DAMAGE BOOK

DRENCHED BOOK

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_160472

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



Born, 18th January 1842. Died, 16th January 1901.

Religious & Social Reform

A Collection of Essays and Speeches

BY

MAHADEVA GOVIND RANADE, C.I.E., M.A., L.L.B., &c.

Judge H. M.'s High Court of Judicature, Advocate ;
Dean, Bombay University, &c.

COLLECTED AND COMPILED BY

M. B. KOLASKER,

Compiler of Mr. Ranade's "Essays on Indian Economics."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Bombay:

GOPAL NARAYEN AND CO., BOOKSELLERS.

G. CLARIDGE AND CO.

1902

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION ... ... i—xl

ESSAYS AND SPEECHES :—

I. PHILOSOPHY OF INDIAN THEISM 1

II. THE AGE OF HINDU MARRIAGE... 26

III. VEDIC AUTHORITIES FOR WIDOW MARRIAGE ... 53

IV. STATE LEGISLATION IN SOCIAL MATTERS ... 92

V. RAJA RAMA MOHANA ROY 115

VI. THE TELANG SCHOOL OF THOUGHT 135

VII. REVIVAL AND REFORM... 156

VIII. SOUTHERN INDIA A HUNDRED YEARS AGO ... 179

IX. HINDU PROTESTANTISM 208

X. I AM NEITHER HINDU NOR MAHOMEDAN ... 229

XI. A THEIST'S CONFESSION OF FAITH 250

XII. CONGRESS AND CONFERENCE 279

XIII. VASHISTHA AND VISHWAMITRA ... 295

PORTRAIT.

THE LATE MR. JUSTICE M. G. RANADE, *Frontispiece.*

(*From a photo by Bourne and Shepherd, Bombay.*)

"FAITH is the seed I sow, and good works are as the rain that fertilizes it; wisdom and modesty are the parts of the plough, and my mind is the guiding rein. I lay hold of the handle of the Law; earnestness is the goad I use; and diligence is my draught ox. Thus this ploughing is ploughed, destroying the weeds of delusion. The harvest that it yields is the ambrosia fruit of Nirvana, and by this ploughing all sorrow ends."—*Gautama Buddha.*

One who never turned his back, but marched breast-forward;
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held, we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake. —*Browning.*

COMPILER'S PREFACE.

THE papers which have been selected for publication in this volume possess a permanent value, as lines laid down for genuine progress, which no person will be likely to underrate. Those who may defer from Mr. Ranade's line of reasoning will have no difficulty, at any rate, in acknowledging the clearness of his historical vision, the cogency of his arguments, the persuasiveness of his reasoning, the perfect candour and sincerity, and above all, his unique selfless patriotism, qualities which secured to him the affectionate interest of his countrymen, irrespective of caste or creed, including even those who shared few or none of his views on pressing social questions.

I know of no other countryman of ours whose utterances exhibit such culture and such clear enunciation of principles of conduct and action bearing upon the question of the regeneration of his country—utterances which cannot be too extensively set before those who may be actuated by a like ambition to serve their fatherland. It is their deep earnestness, learning and convincing character which confer so great and lasting a value on these papers. They now are and will continue to be among the country's most valued intellectual treasures. Mr. Ranade's life was one of incessant activity and practical work in fulfilment of what he conceived to be the mission assigned to him and his colleagues by an over-ruling Providence, the fruit whereof was to be nothing less than the spiritual and economic emancipation of his country, and how he fulfilled this mission these papers bear ample testimony. My great regret is that Mr. Ranade has passed away before I could complete this task of love and lay it at his feet, since that it was at his suggestion that I embarked on the

enterprise. On the score of completeness also it is a matter of regret that I have not been able, in spite of careful search, to find one more important paper from his pen—"The Rise and Decay of Female Rights"—which he had intended that I should include in this collection.

Apart from my one great reward in undertaking this compilation of Mr. Ranade's writings, viz., the pleasure of reading the different papers with the gifted sage, and learning from his own lips the stress of events and circumstances which led to their conception and execution, is the anticipation that I might thus be able to perpetuate for the good of the country the garnered and aptly expressed wisdom of this latest and greatest of the country's *Rishis*.

It was intended to annex a biographical sketch of the author, but that part of the work having grown on my hands from day to day—Mr. Ranade's life being full of varied activities comprising almost the entire mental history of the country during the second half of the last century, and it being impossible to condense the account within a limited space—the idea had to be dropped. But, I hope, if time and fortune favour, to complete what I have already begun and in great part executed of a consistent sketch. Meanwhile, I have to apologise for the delay in bringing forth this second volume of the series, an undertaking I had promised when presenting to the public some time ago the first volume of Mr. Ranade's writings, "Essays on Indian Economics."

My warmest thanks are due to my kind friends, Ardesir Framji, Esq., B. A., LLB., Solicitor; B. M. Malabari, Esq., and Rao Bahadur K. G. Deshpande, B. A., Barrister-at-law, for the help, suggestions and advice freely given to enable me to appear before the public in the modest garb of a compiler and expositor.

3 Girgaum, Bombay.

16th January, 1902.

INTRODUCTION.

THE papers which have been selected for publication in this volume contain nearly all that is of permanent interest in the matured utterances of Mr. Ranade, on the several religious and social questions which concern the Hindu community. The downward fortune of that community in its religious, moral, social and industrial phases forcibly appealed to his patriotic emotion as a catastrophe looming in the future if things went on as they had done. He believed it to be the peculiar mission of the particular branch of the Hindu race to which he belonged to arrest this catastrophe, and himself and his colleagues as bound by a sacred duty to take the lead. Accordingly, from the first moment of his opening public career, he with all the earnestness of his nature began to raise a warning voice and call upon his countrymen to stop and think and arrest the downward march. His appeal was the outcome of that intensity of affection for his country and that faith in its ultimate redemption which placed him above the reach of his colleagues, and which gave his utterances an almost prophetic strain. It was no use disguising the truth that if we did not move with the time, we were lost for ever. But this was, according to Mr. Ranade, not to be. Extinction as a nation was not in the decrees of fate, and means existed for averting such a result. To preserve and to regenerate, and to that end dispel the state of stagnation, and to snap the chains of sacerdotal bondage, to rouse the sleeping conscience of the nation—such was the task before him. We had done wrong—grievous wrong in the past by perverting all true social ideals—and were

bound to make complete atonement if we wished to see our fortunes restored once more. This was the way Mr. Ranade defined the problem he essayed to solve. Its solution could brook no delay, no swerving, no hesitation. To-morrows were not to be trusted to in a matter of such moment, and we must set to work at once, if the threatened calamity was to be averted. It was the urgency of the stupendous task he had undertaken and the consciousness of the limitations set by nature on what individual units, howsoever indefatigable, could achieve, which incessantly preyed upon him, gnawing into his very heart. That heart has now ceased to throb; Mr. Ranade has now secured that eternal peace which only those can attain who die in the full consciousness of having done their duty. But not before solid results have been attained and the path of kindred spirits made clear. Peace! Oh! that we could comprehend the full meaning of that blessed word. If we do, we may yet be warned in time! No more shall we meet Mr. Ranade on this globe, but his example remains with us and the fault will be ours if we do not benefit thereby. Men like him are the seeds sown by nature, and none such are ever destroyed. May his work prevail!

We trust the following summary will be found of use, if only as a classification of his diverse activities. How Mr. Ranade redeemed the promise of his youth and fulfilled his mission will be evident from the papers now presented to the public in a collected form.

HIS RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

MR. RANADE was one of the leaders of the theistic movement of Western India, which was started about 1867-68. This movement did not take the aggressive form which had been noticed in the earlier manifestation of a similar spirit in Bengal. There the Adi Brahmos remained strictly Hindus, no doubt professing their new faith with all imaginable fervour and piety, but not thinking of cutting themselves aloof from the Hindu society. But the sober sense of the old generation was not to the liking of the younger men, who, led by Keshab Chandra Sen, separated voluntarily from the general body of the Adi Bramha Samaja, which had been started by the genius of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and was continued by one of his early disciples, Debendra Nath Thakur, and the higher Hindu Society in general. The seceders called their organization by the name of the Bháratavarshiya Bramha Samaja, *i.e.*, the Bramha Samaja of India and New Dispensation, considered themselves as non-Hindus, arranged to get a Civil Marriage Act passed for themselves, and in fact formed a separate community by themselves. Later on, the celebration of the marriage of Keshab Chandra Sen's child-daughter, contrary to one of the main tenets of the organization, with the Maharaja of Kuch Behar, led to the withdrawal of large section of the Bramhos. This new section of the seceders formed a separate church of their own and named it the Sadharana Bramha Samaja. Thus, from the high ideal the Bramhos had set before them, they within less than a generation, true to the national instinct, split themselves into parties, thereby

strengthening, however unwillingly, the existence of that very Caste system they deplored.

Thanks to the wisdom of the Western India leaders of the Prarthana Samaja movement, the schisms of Bengal were not repeated in Bombay, and the supporters of the movement remained within the pale of their respective communities. The Maharashtra had certainly attained a large measure of spiritual emancipation long anterior to the advent of Western education and thought, and the public here were tolerant towards schemes of religious reform; and though now and again such movements were caricatured and ridiculed, they came to no great harm by this treatment. Mr. Ranade was not a little responsible for guiding the movement along the lines of least resistance, and some of his deliverances collected in this book give ample testimony to this broad and sympathetic attitude towards the orthodox religious sentiments of the Hindus. To use his own utterances at the Poona Conference, he wrote: "The peculiar feature of the movement in this Presidency is that we want to work on no single line, but to work on all lines together, and above all not to break with the past and cease all connection with our society. We do not proceed on the religious basis exclusively, as in Bengal. We have the different Samajas, but somehow or other there is something in our nature which prevents us from bodily moving into another camp. We do not desire to give up our hold on the old established institutions. Some might say this is our weakness—others think in it consists our strength."

He claimed for his own religion an inspiring historical past, and traced it back to the times of the ancient sages of Ind. Thus, in his lecture on Raja Ram Mohun Roy, Mr. Ranade observed that that eminent reformer was only one of the fathers of the Brahma church. "Because I hold, as I have said on many other occasions, that we, the mem-

bers of the Brahma Samaja, can claim a long ancestry, as old as any of the sects prevailing in the country. The Brahma theistic movement was not first brought into existence in 1828. We are representatives of an old race, as old as the Bhagwat Gita and the Bhagwat Purana; much older still: as old as Narada, Pralhada and Vasudeva and the nine sages who visited Janaka. From that time there is a continuity of Sadhus and saints down to the present day."

The same spirit of fair recognition of the past is observable when he describes the characteristics of the movement started by the founder of the Brahma Samaja. It gives us a clue at the same time to his attitude towards the 'New Dispensation' started by Keshab Chandra Sen. Mr. Ranade observes "He, Raja Ram Mohun Roy, did not regard the Brahma Samaja faith as a new dispensation or a new declaration of God's purposes. He aspired only to establish harmony between men's accepted faith and their practical observances by a strict non-idolatrous worship of the one Supreme Soul, a worship of the heart and not of the hands, a sacrifice of self and not of the possessions of the self."

Coming to his religious beliefs we have a clear exposition thereof in his "Theist's Confession of Faith." He sets out with a list of problems which are in their nature insoluble and on which no certain light can be thrown by human cogitation, such as the origin of the world, the origin of man, the relation between God and the created Universe, between the spirit or mind and the world of matter. There is, however, another set of problems the affirmation of which is to be accepted, not indeed on knowledge but on faith, such as the existence of God and the future state, the origin of evil, the imperfect liberty of man, the precise destination of the soul after leaving the body, and its pre-existence. The state of perplexity attendant on these he has tried to explain later on

when giving the basis of his religious convictions. A practical or moral certitude in regard to these is all that is attainable. But science itself is based on no better foundation. Thus in his "Thiest's Confession of Faith" he remarks: "The questions of religion being of a complex character, unlike social and political facts, and being concerned about transcendental things, it is not possible with our limited vision to attain to more than the strength of practical moral conviction on such subjects." The idea is put in a more forcible form in his "Philosophy of Indian Theism." There he observes: "We can never demonstrate logically our reasons for the faith that we feel in the continuity of Nature and the uniform operation of its laws. All science ultimately resolves itself into a product of our faith in the trustworthiness of the ever-changing Universe. This sense of trustworthiness is the slow growth of ages, but it is none the less the basis of scientific truths as we apprehend them. If this basis of faith is not repudiated by science, it has equally legitimate claims upon our acceptance in the philosophy of the Absolute. It not only links us with Nature but it links us and nature alike with the Infinite Existence, whose purposes of wisdom and benevolence, beauty and power are thereby disclosed to our eyes of faith and knowledge; science thus holds the torch of faith to the mystery of religion."

The Theistic idea of God, according to Mr. Ranade, is that God is immanent in the Universe, without being merged in it or his energy being drawn upon His work, being, in the words of the *Purusha-sukta*, "Bigger than the infinite Universe, and encircling as He did, the created world of matter and man, exceeded it on all sides." He has also defined it negatively in another place in the following manner: "We can neither hold that the Universe is only the expansion or emanation or manifestation of God's

extended being; nor that the Universe is without any real being, a mere vision or appearance, only seen by us objectively distinct by reason of our ignorance."

Mr. Ranade is very much inclined towards the Ramanuja sect of Vedantism. In the philosophy, he says: "We have these three postulates—*Chit* human soul, *Achit* matter, and *Brahma* Supreme spirit; the *Chit* and the *Achit* having no separate existence in the *Avyakta*, unmanifested from and appearing separate only when *Vyakta*, manifested or individualized. Further on he remarks "As a matter of fact, both before Shankaracharya's time and after his death, the modified *Adwaita* system of Ramanuja has played a great part in Indian philosophy, and to it may be traced the rise and progress, throughout India, of the *Vaishnava* sects who have attained to a higher and truer conception of theism than any of the other prevailing systems."

His idea of salvation is stated in the following passage culled from the Theist's Confession :—"When the human soul, tried and purified by self-government and resignation, acquires habits which enable it, while in the body or on leaving the body, to escape its trammels and its lusts, to enter into more intimate relation with God, and realize vividly the blessings of God's presence and holiness and recognize Him to be the Lord, Father and Judge, in whose service the soul is bound by love and admiration—this consummation of the soul is salvation."

At the same time he disposes of the other ideals of salvation in the following manner :—"Translations into other worlds to enjoy sensual pleasures, or absorption into God's essence, or awakening to a sense that the human soul is identical with God, or gradually sliding into the state of passionless *Nirwana*, these views about salvation held by the votaries of different religions, are more or less vitiated

as being the result of a too aspiring or sensuous vision, and are, besides, opposed to our own inner consciousness."

His Confession of Faith has a peculiar value inasmuch as it gives us a clear idea of his religious convictions and the grounds on which they were based. Regarding idol-worship he had said that "the associations of idol-worship humanize (anthropologize ?) or rather brutalize our conceptions of God. The myths which soon gather about it, representing, as they often do, the worst license that obtains in human society, complete the destruction of all exalting faith by blunting the conscience and deadening the intellect." The mellowed wisdom of old age, however, only confirmed his earlier conception of idol-worship, so far, at any rate, as it was practised by the saints of the Deccan. He speaks in no uncertain terms about their conviction. "It is a complete misunderstanding of their thoughts and ideas on this subject when it is represented that gifted people were idolaters in the objectionable sense of the word. They did not worship stocks and stones. In Vedic times there was admittedly no idol or image worship. It came into vogue with the acceptance of the incarnation theory, and was stimulated by the worship of the Jains and Buddhists of their saints. Finally, it got mixed up with the fetish-worship of the aboriginal tribes, who were received into the Aryan fold, and their gods were turned into incarnations of the Aryan deities. The saints and prophets, however, rose high above these grovelling conceptions prevalent among the people. Idol-worship was denounced when the image did not represent the Supreme God." This defence of the saints and prophets shows how anxious Mr. Ranade was to connect his movement with the past.

Indeed, his estimate of the work done by the saints and prophets, beginning with Dnyanadeva in the thirteenth century and ending with the close of the eighteenth, gives one an

impression that in his own work Mr. Ranade aimed at convincing Hindu society that he was merely continuing the work of the universally respected Maratha saints. The good of the past and the good of the present are thus indissolubly connected wherever there is a progressive movement of society.

He summarises the results of the work of these saints in this way : "It (the religious movement) gave us a literature of considerable value in the vernacular language of the country. It modified the strictness of the old spirit of caste exclusiveness. It raised the *Shudra* classes to a position of spiritual power and social importance almost equal to that of the Brahmins. It gave sanctity to the family relations, and raised the status of woman. It made the nation more humane, at the same time more pure to hold together by mutual toleration. It suggested and partly carried out a plan of reconciliation with the Mahomedans. It subordinated the importance of rites and ceremonies, and of pilgrimages and fasts, and of learning and contemplation to the higher excellence of worship by means of Love and Faith. It checked the excesses of polytheism. It tended in all these ways to raise the nation generally to a higher level of capacity, both of thought and action, and prepared it in a way no other nation in India was prepared, to take the lead in re-establishing a united native power in the place of foreign domination.

These passages will make it clear how Mr. Ranade tried to impress on his countrymen, especially in the closing years of his life, his ideas regarding religious and social reforms. He did not wish to break the tradition of continuity. He did not wish to innovate; he merely asked his fellow-countrymen to carry on the work of the sages—the work which had led to good results, and which must assuredly lead to good results if carried on in the same manner and in

the same spirit as did the honoured saints of old. There was no suggestion of policy or expediency here. It was the real truth ; the present is always the child of the past, as well in all that is good as in all that is imperfect.

Mr. Ranade's theistic ideal was high. Of Indian Theism he said, "It is associated with no particular saint or prophet, though it has room for reverence to all saints and prophets. . . . With it the revelation is a perpetual stream which never ceases to flow. Above all, Indian Theism is built on the rock of the direct communion of the individual soul with the soul of the Supreme Universe, to which it is linked by the tie of faith, hope and love. Indian Theism does not limit its education of man to a single trial in the world. . . . . The national mind has been cast in a spiritual and religious mould which does not allow it to sink into the worship of this world and its riches and powers as the highest object of desire, but always looks upon the hereafter as its chief resting place. The Universe is not merely His handiwork but He is the Soul who fills the Universe and moves it. Lastly, Indian Theism teaches toleration to all, self-sacrifice, and the duty of love, not only of man to man, but to all animated beings."

Such were the religious views of this remarkable man. They breathe a spirit of tolerance and love towards all ; and it may be stated, without exaggeration, that in practice he strove to carry them out to the best of his powers.

SOCIAL REFORM.

EVER since Mr. Ranade entered public life, the two most important social questions that engaged his attention were those of Infant Marriage and Widow Re-marriage. His standpoint on these questions

may be briefly stated. He was not one of those who would abandon society because it tolerates what seems to them to be great evils; nor one of those who, after having done their best to expose those evils leave society to its fate with a sense of sorrow and disappointment. His nature was of a sturdier character and his attitude towards society was the result of a sounder philosophy. He did not wish to cut himself adrift from the society of which he was justly proud, nor did he rest content with making spasmodic efforts to convince his brethren of the serious evils they were perpetuating. On the contrary, his efforts were continuous and his utterances persistent. He knew that his countrymen were keen on adhering to the practices of their ancestors, and that nowhere were religious practices so much mixed up with social customs as in India. His speeches and writings, therefore, abound in references to old writings, to the injunctions of the law-givers, and to ancient usages. And though he had on one occasion to attack the revivalists for their extreme zeal in trying to bring about a restoration of old practices, he will be always found to have been on the side of those who would historically justify rational practices and fortify reason by an appeal to the past. A few illustrations will suffice. In his lecture on "Southern India a Hundred Years Ago," he said: "We have not to unlearn our entire past—certainly not —the past which is the glory and wonder of the human race. We have to retrace our steps from the period of depression, when, in panic and weakness, a compromise was made with the brute forces of ignorance and superstition. If this unholy alliance is set aside, we have the Brahmanism of the first three Yugas unfolding itself in all its power and purity, as it flourished in the best period of our history." Further on he says that *Reform* is really the work of liberation—

liberation from the restraints imposed upon an essentially superior religion, law and polity, institutions and customs, by our surrender to the pressure of mere brute force for selfish advancement." Again, on another occasion he said: "Most of the customs which we now profess to follow run counter to the practices observed in the old times, when the Institutes were written. The dependent status of women, the customary limits of the age of marriage, the prohibition of marriage to widows in the higher castes, the exclusive confinement of marriage to one's own division of the sub-castes into which the country has been split up, the ignorance and seclusion of women, the appropriation of particular castes to particular professions, the prohibition of foreign travel, the inequalities made by the license enjoyed by men, and the abstentions enforced on women, the jealous isolation in matters of social intercourse as regards food and even touch, indiscriminate charity to certain castes—for all these and many more alienations from the old standards you cannot hold the old law-givers responsible. They are the work of human hands, concessions made to weakness, abuses substituted for the old healthier regulations. They were advisedly made by men whose names are not known to ancient history. They are interpolations made to bolster up the changes introduced about the times when the country had already gone from bad to worse. They are innovations for which no sanction can be pleaded. It may be they were made with the best intentions. Admittedly, they have failed to carry out these good intentions, if any, then entertained; and in seeking to upset them and restore the more healthy ideals they superseded, the reformers of the present day are certainly not open to the charge that they are handling roughly our time-honoured institutions. It is rather for the reprovers to take their stand as defenders of these ancient ordinances and

denounce those who have set God's law at defiance to suit their own purposes."

With this clue to Mr. Ranade's attitude in matters regarding social reform we shall be able to follow clearly the views he sets forth in the following pages. It was not with the zest of a philosopher that Mr. Ranade took up the question, but rather with the zeal of a physician who finds that his favourite patient is threatened with a serious ailment.

INFANT MARRIAGE.

THUS, in his essay on the "Age of Hindu Marriage," he observes: "The study of the morbid symptoms of a nation's decay is no doubt very irksome, but the pain must be endured, and the scruples set aside. The Gordian knot tied during centuries of devolution cannot be cut asunder by any spasmodic violence. The successive stages of slow decay must be closely watched and diagnosed, if we would work out the solution of the difficulty." And he did not despair of success. In the case of an individual the doom of death may be irrevocable, but the Aryan population of India, numbering one-sixth of the human race, cannot die this slow death if proper remedies be applied. "The process of recovery may be slow," he continues, "but if we stimulate the stifled seeds of health and growth, and lop off dead excrescences, decay may yet be arrested, and death successfully averted."

This diagnosis leads Mr. Ranade to the following two conclusions: first, that the Aryan society of the Vedic, or more properly speaking, the *Grihya Sutra* period, presents the institution of marriage in a form which recognized female liberty and the dignity of womanhood in full, though very

slight traces of it are seen in the existing order of things except, fortunately, in the old Sanskrit ritual which is still recited, and the ceremonies which are still blindly performed ; and secondly, that owing to causes which it is not possible to trace, there was a retrogradation and Vedic institutions were practically abandoned or ignored, and in their place usages grew up which circumscribed female liberty in various directions and seriously lowered the dignity of woman in the social and family arrangements.

After a careful examination of the texts of the various *Smṛiti* writers, Mr. Ranade comes to the conclusion that the majority fix the minimum marriageable age at twenty-five in the case of males, and the maximum at fifty. Regarding females, marriage at the twelfth year and consummation at the sixteenth appear thus to be the normal order of things. Fortifying himself thus with the authority of the Shástras, he appeals to his countrymen to abandon the present practices, which set at naught the best traditions of society and injunctions of the *Shastras*, and are, moreover, opposed to all considerations of duty and expediency. In calling for a change on the old lines the reformers seek, not to revolutionise, but to lop off the diseased overgrowth and to restore vitality and energy to the social organism.

The efforts of Mr. Ranade and others at checking the evil of infant marriages have borne some fruit. In Rajputana and Malwa the Rajput leaders are gradually trying to raise the limit of marriageable age, among the Rajputs, Chavans, and other castes. The Mysore State has taken up the subject and passed two enactments for the prevention of early and ill-assorted marriages. In the Brahma and Arya Samajas the marriageable age for girls is raised to fourteen, in the one case by law and in the other by voluntary convention; and Mr. Ranade hoped that with the advance of female educa-

tion and a better appreciation of the necessity of female emancipation, this great blot, which has disfigured the social condition of India for the past thousand years or more, would be removed, and the old purity and elevation of marital relations restored.

