

**TEXT FLY WITHIN
THE BOOK ONLY**

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_174190

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY



FOUNDED BY
RABINDRANATH TAGORE

EDITOR:
K. R. KRIPALANI

Vol. VI, Part III, New Series

Nov. 1940—Jan. 1941

Price: Rs. 2/- (3s. 6d.)

The Visva-Bharati Quarterly



यत्र विश्वं भवत्येकनीडम् ॥

(Where the whole world finds its shelter.)

Visva-Bharati Quarterly is not intended to be an exclusive organ of Visva-Bharati, regarded as an institution localised at Santiniketan. It is a collaboration of writers, scholars, and artists of different countries who, through disinterested pursuit of knowledge or creation or expression of beauty, are adding to the cultural heritage of Man. No religious creed is therefore advocated in these pages; nor any political policy undertaken for views that may find place therein, except in so far as it is necessary to provide opportunity for free expression of ideas.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Rathindranath Tagore
Nandalal Bose
Bhupendra Nath Mohan Sen

Rathindranath Tagore
Nandalal Bose
K. R. Kripalani (*Editor*)

Editors will be glad to consider manuscripts offered for publication. The greatest care will be taken of such manuscripts, but no responsibility is assumed regarding them. Manuscripts, Books for review, and editorial suggestions should be addressed to the Editor, The Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, Bengal, India.

Orders & copy for Advertisement should be sent to the Manager at Santiniketan, Bengal, India.

Price per issue is Rs. 2/- (foreign 3s. 6d.)

Annual subscription Rs. 8/- (14s.) post free.

Members of the Visva-Bharati Rs. 4/- per year, post free.)

The Visva-Bharati Quarterly

Vol. VI, Part III, New Series

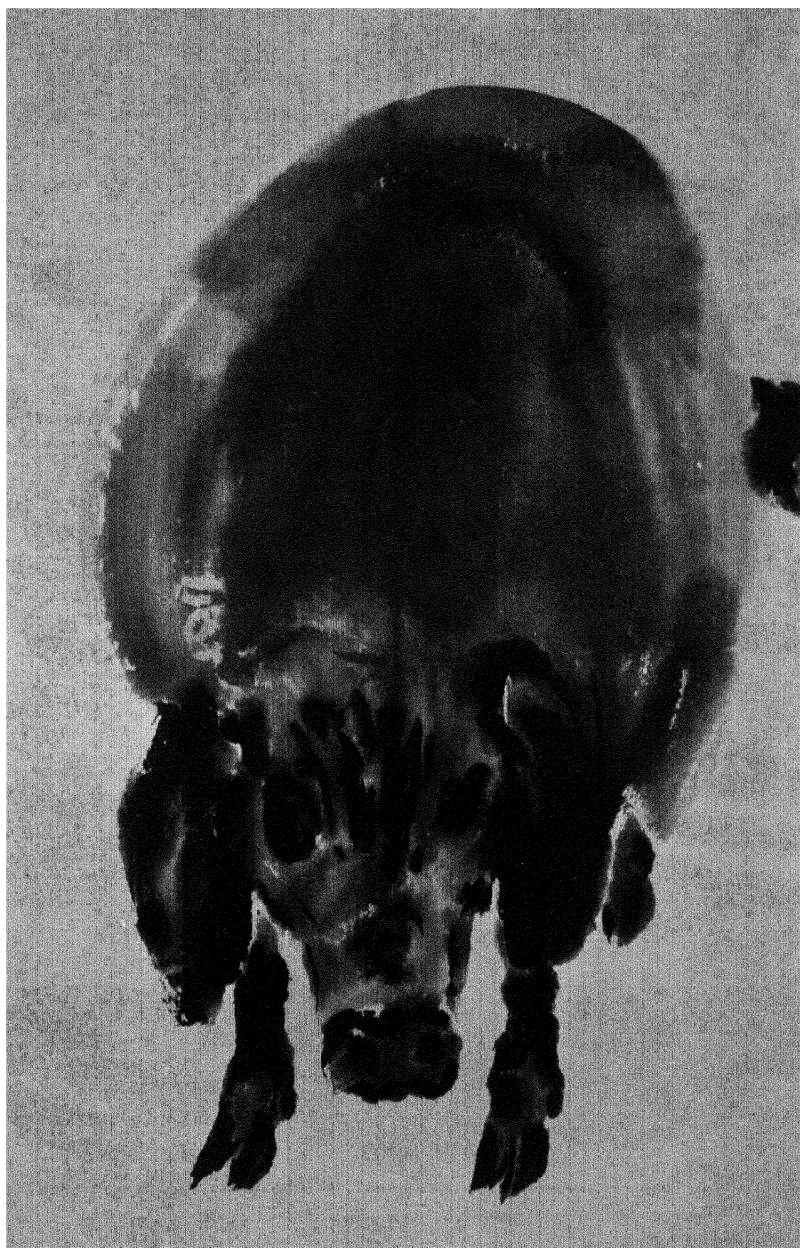
Nov. 1940—Jan. 1941

CONTENTS

Atonement (Poem)	Rabindranath Tagore	185
My Boyhood Days	Rabindranath Tagore	187
What might Hinayana Buddhists learn from Christianity ?	Prof. James B. Pratt	225
Festival of Lights (Poem)	Sarojini Naidu	234
The Idealism of Mahatma Gandhi	Dr. P. T. Raju	235
Four Poems	Rabindranath Tagore	244
Khaqani's Poetry	Prof. Hadi Hasan	248
Before the Sun Rises (Poem)	A. Aronson	260
Why Khadi	S. N. Mozumdar	265
Reviews		273

ILLUSTRATIONS

Study of a Pig	By Ju Péon	Frontispiece
Pencil Sketch of Dwijendranath Tagore	By Jyotindranath Tagore	Facing page 208
Landscape	By Rabindranath Tagore	Facing page 244



By JU PEÓN

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

November

New Series, Vol. VI, Part III

1940

ATONEMENT*

OVERHEAD the array of electric lights . . .
and beneath
in this hell of civilization
—where in the bowels of subterranean darkness
they amass looted wealth,
and the starving and the sleek overfed
struggle in a mortal clash—
the poison of evil corrodes the dense air.

The earth rocks in this over-heat of passion
and the foundation gapes wide
of the temples of triumph.
The store-house where they hoard their stolen gold
crumbles into the dust.

And there in the barbarous caves
the snakes of doom
are rudely roused from slumber.
Their expanded hoods sway ominous
and their venomous fangs
hiss forth ruin and fire.

Let mad confusion squander away
the iniquitous heap of greed.
Let the sore burst in one painful instant
and vomit out its pus of ignominy.
Let the vulture with its murderous claws

* Translated from the original Bengali poem (in *Nabajatak*—1940) by Kshitish Roy.

tear the breast of the earth—
who knows its nails may blunt by use one day !

At the feast of power today
the cannibals are quarrelling
over human sacrifice ;
today the face of the earth
is smeared with gory red.
But time comes
when out of this orgy of devastation
heroic peace will emerge victorious.
Let flames lick up everything unholy,
every evil, every weakness
and burn them into ashes.
I shall stand firm facing all,
nor shall I doubt ever !

In vain do the band of comfort-lovers
visit the temple of the Lord
to dupe Him with honeyed falsehood.
The faint-hearted,
they hope to bring peace to the world
with their cringing prayers.
While insatiate desires rankle their bosom,
they hope to buy indulgence
by chanting their scriptures.

Poor fools, they do not know
if any strength remains in righteousness
there will be a terrible reckoning
—an atonement for all our yesterdays.

And then the morrow will come
and bring a new life to a new land
bright with a new lustre.

Rabindranath Tagore

MY BOYHOOD DAYS*

Rabindranath Tagore

NOWADAYS the city's pleasures flow on like a full river, without a moment's pause. At any hour of the day there is a cinema show somewhere, and whoever pleases may see it for a trifling sum. But in those days entertainments were few and far between, like water holes dug in the sandy bed of a dried up river, three or four miles apart. Like these too they lasted only a few hours, and the wayfarers hastily gathered round, drinking from their cupped hands to quench their thirst.

The old days were like a king's son who, from time to time on festive occasions, or according to his whim, distributes rich and royal gifts to all within his jurisdiction. Modern days are like a merchant's son, sitting at the cross-roads on some great highway with many kinds of cheap and tawdry goods spread glittering before him, and drawing his customers by highway and byway from every side.

Brajeswar was the head-servant, and his second-in-command was called Shyam. He came from Jessore, and he was a real countryman, speaking in a dialect strange to Calcutta. He would say "tenārā" and "ōnārā" for "tārā" and "ōrā", "jāti" and "khāti" for "jetē" and "khetē", "mugīr" and "kulīr" for "mugēr" and "kulēr". Our family "affection" name for him was "Dormani". He had a dark skin, big eyes, long hair glistening with oil, and a strong, well-built body. Endowed by nature with a rough exterior, he was really good at heart, and especially fond of children. He used to tell us stories of dacoits. Dacoity stories filled men's houses then as universally as the fear of ghosts filled their minds. Even today dacoity is no rare thing; murder, assault and looting do take place, and the police do not always catch the right man. But the facts are before us in our newspapers, and it has none of the fascination of romance. In those days dacoities were woven into stories, and passed from mouth to mouth for long periods. In my childhood men were still to be met with who in their prime had been members of dacoit

*Continued from the previous number.

gangs. They were all past-masters in the science of the *lathi*, and were surrounded by disciples eager to learn the art of single-stick. Men made reverent obeisance at the very mention of their names. Dacoity then was usually not a mere matter of rash, headstrong bloodshed. Bodily strength and skill was needed for it, and a generous, gallant mind. Moreover, gentlemen's houses often contained an exercise-ground for the practice of *lathi*-fighting, and those who made a name on these grounds were acknowledged as masters even by dacoits, who gave them a wide berth. Many zemindars made a profession of dacoity. There was a story of a man of this class who had stationed his gang at the mouth of a river. It was new moon, and poojah night, and when his desperadoes returned, carrying a severed head to the temple in honour of Kali Kankali,* the zemindar struck his forehead wildly and cried out, "What have you done? My son-in-law!"

We heard also about the exploits of the dacoits Raghu and Bishu. They used to give notice before they attacked, and they committed no other crime than dacoity. When their rallying-cry was heard in the distance, the blood of the villagers ran cold. But their code forbade them to lay hands on women, and the story ran that on one occasion a woman had advanced to confront them in the guise of Kali, a sacrificial knife upheld in her hand; and by her presence-of-mind had not only saved her household, but received the devout offerings of the dacoits into the bargain.

One day there was a display of dacoits' wrestling feats in our house. They were all strong young fellows, big-made, dark-skinned, and long-haired. One man tied a cloth round a heavy grain-pounder, seized the cloth in his teeth, and then flung the pounder upwards and backwards so that it landed on his back. Another invited men to grasp him by his shaggy hair, and then whirled them round and round by a mere turn of his head. Using a long pole as support and lever, they leaped up to the

* The destructive aspect of the goddess Kali, pictured with a necklace of skulls.

second storey. Then one man stood with his hands clasped above his bent head, and others shot through the aperture like diving birds. They also showed how it was possible for them to manage a dacoity twenty or thirty miles away, and the same night be found sleeping peacefully in their beds like law-abiding citizens. They had a pair of very long poles with a piece of wood lashed cross-wise in the middle of each as a foot-rest. These poles were called stilts. When walking with the tops of the poles held in the hands, and the feet on these foot-holds, one stride had the value of ten ordinary steps, and a man could go faster than a horse. I used to encourage boys of former generations at Santiniketan to practise stilt-walking—though without any idea of committing dacoity ! With such a picture of dacoity feats mingling in my mind with Shyam's stories, how often have I spent the evening with my arms huddled against my pounding heart !

Sunday was a holiday. On the previous evening the crickets were chirping in the thickets outside in the south garden, and the story was about Raghu the highwayman. My heart went pit-a-pat in the dim light and flickering shadows of the room. The next day in my holiday leisure I climbed into the palanquin. It began to move unbidden, its destination unknown, and my mind, enthralled still by the magic of the previous night's romance, knew a thrill of delicious fear. In the silent darkness my pulses attuned themselves to the rhythmic chant of the bearers, and my body trembled with excitement. . . .

On the boundless expanse of plain the air quivers in the heat, in the distance glistens the tank of the Kali temple ; the sand sparkles ; the wide-spreading *pakur* tree leans from the bank of the river over the cracked, ruined *ghat*. My romance-fed terrors become concentrated on the thick clump of reeds standing below the tree on that unknown plain. Nearer and nearer we approach, quicker and quicker beats my heart. Above the reeds can be seen the tips of one or two stout bamboo staves. The bearers will stop there to change shoulders. They will drink, and wind wet towels round their heads. And then ? . . .

Then with a blood-curdling shout, the dacoits are upon us. . . .

.. .. .

From morning till night the mills of learning went on grinding. To wind up this creaking machinery was the work of *Shejdādā**—Hemendranath. He was a stern taskmaster, but it is of no use now to hide the fact that the greater part of the cargo with which he sought to load our minds was tipped out of the boat and sent to the bottom. My learning at any rate was a profitless cargo.

Shejdādā made all arrangements for the education of his eldest daughter. When the time came he got her admitted into the Loreto Convent School, but even before that she had become proficient in Bengali. He also gave Protibha a thorough training in western music, which, however, did not cause her to lose her skill in Indian music. Among the gentlemen's families of that time she had no equal in Hindustani songs.

It is one merit of western music that its scales and exercises demand diligent practice, that it makes for a sensitive ear, and that the discipline of the piano allows of no slackness in the matter of rhythm.

Meanwhile she had learnt Indian music from her earliest years from our teacher Vishnu. In this school of music I also had to be entered. No present-day musician, whether famous or obscure, would have consented to touch the kind of songs with which Vishnu initiated us. They were the very commonest kind of Bengali folk songs. Let me give you a few examples :

“A gypsy lass is come to town
 To paint tattoos, my sister.
 The painting's nothing, so they tell,
 Yet she on me has cast a spell,

* Third elder brother

And makes me weep and mocks me well,
By her tattoos, my sister."

I remember also a few fragmentary lines, such as :

"The sun and moon have owned defeat,
the firefly's lamp lights up the stage ;
The Moghul and the Pathan flag,
the weaver reads the Persian page."

and :

"Your daughter-in-law is the plantain tree,
Mother of Ganesh, let her be.—
For if but one flower should blossom and grow
She will have so many children you
won't know what to do."

Lines too come back to me in which one can catch a glimpse of old forgotten histories :

"There was a fawning, footlicking cur,
Cut through the jungle of thorn and burr,
Built him a throne. . . ."

The modern custom is first to practise scales—*sā-re-ga-ma*, etc., on the harmonium, and then to teach some simple Hindi songs. But the wise supervisor who was then in charge of our studies understood that boyhood has its own childish needs, and that these simple Bengali words would make themselves a place in our minds much more easily than Hindi speech. Besides this, the rhythm of this folk music did not need accompaniment by drums and instruments. It danced itself into our very pulses. The experiment thus made showed that a child learns his first enjoyment of literature from his mother's nursery rhymes, and his first enjoyment of music from the same source.

The harmonium, that bane of Indian music, was not then in use. I practised my songs with my *tambura* resting on my shoulder, I did not subject myself to the slavery of the keyboard.

It was no one's fault but my own, that nothing could keep me for many days together in the beaten track of learning. I strayed at will, filling my wallet with whatever gleanings of knowledge I chanced upon. If I had been disposed to give my mind to my studies, the musicians of these days would have had no cause to slight my work. For I had plenty of opportunity. As long as my brother was in charge of my education, I repeated Brahmo songs with Vishnu in an absent-minded fashion. When I felt so inclined I would sometimes hang about the doorway while my brother was practising, and pick up the song that was going on. Once he was singing to the *Behag* air, "O thou of slow and stately tread." Unobserved I listened and fixed the tune in my mind, and astounded my mother—an easy task—by singing it to her that evening. Our family friend Srikantha Babu was absorbed in music day and night. He would sit on the verandah, rubbing *chameli* oil on his body before his bath, his *hookah* in his hand, and the fragrance of amber-scented tobacco rising into the air. He was always singing, and we boys were always attracted to listen. He never *taught* us songs, he simply sang them, and unconsciously I picked them up. When he could no longer restrain his enthusiasm, he would stand up and dance, accompanying himself on the *sitar*. His big expressive eyes shone with enjoyment, he burst into song and would not rest content till I joined in too.

In matters of hospitality, people kept open house in those days. There was no need for a man to be intimately known before he was received. There was a bed to be had at any time, and a plate of rice at the regular meal times for any who chanced to come. One day, for example, one such stranger guest, who carried his *tambura* wrapped in a quilt on his shoulder, opened his bundle, sat down, and stretched his legs at ease on one side of our reception room, and Kanai the *hookah*-tender offered him the customary courtesy of the *hookah*.

Pān and tobacco each played an equally great part in the reception of guests. In those days the morning occupation of

the women in the inner apartments consisted of preparing piles of *pan* for the use of those who visited the outer reception room. Deftly they placed the lime on the leaf, smeared catechu on it with a small stick, and putting in the appropriate amount of spice folded and secured it with a clove. This prepared *pan* was then piled into a brass container, and a moist piece of cloth, stained with catechu, acted as cover. Meanwhile, in the room under the staircase outside, the stir and bustle of preparing tobacco would be going on. In a big earthenware tub were balls of charcoal covered with ash, the pipes of the *hookahs* hung down like the snakes of *Nagalok*, the scent of rosewater in their tubes. This amber scent of tobacco was the first welcome extended by the household to those who climbed the steps to visit the house. Such was the invariable custom then prescribed for the fitting reception of guests. That overflowing bowl of *pan* has long since been discarded, and the caste of *hookah*-tenders have thrown off their liveries and taken to the sweetmeat shops, where they knead up three-day-old "*sandesh*" and re-fashion it for sale.

That unknown musician stayed for a few days, just as he chose. No one asked him any questions. At dawn I used to drag him from his mosquito curtains and make him sing to me. (Those who have no inclination for regular study find irregular study a luxury !) The morning melody of *Bansi hamari re . . .* would rise on the air. We would never have dreamed of receiving payment for our hospitality, yet this repaid us beyond measure.

After this, when I was a little older, a very great musician called Jadu Bhatta came and stayed in the house. He made one big mistake in undertaking to teach me music, and consequently no teaching took place. Nevertheless, I did casually pick up from him a certain amount of stolen knowledge. I was very fond of the song "The dancing music of the rain today," which was set to a *Kafi* tune, and which remains to this day in my store of rainy season songs. But unfortunately just at this time another

guest arrived without warning, who had a name as a tiger-hunter. A Bengali tiger-hunter !—*that* was a real marvel, and it followed that I remained captivated in his room for the greater part of the time. I realise clearly now what I never dreamed of then, that it was to satisfy our persistence and give us the thrill we expected that he brought out his stories, and that the tiger whose fell clutches he described, had in point of fact never touched him at all. But in those days I busied myself eagerly in the liberal provision of *pan* and tobacco for this hero, and the distant strains of *kanara* music fell faintly on my indifferent ears.

So much for music. In other studies the foundation provided by *Shejdada* was equally generously laid. It was the fault of my own nature that no great matter came of it. It was with people like me in view that Ramprosad Sen wrote, "O Mind, you do not understand the art of cultivation." With me, the work of cultivation never took place. But let me tell you of a few fields where the ploughing at least was done.

I got up while it was still dark and practised wrestling—on cold days I shivered and trembled with cold. In the city was a celebrated one-eyed wrestler, who gave me practice. On the north side of the outer room was an open space known as the "granary." The name clearly had survived from a time when the city had not yet completely crushed out all rural life, and a few open spaces still remained. When the life of the city was still young our granary had been filled with the whole year's store of grain, and the *ryots* who held their land on lease from us brought to it their appointed portion. It was here that the lean-to shed for wrestling was built against the compound wall. The floor had been prepared by digging and loosening the earth to a depth of about a cubit and pouring over it a maund of mustard oil. It was mere child's play for the wrestler to try a fall with me there, but I would manage to get well smeared with dust by the end of the lesson, when I put on my shirt and went indoors.

Mother did not like to see me come in every morning so

covered with dust—she feared that the colour of her son's skin would be darkened and spoiled. As a result, she occupied herself on holidays in scrubbing me. (Fashionable housewives of today buy their toilet preparations in boxes from western shops ; but then they used to make their unguent with their own hands. It contained finely ground nuts, cream, the rind of oranges and many other things which I forget. If only I had learnt and remembered, I might have set up a shop and sold it as “Begum Bilash” unguent, and made at least as much money as the *sandesh-wallahs*.) On Sunday mornings there was a great rubbing and scrubbing on the verandah, and I would begin to grow restless to get away. Incidentally a story used to go about among our school fellows that in our house babies were bathed in wine as soon as they were born, and that was the reason for our fair European complexions.

When I came in from the wrestling ground I saw a Medical College student waiting to teach me the lore of bones. A whole skeleton hung on the wall. It used to hang at night on the wall of our bedroom, and the bones swayed in the wind and rattled together. But the fear I might otherwise have felt had been overcome by constantly handling it, and by learning by heart the long, difficult names of the bones.

The clock in the porch struck seven. Master Nilkamal was a stickler for punctuality, there was no chance of a moment's variation. He had a thin, shrunken body, but his health was as good as his pupil's, and never once, unluckily for us, was he afflicted even by a headache. Taking my book and slate I sat down before the table, and he began to write figures on the blackboard in chalk. Everything was in Bengali, arithmetic, algebra and geometry. In literature I jumped at one bound from *Sītār Banabās*¹ to *Meghnādbadh Kābya*.² Along with this there

1. “Sita in the Forest,” by Iswarchandra Vidyāsāgar.

