

THE ARYAN PATH

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

—*The Voice of the Silence*

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WORLD OUTLOOKS

[In the first of the two articles which we bring together here, **Mr. R. L. Megroz** summarises the "Contemporary World Outlooks" lectures arranged by the British Institute of Philosophy; his reports of these appeared in *THE ARYAN PATH* for December 1946 and January 1947. His point of view is that of a high-minded and sincere seeker for a lead out of the labyrinth in which humanity is wandering. But he does not seem to be satisfied with the lecturers' cumulative offering on the altar of the New World Order. We are not greatly surprised at his finding. The philosophy which creates a correct world outlook needs to be consistent as well as comprehensive in its correctness. Schools of modern knowledge are far too specialised and their synthesis is not even seriously attempted.

We would draw our readers' attention to the article by **Dr. E. M. Hough, Ph.D.**, author of *The Co-operative Movement in India: Its Relation to a Sound National Economy*, which follows his. This epitomises the Theosophical world view and suggests its applications. Theosophy, restated by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, offers in its world view not an abstract theory but a workable formula of individual and social advance. Its mission was, in fact, defined as "the working out of clear unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men; and the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life, as shall offer a field where they may be applied with most equitableness." On every problem of the numerous departments of human life and endeavour, H. P. Blavatsky's teachings have something to offer. Some of her ideas are here presented but thoughtful readers are advised to go to the source—her books, which are (1) *Isis Unveiled*, (2) *The Secret Doctrine*, (3) *The Key to Theosophy*, (4) *The Voice of the Silence* and (5) *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*.—ED.]

I.—POSTSCRIPT TO THE PHILOSOPHERS

Mr. Hugh I'Anson Fausset says *and Seekers*, that their common theme is "that destruction of the

Negation and redemption of the 'Contraries' which I believe to be the task which humanity is called now, as never before, to undertake, if it is not to destroy itself."

This statement is usefully suggestive, and it seems to cast some retrospective light upon the series of lectures on "Contemporary World Outlooks" given last autumn in London for the British Institute of Philosophy. Readers who have seen my summaries in *THE ARYAN PATH* will perhaps agree that the lecturers were remarkable for their common attitude of earnest belief in a certain way of looking at the world. The earnestness was, as became philosophers, reflected most plainly in a critical acknowledgment of important ideas in other world-outlooks, or at least by a careful recognition of weaknesses at home. The series tended to prove that contemporary philosophy, even if muddled, represents strong beliefs.

But if the lecturers shared a certain earnestness of purpose that was but thinly disguised by their dialectical skill, the man-in-the-street or the layman, who does not live in the realms of philosophy, could not help being even more impressed by the complete want of any common scheme of thought or world-outlook. Even Miss Dorothy Emmet, in the concluding lecture on "The Choice of a World Outlook," while clearly outlining her own view, could not but acknowledge the diversity of philosophical attitudes and at best throw out some wise hints on how

they might find common ground. Otherwise it seemed that she simply lumped all the possible world outlooks into two groups, one of which represented her own point of view. The lumping together was achieved on similar lines to the more vaguely presented dichotomy of Theists and non-Theists by Professor MacKinnon. On one side of the fence were all those who wanted scientific evidence for their conclusions; on the other side were those who thought that a regard for truth, indeed the highest regard for truth, fully justified on occasion the holding of a belief that could not be proved true. Mr. MacKinnon, in his uncomfortable philosophical defence of Theism, came very near to confessing that this was the only possible excuse for Theism, *i.e.*, as a poetic myth is excused for its own sake. The rest was a matter of how belief could affect your way of life. As the series was supposed to be philosophy and not religion, the layman hearing all five speakers had the feeling that, to counterbalance the total quantity of special pleading for unscientific convictions in spite of awkward evidence, there ought to have been a more sympathetic and convinced exposition of the Scientific World Outlook, which was dealt with by Dr. F. Sherwood Taylor in one of the most thought-provoking of the lectures. For Dr. Taylor was concerned not at all with a scientific world outlook but with finding something to take its place, and his account of the limitations of

the scientific mind when considering human conduct was, I should say, a gross libel on some of the most brilliant minds of the modern world. Could it be symptomatic, that both Dr. Taylor and Mr. MacKinnon work at Oxford?

Now a complaint that some speakers did not seem to be speaking up adequately for their own subject but seemed to be grinding another axe does not necessarily mean that one disagreed with their particular attitude. Indeed I found myself very much in sympathy with Dr. Sherwood Taylor, who wanted to see religious, philosophical and scientific outlooks combined in a single comprehensive view. But looking back over the five lectures I am wondering if in my ignorance and innocence I have not all the time come much closer to that broadly based view that the protagonists of various philosophies assumed as existing.

With the exception of Mr. Sydney Hooper, who had the advantage of expounding fundamental ideas in the coherent philosophy of A. N. Whitehead, and therefore gave us the most satisfying philosophical talk, the speakers all made us painfully aware of the want of unifying principles in modern Western thought. The only one who impressed us with the confident self-consistency of the outlook expounded was Prof. H. B. Acton, of the University of London, who crowded the maximum amount of argument into a well-balanced exposition of Marxism, enabling us to realise the dynamic

and constructive possibilities of an essentially materialistic philosophy for making practical changes in society.

I believe intelligent people everywhere today have grasped the importance of change in human affairs, and very largely in the direction aimed at by Marxists, as a necessary accompaniment if not preparation for the higher moral and spiritual level of individuals. Apologists for religious outlooks are often heard asserting, with what seems an undertone of defeatism, that no external changes matter before we all experience a change of heart. They have been saying that for 2,000 years, and more. There is of course the tendentious propaganda of certain power groups exploiting religious sentiment, such as the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, which has supported and preached this attitude whenever it could have a political effect in repressing the forces of social progress. This essentially political propaganda is not the same as the defeatism of those who are genuinely alarmed at the largely imaginary evils of applying scientific knowledge to social organisation and the production of wealth.

The strength of the movement of which Marxism is merely the most definite and dogmatic form, comes from its political and scientific background. Politically, it has behind it a good deal more than the economic socialism which had been expounded by several English and French writers before Marx built up his

critical system. It had also the old Radical ideas of political justice. The failure of the great Western pluto-democracies has been due not to any essential weakness in the principles of political democracy but to their slowness to combine with these the principles of economic justice. As a result, the wealthiest nations of all time have during the past century suffered from the poverty of the majority of their people and the crudest social inequalities.

The movement to control the antisocial tendencies of capitalism retained the political theories of democracy which can be summed up in the famous phrase: "Government of the people, by the people, for the people," except in the tension of violent revolution. Today anybody who wishes to contrast the broader and older socialist-communist philosophy with its politically more repressive forms that arose from the necessities of the Russian Revolution should turn back to English writers like William Morris. They will realise that there is also an idealistic or religious (but non-ecclesiastical) motive making the movement for social change dynamic, as well as the impartial authority of the scientific philosophy which sustains much of the outlook of Marxism. This Utopian strain is unduly neglected today, but it can make up for the Marxist's want of sufficient attention to moral and spiritual problems, to which Professor Acton referred. Not only in the West, but in the Orient too, the finer human civilisation

which half unconsciously the world is groping for must depend upon a courageous philosophy of social change which will engage Man's moral convictions, scientific knowledge, reverence for the individual soul, and feeling for beauty.

The range of human knowledge or experience and the unquenchable aspiration of the individual for apparently opposed things like freedom and harmonious order, faith in some transcendent values without abandoning intellectual integrity—these are not comprehended in a scientific outlook, if indeed a scientific outlook can be no more than the outlook of a physicist or a biochemist. But in fact we usually find that the best scientists are a model of open-mindedness in recognising the fields of study which strictly scientific research has not and at the present stage of intellect perhaps cannot till. The opposition to the scientific approach is largely irrational and based mainly on dislike of determinism. The difficulty of the anti-materialistic philosopher is that he does not wish to appear as the champion of merely irrational conclusions, although indeed that is what in effect he often is. The belief in free-will, for instance, like the belief in "God," is at a loss for evidence when opposed by the complex of historical, social, psychological and physiological arguments for determinism. Yet besides the claim that some beliefs may be justified without scientific evidence, there is another way of reconciling the con-

clusions of materialistic philosophies with our conception of reality. A recognition of the influences which determine our very ideas and attitudes is quite consistent with a belief that there is a creative, co-operative and transcendently ethical inclination in mankind towards a richer complexity and potentiality of life. I do not believe that it is only a superficial view which makes one call History as a witness here, and that record of the important external events in the story of civilisation is amplified by the insight of its geniuses.

Now philosophical or theological assertions of the individual's freedom of choice have an echo in the political field. Words like "totalitarianism" are carelessly flung about today by "democratic" critics of the Marxist State. The rational element in the prejudiced attitude towards the faulty but greatly constructive

experiment of the Soviet system of government is the condemnation of the repression of free speech and free thinking. Such repression has dogged all European history and the Western nations have had and still have their martyred champions of the individual, no less than the Soviet Union has had and still has its. But in the West they have been martyred in the interests of a long-established social and economic order, whereas repression of individual freedom in the revolutionary Marxist State has been due to fear of the counter-revolution and the sabotage of what has been achieved for the good of the majority. There is today more individual freedom in certain political respects in the West than there is likely to be in the Soviet Union until it has sufficiently recovered from the second world war in our time.

R. L. MEGROZ

II.—THE THEOSOPHICAL WORLD OUTLOOK

Mr. Mégroz notes in his summary article the lack of unifying principles in Western thought, as brought out in the lectures which he reported for *THE ARYAN PATH*. Dr. F. Sherwood Taylor, who presented "The Scientific World Outlook," went so far as to see the only hope for the world in the incorporation of religious, philosophical and scientific outlooks in a single comprehensive view.

That view Theosophy offers in its universal philosophy which is sci-

entific religion and religious science, a complete and consistent system of thought, with none of the gaps found in modern knowledge. Based on the unity of life and the ubiquity of law, it teaches the relations of man physical to man psychical, and of the two to all that is above and below them. The truths common to all the great religions derive from ancient Theosophy; the intuitive testimony of poets, seers and men of genius, to which Mr. Mégroz ap-

peals, confirms it ; but its teachings do not depend upon their evidence. Like the more limited range of scientific observations, all its facts also have been tested and we are assured by those who vouch for them that they can be reverified by any who acquire the requisite qualifications—not only physical and mental but also moral and spiritual ones.

Mr. Mégroz does well to deplore the harping of religionists for 2,000 years upon the need for a change of heart, before the bringing about of which, external changes do not matter. That is a counsel of despair for society, however high rare individuals have proved that they could rise in spite of circumstances. Theosophy insists that environment does matter greatly. The inner is important, but so is the outer. A bird cannot rise on one wing. Just as good food and healthful living conditions promote physical health and well-being, and bad food and unhealthy surroundings have the opposite effect, so social and economic conditions either put a premium on selfishness and greed or reduce the causes which tend to foster them.

Madame Blavatsky wrote in her *Key to Theosophy* :—

Contrast the lives not only of the masses of the people, but of many of those who are called the middle and upper classes, with what they might be under healthier and nobler conditions, where justice, kindness, and love were paramount, instead of the selfishness,

indifference, and brutality which now too often seem to reign supreme.... Progress can be attained, and only attained, by the development of the nobler qualities. Now, true evolution teaches us that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism ; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man.

But the first question in relation to environment is, what it is for which improvement of environment is to be sought. For the body? Healthful surroundings are important but the rankest materialist will hardly claim that they are all that man needs for his happiness. Add beauty to healthfulness of surroundings and you give sustenance to senses and emotions, but misery is known to be no stranger to palaces and pleasure grounds. Add full instruction in the facts of science and without corresponding moral or spiritual advance you will still have powers prostituted to destructive ends.

It is a fundamental of the Theosophical world view that that which is envired is the reincarnating soul, for the development of which the universe exists. The Theosophical world view sees in the disasters which have overcome the modern world the result of the ignoring in practice of this vital fact. The laws of the body have been followed, albeit in an unenlightened way, with dire results. The dream of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, has failed primarily because a materialistic basis

was assumed for man, society and State.

Professor Acton, lecturing on "The Marxist World Outlook," made the spiral progress, which history confirms, dependent largely on material change. The economic set-up does play its part indeed, but what Mr. Mégroz calls "the dynamic and constructive possibilities of an essentially materialistic philosophy for making practical changes in society" have very definite limitations for bringing in the reign of universal harmony. To expect an unenlightened proletariat to combine perfect economic justice with full political democracy and both with human happiness is as fatuous as to claim that a man can lift himself by his own boot laces. Theosophy recognises the inequities in the existing order but points to a way of overcoming them for permanency.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when a death struggle was in progress between soul-destroying materialism and intellect-drugging sacerdotalism, Theosophy was restated to awaken and to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. The new thought currents that it set in motion were assisted by the revolutionary scientific discoveries of the late 'nineties, predicted by Madame Blavatsky in 1888 (*The Secret Doctrine* I. 612). The trend of philosophical and scientific if not of political thinking is higher today, but a time-lag is apparent on the plane of action. There have been great conquests over nature and great

advances in the mechanical arts, but brute force is still the court of last appeal. The luxury and comfort of the few were never greater, but side by side with them exist great poverty and want, the neglect of social duty on the one side being connected closely with the stunted and arrested development on the other. Vice and corruption are rampant and condoned; followers of different creeds look on each other as enemies; a war between the white and coloured races threatens.