WIDOW RE-MARRIAGE.

THE late Pandit Ishwara Chandra Vidya Sagar, the great Sanskrit scholar, was the first to agitate the question of widow re-marriage. In 1855, he with a number of Hindus in Bengal submitted a petition to the Legistative Council of India pointing out that the prohibition of widow re-marriage was a cruel and unnatural custom, highly prejudicial to the interests of morality, and fraught with the most mischievous consequences to society; that this custom was not in accordance with the Shastras or with a true interpretation of Hindu Law; but according to the interpretation and administration of the law such marriages were held illegal, and the issue thereof deemed illegitimate; that Hindus who otherwise were prepared to contract such marriages in spite of religious and social prejudices were prevented from contracting them owing to the aforesaid legal disabilities, and concluding with a prayer that a law should be enacted removing all legal disabilities attaching to the marriage of Hindu widows and declaring the issue of all such marriages to be legitimate. Acting on this petition, the Legislative Council passed Act XV. of 1856, legalizing the marriage of Hindu widows.

Though widow-marriage thus received the sanction of the legislative authority, it made little progress on account of the strong popular feeling against the reform. It was therefore found desirable, especially in the Bombay Presi-

dency, to arouse the public conscience, and if possible, to enlist the sympathy of the orthodox party. The late Vishnu Shástri Pandit, a learned Deccani Brahmin, an ardent reformer and supporter of widow re-marriage, and who subsequently himself contracted marriage with a widow, came forward in consultation with Mr. Ranade and other friends, to prove its validity even according to the Shastras.

It was consequently arranged in 1870 to hold in Poona, the centre of orthodoxy, a meeting for the discussion of the question of widow-marriage from the point of view of the Shastras. His Holiness the *Shankaracharya* of Sankeshwar, the religious head of the majority of the Deccanis, presided over the meeting, and he was assisted by ten learned Pandits nominated as assessors by either party in equal numbers. An umpire was also nominated in case the votes were equally divided. The meeting created the greatest possible excitement at the time, and both the parties strongly mustered. All possible authorities were marshalled ; learned and subtle dissertations followed in the shape of questions and answers in a manner Sanskrit scholars alone can command. The statement of a proposition and its refutation were made in the regular order ; the assessors gave their opinions and the President gave his judgment. Three assessors were in favour of widow-marriage and seven against it ; and the Shankaracharya, who in the face of his solemn promise not to bring the pressure of his high authority and privilege to bear upon the assessors or interfere with their free judgment, wantonly broke the pledge to secure a majority for the orthodox party to which he belonged, followed the whipped-up majority. The reformers were not dismayed, and Vishnu Shastri Pandit carried on the campaign in the press and on the platform with undiminished vigour ; while Mr. Ranade helped

him with his pen and guided him with his advice. An idea of the controversy will be gained from the paper "Vedic Authorities for Widow-marriage," which was written by Mr. Ranade soon after the deliberations of the Poona meeting. This paper is an able exposition of the position of the reformers from the Shastraic point of view. The gist of the argument is that Parashara is the guiding authority in this age, and he has expressly allowed the re-marriage of a once-married woman in the five cases of afflictions, viz., (1) when the husband has gone abroad and no news of him has been obtained; (2) when the husband is dead; (3) when the husband becomes a *Sanyasi* recluse; (4) when the husband is impotent; and lastly (5) when the husband is guilty of one of the five great unatonable sins. "It is to be remarked," observes Mr. Ranade, "that this text of Parashara, reviving or re-enacting for this age the old law, is very pregnant with suggestions. In the first place, it is expressly intended for the Kaliyuga in which the Smriti has precedence over all others. Secondly, it enumerates the particular cases of affliction when re-marriage is allowed. Thirdly, it refers to the first three castes, for the word *Pravrajita* means a *Sanyasi*, and only members of the higher castes can aspire to the dignity. Fourthly, it permits re-marriage, though the first marriage has been in every sense completed."

The objection of the orthodox party to this interpretation is that the word *Pati* did not mean a husband but simply a protector. What the sages meant was that the married women should have another *protector* in the cases mentioned. To this Mr. Ranade replies that the word should be taken along with the context. The particular injunction is immediately followed by other cases in which another husband is allowed; and further, in the latter cases there is no question as to the meaning of the disputed word *Pati*. It

so, why should the word be interpreted in a different sense in only the preceding verse which treats of the same subject? "Moreover, in the text from Manu and Narada about the five afflictions, translated above (this is also the Parashara text above quoted) the first word *Pati*, being understood in its proper sense as husband, it is not possible to give any other meaning to the second word *Pati*. The same woman, who has lost her first *Pati* (husband) is, according to the text, to take another *Pati*. If by this were meant she was to seek a *protector*, he cannot be *anya* (another) *Pati*. He can be *anya* (another) only with reference to the first. Besides, a mere protector can be of no help in remedying the affliction which the loss or incapacity of the first husband brings with it. A husband who is a eunuch does not become unfit to be a protector of his wife, for he can protect and maintain her most comfortably." Moreover, the law-givers have defined the word *Pati* to mean the husband, and declared that it is after the ceremony of taking hold of the hand that, at the seventh step, which the bride and bridegroom take together, the bridegroom becomes *Pati* of a certainty. Mr. Ranade continues, "this definition of the word ought to silence all doubts as to the interpretation to be put upon the word *Pati* in the texts from Manu and Narada quoted before. Together they establish that a second marriage is lawful to a woman under the enumerated five afflictions, which in the jurisprudence of all other nations, have been held to justify dissolution of the marriage tie with consequent liberty to marry again."

Against this text the orthodox party pitted some prohibitory texts, but they are very general and in no way conflict with the spirit of Parashara's text. Two new texts were advanced from inferior Smriti writers which seem to be more particular than those previously brought forward. They are

from Babhravya and Vayu Samhita. These texts are explained away by Mr. Ranade thus: "In the first place, these texts are fragmentary ones, the books where they are found do not exist; secondly, they are the works of very inferior Smriti writers and not to be pitted against Manu, Narada, Parashara, Vashistha, &c.; thirdly, they are not so special in their particulars as the texts of Parashara which, therefore, controls them; fourthly, that even if they were so special in their particular circumstances, the superior efficacy of Parashara as the law-giver of the Kali age must prevail; and fifthly, that even if it did not prevail, this conflict of two Smritis can only create an optional duty." This looks, no doubt, like the statement of a defendant in a law suit. But in arguing out with persons of the orthodox type there was no other alternative. The best argument in this connection was the one advanced by Vyankata Shastri, namely that, admitting the prohibition is applicable to the Kali age, the time of application is not yet arrived as the present times are included in its Sandhya period which is governed by the observances followed in the preceding age, viz., Dwapara, and therefore, the prohibitory texts are not only inapplicable now but will be so for the next thirty-one thousand years. This is turning the tables with a vengeance on the opponents. To turn to the main argument, it will be seen that the liberty to remarry a widow was given in the previous Yugas in seventeen different cases; the prohibitory texts restrict this liberty to five cases out of the seventeen; and in this way all the authorities are reconciled. This will amply justify the position taken up Mr. Ranade, whose exposition of the Hindu Philosophy and Shastric systems was not involved in a mysterious obscurity; or only comprehensible by a few selected adepts only. He was not only a thinker—and the energy of a nation's life is in its thinkers—but was gifted with

prophetic ardour and a true missionary zeal, which urged him to popularize his ideas among all without exception, men and women, high and low, ignorant and learned alike. His first principles were rectitude, kindness, singleness of purpose and toleration : conditions indispensable for the growth of any influence for good which a man can bring to bear upon his fellow-beings. To Mr. Ranade there was no magic in any outward act—though he held it as a useful adjunct ; every one's salvation consisted in and depended entirely on a modification and growth in his own inner nature, to be brought out by his own self-control and diligence, and which in the result resolved itself into intellectual and moral self-culture and discipline. Mr. Ranade gives due praise to the late Pandit Ishwara Chandra Vidya Sagar in this connection. "By his research and originality and the noble devotion of his life's best days and all that is prized in human possessions to the promotion of this great emancipation of the women of his race, Pandit Ishwara Chandra has become a household name for all that is great and good in human nature throughout India, and a potent influence for good in the ages to come." If Ishwara Chandra was so in Bengal, a somewhat similar position is to be assigned to Mr. Ranade in this Presidency, nay in the whole of India. The sight of a young widow was a continual torment to Mr. Ranade, and the very sound of the word served to conjure up before his mind a picture of heart-broken despair that made him miserable. Probably no Brahmin in the country felt so much for the poor widow's lot and discussed the main questions at issue in a manner more original and persuasive. Mr. Ranade's concluding observations on this question are very interesting. "The agitation of the question for the last thirty years has placed the legitimacy of the movement beyond all danger, and the Poona discussions brought this fact out in

a most prominent manner. No question was raised there as to the Vedic texts, though special attention was drawn to the point ; the argument of Vyankata Shastri was not even noticed. The Smriti texts were jumbled up together, the main text, common to Manu, Narada and Parashara, was twisted and tortured in many ways, some of them most ridiculously absurd, and absolutely no attempt was made to show that the only true and natural meaning of the text was not the one contended for by the advocates. In fact this point was allowed, but it was urged that if the text were so understood, it would come in conflict with others, as if this was not the most common thing in the world with these Smriti writers. The orthodox disputants made a mess of their case, and though the majority of the Panch gave utterance to a foregone conclusion, the truth cannot be so hidden in these days. Thanks to the labours of the late lamented Pandit Vishnu Shástri, and more recently of the late Madhavdas Raghunathdas, and Rao Bahadur Vamanrao Mahadeva Kolatkar, the movement has spread, till at the present day more than a hundred marriages have taken place among the Gujerati and the Deccani communities of the Bombay Presidency, the Central Provinces and the Berars. In the Madras Presidency, Pandit Vireshalingum Pantalu has achieved a similar success, nearly thirty marriages having been celebrated in those parts. In Bengal, during Pandit Ishwara Chandra's lifetime many such marriages took place, and though since his death there has been more coldness shewn in this matter, the labours of Babu Shashipada Bannerji have kept up the public interest in this subject. In the Punjab, Dewan Santo Rama took the lead, and about thirty marriages have been celebrated in those parts. In all India over three hundred marriages have thus been celebrated, and the movement may be said to have survived the attack of the orthodox opposition. People are being reconciled

to this renovation of the old custom, and persecution is becoming, not obsolete, but more bearable. The advocates of reform may well claim to have secured a healthy change in the public feeling in this matter."

STATE INTERFERENCE IN SOCIAL MATTERS.

IN 1884, Mr. Malabari convulsed the usually apathetic Hindu society with his celebrated Notes on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood. The times were most suitable for the agitation. Lord Ripon's administration had just opened for the indigenous intellect of the country a path for political activity. The amendment of the Criminal Procedure Bill, better known as the "Ilbert Bill," by which Lord Ripon sought to place European accused on the same footing as natives, had roused the enthusiasm of the nation. The spirit of equality breathed by the Bill even in the modified form which it ultimately assumed had roused to a sense of fervid recognition of the boon. Here was Mr. Malabari's opportunity. If the Indians want a spirit of equality in politics, why did they not exercise it in their own domestic circle? Mr. Malabari denounced the customs with his usual vigour and earnestness, but not with that winning tact which characterises his later writings. In one direction he succeeded to a remarkable extent, viz., in creating a lively and permanent interest in the subject. It is not my desire to describe the course of the agitation or to note the important events that followed in the wake of Mr. Malabari's pamphlets, such as, for instance, the Age of Consent Act. I mean only to indicate briefly the part Mr. Justice Ranade played in the drama of social reform and the great help he

rendered to Mr. Malabari in his attempt to induce the British Government to interfere even to the extent indicated by the above Act. Government has now become more cautious than before, and unless the matters complained of came within the pale of the criminal law, it has, perhaps wisely, declared its resolve to firmly follow the policy of non-interference. The Government of India, in their celebrated Resolution of 1886, have declared: "When caste or custom lays down a rule which is by its nature enforceable in the civil courts, but is clearly opposed to morality or public policy, the State will decline to enforce it. When caste or custom lays down a rule which deals with such matters as are usually left to the option of citizens, and which does not need the aid of civil or criminal courts for its enforcement, State interference is not considered either desirable or expedient." Further on, they observe, "Legislation, though it may be didactic in its effect, should not be undertaken for merely didactic purposes; and in the competition of influence between legislation on the one hand, and caste or custom on the other, the condition of success on the part of the former is that the Legislature should keep within its natural boundaries, and should not, by overstepping those boundaries, place itself in direct antagonism to social opinion."

This view of its position, laid down by the British Government for its guidance in its executive and legislative spheres, was not approved of by Mr. Ranade. He felt that it was very necessary at certain stages of man's progress to secure the assertion of right ideas by the highest sanctions and to invoke the action of the State as representing the highest and most disinterested wisdom available for the moment, so as to give effect to wholesome movements which might die for want of effective support. "The State in its collective

capacity," observes Mr. Ranade, "represents the power, the wisdom, the mercy and charity of its best citizens. What a single man, or a combination of men, can best do on their own account, that the State may not do; but it cannot shirk its duty if it sees its way to remedy evils, which no private combination of men can check adequately or which it can deal with more speedily and effectively than any private combination of men can do. In these latter cases, the State's regulating action has its sphere of duty marked out clearly. On this, and on this principle alone, can State action be justified in many important departments of its activity such as the enforcement of education, sanitation, factory legislation, and of State undertakings like the postal service, or subsidies given to private effort in the way of railway extension and commercial development. The regulation of marriageable age has in all countries, like the regulation of the age of minority, or the fit age for making contracts, been a part of its national jurisprudence, and it cannot be said with justice that this question (infant marriage) lies out of its sphere. The same observation holds true of the condition of the widow rendered miserable in early life, and thrown helpless on the world. More legitimately than minors, the widows are the wards of the nation's humanity, and to the extent that the evil they suffer is remediable by man, it cannot be said that this remedy may not be considered by the State as fully within its proper function."

To the objection that a foreign Government should not interfere in the domestic relations of its subjects, Mr. Ranade replies "that the force of this objection would be irresistible if the interference was of foreign initiation. The initiation is to be our own, and based chiefly upon the example of our venerated past and dictated by the sense of the most representative and enlightened men in the community; and

all that is sought at the hands of the foreigners is to give to this responsible sense, as embodied in the practices and usages of the respectable classes, the force and the sanction of law." It has, however, been argued by some well-meaning critics that Mr. Ranade does not meet the objection that once a foreign Government is allowed to intervene in our domestic affairs there will be no guarantee that the interference will be only at the instance of the community and not also at the will of the foreigners themselves. Probably he did not care to speculate on questions which did not require an immediate solution. Hitherto, the initiative has been from our own leaders ; and in cases where foreigners have no interests to serve and the initiative is to be all our own, Mr. Ranade remarks that the distinction between a foreign and a domestic Government is a distinction without a difference. He was, however, highly considerate and circumspect as to the limitations of the doctrine of State interference. Where State interference, though legally, socially and morally right, might be irritating and nearly impracticable, he always maintained, it would be better to forego for a time recourse to this mode of action. Above all he valued peace and unity, never tired of explaining the impossibility of a divided nation really prospering. Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot rend asunder our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. We cannot but remain face to face; and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between us. Why should there not be, he would further ask, a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the cause ? Is there any equal or better hope in the world ? In our present differences, is either party without faith of being in the right ? If the Mighty Ruler of Nations, with His eternal truth and justice, be on our side, that truth and that justice will surely prevail

by His divine mercy, formed part of his most cherished sentiments. That sums up Mr. Ranade's creed and it would be difficult to find an instance of greater moral courage and simple dignity, patient forbearance and kindly fidelity, all this combined with a tenacity of purpose but rarely displayed with such uniformity and singleness of purpose.

The tendency of Mr. Ranade in social reform lay always towards freeing social relations from the binding character of religious injunctions. And in arguing in favour of legislation, he brings forward the advantage to be gained by a change "from the law of status to the law of contract, from the restraints of family and caste customs to the self-imposed restraints of the free will of the individual." It will also result in liberating the national mind from the thraldom of superstitions. Mr. Ranade, however, was not unmindful of the serious nature of the reforms he proposed ; for, he says, "It will be necessary to be very circumspect in graduating the change desired to meet exactly the extent of the evil crying for redress. The past century or half a century has effected a change in the national sentiment, which, if not recognised to the extent it has gone, will only lead to a catastrophe and revulsion of feeling that will be simply irresistible, and may involve the ruin of many interests dear to the nation's heart."

Mr. Ranade, speaking as the representative of the reformers on the Bombay side, summarizes their views in the following paragraph :—

"We would, to start with, fix twelve and eighteen as the minimum ages of marriage for girls and boys. Marriages contracted before this age should be discouraged, not by pains and penalties of the criminal law, but by the attendant risk of making them liable to be ignored, as in the case of contracts entered into by minors, liable to be ignored or set aside in case of disputes in the civil courts for sufficient reasons.

Marriage, unless consummated, by actual cohabitation, should not be recognized as a perfect union before the limits laid down above are reached. Before such consummation, the girl should not be recognized as having become one with the husband in *Gotra*, *Pinda*, *and Sutaka*. This is the ancient law, and our revival of it will do away with the superstition which paralyses the action of parents in dealing with the misery of child widows. We would on no account permit disfigurement except after twenty-five years, when the widow may be presumed to be able to realize the circumstances of her position, and can choose deliberately the celibate course of life. Under no circumstances should one wife be superseded by a second connection, except under the safeguards recognized by Manu and other writers. The widow's forfeiture of her husband's estate as a consequence of her second marriage should be done away with, and her life interest in her husband's inheritance should remain intact, whatever her choice of life might be. The marriage of a widower above fifty with girls below fourteen should be strictly prohibited as being opposed to the most approved Smriti texts."

Mr. Ranade's love for his country was so deep and genuine, his concern for the regeneration of his countrymen so acute and deep-seated, that he always welcomed with prompt good judgment, all accessory help, whether it came from the foreign rulers of the country, or from the enlightened rulers of the Native States or from the frigid and lonesome old-fashioned ecclesiastical authorities, their Holinesses the Shankarácharyas, and the much scandalized Shastris—the repositories of all ancient lore, customs, usages and much more that is, 'faultily faultless, icily regular and splendidly null,'—proving himself an apt utilitarian, always seeking, nay creating preparatory opportunities to further the attainment of his nation's predestined goal, the fulfilment of

which might otherwise be retarded. Writing to the late Mr. Justice Telang about the Shankaracharyas, and cognate questions, he said, "I am, I frankly confess, not one of those who think that there are not many reform questions in which we shall not be greatly helped if persons in the position of the Sankeshwar Swamis are open to our arguments, and even if not actively on our side, are prepared to welcome some modifications. The position that reformers ought to regard all old ecclesiastical authorities as their open enemies, is one which I regard as childish, and one which nobody in active life will venture on urging for a moment. These authorities have their uses, and no great or good purpose is served by ignoring them or treating them with contempt. There are some matters in which we must stand out—but there is no reason why we should stand out on all matters simply for the fun of the thing. *It is these public interests which move me and I have deemed it necessary* * to refer to them here because you were good enough to ask me what I thought of the matter. Even if the *Swami* was not prepared to help me on all lines, I should prefer to see him in a mind to realize that we had a side to be considered, and to be agreeable to fair compromise." This spirit of public interest and utility was the keynote of all Mr. Ranade's actions throughout his life.

Mr. Ranade's advocacy of State interference bore some fruit—for the Mysore Government passed, in 1894, two regulations for the prevention of early and old ill-assorted marriages. Even the Madras Government was converted to his views and it brought similar Bills into its Legislative Council. But the Government of India vetoed them, probably basing their action on the Resolution previously referred to. However, in 1897, a special law was passed in the case of the Nairs

* The italics are ours.

permitting those who cared to avail themselves of it to undergo the form of a civil marriage with all its legal consequences. Eighty-three marriages were celebrated under the Act during the last four years, and probably many more marriages would have been celebrated but for the fact that another Act passed a year later gives the Nairs wide testamentary powers for disposing of their property, and hence the chief inducement for contracting civil marriages under the former Act is taken away from the community. About 1895, in the Baroda State, a measure for the prevention of infant marriages was resolved on and a Bill was prepared, but owing to unforeseen difficulties the measure was temporarily laid aside. The Gaekwar's Government has, however, shown greater activity in social legislation since the time Mr. Ranade made the above remarks. The Baroda State has recently passed an Act legalising widow marriage in the higher castes, and it is stated that the Infant Marriage Bill will be soon taken up together with a Civil Marriage Bill. It will be thus seen that though the British Government has perhaps properly hesitated to take up social legislation, enlightened Native States, such as Mysore and Baroda, have rightly undertaken it.

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF REFORM.

Mr. Ranade's interest in social reform was not exhausted by these two questions, though they were the most prominent planks in his platform. In his great speech on "Revival and Reform," delivered at the Social Conference at Amraoti, he passed in review all the different phases of activity in which the social reformers were engaged. They included female education, widow marriage, foreign travel, intermarriages between sub-sections, postponement of infant marriages, prohibition of ill-assorted marriages, the purity movement

comprising the anti-nautch and temperance agitations; admission of converts from other faiths; reduction in extravagant marriage expenses, and similar other questions vitally affecting the social fabric of the Hindus.

English education has acted as an irritant in the social organism of the Hindus, and the activities in social, political, and even in religious spheres have been the result of the dominant influence of foreign ideas. But these have brought in their train materialistic tendencies that threaten to undermine the orthodox Hindu society. At an early date, accordingly, a reaction followed; and people began to admire everything that was best and permanent in the Hindu social structure. Impassioned appeals were made to trace our steps back to the olden times, and to bring back the pristine glory of ancient India, the land of sages, philosophers, poets, scientists, warriors and artists. Even Mr. Ranade in his addresses has often advocated this return to past practices. "Fortunately," he wrote, "the causes which brought on this degradation have been counteracted by providential guidance, and we have now a living example before us of how pure Aryan customs, unaffected by barbarous laws and patriarchal notions, resemble our own ancient usages, to take up the thread where we dropped it under foreign and barbarous pressure, and restore the old healthy practices, rendered so dear by their association with our best days, and justified by that higher reason which is the sanction of God in man's bosom." Such appeals are very common in his addresses and his main object in making them was to enlist the sympathy of the orthodox party in the cause of social reform. But when he found that the cry was taken up in its literal sense, and that people were admiring indiscriminately everything that was old, simply because it was old, he had need to explain himself and ask those who simply

insisted on an indiscriminate return to ancient practices without considering whether those practices would altogether suit the changed circumstances of society. It is in this view alone that Mr. Ranade's attack on the revivalists is interesting ; for, in the succeeding lectures he is again referring to the good customs of yore which gave liberty to women and allowed voluntary marriages at a maturer age and with greater freedom. The quotation is a long one, but it will repay perusal.

"I have many friends in this camp of extreme orthodoxy, and their watchword is that revival, and not reform, should be our motto. . . . When we are asked to revive our old institutions and customs, people seem to me to be very much at sea as to what it is they seek to revive. What particular period of our history is to be taken as the old—whether the period of the Vedas, of the Smritis, of the Puranas, or of the Mahomedans, or the modern Hindu times ? Our usages have been changed from time to time by a slow process of growth, and in some cases of decay and corruption, and you cannot stop at any particular period without breaking the continuity of the whole. . . . What shall we revive ? Shall we revive the old habits of our people when the most sacred of our castes indulged in all the abominations, as we now understand them, of animal food and intoxicating drink, which exhausted every section of our country's Zoology and Botany ? The men and the gods of these old days ate and drank forbidden things to excess, in a way no revivalist will now venture to recommend. Shall we revive the twelve forms of sons, or eight forms of marriage, which included capture and illegitimate intercourse ? Shall we revive the old liberties taken by the Rishes and by the wives of Rishes with the marital tie ? Shall we revive the hecatombs of animals sacrificed from year's end to

year's end, in which even human beings were not spared as propitiatory offerings to God? Shall we revive the Shakti worship of the left hand, with its indecencies and practical debaucheries? Shall we revive the *Sati* and infanticide customs, or the flinging of living men into the rivers or over rocks, or hook-swinging, or the crushing beneath the Jagannatha car? Shall we revive the internecine wars of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas or the cruel persecution and degradation of the aboriginal population? Shall we revive the custom of many husbands to one wife or of many wives to one husband? Shall we require our Brahmins to cease to be landlords and gentlemen, and turn into beggars and dependents upon the king as in olden times?"