2. An Epic on the death of Meghnād (son of Ravana in *Rāmāyana*) by Michael Madhusudan Dutta.

was natural science. From time to time Sitanath Datta would come, and we acquired some superficial knowledge of science by experiments with familiar things. Once Heramba Tattvaratna, the Sanskrit scholar, came; and I began to learn the Mugdhabodh Sanskrit grammar by heart, though without understanding a word of it.

In this way, all through the morning, studies of all kinds were heaped upon me, but the greater the burden, the more did the mind within contrive little by little to shift it; making a hole in the enveloping net, my imagination slipped through its meshes and escaped—and the opinion that Master Nilkamal formed of his pupil's intelligence was not of the kind to be made public.

In another part of the verandah is the old tailor, his thick-lensed spectacles on his nose, sitting bent over his sewing, and ever and anon, at the prescribed hours, going through the ritual motions of his prayers. I watch him and think what a lucky fellow Niamut is. Then, with my head in a whirl from addition sums, I shade my eyes with my slate, and looking down see in front of the entrance porch Chandrabhān the *durwan* combing his beard with a wooden comb, dividing it in two and looping it round each ear. The assistant *durwan*, a slender boy, is sitting near by, a bracelet on his arm, and cutting tobacco. Over there the horse has already finished his morning allowance of gram, and the crows are hopping round pecking at the scattered grains. Our dog Johnny's sense of duty is aroused and he drives them away barking.

I had planted a custard-apple seed in the dust which continual sweeping had collected in one corner of the verandah. I watched eagerly for the sprouting of the new leaves. As soon as Master Nilkamal had gone, I had to run and examine it, and water it. In the end my hopes went unfulfilled—the same broom that had gathered the dust together dispersed it again to the four winds.

Now the sun climbs higher, and the slanting shadows cover only half the courtyard. The clock strikes nine. Govinda,

short and dark, with a dirty yellow towel slung over his shoulder, takes me off to bathe me. Promptly at half past nine comes our monotonous, unvarying meal—the daily ration of rice, *dal* and fish curry—I cannot say that I enjoyed it.

The clock strikes ten. From the main street is heard the hawker's cry of "Green mangoes"—what wistful dreams it awakens ! From further and further away comes the music of the receding brass-peddler, striking his wares till they ring again. The lady of the neighbouring house in the lane is drying her hair on the roof, and her two little girls are playing with shells. They have plenty of leisure, for in those days girls were not obliged to go to school, and I used to think how fine it would have been to be born a girl. But as it is, the old horse draws me in the rickety carriage to my Andamans, in which from ten to four I am doomed to exile.

At half past four I return from school. The gymnastic master has come, and for about an hour I exercise my body on the horizontal bar. He has no sooner gone than the drawing master arrives.

Gradually the rusty light of day fades away. The many blurred noises of the evening are heard as a dreamy hum resounding over the demon city of brick and mortar. In the study room an oil lamp is burning. Master Aghor has come and the English lesson begins. The black-covered reader is lying in wait for me on the table. The cover is loose ; the pages are stained and a little torn ; I have tried my hand at writing my name in English in it, in the wrong places, and all in capital letters. As I read I nod, then jerk myself awake again with a start, but miss far more than I read. When finally I tumble into bed I have at last a little time to call my own. And there I listen to stories—the king's son travels over a vast and trackless plain, but I never succeed in following him to the end.

When I see the roofs of modern houses, uninhabited by either men or ghosts, I realise vividly the change that has taken

place between those times and these. I have already mentioned how the spirit of the *bādām* tree had fled, unable to endure the modern atmosphere of excessive learning. On the cornice where rumour had it that he had rested his foot, the crows snatch and squabble over our discarded mango stones. And men too restrict themselves nowadays to the confined, boxed-in rooms of the lower storeys, and pass their time within four walls.

My mind goes back to the parapet-surrounded roof of the inner apartments. It is evening, and Mother has spread her mat and seated herself, with her friends gossiping round her. Their chatter has no need of authentic information, it is only a means of passing the time. There was then no regular supply of valuable and varied ingredients to fill the day, which was not, as now, a closely woven mesh, but like a net of loose texture, full of holes. And therefore, stories and rumours, laughter and jokes, circulated freely, both in the social gatherings of the men and in the women's assemblies. Among Mother's friends the first in importance was Braja Acharya's sister, who was called "Acharjini." She was the daily purveyor of news to the company. Almost every day she picked up, (or made up!) and brought with her, every item of fantastic, ominous news in the country. By this means expenditure on all ceremonies calculated to avert impending calamity or the evil eye, was greatly increased.

Into this assembly I imported from time to time my recently acquired book-learning. I informed them that the sun is nine crores of miles distant from the earth. From the second part of my "Easy-Reader" I recited a portion of the Ramayana of Valmiki himself, complete with Sanskrit terminations. Mother was no judge of the accuracy of her son's pronunciation, but the range of his learning filled her with awe, and seemed to her much more wonderful than the nine-crore mile journey of light. Who would have thought that any except Naradmuni himself could recite all these *slokas*?

This inner apartment roof was entirely the women's domain,

and had a close connection with the store room. The sun's rays fell full upon it, so it was used for preparing lemons for pickle. The women used to sit there with brass vessels full of *kalai* pulse, and while their hair was drying they made pulse-balls with their deft, quick fingers. The maid-servants who had washed the soiled linen came here to spread it in the sun, for the *dhoby* had little work in those days. Green mangoes were cut in slices and dried for *āmsi*. The mango juice gathered and thickened over black stone moulds of all sizes and all patterns.¹ A pickle of young jackfruit stood there to season in sun-warmed mustard oil. Catechu, scented with the fragrant screw-pine (কেলা) would be prepared with great care.

I had a special reason for remembering this item. When my school-master informed me that he had heard the fame of my family's screwpine catechu, it was not difficult to understand his meaning. What he had heard of, he wished to become acquainted with. So to preserve the good name of my family, I occasionally climbed secretly to the roof containing the screwpine catechu, and—what shall I say? “Appropriated” a little, sounds better than “stole” For even kings and emperors may make “appropriations” when need arises, or indeed even if it does not, but vulgar “stealing” is punished by prison or impaling.

In the pleasant sunlight of the cold weather it was the family tradition for the women to sit on the roof gossiping, driving off crows and passing the time of day. I was the only younger brother-in-law in the house, the guardian of my sisters-in-law's “*āmsatta*”, and their friend and ally in many other trivial pursuits. I used to read to them from *Bangadhipa Parajaya*². From time to time the duty of cutting up betel-nut would devolve on me. I could cut betel very finely. My sister-in-law would never admit that I had any other good quality, so much so that she even made me angry with God for giving me such a faulty appearance. But she found no difficulty in speaking in exaggerated fashion of

1. This preparation is called *āmsatta*.

2. “The defeat of the king of Bengal.”

my skill in cutting betel. Therefore the work of betel-cutting used to go on at a fine pace. But for a long time now, for want of anyone to encourage me, the hand that was so skilled in fine betel-cutting has perforce busied itself in other fine work.

Amid all this women's work that went on on the roof there lingered the aroma of village life. These occupations belonged to the days when there was a pounding room in the house, when confectionery balls were made, when the maid servants sat in the evening rolling on their thighs the cotton wicks for the oil lamps, when invitations came from neighbours' houses to the ceremonies of the eighth day after birth. Modern children do not hear fairy stories from their mothers' lips, they read them for themselves in printed books. Pickles and chutney are bought from the Newmarket by the bottleful, each bottle corked and sealed with wax.

The stamp of a bygone village life was impressed likewise on the outer verandah (*chandimandap*) where the school was held. Not only the boys of the house, but those of the neighbourhood also, made there their first attempt to scratch letters on palm-leaves. It is certain that I too traced out my first laborious letters on that verandah, but though I have tried every device to recall to memory the child I then was, he still eludes me, as the remotest planet of the solar system may elude the telescope of the frustrated star-gazer.

The first thing I remember about reading after this is the terrible story of Shandamark Muni's school, and of the *avatār* Narasimha tearing the bowels of Hiranyakashipu; I think also that there was a lead-plate engraving of it in the same book—and I remember a few *slokas* of Chanakya dating from that time too.

My chief holiday resort was the unfenced roof of the outer apartments. From my earliest childhood till I was grown up, many varied days were spent on that roof in many moods and thoughts. When my father was at home his room was on the third floor. How often I watched him at a distance, from my hiding place at the head of the staircase. The sun had not yet

risen, and he sat on the roof silent as an image of white stone, his hands folded in his lap. From time to time he would leave home for long periods in the mountains, and then the journey to the roof held for me the joy of a voyage through the seven seas. Sitting on the familiar first floor verandah I had daily watched through the railings the people going about the street. But to climb to that roof was to be raised beyond the swarming habitations of men. When I went on to the roof my mind stepped proudly over prostrate Calcutta to where the last blue of the sky mingled with the last green of the earth ; my eye fell on the roofs of countless houses, of all shapes and sizes, high and low, with the shaggy tops of trees between.

I would go up secretly to this roof, usually at midday. The midday hours have always held a fascination for me. They are like the night of the daytime, the time when the *Sannyāsi* spirit in every boy makes him long to quit his familiar surroundings. I put my hand through the lattice and drew the bolt of the door. Right opposite the door was a sofa, and I sat there in perfect bliss of solitude. The servants who were in charge of me had eaten their fill and become drowsy, and yawning and stretching had betaken themselves to sleep on their mats. The afternoon sunlight deepened into gold, and the kite rose screaming into the sky. The bangle-seller went crying his wares down the opposite lane. By and by his cry would penetrate to where the housewife lay with her loosened hair falling over her pillow, a maid-servant would bring him in, and the old bangle-seller dexterously kneaded the tender fingers as he fitted on the glass bangles that took their fancy. The hushed pause of that old-world midday is now no more, and the hawkers of the silent time are heard no longer. The girl who in those days had married status, nowadays has still not attained it, she is learning her lessons in the second class. Perhaps the bangle-seller runs, pulling a rickshaw, down that very lane.

The roof was like what I imagined the deserts of my books to be, blazing hot everywhere. A hot wind ran panting across

it, whirling up the dust, the blue of the sky paled above it. Moreover, in this roof desert I had discovered an oasis. Nowadays the pipe water does not reach the upper floors, but then it ran even up to the third floor rooms. Like some young Livingstone of Bengal, alone and unaided, I secretly sought and found a new Niagara, the private bathroom. I would turn on the tap, and the water would run all over my body. I then took a sheet from the bed and dried myself, looking the picture of innocence.

Gradually the holiday drew towards its close, and four struck on the gateway clock. The face of the sky on Sunday evenings was always very ill-favoured. There fell across it already the shadow of the coming Monday's gaping jaws, open wide to swallow it in dark eclipse. Below at last a search had been instituted for the boy who had given his guards the slip, for now it was tiffin time. This part of the day was a red-letter time for Brajeswar. He was in charge of buying the tiffin. In those days the shop-keepers did not make thirty or forty percent profit on the price of *ghee*, and in odour and flavour the tiffin was still unpoisoned. When we got them, we lost no time eating up our *kochuri*, *singāra*, or even *alu dom*. But such treats were rare. When the time came round and Brajeswar, with his crooked neck still further twisted, called to us, "Look *babu*, what I have brought you today", what was usually to be found in his cone of paper was merely a handful of fried groundnuts. It was not that I did not like this, but its attractiveness lay in its price. I never made the least objection, not even on the days when only sesamum *goja* came out of the palm-leaf wrapper.

The light of day begins to grow murky. Once more, with a gloomy spirit, I make the round of the roof. I gaze down at the scene below, where a procession of geese has climbed out of the tank. People have begun to come and go again on the steps of the *ghat*, the shadow of the banyan tree lengthens across half the tank, the driver of a carriage and pair is yelling at the pedestrians in the street.

In this way the days passed monotonously on. School claimed all the middle part of the day, and only fragments of time in the morning and evening slipped through its clutching fingers. As soon as I entered the class-room, the benches and tables forced themselves rudely on my attention, elbowing and jostling their way into my mind. They were always the same—stiff, cramping, and dead. In the evening I went home, and the oil lamp in our study-room, like a stern signal, summoned me to the preparation of the next day's lessons.

There is a kind of locust which takes the colour of the withered leaves among which it lurks unobserved. In like manner my spirit also shrank and faded among those faded, drab-coloured days.

Now and again there came to our courtyard a man with a dancing bear, or a snake-charmer playing with his snakes. Now and again the visit of a juggler provided some little novelty. (Today the drums of the juggler and snake-charmer no longer beat in our Chitpore Road. From afar they have done obeisance to the cinema, and fled before it from the city.)

Games were few and of very ordinary kinds. We had marbles, we had what is called "bat-ball," a very poor distant relation of cricket, and there was also top spinning and kite-flying. All the games of the city children were of this same lazy kind. Football, with all its running and jumping about on a big field, was still in its overseas home. And so I was fenced in by the deadly sameness of the days, as though by an imprisoning hedge of lifeless, withered twigs.

In the midst of this monotony there played one day the flutes of festivity. A new bride came to the house, slender gold bracelets on her delicate brown hands. In the twinkling of an eye the cramping fence was broken, and a new person came into view from the magic land beyond the bounds of the familiar. I circled around her at a safe distance, but I did not dare to go near. She was enthroned in the place of honour, and I was only a neglected, insignificant child.

The house was then divided into two suites of rooms. The men lived in the outer, and the women in the inner apartments. The ways of the nabobs obtained there still. I remember how my elder sister was walking on the roof with the new bride at her side, and they were exchanging intimacies freely. As soon as I tried to go near, however, I brought reprimand on my head, for these quarters were outside the boundaries laid down for boys. I saw myself obliged to go back crest-fallen to my shabby retreat of former days. But the monsoon rain, rushing down suddenly from the distant hills, undermines the ancient banks in a moment, and that is what happened now. The new mistress brought a new regime into the house. The quarters of the bride were in the room adjoining the roof of the inner suite. That roof was under her complete control. It was there that the leaf plates were spread for the dolls' weddings. On such feast days, boy as I was, I became the guest of honour. My new sister-in-law could cook well, and enjoyed feeding people, and she welcomed my presence to satisfy this craving for playing the hostess. As soon as I returned from school some delicacy made with her own hands stood ready for me. One day she gave me shrimp curry with yesterday's soaked rice, and a dash of chillies for flavouring, and I felt that I had nothing left to wish for. Sometimes when she went to stay with relatives and I did not see her slippers outside the door of her room, I would go in a temper and steal some valuable object from her room, and lay the foundation of a quarrel. When she returned and missed it, I had only to make such a remark as "Do you expect *me* to keep an eye on your room when you go away? Am I a watchman?" She would pretend to be angry and say, "You have no need to keep an eye on the room. Watch your own hands." Modern women will smile at the *naïveté* of their predecessors who knew how to entertain only their own brothers-in-law, and I daresay they are right. People today are much more grown up in every way than they were then. Then we were all children alike, both young and old.

And so began a new chapter of my lonely Bedouin life on the roof, and human company and friendship entered it. Across the roof kingdom a new wind blew, and a new season began there. My brother Jyotidada played a large part in this change. At that time my father finally left our home at *Jorasanko*. Jyotidada settled himself into that outside third-floor room, and I claimed a little corner of it for my own.

No *pardah* was observed in my sister-in-law's apartments. That will strike no one as strange today, but it then sounded an unimaginable depth of novelty. A long time before that, when I was a baby, my second brother had returned from England to enter the Civil Service. When he went to Bombay to take up his first post he astonished the passers-by by taking off his wife with him before their very eyes. And as if it was not enough to take her away to a distant province, instead of leaving her in the family home, he made no provision for proper privacy on the journey. That was a terrible breach of propriety. Even the relatives felt as if the sky had fallen on their heads.

A style of dress suitable for going out was still not in vogue among women. It was this sister-in-law who first introduced the manner of wearing the *sari* which is now customary. Little girls had not then begun to wear frocks or let their hair hang in plaits. In our family the little ones used to wear the tight Rajput pyjamas instead of the traditional *sari*. When the Bethune School was first opened my eldest sister was quite young. She was one of the pioneers who made the road to education easy for girls. She was very fair, uniquely so for this country. I have heard that once when she was going to school the police detained her, thinking her in her Rajput dress to be an English girl who had been kidnapped.

I said before that in those days there was little familiarity or intimacy between adults and children. But Jyotidada's fresh new ideas cut right across all these old customs. I was twelve years younger than he, and that I should come to his notice in spite of such a difference in age is in itself surprising.

What was more surprising is that in my talks with him he never called me impudent or snubbed me. Thanks to this, I never lacked courage to hold and express my opinions. Today I live with children. I try all kinds of subjects of conversation, but I find them dumb. They are afraid to ask questions. They seem to me to belong to those old times when the grown-ups talked and the children remained silent. The self-confidence that doubts and questions is the mark of the children of the new age ; those of the former age are known by a meek and docile acceptance of what they are told.

A piano appeared in the terrace room. There came also modern varnished furniture from Bowbazar. My breast swelled with pride, as the cheap grandeur of the present day was displayed before eyes inured to poverty. At this time the fountain of my song was unloosed. Jyotidada's hands would stray about the piano as he composed and tried out tunes in various new styles, all very rapidly, and he would keep me by his side as he did so. Sometimes it was my work to set words to the tunes which he composed so plentifully.

At the end of the day a mat and pillow were spread on the terrace. Nearby was a thick garland of *bel* flowers on a silver plate, in a wet handkerchief, a glass of iced water on a saucer, and some *chhanchhi** *pan* in a bowl. My sister-in-law would bathe, dress her hair and come and sit with us. Jyotidada would come out with a silk *chaddar* thrown over his shoulders, and draw the bow across his violin, and I would sing in my clear treble voice. For God had not yet taken away the little voice that He had given me, and under the sunset sky my song rang out across the house-tops. The south wind came caressingly from the distant sea, the sky filled with stars.

My sister-in-law turned the whole roof into a garden. She arranged rows of tall palms on stands, and beside and around them jasmine, *gandharaj*, tube-roses, oleander and champak. She

* A kind of sweet *pan*.

considered not at all the possible damage to the roof—all three of us had the minds of visionaries, above such sordid matters.

Akshay Chaudhuri used to come almost every day. He himself knew that he had no voice, other people knew it even better. In spite of that the flow of his song stopped for nothing. His special favourite was the *Behag* mode. He sang with his eyes shut, so he did not see the expression on the faces of his hearers. As soon as anything capable of making a noise came to hand, he took it and turned it into a drum, beating it in happy absorption, biting his lips with his teeth in his earnestness. Even a book with a stiff binding would do very well. He was by nature a dreamy kind of man, one could see no difference between his working days and his holidays.

The evening party broke up, but I was always a boy who retired late. All went to lie down, I alone would wander about like a restless ghost. The whole district was steeped in silence. On moonlight nights the shadows of the lines of palm-trees on the terrace lay in dream-patterns on the floor. Beyond the terrace the top of the *Sishu* tree swayed and tossed in the breeze, and its leaves gleamed as they caught the light. But for some reason, what caught my eye more than anything was a squat room with a sloping roof, over the staircase of the sleeping house on the opposite side of the lane. It stood like a finger pointing for ever towards I knew not what.

It may have been one or two in the morning, when in the main street in front a wailing chant arose—*Bolō-Hari Hari-bōl*.¹

It was the fashion then in every house to keep caged birds. I hated this, and the worst thing of all to me was the call of a *koel* imprisoned in a cage in some house in the neighbourhood. *Bouthakrun*² had acquired a Chinese Shama. From under its covering of cloth its sweet whistling rose continuously, a foun-

1. Funeral chant of the Hindus.

2. Sister-in-law.

tain of song. Besides this there were other birds of all kinds, and their cages hung in the west verandah. Every morning a bird-seed and insect hawker provided the birds' food. Locusts came from his basket, and gram-flour for the grain-eating birds.

Jyotidada gave me serious answers in my difficulties but as much could not be expected from the women. Once *Bouthakrun* took a fancy for pet squirrels. I said it wasn't right, and she told me not to set myself up to be her teacher. That could hardly be called a reasoned reply, and consequently, instead of wasting time in bickering I privately set two of the little creatures free. After that too I had to listen to a certain amount of scolding, but I made no retort.

There was a permanent quarrel between us which was never made up, which was as follows.

There was a smart fellow called Umesh. He used to go the rounds of the English shops and buy up for an old song all their scraps, remnants and strips of many coloured silk, and make up women's garments from them with the addition of a bit of net and cheap lace. He would open his paper parcel and spread them carefully out before the eyes of the women, extolling them as "the very latest fashion." The women could not resist the attraction of such a *mantra*, but I disliked it all intensely. Again and again, unable to contain myself, I made known my objections, but all the answer I got was "Don't be cheeky." I told *Bouthakrun* plainly that the old-fashioned black-bordered white cloth, and the Dacca saris, were far better and more tasteful than these. I sometimes wonder, do modern brothers-in-law never protest when they see their *Boudidis* robed in these modern georgette saris, with their faces painted like dolls? Even *Bouthakrun* decked in Umesh's handiwork was not as bad as they are, for she was at least not so guilty of forgery in the matter of her complexion.

I was however always beaten by *Bouthakrun* in argument, because she would never deign to give a logical answer; and I was beaten too in chess, in which she was an expert.



A pencil sketch of Dwijendranath Tagore.

By Jyotirindranath Tagore.

As I have referred to Jyotidada I ought to say a little more about him, to make you better acquainted with him. To do that I must go back to rather earlier days.

He had to go very often to Shilaidah to see after the business of the zemindari. Once when he visited it for this purpose he took me also with him. This was quite contrary to custom in those days, in fact it was what people would have called "altogether *too much*". He certainly considered that this travelling away from home was a kind of peripatetic schooling. He realised that my nature was attuned to ramblings under the windy sky, that in such surroundings it drew its own nourishment from within. A little later, as the years passed, it was in Shilaidah that I grew to maturity.

