the wind that blows in the sky, or of the rain falling to the ground, or of cloud and haze swimming in air; therefore we can enter easily into a proper comprehension of nature, and our consolidation with it is only natural.

Without this conception of nature Hiroshige's famous landscapes cannot be understood and appreciated, for they are not merely attempts to imitate nature but are expressions of her spiritual beauty and her inner soul.

Space does not allow us to enter Hiroshige's world of flowers and birds or to deal with his pictures of human figures. His landscapes are undeniably his masterpieces, but all his pictures are distinguished for their decorative beauty, the exquisiteness of their composition and their technical excellence. We recommend this book to the lover

of art as well as to those who wish to be educated to understand its value. The indescribable charm of some of these prints not only refreshes the eye but fills the heart with pure delight. As study of metaphysics and commu-

nion with nature purify and ennoble the mind, so does dwelling on great works of art. We feel the richer for this glimpse into another world, the world of the artist and the poet.

M. L.

Helvellyn to Himalaya. By F. SPENCER CHAPMAN, with an Introduction by the Marquis of Zetland. (Chatto and Windus, London. 18s.)

It is no doubt rash to make sweeping statements when one is still under the spell of a great and thrilling experience, but, providing one's reactions are mature, the power of the spell is perhaps the true measure of the value of the experience. So it is that I make bold to say that this book is one of the greatest mountaineering books ever written, and I shall be much surprised if succeeding generations do not thrill to it as contemporary readers certainly will.

It is the general effect, the revelation of character and achievement, without a trace of egotism, that makes the book so remarkable. Many laymen wonder why mountaineers are willing to expend such energy, to undergo so much pain and risk, such great danger merely in order to reach the top of a mountain. Perhaps such people will find an answer in this book; not a clear statement, but an answer in the form of going with the author through a series of unforgettable experiences, that are their own justification.

Spencer Chapman emerges from this book, which is his climbing—and so, incidentally, to a great extent his non-climbing—autobiography, as a remarkable man. Not only in the high light of the book, the climbing of Chomolhari (24,000 feet), a peak “which rises 10,000 feet sheer from the dusty Tibetan plain,” and “gives a greater impression of sheer height and inaccessibility than any other I know,” but in all his climbs, beginning with roof-climbing at Cambridge, he evinces rare qualities of courage, imagination, culture and good judgment. Moreover, he is a great student of bird and plant life, so that like a beautiful tapestry his story is woven in many colours, and his prose style is generally more than adequate to his purpose. Finally, the book is full of interesting human observation and lively humour, as well as of superb photographs.

Perhaps the whole is best summed up in the words of the sherpa who also with him made the final ascent, and the almost tragic descent, of Chomolhari: “I lost all love for my body, but the Sahib brought it back safely, and I hope we shall climb another mountain together.”

BANNING RICHARDSON

Decisive Moments in the History of Islam. By MUHAMMAD ABDULLAH ENAN. (Shaikh Muhammed Ashraf, Kashmiri Bazar, Lahore. Rs. 4/8)

Mr. M. A. Enan is a well-known Egyptian scholar who has written a number of books in Arabic on Islamic history. The present work, one of his best, translated from the second Arabic edition, is a contribution of real merit. It is in the form of descriptive essays on the conflicts between Islam and Christianity from the earliest times, when the Muslims were seeking to found an Empire in Europe and in the Middle East. Unfortunately, the work lacks the harmonious unity of narrative and one of the most important factors—the basic cause of the evolution and development of this “eternal struggle between East and West,” has been lost sight of. The gradual and systematic development of this great historic phenomenon has so far been neglected by historians, both ancient and modern, and the fragmentary and disjointed pieces of information gleaned through the pages of Fr. von Schlegel’s *Philosophie der Geschichte*, Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* or Ibn Khaldun’s monumental *Kitab-ul-Ibar*, are often one-sided.