This was carrying to their logical consequences the arguments of those who seek the revival of the old customs. This language is plain enough, and by no means undeserved of those revivalists whose shibboleth of revivalism means the very reverse of what Mr. Ranade meant and intended. Between Mr. Ranade who desired to revive the ancient practices of widow-marriage and marriage between grown-up persons, and those of the revivalists who desire to practise the purer forms of ancient religion and ancient social customs there is only a difference of degree. He thought, and on sufficient data, that they were only changing the outward form, and not the spirit which has given rise to the present pernicious customs. In this matter, whatever may be our judgment regarding his attitude towards the revivalists, we must admit the soundness of the position he took up in diagnosing the causes of our social downfall. The ideas which have been hastening our decline during the past are isolation, submission to outward conventionality more than to the voice of the inward conscience, perception of factitious difference between men and men due to heredity and birth, a passive acquiescence in evil or

wrongdoing, and a general indifference to secular well-being almost bordering upon fatalism. "These have been the root ideas of our social system. They have, as their natural result, led to the existing family arrangements, where the woman is entirely subordinated to the man, and the lower castes to the higher castes, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect to humanity." Mr. Ranade's remedies may be thus summed up : in place of exclusiveness we must have fraternity, or rather elastic expansiveness, and cohesion in society ; instead of submitting to outward dictation we must try to respect the God in us, that is to say, we must learn to be guided by our conscience, the wisdom of sages coming only to our aid and not to overpower us; instead of being blind believers in heredity, birth and the laws of Karma, we must try to improve our condition and bring about self regeneration by properly training our will-power ; and instead of passively acquiescing in wrong or evil-doing as an inevitable condition of human life, we must try to cultivate a healthy sense of the true responsibility and dignity of our nature and of high destiny as men. "We have lost our stature," says Mr. Ranade, "we are bent in a hundred places, our eyes lust after forbidden things, our ears desire to hear scandals about our neighbours, our tongue wants to taste forbidden fruit, our hands itch for another man's property, our bowels are deranged with indigestible food. We cannot walk on our feet but require stilts or crutches."

"Reforms in the matter of infant marriage and enforced widowhood, in the matter of temperance and purity, intermarriages between castes, the elevation of the low castes, and the readmission of converts, and regulations of our endowments and charity, are reforms, only so far and no further, as they check the influence of the old ideas and promote the growth of the new tendencies." Mr. Ranade has put an

exquisite ideal before the reformer. "The reformer has to infuse in himself the light and warmth of nature, and he can only do it by purifying and improving himself and his surroundings. He must have his family, village, tribe and nation recast in other and new moulds, and that is the reason why social reform becomes an obligatory duty, and not a mere pastime which might be given up at pleasure."

THE SPIRIT OF HOPEFULNESS AND UNION.

SPEAKING about the Telang School of Thought, Mr. Ranade described hopefulness as one of the signs that distinguished that school from others. But in none was this special feature developed to a greater extent than in Mr. Ranade himself, who went on doing his work undismayed by failure and unelated with success. "The sturdy hopefulness is," he observes, "the golden mean between stolid indifference to change and the sanguineness of temper which desires to accomplish the work of centuries in as many decades, and the work of decades in as many years, and the work of years in as many days." People of the latter class do not continue the work in the true spirit of hopefulness and are to be distinguished from those who, while they feel hopeful of the final result, are still weighed down with the thought that they have to undergo a long discipline, and have no heart for boisterous displays or dreams of mock revivals of past glory." The ground for this hopefulness lies in the past history of this country. "You may take the map of Asia, Europe, Africa or America, and you will find that there is no other country in the world which presents such a continuity of existence over such a long period of time. Races and creeds have risen, thrived and decayed

in other lands, but India is so favoured that, notwithstanding its abasement in many other particulars, the people of this country have been preserved from dangers, as though they were a people with a special mission entrusted to them. . . . . If the miraculous preservation of a few thousand Jews had a purpose, this more miraculous preservation of one-fifth of the human race is not due to mere chance. We are under the severe discipline of a high purpose."

It may be observed that Mr. Ranade's vision of national regeneration expanded with age, and that though his main efforts were directed to the revival of the fallen fortunes of his own race, he came to see from an early date that the fate of the second great factor of the Indian nationality was necessarily connected with the other. Even in the questions of social reform Mr. Ranade found a common platform for both races to work upon. In his address, delivered at the Social Conference in Lucknow, he remarks : " Everyeffort on the part of either Hindus or Mahomedans to regard their interests as separate and distinct, and every attempt made by the two communities to create separate schools and interests among themselves, and not to heal up the wounds inflicted by mutual hatred of caste and creed, must be deprecated on all hands." In this respect, he fears, we have departed from the excellent example started by Akbar ; especially when it is borne in mind that the ills that we are suffering from are self-inflicted and their cure is to a large extent in our own hands. Pursuit of high ideals, mutual sympathy and co-operation, perfect tolerance, a correct understanding of the diseases from which the body politic is suffering, and an earnest desire to apply suitable remedies—this is the work cut out for the present generation. The goal to be achieved does not lie in any particular advantage to be gained in power and wealth, though that may be the natural result of reaching the goal. It is represented by

he efforts to attain it, the expansion and the elevation of the heart and the mind, which will make us stronger and braver, purer and truer men. . . . Both Hindus and Mahomedans have their work cut out in this struggle. In the backwardness of female education, in the disposition to overleap the bounds of their own religion, in matters of temperance, in their internal dissensions between castes and creeds, in the indulgence of impure speech, thought and action on occasions when they are disposed to enjoy themselves, in the abuses of many customs in regard to unequal and polygamous marriages, in the desire to be extravagant in their expenditure on such occasions, in the neglect of regulated charity, in the decay of public spirit, in insisting on the proper management of endowments—in these and other matters both communities are equal sinners, and there is thus much common ground for improvement on common lines."

THE NECESSITY OF ALL-ROUND ACTIVITY.

ANOTHER great characteristic of Mr. Ranade that will be noticed in his writings is his desire to see his country progress in all departments of human activity. In describing what has come to be called the Telang School, whose watchward is movement in the line of least resistance, he urged that the work to be accomplished was not one-sided or piecemeal. "The liberation that has to be sought is not in one department of life, or one sort of activity, or in one sphere of thought, but it is an all-round work, in which you cannot dissociate one activity from another." Later on, in his address delivered at the Provincial Conference at Satara he pressed home the same lesson on his hearers. "Politics is not merely petitioning and memorialising for gifts and

favours. Gifts and favours are of no value unless we have deserved the concessions by our own elevation and our own struggles. 'You shall live by the sweat of your brow' is not a curse pronounced on man, but the very condition of his existence and growth. Whether in the political, social, religious, commercial, manufacturing or æsthetical spheres' in literature, science or art, in war or in peace, it is the individual and collective man who has to develop his powers by his own exertions in conquering the difficulties in his way. If he is down for the time, he has to get up with the whole of his strength, physical, moral and intellectual, and you may as well suppose that he can develop one of these elements of strength and neglect the others, as try to separate the light from the heat of the sun or the beauty and fragrance from the rose. You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights, nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economical system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideals are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economical or political spheres. This interdependence is not an accident but is the law of our nature. Like the members of our body you cannot have strength in the hands and the feet, if your internal organs are in disorder. What applies to the human body holds good of the collective humanity we call the society or State. It is a mistaken view which divorces considerations political from social and economical, and no man can be said to realize his duty in one aspect who neglects his duties in the other directions."

This was the ideal Mr. Ranade placed before his countrymen and which he tried to realise, as far as possible, in his own case. And it may be said without the least ex-

aggeration that there was no kind of activity in the land with which he was not in touch and which he did not try to help on by his personal support and to the best of his power. And the inspiration he has left to us as our heritage might be appropriately expressed in the terms of Gautama Buddha's dying words to his disciple Ananda : " *You may, perhaps, begin to think, 'the word is ended now, our teacher is gone :' but you must not think so. After I am dead let the Law and the Rules of the Order, which I have taught, be a Teacher to you.*"

Essays on Religious and Social Reform.

I.

PHILOSOPHY OF INDIAN THEISM.*

NEARLY three thousand years ago, in one of the primeval forests of Northern India, Bhrigu, the son of Varuna, approached his father, and entreated him to teach him what Bramha was—that Bramha from which all beings sprung into existence, that which keeps them alive when born, and that to which they tend, and in which they are finally absorbed. His father, Varuna, told him at first that Bramha was Food, as Food generated life and sustained it after birth, and finally on decay resolved itself into the food of other generations of life and being. Bhrigu long pondered over the matter, but was not satisfied with the finality or sufficiency of the explanation. He again approached his father with the same question, and he was successively told that Bramha was the Breath of life, that Bramha was the Mind, that Bramha was self-conscious Reason. None of these answers stood the test of Bhrigu's further thought, and finally, he was told that Bramha was the Joy and the Blessedness which pervaded the universe; and this reply satisfied the deepest cravings of the young student.

* Delivered at the Free General Assembly's Wilson College.

These three stages of thought, the first stage representing 'Sat,' 'absolute existence,' as the cause of all inanimate or animate matter, second 'Chit,' identifying it with 'mind and self-conscious reason', and the third 'Ananda,' as the source of all 'joy and blessedness,' these three stages represent the three different phases of thought, which have dominated over men's minds throughout history. The spirit of joy and blessedness here described is further spoken of as pervading the universe. '*If there were no spirit of joy in this Universe, who could live and breathe in this world of life?*'—Yajnavalkya Upanishad. He makes us feel joy and gives us peace of mind when it becomes sinless and fearless. This represents the practical side of the subject I propose to-day to take up for your consideration.

There are those among us who are disposed to think that we have had enough of these old-world topics about birth and death, soul and immortality, sin and punishment, and all that can be known about them has been discovered long since, and all beyond the first few steps is mere blind guess. They would dissuade men from the pursuit of this wild goose chase, and characterize the students of this dismal science as preternaturally old men. They will have us turn to more useful pursuits, which will secure for us the comforts of this world, as the world understands comforts. Now, if there has been any feature of our national history which has been its glory and its reward for much suffering, it is the firm belief that 'not what a man hath, but what a man is, or can become,' constitutes his real wealth. This is the protest which Indian thought has raised from all

time, and which, it will continue to raise to the end of time. The contrary view derives also no support from the highest Christian or European ideals before us. The whole mission of Christianity and civilization is meaningless for those who read in it nothing but the progress of physical comforts, and in the means of realizing them. On this point, as in others, the highest teaching of the two religions is identically the same. When the great Apostle of the Gentiles reached Athens, he addressed the Athenians by appealing to the Unknown God to whom they had erected an altar, and he described the Bramha in words, which are only a paraphrase of the passage quoted at the beginning from the Upanishad:— *In Him we live and move, and have our being, that is, outside Him there is neither life nor motion nor being possible.*

The hand of God in History is but dimly seen by those who cannot recognize in the contact of European with Eastern thought a higher possibility for the future of both races. Already the morning dawn is upon us, and we can see glimpses of the bright future reflected in our ability to see and appreciate each other's strength and excellence. Not to refer to the Theosophical movement, have we not seen before our eyes the fact that for the first time after many centuries of stagnation, Indian preachers are reciprocating in other lands the sympathy which sends to our shores the many thousand missionaries, who have laboured among us for generations to spread the truth as they understand it. The labours of English and German Professors are taking a new turn, and the foundations of the Gifford and Hibbert

series of lectures, and the holding of the Parliament of Religions, these are not events which we can afford to ignore or which it will profit us to pass by unheeded. The Lectures of Dr. Fraser on the Philosophy of Theism, of which I propose to give you a brief summary to-night, from an Indian student's point of view, are an important contribution towards this same end, and I am firmly persuaded that I cannot hope to find a more appropriate place for dwelling on this subject than the premises of a College which represents the highest philanthropy of the West actively at work in the East.

What, then, is the problem which the Philosophy of Theism proposes to solve? This is how Dr. Fraser puts it:—What is the deepest and truest interpretation that can be put by man upon the immeasurable actuality with which he is brought in contact and collision ever since he becomes percipient and self-conscious? In what sort of environment, and for what purpose do I exist? What is this Universe for ever changing the appearances it presents to me? What is the origin and outcome of this endless flux? Is the principle which finally determines all events reasonable and trustworthy or chaotic and misleading, or must man for ever remain ignorant about this and unable to adapt himself to it? What light can enlighten me upon my present duties or my final destiny as part of this mysterious whole?

The eminently human character of these questions will be at once perceived by those who are not blinded to their importance. If there was no human element in them, or as our forefathers said, if there was no 'Rasa,' 'light and sweetness' in them, it is hardly intelli-

gible why the highest thought of man in all ages and countries has been busy over this mystery! It is our highest privilege that we feel the full force of this mystery and are drawn towards it. This is the highest fruition of humanity and its final goal. The awe it inspires is the seed of all religion. The devotion of the mind to this study of the Infinite is the working force of philosophy. The successive steps of progress towards this knowledge constitutes the hierarchy of science. The existence of evil and sin here below, and the contemplation of Death and what becomes of us after death, intensify the human character of such studies and make us pause, with Shakespeare, to consider if Death is sleep, or a dream, or else only a shuffling off of the mortal coil. Both individual and social well-being depend upon the answer we give to this question of questions. It dominates morals, it shapes our legislation and the practical art of government. In the words of the Upanishad, "*If there be no spirit of joy over-ruling th Universe, how can we live and breathe in this world of life?*"—Yajnawalkya.

Having proposed the problem and shown its human character, we have next to see what final interpretations have been attempted of this problem of existence, the articulations, so to speak, of the human mind with reference to it. The two postulates underlying all thought are, the 'I' and the 'Non-I,' the subject and the object. This is the quality of finite existence, each a mystery by itself. This is, however not an ultimate analysis; for the question arises when the Infinite and the Eternal dawns upon us, whether besides the Ego and

the Non-Ego there is a third postulate of supreme existence which synthesises both, by being in and outside both—the one in which and by which we live and move and have our being. In the philosophy of the Ramanuja sect of Vedantism, we have these three postulates, 'Chit,' human soul, 'Achit,' matter, and 'Bramha,' Supreme spirit; the Chit and Achit having no separate existence, from Bramha, in the 'Awyakta,' unmanifested form, and appearing separate only when 'Wyakta,' manifested or individualized. This same view is in all other Indian systems of philosophy variously emphasised, some maintaining the existence of three separate principles, others two, and some affirming only the real existence of one principle. In the European systems of philosophy also, the difference between system and system resolves itself into the exaggeration of one or other of these first postulates to the point of negativing the absolute separate existence of the other two. One thing, however, is common to all: the human mind is not at rest with the dual solution of the Finite, which alone its senses grasp. It yearns to find the Finite linked together in some bond with the Infinite; it may be by faith or reason, hope or fear, by aspiration or by love. Man finds that his own existence for a moment of time is not intelligible unless there is a background for it to rest upon. He feels that the flux of things is not intelligible unless it also finds its rest in something which knows no flux. Whether the Infinite Being is potential matter, energy, mind or spirit, these are the points on which philoso-

phy has proposed various interpretations and solutions. The mystery surrounding this third postulate of existence is not more enigmatical than what is involved in a right understanding of what constitutes the Ego and the Non-Ego. We cannot comprehend the one more clearly than the other. Each of us can realize the fact that he exists, and that something outside him also exists. His own existence and the existence of the Non-Ego become more intelligible to him when he also learns to realize the existence of the Infinite.

All the errors of superstition, scepticism and mysticism spring up from our inability to keep our hold on the three distinct postulates of existence. We should not either explain away or exaggerate any of them. When we localize God in place or time and connect Him with uncommon particular events or places, superstition creeps in and overturns the balance of our mind. When we exaggerate our own powers we end in mysticism. When we unduly allow nature and her forms to dazzle us, and belittle our capacities, we become sceptical. It will be useful to see what element of partial truth and falsehood there is, in each of the systems which exaggerate and emphasize the one or the other postulate of existence to the prejudice of the others linked with it inseparably. And first of materialism, which sits at the feet of the material forces and magnifies nature and its powers. In European thought this school has occupied a more prominent position during the last few centuries than it ever occupied in this country. But even in our land two out of the six Darsanas are

partially or wholly materialistic, that of the Sankhya system of Kapila and the atomic system of Kannada As a corrective of extreme idealism, this philosophy has done good service. Its other service to humanity is that it has laid the axe at the root of that conception of the Universe, which made the earth the centre of the universe and man the centre of the world. The sun and the moon, it was thought, shine for us, the planets revolve and the stars twinkle for our benefit. The anthropomorphic conception of God ruling men and things as a great patriarch of old with the full display of exaggerated human passions and force, and also human weaknesses at times, this conception has been dissipated by the discoveries of modern science which have reduced the earth to its true insignificance and man to his true position on earth, so far as he is a physical being. The discoveries of Astronomy and Geology have especially led to this result, and they have enabled men to understand the full mystery of the Infinite in space and time. Scientific evolution has also enlarged men's conceptions of the methods of operations pursued in the genesis of life and being. The equivalence and conversion of different kinds of force have paved the way to much clearness of thought on these and kindred subjects. The brilliancy of these results led men to the other extreme and to dream of abolishing mind and spirit altogether from the universe. This mechanical and chemical interpretation of nature, however, solves nothing. It takes us a step or two back and then it leaves the mind more bewildered in the labyrinth o

chaos. The manner of working is explained to some extent, by the interpretation of second causes, but the efficient and ultimate cause remains as shrouded as ever, and as impervious to human vision as when Moses saw the glory on the top of Sinai and received the Commandments. Materialism explains co-sequence and not causation, and it explains co-sequence by making it out to be a casual assemblage of atoms chancing to evolve order out of chaos. This solution appears to give no satisfaction to the enquirer. Shankara-charya has in his Bháshya very cleverly turned the tables on the atomic theorist.

The first quality of matter is inertia, so our senses tell us. This inertia is overcome by force outside it, and what is this force or energy is still as much a mystery as the mystery of mind and spirit. Why should the molecules be attracted and repelled in a particular way through all time and space? And then, if mind and spirit is left out of view, how comes it that this casual combination of molecules results in the ascending scale of—first, of life, next of conscious life, further on of thought, self-conciousness and responsible will, which does not come within the domain of chances, but is guided by purpose which is the negation of chances? This philosophy thus fails to interpret nature where it most needs rational interpretation. The anthropomorphic conception of a patriarchal God is more intelligible than this materialistic conception of nature without a Providence overruling it to accomplish purposed ends. Society, law, morals, poetry and art, not more than theology, thus

become anachronisms or solecisms, if man and nature are interpreted, as chance combinations of molecules brought out without purpose and both liable to be dis-severed by chance at any time. Man feels instinctively that this surely is not a rational interpretation of the order he sees in the Universe.

He then falls back on himself, and begins to think that there is no truth in this universal flux of things about him, and that the only reality is himself. Things exist for him only, because he perceives them. Outside his perception of form and colour, primary and secondary qualities, things have no existence in themselves, and from this the inference is drawn that the only real existence is the individual soul. Homo Mensura becomes the rule of thought. It is a useful guide within certain limits, but when pushed too far it comes self-destructive. Self-consciousness may be a good reason for man's certain belief that he exists, but it is hardly sufficient to make him equally assured that the external world of matter and force obeys any laws or enjoys permanence outside his changing consciousness about it. Science thus becomes impossible, when scientific truths have no basis except in the fiction of his brain, and even sentient beings like himself have no existence independently of his belief about them. This comes out logically as the result of any philosophy which makes the individual soul the final and only measure of being. There is a similar collapse of our moral nature also, when no relationship subsists between one soul and another. Man feels instinctively that, though he may not be

able to say how the world of matter exists, it existed before he came into life, and will exist after he and his race cease to live. It is only demented humanity which can find rest in a merely human interpretation of the Universe, and it is to the glory of mankind that there has been no systematic school which has given it currency either in this country or in Europe, though individual thinkers have used it as a powerful weapon to expose the vagaries of rival systems.

The human mind being thus foiled in its worship of nature, and the deification of man as an all-sufficient explanation of being, seeks refuge in an exaggeration of the third alternative, which makes out that the Supreme Spirit alone exists, and both nature and man are but its reflected manifestations, not separable from it in essence, but only seen to be separate by reason of our ignorance. This is the system which had its representatives in later Greek and Stoic and modern European, especially German, thought, and which with shades of differences has found its chief home in India.

It has several advantages over the other systems. It is an adequate explanation of the infinity of matter we see around us. It is also an adequate interpretation of the infinity of force we see around us. It dispenses with the necessity of explaining the origin of things and the problem of creation or evolution. It has an element of truth about it, in that the Supreme Being is immanent in all beings animate or inanimate. This is a much higher and truer

conception of Supreme Existence than any which has found expression in many religious creeds of the world, which seek to separate God from nature and man by making Him out to be a being among beings, only more powerful and wise.

There is, however, a notable distinction in this respect between the pantheistic teachings of European thinkers and their prototypes in this country. One of the most current mistakes is to regard the 'Adwaita,' Monistic system of thought as formulated in the great Bháshya of Shankaracharya on the Vedanta Sutra, as the only characteristically Indian explanation of pantheism in this country. As a matter of fact, both before Shankaracharya's time and after his death, the modified Adwaita system of Ramanuja has played a great part in Indian philosophy, and to it may be traced the rise and progress of the Vaishnava Sects throughout India, which Sects have attained to a higher and truer conception of Theism than any of the other prevailing systems. In Shankaracharya's own system the existence of objective nature was not categorically denied. The position taken up was that neither existence nor non-existence could be affirmed in regard to it in the same sense in which the human soul and the Supreme Spirit are known to exist. Besides Shankaracharya freely admitted that Bramha, the Supreme existence, as soon as it conceived the idea of creation, became by reason of that thought 'Ishawara' creator, and all that was created had phenomenal existence. For all practical purposes this philosophy is strictly theistic in its beliefs. The European thinkers, on the

other hand, exaggerated the doctrine so as to negative all other existence.

The European pantheists, while asserting that God was the only substance, the only reality, under the changing appearances of all finite things and persons, fall into the error of consubstantiating this reality with all material things and all individual minds, making it co-extensive with them, so that whatever is predicable of them is equally predicable of the reality. The absolute reality is thus at once Infinite and finite, the substance and the mode, undifferentiated and determined in necessary forms. This error has been avoided in the Indian forms of pantheism as formulated by the great Acharyas. This complete effacement of individual things and persons, and the apprehension of separate appearances as being only an illusion of the imagination ends by reducing the absolute reality itself to a being of two dimensions only, extension and thought, the Sat and Chit of our philosophy. There is no room for the higher spiritual manifestation of Ananda, without which God is an empty substance, without any spiritual relations towards His creatures, these last being only illusory manifestations of His substance. Pantheism thus ends in becoming, like Materialism, or Egoism, an interpretation of what we see around us, which fails to satisfy our intellectual, moral and spiritual perceptions. We are conscious of our differences, we are conscious of our freedom as well as dependence. We are conscious of our sense of right and wrong, and our responsibility for self-determined action. When

the Infinite is thus allowed to swallow up all finite existence in time, space, and causation, the result is that there is no succession in time and space, and that there is nothing like cause and effect. Nothing happens but only exists eternally and necessarily. Nothing is originated or changed. There is no perfection or imperfection, nothing good or evil in men and things. In short, the undifferentiated and impersonal unity which extreme pantheism teaches, is an interpretation of the universe to which the conditions of our self-conscious being can never permanently be reconciled, and this unity must always remain a more or less curious speculation with little permanent hold on the head or heart of men, except in moments of poetic or mystic ecstacy, in which both in Europe and India pantheism finally sublimates.