The old indigo factory was still standing, with the river Padma in the distance. The zemindari office was on the ground floor, and our living quarters on the upper floor. In front of them was a very large terrace roof. Close alongside were great casuarina trees, which had increased in stature with the increasing prosperity of the indigo-trading sahebs. Today the noise and bustle of those sahebs' times has completely subsided. Where is now that steward, the indigo factory's "messenger of death"? Where the troop of bailiffs, loins girded up and *lathis* on shoulder? Where are the long tables spread in the dining hall, where the sahebs came in from their riding and turned night into day? The feasting reached its height, the dancing couples whirled round the room, the blood coursed madly through the veins in the swelling intoxication of champagne—and the "big men" never heard the cries of the unfortunate *ryots*, trudging the weary path of their punishment to the Headquarters Jail. All traces of those days have passed away, save one record alone—the two graves of two of the sahebs. The high casuarina trees bend and sway in the wind, and sometimes at midnight the grandsons and grand-daughters of the former *ryots* see the ghosts of the sahebs wandering in the deserted waste of garden.

Here I revelled in my solitude. I had a little corner room,

and my days of ample leisure were spacious as the wide-spreading terrace. Leisure in a strange and unknown country, unfathomable as the black water of some ancient tank. The "*bou-kotha-kou*"¹ calls incessantly, my fancy unweariedly takes wing. As time goes on my note-book is gradually filled with verses. They were like the blossoms of the mango-tree's first flowering in the month of *Magh*, destined like them to wither forgotten.

Whenever in those days a young boy, or still more a young girl, wrote five or six lines of verse in the fourteen syllable metre,² the wise critics of the country used to hail it as a unique and unparalleled achievement.

I saw in the newspapers the names of these girl-poets, and their verses also were published. Now their names have been blotted out from the canvas which once bore the record of their carefully constructed metres and crude rhymes, and the names of countless modern girls have appeared in their stead.

Boys are shyer and far more self-conscious than girls. I do not remember any young boy poet writing verse in those days, except myself. My brother's son, who was older than I, explained to me that if one poured words into a fourteen-syllable mould, they would condense into verse. I soon found for myself that this magic formula would work. And in my hands the lotus bloom of poetry blossomed within the fourteen-syllable mould, and the bees did not come to it in vain. The barrier between me and the poets was down, and from that time on I gradually destroyed it completely.

I remember how, when I was in the lowest class of the middle school, our superintendent Govinda Babu heard a rumour that I wrote poetry. He thereupon ordered me to write, thinking that it would redound to the credit of the Normal School. There was nothing for it but to write, to read my work before my class-mates, and to hear the verdict—"this verse is assuredly

1. Also called "*makwa-pako*", an Indian species of cuckoo. Both names are imitations of the call.

2. The common ballad metre of Bengal.

stolen goods." The cynics of that day could not foresee that when I increased in worldly wisdom I should grow shrewd in stealing, not words but thoughts. Yet it is these stolen goods which are really of value.

I remember once composing a poem in the *Poyar* and *Tripodi* metres, in which I lamented that as I swam to pluck the lotus it floated further and further away on the waves raised by my own arms, and remained always out of reach. Akshay Babu took me round to the houses of all his relatives and made me recite it to them. "The boy has certainly a gift for writing," they said.

Bouthakrun's attitude was just the opposite. She would never admit that I should ever make a success of writing. She would say contemptuously that I should never be able to write like Behari Chakravarty. I used to think despondently that even if I were placed in a far lower class than he, she would then be prevented from so disregarding her poor poet-brother-in-law's disapprobation of women's fashions.

Jyotidada was very fond of riding. He even used to take *Bouthakrun* riding along Chitpore Road to the Eden Gardens. In Shilaidah he gave me a pony, a beast that was no mean runner. He sent me to give the pony a run on the open temple-car field. I did as I was bidden, in continual imminent danger of a fall on that uneven ground. That I did not fall was solely because he was so determined that I should *not* do so. Shortly afterwards Jyotidada sent me out riding on the roads of Calcutta also. Not on the pony, but on a high-spirited thoroughbred. One day it galloped straight in through the porch, with me on its back, to the courtyard where it was accustomed to be fed. From that day on I had nothing more to do with it.

I have referred elsewhere to the fact that Jyotidada was a practised shot. He was always eager for a tiger-hunt. One day the *shikari* Biswanath brought news that a tiger was living in the Shilaidah jungle, and Jyotidada at once furbished up his gun and

prepared for sport. Surprising to say, he took me with him. It never seemed to occur to him that there could be any danger.

Biswanath was certainly an expert *shikari*. He knew that there was nothing manly about hunting from a *macha*. He would call the tiger out and shoot face to face, and he never missed his aim.

The jungle was dense, and in its lights and shadows the tiger refused to show himself. A rough kind of ladder was made by cutting footholds in a stout bamboo, and Jyotidada climbed up with his gun ready to hand. As for me, I was not even wearing sandals, I had not even that poor weapon with which to drive off the tiger. Biswanath signed to us to be on the alert, but for some time Jyotidada could not even see the tiger. After long straining of his bespectacled eyes he at last caught a glimpse of its striped body in the thicket. He fired. By a lucky fluke the shot pierced the animal's backbone, and it was unable to rise. It roared furiously, biting at all the sticks and twigs within reach, and lashing its tail. I knew very well that it was not in the nature of tigers to wait so long and patiently to be killed. I wondered if some one had had the forethought to mix a little opium with its feed on the previous night? Otherwise, why so drowsy?

There was another occasion when a tiger came to the jungles of Shilaidah. My brother and I set out on elephants to look for him. My elephant lurched ponderously on, uprooting cane from the sugar-cane fields and munching as he went, so that it was like riding on an earth-quake. The jungle lay ahead of us. He crushed the bushes with his knees, pulled them up with his trunk and cast them to the ground. I had previously heard tales of terrible possibilities from Biswanath's brother Chamru, how sometimes the tiger leaps on to the elephant's back and clings there, digging in his claws. Then the elephant, trumpeting with pain, rushes madly through the forest, and whoever is on his back is dashed against the trees till arms, legs and head are crushed out of all recognition. That day, as I sat my elephant, the

image of myself thus pounded to a jelly filled my imagination from first to last. For very shame I concealed my fear, and glanced from side to side in assured fashion, as though to say "Let me but catch a glimpse of the tiger, and then ! . . ." The elephant entered the densest part of the jungle, and coming to a certain place, suddenly stood stock-still. The *mahout* made no attempt to urge it forward. The two *shikaris* had apparently more respect for the tiger's powers than the elephant's. Their great anxiety was undoubtedly that Jyotidada should so wound the tiger as to provoke it to attack. Suddenly the tiger leaped from the jungle, swift as the thunder-charged storm from the cloud. We are accustomed to the sight of a cat, dog, or jackal, but here was concentrated energy of neck and shoulders, yet no sense of heaviness in that perfectly proportioned strength. It crossed the open farmlands at a canter in the full blaze of the midday sun. What loveliness, ease and speed of motion ! The land was empty of crops ; here indeed was a setting in which to feast one's eyes on the running tiger, this wide stretch of golden stubble drenched in the noonday sunlight.

There is one more story that may prove amusing. In Shilaidah the gardener used to pluck flowers and arrange them in the vases. I took a fancy to write poetry with a pen dipped in the coloured essences of flowers. . But the tiny drops that I could obtain by squeezing were not sufficient to wet the tip of my pen. I decided that it must be done by machinery. It would do, I thought, if I had a cup-shaped wooden sieve and a pestle revolving in it. It could be turned by an arrangement of pulleys. I made known my wants to Jyotidada. It may be that he smiled to himself, but he gave no outward sign. He issued instructions, and the carpenter brought wood. Soon my machine was ready. I filled the wooden cup with flowers, but turn the ropes of the pestle as I would, the flowers merely turned to mud and not a drop of essence ran out. Jyotidada saw that the essence of flowers was incompatible with the grinding of machinery, yet he never laughed at me.

This was the only occasion in my life on which I descended to engineering. It is said in the *sastras* that there is a god who compasses the humiliation of those who ignore their own limitations. That god cast a glance that day upon my engineering, and from that time I have not so much as laid hands on any kind of machine, not even on a *sitar* or an *esraj*.

I described in my "*Reminiscences*" how Jyotidada went bankrupt in his attempt to run a *swadeshi* steamer company in competition with the Flotilla Company on the rivers of Bengal. *Bouthakrun's* death had taken place before then. Jyotidada gave up his rooms on the third floor and finally built himself a house on a hill at Ranchi.

.. .. .

A new chapter in the life of the third storey room now opened, as I took up my abode there. Up to that time it had been merely one of my gypsy haunts, like the palanquin and the granary, and I roamed from one to another. But when *Bouthakrun* came all that was changed ; a garden appeared, and a piano was established there. Its flow of new tunes symbolised the changed tenor of my life.

Jyotidada used to arrange to have his coffee in the mornings in the shadow of the staircase room on the eastern side of the terrace. At such times he would read to us the first draft of some new play. From time to time I also would be called upon to supply a few lines with my unpractised hand. The sun gradually grew stronger, the crows cried hoarsely to each other as they sat on the highest roof keeping an eye upon the bread-crumbs. By ten o'clock the patch of shade had dwindled away and the terrace grew burning hot.

At midday Jyotidada used to go down to the office on the ground floor. *Bouthakrun* peeled and cut fruit and arranged it carefully on a silver plate, along with a few sweetmeats made with her own hands, and with a few rose petals scattered over it. In a tumbler was coconut milk or fruit-juice or fresh palmyra

kernels cooled in ice. Then she covered it with a silk kerchief embroidered with flowers, put it on a Moradabad tray, and despatched it to the office at tiffin time, about one or two o'clock.

Just then *Bangadarsan*¹ was at the height of its fame, and *Suryamukhi* and *Kundanandini*² were familiar figures in every house. The whole country thought of nothing else but what had just been published in the last instalment or what would come next.

When *Bangadarsan* came there was no midday nap for anyone in the neighbourhood. It was my good fortune not to have to snatch for it, for I had the gift of being an acceptable reader. *Bouthakrun* would rather listen to my reading aloud than read for herself. There were no electric fans then, but as I read I shared the benefits of *Bouthakrun*'s hand fan.

Now and again Jyotidada used to go for change of air to a garden-house on the bank of the Ganges. The Ganges shores had then not yet lost caste at the defiling touch of English commerce. Both shores alike were still the undisturbed haunt of birds, and the mechanised dragons of industry did not darken the light of heaven with the black breath of their upreared snouts.

My earliest memory of our life by the Ganges is of a small two-storey house. The first rains had just fallen. Cloud shadows danced on the ripples of the stream, cloud shadows lay dark upon the jungles of the further shore. I had often composed songs of my own on such days, but that day I did not do so. The lines of Vidyapati came to my mind, "Brimmed with rain is the month of *Bhadra*, empty my temple stands." Moulding them to my own melody and stamping them with my own musical mood, I made them my own. The memory of that monsoon day, jewelled with that music on the Ganges shore, is still preserved in my treasury of rainy season songs. I see in memory the tree-tops struck ever and again by great gusts of wind, till their

1. A famous Bengali magazine edited by the well-known Bengali novelist, Bankim Chandra Chatterji.

2. Characters in Bankim Chandra's novels.

boughs and branches were tangled together in an ecstasy of play. The boats and dinghies raised their white sails and scudded before the gale, the waves leaped against the *ghat* with sharp, slapping sounds. *Bouthakrun* came back and I sang my song to her. She listened in silence and said no word of praise. I must then have been sixteen or seventeen years old. We used to have arguments even then about various matters, but no longer with our former zest.

A little while after we removed to Moran's Garden. That was a regular palace. The rooms, both upstairs and down, had coloured glass in their windows, the floors were of marble, and steps led down from the long verandah to the very edge of the Ganges. Here a fit of wakefulness by night came upon me, and I used to pace to and fro, as I did later on the banks of the Sabarmati. That Garden is no longer in existence, the iron jaws of the Dundee Mills have crushed and swallowed it.

At the mention of Moran's Garden there comes back the memory of our daily meals under the *bakul* tree. The food owed its flavour not to spices but to the skilful hands that prepared it. How I remember our sacred-thread ceremony, when we two boys were fed by *Bouthakrun* with the ceremonial rice and cow's *ghee* ! For those three days even greedy rascals like us enjoyed our fill of tasty and savoury dishes.

It was a great annoyance to me that it was so difficult for me to fall ill. All the other boys in the house could manage it, and then they would enjoy *Bouthakrun's* personal care. Not only did they have her attention, but they took up all her time, and my own share of it was correspondingly diminished.

So came to an end that page of the history of the third floor, and with it *Bouthakrun* also passed away. After that the third floor became my own domain, but it was no longer as in the old days.

I have wandered in my story up to the very gateway of my young manhood. I must return to the territory of my boyhood once more.

Next I must give some account of my sixteenth year. At its very entrance stands *Bharati*.* Nowadays the whole country seethes with the excitement of bringing out papers, and I can well understand the strength of that passion when I look back on my own madcap escapades. That a boy like me, with neither knowledge nor attainments, should succeed in establishing himself in that *salon*, or at least in escaping reprimand there, shows in itself that the general attitude towards children was changing. *Bangadarsan* was then the only magazine in the country controlled by a mature hand. As for ours, it was a medley of the mature and the crude. Borodada's contributions were as difficult to understand as they were to write; and side by side with them stood a story of mine, the raw verbosity of whose style I was too young to appraise, nor did others apparently possess the critical judgment to do so.

The time has come to say something of Borodada. Jyotidada held court in that third floor room, and Borodada in our south verandah. At one time he plunged into the deepest problems of metaphysics, far outside the range of our experience. There were few to listen to what he wrote and thought, and he would not lightly let any man go who showed himself willing to be audience. Nor would the man himself soon relinquish Borodada, but what he claimed from him was not alone the privilege of listening to metaphysics. One such man attached himself whose name I do not remember, but everyone called him "The Philosopher." My other brothers made great fun of him, not only about his love for mutton chops, but about his endless stream of varied and urgent necessities. Besides philosophy, Borodada then began to take great interest in the construction of mathematical problems. The verandah would be full of papers, covered with figures, flying about in the south wind. Borodada could not sing, but he used to play an English

* Monthly magazine started by the Poet's eldest brother Dwijendranath Tagore referred to here as Borodada. It ran for several years.—Ed.

flute, not for the sake of the music, but in order to measure mathematically the notes of each scale. After that he occupied himself for a time in writing *Svapna-Prayana*. Before doing so, he began experimenting in the resonance of words ; he sought to add stateliness to Bengali poetry by mingling with it a due measure of sonorous Sanskrit. Many of these attempts he retained, but many he threw away, and torn pages were scattered everywhere. After that he started to write his book of poems, but he threw away far more than he kept, for he was not easily satisfied with his work. We had not the sense to pick up and keep all these rejected lines. As he wrote he would read his work, and people would gather round him to listen. Our whole household was intoxicated with this wine of poetry. Sometimes in the midst of his reading he would burst into a great shout of laughter. His laughter was ample and generous as the skies, but woe betide the man who sat within reach when the fit took him ; he received a slap on the back to shake his very soul. This south verandah was the living fountain of the life of *Jorasanko*, but the fountain dried up when Borodada went to live at the Santiniketan *asrama*. I remember, however, times spent in the garden opposite that south verandah, when with mind made listless by the touch of the autumn sun I composed and sang a new song : "Today in the autumn sun, in my dreams of dawn, a nameless yearning fills my soul." I remember also a song made in the quivering heat of one blazing noon : "In this listless abandon of spirit, ever present, I know not what games I play with my own self."

Another striking thing about Borodada was his swimming. He would swim backwards and forwards across our tank at least fifty times. When he lived at Panihati Garden he used to swim far out into the Ganges. With his example before us we also learned to swim as boys. We started to learn by ourselves. We would wet our pyjamas and then pull them up tight so as to fill them with air. In the water they swelled out round our waists like balloons, and we could not possibly sink. When

I was older and stayed on the river-lands¹ of Shilaidah, I once swam across the Padma. This was not as wonderful an achievement as it sounds. The Padma was full of alluvial islands which broke the force of its current, so that the feat was not worthy of any great respect. Still, it was certainly a story with which to impress landsmen, and I have used it so many times. When I went as a boy to Dalhousie, my father never forbade me to wander about by myself. With an alpenstock in my hand I traversed the footpaths, climbing one hill after another. It was most amusing to scare myself with my own make-believe. Once while going steeply downhill I stepped on a heap of withered leaves at the foot of a tree. My foot slipped a little and I saved myself with my stick. But perhaps I might not have been able to stop myself! I wondered how long it would have taken to roll down the steep slope and fall into the waterfall far below. I described vividly to Mother all that might have happened. Then, wandering in the deep pine-woods, I might suddenly have come upon a bear—that also was certainly something worth talking about. As nothing ever really happened I stored up all these imaginary adventures in my mind. The story of my swimming across the Padma was much of a piece with this class of romances.

When I was seventeen I had to leave the editorial board of *Bharati*, for it was then decided that I should go to England. Further it was considered that before sailing I should live with *Mejdada*² for a time to get some grounding in English manners. He was then a judge in Ahmedabad, and *Mej-Bouthakrun* and her children were in England, waiting for *Mejdada* to get a furlough and join them.

I was torn up by the roots and transplanted from one field to another, and had to get acclimatised to a new mental atmosphere. At first my shyness was a stumbling block at every turn. I wondered how I should keep my self-respect among all these new acquaintances. It was not easy to habituate myself to strange

1. Tracts of rich alluvial land often found as islands in the great rivers (Beng. *Shil*).

2. My second brother.

surroundings, yet there was no means of escape from them ; in such a situation a boy of my temperament was bound to find his path a rough one.

My fancy, free to wander, conjured up pictures of the former history of Ahmedabad. The judge's quarters were in Shahibag, the former palace grounds of the Muslim kings. During the daytime *Mejdada* was away at his work, the vast house seemed one cavernous emptiness, and I wandered about all day like one possessed. In front was a wide terrace, which commanded a view of the Sabarmati river, whose knee-deep waters meandered along through the sands. I felt as though the stone-built tanks, scattered here and there along the terrace, held locked in their masonry wonderful secrets of the luxurious bathing-halls of the Begums.

We are Calcutta people, and history had never lived for me there. Our vision had been confined to the narrow boundaries of these stunted times. In Ahmedabad I felt for the first time that history had paused, and was standing with her face turned to the glorious past. Her former days were buried in the earth like the treasure of the *yakshas*.* In my mind formed the first shadowy outline of the story of *Hungry Stones*.

How many hundred years have passed since those times ! In the minstrels' gallery an orchestra played day and night, choosing tunes appropriate to the eight periods of the day. The rhythmic beat of horses' hoofs echoed on the streets, and great parades were held of the mounted Turkish cavalry, the sun glittering on the points of their spears. In the court of the king whispered conspiracies were ominously rife. Abyssinian eunuchs, with drawn swords, kept guard in the inner apartments. Rose-water fountains played in the baths of the Begums, the bangles tinkled on their arms. Today Shahibag stands silent, like a forgotten tale ; all its colour has faded, and its varied sounds have died away ; the splendours of the day are withered and the nights have lost their savour.

* Demons who guard Treasure.

Only the bare skeleton of those old days remained to me, its head a naked skull that had no crown. It would be too much to say that I was able, in the store-house of the mind, fully to re-clothe those dry bones with flesh and blood and restore their ancient form. Even the preliminary sketch, the first rough draft, was far from realistic, a creation of the fancy. Such patch-work is easy when little is known and the rest has to be imagined. The picture that after these eighty years I retain even of myself does not correspond line for line with the reality, but is largely a product of the imagination.

After I had stayed there for some time *Mejdada* decided that perhaps I should be less home-sick if I could mix with women who could familiarise me with conditions abroad. It would also be an easy way to learn English. So for a while I lived with a Bombay family. One of the daughters of the house was a modern educated girl who had just returned with all the polish of a visit to England. My own attainments were only ordinary, and she could not have been blamed if she had ignored me. But she did not do so. Not having any store of book-learning to offer her, I took the first opportunity to tell her that I could write poetry. This was the only capital I had with which to gain attention. When I told her of my poetical gift, she did not receive it in any carping or dubious spirit, but accepted it without question. She asked the poet to give her a special name, and I chose one for her which she thought very beautiful. I wanted that name to be entwined with the music of my verse, and I enshrined it in a poem which I made for her. She listened as I sang it in the *Bhairavi* mode of early dawn, and then said, "Poet, I think that even if I were on my death-bed your songs would call me back to life." There is an example of how, when girls want to show their appreciation, they speak in a sweetly exaggerated fashion in order to give pleasure. I remember that it was from her that I first heard praise of my personal appearance,—praise that was often very delicately given.

For example, she asked me once very particularly to

remember one thing : "You must never wear a beard. Don't let anything hide the outline of your face." Everyone knows that I have failed to follow that advice. But she herself did not live to see my disobedience in this matter of my beard.

In some years, birds strange to Calcutta used to come and build in that banyan tree of ours. They would be off again almost before I had learnt to recognize the dance of their wings, but they brought with them a strangely lovely music from their distant jungle homes. So, in the course of our life's journey, some angel from a strange and unexpected quarter may cross our path, speaking the language of our own soul, and enlarging the boundaries of the heart's possessions. She comes unbidden, and when at last we call for her she is no longer there. But as she goes, she leaves on the drab web of our lives a border of embroidered flowers, and for ever and ever the night and day are for us enriched.

.. ..