Selfishness and competition are the key-notes in this age of "progress," for nations as for individuals. The "struggle for life"—the prolific parent of most human woes and crimes—is rooted in ignorance of man's nature and of his relation to the universe.

Intolerance is pre-eminently the fruit of ignorance and jealousy. It and the world's other moral ills require for their cure a sound philosophy on which right action can be based. Theosophy offers as the basis for such a philosophy: Universal Unity and Causation; Human Solidarity; the Law of Karma; and Reincarnation. How do these offer the key to a just and happy world?

Universal Unity and Causation point to the One All, the universal ceaseless Motion in which Whitehead also sees the basis of all things, as Mr. Hooper brought out in his lecture on "The World as 'Process.'" A stream can rise no higher than its source and in presenting this infinite Divine Presence as the Root

of all, Theosophy affords infinity of [opportunity for growth. Witness the heights achieved by Krishna, Buddha, Christ.

The solidarity of mankind rests upon that universal unity in essence (the consciousness or spirit aspect) and in substance (the material basis), which Mr. Sydney Hooper quoted Whitehead as calling a "mental" and a "physical" pole. Universal Causation means, among other things, that none can sin or suffer the effects of sin, alone. The action, good or bad, of one reacts upon all. But, as Madame Blavatsky wrote, though "Humanity is a great Brotherhood by virtue of the sameness of the material from which it is formed physically and morally, unless...it becomes a Brotherhood also intellectually, it is no better than a superior genus of animals." That intellectual realisation of human brotherhood, like the provision of the right environment for men as souls, depends upon the understanding of Karma and Reincarnation, not as they are misunderstood in the modern East but in their broader sweep and explanation as given in ancient wisdom, restated as Theosophy.

Karma is not fatalism, but, like its corollary, Reincarnation, is a teaching full of hope. For, if the present is the outcome of the past, it is yet in the power of mankind to counteract old evil causes by right present acts. The future will then be the combined product of the present and the past. Science has

rendered a great service in establishing the reign of law in the material world. Theosophy proclaims its rule also in the moral sphere, thus furnishing the self-compelling basis for right ethics. Karma is the law of action and reaction, just and unerring; affecting nations as it does individuals.

Karma is an undeviating and unerring tendency in the Universe to restore equilibrium, and it operates incessantly.

Equilibrium or harmony in the material world is justice in the moral one. Lincoln enunciated a Theosophical truth when he declared, "Nothing is ever settled that is not settled right." Bad means will ever in their measure taint and vitiate good ends. Or, as we find it stated in the ancient Indian Code, the *Manava Dharma Shastra*,

Justice, being preserved, will preserve; being destroyed, will destroy. Take heed lest justice, being overthrown, overthrow thee and us all.

Can any fail to see a connection between Spain's barbarous colonial practices and the loss of her empire as well as of the present oppression of her people? Between the years of international competition, prejudice and hatred and the recent holocaust? Between the creation of a class of untouchables in ancient India and modern India's having fallen under foreign domination? Will the lesson be learned or will the unwanted refugees in their millions be the unconscious invocers of a new Nemesis?

The demand for justice is innate in man. The spirit of rebellion and of protest often springs from the sense of justice outraged by inequities—social, economic or political. It takes sometimes unlovely forms but at its heart there burns the redeeming spark of love for suffering mankind, the yearning for the universal reign of justice and of peace, as Victor Hugo brought out in his grandiose figure of Satan. There must be patience, therefore, with the social rebels' stumbling progress towards their yet dimly formulated goal.

Upon the weakening of the sense of separateness, national and individual, in which is rooted the ferocious selfishness of the day, depends escape from the social hurricane that threatens on a world-wide scale. That escape can be hastened by the infusion into the minds of the masses of new and ennobling concepts. Madame Blavatsky wrote:—

The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery.

These basic teachings of Theosophy offer a worthy purpose for life, in place of the present widespread frustration. They give the masses what they need, to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with their Inner God, the Ray of the Immortal Presence whose voice speaks in their intuition and in their conscience, the centrality of,

which phenomenon Miss Emmet saw as common to world outlooks generally. The leaders of the people will need more, and in the science and the metaphysics of *The Secret Doctrine* the greatest minds can find their fullest scope.

Theosophy puts forward the true socialism, which does not seek the welfare of a group, not even of the largest, but, recognising the true fraternity of all—older brothers and younger—seeks to promote the commonweal. This will not be served by a swing from capitalist tyranny to working-class despotism, but by the recognition of common interests and of what may be called the spiritual basis of democratic industrialism, which Ruskin and Morris glimpsed and which the functional organisation of the Indian village expresses in some measure. Large-scale production need not lose its soul if the idea is held of the organic relation of the unit of production to society.

The higher socialism involves not a pulling down to a common level, as in Communism, which rested originally on an idealistic basis but is reverting to type because of losing sight of the ideals which inspired the Russian Revolution. The higher socialism means a levelling up, the effort being at the raising of all to the level—mental, moral and socio-economic—attained so far but by the few. All cannot be made equal, physically, mentally or morally. The inequalities result from the long Karma of the individuals themselves

and must be recognised. But equal opportunities can and should be afforded for each to take the next step in advance for him. This requires a far-reaching transformation in political and social as well as in economic conditions, a transformation which the application of these principles involves.

An International State is their natural fruition. The least to be expected from its working is that arbitration will be the rule in international disputes and war be relegated to the jungle whence it sprang. But even this will not be possible so long as the UNO is a partial brotherhood with a pariah group beyond the pale. There are many partial brotherhoods, religious, occupational, political and social, but these too often promote brotherhood among the few at the expense of strengthening animosity or indifference towards the rest.

Theosophy has more to say of duties than of rights, but it demands "full recognition of equal rights and privileges for all," nations or individuals, and sees that due not given whenever there is the slightest invasion of another's right or any failure to show him the same justice and consideration that we desire for ourselves. The Theosophical idea of duty is "that which is *due* to Humanity, to our fellow-men, neighbours, family, and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless than we are ourselves."

There are countless philanthropic

trusts for special groups; how few are strictly universal in their ministrations! In our world planning the spirit of the edict of the ancient Buddhist Emperor Asoka has to be given practical effect:—

When thou plantest trees along the roads, allow their shade to protect the wicked as the good. When thou buildest a Rest-House, let its doors be thrown open to men of all religions, to the opponents of thine own creed, and to thy personal enemies as well as to thy friends.

We have had enough now of recriminations and apportionment of blame, from which no nation can claim full exemption. Let us rather recognise the beneficent aspect of Karma in the fact that destruction has its regenerative aspect. Irreparable losses have been sustained by enemy action, but at least the cruel and wanton razing of old slums has made it possible to erect structures fitter for human habitation. So the passing of old institutions as the aftermath of war offers the opportunity to build better ways of life.

It is most important to assume responsibility for future progress and to assure that the deformed and inadequate social and economic structure of the past shall not be carried over into the International State for lack of understanding of the principles of human advance. Co-operation is their key-note—in the home, in the school, in industry, in the social and economic pattern and in the State. The International

Labour Organisation, UNESCO and the International P. E. N. Club are all steps on the long road to world collaboration, understanding, sympathy.

The recognition of the dignity of every type of honest labour well performed will lead to specialisation, national and individual, in terms of natural aptitudes, and interdependence take its place as the recognised complement of self-dependence. Employment will be made available to all, a competence assured to all, but each will be required to make his contribution to the common good. The organisation of society which Edward Bellamy depicted in his *Looking Backward* gives an idea of the first steps towards the full realisation of universal brotherhood on the material level. That work deserves more careful study and wider influence than it has had.

If Theosophical principles are accepted, men and women, white and black, bad or good, will all be recognised as Souls gaining experience in bodies of one or another hue or pattern. In penology, therefore, restraint, reform and rehabilitation of the criminal will be the aim, displacing the eye-for-an-eye code now discredited but still functioning, with its barbarous culmination in the death penalty. The reverence for life which naturally springs from recognition of the Universal Unity will, incidentally, rule out also the iniquities of vivisection and thereby make innocuous the current medical superstition of immunology.

The family will be an equal partnership of man and woman in a co-operative effort to build a home in which the old souls who come into the new bodies they provide shall find an environment in which the good qualities which they bring with them may flower and the bad ones die of inanition. There are psychological counterparts of the physical forces of magnetism, gravity, etc. State and society attract such souls as are suited to them. Constructive policies may bring about conditions which will draw into incarnation in our midst souls better fitted to bring those policies to full fruition. These principles once accepted for the family, sense indulgence for its own sake will naturally be recognised as a side issue, when not unworthy of the immortal Man. The over-population problem will be met by self-control and life energy conserved for higher uses.

A Religion of Life is needed in the place of creeds. The dogma of a God apart from man directly encourages the false sense of separateness and leads to efforts to gain individual salvation, letting the world get on as it best can—as foolish as for a twig to fancy it can prosper while dry-rot eats away its branch! Creedal intolerance and bigotry will go when all religions are recognised as containing both the truth they share with others and the superstitions, rites and exclusive claims with which that truth has been so largely overlaid. Tolerance must result

from even a glimpse of the infinity of the eternal Truth. This process will be helped on by the spread of non-sectarian education, coupled with such religious and moral instruction as shall bring out the fundamental unity of all religions and their ethics.

Educational reform in the light of these principles, in fact, offers the greatest hope for the regeneration of society. "The children are our salvation." School training is of the very greatest importance in forming character but today the emotions are generally left to take care of themselves while pedagogical effort is directed to memory training and to fitting the mind to the Procrustean bed of intellectual conformity. The schools in general, with their examinations and their competition for scholarships and prizes, are hotbeds of selfishness. Provide the right environment in the schools, keep before the children's minds examples

of moral greatness, and self-reliance, tolerance and altruism will come as naturally to them as envy, jealousy and pride do under the present system. The harmonious and equal unfoldment of all the powers and special aptitudes of each child will be the aim—and the creation of "*free men and women, free intellectually, free morally, unprejudiced in all respects, and above all things, unselfish.*"

These are a few of the practical benefits implicit in the Theosophical world view. The Theosophical ideas are slowly permeating the race mind, to its great benefit. The latest re-statement of ancient Theosophy is at once a response to and the most hopeful modern expression of what Mr. Mégroz well calls "a creative, co-operative and transcendently ethical inclination in mankind towards a richer complexity and potency of life."

E. M. HOUGH

CHILDREN'S CHARTER

In unanimously adopting a Children's Charter, the Child Welfare Conference held at Bombay December 30th, under the auspices of the Balkan-Ji-Bari, and under the presidency of the Hon. Mr. Morarji Desai, made social history. The Charter included such fundamental rights as opportunity for all-round development unhampered by limitations of caste or creed, provision for a happy home environment, adequate food and clothing, freedom from fear and chastisements, ante-natal and post-natal care, good education, protection from exploitation for the benefit

of parents or guardians, and facilities for play. A resolution passed regarding the relation between congested conditions in the cities and child health called on the country's Municipal and Government authorities to provide adequate spaces and playgrounds within reasonable distances of all residential areas, and especially of slums. To recognise how great the distance is between present conditions and these goals is not to discredit the goals as utopian but to admit the grave defects of our social and economic structure.

I MEET GABRIELE MISTRAL

[**Shri S. Chandrasekhar** had previously interviewed for our pages Miss Pearl Buck and Dr. Lin Yutang. (See **THE ARYAN PATH** for January and October 1946.) He reports here an interview with Chile's Nobel Laureate, Miss Gabriele Mistral, who freely owns that her debt to India is very great.—ED.]

A single book has sometimes led an author to fame and fortune. There is something fascinating to the onlooker and perhaps disappointing to the creative artist concerned that a book alone comes to represent the life of an author and gradually the life of a generation, even perhaps of an epoch, till it finally takes a firm place among the intellectual treasures of mankind. If it was *Gitanjali* with Tagore, *Of Human Bondage* with Somerset Maugham, *The Good Earth* with Pearl Buck, and *Babbitt* with Sinclair Lewis, it is *Desolacion* (Desolation) with Gabriele Mistral. It was in this book that Gabriele Mistral unburdened her heart of her tragic love affair—that all-consuming first love that can never be shared by any outsider, nor experienced again later in life—the book that set her on the path to international fame.

In *Desolacion*, Gabriele Mistral sings of her desolation which she conquered by being merciful, meditative and mystic in the midst of desperation, nay damnation, for there is nothing as tragic as disappointment in first love. The young man committed suicide. She followed him—rather, the beloved shade—in tears and turmoil. And

she sang, “ . . .to see him then, no matter where, in heavenly glades or in a vortex of fire, under a placid moon or in a flaming dread. . . . ” She refused to be parted from him, but it is said that it was her disconsolate frustration that led her to sublimity and found an escape in poetry and in the love of children—children that she so much wanted but could not have. Both these loves have endured and they are no longer *Desolacion*.

I met Miss Mistral in New York some time ago where she stopped on her return flight from Stockholm to Santiago, after receiving the Nobel Prize. I said that we in India knew little about Latin America because of the distance and the linguistic barrier. In India, as in many other parts of the world, America meant only the United States. I asked what she thought should be done to draw India and Latin America closer together, for there was much in common between the two subcontinents.

“ The freedom movement of Gandhi is of course known all over South America, but in a confused and vague manner. Any personal knowledge which I possess about Gandhi and India has been obtained from Doña Victoria Ocampo, the

editor and publisher of the well-known review *Sur*. She is a great woman and an important writer," she added for my benefit, for few Indians are familiar with Latin American publications and literary personalities. "She expresses feelings of profound veneration for Gandhi, which I completely share."