Mr. Enan’s point of view is rationalistic and critical. Perhaps he could not have done better than to select for his treatment a number of episodes in the major struggle which constituted turning-points in its history. Islam and Christianity represented two different ideologies—one proud of its glorious inheritance from

the past and the other born of an unprecedented religious fervour. The two, both out for the spiritual and temporal domination of the world, were bound to clash. The religious, political and social antagonism between the two reached a climax in the Arab Siege of Constantinople (664 A. D.) and again in the Battle of Tours (732 A. D.); and thereafter it assumed a very grave aspect which led to a number of decisive encounters between Islam and Christianity on Roman, Greek and Spanish soil. The graphic narrative of Muslim naval expeditions and their conquest of Crete, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Majorica, Minorca, Ivica and Cyprus, shows Muslim naval supremacy established as early as the ninth century and that the exploits of brave Muslim seamen like Leo of Tripolis (Ghulam Zarafa), Abu Omar Hafs (al-Balluti), Khafaga ibn Sufyan and others were as brilliant as those of European seamen in the sixteenth century.

Many hitherto untouched aspects of Islamic history, e. g., Muslim diplomacy, slavery in the middle ages and the rules of slavery in Islamic countries, and the conventions of Islamic chivalry, are discussed with the enlightened outlook of a modern historian. Not much is known of the diplomatic relations of Islamic States with their Christian rivals and, up till now, it has been considered doubtful whether, apart from concluding a number of peaceful treaties, the Muslims were eager to develop commercial and political relations with most of the Christian States. The view that constant wars and conquests in the early history of Islam

were not conducive to such relations cannot be accepted now. The Prophet himself sent envoys with his letters to Heraclius, the Roman Emperor; to Chosroes, the Persian King; to Cyrus, the Roman Viceroy of Egypt and to the rulers of Ghassan, Yemen, Amman, Behrein and Abyssinia. As early as 58 A. H. (A. D. 678), at the first Siege of Constantinople, Moa'wia exchanged diplomatic embassies with the Byzantine Emperors; and later, during the

Abbaside Caliphate, mutual correspondence and friendly envoys between Hārūn al-Rashid and Charlemagne, though chiefly directed against the Muslim rule of the Ommayids in Spain, were politically significant. The diplomacy of Islamic Spain was of more solid character, when Abdul Rahman al-Nasir of Andalusia and Constantine VII of Constantinople consolidated the bonds of friendship and alliance with diplomatic missions.

BIKRAMA JIT HASRAT

Prāchya-Vargīkarana-Paddhati : A System of Classification on Oriental Lines. By SATISA C. GUHA with an Introductory Note by Mahāmahopādhyāya Principal G. N. KAVIRAJ. (Granthagoshthī, Gandhigram, Benares. Rs. 2/8)

Prāchya-Vargīkarana-Paddhati by Librarian S. C. Guha is not only a new system of book-classification developed on Oriental lines, but a valuable handbook of Indian librarianship as well. The existing books on library science, written in English, are meant for libraries containing books in English and other European languages. Although Mr. Guha's book is also written in English, it gives ample illustrations from the point of view of the librarian in India; and, further, side by side with English terms are given Indian equivalents in the Nāgarī script. Also one index is provided in Roman, and another in Nāgarī. As a text-book for library training classes the book has been found very helpful. This is for the present the only book suitable for rural and Oriental libraries, though a Hindi edition would prove of greater help to rural librarians.

As to classification Mr. Guha has adopted the decimal notation, and has worked out in detail a large number of Oriental subjects with remarkable

success; some subsequent publications (such as Pārkhī's *Granthālaya sastra* in Marāthi) seem to have followed his order and sequence. Mr. Guha has given outlines of notable systems of classification in West and East, those of Dewey, Cutter, Brown and the Library of Congress, the Baroda schemes, including Kudalkar's Marāthi Paddhati, etc., as also Chinese and Japanese schemes. For a comparative study Mr. Guha's seems to be the only volume available. Mr. Guha published the outline of Mr. Ranganāthan's *Colon Classification*, brought out since this book appeared, in his bibliographical journal *Indiana* for October 1939 side by side with his own system.

Mr. Guha's Regional Table is simple and expansive. It may be specially helpful in arranging Government publications. The system of Author-Marks introduced by Mr. Guha (*Indiana*, September 1939) is also very simple and scientific, probably an improvement on that shown in Cutter's Tables and other similar devices.

The Principal of the Government Sanskrit College, Benares, has rightly observed in his Introductory Note that this book ought to initiate a series of studies embodying the valuable suggestions and supplementing the labours of the writer.

B. N. BANERJI

ENDS AND SAYINGS

“ _____ *ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers.”