The Master-Workman, who made me, fashioned His first model from the native clay of Bengal. I have described this first model, which is what I call my boyhood, and in it there is little admixture of other elements. Most of its ingredients were gathered from within, though the atmosphere of the home and the home people counted for something too. Very often the work of moulding goes no further than this stage. Some people get hammered into shape in the book-learning factories, and these are considered in the market to be goods of a superior stamp.

It was my good fortune to escape almost entirely the impress of these mills of learning. The masters and pundits who were charged with my education soon abandoned the thankless task. There was Gnanachandra Bhattacharya, the son of Anandachandra Vedantabagish, who was a B.A. He realised that this boy could never be driven along the beaten track of learning. The teachers of those days, alas ! did not consider it so important

that boys should all be poured into the mould of degree-holding respectability. There was then no demand that rich and poor alike should all be confined within the fenced-off regions of college studies. Our family had no wealth then, but it had a reputation, so the old traditions held good, and no interest was taken in conventional academic success. From the lower classes of the Normal school we were transferred to De Cruz's Bengal Academy. It was the hope of my guardians that even if I got nothing else, I should get enough mastery of spoken English to save my face. In the Latin class I was deaf and dumb, and my exercise books of all kinds kept from beginning to end the unrelieved whiteness of a widow's cloth. Confronted by such unprecedented determination not to study, my class-teacher complained to Mr. De Cruz, who explained that we were not born for study, but merely for the purpose of paying our monthly fees. Gnana Babu was of a similar opinion, but found means of keeping me occupied nevertheless. He gave me the whole of *Kumārasambhava** to learn by heart. He shut me in a room and gave me *Macbeth* to translate. Then Pundit Ramsarbaswa read *Sakuntala* with me. Outside the classroom they left me alone, and got some return. These then were the materials that formed my boyish mind, together with what other Bengali books I picked up at random.

I landed in England, and foreign workmanship began to play a part in the fashioning of my life. How capricious is Fortune!—I went to England for a regular course of study, and a desultory start was made, but it came to nothing. *Mej-Bonthan* was there, and her children, and my own family circle absorbed nearly all my interest. I hung about around the school-room, a master taught me at the house, but I did not give my mind to it.

However, gradually the atmosphere of England made its impression on my mind, and what little I brought back from that country was from the people I came in contact with. Mr. Palit finally succeeded in getting me away from my own

* A work of Kalidasa.

family. I went to live with a doctor's family, where they made me forget that I was a foreigner. Mrs. Scott lavished on me a genuine affection, and cared for me like a mother. I had then been admitted to London University, and Henry Morley was teaching English literature. His teaching was no dry-as-dust exposition of dead books. Literature came to life in his mind and in the sound of his voice, it reached to our inner beings where the soul seeks its nourishment, and nothing of its essential nature was lost. With his guidance, I found the study of the Clarendon Press books at home to be an easy matter, and I took upon myself to be my own teacher. For no reason at all Mrs. Scott would sometimes fancy that I did not look well, and would become very worried about me. She did not know that the portals of sickness had been barred against me from childhood. I used to bathe every morning in ice-cold water—in fact, in the opinion of the doctors, it was almost a sacrilege that I should survive such flagrant disregard of the accepted rules !

I was able to study in the University for three months only, but I obtained almost all my understanding of English culture from personal friendships. Our Creator takes every opportunity to mingle new elements in our make-up. Three months of close intimacy with English hearts sufficed for this development. Mrs. Scott made it my duty each evening till eleven o'clock to read aloud by turn from poetic drama and history. In this way I did a great deal of reading in a short space of time. It was not prescribed class study, and my familiarity with human thought grew side by side with my knowledge of literature. I went to England but I did not become a barrister. I received no shock calculated to shatter the original framework of my life—rather east and west met in friendship in my own person. Thus it has been given me to realise in my own life, like the sun* from which I am named, the common bond which unites all lands.

* Bengali, *Rabi* (রবি) the sun.

WHAT MIGHT HINAYANA BUDDHISTS LEARN FROM CHRISTIANITY ?

Prof. James B. Pratt

NEARLY four years ago I published in this Quarterly* an article with the title, *What Can Christians Learn From Buddhism ?* The answer I suggested to the question was by no means exhaustive, for surely there are a great many things we all may learn from each other : but I pointed out certain very noble characteristics of the religion founded by Gotama which the followers of the religion founded by Jesus would do well to ponder. Among these characteristics perhaps the most fundamental was freedom from authority and an ultimate appeal to reason. From this there naturally followed a wide tolerance toward all sorts of religions and philosophies and toward every sincere attempt to pursue the truth : and with this an extraordinary elasticity in thought, which has enabled Buddhism to avoid some of the cramping effects of credal formulations and to retain a considerable amount of the growing power of youth. Another fortunate result of its fundamental rationality has been freedom from the hampering necessity to defend various specific beliefs of an historical or scientific sort. Buddhism does not need to worry, as so many Christians have worried, over dates and personalities and events, or over the questions of astronomy and biology. Finally there is a grandeur in the Buddhist conception of the cosmos, a sweep of the imagination in its range over time and space, that makes many of the doctrines of traditional and "orthodox" Christianity seem almost petty.

I wrote the article in question not because I dislike Christianity but because I cherish for it profound admiration and deep love. It is a very great religion : but in its growth and its development it has not realized all its possibilities, nor is it contributing to its followers all that it might give. There are

* See *Vishva-Bharati Quarterly*, Vol. II, Part IV, page 49.

things in Buddhism which it might well make its own. In similar spirit, I am writing this article, not because I am hostile to Buddhism but because I have cherished for its Founder a life-long reverence, and I feel for the great movement he inaugurated a lively and genuinely affectionate good-will. A good friend should give not only praise but kindly criticism when he thinks it needed, and sympathetic suggestions for amendment and growth.

Let me then say, first of all, that in my opinion Hinayana Buddhism does not nourish the spiritual life of its followers as richly as I think it might. Perhaps the most fundamental reason for this is to be found in its atheism. I do not think we are justified in asserting that the Founder was an atheist in the usual sense of that word, nor, on the other hand, should I feel justified in entering a guess as to what his ultimate philosophy may have been. But certainly if we may trust the accounts left us he discouraged metaphysical enquiry and discussion, and certainly the Hinayana Buddhism of the orthodox monks of our day is pretty consistently atheistic. Both of these tendencies—atheism and humanistic or agnostic positivism (the technical but misleading term for the refusal to deal with ultimates)—are distinctly impoverishing to a religion. For the living function of a religion is not merely to point the wise way to live ; a system of ethics does that. Religion is much more than philosophy. Men need it not only for intellectual and moral guidance, but for encouragement, for inspiration, for cosmic reinforcement of the moral ideal, for growth of a sense of relationship with the ultimate. When the Hinayana cut itself off from the metaphysical insights—both intellectual and mystical—of Hinduism at its best, it sacrificed a large part of its opportunity and power as a religion.

To put the *more* of religion into one term, we might say it goes beyond morality in being *worship*. The religious sense of something

“.....far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,

And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky and in the mind of man"

this is the supreme differentia of human nature by which it is distinguished from all other life that we know. And the cultivation of this cosmic sense is worship. I do not say that this cosmic sense is impossible or non-existent within the Hinayana: but certainly both the atheistic and the exclusively humanistic emphasis of much intellectual Buddhism in our day does, at the least, make the cultivation of the cosmic and mystical a difficult matter.

Hinayana Buddhism, of the humanistic and monastic pattern, has, to be sure, developed a form of worship. This is of the sort I have, in another place,* called "subjective". Its aim is solely and confessedly to produce a desired effect upon the mind of the worshipper. Upon the basis of the Hinayana atheism or humanism it could hardly attempt anything else. What I have called "objective worship", the attempt to influence in some way the Deity, to draw near to the Divine, to bring about a closer relation between oneself and the ultimate Determiner of Destiny—this, in the nature of things, would be impossible for one who, like the Hinayana Buddhist, explicitly denies the reality of a Divine or the possibility of affecting it. Hence the utmost such a man can consistently do is to try to produce certain psychological states in his own mind and the minds of others.

Now subjective worship—the attempt by the use of ritualistic practices to produce desirable effects in human minds—is notably successful in Hinduism, in many forms of Christianity, in Islam and Judaism. But it is successful in these religions precisely because of the faith these religions possess and inculcate in the very cosmic situation which the Hinayana either denies or discourages its followers from contemplating. Subjective worship works most efficiently where it can presuppose and make

* *The Religious Consciousness*, Chapter XIV.

use of objective worship. The repetition of prayers and sacred verses and the chanting of hymns produce desirable effects upon the human mind because the human mind believes that in these forms of worship something really happens. Convince the ordinary worshipper that it is all make-believe or that it is at best a kind of hypnosis psychological medicine, and (except for a few who are "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought") very little of the desired psychological effect will be produced. This is what I mean by saying that the Hinayana attempt to be without cosmic reference results in a considerable reduction of the power for good over its followers which it might otherwise possess.

In suggesting that the Hinayana would gain in power by giving up its atheistic and "positivistic" attitude, I am not urging upon its leaders the adoption of an antiquated deism or a superstitious and anthropomorphic form of theism. There are open to the Hinayana cosmic conceptions which are far from being subject to the criticisms which it seems to fear and with which Buddhists sometimes deride those who find in the universe some thing more than matter and its processes and laws. Both Sankara's and Ramanuja's forms of the Vedānta, the faiths of several of the Bhakti sects, the religious philosophy of the Brahma Samaj and of Tagore, the enlightened forms of Christian and Jewish and Moslem teaching, all present possibilities of cosmic belief thoroughly consistent with the essential part of the Buddha's gospel and capable of bringing that ontological reinforcement to the noble moral ideals of Buddhism which weak human nature needs.

The Hinayana has, in fact, always possessed at least the beginnings of such faith ; it has always had a kind of substitute for God. For the law of Karma to a slight extent performs the function of the Divine. It is a poor substitute, to be sure, but if one thinks out and accepts all that it implies one will find it hard indeed to stop short of the cosmic position of some of the other great religions. Belief in the great Karmic moral law of the Universe, that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,

is the beginning of a faith that justice and purpose and, therefore, mind is fundamental to things.

Perhaps my Buddhist friends may be less hospitable to my next suggestion than to the one just made : but it seems to me of fundamental importance. I do not see how religion can feed the spiritual life of its followers in more than meagre fashion unless it recognizes and teaches the reality of individual souls or selves in some pretty solid sense. I do not say it should insist upon an animistic double or upon any one specific and detailed philosophic doctrine of the ego. But the recognition of and emphasis upon the reality of a subject or experiencer in some sense of the word does seem to me essential for a consistent retention of the essentially religious point of view. This fact, I think, was plainly realized by Gotama. For reasons which I have stated at length elsewhere,* and which have been very much better stated by Mrs. Rhys Davids, it seems to me pretty plain that the *anatta* doctrine was never taught nor accepted by the Founder, and that it originated as one of several additions and modifications, made by his monastic successors, some years, perhaps some centuries, after his death.

Whatever be one's conclusion on this historical question, the more important philosophical question of the value of the *anatta* is quite plain. Only if there be some sort of continuing and identical self can one hope for the spiritual survival of bodily death or retain the doctrine of moral responsibility and of moral reward and punishment. Without a subject-self the causal law will indeed remain ; but one who considers this the equivalent of the doctrine of moral responsibility shows thereby that he has little inkling what the latter means.

Moreover, if we combine the *anatta* and its consequences with the atheism of orthodox Hinayana, we have resulting the conception of a universe which has little to distinguish it from the most unspiritual materialism. In such a world there is nothing

* *The Pilgrimage of Buddhism*, pp. 78-82.

divine, no cosmic purpose, no immortality, no self, no freedom, no moral accountability. There is merely a predetermined process of physical and psychical events, the latter being mere "flat pieces of psychological surface." Not only is the whole picture dismal and hopeless in the extreme : it is utterly out of keeping with the moral earnestness and spiritual hopefulness of the great Founder.

Hinayana Buddhism is at its finest in the moral field. Here it has a great deal in common with Christianity, and the two religions should be regarded as comrades in a joint enterprise. The conscious rationality of Buddhist morality and its steady appeal to human experience is something from which Christians might well learn. There are, I believe, a few ethical matters on which Buddhists, on their part, might learn something from Christianity. I have in mind, for one thing, the danger of a subtle selfishness to which the teaching of the Canon and the monastic Hinayana of our day is repeatedly exposed. This danger arises particularly from the Second Noble Truth, to the effect that the cause of suffering is desire, together with the presupposition of nearly all Buddhist teaching that the aim of morality is the avoidance of suffering. The Second Noble Truth is aimed chiefly against the lower desires and preoccupation with self: but it is impossible logically to stop with this, and in fact the Buddha of the Canon does not do so. It is not only attachment to low and evil things that must be avoided : every sort of attachment endangers one's peace and therefore should be ended. One should "cut all the ties" and "wander alone like a rhinoceros." Even family affections are pledges to fortune and the wise man will escape them. "Those who have a hundred dear ones have a hundred woes: those who have ninety dear ones have ninety woes: those who have one dear one have one woe : those who hold nothing dear have no woe."¹ The ideal disciple should so train his mind that he would suffer no grief even at the loss of the Master.² Says the

1. *Udana* VIII, 8. See also *Psalms of the Sister*, 88, 47, 50, 68.

2. *Samyutta* XXII, 80.

Dhammapada, "Let no man love anything: loss of the beloved is evil. Those who love nothing and hate nothing have no fetters."* A Ceylonese monk once said to my wife : "It is wrong for you to love your husband or your father. They might die."

If personal ties are pledges to fortune, earnest desire for the welfare of others, and for the success of some great cause are surely equally so. Those for whom we wish spiritual salvation may degenerate ; the causes we love may fail. It is plain, therefore, that in the Second Noble Truth and in the teachings which naturally follow from it there is a latent but unavoidable selfishness, a selfishness all the more dangerous because of its subtle and hidden nature. It seems to say : Do not venture ; you might get hurt !

As I have already suggested, this is the logical outcome of the Second Noble Truth for the reason that Buddhist teaching so repeatedly takes it for granted without discussion that personal suffering and the loss of inner peace is the one great evil to be avoided at all cost. Sometimes even the Buddha of the Nikayas seems to manifest an almost pathological fear of sorrow. I think Hinayana Buddhism might learn something of considerable value by a study of the Christian attitude toward every sort of suffering. "In this world ye shall have tribulation ; but be of good cheer : I have overcome the world." The Christian is willing to take a chance ; the wise Buddhist will play safe.

Now I am not denying that there are noble passages in the Buddhist Canon in praise of unselfish love and of heroic devotion. Several of the Buddha's teachings are entirely compatible with an attitude toward suffering similar to the Christian. But I do not see how these teachings and passages can in the last analysis be made compatible with the Second Noble Truth and with the many sayings, like those quoted above, which derive from it. The authors of the Mahayana plainly felt about it pretty much as I feel, and so do nearly all Mahayanist scholars of our day. And what-

* XVI, 211.

ever may have been the Founder's own teaching on the matter, I think we may say this with considerable confidence : that while Christian thought has developed in the direction of a courageous acceptance and spiritual utilization of suffering, the Hinayanist attitude toward it, under monastic direction, has largely degenerated into a rather pusillanimous and often selfish prudence in favour of saving one's own skin.

And this brings me to point out a most unfortunate influence in the historical development of Buddhism. I refer to the control exercised over its thought and practice by the monastic mind. Immensely more than either Christianity or Hinduism, Hinayana Buddhism has been a religion of monks. There are excellent things about monks ; but a monastery is not the place to search for freedom of thought, for the development and appreciation of the great human values, for unselfish devotion or heroic daring. Those of my readers who knew Mr. Dharmapala, the founder of the Maha Bodhi Society, will realize how very mild are my criticisms when compared with his scathing attacks upon the monastic institutions of Ceylon and Burma. I do not think the Hinayana can ever furnish the spiritual nourishment needed by the inhabitants of Southern Buddhist lands until energetic and deeply religious laymen take a good deal more of the leadership into their hands than they have possessed since the days of Asoka. In neither West nor East is there much promise of an important future for monasticism.

None of the great religions is capable of being credally defined or of being identified with any stated form of faith or practice. Religions are living things and with them, as with other living things, change, development, growth form the precondition of continued life. Buddhism, as I pointed out at length in my previous paper, has been most fortunate in the elasticity given it by the deep wisdom of its Founder—a character so ingrained, so essential to it, that not even twenty-five hundred years of monkish dominance have been able to weed it out. To this elasticity, this inherent power of change and growth I think

we may look with some hope for a new manifestation of power which will enable Buddhism to slough off those forms of ancient teaching that are ill adapted to the needs of the new day, and to develop those more fundamental insights of the great Founder which are of eternal human value, and thus, more efficiently than ever before, to nourish the spiritual life of the millions who look to it for the satisfaction of their deepest needs.

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS*

To-day, when at dusk the lamps of the Nation
will be kindled in honour of the Festival of Lights—
lamps of gold and lamps of clay to make
concerted radiance for a few brief hours : how
deeply I rejoice. And with me the whole world
rejoices : that the Lamp of your genius still
glows and sheds its lovely lustre across the darkness
of the world. Long may your aged and fragile hands
hold aloft for the world's delight and inspiration the
Light of Beauty—the shining Flame of Song !

Sarojini Naidu.

* The following beautiful lines were addressed to Rabindranath Tagore on the occasion of Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Lights, 30th October, 1940.

THE IDEALISM OF MAHATMA GANDHI*

Dr. P. T. Raju, M.A., Ph.D.

THOUGH Mahatma Gandhi is not an academical philosopher, one can best understand Indian idealism by studying his life and work. Though he does not give us a system of philosophy in writing, his life itself is a system of philosophy. In him does the statement that Indian philosophy is a way of life and not merely a way of thought find a worthy illustration. For him philosophy is a way of life first and way of thought next. His life systematised its plan of work and expressed it in practice and not merely in theory. Philosophy as life reflected on itself is life that has become self-conscious, and this self-consciousness expressed itself now and then as a theory of his practice. Like Buddha he was urged on in his experiments on truth by the evil present in the world, the inequalities and injustices meted out by man to man. Certainly he did not start his life without a philosophical background; and that background is Hindu philosophy. But Hindu philosophy is so vague and comprehensive a term that it may mean anything or nothing. It may mean some sectarian religion without any philosophy worthy of the name, or it may mean a most thoroughly developed system. A number of philosophical ideas found in many systems, including Jainism and Buddhism, are the common property of every Indian, and are woven into the web of his thought and action. But the possession of these ideas does not make a philosopher. Mahatma Gandhi must have started with the same stock; but he has gathered other ideas from Tolstoy, Ruskin, etc. But what makes his ideas particularly interesting is not the philosophical background but the fact that he rediscovered his philosophical ideas by the sheer necessity of his life demanding a plan of action with a theoretical justification. These ideas, like the ideas of truth,

* Extract from the author's *Idealistic Thought of India* (to be published).

are therefore not dead concepts for him but living forces that guide us and demand obedience. Professor Radhakrishnan rediscovered our philosophical concepts and infused life and vigour into their petrified forms by approaching them from the living philosophers of the West and comparing them with the concepts of the latter. Mahatma Gandhi infused life into some of them by coming across them in the very course of his life, which is a struggle for the discovery of truth. The results of his struggle, the conclusions of his life, are not the results of an "ideal experiment", as Bradley would call it, in which theory is compared to theory, but the result of actual experiment on his own life. As he is not an academical philosopher, he may not have given the full implications of his discoveries. But these implications can be developed and his philosophy can be presented in a systematic form. It is beyond our present purpose to deal at length with his ethical and political ideas. We are mainly concerned with his conception of reality, that is, only with the metaphysical side of his teaching. Books have been written by eminent men praising his principle of *ahimsa* or non-violence and love, admiring him for preaching it and comparing him to Christ and Buddha. Critics too of this principle are not wanting. Simply to follow either of them in praising or condemning the principle would only be to express our own prejudices. The advocates of force and violence may praise their own principle and condemn that of Mahatma Gandhi. And philosophically considering we would be in no better position than they. The advocacy of either violence or non-violence must have a metaphysical foundation. If we are to understand the metaphysical basis of Mahatma Gandhi's own ideas we must go deeper into his mind, and bring out his guiding ideas in a coherent form. Then only can we fix his philosophical position, and understand the real significance of *ahimsa* and why he lays so much emphasis on it.

The real clue to his conception of reality is found in the pregnant word, *Satyagraha*, which is generally translated by

Truth-force. He writes : "Satyagraha is literally holding on to truth, and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is the soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul-force. It excludes the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and, therefore, not competent to punish. The word was coined in South Africa to distinguish the non-violent resistance of the Indians of South Africa from the contemporary 'passive resistance', of the suffragettes and others. It is not conceived as a weapon of the weak."¹ In this passage there are two important points to note. First, truth is soul or spirit. That is, the truth of the world is spirit but not matter. Secondly, Satyagraha means some force only indirectly. *Satya* means truth, and *agraha* means sticking on, holding on or persistence. So directly the word means persistence in truth ; and because this persistence is thought to have a peculiar power, Satyagraha is said to be Truth-force or the force of truth. It is our duty to persist in truth and not to yield to untruth ; and it is the nature of truth to establish itself wherever untruth prevails. Truth is existence or being and untruth is only apparent existence or being. However hard the latter tries to overcome the former, as existence is always existence and can never become non-existence, the latter must ultimately succeed. This is the significance of the saying, *dharmo jayati*, or truth succeeds. It is in the nature of things that truth must ultimately prevail, only because true existence is the final controlling factor both of our thought and action, however far they may deviate from it. But unfortunately the word *dharm*a is interpreted as religion, rules of caste system and so forth, and the philosophical significance of the saying is missed.