"It is necessary," she went on, "that correct information concerning India be disseminated among our twenty-one republics of the Americas. Only then would we know India's economic and social problems in the correct perspective. I am already acquainted with the religious conflicts, but even these must be explained by Indian facts and not by information supplied by the British. The sympathy of South America for India's fight for freedom is profound, although it may entail a great deal of ignorance. However, this sympathy will remain null and void as long as precise information is not acquired by the people of South America. You see, we don't even have formal diplomatic relations." (India, however, has quasi-diplomatic relations with Argentina, as we maintain an Indian Government Trade Commissioner's Office there.)

"Early in life I was drawn towards Buddhism," she continued, "and that was my first introduction to India. I was for many years a Buddhist, even worshipping in an Oriental way. Though I am now a Catholic, in the broadest sense of the term, I still feel close to the Buddhist way of life."

"Are you a Hindu or a Buddhist?" she wanted to know. I said I was a Hindu but I pointed out that the difference between the Hindu and Buddhist ways of life was not very great, if we accepted the view that Buddha was a great Protestant Hindu, for in a sense Buddha was to Hinduism what Luther was to medieval Christianity. After asking me whether all modern-educated Hindus felt that way about Buddha, she explained the formative influences in her life. "My personal religious life has been largely influenced by the teachings of Buddha, Christ, St. Francis of Assisi, and Aurobindo. While Tagore's poetry awakened the latent muse in me in the midst of great personal sorrow, another Indian—Aurobindo—brought me to religion. It may sound quaint that a non-Christian Indian should have opened the way to my religious consecration, but Aurobindo did. It is a pity that we in Latin America and the West in general know so little about him."

"Have you met Aurobindo?" she asked. I replied that I had not had the opportunity. "Every people must have an Aurobindo, a man far above the people and yet identified with the aspirations of the people."

"When I was a girl I devoured all of Tagore's writings. I have openly acknowledged in my works the great debt I owe to Tagore and the immense influence his writings had on me. When I met Tagore in the United States I felt I was before

one of the most extraordinary beings of an epoch, and one of the great spiritual leaders of the world. My own poetry has been considerably influenced by Tagore. In fact, I am often referred to in my country as the Hispanic Tagore."

She asked me about what she called the religious problem in India and the question of Indian conversion to Christianity. I explained to her India's communal problem and the work of the foreign missionaries.

"I am against conversion to Christianity, or for that matter, to any other religion; I mean formal conversion. In the sense of formal and external conversion I am against the Western missionaries' work in India and Asia. People who have to embrace another faith formally will be false to real conversion from within. And real conversion of the heart does not need a formal label. Inward spirituality should defy the label of religious affiliations. Of course, I am a Catholic, and when I say this I mean only in the spiritual sense. As you know, there are different kinds of Catholics all over the world. Even Franco is a Catholic, but my Catholicism does not permit me to endorse him or his government. I have visited Spain several times, but I am against Franco."

"Are you in favour of birth-control if you are not just a conventional Catholic?" I asked.

"That is difficult to say." She pondered for a while. "I am easily misunderstood on this question. I love children and, contrary to popu-

lar impression, it is not the mother that protects the child, but it is the child who protects the mother. I am, of course, against diseased and insane parents having children. But I am against birth-control in the modern sense of the term."

"You mean contraceptives?"

"Yes," she said. "Birth-control is no answer to poverty. Fewer children do not mean less poverty. I have seen poverty in Chile, all over Latin America, in Spain and Europe, but somehow I don't feel that birth-control is the answer to this human misery. Here I am in agreement with Mr. Gandhi, if I understand his position correctly."

* * *

Who is Gabriele Mistral? the Indian reader might ask. She told me she was born Lucila Godoy Alcayaga, on 7th April, 1889, in Vacuna, a small town in northern Chile. She is of Spanish and Basque blood, with more than a touch of South American Indian. Her father was a village school-teacher. He was a poet in his own way, and wrote songs to celebrate local and national festivals and *fiestas*. Gabriele attended the local high school. As a little girl and even before graduation she chose the career of a teacher and struggled to train herself in a none-too-well-equipped training-school of the country. Though later she attended the Teachers' College at Santiago, Chile's capital, she did not have a regular university training.

At the age of fifteen she became a primary-school teacher and for sev-

eral years she laboured among the poorest of the poor of Chile's rural areas. During this period she wrote a great number of poems made poignant by her own experience and suffering. They appeared in the village newspaper and they struck deep into the hearts of the villagers, for it was their struggles and frustration she was singing about. Her mastery of her native Spanish and her abilities at exposition were so remarkable that in 1912 she was appointed Professor of Castilian in Licco de los Andes, a post she held for the next six years. During this period, that is, before 1920, the young teacher gained recognition as a poet when she won a poetry contest. The prize-winning sonnets, *Sonetos de la Muerte* (Sonnets on Death) set her on the Chilean road to fame and after that her poems began to appear in many a Latin-American magazine and newspaper, and she came to be known as a promising young poet, the author of melancholy, moving and mystic poems. In fact, her sorrowful lyrics had their origin much earlier, in 1907, when she was in her teens, stirred by a tragic love affair. Ever since that personal tragedy, as mentioned earlier, she has remained single and has taken to children—the world's children, she said—and has been singing their songs. A year later she utilized the material of her own unhappy experiences in the composition *La Vos de Elqui* (The Voice of Elqui). She has also dealt politically with themes concerning children, who have become

her major interest in life. Her collection of poems for and about children, *Canciones de Cuna* (Lullabies) and *Rondas de Niños* (Children's Songs) possess rare lyrical beauty even in translation. In 1918 she won the Latin American Poetry Award and her place in Hispanic letters was assured.

From 1918 she has held a series of important and responsible positions, not only in the service of her native Chile, but abroad as well. In 1922, at the invitation of the Mexican Government, she spent two years in Mexico and helped reform its rural educational system. During that year the Spanish Institute of Columbia University in New York brought out a volume of her latest poems under the title *Desolacion* (Desolation). This was her introduction to the English-speaking North American continent. Since then she has represented her country at the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations and in connection with a score of international conferences and organizations. In 1931 she was Visiting Professor of Spanish History and Civilization at Barnard College (for women) of Columbia University. It being the Latin American custom to appoint distinguished intellectuals to consular and diplomatic posts, she has been Chile's Consul and diplomatic representative at various European capitals. Despite her consular work she has continued to write. Her two latest works are *Ternura* (Tenderness), published in

Madrid, and *Tala*, published in Buenos Aires before the war. When she donated the proceeds of her *Tala* to the Basque orphans of the Spanish civil war a storm of protest rose from Franco's Catholic supporters and in unpredictable Latin America.

Last year came the crowning success, the award of the 1945 Nobel Prize for Literature. When she received the news of the Award from Stockholm she said, "It is the New World that has been honoured through me. . . . It is not my victory but America's."

She was named this year to the Committee on Women's Rights of the United Nations Organization, but resigned after a few weeks for personal reasons. She is now the Consular Representative of Chile in

Los Angeles.

Our conversation turned to Indian politics and after a discussion of Indian parties and personalities she observed, "An up-to-date biography of Gandhi and an exposition of Gandhism is needed in South America and I would like very much to write it. I think he is one of the few great "Universalists"; he has reconciled his religion with his scientific culture. She asked me to prepare a bibliography of writings by and about Gandhi in the English, French and German languages for her guidance, which I promised to do. As I bade her farewell, she remarked, "I would like your people to know that my debt to India is very great and is due in part to Tagore and in part to Aurobindo."

S. CHANDRASEKHAR

LISTENING TO MUSIC

Listening to music by the great masters,
 Dauntless explorers of the labyrinths
 Of scale and tone, of fugue and counterpoint,
 At times the sounds unaccountably fade and dwindle,
 Become attenuated, and I remember
 Other music known in other worlds:
 Flutes of the seraphim,
 And Gabriel's silver horn,
 Ringing harp-strings from Eden's garden,
 Bell-notes from Paradise, orchestral harmonies
 Winging the topmost arch of the rainbow,
 Voices of purity untainted,
 And trumpet-peals vast and triumphant
 Blown by the Guardians of the Heavenly Gates.

Hearing Earth's music,
 Passionate, complex, tuneful and well-contrived,
 At times the sounds fade and grow thin
 And I remember.

EVA MARTIN

BEWARE OF FALSE UTOPIAS !

[**Ernest John Harrison**, author of *Lithuania, Past and Present*, has contributed to our pages more than one article on that interesting little country. The strong feeling which he expresses in this article against those whom he considers to have wronged grievously the Baltic States is understandable in the light of his information, however little hope we place in hostile attitudes as correctives or in a bias as a guide to truth. **THE ARYAN PATH** is not a political journal and it holds no brief for imperialism or exploitation by whomsoever practised. If Mr. Harrison's information is correct, the methods he describes unquestionably merit the severest condemnation. But the Soviet experiment in applied democracy, however short it may have fallen of its original ideals, held possibilities for good. Its taking permanently the way of the imperialist powers would be a major set-back on the path of human progress and the betrayal of the people's hopes. In India there is a tendency on the part of a large number of youths to follow the Red Flag without study, research and understanding. For such blind enthusiasts this article will prove a help and a corrective.—ED.]

I feel sure that the vast majority of Englishmen welcome the prospect of a free and independent India with whose government and people their own government and fellow-citizens can hereafter establish mutually advantageous economic, cultural and political relations. Personally, while whole-heartedly associating myself with these sentiments, I should like to feel equally sure that the future moulders of India's destiny will not, in the first flush of newly-won national sovereignty and perhaps of a not unnatural reaction against certain political, social and ethical standards identified with the superseded British Raj, succumb to the blandishments of an alien ideology whose favourite *Leitmotif* everywhere and always seems to be, "Codlin's the friend, not Short."

I need hardly tell readers of **THE ARYAN PATH** that the alien ideology I have in mind is Russian Communism which, I have reason to believe, has already made a good many converts among Indian youths who are doubtless sincerely convinced that Soviet Russia is a more truly democratic country than either England or the United States; that she is a sort of earthly paradise, and that the Soviet system ought therefore to be copied or emulated by a free India.

I cannot, of course, claim to know how far this dangerous delusion has spread among the more mentally receptive section of the Indian community. Whatever its ramifications, I would warn all who do me the honour of reading these words, to pause before it is too late and to resist by all available means the

insidious infiltration and implementation in India of a doctrine which, judged by its fruits to date, has already wrought incalculable injury to the cause of human freedom, international peace and reconstruction in post-war Europe; and which, should its fanatical protagonists succeed in achieving their grandiose purpose of "Sovietizing" both East and West, would inevitably reduce the proletarian masses everywhere to the status of virtual Robots subject to the tyrannical sway of an oligarchy of "people's (*sic*) commissars."

Let me say frankly that this is no time for mincing words or for strict adherence to the canons of polite parliamentary debate. I write of what I *know* from absolutely reliable first-hand sources to which I have access, and no language could be strong enough to describe the actual conditions today in, for example, the former Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and in Poland, the three first-named of which are openly styled "Soviet Republics" and the last-named of which, under a marionette régime euphemistically called a "provisional Government" in Warsaw, obediently dances to the tune played by Moscow. And the appalling fate that has overtaken the three Baltic countries, more especially, is to a greater or lesser degree shared by the other lands occupied by the Soviet power behind the "iron curtain."

But, confining myself to comment on what is happening in Estonia,

Latvia and Lithuania, about which I am best informed, I can solemnly assure my readers that as between the horrors and atrocities known to have been perpetrated by the Nazi occupants from June 1941 until the end of June 1944 and by the Bolshevik occupants during their first occupation from June 1940 until June 1941, when Germany attacked Russia and expelled her from the Baltic region, and now again since the Bolsheviks reoccupied that area in August 1944, there is very little to choose, and what little there may be is assuredly not in favour of the "Red" ideologues, their distinctive methods of "liberation," and the establishment of a "democratic" and "anti-Fascist" order. Indeed, it is no exaggeration that in mastery of the technique of human enslavement upon a wholesale scale the Nazis were bungling novices compared with the Bolsheviks. Both the Kremlin spokesmen and their obsequious henchmen, to be found even among British M. P.'s, are often eloquent on the old Tsarist tyranny, but the worst indignities to which Lithuanians were subjected by Russian gendarmes between 1864 and 1904 pale in comparison with the unbridled fury which the Lithuanian people withstood during the first Soviet occupation (1940-41) and are now again enduring under the present Soviet occupation of their unhappy country.

Indian democratic leaders may have good reason to complain about arbitrary police methods sponsored

by British authority. But it is well they should know that the worst abuses of which the Indian police anywhere have been guilty are loving-kindness compared with the stereotyped procedure of the Soviet NKVD, the initials standing for—in translation—the “People’s Commissariat of Home Affairs,” really the latest version of the old Cheka, OGPU and Gay-pay-oo of unsavoury memory.