Having thus examined all the possibilities of reducing the three postulates of existence to a single postulate, man's mind, in despair, has taken shelter in doubt or scepticism, not of the aggressive or militant kind, but in a more resigned form of it, in which it seeks to rest satisfied with the position that nothing certain can be grasped in connection with these great problems. This is the latest development of modern European speculation, and is known as agnosticism, and we have now to see how far the human mind can resign itself to a conclusion which may be likened to a paralysis of thought as it withdraws itself, tortoise-like, from all contact with such speculations. One thing strikes the student of this subject as a common characteristic of all such speculations. They

all demand logical proof and are not satisfied with practical or moral certitude. It is just possible that practical or moral conviction is all that is needed and therefore attainable by the human mind in its search after the Absolute, and in that case the demand for logical proof may itself be an unreasonable demand. If practical certitude is attainable, it does not follow from our inability to furnish a logical demonstration by way of proof, that nothing can be positively and certainly known about these matters. The failure of the human mind to attain to a living knowledge of the Absolute has partly arisen from this confusion of certitude with demonstration. This disability is not confined to philosophy or religion only. There are large departments of knowledge where demonstrative proof is not possible, and we content ourselves with the next best alternative and substitute faith for knowledge and act on that faith and suffer for it. Our Earth, or even the Solar system, is not the universe, nor is our time Eternity. Finite existence in time and space become intelligible only when they discover their background of the Infinite. Second causes linked together necessarily suggest a first cause which holds the links together. In our own personal consciousness, the fleeting perception and even thought of each moment cannot furnish the origin of true knowledge. That basis is widened by the more permanent results of self-consciousness, which memory holds together over a great length of time in what we recognize as 'I,' with its past experiences. Further, connecting our individual thought

with those of others, we come to rest our knowledge upon the collective thought of humanity. It would be intellectual suicide or madness if we followed any other principle. We can never demonstrate logically our reasons for the faith that we feel in the continuity of nature and the uniform operation of its laws. All science ultimately resolves itself into a product of our faith in the trustworthiness of the ever-changing universe. This sense of trustworthiness is the slow growth of ages, but it is none the less the basis of scientific truths as we apprehend them. If this basis of faith is not repudiated by science, it has equally legitimate claims upon our acceptance in the philosophy of the Absolute.

This conformity of the material universe with our faith in its trustworthiness establishes the link which joins man with the universe in which he lives and moves and has his being. We do not feel as if we were like fish taken out of water or like the soaring eagle made to walk over earth. This harmony between our thoughts and the operations of nature is the highest natural revelation. This harmony springs not from man's consciousness only nor is it born of inert matter. It not only links us with nature, but it links us and nature alike with the Infinite existence whose purposes of wisdom and benevolence, beauty and power are thereby disclosed to our eyes of faith and knowledge. Science, thus holds the torch of faith to the mystery of religion. If this torch were extinguished or set aside not only will Theism suffer, but with it science itself

will cease to be scientific, for it also rests ultimately on faith in the harmony of the Universe, and the permanence of its laws and methods of work.

The threefold postulates of existence are thus seen to be distinct and yet harmonized together. All attempts to assimilate and reduce them into one absolute existence fail, because they are bound to fail At the same time, they are not distinct in the sense of being disjointed parts of a mechanical whole. They are one and yet they are many. Nature and man each have definite relations of subordination to the great Infinite which rules over them and harmonizes them, and the discovery of these subordinate relations is the special domain of the philosophy of Theism. Even agnostic philosophers have admitted the existence of power and wisdom, beauty and benevolence, as manifested in the operations of nature. In the infancy of science, this power and purpose was conceived as not the work of a single unseen agency and will, but as the play of good and bad deities—Devtas, angels, spirits, and ghosts, the gods and goddesses of mythology, of tribal and local origin, which had larger powers and more subtle influences over nature than man. This stage of thought naturally led to polytheism and to idolatry. It obtains still in this and other countries among people who cannot understand the universal harmony of nature's laws as science discloses it. Later on, science taught men to classify these agencies into good and bad angels, Devas and Daityas, Ahirman and Ahurmast. A hierarchy of gods bigger and

smaller under the banners of the principles of good and evil, was thus evolved, and it is best seen in the early faith of the Hindus and Parsis and has left its stamp on the Mahomedan and Christian systems of faith. Finally, with the triumphs of scientific investigation, the idea dawned upon men's mind of the world of nature and man being pervaded by one power, wisdom and purpose, which superseded the old gods and goddesses and the division of good and evil principles. This was the work of Theism. This God was not as in the olden forms of Deism, apprehended as a being among other beings, a fashioner or mechanician setting the watch in motion from outside. But a God immanent in everything and over-ruling the Universe, a God who was not exhausted by the limits of his work, but was, in the words of the Purushsukta, 'Bigger than the Infinite universe, and encircling as He did, the created world of matter and man, exceeded it on all sides.' It was the peculiar glory of the Upanishads to have discoursed of such a God. 'The winds blow from fear of Him, and the Sun rises and sets as He directs. Fire and Indra and even Death run on His errand.' In one of the Upanishads there is a beautiful account of the way in which the mythological gods of Fire, Indra, &c., tried their strength in contest with this Supreme Bramha, and were foiled in the attempt and submitted to do His bidding. He saw, or rather thought, and the world and the inhabitants thereof were created. This is also the teaching of the Old Testament. Order means reason, conscious mind, or personal will. God's

immanence in nature is seen in the order and the purpose which animates nature.

This account of the origin of things does not make the work of creation an event in time or history. It is as much a development of Infinite thought, as though it had no beginning in time. Both Geology and Astronomy, however, show to demonstration that cosmos, as we now see it ordered and regulated, had a beginning, and a development or evolution from imperfect to perfect, and from simple to complex orders of beings. In this latter view, the important point for us to note is not the question of time but of causation. If causation is seen to be at work in infinite time and space, it is a sufficient explanation for the purposes of practical certitude.

There can be no natural agents in the proper sense of the word. Matter is in its essence inert and the so-called agents are only signs by which the divine reality regulates the purposes of law and order, beauty and benevolence, power and wisdom. This divine activity is what is signified by the phrase, 'God immanent in nature.' These activities are interpretable by man and become trustworthy, because they are His activities and not mere casual combinations and permutations of lawless and purposeless chance. Material agents are like the telegraph wire through which messages are sent across time and space, and deciphered by man, whether they are messages of science or of religion. An interpretable universe brings man face to face with God as the ever acting

immanent cause of all natural changes, and the spirit which animates and regulates the world.

Just as nature is supernatural in this view, man has also a super-human element in him. The distinguishing feature in man is his self-conscious reason and his volition which is free to act or not to act within certain well-defined limits. Free volition can hardly be said to be present in brute creation. They are solely guided by their instincts and impulses, and are not in the strict sense of the word responsible for their actions. Man alone possesses a sort of delegated freedom to choose between right and wrong, between good and evil. He alone has the power of self-determination and of being a causal agent. These distinguishing features constitute his highest glory and his greatest responsibility. They furnish the bases of all law and government, morals and manners, social and family arrangements, literary and scientific culture, and finally of religion and worship. He is not a mere creature of necessity, not a mere diagonal result of opposite forces acting upon him, as is the rest of the world including even the brute creation. Man thus occupies a higher plane of being and the question arises how this higher existence is subordinated to the over-ruling Providence which regulates the universe including man as a physical being. In man's case his spiritual relations with this universal Soul are made manifest by the sense of conscience in him, which makes him feel that he is responsible for the proper exercise of his delegated freedom. He feels that the spirit immanent in the universe about him mani-

fests His presence in him through this faculty of conscience which accuses him when he goes wrong, and helps and guides him when he is on the right path. The bitter remorse he feels when he demeans himself, and the sense of satisfaction which rewards him when he does his duty, are the connecting links between his soul and the spirit he realises as the Soul of his soul. It is this communion which opens to him the gates of another and higher world where love and justice reign supreme. Intelligent, self-originated volition under obligation of duty and sense of personal responsibility, this is in the case of man the divine, that is the super-human and super-natural element in him. This ethical and personal conception of man's relation with the universal Soul is a higher revelation than what nature discloses, and this is the realm where faith and knowledge join hand to hand, or rather knowledge becomes faith which elevates man from mortal into immortal existence. Though we cannot know all that we might wish to know about these mysteries, these revelations of man and nature teach us that the deepest and truest thought man can have about the outside world is that it is the immediate manifestation of the divine or Infinite person in moral relations to imperfect persons who are undergoing intellectual and spiritual elevation in divine surroundings. At the same time God is not to be conceived as merely man made infinite, in his qualities and without his imperfections. This was the error of Buddhism which elevated the wise man above the old mythological Gods and even displaced the spirit from the universe. This is the form of idolatry

against which all religions have raised their protests, and in none more emphatically than in the Aryan system of Faith. The Upanishads have said that 'He who thinketh that he knoweth God doth not know Him, while he who thinks that he doth not know Him knoweth Him. From Him the speech of man recoileth in despair how to describe Him. The mind of man cannot grasp it. Only through faith, hope and love can He be approached.'

This is the teaching of natural Theism. It has to be supplemented by further revelations of God in history which form the basis of all historical religions and religious movements. Historical revelations of Theism must differ from one another according to the circumstances of the age and country in which they occurred. Their historical surroundings are, however, destined in course of time, to fade in importance as their work of national education is accomplished, and they converge together to supplement each other's work in the final goal which they are all intended to reach. Alone in all the countries of the world, India has had the privilege of witnessing this convergence of historical faiths actively at work without losing its own individual characteristics. With her revelation has not ceased at any point of time. The stream has flowed and still continues to flow in the lives and teaching of every saint and prophet of this or of other lands. From the worship of the elements personified, Indian Theism, or as I have elsewhere called it the Bhágvata Dharma, developed into the worship of the power which rules over the elements. This

power then became clothed with ethical and moral grandeur, banishing the old gods and elements into a lower order of beings and Devtás—Deities. The capacities of the human soul next attracted attention, and in the Upanishads the divine nature of the soul was first formulated and carried up even to the point of identity. Then came the Buddhists who strengthened the moral side of our nature, and substituted for the old animal sacrifices the sacrifice of the animal in man, as the highest form of worship and the only road to salvation. Next followed the aggressive domination of the Mahomedan faith which had its own purpose in enforcing the claims of strict Monotheism not only in intellectual apprehension but in practical conduct; and now Christian influences are at work. The power of organisation, active hatred of sin, and indignation against wrong-doing in place of resigned indifference, a correct sense of the dignity of man and woman, active philanthropy and a feeling of fraternity, freedom of thought and action, these are Christian virtues which have to be incorporated into the national character, and this work is actively going on in all parts of the country. The Bhágvata Dharma has many points of contact and kinship with the Christian system of faith. The Supreme Spirit is apprehended in both as being the Ocean of life in which we live and move and have our being. The three persons of the Trinity have their more logical counterpart, in the One without a second, who is absolute existence 'Sat'; the Logos, or the Word eternal is the 'Chit,' and the third person, the Holy Comforter is, 'Ananda'

joy and peace, who inspires joy and peace in all. The Hindu ideal of the soul becoming one on emancipation with the universal spirit is materialized in the Christian mystery of transubstantiation. Both systems recognize incarnation, the difference being of one or many. In both sacrifice has played an important part. With these elements of kinship there are essential differences which cannot be overlooked. The characteristics of Indian Theism, which have enabled it to maintain its identity, will cling to it through all times. They are first its non-historical character. It is associated with no particular saint or prophet though it has room for reverence to all saints and prophets. It is not bound down to any particular revelation but is open to the best influences of all revelations. With it, revelation is a perpetual stream which never ceases to flow. Above all, Indian Theism is built on the rock of the direct communion of the individual soul with the Soul of the Universe to which it is linked by the tie of faith, hope and love. Indian Theism does not limit its education of man to a single trial in this world. The modified law of 'Karma' which distinguishes it from fatalism, which connects the past with the present and future, is nowhere better realized than in this country, though it is much exaggerated in some of its over-logical conclusions. The national mind has been cast in a spiritual and religious mould, which does not allow it to sink into the worship of this world and its riches and power as the highest object of desire, but always looks upon the hereafter

as its chief resting place. The universe is not merely His handiwork, but He is the Soul, Who fills the universe and moves it. Lastly, Indian Theism teaches toleration to all, self-sacrifice, and the duty of love, not only of man to man but to all animated beings. It was not therefore, without reason that the Rev. Dr. Miller, in an eloquent address he gave at Madras, asked the Christians to bear in mind that God was at work in India long before any missionary, Catholic or Protestant, set his foot there, and that the Hindu system, amidst all its corruptions, contains elements of divine Truth. The *Christian World*, commenting upon this, has observed that India will not give up all its moulds of thought at the bidding of British or Christian organisations, but it will draw into itself the divine life which these organisations enshrine.

Gentlemen, I hope you will excuse this last digression from the professed purpose of the present address. I have tried to present before you on parallel lines the substance of Professor Dr. Fraser's lectures which represent the latest phase of European thought, and illustrated it by references to our own ancient works. The parallelism is very suggestive, and I hope it will prove an incentive to some of you to follow up these studies. If that result is achieved, I shall consider myself amply rewarded.

II.

THE SUTRA AND SMRITI TEXTS ON THE AGE OF HINDU MARRIAGE.

ONE of the penalties of arrested civilization is that, while stopping further growth, the seeds of decay and death are sown in the paralyzed social organism. The 'stationary East' is one of those popular fallacies which die a very hard death, though killed and exploded a hundred times. It is not possible for a living being, be the unit an individual or a collection of individuals, to remain stationary at any stage of progress achieved by them for any considerable time without, in fact, undergoing the slow process of decay and degradation. The full importance of this fact is not at once realized, because the span of national life is not, like that of the individual man, easily encompassed within our ordinary vision; and even in ordinary human life, many people imagine that they stand still when in fact they are sinking in health and vigour, and lapsing into decrepitude and dotage. Perhaps, no better illustration of this great truth can be cited than what

is furnished by an historical survey of the changes which have taken place during centuries of arrested growth in the social usages regulating the institution of Marriage in the Aryan population of this country. Without such a survey of the past, it is not possible to understand intelligently the present, or correctly to forecast or guide the future. The theory of evolution has, in this country, to be studied in its other aspect of what may conveniently be called devolution. When decay and corruption set in, it is not the fittest and the strongest that survives in the conflict of dead with living matter, but the healthy parts give way, and their place is taken up by all that is indicative of the fact that corruption has set in, and the vital force extinguished.

The study of the morbid symptoms of a nation's decay is no doubt very irksome, but the pain must be endured, and the scruples set aside. The Gordian knot tied during centuries of devolution cannot be cut asunder by any spasmodic violence. The successive stages of slow decay must be closely watched and diagnosed, if we would work out the solution of the difficulty. Fortunately, the doom of death is not, as in the case of an individual, irrevocable as fate, in the case of a nation so large as the Aryan population of India, numbering one-sixth of the human race. The process of recovery may be slow, but if we stimulate the stifled seeds of health and growth, and lop off dead excrescences, decay may yet be arrested, and death successfully averted. It is this hope which must cheer all those who desire to see the dead

bones in the valley heave again with the breath of resurrection, and the sleep of centuries disturbed by the penetrating rays of living light.

It is proposed here to take such a survey of the growth and decay of the Aryan social usages regarding the Institution of Marriage in this country during historic times, that is, the times of which we can trace the history in records, or institutions, or customs. Such a survey presents many stages of growth, as also of decay, but it is not proposed to dwell on them all here. It will be enough for the purpose of this introduction to note only two stages; the one stage associated with all that is truly old and venerable, associated, moreover, with all that is best and noblest in our traditions, and the other stage when the civilization which promised so well was arrested in its growth, and internal decay set in, and foreign invasions paralyzed all activity, and brought in with them political subjection and social slavery. This distinction of two stages fits in with the orthodox view of looking at these matters. The most orthodox interpreters of our Shastras admit that the present is separated from the past by a distinctly laid down land-mark. The Vedic age is separated from the Puranic age in which Aryan society now lives and moves, and has its being. The Shastris profess veneration for the past, but their allegiance is given not to the venerated Vedic past, but to the more modern transformations represented by the developments of the Puranic period, and owing to a false rule of exegesis, they try to distort the old texts so as

to make them fit in with what is hopelessly irreconcileable with them. This desperate attempt must be abandoned if it is desired to look at the subject in its true historical aspect. Two propositions may safely be laid down in this connection :—Firstly, that the Aryan society of the Vedic, or more properly speaking, the Grihya Sutra period presents the institution of marriage in a form which recognized female liberty and the dignity of womanhood in full, very slight traces of which are seen in the existing order of things except, fortunately, in the old Sanskrit ritual which is still recited, and the ceremonies which are still blindly performed; and secondly, that owing to causes which it is not possible to trace, there was a revulsion of feeling, and the Vedic institutions were practically abandoned or ignored, and in their place usages grew up which circumscribed female liberty in various directions and seriously lowered the dignity of woman in the social and family arrangements. By clearly separating the texts relating to each period, the confusion of thought and ideas, which marks all orthodox discussion of these subjects, will be avoided, and the whole history presented in a way at once intelligible and suggestive.

It may be noted that the stage of civilization represented by the texts of the Sutra period has itself a background of pre-historic times when the arrangements of the family life and marriage were admittedly archaic and barbarous. In the Mahabharata there are traces of this period when married life had no sanctity, and the tie of wife and husband was felt to be very loose. The well-known story of

Dirghatama may be referred to as an illustration of these pre-historic times. The Yajur Veda texts, which described a woman as necessarily 'Ananshha,' disentitled to inherit, like those male heirs who were deformed or affected with an incurable malady, point to the same time, and their influence was recognized by some of the old Sutra writers, Baudhayana and Apastambha. The possession of a wife by a family of brothers as common property is a relic of the same period. The lower forms of Asura and Pishacha marriages are survivals of the same period. Slowly Aryan society grew out of this savagery, and one by one female heirs, first the wife, then the daughter, afterwards the mother and sister, began to be recognized as heirs to a separated Aryan householder. Monogamy became the rule of life, and rose in national estimation, as the story of Rama and Sita so nobly illustrates. Woman's freedom and dignity were vindicated, and, in the Kshatria caste especially, liberty to choose her husband in the form of Swayamvara, marriage by free choice, so well illustrated in the stories of Sita, Damayanti, Rukmini and Draupadi, was allowed as a matter of course. Among the Brahmins, women given up to study and contemplation, refrained from marriage altogether, and lost none of their importance by this act of self-abnegation. Marriage took place in all castes at a comparatively mature age, and the remarriage of widows was not looked down upon as disreputable, seeing that Damayanti was permitted by her father to make a feint of it

to find out her long-lost husband, and that Krishná's son married a widow of his enemy Shambara, and Arjuna married Ulupi. This was the classical age of Indian history, when the nation throve in all lines of activity. Later on some cause or another led to a change, and Swayamvara fell into disuse, single life became unfashionable, late marriages and remarriages became disreputable, women's rights as heirs were also circumscribed in favour of distant male heirs, monogamy lost its strictness so far as males were concerned, the Bramha form of marriage by gift was recognized as the best form, and women were denounced as being on a level with the Shudras in respect of Vedic learning and performance of Vedic rites, and they were condemned to life-long pupilage, first to the father, and afterwards to the husband, and lastly, to the son. The Shastris explain the revulsion of feeling by ascribing it to be the result of the change of Yuga, that is, the setting in of the Kali Yuga. The explanation is not satisfactory or complete, since the same texts, which ushered in these restrictions on female rights, were equally explicit in regard to many other customs, such as long continued Bramhacharya on the part of men, and entering the Monastic order. In these matters, the restrictions did not form a bar to the continuance of the old practices as honoured institutions. The cause of this revulsion of feeling was really the reflex action of the rise of Buddhism with its horror of female society, joined with the confusion caused by invasions of barbarous hordes, such as, the Shakas, Hunas and Jats, from outside, and

the rise of non-Aryan tribes to power in the country, which deluged the land with bloodshed, and extinguished the spirit of chivalry, learning and independence, and reduced the nation to the subjection of people with a lower type of civilization about the commencement of the Christian era. This destructive work was completed by the invasion of the Mahomedans, who had a distinctly lower ideal of family life and respect for the female sex. The revulsion in feeling was not confined to the marriage institutions only. It equally affected the law of inheritance by discouraging partition, and encouraging living in union under the authority and protection of the eldest living male. It similarly affected the notion of individual property in land, and substituted in its place communal or tribal ownership of the soil, as evidenced by the tenure of land in the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab. The intermixture of castes was discouraged, and the sub-divisions became more numerous and rigorous than ever. Foreign intercourse by sea and land was similarly eschewed and discredited. The domination of the priesthood became more pronounced than ever, and led to the foundation of the numerous sects and heresies. Whatever may have been the cause of this change of front all along the line, the fact is indisputable, and cannot be denied.

Having thus presented the pre-historic, the classical or Vedic, and the Puranic stages in our view, it will be now convenient to refer more in detail to the Institution of Marriage, and trace its downward course

step by step. The following conclusions may safely be laid down on this point :—

In the Grihya Sutras no definite age limit for the marriage of females is laid down. The age limit of males is laid down by inference, seeing that the studentship commences at eight years for Brahmins, and at a later age for other castes, and the study of the three Vedas, of two or of one Veda is prescribed for thirty-six, twenty-four or twelve years in the preceptor's house, as a preliminary to the Brahmin student's entering upon the life of a Grihi, married householder, with his preceptor's permission.

While no definite age limit has been laid down for females, the texts indicate clearly enough what they mean by prescribing certain qualifications as necessary in the case of females. The Hiranya Keshi Grihya Sutra lays down that the female should be 'Nagnika' defined in Sanskara Ratna Mala as 'Maithunarha,' fit for cohabitation with her husband, and Brahmacharini, similarly defined to be one who has not associated with a male person. This requisite of Brahmacharini, is a qualification prescribed in all the Sutras of the different Vedas and Shákhás.

It might be said that the interpretation put upon 'Nagnika' and 'Brahmacharini' is too far-fetched, and cannot be accepted as fairly representing the general sense of the Sutras. Such a contention will not be urged by any one who reads the texts in full for himself. The texts in all the Sutras

require that for three days at least—some texts prescribe twelve days, others a year—the husband and wife should be 'Wratastha,' abstemious, that is, should observe certain forms of self-restraint, and among these restrictions are (1), that they should abstain from the use of salted food, (2), they should sleep on the ground, and (3) that they should observe the 'Bramhachari Wrata' also for the prescribed period. There could thus be no mistake about the sense of the words, even if the texts, which permit a girl to look out for a husband, only when she desires to be joined in marriage, be left out of account.

No doubt, however, is left on this point by the ceremony of the fourth night which used to be performed in former times after the 'Wrata' of the three nights was over. This ceremony is still kept up in name in the rituals of all the Sutras, except the Ashwalayana, where only the three nights' Wrata is mentioned. In the other Sutras the fourth night's ceremony is intended to sanctify the ground, that is the female body, so as to make it fit for association for purposes of cohabitation, and the ritual prescribes the union, by actual contact of the bodies and of the members thereof, of both husband and wife. Even the texts, which refer to a later period, recognized the completion of the three nights' Wrata and the union of bodies on the fourth night as the final step which made marriage complete, so as to make the couple 'Eka Rishi,' that is, to incorporate the woman with the man's Gotra—*gens.*

This incorporation entitled her to receive and offer the Pinda after death and observe Sutaka, mourning. Even the Ashwalayana, as interpreted by the Prayoga Parijata, has stated the efficacy of the Wrata of three nights, &c., to be, that it took away the girl out of her father's Gotra, and incorporated her in her husband's Gotra. This rite is not now performed at the marriage time, but part of it is performed after the girl attains age at the time of the Garbhadhana—consummation of marriage, and the omission to perform the rite at the proper time is atoned for by a Prayaschitta, penance. The fourth night's ceremony was understood to join the husband and wife in actual bodily cohabitation, and the Bramhachari Wrata then ceased. This fact can leave no doubt as to the correctness of the interpretation put upon Nagnika and Bramhacharini by the commentator, and it shows that the marriageable age was fixed at a mature period both for the husband and the wife.

This circumstance also accounts for the fact that a great many of the Smriti texts favour the re-marriage of Akshatayoni girls, widowed in their childhood, before the consummation of marriage, even when these texts do not permit it, more generally in the way Parashara, Manu, Narada, &c., authorised such remarriage in the case of all women suffering from five forms of distress.