But how truth is to overcome untruth, whether by terminating it by destruction or by transforming and absorbing it, we have no right to decide. That is why Mahatma Gandhi says that for us violence is excluded because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth. Of course he means absolute truth

1. *Young India*, Vol. I, p. 222 (Edited by Babu Rajendra Prasad).

in detail. All knowledge of truth is not precluded, as otherwise we cannot persist in truth.

The passage preaches self-expression without aggression. But self-expression does not mean asserting oneself any way one likes. The true self is not the finite individual with his lust, whims and passions. It is the Spirit and there is only one Spirit in the universe. Mahatma Gandhi writes : "I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever-changing, ever-dying, there is underlying all that change a Living Power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and re-creates. That informing Power or Spirit is God ; and since nothing else that I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is."¹ All else is "illusion—Maya. We are not, He alone is."² So our finite self with all its weaknesses and imperfections is false. And it is not the false self that is to express itself, but the true self. The expression or assertion of the false self is aggression, and the expression of the true self is Satyagraha. Does this imply inactivity or passivity on our part ? If it does it would mean surrendering ourselves to untruth. The need for Satyagraha arises when untruth becomes aggressive ; and to remain passive is to allow ourselves to be conquered by it. But then how are we to assert ourselves ? Only as participating in Truth. Our duty is not to oppose ourselves as finite to untruth, but to know truth and, so far as we know it, to assert it. To assert it is to assert our true selves. In spite of our being identical with truth in essence, we as finite are not identical with it, and therefore we have no right to aim at the destruction of our opponents.

Mahatma Gandhi further tells us that truth is not only God but also Love. For this reason Satyagraha is the force of love and not of hatred. God loves and does not hate ; but we both love and hate. Hatred leads us away from truth. Hence we should not hate our opponents and destroy them by violence.

1. Quoted from O. F. Andrews : *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*, p. 48

2. *Ibid*, p. 47.

Because God is love, the fact that God destroys must mean, according to Mahatma Gandhi, that he destroys in love and not in hatred. Mahatma Gandhi tells us that destruction or violence is the prerogative of God. But this destruction is not annihilation. No Hindu believes in the annihilation of even the finite self. Even in the extreme forms of monism like the Advaita, according to which the *jīva* becomes merged in the Infinite and becomes one with it in the state of liberation, the finite self, so long as it is finite, is never annihilated, but continues to take one birth after another according to its merit and demerit. Hence what we call destruction, punishment, etc., meted to the *jīva* by God, when the former takes a particular line of action, is only thwarting and checking him in the hope that the *jīva* thus thwarted may reflect and realise his mistakes. But still God allows the *jīva* the freedom between good and evil. Hence the conflict, and the need for Satyagraha. The *jīva* sometimes chooses evil, which means the assertion of his own particular self against Truth or the Universal Self. This assertion violates the universal order of things established by God. Conflict is consequently inevitable. And in this conflict we are not to assert our finite self, which again is false and will introduce a new conflict in place of, if not in addition to, the old one, but must hold on to Truth and assert our true self, which is God Himself.

But does God exist? Mahatma Gandhi tells us that he has "no argument to convince through reason. Faith transcends reason."¹ But is this faith blind faith which is the same as superstition? He writes: "That which is beyond reason is surely not unreasonable. Unreasonable belief is blind faith and is open to superstition. To ask anybody to believe without proof is unreasonable, as for instance, asking an intelligent person to believe without the proof that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles." "True faith is appropriation of the reasoned experience of people whom we believe to have

1. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

lived a life purified by prayer and penance. Belief, therefore, in prophets or incarnations who had lived in remote ages is not an ideal superstition but a satisfaction of an innermost spiritual want. The formula, therefore, I have humbly suggested for guidance is rejection of every demand for faith where a matter is capable of present proof and unquestioned acceptance on faith of that which is itself incapable of proof except through personal experience.”¹ The existence of God can be felt only through personal experience, and the experience can be had only after our mind is purified by prayer and penance. The point of philosophical importance which this passage contains is that belief in God is “the satisfaction of an innermost spiritual want.” Mahatma Gandhi does not say here “an intellectual want.” But now probably he would say it. For in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* he says : “Of late, instead of saying God is Truth I have been saying Truth is God, in order more fully to define my religion. I used, at one time, to know by heart the thousand names of God which a booklet in Hinduism gives in verse form and which perhaps tens of thousands recite every morning. But nowadays nothing so completely describes my God as Truth. Denial of God we have seen. Denial of Truth we have not known.” God is generally felt to be necessary for religion ; but truth is always felt to be necessary for reason or intellect. Logic cannot deny that there is truth, but it may deny God. Thus truth satisfies an intellectual want. That is, it is the presupposition of our reasoning itself. Reason cannot stand without the admission that there is truth. It may be difficult to prove the existence of God as God, that is, as an omnipresent, omnipotent, benevolent person, who creates, controls and destroys the universe. But it is not difficult to prove the existence of God as Truth. For one who argues that there is no truth destroys the very basis of his argument as no argument which does not claim to be true is convincing and need be taken seriously.

1. *Young India*, Vol. III, p. 148.

No student of logic can fail to understand the significance of the change from "God is Truth" to "Truth is God." No sane and sober man makes a judgment about a subject which is recognised to be unreal or the reality of which is doubted. A judgment about an unreal object is neither true nor false and would have no more value than the prattle of a child. It can have no significance for logic, the subject matter of which is the determination of truth and falsity. Hence every significant judgment presupposes an existent subject, and the judgment is about that subject. In the judgment "God is Truth", the existence of God is presupposed. But this existence may be questioned, when the predicate Truth would have to be referred to a non-existent subject. And the judgment would be without logical significance. But none questions that there is truth in the universe. When it is said that God is the same as that Truth, the judgment becomes significant and practically amounts to the proof of God.

This proof is the old ontological argument in a new form. There is no doubt about Mahatma Gandhi's being an absolutist and a monist. For him God is the only truth, He alone exists. Everything else is Maya. "We are all sparks of Truth. The sum-total of the sparks is indescribable, as-yet-unknown Truth, which is God." The ontological argument in its old form runs : I have an idea of an all-perfect Being. If this Being lacks in existence He cannot be perfect. Therefore He exists. The fallacy of this argument was exposed by many, especially by Kant, who pointed out that to have the idea of a perfect Being is not the same thing as the existence of that Being. Only when the idea is identical with existence can we infer God's existence from the idea we have of Him. But the idealist philosophers who came after Kant maintained that the ontological argument as understood by Kant is misunderstood. It is true that to have the idea of a hundred coins in my pocket is not the same as to have them in it. Those who formulate the argument are not so foolish as to maintain this. Its signifi-

cance is different. It is that the truth which is implied by our reasoning process must be existent. But we do not see its existence just as we see the existence of the paper and pen before me. Yet if we are to argue about anything, we have to admit the existence of truth. Just as one who comes and talks to us cannot convince us that he does not exist, so one who reasons at all cannot prove that truth does not exist. It is the regulative principle of our thinking. But what else is this regulative principle than existence itself? The difference between thinking and imagination is that the former is based on being and is about being, while the latter is free from being. The object of imagination need not be; but the object of thought must be. That is why imagination works without reference to existence, while thought is grounded on existence. But what is always presupposed by thought cannot be an object of thought. Hence this principle of Truth, though not actually perceived, cannot be denied existence. Here idea involves and must involve existence.

This Truth, Mahatma Gandhi declares, is the law of the universe. He writes: "There is an unalterable Law governing every thing that exists or lives. It is not a blind law; for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings." "That law, then, which governs all life is God. Law and law-giver are one." This is really the central conception of all Indian idealism. For the Buddhist Nirvana, Sunya, Tathata, etc., are the Truth; they are the same as the true Buddhakāya, that is, the Dharmakāya or the body of law. It is this Law that supports the whole universe; it is the essence of all things, their true nature. Every phenomenal thing moves towards the realisation of its true nature. So all things are held together by this Law. It is really the centre of the universe. Just as the centre imparts unity to all points on the circumference, the Law imparts unity to the manifold of the universe. This conception is found in the Vedānta also. The Brahman as the final Truth is the *ādhāra* or support of every appearance. It is the highest Law, Universal or *sāmānya*. We can find this idea even in Ramanuja's system. The Brahman as the soul is really

the principle of unity of the parts of His body which is constituted by the *jīvas* and the material world. Without that principle the body will decompose and its parts will fall apart. The same principle is the Law or Dharma from the stand-point of ethics and science, Truth or existence from that of logic and epistemology, and God from that of religion.

This conception of reality is the answer to the question : Is Satyagraha true to facts ? For every moral injunction the question may be raised : Is it according to reality ? In non-philosophical language we ask : Is it according to nature ? For it is felt that no moral law is binding upon us if it is not based upon the nature of things. For it is not morally binding upon man to fly with his hands in order to save some poor bird from the clutches of another. It is not morally binding upon a eunuch to be a father, though Manu declares that in order to pay off our debt to our forefathers (*pitṛrṇa*) we have to be fathers. To this question Mahatma Gandhi comes out with an affirmative answer. For Satyagraha means moral activity according to reality. Fichte long ago developed his system of philosophy to meet the demand that reality should be such as to meet the demands of the moral will. If the moral law is opposed to the natural law, the former cannot be binding on us. Hence the two spheres of morality and nature must ultimately agree with each other. Mahatma Gandhi can say that his Satyagraha is true to reality because it exhorts us to hold on to Truth and this Truth is the Law of the world, its essential nature. It is the only Existence. Everybody who does not hold on to Truth is thereby heading towards non-existence. The nature of this Truth, Mahatma Gandhi says, is Love. Hence if we are to realise the Truth, we should weed away all hatred from our hearts. But this weeding away of hatred does not involve passivity, for mere passivity would be yielding to untruth and allowing it to triumph. Hence we have to assert Truth, which is Love, in face of untruth. Provided we are sincere, Mahatma Gandhi has no doubts about the results.

FOUR POEMS*

BY

Rabindranath Tagore

I

WHEN in the depth of the night
in the phantasmal light of the sick bed
appears your wakeful presence,
it seems to me
that the countless suns and stars
have guaranteed my little life :
then I know that you will leave me
and the fear spreads from sky to sky,
the fear of the terrible indifference
of the All.

* These three are among the many poems written by the Poet during his recent serious illness. They have been translated from the original Bengali by himself. They embody touching references to those who have been serving him day and night during his illness. The first lines of the Bengali originals are given below :

- I. গহন রজনী মাঝে ।
- II. অবসন্ন আলোকের শরভের সাগর প্রভিমা ।
- III. সত্যের নানাক্ষেত্রে নানাকর্মে বিকিপ্ত চেতনা ।
- IV. কখন বুঝায়েছিহু ।—*Ed.*



By Rabindranath Tagore

The original drawing, here reduced, was made by the Poet during his recent illness.

II

SHE is the spirit of an Autumn evening,
 robed in the gleams of the vanished sunset,
carrying the promise of the immense peace of the star,
 guiding with her speechless ministry
the languid steps of the long lingering hours of
 the reluctant night
 into the neighbourhood of the morning star.
Her tresses touched by the gentle breeze of the dawn,
 that smells of the morning worship,
her sad and sweet face of the day's end
 becomes radiant with the blessedness of the
 morning light.

III

IN the endless paths of the world,
 among numberless activities,
her nature is scattered
 with all that is unattained in her and
 incomplete.
By the sick bed around one eager aim
 she appears as a new vision
 complete in her being,
where all the goodness of all things
 becomes centred in her,
in her touch, in her sleepless anxious eyes.

IV

WHEN I rose from my sleep
I found a basket of oranges at my feet,
my mind wondered who could be the giver
of such a gift ;
my guesses flew from one name to another
but sweet names were abandoned
like flowers in the spring,
and all varied names combined
to make this gift a perfect one.

KHAQANI'S POETRY

Prof. Hadi Hasan, M.A., Ph.D.

IN the sixth century of the Hijra the province of Shirwan, lying between Georgia and the Caspian Sea produced three poets and three Kings. The Kings were Faridun I (d. 514 A.H.) ; his son Abul-Hayja Fakhru'd-Din Minuchihr II (514-544 A.H.) ; and this Minuchihr's son Abu'l-Muzaffar Jalalu'd-Din Akhsatan I (544-594 A.H.). The poets were Abu'l-'Ala, his pupil and son-in-law Khaqani, and Khaqani's pupil, Falaki. Abu'l-'Ala's date of death is uncertain ; Khaqani lived till at least 592 A. H. when he addressed an ode to Sultan Takish Khwarazmshah the conqueror of Isfahan ; and Falaki died young during the lifetime of Minuchihr II, *i.e.* before 544 A. H.

Abu'l-'Ala, Khaqani and Falaki were court-poets, professional panegyrists working and writing for money. But what money did they receive from the Shahs of Shirwan ? This raises the whole vexed question of poetry as a profession and a merchandise, on which curiously no work has been done. I shall, therefore, first give my general conclusion and then lead evidence in support of that conclusion.

Among the Arabs, the professional poets succeeded now and then in raising money from the fitful and capricious bounty of their patrons ; among the Turks, from the time of the Ottoman Sultan Muhammad II (d. 1481 A. D.), court-poets were drafted into the Ottoman educational service and those who did not care to accept any official position were pensioned off at the rate of 1,000 aspers a month (one asper equals two pence) ; among the Persians, with the exception of the Mughal Court in India, court-poets, like other court-servants were well-fed, well-clothed, well-lodged, but if they asked for liquid cash they were just turned off to shake their ears and graze in commons. Therefore, contrary to popular opinion based on anthologies

which regarded poetry as a gold-mine, the Persian poet (who alone concerns us) has been, in general, like Romeo's apothecary—famine in his cheeks, need and oppression in his eyes, contempt and beggary upon his back. "Begging is the law of the poets," says Anwari ; "and never has a poet been paid for his poetry," says Athiru'd-Din Awmāni.

The Mughal court in India, I have stated, was an exception. Let me first analyse this exception. The Emperor Aurangzeb had no love for the fine arts. He abolished the singers who tried to stage a mock-funeral of music : "Melody is dead and we are going to the grave-yard to bury it." "Very well," said the Emperor, "make the grave deep so that neither voice nor echo may issue from it." Fifty-nine poets were attached to the court of Akbar. What help they received is unknown ; but the poets, Fayḍi, Abdu's-Samad, Asaf Khan, Bir Bar, Qasim-i-Kahi and Taqi-i-Shustari, who were commanders of 400 horse and upwards, were all members of the Divine Faith ; and it is obvious that they were paid warmly for their religious lukewarmness rather than for their burning love of poetry. I have found only two specific cases of Akbar's gifts to poets. For an ode in every verse of which the word *fil* (elephant) was to appear, Qasim-i-Kahi received one lac of *tankahs* ; and two lacs of *tankahs* were given to Khwajah Husayn of Merv for an ode on the birth of Jehangir. The ode is throughout a double chronogram : in every verse, the first hemistich gives the date of Akbar's coronation, and the second hemistich, of Jehangir's birth. Now as Jehangir states explicitly in his *Tuzuk* : "in no reign, except mine, have *tankahs* been coined except of copper ; the gold and silver *tankahs* are my invention", the two poets of Akbar's court did not receive one lac of *rupees* and two lacs of *rupees* but Rs. 1,500/- and Rs. 3,000/- respectively.

Similarly, the only two instances of Jehangir's generosity to poets recorded by Jehangir himself are as follows :—In 1611 A. D. Naziri of Nishapur received Rs. 1,000/- for an ode in

imitation of Anwari; and in 1618 A. D. Saida-i-Gilani (who subsequently designed the Peacock Throne) was weighed against *zar* for an ode in honour of the Emperor Jehangir and Prince Shah Jehan. Now *zar* ordinarily means gold, but I have no doubt that in this particular instance *zar* merely means money and not gold, for in 1636 A. D. (the 12th of Shawwal 1045 A. H.), Haji Muhammad Jan-i-Qudsi, the poet-laurate of the Emperor Shah Jehan was similarly weighed against *zar* and the value of this weight is given as Rs. 5,500 in the contemporary *Padshah-Nama*. Other rewards from Shah Jehan to poets are: to Abu Talib Kalim 200 gold *mohurs* and again 200 gold *mohurs* in 1645; to Qudsi 100 gold *mohurs* in 1640 and Rs. 2,000/- in 1644 A. D.

So much for actual facts on direct contemporary evidence; but as zeros and non-contemporary works have no value, non-contemporary works have added zeros to the original figures converting copper into gold, hundreds into lacs. Thus the contemporary Rasmi says that Khan Khanan Abdur-Rahim was "liberal" in his patronage of the poets—Faydi, 'Urfi, Naziri, Shakibi, Hayati, Nawi and Kufawi. But this vague patronage literally glitters with gold as presented in the non-contemporary *Ma'āthir-ul-'Umara* of 1780 A.D.: "Once Naziri said to the Khan Khanan Abdur-Rahim: 'I have not seen a lac of rupees. What sort of a heap does a lac of rupees make?' So the Khan Khanan ordered a lac of rupees to be brought from his treasury. 'Thank God,' said the poet, 'I have seen the money.' 'Seen,' said his Excellency, 'nay, the money is thine.'"

So much for Mughal patronage. Persian patronage is even more non-contemporary. I have not found a single Persian poet who has himself stated what he ever received from his patron. Jami received an annual pension of £ 550 sterling from the Ottoman Sultans Muhammad II and Bayazid II and half this amount was the annual pension given by the Ottoman court to the author of the *Akblaq-i-Jalali*. But otherwise Khaqani says Unsuri received a lot of money and Unsuri says Rudaki received

40,000 *dirhems*. All these poets, therefore, are alike—not equally rich but equally poor, living in hope and dying in penury. “If eulogy fails to work,” says Anwari, “try satire and intimidation to loosen the purse-strings of the patron.” With the three Shirwani poets, however, the scheme did not work : Khaqani was imprisoned by Akhsatan I and Falaki by Minuchihr II whilst Abul’Ala declares that people are desirous of wading in his blood.

II

To consider now the poetry of Abul’Ala, Khaqani and Falaki. Abul’Ala was the poet-laureate of the Shirwan court but with the exception of a single ode preserved in the *Haft Iqlim*, his *diwan* has perished. Nothing therefore can be said of his poetry. Falaki’s *diwan*, which I edited in 1928 A. D., is remarkable, firstly, for its astrological terminology and, secondly, for its chronological value. In an ode addressed to Minuchihr II, for example, he says that the *Eid* of Ramadan (which takes place on the first of Shawwal) and the Zoroastrian festival of Mihrgan (which takes place between the 16th and the 21st of the month Mihr) have synchronized. To obtain, therefore, the date of composition of the ode (which would necessarily give the date when Minuchihr II was living and reigning) all that I had to do was to put in parallel columns the Hijra calendar and the Zoroastrian calendar, and to strike off the year when the first of Shawwal synchronized with Mihrgan. But how was the Zoroastrian calendar to be found ?

Now the Zoroastrian Year, which begins with the accession of Yazdigird III to the throne of Persia on June 16, 632 A. D. and which consists always of 365 days, i.e. 12 months of 30 days each plus 5 days added at the end of Aban, is not a solar year : the calendar recedes and rotates, and the festivals dependent upon this calendar, fluctuate correspondingly in different years. To equalize the Zoroastrian year with the solar year (which consists of 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes 46 seconds of mean solar time) the calendar was reformed by Umar-i-Khayyam, at the

order of Jalalud-Din Malikshah (hence called the Jalali era); and this new era, which began on the vernal Equinox, March 15, 1079 A. D., being a true era with the year consisting of 365, or in leap years, 366 days, no recession is possible. The work of Pope Gregory in 1582 A. D. therefore was merely a repetition of the work of Umar-i-Khayyam. The Julian Year (named after Julius Caesar) began in 46 B. C. and consisted of 365 days 6 hours. But the solar year consists of 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes 46 seconds. The excess is 11 minutes 14 seconds ; and the excess spread over a period of 16 centuries (the time elapsing between Julius Caesar and Pope Gregory) gives 12 days. Pope Gregory, therefore, made the calendar leap over 12 days from the 2nd of October 1582 A. D. to the 15th of October 1582 A. D. But, curiously, whilst we remember the work of Pope Gregory, we have forgotten the work of Umar-i-Khayyam which preceded the work of Pope Gregory by five centuries. In other words, I had to reconstruct the whole Zoroastrian calendar on the basis of R. Schram's *Calendariographische und Chronologische Tafeln*, and so found a solution to Falaki's chronological puzzle, namely that the first of Shawwal synchronized with the 19th of Mihr on the 28th of September 1128 A. D.

I proceed now to the poetry of the obscure but great Khaqani. Wherein lies his greatness ? The answer is personal but strictly relevant.

It occurred to me some time ago that the sonorous majesty of Firdawsi's *Shahnama* was curiously associated with sound-elimination and sound-synthesis. Several thousand couplets, for example, are dedicated to the legendary warrior Rustam and the most trivial *minutiae* of him are recorded, but of his voice there is no mention whatsoever. He speaks or he roars, as the occasion demands, and from this clue we are to gather what opinion we may, about the pitch of his voice, its intensity or its timbre. The delicate portraiture of Rudabe or of Tahmine—a perfect word-photograph—does not incorporate the quality of

their voice, although as Sa'di says : "Better than a pretty face is a sweet voice, for that pleases the bodily senses, and this nourishes the soul." The poet Firdawsi who commands only the bare word *Kburushidan* (to emit sound) for the creaking of a bow, the squeaking of leather, the beating of drums, the blowing of trumpets, the pealing of thunder, wailing and screaming and even for the crashing of boulders is no specialist in acoustics. Facial and not vocal beauty captures the hearts of Firdawsi's heroes, at best imperfect connoisseurs of beauty, strangely indifferent to the peculiar attraction of the mellow voice which can win Love more potently than the graceful contour of face and figure. Similarly all the objective poets of Persia have laid more emphasis on the eye than the ear. Sa'di has to fall back upon the word "sweet" (*kbush*) three times in one small paragraph in his *Gulistan* : and the same word "*kbush*" or "*shirin*" marks the highest achievement of Hāfiz in his *diwan* and of Nizami in his *Sikandar-nama*.