The NKVD agents almost invariably make their arrests during the night hours. Not only are their victims not told the reason for their seizure at the time, but generally they are not told for months. Threats, terror, torture and solitary confinement constitute the routine treatment, while examinations last for hours, often throughout the night. Space will not allow me to describe in detail the fiendish ingenuity of the methods employed to extort so-called “confessions” from the helpless victims. Many prisoners lose their lives during the process of examination; others commit suicide. Open trials are as a rule avoided. A never-failing accusation is “counter-revolutionary” activity against the established régime. Membership of any political party except the Communist Party or connexion with any organization, foreign citizenship, representation of a foreign firm, etc., have all been deemed sufficient reason to brand one as an “enemy of the people” and to have him arrested. Complete isolation of prisoners from the out-

side world is the Soviet rule, and the families of those arrested are never informed of the whereabouts of their loved ones. Prison conditions are almost indescribable and must be left to the reader’s imagination. Incontrovertible proofs of the horrible tortures inflicted and the massacres of so-called political prisoners carried out during the first Soviet occupation are in the possession of the Baltic legations abroad, and among the victims of this characteristic terror were some of my own personal friends and former revered colleagues. Numerous corpses, often horribly mutilated, were exhumed and photographed after the first expulsion of the Bolsheviki.

The many thousands of victims of mass deportations were herded in closed freight cars, and at the station women and children were systematically separated from their husbands, fathers and brothers. From sixty to eighty deportees were packed into each car, and freight cars loaded with human cargo stood in some railway stations for several days on end. No food or water was distributed while the cars remained in the station, and sometimes not even during a large part of the journey. Nobody was permitted to approach the deportees. Sanitation was non-existent. The journey to distant parts of Siberia took weeks. Hundreds died while waiting in the freight cars; others perished on the way; especially infants, old people and expectant mothers. The ultimate fate of the survivors of

this ghastly ordeal is hardly more enviable; death from hideous privations, arctic cold and inhuman slave labour in the remote concentration camps where the deportees are confined usually overtakes most of these unfortunates in a few months or years at the outside.

These deportations, as revealed subsequently in Soviet documents which fell into Lithuanian hands, were only part of the entire scheme of deportations which were planned to total about 750,000 persons in Lithuania alone. Today these deportations are again going on and, in conjunction with a deliberate policy of undernourishment adopted throughout the enslaved Baltic States, are clearly designed to effect virtual extermination of the native population, the rightful owners of the soil, to make room for "settlers" imported from Soviet Russia, who will occupy the farms thus rendered vacant.

And this, in a few inadequate words, is the abomination of desolation which Moscow and its lackeys in our midst, appropriately known as crypto-Communists, call a "Democratic" peace! It is with the direct authors of these inhuman outrages and their Communist adherents in other parts of Europe that Social Democrats are urged by our pro-Soviet clique to make common cause as the only practical means of guaranteeing "peace" in Europe and the final obliteration of "Fascism"! In the words of Seymour Cocks, M. P., "Soviet Russia has a job to do in

Eastern Europe." It should on no account be obstructed in so doing by soft-hearted sentimentalists in the West! And while these monstrous crimes against humanity are being openly committed by our "friend and ally," Soviet Russia, with whom, as we are assured *ad nauseam* the Western democracies are pathetically eager to be friendly, Soviet spokesmen in UNO and their toadies elsewhere howl about the "threat to peace" inherent in the Franco "Fascist" régime in Spain! A palpable red herring, if ever there was one.

And we have latterly been treated to the obscene spectacle of the representative of the Power which in 1939 conspired with Hitler to divide a large part of Eastern Europe between them sitting in judgment on his fellow criminals in the dock at Nuremberg, among them the late von Ribbentrop, whom Stalin himself was delighted to honour with the Order of Lenin! Could international hypocrisy go farther? And on top of this our Left Wing organs prate about the warning to *future aggressors embodied in the Nuremberg sentences!* They are discreetly silent about criminals in their midst.

In the face of this overwhelming evidence of a world already aligned in two hostile and irreconcilable ideological camps, it is surely idle to talk about its "indivisibility." Yet the Editor of *The New Statesman and Nation* recently denounced as "dangerous and superficial" the "cant talk" that blasphemously

compares the foreign policy of Soviet Russia with that of Hitler, and he rarely loses an opportunity of declaring the Western democracies largely responsible for the "justifiable suspicion" which Moscow harbours of Western professions of friendship, and for the fears which Moscow is supposed to entertain of Anglo-American plotting for an eventual atomic attack on Soviet Russia. These "suspicions" are glibly assumed to account for the recalcitrant attitude of Comrade Vyshinsky in London, Comrade Gromyko in New York, and Comrade Molotov in Paris. "Russia unquestionably wants peace," avers the same Editor pontifically, "*and the conception of a nation dominating the world by force is alien to a Power which is based on the dogmas of Marxian Socialism.*" So, we are told, war is not in fact likely in the near future, "*because the USSR does not want it.*"

Considerably less fatuous than *ex parte* assertions running counter to the facts plain for all to see, but considerably more sinister, malevolent and dangerous, are the obvious efforts of this and other Left Wing organs to foster friction and misunderstanding between Great Britain and the United States by persistent virulent criticism of American policy in Europe as being directed against Soviet Russia, and solemn warnings to the Government not to range itself on the side of American "plutocracy" and "capitalism" in any Western bloc which Russia would automatically regard as hostile to herself.

And when a first-hand observer like Paul Winterton, on the strength of several years' experience as a correspondent in Moscow, has the courage to expose Russia's imperialistic designs and to demonstrate the moral impossibility of any merger between Communism and Social Democracy, he is forthwith stigmatized by K. Ziliacus, M.P., as a prey to "counter-revolutionary panic." And when Arthur Koestler, a former Communist subsequently disillusioned as the result of personal experience of Communism in its working in Soviet Russia, recently broadcast his views in a brilliant BBC talk, he exposed himself to more or less parliamentary abuse by Professors Bernal and Haldane as a dangerous "reactionary."

Meanwhile the poison of Communist ideology is doing its deadly work, and transforming its victims into potential Fifth Columnists prepared, as we have seen in the recent Canadian espionage case, to betray their own country for a mess of Moscow pottage.

In these disquieting circumstances, it is vitally important that a free India should take stock of the situation and make up her mind on the question of where she stands in a world already divided between these hopelessly conflicting concepts of civilization and democracy. I do not think I shall be accused of shutting my eyes to the many glaring shortcomings, the sins of omission and commission of our Western "civilization," when I still contend that the way of life for which it

stands is infinitely to be preferred by all who value humanity and some measure of individual freedom—alarming as the betrayal of the former and the loss of the latter have latterly become—to the deplorable lot of the rank and file in the Soviet “paradise,” where not only is physical liberty virtually nonexistent, but, as the latest Kremlin “purge” of writers and artists conclusively shows, even the minds of Soviet citizens must be subservient to an amoral political, economic and sociological theory, and those guilty of the slightest deviation from the so-called “general line” severely punished.

I am loath to believe that India's political leaders and the leaders of Indian thought today, whether Hindu or Moslem, would ever voluntar-

ily pursue a course likely to cut off their country and people from that family of nations whose cultural and humanistic standards largely bequeathed by Greece and Rome have fundamentally much more in common with the immortal Indian heritage of the *Rig-Veda* than with the soulless dialectical materialism of Karl Marx and Lenin. Deprived of India's co-operation in the preservation of our joint ideals, the odds against us in a struggle with the Soviet colossus might well prove too heavy; whereas given her wholehearted support in this imperative task, it may yet be possible to avert the final catastrophe which would write “*Finis*” to world civilization and in which India herself would be involved.

E. J. HARRISON

A SAPPHIRE

Depths of dark wonder, hidden mystery
 Of the stars made manifest, the alchemy
 Of infinite regions, smelted down and shown
 Within the Tyrian blue of this rare stone :
 Here gulfs of space return from whence they came ;
 Within this milky space, the Eternal Name
 Shines with resplendent glory, all Nature
 Has here her miniature.

BARNETT D. CONLAN

JAINISM AS A MESSAGE OF PEACE

Religion is the highest bliss. Non-injury, self-restraint and penance are the paths leading to it. Even the Gods above bow to those who are religious.

Jainism teaches us to treat all sentient beings as inherently equal; it enjoins consideration for the feelings of all beings. It preaches universal brotherhood not only of human beings, but of all sentient beings. It aims at the uplift of the soul and, for that, enjoins on all its followers the greatest self-control. It strongly deprecates the action of those who, for their selfish ends, hurt others' feelings. To treat others as oneself is its principal teaching and once this is realised all other questions are easily solved.

The universal truths of religion as preached by Jainism are non-injury to others, abstention from falsehood and from theft, chastity and restriction of possessions. These are recognised by all schools of thought as sound principles and whoever practises them develops his character. There is no caste or creed, race or nation who cannot follow these principles of Jainism. Anyone following any profession may strive to become a Jain or to follow the principles leading to the ultimate goal.

All outward inequalities owe their origin to various Karmic forces but that does not in any way interfere with the practice of the principles. The equality of all beings, fraternity with the whole world and liberation of every soul are the watchwords of Jainism, as they must also be of every other faith having the uplift of the world as its aim.

It has been truly said that one may conquer a million persons in war but he who conquers self is the greatest

conqueror. Therefore let everyone strive to practise religion as long as old age and diseases do not overcome him.

Jains hold that their Religion, as promulgated by omniscient sages, is perfect. But the Jain religion enjoins that not one of its principles be forced upon anyone. The heart is to be converted by reasoning only. Religion is to be practised by oneself, by personal exertion, not through agents or substitutes. It is by restraint of body, mind and speech that religion can be practised. It is preaching the evil effects of wrongful acts and persuading people to give them up which are really commendable and religious. No force and no allurement will make one change one's heart. So long as you do not touch the heart of the evil-doer, you cannot by force make him give up his evil desires.

Mind is the cause of bondage or liberation of a soul.

To control one's desires and to practise self-restraint are true religion and to preach the good effects of self-control and to induce others to practise the same are the highest service that a man may render and are the purest form of religion. As all woes are due to unrestricted indulgence of the passions and consequent disregard for the feelings of others, it is of supreme importance that the universal principles of Jainism, namely, *Ahimsa* (Non-injury); *Satia* (Truth-speaking); *Asteya* (Abstention from theft); *Brahmacharia* (Self-control) and *Aparigraha* (Non-possession) should be widely preached and followed; the practice of these would surely lead to the purification of the soul and to its uplift to a higher plane.

May Peace be unto all.

YOGY SRI GEORGE

Mount Abu.

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

THE AMERICAN NEGRO—YESTERDAY AND TODAY *

The initiative in practically all the higher education in the United States of America came originally from voluntary and often sacrificial efforts by members of religious sects and communities. From the same source, mainly, proceeded an endeavour no less significant for the American future—the extension of general education to the Negro substratum of the population. The Africans who were shipped to America to become plantation slaves, during the first century or more of American civilisation, were cut off from their tribal origins and grew up among the master race upon whose language and religious ideas they became perforce as dependent as upon its economic practices. Whilst the Negroes were still bought and sold as slaves, the influence of the Churches was steadily, if all too weakly, exerted to humanise their status and conditions; and the general American attitude to Negro education was actually more favourable in the earlier days of their bondage than later. But though an increasing number of slaves received some instruction in reading and religion, it was elementary and slight.

Even before their legal emancipation, slaves were not infrequently liberated by their owners under the influence of religious opinion, and some seminaries were formed for Negro higher education. Fostered by religious, philanthropic and humanitarian patronage, the facil-

ities for higher education continually increased after the Civil War, and now it may almost be true to say that it is only the poverty of the Negroes which effectively denies a college education to the vast majority of them.

Since the first Negro was awarded a university degree in 1826 the total number of Negro graduates from all colleges was under 44,000 until 1938, though in that period the Negro population had increased to many millions. Evidently it takes time to come up from slavery. In his new book on this subject, President McKinney records the tardiness of this advance with regret, but he shows also that it is steady and accelerating.

This book is the record of an exhaustive investigation, made under the highest academic and religious authority and assistance, into the state of religious life and teaching in Negro institutions for higher education. The motive for such an enquiry is no doubt related to the disquiet felt in many quarters at the increasing secularisation of American collegiate education in general. America is passing through a cultural crisis, which has sharpened the antagonism between those who would like a reinforcement of religion in the universities and those who would prefer to see religion excluded in favour of secular and scientific studies. There has been, naturally, a desire to know how far the same conflict might be

* *Religion in Higher Education Among Negroes.* By RICHARD J. MCKINNEY. (Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn. \$3.00; and Oxford University Press, London. 20s.)

affecting the Negro colleges.

President McKinney's book, though it has the virtues of a first-rate government report rather than charm of expression, will hold the attention of all who feel the importance of its subject and its poignant human interest. The conclusions are, however, those we might have expected. Religion means more to the Negroes than to white students, to judge by the evidence, and has a slightly more important place in their studies. But among them, too, the desire to secularise education, and even to abolish the religious element as antiquated and irrelevant, begins to find some expression, sometimes associated with the Communist idea that the inequality between the Negroes and white Americans is merely an economic class conflict; and religion, class propaganda. In a two-

caste social system (which is what the American has become through the Negro minority) one would expect to find, as we do, that the inferior caste thus copies the ideas of the superior, and that its higher education reflects the same problems, though less clearly and with a lag in time. This is a point that President McKinney perhaps insufficiently emphasises, for his recommendations are limited to methods which he thinks might keep Negro students and studies religious. This will surely happen of itself, if and when the white men's higher education becomes more explicitly based upon spiritual values and religious disciplines. But if their own higher education becomes more secular, technical and "tough," so will that of the Negroes.

PHILIP MAIRET

In this book,* Mr. Botkin has made a selection of excerpts and complete narratives from the Slave Narrative Collection of the Federal Writers' Project, and, in reducing the bulk of the collection from over 10,000 to 500 or 600 manuscript pages, he has succeeded in maintaining both the representative character and the flavour of the original, concentrating on its broadly human and imaginative aspects and above all its folk values, and fitting the selections into some sort of sequence that would give pattern to the book and to slavery.