There is thus a recognized distinction between the status of a wife married with the fourth night's ceremony, which was most in vogue in those days,

and a girl given in marriage who had not known her husband. There was no occasion for any such distinction in old times. With the restrictions of age limit, this distinction had to be made as a concession to popular feeling.

The marriage ritual, it may also be noted, has no place in it for the girl's father after the Kanyadana ceremony, giving away the girl in gift. The subsequent rite is entirely an affair of the husband and wife. The mutual promises and assurances of love and protection and obedience presuppose a much greater capacity in both than can be attributed to them in their childhood. The marriage rite is no doubt a sacrament, but it is a sacrament which presupposes the age of discretion on both sides. As now performed, it loses all its significance, because neither party understands what is said or done.

The circumstance that Swayamwara was much in vogue in royal families, and among Kshatriyas generally, is an evidence of the same fact, namely, that marriage was contracted after girls had arrived at age and years of discretion, and that it was not a matter in which they were allowed no choice. Even after the Smriti texts greatly restricted female liberty, they have expressly reserved to the girl the power of marrying oneself after waiting for three years for the father's choice.

To the same effect is the evidence of the Puranic legends, which expressly refer to the cases of girls who refused to abide by the choice of their fathers. The well-known story of Sawitri is a proof

of this. Sawitri, when she had attained to the marriageable age, was told by her father to make a choice for herself. She chose Satyawan, and when Narada said that Satyawan would die within a year, and in consequence her father asked Sawitri to forego her choice, she said 'No,' and Narada supported her. This is the version given in the Mahabharata. The stories of Rukmini and Subhadra are similarly instructive. The choice of the daughters of Kashi Raja and of Mandodari in the Devi Bhagawata legend tends to confirm this position In some of these cases the girls chose to remain unmarried, and their fathers did not think they were bound to constrain their choice. The several points noticed above can leave little doubt upon the question at issue, and they show beyond doubt that marriages took place after years of discretion, and were matters more of choice than of parental constraint.

To come next to the Smriti texts, there is no doubt, that when these texts were written, there was a revulsion of feeling, and it was generally regarded as a matter of necessity that no girl should remain unmarried, if the parent could help it, after twelve or before puberty. In their inability to fix the relative locality, order or date of the Smritis, and under the stress of a false theory of exegesis, the Shastris lump the Smritis together, and attempt the hopeless task of reconciling opposite texts by inventing fictions. No fair view of the subject can be secured by mere violent interpretation. The better

plan appears to be to take the texts as they are, and arrange them in intelligent order, and ascertain on which side the balance of authority rests. The following observations have been written with this view and may prove useful.

In regard to the marriageable age of males, there is not the same diversity of view as in regard to the age of females. Marriage is not compulsory for males. If a man desires to marry, the lowest permissible age according to the Smritis is sixteen, and the highest is thirty, as the following texts will show clearly:—

Brihaspati: A man thirty years old should marry a girl of ten years. In another place the text reads that a man of thirty should marry a girl of sixteen.

Manu and **Yama:** A man at the age of thirty should marry a 'Kanya.'

Dewala: A man at the age of eighteen should marry in due form a girl of seven, who is then called 'Gauri.'

Ashwalayana: A 'Dwija' twice-born of twenty-five should marry a 'Kanya' of eight years. A man of less than thirty should marry a 'Rohini' of nine years. She becomes 'Gandhari' after ten, and he who wishes long life should marry such a girl before she attains her menses.

Wyasa: A Dwija of twenty-six years, who has fulfilled all observances and finished his studies, should, with his preceptor's permission, if he desires to be a householder, marry a faultless and grown-up girl.

Gautama: A householder should marry an unmarried grown-up girl of less age than himself. Wise men have said that after fifty a man should not marry in Kali Yuga.

Wriddha-Gautama: A man should study in his 'Balya,' early age, and marry in the 'Yauwana,' period of youth, after finishing his 'Brahmacharya.'

Budha: After finishing the study of the Vedas and the service of his preceptor, and after having completely observed all 'Wratas,' a man should marry a girl of his own caste.

Ashwalayana: After finishing four Vedas, or three, or two, or one, and satisfying his preceptor, a man should, after completing one-fourth of his life's period, twenty-five years, become 'Grihi,' householder, for the second portion of twenty-five years of his life, and then retire into the forest.

Manu: (*a*) A man thirty years old should, after finishing the study of the Vedas, or two Vedas, or one, or after a fair mastery thereof and having remained a 'Brahmachari' all the while, become a 'Grihastha,' householder.

(*b*) A man should in the first quarter of his life stay with his preceptor. In the second quarter of his life, by marrying a wife he should stay in his house as a householder.

Yajnawalkya: A male should be chosen who is 'Shrotriya' well-endowed, one who is 'Yuwa,' young, intelligent, and beloved by men.

Shatatapa: A man should be Yuwa who desires marriage.

Daksha: A man who has finished his study of the Vedas should marry a well-endowed girl. Before sixteen a man is not qualified for marriage. After he has finished his study of the Vedas and completed his Brahmachari Wrata he should bathe and become Grihi, a householder.

Manu: The 'Keshanta,' removal of hair, ceremony may be performed in the case of a Brahmin at sixteen, in the case of a Kshatriya at twenty-two, and in the case of a Waishya at twenty-five. After bathing he becomes Snataka, anointed and fit for marriage.

These texts leave no doubt that the majority of the Smritis favour the age after twenty-five in the case of males. Only one text fixes the age at eighteen and another at sixteen. The maximum limit is also fixed at fifty. The text of Dewala about eighteen is counterbalanced by his own text which fixed the age at twenty-five. Daksha specifically lays down a minimum limit of sixteen, before which no man may legally marry. Manu's text about sixteen relates to Keshanta ceremony, and is balanced by his own other text which fixes thirty as the limit of age. The medical works also favour the higher ages. Sushruta and Wagbhata fixed twenty-one and twelve as the marriageable ages of boys and girls respectively, and twenty-five and sixteen as the age for the consummation of marriage by cohabitation. These medical works state: 'Children born of parents who are respectively less than twenty-five and sixteen years old are either still-born, or if born alive, are

weaklings.' All these authorities are thus clearly in favour of late, as against child marriages. Nobody now proposes to wait till twenty-five, though that would not be unreasonable, but surely a proposal to raise the minimum age to eighteen or twenty for males is not an unreasonable concession to the weakness of the Kali Yuga.

To proceed next to the consideration of the age for females. It will be noted that the Sutras laid down no minimum or maximum age limit, but left marriages optional. Those who desired to marry might do so at a time of life signified by the use of the words Kanya, Kumari, Yuwati, Kánta, Nagnika, and Bráhmacharini, which in those days were sufficiently indicative of their being grown-up girls. The way in which the Smriti writers proceeded to restrict this freedom was, firstly, by prohibiting the choice of single or unmarried life to females, secondly, by making it compulsory on fathers or guardians to see their daughters married before puberty at the risk of damnation, and thirdly, by inventing new texts limiting the age significance of the words Kanya, Kumari Nagnika, &c., used by the Sutra writers. It is a very interesting study to mark the successive stages of this gradual process of restriction and degradation. Notwithstanding this manipulation, it will be seen that the majority of the texts favour the age of twelve or the age of puberty as the marriageable age for girls. As might be expected, the Smriti texts, which bear the same names as some of the older Sutras, are naturally the most in accord with the ideas of the

Sutra period. Baudhayana, for instance, prescribes that a girl must be both a Nagnika and a Bramhacharini, words obviously used in the sense of the Sutras, that is, as a girl fit for sexual connection, but who has had no such intercourse before. Ashwalayana, Shankhalikhita, and Paithinasi also use the same words Nagnika and Kanya, but obviously use the words in a sense different from the Sutras. Katyayana similarly uses the word Kumári. In the same way Shaunaka in his Kariká keeps up the memory of the traditions of the three nights' observance of Wrata to be followed on the fourth night by actual consummation. Owing to the change of habits the three nights' Wrata was enlarged to twelve days or a year's period for the final consummation of intercourse. Satyawrata, another writer of the same early period, also refers to the three nights' observances, and the fourth night's union as completing the marriage. Even when less liberal notions were evidently in the ascendant, Baudhayana clearly permits the girl to wait for three years after she attains her menses, and if till then her father did not give her in marriage, she was at liberty to contract a lawful marriage herself. Wasishtha belongs to the same early period. According to him, the girl eligible for marriage is one who is Asprishta-Maithuna, that is, has not had sexual intercourse, in other words, is Brahmachárini in the old Sutra sense.

The first decisive step in the downward course of restriction and constraint was taken, when the maximum age for marriage was brought down to the

period before a girl attained her menses, and the words Kanyá, Kumári, Nagniká, and others were defined accordingly. And a new word of opprobrium, Wrishali, was invented for the girl who remained unmarried after she attained menstruation. The authorities on this point are numerous, and belong decidedly to a later period, contemporary with the compilation of the 'Amarkosha' lexicon, which defines Nagnika by its equivalent of Nágatártawá, one who has not attained her menses. The omission of the word Brahmachárini is easily explained, for there was no occasion for the use of that text when the age was brought down. The descent from Nagniká, who was fit for sexual intercourse, to Nágatártawá, one who had not attained her menses, is a clearly marked one, and constitutes the first link in the retrograde chain. Yama, Ashwalayana, Baudhayana, Dewala, Paithinasi, Gautama, Shankhalikhita, Brihaspati, Wasishtha, and Marichi, all prescribed the gift of a Nagniká girl as the most eligible form of marriage called Bráhma-wiwáha, and the following Smritis, Brihaspati, Paráshara, Shátátapa, Wyása, Atri, Marichi, Kashyapa, Shátyáyani, Dewala, Yájnawalkya, Hárita, Nárada, Gautama, Sanwarta, Angirá, Paithinasi, Yama, and Vishnu, expressly contain texts, laying down that a girl who attains her menses, while living in her father's house unmarried, becomes a Wrishali, and her father, brother, &c., incur the guilt of Bhrunahatyá, child murder, or, more vaguely, 'go to hell,' and her husband is a Wrishalipati, unfit to be associated with or invited for Shradha, anniversary of the dead.

Paithinasi assigns another reason why a girl shoul be given before she attains her menses. That reason is, 'A girl should be married before her breasts are developed.' Angira and Kashyapa also require that a girl whose breasts are not developed, or who has not attained her menses, should be given in marriage. These texts, it will be seen, say nothing about the girl incurring any guilt. On the contrary, Baudhayana permits her to give herself in marriage after waiting for her father doing so for three years, and according to the Smriti writers, namely, Wyasa, Atri, Dewala, Wriddha-Atri, Marichi, Laugakshi, Shaunaka, Ashwalayana, Apastamba, and Wriddha-Parashara, even when a girl becomes impure in the course of the performance of marriage rites, these rites are only delayed by three days of impurity, at the end of which she is to bathe and after a small penance she is eligible for marriage, as if she had not attained her menses. But in the further development of this same retrograde tendency, it was laid down that she herself incurred guilt, and that she should be abandoned by her father, and her face should not be seen according to Gautama and Markandeya. According to Brihaspati and Atri the marriage of a girl, after she has attained her menses, destroyed the welfare of the giver's ancestors. The word 'Wrishali' was apparently, at first, applied to a barren woman or a woman who gave birth to still-born children. As shown above, the word was obviously at this time intended to embrace the unmarried girl who had attained menses, and as such the denunciations against connection with a

Wrishali of the old sort, contained in Yama, Harita, Ushanas, Manu, Wasishtha, Shaunaka, and Gautama, were made applicable to marriages with girls after they had attained menses. The next step in order of further restriction was taken by fixing the time of the first appearance of menses at the age of twelve. Yama, Parashara, and Brihaspati laid down that girls attain their menses when they have reached the twelfth year, and they condemn the father who neglected his duty in getting his girl married before that period. Manu and Yama accepted the limit of twelve years as a suitable age limit for the bride of a full grown-up man of thirty, and Sanwarta fixed upon twelve years as the age when a girl became a Wrishali. This was thus the next step and must have been later in time than the age of Amara-kosha, noted above.

In keeping with this view, or in exaggeration of it, a Nagnika was defined in the Puranas to be a girl who did not feel the desire of concealing her limbs in a male's presence, or was still playing like a child in the dust, and did not know what was proper and improper. But a time came soon after, when the limit of twelve was thought to be too liberal by the text writers, and the words Nagnika, Kanya, and Kumari were subjected to further manipulation. The Sutras prescribed the marriage of a 'Kumari,' virgin, and a 'Kanya,' daughter, among whose qualifications they had stated that they should be Nagnika and Brahmacharini. In the Sutras the words Kanya and Kumari, were never intended to signify any particular

age, or state of bodily development, any more than 'Bharya,' wife, or 'Stri,' woman, used in Brihaspati and Apastamba. They are general words, and used as such in Manu, Ashwalayana, Shaunaka, and Baudhayana, in various places, where girls of twelve and after maturity are called Kanya, as also in Brihaspati, Yama, Parashara, and Vishnu, where a father is condemned to the sin of child-murder who leaves his Kanya unmarried after she attains menses. When, however, a desire began to be felt to bring down the age from twelve, the device of defining Kanya, Kumari and Nagnika, as a girl who had reached a particular age, was adopted and turned to account. Thus Kashyapa styled a girl of seven Gauri, and a girl of ten was called Kanya, and a girl after ten was called Rajaswala. Another reading of this same text states that a girl after ten becomes a Kumari. A third reading states that at the age of twelve she becomes Rajaswala. Sanwarta styled a girl of eight years Gauri, of nine years Nagnika, and of ten Kanya, and of twelve Wrishali, which last thus became synonymous with Rajaswala. Yama, Gautama, Garga, and Parashara called the girl of eight Gauri, of nine Rohini, of ten Kanya, and after ten she became Rajaswala. By this device of merely calling a girl Rajaswala after ten, these writers attempted to cancel the definition adopted by previous texts noted above of fixing the age of twelve as the age of menstruation. Ashwalayana and Dewala also adopted the nomenclature Gauri, Rohini and Kanya, as the names of girls in their eighth, ninth

and tenth year, and they called the girl after ten Gandhari. Angira called the girl before she attained menses Nari, a girl who had attained menses was called Rohini, and one who had developed breasts was called Kanyaka. The confusion seen in these texts, and their open contradiction of each other and of the large number of the texts quoted before, fixing the age of marriage by the limit of monthly courses, or twelve years, condemns them as being later tamperings with old texts or later additions. By this ignoble device the marriageable age of girls was cut down by two years and reduced from twelve to ten; for, after ten a girl was supposed to be Rajaswala, against all the facts or experience, and the authority of texts which fixed the age at twelve.

As if the limit of ten was not low enough, and to complete the degradation, it was later on suggested that as girls had not, like boys, any 'Upanayana,' initiation ceremony to go through, the marriage sacrament should be taken in the place of the Upanayana ceremony of boys, and therefore, the texts laying down the age for Upanayana were by analogy made applicable to girls for their marriage. Angira and Sanwarta laid it down that wise men have commended the age of eight as a fit age for a girl's marriage. But as Manu's authority was required to support the fraud, a text of Manu was made to order, laying it down that eight years from birth or conception was the best time for a boy's Upanayana or a girl's 'Warana' acceptance of a husband. The word Warana in the text is not exactly equivalent to 'Wiwaha'

marriage, used in the Angira's text, but it supports the confusion of ideas on which the fraud was based. Ashwalayana and Dewala, as also Marichi and Brihaspati, were laid under contribution as assigning particular blessings or particular portions of heaven to the man who married or who gave his daughter in marriage when she was a Gauri, a Rohini or a Kanya. In this indirect way a few solitary and apparently fraudulent additions have been made to do duty, and the eligible marriage age was reduced to what it now obtains in a large number of cases.

That some of these texts have been manipulated can hardly admit of doubt; for instance, the texts of Manu, Nárada and Yama which allowed a girl 'to remain unmarried even till death rather than be wedded to a man who is of a bad character,' has been made in some books to read that such a girl should on all accounts be given to a man, howsoever bad he might be, and her forcible abduction is not at all a sin. In the Kashyapa text a similar manipulation of ten for twelve years is proved by the readings in different still extant books.

Taking a connected view of the whole subject, it will be seen that the authorities for the marriage of girls before eight years are obviously later additions and are limited to two obscure Smritis, of which full texts have not been preserved, and the Manu text quoted is evidently not to the point. The authorities who support the marriage at ten are similarly of no great weight, being based on a device by which the word Kanya has been distorted from its correct sense

to mean a girl of ten years. These authorities are eight in number. The largest preponderance of authorities is for twelve years as the limit. Properly speaking, these authorities lay down the limit at the period when a girl attains one of the signs of puberty —menstruation. But, even taking them as they have been since interpreted, the limit of twelve is supported by nearly thirty text-writers of repute, and as such it may be taken as representing the correct sense of the Smriti writers generally. It is also supported by the orthodox works on Medicine. Marriage at the twelfth year and consummation at the sixteenth appear thus to be the normal and authoritative ages for girls.

Here these observations must be brought to a close. Leaving the old Sutra period as too remote to influence the present condition of our population, no such objection can be urged to the limits laid down above, that is, twelve for girls' and eighteen or twenty for boys' marriages, and respectively, sixteen and twenty-five for consummation, as supported by the vast majority of the really authoritative texts. Those who seek reform in this matter do not desire to turn marriage into an affair of mutual love. They do not want to thrust aside the parental authority, or to diminish the sense of responsibility now felt They advocate a return from modern corruptions to the real sense of the old Smriti texts, and their request is, therefore, fairly entitled to consideration.

It is hoped that, after the present reaction subsides, men will come to see that, in clinging to the existing order of things, they are really setting

at naught the traditions of their own best days and the injunctions of their own Shastras, not to speak of all considerations of duty and expediency, and that, in calling for a change on the old lines, the reformers seek, not to revolutionise, but to lop off the diseased over-growth and excrescences, and to restore vitality and energy to the social organism.

This introduction to Mr. Dayaram Gidumal's book, written in 1887, ends here. Since then the hope expressed towards the end has been, to a large extent, realised. In the Rajputana Agency, the Walterkrita Hitakarini Subha, started about this time, has been carrying on, under the authority of the Rajput Rulers themselves, the work of gradually raising the age limit of marriage in the case of girls among the Rajputs, Charans and other castes. The age limit fixed upon is fourteen years, and from the reports of the last twelve years it is gratifying to note that the rules are being observed throughout these large territories. The example of Rajputana is being followed in Malwa and other parts of India.

In the South the Mysore Government passed in 1894, two Regulations for the prevention of early and old ill-assorted marriages. Two similar Bills were brought into the Legislative Council of the Madras Government, which proposed higher limits, and they were received favourably by the public. The Government of India, however, did not sanction the introduction of these Bills, apparently on the ground that public opinion was not yet sufficiently advanced to justify Government action. On the

Malabar Coast, a special Marriage Law has, however, found favour with the authorities, the effect of which cannot fail to produce healthy change in course of time. In the Baroda State, a measure for the prevention of infant marriages was thought of and a Draft Bill prepared, but owing to unforeseen difficulties the measure has been for the present laid aside. From the reports of the Indian Social Conference and of the various Social Reform Associations established in different provinces, it is clear that the marriageable ages of both girls and boys are being slowly raised, and in most of the caste-associations, the age of twelve for girls is being recognized as both desirable and obligatory. In the Bramha Samaja and the Arya Samaja this age has been still further raised to fourteen, in the one case by law and in the other by social opinion.

This advance made in the growth of public opinion will not fail before long to influence the action of Government, and it will be thus seen that the tendency towards lowering the age, which marked Puranic India, has been vigorously checked, and the tide has turned towards the revival of the most ancient salutary custom. In other respects, as will appear from subsequent chapters in this work, the condition of the widows is being ameliorated and the rights of female heirs are being more generally recognized on the lines laid down in the Vedic and the Epic times of our past history. There is then every reason to hope that in this respect the efforts of the reformers have not al-

together proved fruitless, and that a better time is dawning upon our horizon, when with the advance of female education and a better appreciation of the necessity of female emancipation, this great blot which has disfigured the social condition of India for the past thousand years or more, will be removed, and this country restored to the purity and elevation of its ancient grandeur.

III.

VEDIC AUTHORITIES FOR WIDOW MARRIAGE.

This Paper was written about 1870, when the Widow Re-marriage Controversy was at its height on this side of India. A great Council was held to discuss the question, under the presidency of His Holiness the Shankaracharya of these parts, at Poona.

Five learned Shastris were selected as Punch on the orthodox side and five others were selected on the Reform side. After nine days' discussion seven Shastris gave their opinions against and three in favour of the validity of re-marriage among the higher Castes. The late lamented Mr. Vishnu Shastri Pandit was the leader of the Reform party, and he and his friends have continued the celebrations of more re-marriages till now. About a hundred such marriages have taken place on this side of India, including the Presidency of Bombay, Central Provinces and the Berars. The popular excitement at the time was great, and one of the younger reformers, who had been defamed by a Shastri on the other side, brought a criminal complaint in the Court of Dr. A. G. Fraser, who was then the Railway Magistrate, at Poona. Dr. Fraser, in delivering the judgment, discussed the question, and it was deemed desirable to publish in an English form the principal Vedic and Puranic authorities, on which the Reformers relied in support of the validity of such marriages. This paper was published at the time and it exhaustively treats the whole subject. With this introduction the remarks that follow will be intelligible.—Editor.

DR. FRASER, in his learned judgment in the great Poona Defamation Case, has very clearly stated one of the grounds on which the advocates of re-marriage found their argument, that

re-marriage is permitted to the high-caste Hindu widow in this present age. As the learned Judge has so forcibly put it, in seeking this reform, the advocates are only endeavouring to restore the purer institutions of old times. People who are, however, not conversant with the merits of the question, may be misled by the special prominence given to one minor argument in the judgment, namely, that the central period of the Kali age, which is the Yuga proper—Kali-yuga not yet come, and to which alone the prohibitions against remarriage and other institutions can apply, has not yet commenced, and in fact, it will commence only after some thirty-one thousand years from this date. This special mention of it in the judgment may mislead people into thinking that the advocates have after all a very narrow basis to build their great argument upon, and it is deemed necessary that this false impression should be removed. So far from this argument being the only one the advocates ground their movement upon, the truth is that it occupied only a very secondary place in the late discussions at Poona. Dr. Fraser's attention was specially directed to it by reason of the fact that one of the accused, Vyankata Shástri, was the first to discover this line of argument, and he communicated it to the late lamented Vishnu Shástrí Pandit, the great apostle of this movement on our side of India, who made use of it in the late discussion at Poona, and there it stood its ground, for the orthodox disputants gave no answer to it. In itself, it is, however, a very lame argument, for it has no force

if the antagonist denies the validity of re-marriage even in the previous ages. This was the position taken up in the late discussions, although as it is a very unsafe one, the Pancha on the orthodox side in their joint decision wisely confined themselves to a statement, 'that by reason of the prohibitions which apply only to this Kali-yuga the practice of remarriage derives no countenance from the Shástras in this Kali age,' thereby impliedly admitting that in the previous ages, when the prohibitions did not exist, it was valid by the Shástras. This is a position about which there is a general consensus of opinion of all the authorities most opposed to the concession of this liberty to widows in this age. Once, however, it is admitted that re-marriage is authorized by the Shástras for the previous ages, Vyankata Shástri's argument comes to the assistance of the advocates of re-marriage much in the way of a plea in abatement. It simply asks both parties to put up their quarrels for the present, and for thirty-one thousand years more, at which distance of time alone the prohibitions will come into force, even allowing them to have any binding character.

The advocates of re-marriage are, however, in a position to make out a much stronger case. They are able to show in the first instance, that the re-marriage of widows has the positive authority of the Shástras, which Shástra authorities hold good for all the four Yugas, that is for all time. They are also able to establish, that, allowing the prohibitory texts for the Kali-yuga to be in force now, they

only restrict, and do not totally abrogate, the privilege enjoyed before, and that the widow's case falls under the class of the permitted circumstances of distress, in which it is lawful for a woman once married in due form, if she is unable to live a life of single devotion to her deceased husband's memory, to marry another man. Before we proceed to arrange the texts in due order, it is necessary to bear in mind that the Vedas, the Smritis, and the Puránas including Itihásas are the three-fold authorities which constitute our Law, and that the Veda texts over-ride all Smriti texts, and these latter over-ride all Puránas, in cases of direct conflict. When the former class of authorities are silent, then the latter are held binding and authoritative. The fiction is that all these Smriti texts proceeded from one and the same source, and they must all be reconciled together, a place being found for every text by force of the rules mentioned before, and also by a rule which allows to one institute a sort of presidential authority for its age controlling all others, if in direct conflict with it. The ordinary rules of interpretation are the same in Hindu law as in English law, that words are to be understood in their plain and grammatical meaning, that technical words are to be understood in their technical sense, that a general law is restricted in its operation by a special and particular one, and so on.