Till then I had kept away from Khaqani. What else shall I find in him but words ? But then it suddenly dawned upon me that I had not recognized my physician. If sound-words were obtainable anywhere, then the most likely place to search for them would be the *diwan* of the verbose Khaqani. And I seized the *diwan* with the agony of suspense.

And for a long while I was like one crying in the wilderness. And the words echoed in my ear : What went ye out in the wilderness for to see ? A reed shaken with the wind ? And then to me, to me, beyond all hope of mine, there came a shout, loud as from numbers without number, sweet as from blest voices uttering joy. And I knew the little organ had begun to discourse most eloquent music. The thing had become a trumpet ; that reed, shaken with the wind, had become a minstrel's pipe ; that little organ was an orchestra.

"The *rattle* of the wings of Gabriel, the trumpet-blare of Israfil,

The *din* of the scriptural *recitation* in Paradise, the *clink* of
 the jewellery of *Houris*,
 The *whizz* of the sphere at the time of the mystical dance,
 the *tones* of the pentateuch at the time of recitation,
 The *singing* of Barbad, the *piping* of minstrels and lutes, the
air of the musician, the *tinkling* of the tambourines
 and guitars,
 The *moan* of wood-pigeons, the *carol* of larks and starlings,
 the *cooing* of the ring-dove, the *singing* of the
 nightingale,
 The *tuning* of the lips of the beloved to the verses of
 Khaqani, the *scaling* of the voice of Qumri to the
 Phoenix mood,
 —From all these *sounds* I do not receive that happiness as
 from one single *note* of greeting from the land of
 my friend."

But even a more pleasant surprise was awaiting me. Working on Persian navigation I found that the theory of Persian maritime aversion, propounded by John Malcolm, William Vincent, Lord Curzon, and Sir P. M. Sykes, was not supported by the evidence of history. For apart from Achaemenian sea-power in the Mediterranean sea, and the exploration of the Persian Gulf under the direction of Darius the Great, and the attempted circumnavigation of Africa in the reign of Xerxes, there is the Persian conquest and colonization of Yeman under Nushirwan (531-579 A. D.), the navigation to Ceylon of which Cosmas Indicopleustes is an eye-witness, and the regular navigation to Canton described by Hwi Chao in 758 A. D. Later in 985 A. D. Muqaddasi writes on personal observation: "most of the ship-builders and seafaring men along the circuit of the Arabian peninsula are Persians." Later still there is the Persian conquest and colonization of the East African littoral and of the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba, Mafia and so forth. But curiously the evidence of history is not supported by the evidence of literature. And

for the most obvious of reasons : the sailor was not a scholar ; the scholar was not a sailor. The sailor came from the coast ; the scholar came from the interior of Persia. And for the Persians of the interior, the literati of Persia, the sea has always been an object of terror. Rhazes declared it incompatible with wisdom to risk the passage of the Oxus and had consequently to be conveyed across the Oxus like a live parcel ; Anwari wanted a demonstration of swimming and diving before he would cross the Oxus ; S'adi declared that safety lay on land ; and Hafiz abandoned the sea-voyage which was to take him to the court of Mahmud Shah Bahmani of the Deccan. It then struck me that just as seafaring people have called a camel "a ship of the desert," I should find, conversely, somewhere in Persian literature the quaint description of a ship as "a camel of the sea." And I began, accordingly, to search for marine themes in Persian literature. But experience should have taught me to economize labour. For where else could I hope to look forward with greater success than in the works of Khaqani ? And the thing was there almost identically :

"On the Tigris, a boat is at rest and in motion.
Like the she-camel of Swaleh from head to foot and
underneath is the serpent of Moses."

The prophet Swaleh, sent to the people of Thamud, produced miraculously from a stone a she-camel in the tenth month of pregnancy and carried a warning that the destruction of the camel or her young would be accompanied by the destruction of the tribe. The boat on the Tigris is from head to foot, that is, from stern to stern like this she-camel because it carries passengers and saves them from destruction. The serpent of Moses is the boisterous water which engulfs victims.

Such then is the utilitarian value of Khaqani's *diwan*. It is a misnomer to call his *diwan* a book of poems. For it is not merely a book of poems. Rather, it is an encyclopaedia, a reference catalogue, a dictionary, a vast repository of the

learning of the East. And, like the learning of the East, unbound, unindexed, disarranged.

III

Khaqani's poetry is highly conventional : everything beautiful coming from China, Chinese idols, Chinese painting, Chinese deer, Chinese spring ; full of stock epithets (moon face, cypress stature, ruby lips) ; when the rose is mentioned the nightingale is not far away ; and when the candle is mentioned, the moth is safely or rather dangerously near. Rich in detail, it is richer in archaic allusions. There are eight paradises of ruby, pearl, chrysolite, coral, silver, gold, musk and lustrous pearl. The earth is flat with eight mountain-chains of Qaf, alternating with seven seas, whereof the innermost is the circumambient sea (*bahr-i-muhît*). At first the earth was unstable, tossing like a ship, so an angel was made to support it on his shoulders ; and under the angel is a mighty rock, and under the rock a great bull, and under the bull a great fish, and under the fish an ocean, and under the ocean the seven stages of hell, and under those a tempestuous wind, and under that a darkness, and under that a veil, and beyond this the knowledge of man goeth not, not even the knowledge of Khaqani.

This cosmogony goes hand in hand with cosmography. Around the central stationary earth are seven concentric spheres, "like the coats of an onion", namely of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Then comes the sphere of the fixed stars ; then the sphere of spheres (*falak-ul-aflāk* or *charkh-i-gardūn*). The eight spheres revolve slowly from west to east, whilst the ninth whirls them all round in the opposite direction once in twenty-four hours. The ceaseless rush of the ninth sphere causes sudden changes in the position of the planets, and as worldly affairs are controlled by the relative position of the planets to one another, the ninth sphere which causes ever-shifting positions of the planets, must be regarded as evil. Hence

the unanimous condemnation of the ninth sphere : "fie upon thee, O circling heaven, fie."

A poetry which wantons in every kind of ambiguity and artificial conceit must be unnatural. But Khaqani was a genius : very artificial in his artificiality ; very sincere in his sincerity. As is well known, the Arabs sacked the Sasanian capital, Ctesiphon or Madā'in in 637 A. D. with the war-cry : This is the white palace of the Chosroes. The sack continued, off and on, till early Abbasid times. To obtain building material for his new capital of Baghdad, the Caliph al-Mansur decided to destroy the Sasanian palace known as the *Aiwan-i-Kisra*. For three days, therefore, the workmen hammered at the Sasanian palace ; but it was made of tough material and it resisted the pickaxe. Thereupon the Caliph turned to his premier, Khālīd, who had previously dissuaded him from destroying the palace, and said : "We have now come over to your point of view, for we find that the cost of destruction is even greater than the value of the building material we can obtain." "I now advise you," said Khālīd, "to continue the work of destruction lest it be said of you hereafter that you were not even able to destroy what another was able to construct." Fortunately the premier's advice was again disregarded ; but time and neglect continued the work of destruction so that when Khaqani, on his way to the pilgrimage during the caliphate of al-Muqtafi or al-Mustadi, visited Madā'in, the capital and its *Aiwan-i-Kisra* (the Hall of Audience) was a heap of ruins. Says Ibn-i-Hishām in his biography of the Prophet Muhammad :

"Now Khusraw Anushirwan used to sit in his Hall of Audience where was a golden crown like unto a mighty cask, set with rubies, emeralds and pearls, suspended by a chain of gold from the top of an arch in his Audience Hall. And his neck could not support the crown, but he was veiled by draperies till he had taken his seat on the throne and had inserted his head

within the crown whereupon the draperies were withdrawn. And no one looked upon him without kneeling in reverence before him."

Now as Khaqani looked upon the ruins of this Hall, the past rose up out of the dark before him, spread like a picture before his eyes, and breathed like a tale into his ears. Persian literature has no nobler example to offer than Khaqani's threnody on Madā'in or Ctesiphon. The words are ordinary but they are employed with extraordinary effect : there is no composing of verse ; there is no writing of poetry. There is perception and emotion and impulse—and the words come forth, like sunrise from the sea, like the break of dawn.

"Draw thyself awhile from the Tigris bank to Ctesiphon
and with the river in thy eye water Ctesiphon
with a second Tigris.

The Tigris herself weeps a hundred blood-streams issuing
from the ruddy furnace of her eyes.

Dost thou see the bubbles of foam on the Tigris'
breast—the blisters on her lips raised with the
fume of her sighs.

Were the Tigris to mingle the frost of her sighs with
the fire of her heart, half of her would freeze
like ice, and half of her leap like flame.

The Tigris a liquid leaping flame ? Nay, parted from
the royal House behold how like a wounded
snake she draws her slow length along.

Deep is the air and dark, black, substantial, an ebon
mass : the hooting of the owl alone piercest it.

Oh what will be the fate of the Halls of Oppression
when this has been the fate of the Hall of
Justice ?

This is the Yard whose carved lions subdued the Lion
of the Sky.

This is the Hall whose glitter came from coronets and
crowns.

This is the Chamber whose Chamberlains ruled over
Babel and Turkistan.

Whither have they gone ? Lions and pages and crowns ;
Khusraw and Parwiz and Shirin.

Shirin's blood is the juice of thy grape ; Parwiz's dust
is thy pitcher of wine."

"Why may not imagination," says Hamlet, "trace the noble dust
of Alexander till he find stopping a bung-hole ? . . . Alexander died,
Alexander was buried, Alexander returned into dust ; the dust
is earth : of earth we make loam ; and why of that loam whereto
he was converted might they not stop a beer-barrel ?"

Khaqani's poetry is like jewels in a casket ; and apprecia-
tion demands that the jewels be removed from the casket and
held up to solar light.

BEFORE THE SUN RISES

A. Aronson

I

BUT we shall not be alone :
the knocking at the door and the ringing of the phone
will find us wide awake
in the early hours—before the sun rises ;
we shall go to the cupboard and take
a shirt and a warm suit for the evening,
and then we shall stand and pray
near the window where the shadows fight
and we shall look across the trembling towers
towards the pale and fast receding night.

But we shall not be alone
in those tormented morning hours :
we shall hear from across the street
people pray and cry and groan
and we shall see them marching
with heavy and sleepless feet
towards the dark doors of churches
that were open all night.

It is good to kneel down and to know
that the hours of fear and anguish are past
and that some one will have mercy upon us,
that there are crosses that will stand and last
in the morning and the evening,
in springtime when all the years meet
and in winter when the shadows bleed ;
it is good that we are not alone
on the crooked and twisted and narrow street.

But how shall we pray,
we who are used to the silverscreen
and the close-up smile on a vacant face
in the flickering light of moving space,

we who have known and heard and seen
the fighting shadows under many crosses,
their battle-cry after so many losses,
their silence on the judgment-day ;
we who are awake before the sun rises,
before the knocking at the door and the ringing
of the phone,
how shall we stand near the window and pray,
we who are never alone
before the cross.

II

This is the hour of the smoky day
rising behind a block of city-flats
in which a thousand hungry souls
wait for the windy dawn and pray ;
the heavy boots of firing-squads
cut the morning into rhythmic fears
and echo across half-deserted squares
in the city that fell at dawn.

A thousand hungry souls have lain awake
all through the parabolic night,
have shaped and changed their decisions
with the coming and going of tank-divisions,
have sat with yellow books by candle-light,
with withered words of war blown by the rain
against the whirlpool of their drowning brain,
and they have thought and felt and known
it all along : this is the hour
of the falling and dying generation,
the windy hour of desolation
in the city that fell at dawn.

A thousand hungry souls have prayed in vain
for some bitter hope and consolation ;

in gnawing numbness they have lain
across the darkness and the evil power.
And now they listen to the firing-squads
from thousand curtain'd windows in their flats ;
their trembling fingers grasp the gliding hour
and count the smoky minutes of the day
while heavy boots are trampling far-away
a rhythm without tune, a twist, a turn

The dry and sudden clap of thunder
has torn a thousand souls asunder,
and the hour that is, is a journey to no end,
a power misused and a joy misspent.
Over a thousand open graves the sky is bent
in the city that fell at dawn.

III

Look out : the sun is standing high
in Vienna, Madrid, and Shanghai,
the pavement is hot and dry . . .
—Is man no more than this ?
Round the corner there are corpses in the sun
rotting in ignorance and peaceful bliss.
They are no longer afraid to think
what they have done.

—Make no noise, make no noise ;
draw the curtains :
In Vienna, Madrid and Shanghai
noontime has come, the sun
is a ring,
a ring in the whiteness of the sky.
Don't play about with forks and spoons,
think of those that restlessly wander
across the streets where the corpses lie

and bend their heads across so many afternoons.
—What is the cause of thunder ?—
tell me and draw the curtains,
for I am afraid . . .

—We'll go to supper i' the morning
in Vienna, Madrid, and Shanghai.
You may be sure that I shall come and wait
outside the house among the lifeless eyes ;
there will be knocking at your gate,
but you will not be afraid
for I'll be standing in the shade
looking up towards the cloudless sky.
May-be a head will be rolling down the street
trampled upon by heavy soldiers' feet—
it does not matter in the least, my dear :
we'll go to supper i' the morning—
across the perforated limbs and rolling heads
across the rails where engines boil and hiss
we shall bend our heads and wander,
tell me,—what is the cause of thunder ?
and draw the curtains,
—Is man no more than this ?—

Noontime has come. And the sun is a ring
in Vienna, Madrid, and Shanghai.
You are no longer afraid to think
of lifeless eyes staring at the sky,
you know all you have to know
of putrefaction and desire,
of lust, consumption, frozen fire,
of eyes that in darkness glow.
Behind the curtain you will sit and gaze
through the long and dreary afternoons
playing with golden forks and spoons
and looking behind mirrors for your face.

IV

Souls torn to pieces
hanging in the wind to dry ;
he plays with them carelessly
throwing all the inhibitions
up against the cloudless sky.
There they are mended
and made responsive
according to taste and the four dimensions
of the universe.

Some are too small and terse
and must be enlarged
to fit into a given pattern.
Some outgrowing the natural wall
of their former owner
are re-adjusted
in time and space
and in a four-dimensional fall
are put behind a human face.

But there are those that are without size
loosing themselves in movement alone
around a dead point where solution lies.
Long life is not given them. The bone
withers away below the skin and diés.
On some misty winter afternoon
you might have seen those terrifying eyes
that speak of life too fast and death too soon.

Souls torn to pieces
hanging in the wind to dry.
Behind each soul
look out the withered bones of a face
wondering at time and space
and the four dimensions of the sky.

WHY KHADI*

S. N. Mozumdar

WORK on khadi began in Orissa in 1922. By 1936 it was well on the cards that the organisation would be disbanded, for all that it could show by way of result was sales amounting to Rs. 17,000 for the whole year for the entire province of Utkal. What was worse, production amounted to the value of only Rs. 11,000 for the year. But in fact this state of affairs was due to the usual causes so common to difficult constructive work against odds in our country. Better organisation, the resultant efficiency and enthusiasm, aids and assistance have changed the shape of things quite remarkably. The figures of 1939 tell a different tale.

In that year the Utkal branch of the All India Spinners' Association, with two independent organisations carrying the Association's certificate, gave employment to 6,352 spinners. The wages earned by them amounted to Rs. 43,798 ; 1,78,000 yds. of khadi were produced worth Rs. 1,00,300 ; 358 weavers wove the khadi and earned Rs. 18,000 as wages.

Mere spinning did not exhaust the activity of the Association. A beginning was made in another direction, rearing of Eri and Tasar. And it would appear that the achievement of only a few months was not at all discouraging. 2,082 persons in 374 villages took to Eri rearing. Nearly 32 maunds of cocoon valued at Rs. 1,650 were produced. Some of this was spun, some sold, and the production of cloth was 210 yds. This was the result of a first attempt and was not recognised by the organisation as successful. The pleasing feature was that most of the Eri cloth was retained for personal use. Tasar-rearing prevails in the district of Sambalpur but is fast decaying. This

* The author, who is a member of the Indian Civil Service, was in charge of the direction of industries in Orissa under the Congress Government. He speaks therefore from first-hand experience. Though his conclusions are based on experience in Orissa, they have an obvious all-India significance.—*Ed.*

district is a great manufacturing centre of Tasar textile. It once used its own forest product, but now cocoons come mostly from the forests of the district of Singbhum in Bihar. Curiously enough, the rearing of Tasar is confined to a class of Harijans, and the poorest at that. Therefore the attempt of the A.I.S.A. to revive Tasar rearing in this district was a doubly welcome move : 393 rearers at only 5 centres earned Rs. 4,520.

Employment was thus provided in the year 1939 to 9,185 persons. They earned Rs. 67,968. But the point to remember is that the whole of this sum except the wages of the weavers amounting to Rs. 18,000, was supplementary income. It was earned by labour at home and at moments of leisure by men, women and children.

The question arises : has this enterprise been worthwhile ? The answer seems to be : Yes, everytime. The average man needs a supplementary income, and in Orissa the average man is a cultivator. He has enough leisure and to spare. Even a village artisan has. So have their families. What other occupation of general adaptability better suited to fill this leisure hour profitably is there than spinning ? Whether one uses a *takli* or a *charka*, the capital cost of the entire machinery of production will not exceed Rs. 5, and not one part of the machinery is such as cannot be easily replaced or repaired in the village or nearby, and in fact there is very little to go wrong. The work is not tiresome, interferes with nothing, be it gossip, exchange of pleasantries, serious thinking or a peaceful quietness of physical and mental rest. On the average a spinner earned Rs. 7 of additional income. One can safely challenge anybody, truly familiar with the economic condition of the rural population, to laugh derisively at this figure. To an average Oriya it is a fortune. One looks round in vain for a substitute spare-time employment of equally wide and general applicability of equal efficacy. When such a substitute, or even a number of substitutes, is placed before the country there will be time enough to question the utility of khadi or its easy competence

to provide two mouthfuls of food for the country's millions where now only one exists.

Khadi has at least, unlike the system of dole in the west, the merit of providing food with employment. Dole, a charity, kills the soul of the receiver for it gives no work. It will surprise many to learn that even as late as in June last with the greatest carnage in human history in full swing, England nursed over 7 lakhs of unemployed. The number of unemployed in India has never been estimated ; it can hardly be in a mainly agricultural country. But if unemployment means absence of opportunity to earn food by labour, the number of unemployed in India will run into a few crores. In an industrial country, a man without money in his pocket cannot get food. Therefore he attracts more notice. Such countries are more advanced, the people there have learnt to know their rights, to demand them of the State, they make themselves felt. The consequence is that they are maintained by the State. In India, the average man's roots are in land and perhaps he can still get a handful of rice to eat even if he possesses no money. He has not learnt that the State has a responsibility in the matter, his age-old instinct prompts him to put the blame on his fate, as his *karma*, and the result is that little fuss is made of our unemployed. But these millions that we know of, who have no employment either throughout the year, or a part thereof, or in a regular measure, what employment have we to offer them ? In Orissa, there are no large-scale industries worth the name. Those that exist are mostly the seasonal rice-mills. There are a couple of coal-fields, and perhaps the geological surveys now in progress may open up fields of further large-scale mechanized industries. But to what extent can they draw off the surplus population from agriculture ? Very little. At the present moment there are not even 5,000 skilled and unskilled labourers in all the registered factories of Orissa. Judging by the response a small scheme of electrification recently received in the province and outside it, the day of industrialisation of Orissa, even if adequate opportu-

nities presented themselves, seems distant. In the meanwhile why should we not adopt khadi and for the matter of that all our village industries, develop them, consolidate them, extend them to find work for our unemployed, to give food to them? What else can be done?

"But khadi is so expensive!"—petulantly complain the rich and the middle class. Normally, would not Indian mill-made cloth be dearer than the Japanese and the British? Indian sugar dearer than the Java sugar? Do we not pay more for our own steel and iron? Why? Because chiefly of our own inefficiency, because in these industrial ventures we have not yet attained the efficiency, experience and wisdom of the matured. It is the same with khadi. Our implements are not as efficient as they might be, our workers are still inefficient, our organisations weak, our methods perhaps unscientific. But these are remediable evils. Already signs of improvement are visible, and with increased efficiency there is no doubt that prices will fall.

The main cause of the rise in price is the increase in wages to the spinners. A minimum wage for labour is a world-recognised principle. All that the A. I. S. A. has done is to fix a minimum for the spinners as they needed the protection the most. And what is this minimum? Though practically the whole of the rise in price is due to this increase, the minimum is a bare -/3/- annas for a 8-hour day, or not even Rs. 6/- a month. It will greatly interest us to know that very recently it has been decided in Britain to raise the minimum wage of agricultural labour to 48 s. a week, allowing a rise of 11s.-13s. But no farmer can face such an increase in wages on present prices, so it was decided that there must be also an increase in the prices paid to the farmer for his produce. Here is a lesson for us to learn. As an interesting sidelight it may be mentioned here that one of the results hoped for, as the result of the rise in agricultural wages in Britain, is that there will be improvement in the standard of cottage accommodation provided for the

labourers. Anticipating this, county committees are being allowed to increase rent upto 12½% of the basic wage instead of the existing 3 s., of course where improvements made justify it. One is also reminded of a drive made on behalf of British motor cars in India a few years ago. In a large industrial area upcountry with a large British population the most popular car was the Fiat. Within three years about 500 of these cars disappeared to make room for British cars and at a much higher price and with doubtful advantages, and in some cases with positive disadvantages. The appeal was based on finding employment for the country's workers. The population cheerfully paid the price to provide food for the hungry.