His first section, for example, is devoted to "Mother Wit" and consists of tales, talk and anecdotes, taken

down direct. Another contains excerpts that show how, in spite of all attempts to crush it, the slave kept a will of his own and expressed his hatred of enslavement and his contempt for the enslaver in all sorts of ways, crude or subtle, secret or defiant. They show, too, how the master was the victim of his own system as well as the victimiser. Then comes the "Freedom War" in which many slaves served, but many also suffered not only the pinch of hard times, but the violence of fear-maddened masters. The last section deals with the privileges and the penalties of freedom. For, apart from such barbarities as those of the Ku Klux Klan on which there are terrible records

* *Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery*. Edited by B. A. BOTKIN. (University of Chicago Press, Chicago. \$3.50; and Cambridge University Press, London. 20s.)

of the first atrocities of some of the masters enraged by defeat, legal emancipation proved for many as harsh and humiliating an experience as bondage. Not that there weren't good masters then as before, who had built up a human relationship with their slaves, based on respect for them as persons, which was a true basis of association and merely found completion in the change of legal status. But such cases were few and the whole book testifies to the awful social and personal devastation which slave-ownership entailed.

Essentially, however, the victims would seem to have been less demoralised than the victimiser. The former were physically exploited and mentally starved. But beneath it all they kept their souls alive, those souls of which one of them said that "the souls is all

white or black, 'pending on the man's life and not on his skin.'" And it is today less as an exposure of the abomination of slavery that this book is of interest and value than as an immensely varied expression of the riches of the folk-soul, of the insuppressible raciness of a primitive people and of their union, unconscious and conscious, with the mysterious depths of life and its divine sanctions. The best of the narratives also belong, as Mr. Botkin writes, to literature. There are a good many colloquial excerpts that reflect only the passing humour or pathos of life, but they have, as he claims, "the forthrightness, tang and tone of people talking" and, the majority of them, "the salty irony and mother wit which, like the gift of memory, are kept alive by the bookless world."

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

This lecture,* delivered in 1944, by the Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, who is known as a historian of the British Empire and of North America, is limited to fairly simple generalisations concerning the nation that inhabits the United States. Mr. Benians maintains that there are no peoples but only one people in the United States. If you can agree with this you will find his historical sketch of the growth of the American nation not only interesting but adequate for the purpose. The majority of the early immigrants did go from Europe looking for and hoping to help build a New World better than the Old, and as the

open spaces were populated with an ever more cosmopolitan influx the new State began to depend for its unity, its very preservation, on the application of political democracy. That was why the slave-owning South was defeated in its resistance to the abolition of slavery.

Up to a point the various peoples from European nations, which the author unhappily and constantly refers to as "races," acquired the same rights. Not so the original Indians of the continent, and the Negroes. I could not help feeling that Mr. Benians was being over-polite to America in avoiding any condemnation of the disgust-

* *Race and Nation in the United States: A Historical Sketch of the Intermingling of the Peoples in the Making of the American Nation.* By E. A. BENIANS. (Cambridge University Press, London. 2s. 6d.)

ing treatment that coloured people have received in the United States, and it is surely regrettable that a historian of his influential academic position should today approve of the legal devices by which the South was enabled for so long to deprive the Negroes of political influence and to maintain a condition of social and cultural inferiority for them. The results to this day are disastrous and offer an urgent problem to the great Western Democracy which in practice, owing to economic developments, has, in common with all the Western world, seen political democracy become for the majority of people a mere pretence of equal rights and privileges.

Even where White cultural groups, such as the Germans and the Jews, are in question, I cannot but feel that Mr. Benians exaggerates by over-simplification the success of their absorption into the American nation. The political influence of such groups has often played a far from insignificant part in colouring and directing the policies, especially the foreign policy, of

Washington. It is a big problem, but a frank recognition of the failures as well as the amazing achievement of America is the least that students should get from a historian friendly to the United States. Mr. Benians does indeed remark that the process of assimilation is unfinished, and says "this is doubtless true" of Wendell Willkie's reference to the "maladjustment of the races" and his statement that much remains to be done if America is to realise her ideals. But so very much remains to be done that, if one realises it while reading, the lecture looks like special pleading instead of objective history. All such historical sketches of Western "democracy" are anyhow vitiated when they neglect the social consequences of economic developments since the eighteenth century. That is why, for all the fine talk of political propagandists in the West today, democracy tends to become less and less a reality unless, by the growth of socialism in practice, it becomes economic as well as political democracy.

R. L. MEGROZ

PORTRAIT OF A JAPANESE VILLAGE *

Before the sociologist or the social anthropologist can attempt any well-founded generalisations about man and society and its institutions, he must first find out how individual men, women and children live in a given social structure. Field work is, therefore, as indispensable for the promotion of the social sciences as experiments in the laboratory are for the advance of physics and chemistry.

Much has been written during the last few years about Japan and the Japanese which was either based on insufficient evidence or spoilt by the heat of political ardour and controversy. This careful study by Dr. Embree is different and in some ways unique. Ten years ago this trained anthropologist went from the United States to Japan with his wife and spent twelve months in the village, the

* *A Japanese Village: Suze Mura.* By JOHN F. EMBREE. (International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., London. 18s.)

life of which he has so penetratingly observed and analysed in the 250 pages of this book. He also took a number of attractive photographs illustrating the various activities of the villagers, which increase the value of his book. Why did Dr. Embree choose Suye Mura on the Island of Kyushu in the Kuma County for examination, after visiting twenty-one Japanese villages? Because this village with less than 3000 inhabitants has no striking feature distinguishing it from the general run of rural communities in Japan. It is a rice village with silk as a secondary crop, neither very poor nor very rich.

The Japanese village (*mura*) is based on a number of smaller units or limited neighbourhood groups, the ancient *buraku*, in English, "hamlet."

The Government-controlled *mura* unites several of these local house clusters by means of a common school, a village office and a village Shinto Shrine. Each of the hamlets consists of a number of households which in themselves, as well as between each other, render mutual aid in many economic and social activities. The outstanding features of the life of a *buraku* are co-operation and exchange. Co-operation in Suye Mura means, for instance, that all the households work together at regular intervals to perform public works, such as road-building or bridge-building. As a result of this joint working of the community, people feel united in a common task extracted from them by traditional custom instead of by a boss, and followed by a common drinking party—social conviviality is apparently as frequent as it is lively in these villages.

The most outstanding form of economic co-operation is the exchange of

labour for rice-transplanting, one of the biggest events of the year. Groups of households work together, first on one man's field, then on the next man's and so on until the rice in all the fields has been transplanted. At the root of this emphasis on co-operation lies the sound principle of reciprocity—some return must be made for any gift or favour or service rendered.

The kinship system, linking together various households belonging to the same or different hamlets, is conditioned through the wide-spread custom of adoption in various forms. Before the Meiji Revolution, eighty years ago, class distinctions were fixed and rigid, with the feudal lords, the *samurai*, the farmers, the artisans and the merchants sharply divided from each other. Today class lines are not so arbitrary and their definition is more difficult. The upper groups in Suye Mura are composed of old native families and are nearly always landed farmers. Shopkeepers and teachers are non-natives and belong to the middle stratum. Whereas marriage is primarily a social and economic arrangement between two families, the head of a poor household might, under economic pressure, sell one or more of his daughters as a prostitute or a *geisha*. The author briefly points to the important function of the *geisha* in the Japanese social organisation. There is a dualism of types between the wife as a loving slave in the house and a more sophisticated female who satisfies the demand of the middle-class men for some more or less clever conversation, "someone to laugh at one, someone to hold out love and then to pretend to snatch it away." This dualism does not apply to the peasants, whose

womenfolk have fewer inhibitions and more freedom for self-expression than the well-bred Japanese women.

The main impression the reader receives from Dr. Embree's detailed survey of the life-history of the individual in Suye is that it is largely determined by an ancient social pattern. There are some interesting common features concerning the three great events in the life of the individual; in all of them an intermediary plays an important function: at birth, the midwife; on marriage, the *nakaudo*, or go-between, who even becomes something of a relative later; and after death the Buddhist priest, who fulfils various ceremonies intended to send the dead person's soul to paradise.

In spite of the activities of both Buddhist and Shinto priests, the only religious system with a direct impact on local community life is the festival calendar, marking the phases of the moon and the seasons of the year.

The author devotes a final chapter to a discussion of the changes observable in the social organisation of Suye Mura. These changes, partly caused through the influence of Western civilisation, are somewhat similar to those in Central Africa, recorded by Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Wilson recently, in *The Analysis of Social Change*—reviewed by me in this journal for September 1946. The Japanese hamlet is steadily losing its relative independence. Itself as a group as well as its members are becoming more and more involved in and dependent upon relations with the wider

social environment. Through roads, railways, omnibuses, etc., even this remote village is now connected with an outside world still unknown to the grandfathers of the present villagers. Before the war a number of changes were carried through and controlled by the Government, such as the introduction of the school, of conscription, of the agricultural associations and of various societies serving nationalist propaganda. Other changes came uncontrolled, *i.e.*, the change from a rice to a money economy and with it the increased use of machines, leading as it did to a breakdown of the local co-operative system in favour of hired labour.

It remains to be seen how far the present Occupation of the Japanese Islands, the democratisation of their political structure and the renunciation of the doctrine of the divine origin of the Emperor are affecting the rural social system. Will the impact of the post-war situation be radical or comparatively superficial; will it lead to a widening of the outlook of the villagers, to their parting with ancient superstitions, to a more rational and independent mode of thinking? Will the autocratic stamp of a centralised government have gone once for all? Today these are questions of more than academic importance and it is to be hoped that Dr. Embree, after a further visit to the land of his researches, will be able to answer them for us.

E. K. BRAMSTEDT

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST ? *

"What think ye of Christ?" To that perennial question a temperate rationalism replies in this competent, well-documented and obviously sincere little book. It is, indeed, the combination of competence and sincerity with a curious, as it were, colour-blindness which, for most modern readers, may be more significant than its argument.

The immediate subject of this enquiry—the historicity of Jesus—has ceased to be a very live issue today; it dates from the period of "honest doubt." But the underlying issue between the rationalist and the religious approaches to reality, as posed in the apparent antinomy—either the Jesus of history or the Christ of faith—remains very much alive. In its modern form it is that conflict of life attitudes which Mr. Koestler has lately styled those of the "Yogi" and the "Commissar." Mr. Robertson, in his approach to this problem, unequivocally adopts the attitude of the "Commissar." "The Rationalist," he writes, "sees in scientific method the only avenue to objective truth."

It is the contrast, later to become conflict, which John Donne noted in the seventeenth century when he said that "Reason is our soul's left hand, faith her right." But for Donne and his age left and right hand still acted in unison as members of a single and sovereign soul. Today the left hand of reason knows not what the right hand of faith does or means. Mr. Robertson is left-handed and blissfully sure that what the scientific reason knows not is not knowledge. In this

book, therefore, we have a singularly pure specimen of this left-handed mode of ratiocination unadulterated by any doubt that reason is the final measure of all mysteries.

The result is a curiously one-eyed vision, as limited and exclusive in range as that of a man peering through a microscope compared with the stereoscopic vision of normal sight. He sees his subject, thus constricted and intensified, in a brilliant light. But to all that seems obvious to other modes of perception he is quite blind. He seems quite immune, moreover, to the modifications of the original rationalist faith long admitted by the majority of modern leaders of science, of whom very few would today be prepared to affirm that the scientific method is the *only* avenue to truth. Here is a fundamentalism of the rationalist faith. It is as dogmatic, as fanatical, even sometimes as bigoted as Christianity has ever been.

It seems significant of such a fanaticism that it does not apparently occur to Mr. Robertson as in the least odd that this problem, disposed of by the fathers of the rationalist faith to their full satisfaction long ago, should still engage the intense preoccupation of rationalists today. "...there is no topic," he admits, "which raises such a hornet's nest as this in the columns of a free-thought journal." The ghost of Jesus, exorcised so long since, still apparently haunts the cold academies of rationalism and even perpetuates bitter feuds in its ranks. Yet Mr. Robertson returns to the attack with undiminished

* *Jesus: Myth or History.* By ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON. (C. A. Watts and Co., Ltd., London. 2s.)

faith in the omniscience of the scientific method to cope with this persistent enigma.

He will admit no other mode of approach; it is one which leads him to conclusions which to a more synthetic view seem absurd. Thus he repeatedly finds in the epistles of S. Paul "an utter indifference to the teaching credited to Jesus in the Gospels" whereas, for a less limited perception and an intuitive, æsthetic or spiritual discrimination, the consonance of, for example, Paul's great hymn to Charity with the Sermon on the Mount is so manifest as to be inescapable. But such evidence is inadmissible in the rationalist court of judgment.

Again, he finds it "unlikely that a devoted follower of Peter would have penned a work which repeatedly represents him and his fellow-disciples as dolts and cowards." Yet from another angle (excluded by his rigid frame of reference) it is precisely this fact which argues the authenticity of the record and its kinship with the whole Gospel ethic of sin and redemption. Thus, too, the Fourth Gospel, in spite of the verisimilitude of its circumstantial detail and the trend of all recent criticism is summarily dismissed as "obviously fictitious" and the Apocalypse discounted as "off the main line of development." For a less exclusive criticism their sequence in the development of doctrine from the Gospel seed is clear as daylight.