With these prefatory remarks, we enter upon the argument by which we hope to establish, that the Shástras common to the four ages permit or authorize the re-marriage of widows in all castes.

The only difficulty in the way of the right of the widow to marry again is the fact of her completed first marriage. All texts, therefore, which permit or authorize or prohibit an Udhá, a woman whose first marriage is perfected, to marry again under certain enumerated cases of distress, authorize or prohibit, *a fortiori*, the remarriage of widows. We shall now enumerate the texts in their order ; the Vedic texts first, the Smritis next, and after them the references in the Puránas and the Itihásas.

The Vedic Texts.

"Get up, oh woman, you who lie down by the side of this your lifeless husband. Come to this crowd of living people about you here, and may you become the wife of some person desirous of taking the hand of a widow in re-marriage."

This text occurs in Yajurveda, Taittiríya Aranyaka, Prapáthaka, VI Shloka 14. It occurs in all the other Vedas also, and is quoted in Ashwaláyana IV, 2, 58, and also in Baudháyana. In the course of the re-marriage discussions, this text was brought prominently to the notice of the late Pundit Vishnu Shastri by Dr. Bühler, who remarked that by a slight modification of two letters in one word, the text was made to countenance Satee, when it was really meant to persuade the widow to re-marriage. It is addressed to the wife of an Agnihotrí Brahmin deceased, who it seems had in old times by way of expressing her grief to lie down by the side of the corpse of her dead husband. Some near relation, says the Sutra, is to go to her after having recited

this text, and with the right hand raise her up, and bring her back to the crowd of her relations. This is an express text, and the translation as given is taken word for word from Sáyana's Commentary. If the wife of an Agnihotrí, who has even borne children to him, may marry, all objection to the re-marriage of helpless girl-widows is, *a fortiori*, removed.

'Therefore many wives to one husband there may be, but not many husbands *together* to one wife.'

This text occurs in Aitareya Bráhmana, III Panchika, 22 Khanda. The word *saha* (*together*) is very significant, no such word occurs in reference to the husband. It indicates that one woman cannot have many husbands together at the same time, impliedly sanctioning a second marriage when the first husband is dead and gone, &c.

'Your first husband was the moon, after him Gandharva became your husband. Agni was your third husband, and *those* born of men will be your fourth husband.'

This text occurs in Rigveda, VIII Ashtaka, and is recited on the occasion of marriage. Every girl is thus the wife successively of three superhuman beings, and what is the most significant part of the text, it says, *those* born of men (the word is in the plural number) will, altogether, as belonging to the order of human beings, be your fourth husband, impliedly giving sanction to successive marriages with human husbands.

'Oh Ashviní Kumára, where do you stay during the night? Where do you remain during the

day? Where do you dwell? What priest offering sacrifices invites you to the sacrifice as a widow attracts her second husband, or a wife attracts the man who is her husband to be present with her in her bed.'

This text occurs in Rigveda, VII. 8. 18. It is useful to show that in those archaic times, it was a common illustration to speak of widows blessed in the company of their second husbands. It was no more strange, no more disreputable, than for a wife to be happy in the embrace of her husband.

The mention of a *Didhishu* husband, that is, a man who marries a widow, or a woman who has been married once before, occurs in several places in the Vedas, as, for instance, in Taittiríya Bráhmaṇa, III, 4, 4, this passage occurs :—

'To the Goddess Arádhi, the sacrifice of a *Didhishu* husband is enjoined,' which passage contains an enumeration of human sacrifices to the different gods, and to some god, it seems, the sacrifice of a man who was married to a widow was specially acceptable, just as others liked children or women or old men, or even Brahmins learned in the Vedas.

Lastly, in a passage in Atharva Veda IX., 5, 27, which was communicated by Dr. F. Kielhorn, Professor of Oriental Languages, Deccan College, Poona, it is expressly said, that—

'She who having had a first husband subsequently marries another second husband, provided they two give an Aja Panchodana, they should not separate.'

The following verses are still more emphatic :—

'This second husband goes to the same place in heaven with the twice married woman, if he gives an Aja Panchodana, a kind of offering, and additional offerings to the sun.' IX. 2, 28.

'Such married couples after giving a cow with her calf, a bullock, a bed, clothes and gold, go to the best of heavens.' IX. 5, 29.

We fail to see what more man or woman can desire after this assurance.

Against all this mass of express permissive texts and incidental references (and incidental references have in the case of the Vedas the same force as express permission), against all this mass of evidence, there is nothing to be advanced on the other side except one solitary text.

'As about the same sacrificial post, two cords can be tied round, so one man may marry two wives. As one cord cannot be tied round two sacrificial posts, so one wife cannot marry two husbands.'

This text occurs in Black Yajurveda, Ashtaka VI. Adhyaya 6, Prapáthaka 4, Anuváka 3. After all, it comes to no more than this, that one woman cannot marry two husbands at the same time. For there is nothing to prevent one cord, when loosened from the first post to which it was tied, from being wound round another post. And that this is the correct rendering will be seen by comparison of this text with the second text translated before, where the significant word 'together' occurs.

Besides this solitary text, no Vedic text expressly prohibiting the marriage of widows, or the re-marriage of a girl once married in due form, has been discovered. The Benares Pandits have sought to infer indirect prohibition from the use of the word *Kanyá*, daughter, in the *mantras* which are recited at the time of the first marriage.

The father says to the bridegroom: 'I give this my *Kanyá*, daughter by pouring this water on your hand.' Now it is contended that the word Kanyá, daughter, should be restricted to the artificial sense of an 'unmarried daughter,' as if the relation of the father and mother to the girl, expressed by the word Kanyá or daughter, ceases at the time of the marriage, and ever after. This position, however, cannot be sustained, for the daughter remains Kanyá to her father, inherits as such, sits in mourning as such, offers oblations to him as such as long as she lives, and long after through her sons. Moreover, there are innumerable texts in which the word Kanyá is applied to a married daughter. The Vedic texts recited at the time of the first marriage, as they contain no words of limitation, apply with equal effect to any second marriage when the father gives away his widowed daughter. The father in giving away his daughter does not part with all his rights over her. He only creates other rights and other relations, good for the time they stand. Just as when a prince gives land in service Inam, the grantee is the proprietor so long as he lives, or has issue capable of carrying into effect the objects for which

the gift is made, and the prince, on failure of issue, may make a second gift of the land, the gift of a daughter in marriage is a conditional one, and not an out-and-out gift. The fourfold objects for which the gift of a girl is made are defeated by the husband's death, leaving the girl widowed behind him, desolate and hopeless, and the father has every right by the analogy to make a second gift of his daughter or *Kanyá*. We have thus shown that the Vedas, the highest authority on matters of law, recognise re-marriage as a permitted thing even to the wife of an Agnihotrí, and that she should be allowed to remain as wife, and that it was an ordinary thing in those days to speak of the felicity of widows and their second husbands.

II.

SMRITI AUTHORITIES FOR WIDOW MARRIAGE.

Vyása in his Smriti 1, 4, says: 'When a conflict is seen between the Vedas, the Smritis and the Puránas, then the Vedas are the authority. In case of conflict between the latter two, the Smritis are to be preferred.' As regards preference among the Smriti texts themselves, there are two rules of construction. First, 'If one set of Institutes contradicts the other, then there is option'—(Mitákshara, Commentary on Yájnavalkya, v. 5). And, again, each age has its presiding Institute. Secondly, 'In the Kritayuga the Institutes of Manu, in Tretá the Institutes of

Gautama, in Dvápára the Institute of S'ankha and Likhita, and in the Kali age, the Institutes of Parásara, are to be preferred' in cases of conflict. With the help of these rules of interpretation, we shall now enumerate the Smriti texts in their order, continuing the enumeration of the authoritative texts which permit the re-marriage of a woman whose marriage has once been completed.

Manu,—' In the case of five afflictions, namely, when the husband has gone abroad and no tidings of him have been obtained, when the husband is dead, when the husband becomes a Sanyási, recluse, when the husband is a eunuch, and lastly when the husband being guilty of the five great sins, becomes a *Patita*, that is, one for whose offence no atonement is prescribed; in these five afflictions another husband is permitted by the Institutes to women.'

This is explicit enough. This text does not occur in the Institutes as they are extant, but Madhaváchárya cites and extracts it as from Manu, and it is found in the Nárada Smriti which professes to be an epitome of Manu Smriti, and it is acknowledged by all that it is a text of Manu. The fact is, it is the law of the dissolution of the marriage tie which this text expounds. As the modern law allows seven years' unheard-of absence as a justification for re-marriage, these Institute-writers did the same. A long unheard-of absence, death, imbecility, renunciation of the world or becoming a monk, and lastly excommunication for great offences, these are all valid justifications for the dissolution of the marriage tie

by natural law, for in all these cases the great objects of marriage are defeated.

Narada.—This same text occurs in Nárada Smriti IX. 12, 97.

The verses which come immediately after the text in this Smriti explain the first word of the text, *Nashte*, that is, gone abroad and not heard of. Those verses also explain the length of the period during which a wife should wait for her absent husband of whom no tidings are received. 'A Brahmin wife should wait for eight years for her absent husband; if she has never borne children, she should wait for four, and then accept another husband.' In a similar manner, periods of six and three years, and four and two years, are prescribed for women of the Kshatriya and Vaishya castes, respectively. No period is prescribed for a Shudra's wife. 'In all cases when tidings of his being alive are received, the period of absence should be double. This is the view of Prajápati about absent husbands. If after the period prescribed, the woman associates with another husband, there is no sin in the act.' About the other afflictions similar uncertainty does not exist, for the period is certain when the disability commences and the Smriti is silent.

Narada.—'In the case of a husband belonging to one of the four different sorts of eunuchs, their wives should abandon them *though they have cohabited with them*, IX. 12, 15. In the case of two others of the imbecile class, *A'kshipta* and *Moghabija*, another husband is permitted to their wives after six months' trial, though they have cohabited with them.

In the case of a seventh kind of imbecile, who feels passion only in the company of women other than his wife, the wife should marry another husband.' These texts are important, for they afford a sure index of the meaning attached by the writers of the Institutes to the main text quoted before. In both the texts the word used is *Pati*, and one of the arguments in the recent discussion at Poona, and in fact the chief argument on the other side was, that the second word Pati, occurring in the main texts, should be rendered into a protector, which meaning is plainly out of place here. The texts translated in this and the preceding para. remove all doubt on this head. The latter come immediately after the main text, and in them the same word Pati is used all through in a manner where it can be understood as husband and husband alone. The limitation of the period of absence is different in the case of a woman who has borne children from that in the case of her who has borne none from her first husband. Then in the texts about eunuchs, though the first husband has lived and cohabited as Pati, *Kritepi Patikarmáni*, yet as he is incapable of Patikarma, the functions of a Pati, another Pati, or husband, is prescribed. This settles all doubts as to the sense in which the word is to be understood, that it is a perfect Pati, and not a candidate proposed to be a husband that is spoken of in these and other texts.

Moreover, in the text from Manu and Nárada bout the five afflictions, translated above, the first

word Pati being understood in its proper sense as husband, it is not possible to give any other meaning to the second word Pati. The same woman, who has lost her first Pati, husband, is, according to the text, to take another Pati. If by this were meant that she was to seek a *protector* he cannot be *Anya*, another, Pati. He can be *Anya*, another, only with reference to the first. Besides, a mere *protector* can be of no help in remedying the affliction which the loss or incapacity of the first husband brings with it. A husband who is a eunuch does not become unfit to be a protector of his wife, for he can protect and maintain her most comfortably.

This same word *Pati* is, moreover, not an ordinary undefined word. Nearly all the Institute writers have defined it. Manu, Nárada, Yama, Wasishtha, Brihaspati, and others have said :—'Not by the pouring of water on the bridegroom's hand, nor by the offer by word of mouth, is the bridegroom called Pati, husband of the *kanya*, daughter. It is after the ceremony of taking hold of the hand that, at the seventh step, which the bride and bridegroom take together, the bridegroom becomes Pati of a certainty.'

This definition of the word ought to silence all doubts as to the interpretation to be put upon the word Pati in the texts from Manu and Nárada quoted before. Together they establish that a second marriage is lawful to a woman under the enumerated five afflictions, which, in the jurisprudence of all other nations, have been held to justify dissolution

of the marriage tie with consequent liberty to marry again.

To proceed with the argument:—

Manu, IX. 176.—'She who is abandoned by her husband or is a girl widow, if she has never cohabited with a man, she is fit to be married to a second husband. If she leaves her first husband, and returns back without having cohabited with another man, the first husband may go through a second ceremony of marriage with her.'

Besides the five cases of distress before mentioned, Manu in the text adds two more, only with the qualification, that she should be free from impure cohabitation.

Wasishtha, XVII.—'On the death of the husband of a girl-wife, who has been merely married with the recital of the Mantras, but has never cohabited with her husband, she is fit to be given in marriage again.'

Prajapati—'If she is a girl widow or has been abandoned by her husband by force or violence, then she is fit to be taken as a wife by any man upon a second ceremony of marriage.'

Narada—'Even if the marriage rites have all been completed, if the daughter has not cohabited with the husband, she is fit to be married again. She is like an unmarried daughter, *kanya,* or as though no marriage was celebrated.'

Shatatapa—'A husband from a low family or of bad disposition is not fit to be united in marriage to a daughter. Though the Mantras, marriage texts, have been repeated, that is, though the marriage rites have been performed, they are not

binding. If she has not cohabited with him, she should be wrested back from him by force, and given in marriage to another who is qualified.'

The last two texts and others to the same effect are of importance. They show what importance is attached to the complete performance of marriage rites. They are not allowed to work injustice even when the first husband is living; and *a fortiori*, it cannot have been intended that they should stand in the way of the widow after his death.

Katyayana—'If after having married the girl, the husband dies or disappears, the girl may marry again after an interval of six months.'

Katyayana—'If the husband is of another caste, or a *patita*, or a eunuch, or of bad disposition, or belongs to the same Gotra or clan, or is a slave, or is afflicted with chronic malady, in all such cases, a Kanya, daughter, though the marriage rites have all been performed, is fit to be given in marriage to another person with clothing and ornaments.'

This text is important as it shows that a husband who is afflicted with chronic sickness does not stand in the way of a second marriage. *A fortiori*, a husband dead cannot put in a claim to keep the girl a widow all her life.

Wasishtha—'If he comes of a low family or is evil-disposed, or is a eunuch, or is *patita*, or is afflicted with epilepsy, or is diseased, or is an actor, or belongs to the same Gotra, clan, in all these cases, the daughter, though given in marriage, may be wrested back and given again.'

Many other texts may be cited, but these will suffice. There are thus no less than eight different Institutes which permit the re-marriage, under peculiar circumstances of distress, of a girl once married in due form. Of course, they do not all enumerate the same particular justifications, but five of them expressly allow re-marriage in the case of the husband's death, and the others, by implication or by analogy. By way of summing up, it may be stated, that there are no less than seventeen afflictions upon the happening of which different Institutes permit a second marriage to a girl once married in due form.

All the texts cited hitherto are texts which have efficacy for all the *Yugas*. They may well be regarded satisfactorily to establish that as in the Vedas, so in the Institutes, so far from there being no recognition of the validity of re-marriage, there are express provisions for no less than seventeen cases in which remarriage is justifiable. Against this mass of authorities, what have the other side to show ?—not a single express text which negatives this permission. Manu, in his chapter on the duties of a widowed woman who wishes to live in single devotion to the memory of her deceased husband, says very naturally, in the exaggerated way so common with him, that :—'The widow should emaciate her body by subsisting on fruits, roots, and flowers; let her not when her lord is deceased, even pronounce the name of another man.'

Moreover :—'The widow who from a desire of children proves unchaste to her husband, and has unlaw-

ful intercourse with another, brings disgrace on herself, and will not attain the place in heaven where her husband goes. The children begotten on her by any other than her husband is not her progeny nor the progeny of such begetter.' In respect of chaste women, this other is nowhere spoken of as her second husband.

These are the only texts which have been urged on the other side, and, strange to say, relied on by a few European scholars of some authority on points of law. They all lay down the line of conduct which a widow who wishes to live a life devoted to the memory of her deceased husband should observe. They only prohibit illegitimate connections. The advocates of remarriage have never maintained that a woman after her husband's death should not live a life of single devotion to her deceased husband. They freely allow that such heroic self-sacrifice to a sentiment is peculiarly meritorious. But a woman who cannot live this species of life, a woman who is widowed when a girl, before she knew who was her husband, before she knew what her duties as wife were —surely such a woman cannot practise this devotion. It is on behalf of such women chiefly, that this reform is a peremptory crying want, and to require them to live a life of devotion in the manner Manu prescribes is a simple mockery of all religion and justice. And after all, the woman is directed not to prove unchaste, not to have unlawful intercourse with another. To the same effect is another passage from Manu often quoted:—

'To whomsoever the father or the brother with the consent of the father gives her in marriage, she

should serve him while living, and not prove unchaste to him even after his death.' The word used is *Langhayet*, over-step, which Kulluka Bhatta, the commentator, interprets to mean *Vyabhicharet* have unlawful intercourse.

Manu, again :—'A girl can only be given away once in marriage. Three things occur once only. Inheritance from the same ancestor can only take place once, a daughter can only be given away once, and the same thing can be given away to another once only.' By the analogy of the illustrations, it is apparent, that this text only determines the finality of the first marriage as a general rule, except where other texts intervene by way of exceptions. Except in places where these texts, intervening, allow a second marriage, the girl, it is admitted, can only be given away once. The exceptions where remarriage is allowable are as much law as the rule. Otherwise the host of texts which sanction forcible separation, which justify the reversal of a gift, which allow a second gift, would become simply meaningless. This is all that has been adduced on the other side against the positive permission of the Institutes. The general rule, no doubt, is that a first marriage is final, but the very Institutes which prescribe this finality, enumerate seventeen different exceptions to this general rule, in which second marriage is allowed to women as a permitted resource, not of equal merit with the life of a devoted widow, but still of legal force and efficacy. Much indeed has been made by the Benares Pandits of a text of Yájnavalkya which

enumerates the qualifications of a girl who should be selected for a wife :—

'He who has never had sexual intercourse, should, after having completed his studies, marry a well-qualified girl, one who has not been given away in marriage to another before, who is handsome, who does not belong to his *Sapindas*, near relations, and who is younger in years, who has no disease, who has brothers, who is not of the same Gotra, who is not within the prohibited degrees both on the father's and mother's side, whose ancestors for ten generations have been well known, who comes of a distinguished family learned in the Vedas, prosperous, and without any defect or hereditary disease. The bridegroom should also possess these same qualifications, be of the same caste, proficient in the Vedas, of potency proved with care, young, intelligent, and liked by all.'

The qualifications of both the girl and the boy are enumerated at greater length in Manu and the other Institutes. But it is plain from the quotation that all these circumstances are mentioned as Arthawada, recommendations only. They are not essentials. For, if it were so, no man could marry a second wife on the death of the first, for the text requires that he should be one who has had no intercourse with woman before, a consequence which will not at all be welcomed by those who so strenuously assert that a virgin girl alone can contract legal marriage. So much in the way of answer to these objections.

From these quotations it will appear that both in the Vedas and in the Smritis which are common

to all the four ages, there are no less than seventeen circumstances of distress under which a woman married once may lawfully contract a second marriage, and there is not a single express text negativing the permission given in these excepted cases. For, this express negation is essential to establish the opponent's case. The advocates and the opponents both allow that a first marriage is, as a rule, final and binding; the advocates, however, further assert that the law allows exceptions to the rule in the enumerated cases of affliction which form so many justifications for second marriage. It is for the other side to show that there are other texts which negative the force of these express permissions. Mere general recommendations or assertions of the finality of first marriages will not be good answer against definite exceptions allowing re-marriage.

The proposition then is established that in these enumerated instances, re-marriage is permitted by the Smriti texts. It should be borne in mind that these are the only Smritis which speak anything either way. The others are simply silent.

To come now to our own *Yuga*; we meet at the threshold, for the first time, with general negations of this permission accorded by the unanimous consensus of all the Smritis in the three first ages. Re-marriage, along with several other practices, is prohibited in the Kali Yuga by the following texts. Most of them, it is to be observed, are Puránas, of inferior validity to Smritis, and a few, which profess to be Smritis, are the works of inferior authors,

whose names are not enumerated among the leading Institute writers.

These negative texts are :—

Kratu—'The practice of begetting a son from the husband's brother after the husband's death, the re-marriage of a daughter who has been once given away in marriage, killing of cows in sacrifices, and becoming a Sanyási, these four things are prohibited in Kaliyuga.'

Now, it is to be observed upon this, that the last practice, so far from being abolished in Kali, is at present in force, and His Holiness the Shankarácharya himself comes within this exception. If the text is to hold good against one forbidden practice, notwithstanding the generality of its words, it must hold good for the same reason against the other.

A'di Purana—'The re-marriage of a girl once married in due from, the excess portion due to the eldest brother, the killing of cows, begetting a son on a brother's wife, and becoming a Sanyási, are prohibited in Kaliyuga.'

Brahan-Naradiya Purana—'The gift in re-marriage to another of a girl once given away in marriage is prohibited in the Kaliyuga.'

A'ditya Purana, Brahma Purana, Galava and **Devala**,—the latter two inferior Institute writers, whose Institutes have perished as entire works, and are only extant in rare quotations by modern authors, contain the same or similar prohibitions.

Now, it is to be observed with regard to them all, that they are all texts of a very general sort. None of them contemplate the particular case of the

re-marriage of a widow. Nobody ever maintained, that, *as a rule*, a girl once married in due form might be given away in marriage to another. Even in the previous three *Yugas*, it is only under special circumstances, which the authors of the Institutes have been careful to enumerate, it is only on the occurrence of those particular contingencies, that re-marriage is allowed. Such particular permissions are not interfered with by general texts prohibiting the re-marriage of a girl once married in due form, a position which nobody ever disputes. None of them, moreover, contemplating the case of a widow, negatives the permission accorded by the texts common to all the *Yugas* quoted before. The fact, however, that so many writers of the Puránas, who lived comparatively in very modern times, thought it necessary expressly to prohibit the practice, shows convincingly that, as they understood it, the practice was very common in the previous *Yugas*, and they wished to restrain the liberty of archaic times. This is the strongest argument in favour of those who maintain that the re-marriage of widows had the express countenance of the Shástras in the previous *Yugas*, and was in extensive use and favour in those days. However, to proceed with the argument, these texts quoted above being merely general prohibitions against the re-marriage of a girl once married in due form,—a position which nobody ever contended against, do not come into conflict with the particular texts, as we have ascertained it before, which allowed liberty to women to re-marry under certain enumerated

circumstances, and among others, on the death of the husband. Besides, most of them being only found in the Puránas, they have no force against express Smriti texts, by a well-known rule of construction.

Allowing, however, to these texts an operation in excess of the force of the words used, it is to be borne in mind that the leading Smriti for the Kaliyuga,—the production too, of one who is ranked among the most authoritative Institute writers,—expressly sanctions the practice of re-marriage in five enumerated cases. As if to anticipate all objections, Paráshara, in his celebrated texts, simply reproduces the texts of Manu and Nárada quoted before, and, by thus expressly re-establishing these old Institutes as the law for this age, removes all manner of objections out of the way.

Paráshara's Institute, it will be seen, is intended expressly for the Kaliyuga, and this presidency of his Institute, his authority to control all other conflicting Smritis and *a fortiori* all Puránas, as a matter of course, has been acknowledged by all the commentators, among others, by the author of Nirnaya Sindhu, by Nilkantha, the author of the Mayukhas—(see Sanskára Mayukha and Samaya Mayukha), and by Shankar Bhatta, the author of the Dwaita Nirnaya. This right of controlling all other conflicting texts has been allowed by all orthodox writers, and it is their acknowledgment of this supreme right of Paráshara to dictate the law for the Kali age, that has forced them to distort the meaning of this text in some

way or other which will not conflict with their favourite prejudices.