HUDIBRAS

From this month THE ARYAN PATH is being printed by the Sadhana Press which The Theosophy Co., Ltd., Baroda, has started in the capital of the Maharaja Gaekwar. The editorial work will continue to be done in Bombay, but the magazine will be despatched from Baroda, and the managerial office will be at the same address as the Sadhana Press, viz., Raopura, Baroda.

Sir Vangal Thiruvenkata Krishnamachariar, K. C. I. E., the able Dewan of Baroda, was unavoidably prevented from performing the opening ceremony, but he sent a felicitous message which was read by his daughter, while Lady Krishnamachariar on her husband's behalf declared the Sadhana Press open. In his message the Dewan Saheb said :—

We all cordially welcome the opening of the Sadhana Press in Baroda. At this Press, will be printed and published three monthly magazines which have made, and are making, a notable contribution to the religious and intellectual life of India. The first of these is THE ARYAN PATH which I have no doubt many of you read regularly. It “stands for all that is noble in East and West alike” and deals with topics of supreme interest with remarkable catholicity and broadmindedness. The second is the *Indian P. E. N.* As you know, the P. E. N. is a world association of which the Indian organisation is a part. The monthly issues of the *Indian P. E. N.* contain reviews of works written by

Indian authors in all languages. It is thus a record of the achievement of the Indian intellect in the field of letters. It also contains notes about works published in other countries, besides articles bearing on general literary criticism. The third magazine which will be published here is the *Theosophical Movement*. We know generally what this movement stands for. If today there is a deep appreciation among us of the truths contained in our religion and a proper understanding of its tenets, this is the service which Theosophy has done to India. At a time when educated Indians had no idea of the fundamental principles of religion and of the great works of the past, the early theosophists published many of these works of the religions of India in scholarly editions and drew attention to the rich thoughts enshrined in them.

From all this, you will realise what a great gain it will be to the intellectual and spiritual life of Baroda that from next month these three magazines will be published here from month to month. I feel sure we all look forward to reading them with the keenest of interest. Here is a platform on which all of us can meet, as it is the policy of these magazines to avoid politics.

The inspiration for this work, dedicated to the service of India and to the Cause of Human Brotherhood, is derived from Theosophy, the Immortal Wisdom repeated in our era by H. P. Blavatsky, whose Teachings have been kept alive, untinged and untarnished, by the efforts of William Quan Judge and Robert Crosbie. Much confusion exists in reference to the

philosophy of Theosophy, for the pure teachings of H. P. Blavatsky are mostly unknown outside a limited circle of genuine students belonging to the United Lodge of Theosophists.

The day of inaugurating the Sadhana Press was the 20th of March—a day prior to the Spring Equinox which also is the anniversary of the passing of W. Q. Judge, who, after H. P. B., has been the greatest Theosophist who has laboured in the public world. It is also appropriate that the first number of THE ARYAN PATH to be printed by the Sadhana Press is that for the month of May, during which the entire Theosophical world will celebrate White Lotus Day, the anniversary of the passing of H. P. Blavatsky. The 8th of this month will be the fiftieth anniversary of her death and the best way to commemorate it is to engrave on our hearts the memorable words she offers to her students and her followers:—

He who does not practise altruism; he who is not prepared to share his last morsel with a weaker or poorer than himself; he who neglects to help his brother man, of whatever race, nation, or creed, whenever and wherever he meets suffering, and who turns a deaf ear to the cry of human misery; he who hears an innocent person slandered, whether a brother theosophist or not, and does not undertake his defence as he would undertake his own—is no theosophist.

Speaking of anniversaries—three days later, on the 11th of May, all Buddhists will celebrate the Triple festival of the Birth, the Enlightenment and the Passing of Gautama Buddha. Buddhist organizations should appeal to the Government to declare the

Buddha Day an annual Bank-holiday. This will be facilitated by an earnest endeavour to celebrate the day in every town of India. Attempts ought to be made to popularize this Festival of sacred memory for there is inspiration to be derived from it. There is no historical figure whose life of spiritual endeavour and benign renunciation appeals to the human mind as does that of the Buddha.

..I will not have that crown
Which may be mine : I lay aside those realms
Which wait the gleaming of my naked sword:
My chariot shall not roll with bloody wheels
From victory to victory, till earth
Wears the red record of my name. I choose
To tread its paths with patient, stainless feet,
Making its dust my bed, its loneliest wastes
My dwelling, and its meanest things my mates.