There is another aspect of this question. The average Oriya's measure of need in clothing is small, only a few pieces. The cloth used is coarse. The mill yarn imported into Orissa, where approximately Rs. 2 crores worth of textiles are woven in handlooms, is mostly the coarse count of 15 and 16's. He and his family can nearly produce their full requirement of cloth from their own spinning. The price of khadi is of no account to him. It also stands to reason that the spinner must himself use what he helps to produce. If he wants finer cloth it will be an incentive to him to produce finer yarn. If his wife or daughter fancies a particular design he can fulfil her desire, for perhaps his weaver lives in the same village or in the next. It is thus that newer and newer designs and patterns will be evolved by the people themselves enriching their innate sense of art. The old complaints against khadi that it is poor in quality and coarse in texture, monotonous in display are things of the past, and though Orissa is not yet in the forefront of the khadi world, she will soon occupy a place there. The Patsalia spinners of the Ganjam district produce with ease yarns of the fineness of 60 counts.

It is of great interest that spinning still survives in many parts of Orissa. The Patsalia spinners are all Telegu women in the Ganjam district. In the Parlakhemid region the Savaras spin the yarn of the beautiful tasseled loin cloth they wear. In

Gunupur spinning is universal amongst the aboriginal element. In other parts of Orissa it is not difficult in most of the villages to hunt out an old charka or two of the old days and women can still be found who are proficient in the art of spinning. And this is not surprising, for even now there are no less than 50,000 families of weavers in Orissa and the Oriya weavers' proficiency is well-known. Once the Oriya takes to spinning with zeal, the quality of yarn produced will cause no worry.

To the 50,000 weavers, khadi is the only solution of their main problem. With yarn available within easy reach, he will for once stand a reasonable chance of a fair competition with his rival the mills. At present it is his antagonist on whom he has to depend for his raw material. No wonder the cry ever is, "Babu, we cannot produce our goods at the price of the mills." Yet goods worth Rs. 2 crores are made in Orissa on the hand-loom and presumably consumed mainly inside the province. The reason is inefficiency of the mills, the advantage of the weaver of a market around his own village and comparative inaccessibility of some parts of the province. But with increasing efficiency of the sales-organisation of the manufacturing concerns, or their agents, and easier transport facilities to the backward parts, the weaver will inevitably be crushed. The obvious path to follow is that since spinning is proved to be the spare-time employment par excellence of the masses of the province, and because weavers in large numbers will be necessary for the utilisation of the yarns and since weaving as an industry already exists and ranks second to only agriculture in the province in giving employment to the population, such protection should be given to khadi as it may need to compete successfully with the mill products in the markets of Orissa. Protection of this nature to industries is common in this country and the world over. No industry can demand protection with greater justice than khadi which in Orissa within a period of barely two years has given employment to nearly 10,000 persons. Such protection comes legitimately from governments in the shape of financial

assistance, as was given to the A. I. S. A. by the Congress government of Orissa,—grants to introduce and improve cultivation of cotton, supply improved implements, for organisational work, as working capital, as a direct subsidy. Governments can undertake or assist in marketing. This the Orissa Government have undertaken. Government can also help in giving expert advisers, particularly in the field of evolving designs and patterns. But all these do not absolve the people of their responsibility in the matter. The Britisher all over the world helps his industries by actively patronising the products of his country, dearer though they invariably are than corresponding articles of other countries. And that is what we have to learn in India.

Decentralised production has been brought into the forefront of the picture which is being unfolded before us day by day by the war. The main targets of bombing are the centralised production centres to cripple the enemy. It is claimed that because the production centres of China are in the villages scattered over the country, that is principally why she still holds out against the Japanese in the face of overwhelming odds. Blankets and clothing for the Chinese army are being supplied by the cottage workers. It has saved the country. Is there any reason why we in India should not have one great industry of clothing the population under a decentralised organisation, especially when it will not only keep alive hundreds and thousands of our weavers spread all over the country but also provide employment and food to millions of our semi-starved countrymen by a spare-time occupation? Every mouthful of food we can add to the sum-total available counts in this country.

To the scoffer I present the following picture. It was late winter, and the day was not far advanced, about eleven. A road ran winding in and out of deep forests with patches of cultivation marking human habitations here and there. A neat little bamboo and thatch structure enclosing a small courtyard

stood within 50 feet of the road. There was an open gate leading into the courtyard and there waited small groups of men and women, mostly women. There was an eager and expectant look on their faces. An air of faint restlessness hung about them which was noticeable, being so uncommon in a waiting crowd in India. On the road was a steady stream of men, women, children, some with empty hands, others carrying loads, merchandise in carts, pack-animals or baskets, proceeding north, for it was the market day. Then a young man was seen cutting across the road towards the gate. A sigh of relief was audible amongst the waiting crowd, greetings were exchanged, smiles lit up their faces. The young man hurriedly went inside and came out with a book and sat on a *charpoy*. The crowd gathered around him, there were fumbings inside their clothing and out came in each hand bundles of cotton yarn, some small, some large, some medium. Eagerly these hands were thrust out towards the man. Each bundle he took, examined, weighed and noted in the book he held against an entry bearing the name of the man or woman who presented the bundle. Rapid arithmetical calculations were made by the young man in his head and out came a few nickel pieces or copper, as the case was, according to his calculations. Eagerly the man or woman clutched the coins and rushed out to the road joining the throng wending its way to the market. One such woman we followed. At the market she produced a small bottle with a loop of string on its neck. The oilman filled it half with mustard oil. A seller of ripe old tamarind sold her a small ball of de-seeded tamarind. Small fish neatly piled in a cup made of a few *kendu* leaves were 2 pice a cup. She bought two of these. That evening I long to dream there was happiness and contentment after the evening meal that she cooked for her little family of a husband and two little boys. As it happened it was the first square meal, and of tasteful quality, of that week.

REVIEWS

THE GOOD SHEPHERD : by C. F. Andrews.

Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd. London.

Price 6/- net.

THE nucleus of this book, now published posthumously, is a course of lectures in Pastoral Theology delivered by Mr. Andrews at Cambridge in 1937; its theme may be stated in his own words as "the supreme need of quiet devotion in the pastoral work of the Church." The first part of it deals with the Christian experience of personal relationship with Christ as the Great Pastor, the Good Shepherd of the individual soul; the second part discusses aspects of the disciple's relationships with his fellow-men as he seeks to obey the Master's command, "feed My sheep", and to lead them into the same fellowship with the Good Shepherd as he himself enjoys.

The book is addressed in the first place, like the lectures from which it originated, to those entering the regular ministry of the Christian Church; but it has been so enlarged in scope that the greater portion of it is equally relevant to the needs of any man or woman with a serious sense of Christian vocation. It is written primarily for Great Britain, and envisages religious work in the social conditions that obtain there, and under the close shadow of war, but is immensely enriched by the writer's life-work in the East and the special concern for the "new lands" of the Dominions that sprang from his world tour of 1936.

In this last book C. F. Andrews argues no intellectual position, and concerns himself but little, directly, with the advocacy of any of the outward activities by which he himself, no less than others, sought to make practical application of his faith. Instead, like the apostle John, he declares to us with simple yet profound sincerity, what he has seen and known, and his hands have handled, of the Word of life. That Word is simply that no outward "efficiency" can be spiritually effective unless it is the fruit of time spent in the discipline of quiet and persevering prayer; and that nothing can take the place of the daily "practice of the presence of God" in which he himself found his inspiration. In a moving passage he speaks of his longing that the Christian Church, now under the stress of war, should not lose this basic serenity in the feverish activities of superficial "national service", still less in the bitterness of national hate. In every context he repeats the spirit of the words of Jesus: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But *one* thing is needful"

There are many things in the book that should make a special appeal in India, in spite of what was said above about its primary purpose. One of the most striking is the story of the Himalayan shepherds which illuminates the verse "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." Another is the description of the influence on his life of the old Muslim saint who allowed no outward activity to encroach upon his prayer times. The emphasis on the life-giving freedom and joy of true religion reflects, one may surmise, the writer's long friendship with Rabindranath Tagore. The tender understanding of the difficulties of the poor, and the experience that underlies such a phrase as "the clean surgery of truth spoken in love", reveal the qualities that made him a friend and admirer of Mahatma Gandhi. The indictment of modern civilisation for its crowded restlessness and futility again owes much to Indian experience, and is all the more impressive for its restraint.

Those who know C. F. Andrews' former writings will expect that here as elsewhere he will have much to say that will "reach" men of prayer in all faiths, and they will not be disappointed. Such men will have shared from time to time in the experience of intimate communion and divine guidance, though they may not call the Giver by the name of Christ. In one passage, however, he seems to desire to dissociate himself from those who think of the Godhead as formless, impersonal spirit rather than as the mighty Personality which is the distinctive (though not exclusive) conception of Christian thought. "The flower of Heart's-ease," he writes, "is one that grows only in a glorious *companionship*, and not merely under the sway of an *influence* or energy."

Finally, the references towards the end of the book to the part played by Jesus in the national life of his people make keener our regret that the study of the Sermon on the Mount which Andrews was planning was left so incomplete at his death. The question was one which occupied his very close attention during the last months of his life, as his letters and conversation testified. As they stand, the references are sufficient to answer those who would accuse the writer of being too exclusively concerned, even in such a book as this, with individual piety.

Marjorie Sykes.

হেলেবেলা (*MY BOYHOOD DAYS*) : by Rabindranath Tagore.

Visva-Bharati Book Shop, 210 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

Price Re 1/8/- & Rs. 2/-.

THE author in his preface to this autobiography writes, that though its subject matter is somewhat similar to that of *My Reminiscences*, there is an intrinsic difference between the two. "If one is the lake the other is the mountain spring," says he. In *My Reminiscences* the portion dealing with the poet's early life occupies a position of secondary importance in the book itself. And necessarily so : the account given there is but a part of an indivisible whole, providing a suitable prologue leading on to an understanding of the ultimate development of the poet as we know him today. The child who is only the father of the man in *My Reminiscences* assumes the principal rôle in his own undisputed right in *My Boyhood Days*.

The book is a complete narrative by itself and needs no sequel. Starting from the earliest recollections the poet has given a fairly connected story of the various incidents of his life taking us right up to his student days in London. It is more than a story ; it is a sustained vision of a procession of days that are now no more, recalled by an aged poet in moments when he withdraws into himself and lives his past over again. *My Boyhood Days* is as much the story of a particular boy as it is the story of the boy in every one of us. Its appeal, as that of the *The Crescent Moon*, is particular and general at the same time.

And yet this story of a seemingly impersonal and universal boyhood has all the qualities that the best autobiographies should possess. The setting and the background are not merely interpretive, they are as real as the boy himself whom we almost see living and moving through the pages. Page after page the chequered light and shade of a poet's memory has created an artistic pattern which is intricate in its very simplicity. In no other prose work of his, barring perhaps *Broken Ties* (চতুর্দশ) has the author achieved so much with so little. Seen from other stand-points also, *My Boyhood Days* may very well take its place of honour in the history of Bengali prose style. As a specimen of pure colloquial prose whose *forte* lies in directness and uninvolved simplicity the book has set up a new precedent and has opened out newer possibilities.

One feels tempted to quote passage after passage to illustrate the inimitable charm of the author's narrative style, but it would be superfluous to do so here, as an English translation of the book is being published in this very issue of the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*. Miss Marjorie Sykes (of Santiniketan) is to be congratulated on her excellent rendering of the original into English.

Kshitish Roy.

OUR INDIA : By Minoo Masani. Illustrated by C. H. G. Moorhouse.

Published by Oxford University Press, (Indian Branch),

October 1940. Price Rs. 2—12 As.

WHEN Minoo Masani retired from the field of active politics the fact was regretted. He was a bright unit of a group of young socialists who were making themselves felt in political India. But Masani has reappeared in another field and, on the whole, India is the richer for it.

It is a delightful and valuable book of 165 pages that he has produced with telling illustrations, associated these days with works of M. Ilin on achievements of Soviet Russia. Written primarily for boys and girls, the book is equally profitable reading to the grown-ups.. Within a small compass Masani has drawn a picture of India never sketched before.

"We are looking forward, and not back," is what he says, a very healthy pastime for the youth of the country. He tells the reader what India is, what she has, her potentialities and the way in which the rich store of materials that make real wealth can be utilised to make the country a land of plenty for all. All this set out in a refreshing style, in attractively simple language with profuse illustrations. Within 165 pages of this book there are 100 illustrations.

The little book tells in broad outlines what the country's resources are, where we fail to make full use of them, the correct balance between agriculture and industries, and between the different forms of the latter. Man to man an Indian is not inferior to the best in the world, the country is rich beyond measure, nature is bountiful, and yet why is the country a land of tears? Why does the farmer produce so little, why is there not enough milk to go round when we possess a third of the cattle in the world, why in the land of snow peaks and mighty rivers do crops suffer from drought in some part or other of the country every year, why does the farmer burn his agricultural capital in dung manure into ashes in his hearth, why is there not enough wood for use as fuel, why does India export cotton and import cotton fabrics—these and many another are the questions he asks of his readers and answers for them. He tells us how rich we are in our mineral wealth, that we can go on digging coal at the rate we are doing for over 2000 years, how we are wasting every year some 30 million gallons of coal-tar rich in motor spirits and light oils, how poor is our utilisation of the wonderful store of iron ores, to what little benefit to our country do we turn the great deposits of manganese ore and instead ship more and more of it out to other countries, and so on with the other valued underground treasures.

We pay, he reminds us, £ 20 million every year as the price of things we buy from Europe. What little use we make of Power in India, he throws in clear perspective by stating that, whereas in Norway water power alone provides 700 horse-power of electricity for every 1,000 people, it is just 1 in India. "We Indians are allowing what we possess to run to waste in a very foolish way. That is because we do not try to plan our country's life. We live higgledy piggledy, from day to day, and from hand to mouth" The author ends the book with a picture of India Tomorrow, a picture that should allure the heart of all youths.

Of a book so well written one feels that there should be no criticism. But there is just one small point which might be mentioned here. Averages in statistics have their utility but only where they do not cloud the picture. Unfortunately, the figures of average income and of duration of life introduce an undesirable element of unreality. The talented author, I have no doubt, will have no difficulty in making this part of his picture as vivid without these statistics in the succeeding editions which one can safely prophecy for this book.

There is need for translations of this book in all the principal Indian languages. The book should be in the hands of every boy and girl in our schools.

It is to be hoped that many more books of this type will come out of Minoo Masani's pen in future. But will he make them hundred per cent Swadeshi by illustrations from home-made talents ?

S. N. Mozumdar, I.C.S.

THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH :

by M. K. Gandhi, Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad,

Second Edition, 1940. Price Rs. 4/-.

Pp. xviii 636, ten illustrations.

IN its first edition, the Autobiography was published in two volumes priced at Rs. 5/8/- each. It was a library edition, and consequently took about eleven years to run out. In its Gujrati original, the autobiography has already run through five editions covering 50,000 volumes. It was therefore keenly felt that a cheaper English edition ought to be placed upon the market ; and the publishers must be congratulated on the way in which they have produced the present work.

It is a complete reprint in a single volume of the previous two English volumes, along with the addition of ten plates which were absent in the

former edition. The price is very moderate, the size handy ; and, we are sure, the book will be welcomed by those who wish to understand Gandhiji more thoroughly, as well as among that larger circle of readers who love to read a remarkably sincere and penetrating story of a great man's life.

Nirmal Kumar Bose.

MORE ABOUT THE HEREAFTER : by Mrs. Rhys

Davids, M. A. D. Litt.,

(Psychic Review Ltd., London, 1939).

THIS appears to be the latest work from the pen of a distinguished writer whose name is already familiar, along with that of her husband—the late Prof. Rhys Davids, as an authority in the *Pali Buddhism*. They have both done an invaluable service for an old and almost world-wide faith, which had its birth over five centuries before the Christian era, by the publication, as also by English translation, of some of the noted works in the literature of what is considered to be the earlier phase of Buddhism. A book of the present sort, bearing a queer name, from one of the writers was naturally expected to be on a certain aspect or doctrine of the Thought they so prominently represent. But that is not the impression the work gives, at least directly. A closer view would, however, disclose some indirect connection of the subject treated here with an aspect of the teachings of Buddha as understood and interpreted by the present writer. In fact, a suspicion arises in the mind, whether the view which the author has of late given out in her work—*What is the Original Gospel in Buddhism*—has not had its origin in the studies embodied in the work under review. It may be, on the contrary, that the main trend of the subject of this work had its orientation in the new interpretation that she offers now of some of the doctrines of the earlier Buddhism. At any rate the two books furnish some clue to each other, so far as the problem about the life of man after one leaves this earth is concerned. The problem is no doubt a serious one for all faiths which recognise a “survival after bodily death.” We find the same problem is most prominently emphasised in our *Kathopanisad* beginning with a dialogue between the boy *Nuchiketas* and the *Yamaraja*—the King of the Hades. The way the present author has introduced the subject and treated elaborately, offering references to the scriptures of different faiths, particularly Christianity and Buddhism, on the matter and giving out boldly what she believes to be true in fact on her personal experiences, makes the work, not simply interesting, but also deeply significant—if it is really a true account of man's life on earth and

thereafter. Much of what she records as testimonies, coming from the statements made by eminent men who have long or lately left this earth, but have now a "more" or better life in a plane beyond, might appear to an ordinary reader to be rather "fantastic." But there is no mistake about the seriousness with which the author has undertaken this task in an age which is so sceptical about these matters. She appears to be so convinced of the truth about the facts recorded and the conclusions drawn therefrom, that she is prepared even to face any opprobrium or opposition. In view of this attitude of mind with which she has published this work, one is bound to pause before offering any off-hand criticism arising from one's cherished beliefs or ideas. And Mrs. Rhys Davids is not a personage, whose opinions can be so easily brushed aside. She is well-known for her saintly life and integrity of thought and writings. As to the subject under consideration, she herself states that she has devoted twenty years of her life to its study and investigation, beginning with a sceptical attitude and ending with a firm conviction of the views laid down in the work. It is difficult therefore to offer any opinions, for or against, on the part of one who is outside the circle of Psychical Researchers. Yet the author does not appear to have approached the subject as a mere curious student of psychical research. Her comparative studies of the scriptures of the principal Faiths and religious works on the subject of the Hereafter, particularly Christianity and Buddhism, have brought the problem, as she avers, prominently into her mind, and led her to undertake serious investigation about the problem on the lines of researches hitherto made and carry on the same work further in support of the conclusions thereof, with fresh evidences obtained by personal experiences and careful "experiments" (if we may so use the term) in the so-called "psychical" field. About this field, there is still much honest ignorance and lingering prejudice. What is called the "mental life", as hitherto studied in the west and recorded in the current text-books, is but the beginning of the study and remains still in a state of struggle with old and cherished ideas. The subject needs a wider outlook and freedom of approach in order to be able to say definitely what exactly is the nature and operations of the mind studied from its deeper levels and wider expressions. A new orientation is required here for the purpose. And one wonders if the present-day studies in the field of religious psychology would offer ultimately a glimpse of the underlying nature of the mental life. Buddhism is found to be particularly rich in studies of this field. But the ideas are so queer there and the methods of analysis so unfamiliar to the ordinary level of mental attitude, as also to the so-called "scientific" students of the mental life, that it may be considered as almost hoping against hope that any serious

approach to the subject would be readily undertaken, unless and until the old ideas are shaken off, and a serious research in this unfamiliar field be undertaken under a sound inspiration of the spiritual sort. However, to return to the subject under review, Mrs. Rhys Davids is found to have undertaken the work, not simply with the purpose of offering a glimpse into the sort of life a man is supposed to enter after the present earthly one and the struggles continued thereinto for the "betterment" of further existence. She is particular also to suggest, on the basis of her convictions, the sort of life a man should live on earth, so as to "fare well" hereafter. Man's life is essentially a life of the spirit, and life of the spirit is a life of "becoming", in which man is free to advance further and further in order to be true to his or her real and inner self. This is the substance of her sound advice. Unfortunately this is what man is apt to forget in this life, and to suffer the consequences. It is hoped the glimpse which the author gives here of the life to come hereafter, if true in fact, would be a valuable lesson to humanity—a lesson which humanity needs badly in the present-day materialist tendencies and prevailing sceptical ideas. We wish heartily that the work may find the appreciation and welcome reception, which it deserves to have.

P. B. Adhikari.

ARABIC THOUGHT AND ITS PLACE IN HISTORY :

By Dr. De Lacy O'leary, D.D. Published by Kegan Paul,
Trench, Trubner & Co., London.

Revised Edition 1939, pp. 327 ; Price 12/- Shillings.