It is to be remarked, then, that this text of Paráshara reviving or re-enacting for this age the old law is very pregnant with suggestions. In the first place, it is expressly intended for the Kaliyuga in which, moreover, it has precedence over all others. Secondly, it enumerates the particular cases of affliction when re-marriage is allowed. Thirdly, it refers to the first three castes, for the word *Pravrajita* means a *Sanyási*, and only members of the higher castes can aspire to the dignity. Fourthly, it permits re-marriage, though the first marriage has been in every sense completed. 'On the death, &c., of the first *Pati*, husband, his widow may marry a second husband or *Pati*.' Now nobody can become a *Pati*, or husband, by any ceremony short of the Saptapadi, walking the seven steps together, which is the binding and concluding rite. In these four respects, this text is special in its permission and authorization. None of the prohibitory texts has this character. They simply contain a general prohibition which in no way conflicts with the spirit of Paráshara's text. The late Mr. Vithobá Anná of Karáda, who took part in the discussion of 1869, had collected two new texts from inferior Smriti writers, which seem to be more particular than those mentioned before. They are as follow :—

Babhravya—'After the completion of the marriage ceremony, if the separation takes place of the husband, wise men should not give away their daughters in marriage again in the Kali age.'

Wayu Samhita—'Whether the husband is living or dead, his wife should not beget children from her husband's brother. In this Kali Yuga, a girl who has been married once in due form should not be accepted in second marriage.'

Now, in the first place, these texts are fragmentary ones, the books where they are to be found do not exist; secondly, they are the works of very inferior Smriti writers and not to be pitted against Manu, Nárada, Paráshara, Wasishtha, &c.; thirdly, they are not so special in their particulars as the text of Paráshara which, therefore, controls them; fourthly, that even if they were so special in their particular circumstances, the superior efficacy of Paráshara as the law-giver of the Kali age must prevail; and fifthly, that even if it did not prevail, this conflict of two Smritis can only create an optional duty. It will be thus seen that those who advocate the Shastraical validity of re-marriage are able to give a very satisfactory account of the prohibitory texts which apply to this Kali Yuga. At the best, giving them the most extensive operation, they only restrict the liberty given in the previous Yugas in seventeen different cases; they restrict this liberty to five occasions out of the seventeen, and by this method of reconciliation, all the authorities are reconciled. This great argument of the reconciliation of the texts was first laboured out by the late lamanted Pandit Ishvarachandra Vidyaságara, and has stood its ground against all attacks notwithstanding the great ventilation of the subject since. By his research and originality

and the noble devotion of his life's best days and all that is prized in human possessions to the promotion of this great emancipation of the women of his race, Pandit Ishvarachandra has become a household name for all that is great and good in human nature throughout India, and a potent influence for good in the ages to come.

The proposition then stands true beyond all possibility of dispute that there is express authority in the Shástras permitting the re-marriage of a girl once married in due form, on the happening of certain defined contingencies, and that none of the prohibitory texts do more than restrict the greater liberty allowed to women in the previous Yugas.

There is one solitary and suspicious text in A'shwaláyana Smriti, which requires a brief answer.

'If a twice-born marries a widow from ignorance, as soon as he knows her character, he should abandon her and do penance.'

Now about this text, it is to be remarked that A'shvaláyana Smriti is not intended specially for the Kali Yuga, and even if it has force, it cannot have more force now than it had in the previous Yugas, against the whole current of express permissive texts, especially against Paráshara, whose Institute is the supreme authority for the age; and lastly, that the passage quoted from Atharva Veda, which prohibits a husband from abandoning a widow so married, upsets all the little force this text might otherwise claim.

There is thus express permission in the Vedas, express permission in the Smriti law common to all

the Yugas, and express permission in the special law for the Kali Yuga; and it has been shown that all the prohibitory texts are mostly very vague and general, and so far from abrogating, only restrict the number of contingencies when re-marriage is permitted by law. And such of them as are more particular are controlled by the Paráshara text, first because it is so special, and secondly, because it is the binding authority for the age.

In furtherance of this great conclusion, the argument from the texts first formulated by Vyankata Shástri comes opportunely to aid. The demarcation line which separates one Yuga from another is only an imaginary one. The theory is that the race is gradually retrograding and degenerating in virtue, in capacity for austere endurance, and length of life, and as the old law would press too hard upon these decaying generations, and old permissions would be abused into wild license, it was deemed necessary to provide a graduated scale of duties and observances, some common to all ages, and other specially intended for each age. The world's duration is in all twelve thousand years of the gods, which is divided into four Yugas, and one Yuga is made to slide into another, the intervals being called Sandhyá and Sandhyánsha, or junction periods of the Yugas. To provide for this gradual retrogression, a graduated central period of four, three, two and one thousand celestial years is in the Bhágvata Purána and the Mahábhárata, assigned to the four Yugas in succession, supplemented in each case by a morning and an

evening twilight, lasting for as many hundred years each, constituting in all twelve thousand years of the gods, as the duration of the world. The prohibitions and the observances prescribed for each particular age have effect only in the central periods, and in the junction or twilight periods, the law of the previous Yugas may be followed—Bhágvata Purána. The human year consisting of 360 days is a celestial day, whence a celestial year is equal to 360 mundane years. The duration of the Kali Yuga being one thousand celestial years, its morning twilight or transition period is, as will be seen from the above, one thousand divine years, that is thirty-six thousand human years, and as, according to the received mode of calculation, it is only five thousand human years since Kali commenced, there are yet thirty-one thousand human years to run before the Kali *Sandhyá* or morning twilight will end. By that time, it is thought, caste distinctions will be obliterated, the Vedas will not be studied, the Ganges will lose its sanctity, and the gods become silent. As long as these evil prognostics are not realised, so long the practices prohibited in the Kali Yuga may be observed. And the orthodox commentators base their justification for the continuance of ascetic retirement, the domestic worship of sacred fire, and many other rites, on this ground alone. Re-marriage being like them admittedly a valid practice in the previous ages, it continues to be a lawful rite now and for thirty-one thousand years more, when it is hoped there will be little occasion to dispute its validity.

IV.

TRACES OF WIDOW MARRIAGE IN THE PURANAS AND IN MORE MODERN TIMES.

To proceed with our main arguments, we think it has been satisfactorily established that the re-marriage of widows among the twice-born classes is a practice known and recognized in Hindu law, and that whether we look to the Vedas or the Smriti or Institute writers, the widow remarrying has the legal status of a wife. This is clearly established by the fact that the Paunarbhava son, that is son born to a widow, who has married, occupies a very prominent place in all ancient books of law. Except in very archaic times, as illustrated by the references from the Vedas quoted before, it is likely that the practice of re-marriage, however, may not have been very popular, as is but natural with a people who habitually married very late in life, and prided themselves upon a life of the severest austerity. This observation holds good of the Brahmin caste only. The warrior-caste, being more free to enjoy the sweets of life, seem not to have been equally averse from such indulgence; and this brings us to the Puránas and the Itihásás, the latest addition to our Shástra lore. A few studious scholars have investigated this subject from a desire to remove one great stumbling-block out of the way of the favourable reception by the orthodox population of this innovation, by showing that the practice of re-marriage was common in past

times, in the time of their wise ancestors, and accordingly, that it may be revived in our present age. The industry of those who have searched for such illustrations in the Purána myths has succeeded in discovering three well-attested instances.

The first on the list is the re-marriage of *Ulúpi*, the widowed daughter of a patriarch of the Nága tribe, who, on the death of her first husband, was given in marriage by her father to the famous Arjuna, the hero of the Mahábhárata story. Ulúpi, in so many distinct words, is described to have become one of Arjuna's many wives, the son she bore to him is emphatically described to be his legitimate-born son, and not one of the inferior sorts of sons. The entire narrative in the Mahábhárata, and still more emphatically in Jaimini's continuation, corroborates this assertion.

The second illustration is from the story of *Nala and Damayantí*. The latter Princess, after having been abandoned by her husband in the forest, found her way after much suffering to her father's house. While there, she bided in hope for some time, but could get no news of her absent lord. Thereupon, with the consent of her mother, she contrived a plan for finding out her long-lost Nala. She secured the services of a learned Brahmin to advertise to all the neighbouring princes that she was going to have a second Swayamvara, and make a choice of a husband for herself, in consequence of the disappearance and probable death of Nala, her first husband. This Brahmin carried his message to the

court of the king of Ayodhyá, with whom Nala had sought shelter in the disguise of an obscure charioteer. The king of Ayodhyá, on hearing this news, prepared to go to the Swayamvara, and Nala drove the chariot for him with extraordinary speed, the secret of which was known to him only. This display of skill and certain other circumstances led to his subsequent recognition, whereupon all idea of the second marriage was given up. This story has its importance, for it shows the received opinion among the people of the day, to whom such an invitation did not appear in any heinous light, did not appear more extraordinary than the invitation to the first marriage. That a princess like Damayanti, so renowned for her devotion to her husband, should, with the consent of her parents, try to discover the whereabouts of her lost husband by this stratagem, at once shows that re-marriage did not strike people in those times as an abomination, but as an ordinary commonplace occurrence.

The third illustration is from Padma Purána, the story of the unfortunate daughter of the king of Benares, who was married no less than twenty times, it being her peculiar misfortune that as soon as the marriage rites were all performed, the husband so married died, but though this happened over and over again, the father, with the consent of the sage Brahmins of his court, solemnly gave her in marriage, as often as she became a widow. The emphatic words used in the text preclude the supposition contended for by some disputants, that the several

husbands were removed by death before, and not after, the binding marriage rites had been celebrated.

Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar, in his search of Jain Manuscript, came across a work of the eleventh century called the Dharma Parikshá, of which the copy seen by the learned Doctor belonged to the sixteenth century. This ancient Jain work gives an account of a Brahmin, who studied at Benares till he reached his thirty-fifth year, and when he came back to his village found it difficult to secure a virgin girl in marriage by reason of his poverty. He thereupon went to a Jain Pandit, who advised him to marry a widow. When the Brahmin demurred to the proposal, the Jain savant referred him to the Parashara text, which in the Jain Manuscript was indeed in a slightly different form. The Parashara text as we now find it in the Shastras is,

नष्टे मृते प्रव्रजिते, Nashté Mrité Prawrajite
क्लीबेच पतिते पतौ. Klibécha patité *Patau.*

In the Jain Manuscript the text reads:—

पत्यौ प्रव्रजिते क्लीबे *Patyau* Prawrajité Klibe
प्रनष्टे पतिते मृते. Pranashté Patité Mrité.

The other half of the shloka is the same both in the Jain and in the old Sanskrit Parashara Text. The value of this discovery is that the difficulty created by the Poona Shastris, was about the incomplete form of the word 'पतौ' Patau now obviated by the Jain rendering 'पत्यौ' Patyau which, t will be seen, mentions the same five occasions of distress when re-marriage is allowed to a widow.

The story in the Jain chronicle says that the Brahmin married the widow and led a very happy prosperous life.

These are the only instances as yet discovered in the mythic Puránas and Itihásás. In a book of the last century, called Smrityarthasára, or an epitome of the Smritis, the compiler mentions without comment or disapproval that 'a girl given by word of promise may be given away in second marriage; that some maintain that before the Saptapadi rite is performed, a girl may be given away to another in second marriage; that others maintain that she may be given away after the rite is performed till the days of puberty, that some texts maintain she may be given away though she has had sexual intercourse with her first husband, and even after she conceives a child from her first husband.' This statement comes from entirely orthodox quarters, and has an interest which the student of history alone can understand. This shows satisfactorily what orthodox writers thought of the Shástra texts in the last century. It is a matter of history also that in several Brahmin communities in Cutch, Sind, and Guzerat, the practice of *Páta* marriages still obtains.

We know there are those who are not satisfied with such few traces, and would fain have many more. To them we have a word or two to say. The position taken up by the advocates is, that the revival of the Institution sought for is peremptorily required in the present circumstances of our society. A strong base, however, of legitimacy must be

established before the mass of Hindu society can be asked to help their unfortunate daughters and sisters out of their unmerited and irremediable misery. To ask them to change national institutions upon grounds of expediency is a thing they cannot understand, and will not tolerate. When this legitimate basis is once established beyond all danger of being shaken, to crave for more examples of the practice is very unreasonable, in respect of an institution which is professedly an innovation in every practical sense of that word, though it may be true, for the matter of that, that it is a renovation or a return to the manners of old and purer times.

Popular conscience has never been dead to the claims of this subject on its attention. In two recorded instances, the claims of the womankind for kinder consideration under this misfortune moved the souls of the great Jayasing, the Maharaja of Jeypoor, and of the famous Pandit Appayá Dixit to rebel against custom. On both these occasions, however, the dead inertia of ages at last prevailed against the promptings of nature. In more modern times, the question was raised in our own part of the country, by the famous Parshuráma Panta Bháu Patvardhan, the coadjutor of Lord Cornwallis in the wars of Tippoo Sultán, and the last of the terrible leaders of Maratha conquering hosts. He had a young daughter, and Durgábái, we believe, was her name. She was given in marriage at a very tender age, varying in different accounts from five to nine years, to a scion of a Joshi family. The young

bridegroom died of small-pox fever, while yet the marriage festivities were not over. The brave old father was so moved by this calamitous termination of his fond hopes to see his daughter blessed, that he wrote to the Peishwa at Poona, tendering his resignation of his command of the army, and expressing a determination to retire from the world. The Peishwa's Durbar, who knew the value of the man, and felt with him in his sufferings, assured him that he need not despair, for they would try to find a remedy to comfort him in his great affliction. The Shankarácháryа of the time was then referred to, and his kind offices were prayed for by the men in power. The old man had some grudge against the Bháu, and he answered that he would have nothing to advise in the way of giving comfort to a man who was worse than a *Yavan*. The Peishwa's Durbar, it is said, then wrote to the Benares Pandits, the Pandits of the Poona court having shown a perverse disposition. These Benares Pandits sent a letter of assent, in which, moved by the extreme infancy of the bride, and also by the consideration that the cause of Brahmin supremacy would be greatly checked by the withdrawal of the Bháu from public affairs, they found out that the Shástras favour the re-marriage of girls like Durgábái, widowed in infancy. On receipt of this letter of the Benares Pandits, the Shankarácháryа of the day thought it wise to yield, and the Poona Pandits were about to follow suit, for none dared to come in the way of the lion of the Deccan, as he was called. The

astute Pandits, however, waited on Parshuráma Panta Bháu's wife, and through her they gained their object. The mother expressed her readiness to bear with her daughter's bereavement, rather than see a new innovation introduced. Parshuráma Panta Bháu was much surprised at this resolution and yielded the point to the Pandits, declaring that he insisted upon it solely with a view to console his wife, and if she wished for no consolation, he had nothing more to say. Thus the matter ended. The above account of the affair represents accurately what happened on the occasion. It is taken *verbatim* from one who has himself seen the original papers in the possession of the family, in his capacity as one of its old servants in charge of the records. The account is, moreover, corroborated by the received understanding of all the old people in the Patvardhana service, who have often said to us that they felt much surprised to find that the opponents of re-marriage still had anything left to say after the solemn settlement of the question in Parshuráma Panta Bháu's time.

We have said all that is necessary to be said in illustration of the main theme of these observations The agitation of the question for the last thirty years has placed the legitimacy of the movement beyond all danger, and the Poona discussions brought this fact out in a most prominent manner. No question was raised there as to the Vedic texts, though special attention was drawn to the point; the argument of Vyankata Shástrí was not even noticed. The Smriti texts were jumbled up together, the main text,

common to Manu, Nárada, and Paráshara, was twisted and tortured in all manner of ways, some of them most ridiculously absurd, and absolutely no attempt was made to show that the only true and natural meaning of the text was not the one contended for by the advocates. In fact this point was allowed, but it was urged that if the texts were so understood, it would come in conflict with others, as if this was not the most common thing in the world with these Smriti writers. The orthodox disputants made a mess of their case, and though the majority of the Panch gave utterance to a foregone conclusion, the truth cannot be so hidden in these days. Thanks to the labours of the late lamented Pandit Vishnu Shastri, and more recently of the late Mr. Madhavdas Raghunathdas and Rao Bahadur Wamanrao Mahadev Kolhatkar, the movement has spread, till at the present day more than a hundred marriages have taken place among the Gujerathi and the Deccani population of the Bombay Presidency, the Central Provinces and the Berars. In the Madras Presidency Pandit Vireshlingum Pantulu has achieved a similar success, nearly thirty marriages having been celebrated in those parts. In Bengal during Pandit Ishwarchandra's life-time many marriages took place, and though since his death there has been more coldness shewn in this matter, the labours of Babu Shashipada Bannerji have kept up the public interest in this subject. In the Punjab, Dewan Santa Ram took the lead and about thirty marriages have been celebrated in those parts. In all India over three hundred marriages

have thus been celebrated, and the movement may be said to have survived the attack of the orthodox opposition. People are being reconciled to this renovation of the old custom, and persecution is becoming, not obsolete, but more bearable. The Advocates of Reform may well claim to have secured a healthy change in the public feeling in this matter.

IV.

STATE LEGISLATION IN SOCIAL MATTERS.

THE discussions raised by the publication of Mr. Malabari's Notes on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood have been notably distinguished for the warmth and freshness of light thrown upon many of our most cherished social institutions. As is usual in the case of all discussions on social evils, much declamation and invective have been employed on both sides, to supply the place of calm and critical investigation, and the merits of the questions really at issue have been obscured by clouds of words and figures, and empty boasts of self-satisfied complacency. These questions really reduce themselves to two points of inquiry, first, whether or not the institutions assailed produce on the whole more of evil than good, and secondly, whether the evil that is in them admits of a speedier and more effective remedy than is implied in the advice of those who would let things alone, and would drift along with the

stream of events, but neither exert themselves, nor permit others to make an effort, to regulate the current and make it run steadier and stronger in the desired direction. On the first point, taking the general sense of those who have spoken out on both sides, there appears to be a general agreement. The dispute here is confined to the alleged extent of the evils, which are freely admitted to be real. On the second point, the difference of views is radical, and there does not appear to be any great likelihood of an agreement ever being arrived at which will satisfy both parties. When one sees how men, who had grown grey in the denunciation of these evils, turned round immediately a suggestion was made for practical action, and joined the orthodox majority in their praise of the existing arrangements, the 'Political Rishi's' warning about the deefcts of Hindu character seems to be more than justified. There appears to be no ground for hope, under such circumstances, of seeing any genuine reform movement springing up from within the heart of the nation, unless that heart is regenerated, not by cold calculations of utility, but by the cleansing fire of a religious revival. However, there is really nothing strange in all this outcry. There will always be, and there always have been, as Lord Ripon in another connection observed, a clean and an unclean party in small municipal, as well as in large social, arrangements. If the population of our cities were entirely left to themselves, and each man's or woman's vote was as good as another's, the good sense of the men of light and leading would

no doubt prevail in the end, but, in the earlier stage of discussion and argument, we should doubtless hear many an appeal to the glory of our ancestors, their long life and vigour, maintained, it might be proudly observed, in spite of, or in the absence of, municipal conservancy. Even in European countries, there are anti-vaccination doctors ; Shakers, who take no medicine, but leave the body to cure itself ; physical science pedants who still question the truth of the motion of the earth round its sun centre, and its motion round its own axis. A love of paradox is a weakness which clings to many great minds, grows with their other excellences like a parasitic excrescence. Leaving these unnatural developments aside, it is clear that there is a chance of producing a reasonable conviction among not the vast majority of those who do not think, but among the considerable minority who in every country lead public opinion by informing it and setting it in proper form before the community in general.

Viewed in this light, there is abundant reason for hope that an historical study of these institutions will dispel many a false conception of the antiquity and sanctity of the existing arrangements.

The early celebration of child marriages, the forcible disfigurement of widows and absolute prohibition of remarriage in the higher castes, the occasional and local practices of polyandry and polygamy, are all admittedly corruptions of recent growth unknown to the best days of our country's history. The late lamented Hon. Rao Saheb V. N. Mandlik, C.S.I., who speaks with

an authority which few will dispute, has freely admitted that the Hindu girl's marriageable age is twelve, and that the corresponding age for boys has been reduced from time to time as the period of Brahmacharya, studies, was more and more curtailed. Taking the most narrow acceptation of the Grihya Sutra rules, this period could not well be legally curtailed below twelve years, thus making the marriageable age for boys twenty years. In regard to the question of widow marriage, it is admitted by the orthodox leaders of the opposition that the prohibition forms part of the Kali Nishedha, or prohibitions intended for the Kali Yuga only. The writings of Manu and Yajnawalkya show, what the Puranas and Itihasas confirm, that monogamy is the natural condition of Aryan life and that both polygamy and polyandry are disreputable excrescences. Nobody can, under these circumstances, contend that, on the strictest interpretation of the texts, the local usages which obtain at present agree with our best traditions of the past. Those who advocate a return to the old order of things are thus in good company, and are not foreign imitators.

We have to consider, next, how it came to pass that the Aryan population in course of time departed from the vigorous and healthy usages of their ancestors. Such an enquiry alone will enable us, who now aspire after a higher life, to trace our way back without risk of failure or disappointment. The Hindu community has always been self-contained, if not original, in its grasp of social matters, and no analo-

gies drawn from Christian or Mahomedan nations can have any convincing force, unless they are supported by reasons and associations of our own venerable past.

The rise and fall of female rights and status in Hindu Aryan Society has a history of its own, at once interesting and suggestive in its analogies to the corresponding developments in the institutions of another kindred stock, the Roman Aryans, who have so largely influenced European ideas. Both began by a complete subordination of the women in the family to the men, and of the men themselves to the head of the family. In early Vedic times, the woman was, like the deformed or the sickly member of a family, devoid of rights, and, being incapable of self-protection, was disentitled to share the inheritance. The succession in a united family after the death of its chief went to the surviving male members, his sons and brothers, and in their default the more distant agnate males.

The earlier Sutrakars, Baudhayana and Apastamba, clearly re-affirmed this exclusion from inheritance and asserted the perpetual subjection of every woman to her father, her husband, and her son. Gradually, however, as the Aryans settled in the land, and the necessities of war gave place to the gentler virtues and victories of peace, the earlier Smritis found admission by express texts for the wife, the mother, the grandmother, daughter, and the sister, and finally to the female relations of the male Gotraja Sapinda. It is hardly necessary to follow this

growth step by step. Corresponding with this recognition of the claims of family affection, a chivalrous regard for women, and for their personal comfort and liberty, was asserted in other ways. The women took equal part with the husbands in solemn religious rites, and as quaens took their places in great religious sacrifices and the deliberations of State, on occasions of display and power. They were permitted at their choice to remain single and unmarried, and neither the father nor the mother would interfere by exercising their power of choosing husbands for them. They were poets, philosophers, and Rishis, and composed hymns, wrote works and studied and argued with men on equal terms. This went on for many centuries, and the proofs of it are too numerous in all our early writings to admit of any hesitation on the part of even the most hostile critic. Marriage was optional with man as well as with woman. The texts of the Marriage ritual, the rule for selecting brides or rather bridegrooms, the practice of Swayamwara in mature age, the liberty to be married again on the death, or absence, or incurable impotency, of the first husband, both before and after consummation, the strictness of the monogamous tie, all these privileges were conceded to women in the natural growth of things.