If the promotion of the pleasure of others for its own sake is often a moral duty is it reasonable to maintain that there is never any moral duty to promote one's own pleasure? Professor John Laird denies it vigorously in *Philosophy* for January, 1941. He is convinced that there are other intrinsic goods than happiness or pleasure, that there are perverted "pleasures" the promotion of which for any one could never be a moral good, and that exaggeration may carry the most "innocent" pleasure into the other camp. But he makes the point, with sanctified common sense at his back, that if happiness be a good *per se* it is a good for oneself, and he insists that a due regard for one's own interests is morally justifiable.

Justice to oneself as a unit of collective humanity is an ethical duty only less noble than that of self-sacri-

vice for the good of the many. But such is the selfishness of our average humanity that for one who needs Professor Laird's sermon against kill-joy puritanism there are probably twenty who need no urging to seek their own happiness, and among them a number who in doing so can quite easily forget the interests of others.

But for the one in twenty, or perhaps in a much larger number, who do have a tendency to masochism or self-torture some of Professor Laird's arguments against "wickedly killing our own joys" are worth quoting. He brings out that in most other cases it is obvious that what ought to be promoted in the case of others ought to be promoted in one's own case.

Self-education and self-culture is a duty as well as the education or culture of others. There is a morality of self-respect as well as of respecting others, a duty to stand up for one's own rights, freedom, and independence as well as a duty to stand up for the rights and freedom and independence of others, a duty to keep oneself clean and fit and sober as well as a duty to scrub other people's children and rid them of lice and see to it that they have fresh air and milk and exercise....

Others, we say, should have leisure to enjoy as well as leisure to recuperate. Shouldn't we ourselves have the same as well as they?... Others, we say, should have time to play, not only if they are children. Should we not, on the same grounds, cherish a time for play for ourselves, whether we ourselves are children or no?... We drive ourselves harder than we would like to see any other man drive himself, and we have a moral duty not to make that particular mistake in our own case. What is the sense of saying that we should try to banish the gloom in a dismal company but, in solitude, have no similar duty to expel our own gloom if we can?

Europe at present, the Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru told the graduates of the Calcutta University on March 8th, "should be a warning to us rather than an example to follow." Not that there is nothing of value in Western civilization! There is much, though it will be well for the world if the balance of trade in intangibles continues in India's favour; for the sake of all concerned India should recognize that in cultural interchange especially it is a thousand times "more blessed to give than to receive."

But the West has made a considerable and to a certain extent a valuable contribution to the synthesis of Indian culture, upon which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru dwelt in his Convocation Address. Differences, he freely conceded, there had been, between communities, between religious ideals, between outlooks on life, but these very differences, he said, had "led to an ever-increasing unity in thought, in language, in art, in music, in æsthetics, in architecture, in painting and in poetry." In the fact that the resulting culture was neither wholly Hindu nor wholly Muslim nor wholly English, he read

the prophecy of a future in which, when the dust and din of the present-day controversies, which divide man from man and community from community, will have disappeared, each one of us will be able truthfully to say that India is neither my heritage nor yours; but a common heritage.

Was it vain to hope, Sir T. B. Sapru asked, that "out of the chaos of ideas and aspirations," the Universities might "evolve a cosmos of clear thinking and generous feeling?" It will be well for

our country if our Indian Universities become indeed, as he urged, "the seed-beds of a fertile unity." "From them we are entitled to expect light."

The Editor of *The Indian Social Reformer* in his issue of March 22nd puts his finger on the root cause of India's economic [and, he might have added, other] disabilities. He writes:—

Our own firm belief is that the economic poverty is itself the direct result of the spiritual starvation for the past one thousand years. The nation had lost faith in itself, lost confidence in the capacity of her own men and women to aim high and achieve greatly. Evidence of this is plentiful on all sides. The first thing to do is to raise the national morale.

It is a thousand pities that what he writes cannot be gainsaid. India, who at her perihelion reached a height of culture never since surpassed, has been going down for hundreds of years, as psychism has gradually overlaid spirituality and the physical practices of Hatha Yoga have superseded the mental discipline inculcated by the great teachers, until India today is more psychic than spiritual, is ritualistic rather than religious. How are the masses to be aroused from the demoralizing lethargy in which they are submerged and which has contributed to the national decline? How are they to be given the necessary impetus to work and to force the current of events instead of waiting for time?