This rationalist dogmatism not only begets this strange obtuseness and colour-blindness; it also leads the author into obvious errors of factual judgment. It is, for example, simply not true that the conception of the divinity of Jesus "does not figure in

the triple tradition." S. Mark's Gospel is declared to be "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God"; it is instinct throughout with the assumption that it is of a "Christus Pantocrator," Lord of life and the demons, of whom it tells. And, in all three Synoptic Gospels, Peter makes the specific declaration that Jesus is, not Elijah, not John the Baptist, not a prophet, but the "Christ of God."

Again, in support of his prejudged case, Mr. Robertson is lured into such naïvely erroneous statements as that Gnosticism, a cult of immemorial antiquity, "was forming in the Mediterranean underworld" only in the first Christian centuries or that Paul was a "Gnostic missionary." He surmises also that the conception of the "Suffering Servant," already explicit in Isaiah, "may have taken shape in the same first-century Mediterranean underworld." Only an oddly distorted dogmatic astigmatism could account for such naïvetés in an otherwise acute historical sense.

But it is in Mr. Robertson's conclusion that the distorting effect of this rationalist dogmatism is most manifest. In his considered view "there are two Jesuses, a mythical and an historical." He himself, in opposition to the extremists of his party, is satisfied that "there was an historical Jesus and that he lived about the date usually assigned." Nevertheless this historical Jesus is not the Jesus of the Gospels; the Christ of Christian faith is "a fusion of myth and history."

Thus, for the rationalist, myth and history were forged into that creative faith which turned the world upside down and changed the whole course of history. And this miraculous fusion

of, from the rationalist point of view, quite incompatible factors, was the work, not of great genius or high statecraft, but of the rabble of the submerged tenth of the Roman Empire. "The Gospels owe their vitality," we are told, "not to the divine majesty or to the human genius of their hero, but to those men and women of the first and second centuries who...made them the medium of their frustrated aspirations..." In other words, the Christ of faith was the fiction of the wishful thinking of an impotent and illiterate under-world.

It is a conclusion which is substantially that of Freud, for whom all religion is "an attempt to get control of the sensory world...by means of the wish-world." Upon this view Christianity was the fruit, not of man's grandeur but of his folly, infantilism and cowardice. For Freud, who had reduced the pride of reason to the dust, such a conclusion was logical. But for the still-convinced rationalist could any conclusion be more irrational? For those who mock at miracle what miracle could be more marvellous than this?

Thus, when critically examined, Mr. Robertson's rationalist criticism of Christianity reduces rationalism itself to a *reductio ad absurdum*. But that conclusion, though very other than that which his book ostensibly offers, is itself a real and valuable contribution to the cause of truth to which he is so sincerely devoted. For to know that, for such a quest, scientific reason is not enough, is to know where a more integral wisdom begins.

Such a fuller wisdom competent to compass the enigma of Christ, can come from, in Sri Aurobindo's phrase, an "integral consciousness" alone, in which the left hand of rational- and the right hand of faith-knowledge are no longer at odds. The left-handed "Commissar" consciousness will always be colour-blind to that range of Reality which is crystallised in the concept of Christ. Mr. Robertson shows very clearly that the real rationalist reply to the question—"What think ye of Christ?" is that, by ratiocination alone, only a very "dusty answer," is to be found. His labour is therefore, far from having been in vain.

MELVILLE CHANING-PEARCE

TWO BOOKS BY COOMARASWAMY

Dr. Coomaraswamy's conception of art in this new volume of essays,* as in its predecessor, is clearly stated in the following passage:—

That "To make the primordial truth intelligible, to make the unheard audible, to enunciate the primordial word, such is the task of art, or it is not art," has been the normal and œcumenical view of art....Our

private and sentimental heresy which makes of works of art an essentially sensational experience is stated in the very word 'æsthetics.'...We are, indeed, just what Plato called "lovers of fine colours and sounds and all that art makes of these things that have so little to do with the nature of the beautiful itself." The truth remains, that "Art is an intellectual virtue."

Such a view of art takes it out of the

* *Figures of Speech and Figures of Thought: Collected Essays on the Traditional or "Normal" View of Art*. Second Series. By ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY. (Luzac and Co., London. 10s. 6d.)

provincial and autonomous realm in which a degenerate humanism has confined it and relates it once again to the metaphysical principles of which all human activity is an expression. Elsewhere, in a profound and illuminating essay on "The Nature of Buddhist Art," Dr. Coomaraswamy describes the practice of an art as a metaphysical and devotional rite, and remarks that no distinction can be drawn between art and contemplation. The artist is first of all required to remove himself from human to celestial levels of apperception; at this level and in a state of unification, no longer having in view anything external to himself, he sees and realizes, that is to say becomes, what he is afterwards to represent in wrought material.

This view, although persisting to this day in the East, is not peculiar to it. It was held by the Schoolmen of Medieval Europe and expressed succinctly by Dante in the words, "No painter can paint a figure if he have not first of all made himself such as the figure ought to be." It is only since men have become blind to the spiritual realm and forgotten to live in two dimensions at once, that they have ceased to regard all earthly forms as symbols of ideal prototypes laid up in heaven.

The divorce, however, between the sensible shape and the intelligible form

In these three pieces, printed together,* Dr. Coomaraswamy presents a clear and accurate diagnosis of the tension between the societies of the East and the forces which are invading them from the West. The masterly simplicity with which he handles this

in modern Western art is hardly as complete as Dr. Coomaraswamy suggests. Certainly the subordination of form to figure and engrossment in humanistic or naturalistic interests in European art after the Middle Ages, which he deplores, cannot be considered a mere orgy of æstheticism. The greatest Renaissance masters sought the divine form in the human figure, even if the humanity of their subjects and all its sensory associations tended more and more to submerge the spiritual prototype of which the senses can give no direct report.

The aim of a hieratic art is to symbolise the heavenly mysteries, but there is a place surely for an art which seeks to portray the divinely human. To practise truly such an art or even understand it, one must, as Dr. Coomaraswamy writes, "be not merely a sensitive man, but also a spiritual man; and not merely a spiritual, but also a sensitive man." And in these essays, in which he ranges over many fields of art from primitive folklore to medieval theory or Oriental practice, he expounds with as deep insight as erudition the primordial truth in which life itself is known both as a mystery and as an art.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

vast cultural problem is due to the surety with which he relates its various and bewildering aspects to one root of reality. Perhaps only a trained metaphysician is able to keep clearly in view, through such a tangle of economic and political offshoots, the fact that every

* *The Religious Basis of the Forms of Indian Society, Indian Culture and English Influence East and West.* By ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY. (Orientalia, New York.)

social organism lives, grows or decays with the existence, increase or fading-away of a knowledge of reality enshrined in a system of beliefs—in short, that what we call “a culture” is a faith in action. To that supreme criterion of a culture all technical, economic or political diagnosis is subsidiary.

It is India, more than the East in general, that is the subject of this booklet, but it is broadly true of the East as a whole that its societies are still living by the light of religion, by faith in a specific revelation of the nature of existence. To a much lesser extent, but still more than they know, the societies of the West are also living by what they still cherish of a religion, of a comprehensive vision of reality. Dr. Coomaraswamy's great and peculiar contribution is due to his exact knowledge of this: so that, although deeply and even passionately involved in the cause of Indian liberation—and indeed Nationalism—he sees clearly that “the enemy” is not England (except in very contingent and relatively unimportant respects) but a spirit of denial based upon *avidya*, which has largely possessed itself of the West and is encroaching almost everywhere upon the East. Scientific-pseudo-scientific materialism, composed from categories of thought which are of very limited range, is accepted amongst all the “progressive” nations as if it were the key to a complete and valid philosophy of life—a delusion as destructive of the real, spiritual and physical resources of European as of Indian life. In Dr. Coomaraswamy we have a writer who knows his St. Thomas Aquinas as well as his Sri Sankaracharya, knows

the Gospels as well as the Upanishads: and in the teaching of the great saints and doctors of the West he traces the same architectonic order of social and individual salvation which India has expressed in the fourfold system of *kama-artha-dharma-moksha*. It is that spiritual heritage which is being destroyed in both civilizations.

Of the “revival of scholarship in India” (to which he himself has probably contributed substantially) Dr. Coomaraswamy writes:—

...in a sense the tables are turned; the Indian Sanskritist has begun to familiarise himself with the Greek and Latin sources of Classical and Christian philosophy. But not as the missionaries studied Indian scriptures in order to refute them; on the contrary, using one tradition to illuminate the other, and so as to demonstrate ever more clearly that the variety of the traditional cultures, in all of which there subsisted until now a polar balance of spiritual and material values, is simply that of the dialects of what is always one and the same language of the spirit and of that Perennial Philosophy to which no one people or age can lay an exclusive claim....

This field of “cultural relations,” in which there has hitherto been more wishful thinking than accomplishment, is one in which this writer's achievement is altogether remarkable. And since what we call the problem of East and West is only to be resolved at the highest level of thought, where alone it presents itself in truly intelligible form, the importance of his work can hardly be exaggerated. For those who do not know it, this collection of two lectures and an essay will provide an excellent introduction.

PHILIP MAIRET

Child Treatment and the Therapy of Play. By LYDIA JACKSON and KATHLEEN M. TODD. (Methuen and Co., LTD., London. 8s. 6d.)

This is a clear and careful exposition of the theory and practice of psychological therapy as it is applied to the emotionally disturbed child. It also gives a useful summary of various theories concerning play, and emphasises that play itself, although the natural expression of childhood, is not, strictly speaking, therapeutic in itself, but, at the same time, can be curative in many cases.

The authors say that "the play of a neurotic child...differs from that of a normal child in many well-defined ways...his play may indicate both the type and extent of his mental disturbance." They go on to explain just in what way this diagnosis can be carried out and it is certain that most experienced mothers and teachers will agree with the conclusions reached. What may not be sufficiently clear, however, is that, on occasions, normal children may react abnormally and that these fits of strange behaviour are only temporary. Many otherwise well-balanced children can show peculiar aberrations at times and it would be a pity for an over-anxious parent to read more into the matter than is truly there.

In fact it may be argued that the book is not entirely suitable to the untrained parent. But again one might say, with truth, that there should be *no* untrained parents! However, as it presupposes a certain amount of psychological education on the part of the reader it is unlikely that much harm can be done. Certainly it will be of real help to teachers and all who hope to work for children.

Interesting descriptions are given of various methods of work, including a chapter on "Play as an Expression of Conflict" and another on "Play as a Method of Treatment." It is also cheering to note that the authors, in common with the newer scientific workers, emphasise the importance of "mothering" and the necessity for the infant and young child to feel the comfort and stability of a loving relationship with his parents. Too many children have suffered in the past and in their later life from the exponents of the "don't kiss the baby" school of thought, and from the rigid type of child training (particularly in relation to toilet training) that it is more than welcome to find responsible psychiatrists showing just how erroneous these pseudo-scientific theories are, and how urgent it is that children should be given the environment and treatment their natures demand.

It is made clear, throughout the book, that the home is, particularly in early years, the thing that matters, and that the neurotic child is the result of mistaken treatment or unfortunate relationship with the parents. In fact, it is often hard to make a successful adjustment owing to the problem parent. Thus we see the need, more and more, for co-operation with the parents, for parent-teacher meetings, and for the kind of Health Centre that will help parents to lead happier and more fulfilled lives.

Naturally the authors have met with, and give examples of, children that are somewhat seriously maladjusted, but most of us have come across cases similar in type if not in acuteness, and so are helped to understand them better.

The book is useful and worth while, but again one feels that it is sad that so much skill and energy must be given to putting right things that should

never have gone wrong, and which in a more reasonable society would never occur.

ELIZABETH CROSS

A Century for Freedom: A Survey of the French "Philosophers." By KENNETH URWIN. (The Thinker's Library, No. 109, C. A. Watts and Co., Ltd., London. 2s.)

This readable book is a useful addition to the Thinker's Library. It is a sketch of the eighteenth-century Rationalists, the encyclopedists or the French "Philosophers": Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D'Alembert, Bayle and others, and of their attempt to free the human mind from dogmatic religion; from dogmatic Christianity; in particular, from Catholicism. "They were not attacking Christianity because it was Catholic, but Catholicism because it was dogmatic Christianity."

We may say that the legacy of medieval Catholicism was (1) the confusion of reason with deduction; (2) emphasis upon authority; (3) opposition to free enquiry; (4) mystical interpretation of the Bible; (5) merciless extermination of "heresy," a campaign which justified the Inquisition and later the Index and the punishment of even cautious "free thinkers"; (6) the eschatology which demanded the eternal damnation and torment of many souls; and (7) the relative absence of progress in experimental science.

What did the Rationalists mean by "reason"? This is a point of some importance. They meant by "reason" scientific reason—of the type of Descartes, Newton and Locke. By Rationalism they meant both "rationalism" and "empiricism" which are generally considered opposed to each other. Rationalism appealed to intuited and self-evident axioms as opposed to the

revealed truths of dogmatic religion; and as opposed to this rationalism there was empiricism which appealed not to axioms, but to facts. As opposed to faith and the authority of dogmatic religion, eighteenth-century rationalism sought for "certainty"—deductive and factual certainty—but was content, in the end, with "rational probability."