THIS is the second revised edition of Dr. O'leary's work, which first appeared in 1922. There are views of very conflicting character as to the nature, origin, progress and ultimate achievement of Hellenistic influence on the cultural life of early Muslims, which found its way into the Islamic world through Syriac channels. Of the transmission of Hellenistic thought into the Muslim world, we have no doubt, but it is still a matter of opinion as to whether the nucleus of Latin Scholasticism introduced any remarkable changes into the religious life and thought of the Arabs. The neo-Platonists represented a very high standard of intellectual life and the cultural centres of the "classic age" at Athens imparted philosophical and scientific knowledge to the East, and even as early as in the fourth century, the Greek philosophy had crossed the Aegean waters and come into Syria, where in 310 A. D. at Nisibis a school was established by a band of Nestorian refugees, who had fled from the persecutions of the intolerant

home church ; but neither the Nestorian schism, which is acclaimed as the stronghold of Greek culture till 499 A. D., when emperor Zeno expelled them, nor did the seven neo-Platonist philosophers, driven out of their homes by Justinian to the court of Nushirwan in 532 A. D., with their semi-philosophical, semi-missionary activities throughout Central Asia down to Arabia, succeeded in permeating the theological life of Islam. Much emphasis is laid on the Arab reception of Aristotelian philosophy and on the Mu'tazilites, whose doctrines are said to be "remodelled and propagated under the influence of the philosophy of Aristotle" (Dozy's *L'Islamisme* in Chauvin's French translation, pp. 205-207), but, strange as it may appear, all the chief exponents of this school viz., al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Rushd and others, were devout Muslims, who did not dare assail the fundamental principles of the Faith. The breach between philosophy and dogma, to a certain extent, was undoubtedly affected by them, but it is quite preposterous to think with Dr. O'leary that "the Aristotelian philosophy was received by the Muslim world as a revelation supplementing the Quran" (p. 123).

We can well believe Steiner (*Die Mu'taziliten oder Freidenker im Islam*, p. 5) when he says that "the Arabian Aristotelians were properly rather Natural Scientists than philosophers", their most signal achievement belongs to the region of observation of natural phenomenon, above all medicine and astronomy, but they never succeeded in disintegrating the traditional theology of Islam. The Muslim interest in Greek philosophy, which resulted in the translation of a large number of works into Arabic, was purely academic rather than philosophical, hence we feel constrained in agreeing with Dr. O'leary when he says : "Thus the Quran and Aristotle were read together as supplementing one another in perfect good faith, but inevitably the conclusions, and still more perhaps the method of Greek philosophy, began to act as a powerful solvent on their traditional beliefs" (p. 123).

Even the theory of neo-Platonic origin of mysticism is as much doubtful as the association of its fundamental doctrines exclusively with Vedantism or Buddhism, and here Dr. O'leary has been over-zealous in establishing his hypothesis. To take an example, he describes *Tawhīd* or the doctrine of Unification as "the final union of the soul with God" (p. 192) in a way closely resembling the neo-Platonic teaching and wrongly adds that the exercise of intuitive faculty of reason is not essential for its attainment. He goes a step further in the misrepresentation of the doctrine of *Ḥalūl* or incarnation which he calls as "*Tawhīd* taking place in this present life"; undoubtedly he is quoting from the *Kitāb al-Tawāsīn*, when he remarks that here "the deity of God enters the human soul in the same way that

the soul at birth enters the body." This teaching, according to his conviction, is "a fusion of old pre-Islamic Persian beliefs as to incarnation and the philosophical theories of neo-Platonism" (p. 193). He adds : "This is an extremely interesting illustration of the fusion of Oriental and Hellenistic elements in Sufism, and shows that the theoretical doctrines of Sufism, whatever they may have borrowed from Persia and India, receive their interpretative hypotheses from neo-Platonism" (pp. 193-194).

Similarly the doctrine of *Fana*, which is universally admitted on all hands to be of Indian origin, has been exclusively associated with teaching of the neo-Platonists, a fact which the author has failed to establish. In the case of the doctrine of "unitive state", he is quite uncertain whether it was borrowed from Buddhism, Gnosticism or neo-Platonism, but strange, as it may appear, he says : "But in this as in other parts of Sufi speculation it seems that the constructive theory employed in forming a theological system was neo-Platonic : even in mysticism the Greek mind exercised its influence in analysing and constructing hypotheses" (p. 201).

Bikrama Jit Hasrat.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIVING FAITHS—An Introduction to Comparative Religion : by Dr. Haridas Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D., P.R.S.

Head of the Department of Philosophy, University
of Dacca. Published by the University
of Calcutta, 1938.

THIS is the First Volume embodying six Lectures the learned author delivered at the Calcutta University during the closing months of the year 1934 under the *Stephanas Nirmalendu Ghosh* Lectureship. The second volume, which has not perhaps been published yet (at least it has not been sent to us yet for review) is to contain the remaining five lectures. The present volume begins in the first chapter with the question of the origin of Religion and its value in individual and social life of man and allied subjects, and goes on, in the next two chapters, to treat critically of the *role* of Prophets, as distinguished from that of mere Preachers and Reformers of religion, and their relationship to Revelations—illustrating from some of the Living Faiths how they have shaped the growth of religious development differently among different peoples in the course of their cultural life. The treatment of the various matters coming up in connection with them has been, not simply thorough but also admirable, and the critical attitude maintained throughout the discussions in these chapters is marked

by wide sympathy and true appreciation of the comparative value of the different Faiths in whose growth the said features have been prominent. The remaining chapters of this volume are devoted, rather by way of illustrations, to the conception of Gods (or of God) in Hinduism in its Vedic and post-Vedic or Pauranic periods, God in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and lastly God in Zoroastrianism—both Gathic and post-Gathic. The second volume is to treat, on similar lines, of Buddhism and Jainism, and of the three religions of what the author calls the Mongolian Group—*Confucianism*, *Taoism* and *Shintoism*. We can say nothing definitely as yet how he has dealt with these living faiths and how far he has been able to extend his theories of religious origin and development to them, until we have gone through the volume not in hand yet. But from what we find to be the characteristic mode of treatment of the subjects in the first volume, we doubt not that the same masterly way of handling has been extended to the contents of the second volume. And the spirit of criticism, as expressed by the author in the following lines in the Preface, has been, in our opinion, carried out truly there as in the whole course of the lectures before us : “My criticisms have proceeded from a genuine conviction that all the living religions possess good points—some more, some less—of which they may be legitimately proud, but that none is perfect in spite of all that its adherents may claim on its behalf and that they are capable of development in diverse degrees and directions. This is why I have been constrained to criticise more than once the doctrine of Final Revelation, which, in spite of its value for social solidarity, is a serious obstacle to the development of individual faith and communal toleration.” This shows evidently the objective nature of the attitude with which he has approached the history of the different Faiths treated in the work and an impersonal and sympathetic outlook on their treatment and evaluation. The author has not simply gone to the root and origin of the different faiths treated, but has also taken a wide and cautious view of the particular circumstances which have influenced the growth of every one of them. This is the historical part of his work. But his treatment is not merely historical. The role of a writer on comparative religion, we think, is somewhat, if not entirely, different from that of a mere historian. A comparative study is not worth its name, if it leaves out a true and adequate evaluation of religion in its historical growth. He has to bear in mind the truth, so widely illustrated in the history of human culture, about the difference between origin and value, and nothing is so unpardonable in a writer as to judge of the value of any item of human culture merely by referring to its low origin. The application of Spencerian theory of Evolution

is undoubtedly inapplicable to this field, if not elsewhere. An evolution of the emergent type finds an apt illustration here. Our learned author's whole treatment is marked by this character. He has not simply played the part of a historian, but the true role of a comparative student of religious faiths as well. There are many histories of religion in the field already; their number is rather growing. But we find very few works in English on comparative Religion. The present work in its two volumes will, it is hoped, remove a long-felt want in this respect. It is bound to be a standard work on the subject, and as such it should find a place in the curricula of studies in any University, Indian or foreign, which offers the subject of comparative study of religions as one of its post-graduate subjects.

P. B. Adhikari.

CO-OPERATIVE FARMING : S. K. Dey, I.C.S. Published by

Indira Devi, Collector's House, Nadia.

Price Re 1/-.

THIS book embodies, as the author says, "the theory and practice of a scheme being tried in a Bengal District."

Three co-operative farming societies have been organised but had not been registered till the time of publication of the book. It was in the middle of April last, barely 6 months before the book was published that these farming organisations were given the start. The farms have a comprehensive plan of rich double-cropping. In the circumstances is it not surprising that the author, a member of the Indian Civil Service, should rush into print so prematurely? Undoubtedly it is an interesting experiment and the author has zeal. But he will better serve the interest of agricultural advancement if he would wait till a proper rotational programme of cultivation has been worked out on the farms in 4 or 5 years and then publish the results. When, if at all he does so, he will be well advised to let the facts speak for themselves, and, alongside, give a complete picture of the lands in the farms, their character, tenure, and the facilities provided for cultivation. These will give a proper setting to judge the results.

"Krushak-Bandhu".

33 YEARS' SERVICE

In India to-day there are poor men who once were rich and rich men who may be poor in the years to come. Life Insurance is the surest of all safeguards against such bitter losses of personal fortune. Protection for the needs of to-morrow has been provided by this prominent national institution for over 33 years. Its contracts, complete in every respect, stand for uncompromising high quality and proved dependability.

FIGURES THAT IMPRESS

(May—Dec., 1939)

New Business	(over)	Rs. 2 Crores	10 Lakhs
Policies in Force	" "	17 "	
Life Fund	" "	3 "	10 "
Total Assets	" "	3 "	56 "
Claims Paid (1907-39)	" "	1 Crore	97 "
Premium Income (Nearly)	" "	...	47 "

Per Rs. 1,000 Per Year.

BONUS :	ON ENDOWMENT	Rs. 18
	ON WHOLE LIFE	Rs. 15

THESE FIGURES ARE UNDENIABLE PROOF OF THE GREAT AND INCREASING CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE IN THE HINDUSTHAN'S SOUND, SECURE AND PROFIT-EARNING POLICIES. GET MORE FACTS FROM US AND DECIDE FOR YOURSELF. WE ARE ANXIOUS TO HELP YOU, OUR HELP IS BASED ON EXPERIENCE.

HINDUSTHAN

CO-OPERATIVE INS. SOCIETY, LTD.

HINDUSTHAN BUILDINGS, CALCUTTA.

BRANCHES:—BOMBAY, MADRAS, DELHI, LAHORE, LUCKNOW, PATNA, NAGPUR, AND DACCA. OFFICES:—ALL OVER INDIA, BURMA, CEYLON, Br. EAST AFRICA, MALAYA, ETC.

EFFERSAL

Effervescent
FRUIT SALINE



When you are dull and listless, or feel that you cannot bring to your day's work the requisite amount of energy and sprightfulness, take a bubbling glassful of

EFFERSAL

First Thing in the Morning

AND BUBBLE UP WITH HEALTH
& HAPPINESS ALL THE DAY LONG.

In 2 oz. and 6 oz. packings.

BENGAL CHEMICAL

CALCUTTA : : BOMBAY

HINDUSTHAN PROUDLY PRESENTS RABINDRANATH'S GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

H 1	{	ভবু মনে রেখো	(কীর্তন)			
এচ ১	{	আমি যখন বাবার মত হব (আবৃত্তি)	H. 782	{	The Vision	(Recitation)
H. 49	{	হৃদয় আমার নাচে রে	(আবৃত্তি) এচ ৭৮২	{	The Trumpet	Do
এচ ৪২	{	আমার পরাণ লয়ে কী খেলা (গান)	এচ ৮১২	{	বুলন	(আবৃত্তি)
H.342	{	ছোঁই বীর পুরুষ	(আবৃত্তি) H.812	{	আশা	(ঐ)
এচ ৩৪২	{	লুকোচুরি	(.)			
		(মূল্য—২৫০)		(PRICE—Rs. 2-12 EACH)		

There are more than 50 songs of Rabindranath (sung by different artists) and recorded and released by HINDUSTHAN PRODUCTS. All these Gramophone Records will make your set a *record* one.

Call at any gramophone dealer or write to us for lists.

HINDUSTHAN PRODUCTS

6/1, Akrur Dutt Lane, : : : : Calcutta.

BRAHMAVIDYA

THE ADYAR LIBRARY BULLETIN
APPEARING FOUR TIMES A YEAR

Director : G. Srinivasa Murti, B. A., B. L., M. B. & C. M. Vidyaratna.

Editor : Prof. C. Kunhan Raja, M. A., D. Phil., (Oxon.)

Asst. Editor : A. N. Krishna Aiyangar, M. A., L. T.

Rates of Subscription :

Life Subscription	Rs. 100	
Or	\$ 50	
Or	£ 10	
	Per Annum	Single Copy
India & Ceylon	Rs. 6	Rs. 2-8
U. S. A.	\$ 3	\$ 1'25
British Empire	Sh. 12	Sh. 5
Other Countries	Rs. 9	Rs. 3-8

All Communications to be addressed to :

*The Director,
ADYAR LIBRARY,
ADYAR, MADRAS S., INDIA.*

S. SAHA, PHOTOGRAPHER,

2/1, Lake View Road, Calcutta.

Photographs of Rabindranath Tagore and of views and festivals at Santiniketan and Sriniketan available in varying sizes. Secured several first prizes in World Photographic Competitions. Highly recommended by the Poet himself and the authorities of Visva-Bharati.

Price—Mounted $8\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$: Rs. 2/8/- Unmounted 6×4 : Re. 1/-
For other sizes, please enquire. Postal charges extra.

THE ARYAN PATH

Editor : SOPHIA WADIA

STANDS FOR IDEALISTIC AND CULTURAL AIMS.

IDEALS free from Sectarianism. DISCUSSIONS free from Politics. CULTURE free from National or Racial Bias.

TO APPEAR IN AUGUST AND AFTER :

THE ENDURING FRANCE
THE FUTURE OF EUROPE
BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY—A STUDY IN
RELIGIOUS PARALLELISM
POSITION AND INFLUENCE OF WOMEN IN ISLAM
THE CREATIVE SPIRIT OF INDIAN ART
THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ONE
LIGHT IN ISLAMIC MYSTICISM : II.—ITS
CONCEPTION IN AL-GHAZALI'S TEACHING
UNDER SENTENCE OF TIME
SWEDISH IDEALISM AND RELIGIOSITY
REINCARNATION IN JAINISM
THE NOVEL IN THE MOULDING OF SOCIAL OPINION
THEATRE AND COMMUNITY

By Carlo Sforza

By S. K. George
By Faiz B. Tyabji
By Hermann Goetz
By D. S. Sarma

By Margaret Smith
By J. S. Collis
By Alf Ahlberg
By Ajit Prasad
By Stella Gibbons
By Hermon Ould

Annual Subscription Rs. 6/-

Single Copy As. 12-

W. S. DEPARTMENT

THE ARYAN PATH OFFICE

"Aryasangha", Malabar Hill, Bombay.

A DIALOGUE ON MODERN POETRY

By R. Bailey.

Price 5s.

Modern poetry is a controversial subject, and therefore most conveniently discussed in a dialogue. The *Plain Man* or the *Perplexed*, the *Attacker*, the *Defender*, and the *Moderator*, who guides the argument, all emphasize their respective points of view.

THE OXFORD BOOK OF MODERN VERSE

Chosen by W. B. Yeats.

Price 8s. 6d.

This is now recognized as the standard anthology of all poems published between 1892 and 1985

OXFORD UNIVERSITY
PRESS, CALCUTTA.

The publishers of Philosophic Abstracts take pleasure in announcing for Summer 1941 publication

THE DICTIONARY OF PHILOSOPHY

Although embraced in one volume, the dictionary covers metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, logic, philosophy of religion, aesthetics, philosophy of law, philosophy of education, social philosophy and philosophical psychology. Special emphasis has been placed on the definition of basic concepts and terms germane to the contemporary schools of philosophy, logical positivism, dialectical materialism, mathematical logic, neo-scholasticism, philosophy of science, Chinese, Jewish and Indian philosophy.

The DICTIONARY OF PHILOSOPHY is edited by Dagobert D. Runes with the collaboration of Alonzo Church, Rudolf Carnap, G. Watts Cunningham, Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Irwin Edman, Rudolf Allers, A. C. Ewing, Ralph Tyler Flawelling, Jorgen Jorgensen, Ledger Wood, William Marias Malisoff, Carl G. Hempel, B. A. G. Fuller, A. Cornelius Benjamin, Hunter Guthrie, Wilbur Long, V. J. McGill, A. O. Pegis, Glenn R. Morrow, Joseph Ratner, Wendell T. Bush, Dorion Cairns, James K. Feibleman, Paul A. Schillip, Paul Weiss and a number of other scholars.

Applications for further literature, as well as other communications, should be addressed to :

PHILOSOPHIC ABSTRACTS

15 East 40th Street

New York City

T'IENT HSIA MONTHLY

*Published under the Auspices of the Sun Yat-sen Institute for the Advancement
of Culture and Education*

ARTICLES

CHRONICLES

TRANSLATIONS

BOOK REVIEWS

AIM:

To bring about a
better Cultural
u n d e r s t a n d i n g
between China
and the West.

SPECIAL

FEATURES:

1.

Articles on differ-
ent aspects of
Chinese Life and
Culture.

2.

Articles on West-
ern Life and
Letters, which
educated Ch i n e s e
would be
interested in.

3.

Chronicles giving
a bird's-eye view
of movements in
Art and Letters
in China to-day.

4.

Full translations
into English of
important Chin-
e s e writings,
both ancient and
modern : poems,
essays, stories,
sketches, etc.

5.

Reviews of cur-
rent Chinese and
& foreign books.

Some Important Items in Recent Issues :

ARTICLES

Isaac Titsingh's Embassy to the Court of Ch'ien
Lung (1794-1796), by C. R. Boxer

Federal Union, and the Obstacles,
by John Middleton Murry

Modern Scottish Literature, by Chung Tso-you

Economic Developments in Wartime China.

by Lowe Chuan-hua

The Religious Influence of the Early Jesuits on
Emperor Ch'ung Ch'eng of the Ming Dynasty,
by Chen Shou-yi

Some Hsieh Shih Episodes, by T. K. Chuan

All Pathos and No Humour, by John C. H. Wu

Some Observations on Bertrand Russell's Introduction
to the Second Edition of the Principles
of Mathematics, by James Feibleman.

Prospero's Isle, by Lawrence Durrell

Some Fundamental Differences between China and
Japan, by Derk Bodde

The Chinese Educational Mission and Its Influence,
by Yung Shang Him

A Portuguese Account of East Asia in 1614,
by J. M. Braga

CHRONICLES

Art Chronicle, by Chun Kum-wen

Cinema Chronicle, by Tu Heng

Science Chronicle, by Hsu Chu-yeh

Poetry Chronicle, by Ling Tai

TRANSLATIONS

Fifty-Six Poems from the Chinese, by Teresa Li

Nine Poems of Su T'ung P'o,

trs. by H. H. Hu & Harold Acton

Ch'un-Hsiang Nao Hsueh by T'ang Hsien-tsu,
trs. by Harold Acton

Yang Chu, trs. by Leonard Lyall

Lao Tzu's *The Tao and Its Virtue*, trs. and annotated
by John C. H. Wu

BOUND COPIES OF VOLS. I-IX are now on Sale

SUBSCRIPTIONS (Payable in advance)

Domestic: NC\$18.00 per annum or \$2 00 per copy

Hong Kong: HK\$9.00 per annum or \$1.00 per copy

America: Gold \$5.00 per annum or 60 cents per copy

England and other Countries: 20/- per annum or 2/6 per copy

Postage free

All subscriptions to be sent to :

MESSRS. KELLY & WALSH, LTD.,
66 NANKING ROAD, SHANGHAI.

Rabindranath's HINDI WORKS



The copyright of the Bengali works of Rabindranath Tagore and their translations in Hindi belongs to the Visva-Bharati. The Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati has arranged for publication of a series of authorised translations of the Poet's works in Hindi from original Bengali.

JUST PUBLISHED

Visva-Parichaya (A Science Primer with illustrations)—Re. 1/-

A FEW AUTHORISED TRANSLATIONS

Galpa Guchha	(A Book of short stories)	Rs. 1 8 0
Sorashi	(A Book of short stories)	„ 1 0 0
Kumudini	(A Novel) ...	„ 8 0 0
Rush-ki-Chithi	(Travels in Russia)	„ 1 12 0
Siksha Kaisa Hay	(A collection of Essays on Education)	„ 0 5 0
Char Adhyaya	(Latest Novel)	„ 1 8 0

LIBERAL COMMISSION IS ALLOWED TO BOOK-SELLERS

VISVA-BHARATI BOOK-SHOP

210, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

VISVA-BHARATI



PRESIDENT: RABINDRANATH TAGORE

MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

Objects

"To study the Mind of Man in its realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view."

"To bring into more intimate relation with one another, through patient study and research, the different cultures of the East on the basis of their underlying unity."

"To approach the West from the standpoint of such a unity of the life and thought of Asia."

"To seek to realise in a common fellowship of study the meeting of the East and the West, and thus ultimately to strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace through the establishment of free communication of ideas between the two hemispheres."

"And with such ideals in view to provide at Santiniketan aforesaid a centre of Culture where research into and study of the religion, literature, history, science, and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Sikh, Christian and other civilisations may be pursued along with the culture of the West, with that simplicity in externals which is necessary for true spiritual realisation, in amity, good fellowship and co-operation between the thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste, and in the name of the One Supreme Being who is *Shantam, Shwam, Advaitam*."

Membership :

"The membership of the Visva-Bharati and of its Constituent Bodies shall be open to all persons, irrespective of sex, nationality, race, creed, caste, or class ; and no test or condition shall be imposed as to religious belief or profession in admitting members, students, teachers, workers, or in any other connection whatsoever."

The Society is at present maintaining the following institutions :—Patha-Bhavana (The School), Siksha-Bhavana (The College), Vidya-Bhavana (The Research Institute), Kala-Bhavana (The School of Arts and Crafts) at Santiniketan and The Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Surul. The Society manages its own Press and Publishing Department.

The supreme control is vested in the *Parishat*, the *Sadasyas* (members) in General Meeting assembled. The Governing Body is the *Samsad*, consisting of members elected by the *Sadasyas* and the representatives of the different departments.

Life-membership Rs. 250. Annual subscription for ordinary members Rs. 12.

Persons desiring to become members of Visva-Bharati should fill up a Form of Application and send it to the Visva-Bharati office.

General Secretary,
Santiniketan, Bengal, India.