The mists of superstition and of popular error which now cover the land as with a psychic fog have to be dispersed but iconoclasm is a negative activity and alone can never meet the

positive need of awakening the people's now largely dormant spiritual intuitions—theirs by right of inheritance from their own past. Education of the Western type has been iconoclastic and especially the effort of Christian missionaries to discredit the religions of India, not only their superstitions, but also all that they hold of good. The resulting materialism of so many educated Indians is but an additional stumbling-block in the way of national progress.

The solid foundations are there on which to build. There is no people on earth more open than ours to the reception of spiritual ideas. Even the common illiteracy offers no barrier to the quick and clear perception of the most abstruse metaphysical truths. The people must be taught to reverence their noble heritage; they must be imbued with a sense of responsibility as the custodians of the spiritual verities that they hold in trust for the world, and they must be encouraged to dwell upon and to exemplify the great truth that formed the ideological basis in the days of Aryan glory—the truth that every man in his real nature is part of the Divine and that each is in evolution to bring that latent godhood into patency.

"If America enters the war, what shall I do?" was the question answered by ten Christian leaders of the U. S. A. in a series of articles which appeared in *The Christian Century* (Chicago) between 4th December 1940 and 5th February 1941. The answers are about evenly divided and some of the argu-

ments, as almost inevitably on an issue so widely debated, are trite and there is a vast deal of circumlocution, to which the Rev. John Haynes Holmes's unequivocal answer stands in refreshing contrast :—

If America goes in will I support my country? No!..If and when my country enters the war, I will join neither hand nor heart to the hostilities of the hour, but toil still for brotherhood, in love of friends and enemies alike, and for that peace which can alone save mankind from death.

Two challenging statements are those of the Rev. Ernest Fremont Tittle and of the Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick. The latter in the last war "went all out for the backing of the fray."

I twisted and turned every which way to harmonize war and the Christian ethic, preaching against hate, praying for the Germans, and arguing beautifully about the way we could slaughter them in the spirit of love.

He recognizes now how difficult it is "to fit Christ into a military uniform." "The whole business of war," its causes, processes and moral consequences "are too obviously the denial of everything that Jesus taught."

Not Jesus only, but all the great Teachers! With all due allowance for the cloth, there is a little too much talk of Christian pacifism in these articles, even in that of the Reverend Mr. Tittle, who turns to South Africa and to India for evidence that non-violent resistance works! However, he honestly insists that pacifism as a national policy would require that the U. S. A. set its own house in order. This would involve, among other things, providing "equality of opportu-

nity for all Americans, including Negroes" and "would require the repeal of the Oriental Exclusion Act," a dark blot indeed upon present American policy!

A study of "Ibn Khaldūn: A North African Muslim Thinker of the Fourteenth Century" is contributed by Dr. Erwin I. J. Rosenthal to the October *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester. In it he brings out the effort of Ibn Khaldūn in his *Universal History* to develop his humanistic concept of culture and civilization in a new science of history. The mediæval Muslim thinker devoted himself to establishing the laws which govern human society organised into political units and which he claimed to be as unalterable as those of human nature itself. He viewed the State as a living organism, whose life proceeds in ever-recurring cycles of birth, growth, decline and death under the same law of cause and effect which governs the individual and which is unalterable.

Ibn Khaldūn recognized the possibility of permanent values which can survive dynastic and national-political boundaries but he believed that only the religious ideal was capable of inspiring man to create such values, and that a lasting political order could not be brought into being without the co-operation of the religious ideal and the corporate will of the group.

But if history conveys any lesson it is that no political order, as no form of any kind, can permanently endure. Organizations, like material objects, are in ceaseless flux.

There is the Unchanging Real, but it is at the very centre of the Wheel of Life. It can be reached, but only man by man.

The discovery of the principle of the wheel lies so far behind us that we can hardly realize the extent to which our civilization rests upon the wheel, or imagine life without the acceleration of tempo for which it is largely responsible. The wheel is the symbol of movement, of cycles, of progress. But, as Olive Schreiner wrote :—

Rapid movement is an advantage only when we move towards beauty and truth; all motion is not advance, all change is not development.