So the alternatives before the eighteenth century were two and both appear to me to be philosophically unsatisfactory: *either* dogmatic religion *or* the rational probability of science; *either* Theology *or* secular Humanism. If medieval Catholicism left one kind of legacy, eighteenth-century rationalism left us another: a superficial and negative rationalism (and relativism), where reason is assigned the task of contemplating mathematical symbols and rational probabilities. In the language of Plato, I should say that the eighteenth century, in spite of its attempt to free the human mind from religious dogmatism, was yet "unable to give and take a reason." The Reason of the Rationalists could not penetrate Being. Reason was not for them that

power of raising the highest principle in the soul to the contemplation of that which is best in existence. (*Republic*: Book VII. 532)

I should therefore describe this "Century for Freedom" as the Failure of a Century.

N. A. NIKAM

In Quest of Civilization. By RONALD LATHAM, M. A. (Jarrolds, Publishers (London) Ltd. 2Is.)

Whatever else we may nowadays disagree about, we all must agree that the course of human history took a new turn on August 6th, 1945, when the Atomic Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. In the year which has passed since then it has become increasingly apparent that, whatever new and productive sources of power may have become available to humanity in the development of atomic energy, the main thing that has been let loose amongst us is Fear. We have awakened from a world of dreams to realise that unless this science is curbed and canalised by an effective world-control, human civilization may very speedily come to an end, in a vast mutual suicide.

Thinking of this fact many people who can see a little way beyond the immediate present have asked whether civilization itself has not taken a wrong turning. Others, probing deeper, have asked whether civilization, being a progressive adaptation of means to ends in an ever-widening control of nature, has not from the beginning carried the seeds of its own destruction within itself. Ronald Latham, in an absorbing new study, *In Quest of Civilization*, traces its origins to the fact that man has within him the capacity for imagining better conditions of life for himself—a capacity which does not appear to be shared by any of the higher animals. In reading this study we pass in review a fascinating catalogue of the achievements of ancient cultures, from all parts of the world.

But have not the results of the last year, since August 6th, 1945, rendered it necessary to adopt a totally new standard of values by which to judge of the achievements of a civilization? If the control of nature was destined to result in the destruction of Hiroshima, and potentially of all the other cities on earth, under atomic attack, and in the development of a fear-mentality in which we are told (as we recently have been told, even by a Commission of the British Churches) that the only hope of survival may be a readiness to "press the button first" for the destruction of the cities of an ex-ally by means of the Bomb: then was not the whole enterprise of the control of nature wrongly conceived from the very beginning? Was it not perhaps disastrously motivated by greed, first of more food and then of more possessions: and by hatred of other men—nature being ransacked for new weapons?

Is it not possible, in view of these things—things which today have become so tragically urgent—that the great spiritual teachers of humanity were right when they said, for instance, that a man's wealth consisteth not in the multitude of the things that he possesseth: or that action should be undertaken not for the sake of selfish advantage but for the helping of other men and the glory of God?

There is every reason that we should go back to our beginnings, in the way in which this book encourages us to go back: but we should concentrate our attention less upon the material achievements of "civilization" and more upon the things of the spirit, the "great imponderables," which alone breed a mind in man exempt from fear of mass-suicide because trained to live beyond the self, for others.

JOHN S. HOYLAND

Voicelless India. BY GERTRUDE EMERSON SEN. (Indian Publishers, Benares. Rs. 7/8)

The American author of this book has sought to become the voice of the long-suffering dumb millions of India through this very truthful picture of life in a typical Indian village. It is a very remarkable thing that this gifted woman has achieved, first in the acquisition of authentic knowledge of Indian life at first hand and then in the simple telling of her experiences, making the reader see what she has seen and understand what she has felt. The reproduction of a collection of photographs of her Happy House and its environment in Pachperwa at the beginning of the book is of a piece with the rest of it, the whole book conveying the vividest of impressions of actual village life in India, through its attention and faithfulness to detail.

Miss Emerson, as she then was, did the only right, but the most difficult, thing, especially for a foreigner, to get to know the life of a people. Against the advice of even friendly Indians she quietly went and settled down in a small North-Indian village, remote from the centres of modern imported civilization. There she built herself a house with village labour and materials, ate what the village could provide and worked her way into the hearts and homes of the people. The book tells of her varied experiences, of doctoring without a license, because she could not resist the call of piteous suffering, of visits to the seclusion of the zenanas, of listening to the settling of disputes at the Tahsil, of meeting Yogis and snake-charmers. She also discusses serious problems like rural indebtedness

and land revenue, caste and illiteracy, child marriage and religion. But everything she touches is informed by her sympathy and illumined by her gentle humour. She bumped into God twenty times a day in Pachperwa, she says, as He was the explanation of everything in Indian village life.

Of course she saw much that was primitive, crude and culpable in the life around her, much that was naturally repugnant to her American mind. But her consciousness of the crudities and indecencies of her own civilization prevented her from pronouncing a verdict upon another culture. The comparison she points out between Pachperwa illiteracy and New York literacy is characteristic of her whole attitude in drawing this picture of village India. The tell-tale evidence of what American civilization contributed for the edification of the literate American masses in the illustrated magazines she received was such that Miss Emerson had to make a bonfire of them unnoticed by her servants in the dead of night! "The illiteracy of Pachperwa seemed infinitely preferable to the literacy of New York." Her delicate and sympathetic probing therefore of the running sores in Indian village life demands the attention of those who would befriend the friendless and serve the least and lowliest in this land. As Gurudev Tagore wrote in his introduction to the first English edition of the book, every Indian ought to be grateful to the writer for "her masterly picture of our pathetic village life, so vivid and yet sober in its colours." The present is an Indian reprint of the second American edition of the book, with a foreword by Pearl Buck.

Essays on Human Evolution. By SIR ARTHUR KEITH. (C. A. Watts and Co., Ltd., London. 15s.)

In the scientific journal *Nature* (6th September 1941) a British scientist, Dr. C. H. Waddington, put forward the claim that at this stage in man's evolution science was in a position to provide the world with a true system of ethics.

The problems discussed by Dr. Waddington and other scientific men are those upon which Sir Arthur Keith, one of our foremost anthropologists, has been working for the past twenty-five years. In *Essays on Human Evolution* he gives the results of his investigations in a series of brilliant essays dealing with the conditions in which man lived during the time of his major evolutionary changes; nations and tribes as evolutionary units; and war as part of the machinery of human evolution.

Sir Arthur Keith has a calm and spiritual outlook on life which does not fail to react on the mind of the reader. He makes no profession of infallible knowledge, but marshals his facts, gleaned from many sources over a long period, and then presents his sane and unbiased opinion.

The introductory chapter gives us the writer's belief

that human nature has been built up not only by evolution, but that every element in it might serve as part of the machinery which brings about the further development of a tribe or community. Every reaction of our nature which works for the integration of the tribe and for its perpetuation... we may call good; its action, in respect of the tribe, we may call virtuous.

Where Sir Arthur Keith joins issue with Dr. Waddington is that he contends that what may be for the highest good, from the evolutionary view-point,

of any particular tribe or nation may spell disaster for the tribes or nations around it. To work out its evolution the nation or the tribe must remain integrated, isolated as a unit. If the life of a tribe is to continue, its members must preserve its frontiers and must be prepared to die to keep their native soil.

He discards the Victorian scientists' idea that the final purpose of man's existence is to develop individualism in man or woman, and believes that "to permit a closed society... to develop its collective potentials of brain and body as an evolutionary unit" is the only satisfying explanation of man's dual mentality. That evolution aims at producing societies and not individuals is Keith's assumption.

Citing modern Germany under Hitler as an example, Keith traces how war, force, terror and propaganda were evolutionary means used by the Nazis to weld the German people into a tribal whole. Terrible as are the results of war, it is, he claims, a means of evolutionary progress.

War, according to Keith, is the final arbiter in intertribal struggles and serves an evolutionary purpose. In the recent war, Britain and her allies were involved in an evolutionary struggle to carry on their evolutionary careers.

This is a brilliant exposition of a much debated theme. Many of the writer's statements challenge old beliefs. We may rebel at the idea that the goal of man's evolution may be the sinking of all individualism in the tribe or the state. But that this is a vital, provocative work we cannot deny. Perhaps a solution to the argument is that individuality is necessary for tribal

progress for it is not a satisfactory conclusion to suggest that localised good may prove a world-wide evil!

Rabindranath Tagore. By MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR. (Jeevana Karyalaya, 43-44, Gavipur Extension, Basavangudi, Bangalore. Rs. 6/-)

"It is far better for a poet to miss his reward in this life rather than to have a false reward, or to have his reward in an excessive measure," said the poet himself in a letter to a friend, after the rousing reception which he had received in the West. He was right in his prognosis; for soon followed carping criticism of his poetry, almost from the very same quarter. Also critics like E. M. Forster began to say cautiously that in judging the poet people should wait for the adoration as well as the reaction that such adoration entails to abate in order that "Beauty can pronounce across the subsiding dust." There were others like the Rev. E. J. Thompson, who devoted ample pages to a study of Tagore, though they did not fully comprehend the thinker in him, who "derives from the oldest thought of his own race and is yet modern enough to be of use to all the world today."

Among those that have discussed Rabindranath, few can approach the high level of critical appreciation to which Masti Venkatesa Iyengar has risen. Though Tagore's magnitude of personality and poetic merit cannot be satisfactorily envisaged in a study of this length, one feels after perusing it that the author has spared no pains to combine exhaustiveness in a fair measure with the brevity that is befitting the scope of his undertaking.

Sir Arthur Keith has given us a very valuable and delightful book.

A. M. Low

One finds here sufficient material too, not to miss that everything the poet touched—philosophy or economics or sociology—in his hands became poetry. The poet's humour, his mysticism, his capacity for music and painting, have all been noticed in their proper places, so that when we lay the volume down, we feel that the great writer was even greater as a man.

Masti's mind is of a rare type, sensing in its own way the poetry in life. It comes naturally to him, therefore, to make out without great ado the exact significance of a piece or the subtle shade of a thought of Tagore's. But at the same time his criticism on some points is really informed and altogether conducive to a correct appraisal of the poet's life and genius.

A book of this kind was an urgent need in South India, where there is not yet much real attempt to evaluate the rich mine of Tagore's thoughts. However much the poet may have suffered in translation, still, much of the substance of what he wrote is within the reach of the average Indian, whether he belongs to the North, the East, the West or the South of this vast country, because the culture and civilization represented by him have hardly anything that is not a common heritage of all India. We therefore acclaim this impartial estimate as doubly a godsend, when indifference and inadvertence often play so large a part in the so-called criticisms that we get of writers.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Voyage: An Anthology of Selected Stories. Edited by DENYS VAL BAKER. (Sylvan Press, London. 10s. 6d.)

The more perceptive understanding a reader can bring to his reading, the more he will get out of the contemporary short story. It does not set out to entertain, as the old "plot" story did; its roots grow close to the roots of poetry, in that the good short-story writer compresses, suggests much more than he makes explicit, and manages his style and form—a form that is not always easily apparent—in order to achieve something complete and satisfying in its own terms.

It is difficult to apply a test of quality to examples of an art which is still in an experimental stage. This is a comparatively new field of literature, and the reader unfamiliar with its products may well be forgiven for feeling perplexed or dissatisfied with a short story which "doesn't seem to have much point." But if he perseveres, one test will be to set it against his own reading experience.

An excellent selection of contemporary short stories has been got together by Denys Val Baker. He calls the anthology *Voyage* as the stories are "intended to reflect something of the modern short story writer's adventuring, or 'voyaging,' into the many worlds of the creative imagination."

Here another test of quality must be applied—how successfully does the story communicate, or re-create, an experience; whether an imagined or real experience, significant or trifling? It may be no more than a number of

washerwomen talking and quarrelling as they wring out the clothes over the steaming tubs—such is Fred Urquhart's contribution, "Dirty Linen." But he evokes the scene perfectly; it is bustling, robust and garrulous.

In contrast to this realistic treatment of an everyday theme is Mary Lavin's boldly mannered treatment of a tragic theme in "The Green Grave and the Black Grave." The body of a drowned Irish fisherman is brought back to his wife's cottage by two other fishermen. The poetic prose consciously—almost self-consciously—heightens the dramatic effect, and the dialogue between the two fishermen might be the chorus and semichorus of a classical tragedy. The story has a hypnotic effect, which one feels has been achieved by a trick, but does not touch the feelings.

In the realm of fantasy, Walter de la Mare in "What Dreams May Come" evokes through his precise use of symbols the territories of an invisible world; and in "The Little Room" William Sansom blends the nightmare world with the material world in a sustained and intensely imagined piece of writing.

Aspects of war in other countries are the subjects of stories by Mikhail Sholokhov, Chun-chan Yeh and Alex Comfort. Mulk Raj Anand is in light satirical vein with "The Two Lady Rams," an enchanting fable of refreshingly individual flavour.

This book can be recommended as a representative and carefully chosen selection of stories which will repay study.

HELEN SPALDING

History Is on Our Side. By JOSEPH NEEDHAM, F.R.S. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 8s. 6d.)

In his latest book, a compilation of letters and addresses from 1931 to 1942, Dr. Joseph Needham discusses some of the problems of the future in the light of the world as it is today.

This is an eminently readable work, outspoken and provocative, but those who differ from Dr. Needham's political creed may find it difficult to accept many of his arguments.

Writing of science under capitalism Needham believes that in spite of the Industrial Research Associations formed to carry out fundamental research for particular industries, such schemes are a failure because individual firms are more interested in keeping information from their competitors than in sharing it, while big Trusts and Cartels are unwilling to encourage fundamental research if they can by cheaper methods win substantial profits.