The wheel has tremendous potentialities for good but also for evil. A brake is imperatively necessary, however the spirit of radical change may chafe against the conservative spirit, the daring of youth against the hesitation of age. The need for a brake today, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar implied in an address at Madras which *The Hindu* for March 12th reports, is met in part by educational institutions of the type of the Mylapore Sanskrit College, at whose Founder's Day Celebration he was speaking. "We have need today," he declared, for a spirit of conservatism which will perform the very useful function of acting as a brake on the forces in operation which are making for great changes. I for one have sufficient faith that the outlook of the products of this institution has been one of a fairly balanced character, at any rate more balanced than the outlook of pupils of purely English Colleges and Universities.

In his Commemoration Address on the same occasion, Prof. D. S. Sarma

of the Pachaiyappa's College said that, while India wanted to assimilate the best in others,

the spell cast on her by the civilisation of the West had lost its potency. Today Indians were determined to lead their own life, develop their own natural endowments, and be true to the laws of their own being. . . . It was necessary to assimilate the spiritual and religious basis of our religion and society with the wide range of progress and scientific knowledge brought within our reach. And the spirit of our ancient civilisation could not be understood without a knowledge of Sanskrit literature, secular and religious.

Defining goodness as synonymous with comprehensiveness and stability, and morality as the fashioning of one's way of life conformably to a supreme purpose regardless of the nature of that purpose, Dr. Michael Kaye finds no difficulty in establishing that goodness and morality are not equivalent. He writes in his article on "Good and Evil Morality" in *Philosophy* for January 1941 :—

Except as he displays a morality of some kind, except as he is sufficiently courageous and temperate and zealous to follow his chosen path to the end, I do not dispute that a man will probably be unable himself to attain what is substantially good. . . because he will be unlikely to achieve much of anything. But precisely because his morality is of one kind rather than another, a man may head all the more swiftly and rigidly for evil. And it is thus that I would appreciate many gigantically strong men both of ancient and of nearer history. I would allow their morality. But I would dispute their goodness.

"There can be no goodness without resolution," but there can be resolution that is essentially evil. A man who does what seems to him right is a

“moral” man, but “in the name of morality men have distorted the truth and tortured the innocent.” Morality and disinterestedness can be thought of as inseparable, Dr. Kaye declares, only when a man’s supreme purpose is self-dedication to what is good. But “respect for good demands not merely good will, but courage, wisdom, and power.”

It is possible to have an immense will to good and still be quite unwise. Sentimental ethical acquirements without wisdom make the individual the more facile puppet of a subversive ideology. There are many more fools than knaves in the world, but if there were no fools the capacity of the knaves for harm would be slight. No blind followers, no Führer!

John Brophy, in *John o’ London’s Weekly* for December 27th, objects to the application of the term “genius” to all and sundry and to the “vague, random, enthusiastic and often invidious interpretations put upon it.” It seems to him, as it does to us, profanation to hail as a genius any man or woman who rises to eminence in any line of human activity.

A genius, by Mr. Brophy’s definition, “must not only do something superlatively well, he must create, and he must create something of lasting importance to the mind—the mind including imagination as well as intellect.” He disclaims any intention “to drive a transcendental coach and horses

through the problem by saying that genius is the result of inspiration, and those on whom it alights form a species apart from common humanity.” He does believe, however,

in something very like inspiration, in an intermittent power arriving in the mind apparently from somewhere beyond its normal scope of experience and perception and which to all intents may be said to dictate to the creative artist what and how he shall create.

We would limit the term genius even more strictly, convinced that it “puts out the most dazzling rays of human intellectuality, as the sun quenches the flame-light of a fire in an open field” and that the man through whom it operates is equally distinguished for moral and for intellectual grandeur.

But whence the genuine inspiration even of one whom Mr. Brophy would name a genius, a Shakespeare, a Beethoven or a Michelangelo? By what hand is the flame of genius lighted but by that of one’s own Spirit? The difference between the genius and the ordinary man lies in the quality of the vehicle through which the divine thought seeks expression, or the amenability of the personality to guidance from the higher nature of the individual, the exiled “god” who is in every man. That “god” is the performing artist, who, however great his skill, cannot produce a faultless harmony through a coarse or defective instrument.