In opposition to these claims, however, it must be stated that there are many today who see in the nationalisation of industry and the suppression of private enterprise a deadly enemy to original research and a corresponding lagging behind in scientific progress. Competition and evolution are not always dissimilar.

Regarding religion and politics, Dr. Needham attacks the Church for holding the view that it must not concern itself with politics; that today religion is one thing and business another.

Such a restriction in the Christian Church, would, if true, be indeed a fundamental lie, but here we think the

author is on shifting ground. It is surely a fact that at the present time the Church has been attacked for being too temporal and trying to interfere in government affairs rather than remaining unmoved by what is going on in the world around.

The work and addresses of the late Archbishop Temple show the attitude (official) of the Christian Church and the resolve of its members to work for the good of the "common man" in every phase of life.

It is when writing on science that Dr. Needham is most illuminating. He shows how under Nazism science was directed to devote all its energies to the glorification of war. He remarks on the decline of German science under Hitler; but it must be admitted that recent disclosures and exhibitions of German war weapons show that their skill and ingenuity stand high. Nor should it be forgotten that the research that brought such weapons into being can always be readily turned to peacetime use.

Needham sees the future hope for the world to lie in that socialism that is part of the continuation of the evolutionary process; from apparent disorder

biological and social organisation is everywhere increasing. All science is a manifestation of this social organisation, itself the product of evolution and the guarantee of further evolution.

An interesting and thought-provoking work, but it is not always easy to appreciate the author's association of socialism and evolution.

A. M. Low

Indian Contribution to English Literature. By K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR. (Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay 4. Rs. 6/-)

Dr. Iyengar had written an admirable brochure on "Indo-Anglian Literature" for the P. E. N. and now he has gone into greater detail to give us this comprehensive work on the same subject. In the Preface he explains that he has used the term "literature" in its widest connotation, making it include the works of historians, philosophers, jurists, journalists and orators. He has taken within his purview works like Gandhiji's great autobiography which was originally written in Gujarati and later translated by others into English. He has, moreover, tried to trace the history of Indo-Anglian Literature from Ram Mohan Roy and Henry Derozio, from Toru Dutt, Romesh Chander, Behramji Malabari and Nagesh Pai to the young writers who started working in the last decade or even in the present one. Naturally the three hundred pages of the book are crammed with matter and if some of our favourites are not discussed as fully as we would have liked them to be, we admire the skill of the writer in making so much of the space at his disposal and giving us detailed critical studies of everything significant in Indo-Anglian literature.

In these studies the author has given evidence not only of his wide reading but also of a catholic taste and a critical acumen rarely found in "Hand-

books" of Literature. In his detailed analysis of poems and dramas, of novels and essays, he has given us admirable samples of applied criticism but the most valuable parts of the book are those which raise general problems like those of dialogue in drama, of the portraiture of sophisticated society in objective works of art, of the place of English in future India, of the relationship of publishers and men of letters. Thus he concludes his survey of Indo-Anglian poetry by saying :—

The best Indo-Anglian poets have given us something which neither English poetry nor any of our regional literatures can give; in other words, they have effected a true marriage of Indian processes of poetic experience with English formulæ of verse expression.

This suggestive sentence prompts us to ask: (1) Can we think of poetic experience as universal and/or national; (2) To what extent are any particular formulæ of verse expression better suited for one type of poetic experience than for another; (3) What is the nature of the discipline to which the poet subjects himself when he chooses to express his feelings in verse rather than in prose; (4) Is the discipline more rigid and rigorous when the writer chooses verse-forms of a language other than his mother-tongue? It is this suggestiveness which distinguishes genuine critical work from the products of laboured artifice and we are grateful to Dr. Iyengar for giving us this thought-provoking study replete with information and illustrative of mature, balanced judgment.

N. K. SIDHANTA

Shri S. N. Tadpatrikar calls his article in a recent number of *The Poona Orientalist* "A New Approach to the Bhagavadgita." Shri Tadpatrikar finds in Sri Krishna's proclamation that "Equal-mindedness is Yoga" the master-key. Without calmness, truly, there can be neither spiritual enlightenment nor skill in action; with it, all things are possible to man. That perfect balance can well symbolise the

full self-conquest and the full unfoldment of the human soul. He who has gained it, who is imperturbable, has indeed, as Shri Tadpatrikar declares, attained the goal. Shri Tadpatrikar has laid hold of a valuable aid to gathering the surface treasures of that ancient scripture of the soul, but no formula, no net of ordinary man's devising, surely, can contain the wealth of wisdom hidden in the *Gita's* depths.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

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

HUDIBRAS

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made several valuable points in his presidential address at the Indian Science Congress at New Delhi on January 3rd. There will be none to challenge his committing of the country to co-operation for peace and progress, his warning to scientific workers not to allow themselves to be exploited for base ends, his insistence that

science must think in terms of the 400,000,000 persons in India who need food, clothing, education, health, etc.—all the absolute necessities of life that every man should possess.

We cannot, however, concede the subordinate position assigned by implication to philosophy and religion when Pandit Nehru said that truth and God had little or no meaning to the hungry. “We have to find food for them. When we have done that we can philosophise and think of God.” This is putting the cart before the horse. Pandit Nehru’s quarrel really cannot be with the paramount importance of religion and philosophy *par sang*, but rather with the false religions and philosophies that, ignoring human unity, permit complacency in the presence of remediable suffering.

In the absence of a sound philosophy of life the recent communal riots, for example, which naturally Pandit Nehru deplored, are not only understandable events but ominous portents. Without a true philosophy of life possessed by some at least of the leaders of the peo-

ple, there seem to be no reasonable grounds for Pandit Nehru’s assurance that when a whole people was on the move, thus giving evidence of their vitality, “even if they went astray, they would come back to the right path.”

Social and economic questions do press for solution and cannot longer be put off, but before one builds the house one makes the plan!

“Mere independence cannot make us happy,” declared Prof. Meghnad Saha, F.R.S., in a statement issued late in December apropos of the prospective inauguration at Delhi on 2nd January of the Association of Scientific Workers (India). This proposition requires no demonstration beyond a glance at the “free” countries of the West.

Professor Saha did well to deplore the over-emphasis which some politicians place on issues which seldom concern the common man and their ignoring of such vital problems as food, clothing, housing, education, etc. Communal rights are rightly included among such irrelevant issues but, as certainly, religion is not—unless by religion creedalism is meant. True religion—the understanding of the relation of the part to the Whole and to all other parts, and action in accordance with that understanding—can furnish what Professor Saha truly says

political institutions have failed to discover: "The common purpose in life which would lead to unity." It is most questionable whether scientific institutions can succeed better than the politicians have done.

This is not to say that science is not very necessary or that scientific workers do not merit what Professor Saha pleads for on their behalf—more adequate remuneration and release from "the degrading status of 'order suppliers' to the vested interests... responsible for bringing wars every twenty years." The physical necessities must be provided, by all means, for all, and in that provision science can play a most important rôle. But they are means, not ends.

We would not put a damper on the long overdue zeal for housing and other physical reforms, but in the matter of relative values, old Epictetus' statement cannot be gainsaid:—

You will confer the greatest benefit on your city, not by raising the roofs but by exalting the souls of your fellow-citizens. For it is better that great souls should live in small habitations than that abject slaves should burrow in great houses.

Developing Village India: Studies in Village Problems, is a beautifully and profusely illustrated volume of nearly 300 pages, revealing and informative, invaluable to the rural worker and of interest to any one. This "Special Number 1946" of *Indian Farming*, published by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research at New Delhi, contains more than fifty articles, grouped under Organisation, Publicity and Propaganda, Agriculture and Nutrition, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Cottage Industries, Health and Sanita-

tion and Education and Culture. It testifies most eloquently to the growing recognition of the key importance of our villagers in any scheme for national advance.

Appropriately it is dedicated "To Indian Peasants with whom now lies the deciding vote and power." But the composite picture which emerges, has, for all its interest, its depressing side. Was ever sceptre thrust into hands so unready to wield it? The rigid conservatism of the Indian cultivator is rooted in the ignorance which it tends to perpetuate, as J. M. Lobo-Prabhu brings out in his thoughtful article, based on experience, as a District Officer, with "The Villager's Mind." But that very conservatism, so baffling when it slows down salutary change in the initial stages, may prove most valuable as a brake as the movement gains momentum. The too rapid weakening of custom and tradition, the too sudden spread of indiscriminate enthusiasm for the new, may lead to the drying up of the sources of India's spiritual strength by the crowding out of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and *Quran* by agricultural journals and their congeners. The sudden conversion to material values might easily put the masses at the mercy of the revolutionary demagogue and sweep them from their moorings, with dire results to India and to world peace.

It is therefore of the highest importance that the traditional culture of the villagers is recognised as integral to the planning for their welfare. Sir Datar Singh remarks in his Preface:—

Folk art, folk-dances, folk-songs—all have been given their place in the whole scheme for they are the heartbeats of the village.

Several important points were made by Lady Dhanvanthi Rama Rau in her presidential address delivered at Akola on December 29th before the nineteenth session of the All-India Women's Conference. These included the priority of the preliminary conditions for health and housing over even educational needs and the part that women can and should play in promoting the amelioration of economic conditions by fostering cottage industries, women's co-operative societies, etc. Especially, however, Lady Rama Rau wisely insisted on the responsibility of safeguarding children's rights.

The lack of knowledge of the requirements of the child from the earliest stage—even the pre-natal stage—the necessary diet, discipline, hours of sleep and play, methods of awakening the child mind etc., is pathetic.

“In no country,” she declared, “are children so much neglected in spite of all the love bestowed on them as in India.” She saw nation-wide propaganda in the homes as a primary need and urged the branches of the Conference to work for the child's fundamental rights by changing the outlook of the mothers and the grandmothers—a task which only women could successfully perform.

Presiding at Akola on 29th December, at a meeting under the auspices of the All-India Women's Conference, the Princess of Berar appealed to the women of India to do all in their power to bring about communal harmony. Without this, she truly declared, there could be neither progress anywhere in India nor security in any Indian home. She deplored that on the golden threshold of freedom, on which India stood, fell the dark shadow of communal strife.

I feel it in my heart that it is not thus she should have approached this day, unsure of herself and with inner turmoil and torment tearing at her heart. It is with the calm strength and dignity born of peace and concord among her children of all races and of understanding of one another's problems and purpose, with courage, conviction and tolerance, that she should have moved to greet the dawn. Then none would have questioned or criticised her ability to attain or maintain that power.

The women of the country cannot disclaim indirect responsibility for the present situation or for the tragic happenings of recent months, though the ignorance of the majority may be urged in extenuation. The removal of that ignorance should be a first charge on the State. For women everywhere are the creators of the climate of thought and feeling in which their children pass their formative years. It is proverbial that “as the twig is bent, the tree is inclined.” Childhood impressions form the background for later thoughts, feelings and acts.

The Princess of Berar therefore did well to urge upon the women of the country the duty of instilling into their sons the understanding that so vast a country was naturally the home of diverse cultures, races and religions. The many colours represented by those differences could be blended, to the enriching of the Indian picture, “with wisdom and tolerance and compassion.” “Let this,” she concluded, “be for us, the women of India, our vision, our desire and our determination.”

Mr. K. G. Saiyidain, Educational Adviser to Rampur State, presiding at Trivandrum on 29th December at the fourth All-India Adult Education Conference, declared that both political

and human reasons had brought the issue of adult education to the forefront.

Recent events in India have underlined the need of education on right lines. Mr. Saiyidain appealed most earnestly to all political leaders, parents and teachers, as to all young men and women "who inhabit this great land which is today plunged in shame and mourning at the misdeeds of its own children—to realise whither we are going and to cry a halt to this madness."

Mere imparting of the rudiments of education and leaving the adult unenlightened, is playing into the hands of demagogue and fanatic, whose approach to him we shall have facilitated. Mr. Saiyidain is quoted as declaring that

unless we could bring the total impact of an enriched adult education to bear on the life of an illiterate adult and widen his horizon of knowledge and appreciation, we could not succeed even in our narrow objective of imparting literacy.

In laying the foundation stone of the National Physical Laboratory near New Delhi on January 4th, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru stressed the importance of atomic energy research in India—not, he hoped, to make bombs, but for its practical bearing on industry etc. Not only had radio-active elements their demonstrated therapeutic value; they also held the promise of making power mobile, and thus of making possible the wider distribution of industry. India had tremendous power resources yet inadequately tapped, posing the question how to

yoke those together with her manpower and her vast mineral resources.

Science could, moreover, help to overcome the present rather hidebound and restricted outlook of many in regard to social customs and the like.

Science had been of service in the past and should be in the future in helping to free mankind from terror of the gods, though much remained still to be done in India in that respect. And then he said a true and highly thought-provoking thing: "There is, perhaps, a greater terror even than the terror of the gods, and that is the terror of man himself." We do not altogether share the confidence which he expressed that, "in that, science and the scientific approach may also help a great deal."

As he himself brought out at the inaugural meeting of the All-India Scientific Workers Association, "a time may come when organised scientists may well have the power to hold a pistol at the rest of the community if they want to." That might happen, he said, if science proceeded

purely on the lines of advocating and encouraging the profit motive in the individual. Power plus profit motive is a very dangerous thing and I should like scientists to develop more of what in India we consider the Brahminic spirit...

which he implied had nothing at all to do with birth in a Brahmin body.

What, indeed, but the understanding of the unity of all men with each other and with the Universal Presence, can inspire that spirit and so effectively remove "the terror of man himself"?