Thus far, there was no break of continuity, and all was smooth sailing. The analogies between the Roman and Hindu developments were complete so far. In course of time. the Arvans. like the Romans.

having overcome their enemies, fell to fighting among themselves, and long and murderous wars between Brahmins and Kshatriyas devastated the land. Under the pressure of these complicated difficulties, the strong love of the active virtues of fighting and hunting, chivalrous regard for women, and the enjoyment of the innocent pleasures of life generally, gave way to a philosophy which regarded life and being itself as a pain and a calamity, the bustle of the arts of peace and war as a vanity of vanities. And naturally weak woman, from being the soul of chastity and virtue, came to be described as a snare and a burden. The gods, who had cheered the conquering and militant Aryans with their countenance, retired with the Rishis to the Himalayas and beyond. They could no longer be seen, and gave way to a fatalistic belief that man was the slave of his own miserable *Karma*, and must bear it patiently till he learned how best to throw off this mortal coil. The great excess of bad passions which had deluged the land with fratricidal blood demoralized society, and lowered the status of women in the family, the State, and in the social arrangements generally. The Aryan ideals lost their charm, and a lower type of character and morality asserted its predominance as the down-trodden races, which had been driven to the hills, issued from their haunts, and fell upon the demoralized and disunited Aryan kingdoms on all sides. At the same time, a new race of invaders from Central Asia, partly Scythian and partly Mongolian in stock, entered India by the North-

West, and the North-East, drove before them the old Aryans, and established their power and colonies in the Punjab, Sind, Rajputana, Central India, Bengal, Guzerat, and even in parts of Maharashtra. This process of the upheaval of non-Aryan races, and the invasion and settlement of barbarian Scythian and Mongolian conquerors, was in active development for many centuries, and these ethnic and political forces have profoundly modified the institutions and usages of modern India. They brought to the surface races of men with a lower civilization, more patriarchal, and, therefore, less chivalrous ideals of life. Polyandry has always been a normal institution of the non-Aryan or Scythian and Mongolian races. It derived new dignity from the rise to power of these backward races. The woman's lot has always been one of dependence and misery in barbarous countries. It could not be otherwise here. Woman in these ruder races was bartered in marriage as a moveable chattel or slave. She was burned with the deceased lord, with his bows and arrows, his horse and weapons, to provide for his comfort in another world. When these races rose to power, the better minds were driven to seek shelter in asceticism and abandonment of the world which had for them no charms, and only misery, life-long and unrelieved; and instead of being the deity of peace and goodwill in the family, woman became the symbol of corruption and vice. Optional celibacy and Swayamwara were under these circumstances out of the question. The old state of pupilage and dependence was re-affirmed. Late marriages, and the liberty of

second marriage to widows, were denounced, though here and there they were allowed to associate with their husband's surviving brother for the purpose of procreating children for him. The well-marked four-fold divisions of life lost their meaning and their sanctity, and baby and child-espousals could not but come into fashion, and bring in their train polygamy and concubinage. Things thus settled themselves on this lower level of barbarous usages.

Gradually, the better and the Aryan portion of the community recovered from the surprise and discomfiture, and the dark clouds of the Middle Ages of Indian History, the dreaded Kali Yuga of the Puranas, began to clear up. The Aryan Religion, social polity, and marriage institutions were reformed on a footing of compromise, and those who guided the course of events tried their best to re-assert the dominion of the Vedas and of the Brahmins, who represented in their persons the highest civilization of the olden days. This form of restoration and renascence was again interrupted by the Mahomedan invasions, which repeated for some centuries all the horrors of the previous dark period. Before the license of Mahomedan outrage, women shrank from public gaze, and it became necessary for their safety to secrete them within the dark recesses of the house. Polygamy and illicit concubinage became once more fashionable.

It will be clear from this review that internal dissensions, the upheaval of non-Aryan races, and the predominance acquired by barbarous Scythian and

Mahomedan conquerors, degraded the condition of the female sex, deprived them of their rights of inheritance and freedom, and made woman dependent on man's caprice, instead of being his equal and honoured helpmate. Political and ethnic agencies of great power have wrought the evil, and we cannot afford to lose sight of this fact in our attempts to elevate the status of the female sex. Fortunately, the causes which brought on this degradation have been counteracted by Providential guidance, and we have now, with a living example before us of how pure Aryan customs, unaffected by barbarous laws and patriarchal notions, resemble our own ancient usages, to take up the thread where we dropped it under foreign and barbarous pressure, and restore the old healthy practices, rendered so dear by their association with our best days, and justified by that higher reason which is the sanction of God in man's bosom.

The next question is, as stated above, a more difficult one to deal with. How this gentle revolution is to be effected without breaking with the past, is a problem which admits of difference of views. There are two schools of thinkers among those who have discussed this subject. One set would utilize all the active and passive agencies which tend to encourage and vitalize reform; the other set would leave things to take their own course, firm in the confidence that the passive agencies at work would secure all our ends just as we desire, slowly but surely. Those who feel the full force of the ethnical and political causes mentioned

above, and also feel how necessary it is at certain stages of man's progress to secure the assertion of right ideas by the highest sanctions, advocate to some extent the help of State regulation, as representing the highest and most disinterested wisdom of the times, working to give effect to the other tendencies, concentrating and popularizing them. Those who are not sufficiently alive to these considerations would trust to education and the gradual development of better ideas by their own internal force, to achieve all that we desire. It is needless to state that the publication to which these remarks are prefaced is intended to strengthen the hands of the first set of thinkers, and to show, by the example of what occurred in the past, that timely State regulation is not attended with the mischiefs which people attribute to it, and that it co-ordinates and vivifies the healthy action of the other agencies. It becomes, in this connection, necessary to consider briefly the several objections urged by the advocates of the let-alone school in their order of relative importance.

The first objection urged on this head is that these are social questions, which it is not the duty of the State to regulate. We answer that this argument is not open to those who welcome, as the vast majority of this class of opponents freely do, State regulation for the abolition of *Sati*, of infanticide, the suicide of jogees on the banks of the Ganges, and self-torture by hook-swinging before idol shrines, or to those who propose compulsory

education, and compulsory vaccination, and sanitary precautions generally. Individual liberty of action is no doubt a great force, but this liberty has its limitations imposed by the fact that no man's liberty should encroach upon the liberty of those who surround him. Whenever there is a large amount of unredressed evil suffered by people who cannot adopt their own remedy, the State has a function to regulate and minimize the evil, if by so regulating it, the evil can be minimized better than by individual effort and without leading to other worse abuses. The State in its collective capacity represents the power, the wisdom, the mercy and charity, of its best citizens. What a single man, or a combination of men, can best do on their own account, that the State may not do, but it cannot shirk its duty if it sees its way to remedy evils, which no private combination of men can check adequately or which it can deal with more speedily and effectively than any private combination of men can do. In these latter cases, the State's regulating action has its sphere of duty marked out clearly. On this, and on this principle alone, can State action be justified in many important departments of its activity, such as the enforcement of education, sanitation, factory legislation, of State undertakings like the postal service, or subsidies given to private effort in the way of railway extension and commercial development. The regulation of marriageable age has in all countries, like the regulation of the age of minority, or the fit age for making contracts, been a part of its national jurisprudence,

and it cannot be said with justice that this question lies out of its sphere. The same observation holds true of the condition of the widow rendered miserable in early life, and thrown helpless on the world. More legitimately than minors, the widows are the wards of the nation's humanity, and to the extent that the evil they suffer is remediable by man, it cannot be said that this remedy may not be considered by the State as fully within its proper function.

The next argument urged on the other side is that the evil is not so great as some people think, and that it really needs no State action. There can be no doubt that, to some extent, Mr. Malabari has laid himself open to this side attack. The evils of child-marriage, and enforced widowhood, and unrestricted polygamy, are not quantitatively, and calculating them by statistical returns, so great as Mr. Malabari described them to be. But this does not go to show that, after making due allowance for all exaggerations, the residue of unredressed wrong which calls for remedy is not sufficiently great to justify action. Much the same thing was said when it was proposed to prohibit Sati or Infanticide. Wherever there is undeserved misery endured in a large number of cases there is a ground for State interference, always supposing that the interference will lead to the redress of the wrong, better than any individual effort can accomplish.

A third way of stating the same objection is that the parties who suffer do not complain of it, and strangers have therefore, no business to intervene.

This is a very old line of defence. It was urged as an argument against the abolition of slavery, as well as against the laws which rendered Sati and Infanticide crimes, and validated widow marriages. Perhaps, the worst effect of injustice is that it depresses the down-trodden victims to such an extent that they lick the hand of the oppressor. The slaves fought on the side of the Southern planters against their Northern liberators. No wonder then, if the helpless women and widows side with the orthodox majority. If the State contemplated forcible action in spite of the wishes of the victims, the argument might be urged with some effect. But nobody in his senses can, or does, contemplate any such method of procedure. Widows and children are not the proper persons who can seek their own relief under the wrong that is done to them, and to society, and this argument therefore, falls to the ground.

Fourthly, it is urged that, admitting the fact that such regulation falls within the province of State action, and that these evils, after making all allowances for exaggeration and the apathy of the victims, are still sufficient to justify State action, if such action can remedy the wrong without leading to other and greater abuses, and that it is not proper to wait till the victims rebel—it is urged that a foreign Government cannot be trusted with this power. This jealousy of foreign interference in social matters is not altogether a bad sign, and if the interference was of foreign initiation, the force of this argument would be irresistible. In this case, however, the foreign

Rulers have no interest to move of their own accord. If they consulted their selfish interests only, they would rather let us remain as we are, disorganized and demoralized, stunted and deformed, with the curse of folly and wickedness paralyzing all the healthy activities and vital energies of our social body. The initiation is to be our own, and based chiefly upon the example of our venerated past, and dictated by the sense of the most representative and enlightened men in the community, and all that is sought at the hands of the foreigners is to give to this responsible sense, as embodied in the practices and usages of the respectable classes, the force and the sanction of law. These considerations weighed with our leaders in the past, when they welcomed this co-operation in the abolition of Sati and Infanticide, and also in the recognition of the validity of widow marriages.

If we are to abjure such help under all circumstances, we must perforce fall back behind the Parsis, Mahomedans, and Christians, who have freely availed themselves of the help in recasting their social arrangements. The Parsis through their Punchayeta secured to their community the benefit of the Parsi Marriage Act, and their Matrimonial Courts with Parsi delegates to assist the Judge. The Khojás have been striving to secure similar concessions for their own community. The Nayárs in Malabar, have very recently had the benefit of an improved Marriage Law extended to them by legislature. The movement of proper regulation of religious endowments, in respect of which public opinion

is almost unanimous, may be cited as an illustration of the readiness of all classes of people not to object to State Legislation at the hands of foreign rulers. Further, as it is likely that foreign rule will last over us for an indefinite length of time, we reduce ourselves, by accepting this policy, to the extreme absurdity of shutting out a very useful help for many centuries to come. In such matters, the distinction of foreign and domestic rulers is a distinction without difference. It has a meaning and significance when foreign interests override native interests, but when the foreigners have no interest to serve, and the initiative is to be all our own, the recognition of State help is not open to the stock objection urged by those who think that we forfeit our independence by seeking such regulation on lines approved by us.

Fifthly—It is further urged, in deprecation of State action, that in this matter we must not lose sight of the fact that institutions, like constitutions, must grow and cannot be made to conform with foreign ideals to order. There is, no doubt, some force in this observation, and it would be a fatal objection if the argument for change were based on the ground that we must copy the foreign exemplar. The remarks which have been made above are, however, a sufficient answer to this allegation. The change is sought not as an innovation, but as a return and restoration to the days of our past history. Those who advocate it justify it on the authority of texts revered, and admitted to be binding to this day. The intermediate corruption and degradation

was not of the nation's seeking. It was forced upon it by the predominance of barbarous influences, and by the intolerance of ruthless conquerors. That force having ceased to be operative, we must now return to the old order of things, if we are to grow to our old proportions. The history of the suppression of Infanticide and of Sati shows that these institutions, which had grown as excrescences upon the healthy system of ancient Hindu Society, were checked, and could be checked, only by the strong arm of Law, and once they were denounced as crimes, they disappeared from the face of the country. Before Government made up its mind to deal finally with these evils, the usual arguments that institutions grow, and cannot be made to order, were urged, and the duty of religious neutrality was held up *in terrorem* to frighten the timid and arouse the passions of the ignorant and the prejudiced. The diseased mal-formations of the body cannot, and should not, be dealt with in the same way as its normal and healthy developments. The sharp surgical operation, and not the homœopathic infinitesimally small pill, is the proper remedy for the first class of disorders, and the analogy holds good in the diseases of the body politic, as also in dealing with the parasitical growths of social degeneration.

Sixthly—The apprehensions against State legislation expressed in some quarters might have been most reasonable if, as a fact, Hindu Society was really not governed by any law, and it was proposed for the first time to regulate these matters by subjecting them

to the controlling action of the State. The fact, however, is that law, a written law, and a very stringent one too, does regulate these matters, and it is enforced much in the same way as other laws by our Courts of Justice. The courts are bound to give effect to that law, and decree personal rights and disabilities in strict accordance with it. What is now proposed is to substitute the more ancient and righteous law for a later degenerate off-shoot of that law, cancel the travesty of law which is condemned by all, at least more amenable to reason, and utilize the force of State sanction as a final support. No private understanding can prevail against the coercive power of unjust law as it is now enforced. The new law proposed is itself not a foreign importation, but is only a revival of the ancient law of the country as laid down in the texts, and all that the Government is called on to do is to revert from the times of corruption to the times when Hindu Society was more healthy and vigorous.

There is another incidental and an important advantage likely to accrue in consequence of the change proposed. All progress in social liberation tends to be a change from the law of status to the law of contract, from the restraints of family and caste customs to the self-imposed restraints of the free will of the individual. Nay more, the confusion caused by inconsistent Smriti texts and judicial authorities on ancient Hindu Law and custom furnishes the strongest argument for a definite improvement based on ancient lines by way of codification on the sub-

ject by the legislature. There is not a custom, however absurd, which cannot be defended by some strong text of ancient law. The usual practice of reconciling texts, intended for different ages and countries, and the loss of the spirit of true criticism, have benumbed the power of judgment. The liberation from superstitious thraldom, which will result from the changes proposed, is not likely to be the least of its benefits. It will be necessary to be very circumspect in graduating the change desired to meet exactly the extent of the evil crying for redress. The past century or half a century has effected a change in national sentiment, which, if not recognized to the extent it has gone, will only lead to a catastrophe and revulsion of feeling that will be simply irresistible, and may involve the ruin of many interests dear to the nation's heart.

There is only one more objection which we think deserves a passing notice. It is said that all previous legislation was directed against positive crimes, or was only of a permissive nature, while the evils now sought to be remedied are not crimes, and the remedies proposed are not of a permissive character. On the first point, we must urge that the practices now complained of are in some respects far more criminal than those which State action has checked. Sati was committed under temporary insanity caused by grief, while infanticide was in too many cases dictated by a similar mad impulse. They were both offences not committed in cold blood, and their effects spent themselves in a single

act of violence, which inflicted the greatest shock on the perpetrator himself or herself. In most cases enforced widowhood and disfigurement, the destruction of home sanctity by polygamous connections, the stupidity of baby marriages, are not impulsive acts, they are done in cold blood, and they inflict lifelong and undeserved misery on helpless victims, while the offenders suffer but little. So far as their moral heinousness is concerned, they are inflictions of injustice without any redeeming features, and the criminal responsibility of the nation is beyond all reprieve.

As regards the question of permissive *versus* compulsory legislation, we have no patience with those who can find consolation in empty words. The remedies proposed are in their nature permissive, and need give offence to nobody. If the law lays down strictly that no polygamous connection shall be entered into except for reasons specially permitted by the ancient law of Manu, we fail to see how such legislation is more compulsory than permissive. When the law lays down that no widow may disfigure herself except of deliberate choice, and at a fit time of life, say after she is twenty-five years old, where indeed is the compulsion? When the law lays down that marriages shall not be celebrated below a certain age, at least twelve for girls and eighteen for boys, under penalty that earlier celebrations will not meet with the recognition of the Civil Courts in cases of disputes, where again is the compulsion?

We have thus noticed and answered all the usual objections urged by those who honestly support the

continuance of the existing order of things. The question of principle is one which must first be argued out in all its bearings. Once the principle is recognized, the details of legislation may safely be left to the common sense of the community. It is with this view that the compiler of this publication has addressed himself to the task of placing before the public, in an accessible form, the literature of the subject in the shape of the debates that took place when the Widow Marriage Bill was just introduced in the Legislative Council thirty years ago. The arguments then urged and refuted have a curious family likeness to those we hear at present, and just as the apprehensions then entertained were disappointed, so surely we trust to see that all our ignorant prophecies will be falsified. The directions in which the marriage law needs reform have been already briefly indicated. Diwan Bahadur Raghunath Rao has already sketched out a draft Bill in which some of the reforms urgently required are set forth in full detail. The late Maharaja of Burdwan submitted thirty years ago a scheme for abolishing polygamy. The views of those who have given thought to the subject on this side of India may be briefly thus summarized.

We would, to start with, fix twelve and eighteen as the minimum ages of marriage for girls and boys. These periods are in full keeping with the most approved practice, and the more respectable orthodox sentiment of the present day. Even Rao Saheb V. N. Mandlik has stated twelve years for females as a permissible limit, and for boys we do not think he will regard

eighteen years as an unreasonable limit. Marriages contracted before this age should be discouraged, not by pains and penalties of the criminal law, but by the attendant risk of making them liable to be ignored, as in the case of contracts entered into by minors, liable to be ignored or set aside in case of disputes in the Civil Courts for sufficient reasons. Marriage, unless consummated by actual cohabitation, should not be recognized as a perfect union before the limits laid down above are reached. Before such consummation, the girl should not be recognized as having become one with the husband in Gotra, Pinda, and Sutaka. This is the ancient law, and our revival of it will do away with the superstition which paralyses the action of parents in dealing with the misery of child widows. We would on no account permit disfigurement except after twenty-five years, when the widow may be presumed to be able to realize the circumstances of her position, and can choose deliberately the celibate course of life. Under no circumstances should one wife be superseded by a second connection, except under the safeguards recognized by Manu and other writers. The widow's forfeiture of her husband's estate as a consequence of her second marriage should be done away with, and her life interest in her husband's inheritance should remain intact, whatever her choice of life might be. The marriage of a widower above fifty with girls below fourteen should be strictly prohibited as being opposed to the most approved Smriti texts.

These are the several changes which the advocates of Reform seek to accomplish, not all at once but in due progression. They are fully aware that the details of legislation will not be easily settled, without suggesting many difficulties and doubts which will have to be provided against. The time, however, for suggesting these details has yet to come. We think the discussion has now reached a stage when all sides may well agree in asking for a Commission of Inquiry. Such a Commission, composed of representative Natives and Europeans, on the model of the Education Commission, will pave the way for practical suggestions. Its inquiries will give point to the discussion, and tend to preserve the interest that has been aroused in all quarters.

V.

RAJA RAMA MOHANA ROY.

IT has been arranged that after service this day, I should speak to you a few words about the life and teachings of Rájá Ráma Mohana Roy. All of you are aware that this day, the 27th of September, is the anniversary of his death. He died while he was on a visit to England; and his remains were buried there by loving friends. He died in 1833; we are in 1896. We are therefore, celebrating in this place on this occasion the sixty-third anniversary of the death of this great man. Among the orthodox community, this particular fortnight—the dark half of the month of *Bhádrapada*—is dedicated by a very ancient and a very useful custom to commemorate the death of our departed ancestors. Each man and woman tries during these fifteen days to remember the debt of gratitude he or she owes to those who gave them birth; and though in this Samaja this practice has no place and we may not follow the outward observances, the sense of filial love and duty, which moves thousands of people in all parts of

the country to show their gratitude for the debt due to our ancestors—has a significance and a truth which we cannot afford to ignore. This is then the sixty-third anniversary of the death of a person who might well be called one of the fathers of the Brahma Church. I say one of the fathers, and advisedly. Because I hold, as I have said on many other occasions, that we, the members of the Brahma Samaja, can claim a long ancestry, as old as any of the sects prevailing in the country. The Brahma movement was not first brought into existence in 1828; we are representatives of an old race; as old as the Bhagwat Gita and the Bhágwata Purána; much older still; as old as Nárada, Pralháda, and Vásudewa and the nine sages who visited JANAKA. From that time there is a continuity of *Sádhus* and saints down to the present day. Rájá Ráma Mohana Roy, as I said, was thus one of the fathers of the Brahma Church but he was neither the first nor the last. For even in these modern times we have had the founder of the Swámi Náráyana sect, Keshava Chandra Sen, and Pandit Dayananda Saraswati; which fact shows that the old fire, that animated those who have made this land the sacred birthplace of many religions and religious movements, has not been burnt out. Before, however, I come to speak about Rájá Ráma Mohana Roy's life and teachings, some of you will be interested, I believe, if I draw your attention to the fact that while the anniversaries celebrated in the case of Gods and birthdays in the case of men are allowed to be buried and

for the most part forgotten, we find that it is the anniversaries of the deaths of great men that are honoured all over the world. There must be some meaning in this custom so universally prevalent among Christians, Mahomedans, Parsis, Buddhists, and Hindus; it could not well have been a mere accident that, while the *Jayanties* of gods and incarnations are the days of their births, in the case of men we celebrate the time when they leave us. There is a very good and sufficient reason for this difference. No man, till death takes him away from the temptations of this world, can say to himself, nor can it be said of him by his friends, that the man's life's purpose has been accomplished. A Greek philosopher was asked a similar question. He said, 'wait till that particular man dies before you sing any song about him.' The life that we lead here has a serious purpose; it is to be guided by discipline, and discipline is, as you know, always a hard master. Out of the hundreds of thousands who start in the race of life those who reach the goal are but few. Temptations lie in the way, and the difficulties that we experience disable many of us, and it cannot safely be said till a man's death that his life's purpose has been accomplished or that his is a life worthy of the purpose for which he was sent into this world. That is the reason why in the case of men it is the anniversary of death that is commemorated by those who remain after him. No man can be called great who has not, to the last hour of his life, fulfilled the

responsibility which greatness implies; and this brings us to the consideration of the question, what constitutes the greatness of the men we love to honour after their death. When we celebrate the anniversaries of our own ancestors, of our fathers and grandfathers, mothers and grandmothers, the question is not whether they are great or whether they are not great. To every one of us our fathers and mothers are always objects of reverence as the ancestors who gave us birth, and whatever may be their failings, the mere fact that they are persons to whom we owe all that we have, constitutes a debt of gratitude which we are bound to discharge by celebrating their memories at least once a year in a more solemn manner than we may be disposed to do on other occasions; but when we make a public commemoration of our great men, the question naturally arises: 'What is it that constitutes greatness in the sense in which you and I and everybody else understand the word? What is it that constitutes this greatness of character?' There are various views held on this subject. To such of you as are interested in this study I would recommend a very careful perusal of some of the English authors, especially Carlyle on 'Heroes and Hero-worship' or Emerson on 'Great or Representative Men.' These two books will place before you all that might be said on this question: 'What is it that makes a man great, so that we should be anxious to keep green his memory from year to year?' One view, that is Carlyle's view, is that sincerity of purpose and earnestness of conviction

make a man great. Everyone of us can feel that there is a good deal of truth in that observation. All of us are more or less acting parts in the theatre of this world. Every one of us, be he small or great, be he learned or unlearned, each of us has a small stage; on that he struts and strides, moves about and goes on, persuading others as he also persuades himself that he is not playing a part but that he is playing the reality. However, when he is shut up in his own chamber, when nobody sees him, then you find that every one of us is disposed to wonder and to laugh at the way in which he moved in this theatre. For the most of us there is no reality about it. Sincerity of purpose and earnestness of conviction certainly go a long way to make a great man's character. If we are wanting in one thing more than another it is in this sincerity and earnestness. In the case of great men, that is, men who are worthy of being so reckoned, you will find that this element of greatness is more or less found in a much larger measure than in the ordinary run of men and women who constitute human society. We may be sincere and earnest on occasions; but habitual sincerity of purpose and habitual earnestness of action are a gift, a possession, and a treasure that are denied to most of us. You may take up the life of any man whom the world classes as great; and you will find in a large number of such men this trait of character. Take the case of Luther. In his time there were more learned and even better men than himself, such as Erasmus and Melancthon, who were

equally gifted and equally endowed. But what was wanting in them was the earnestness of conviction and sincerity of purpose which were found in Luther. We are all of us more or less speaking under constraint, moving under constraint; we know that there is no outside control over us, yet we make our own constraint; and we find that full freedom of movement is not left to us. That is not exactly what constitutes a great man. I will give you another instance of this trait of character in great men. There was a son of a Mahomedan butcher, aged ten or eleven. His father told him to follow his own trade. When, however, the knife was given him and he was told to use it in the way in which his father was using it, he said: 'I am not going to use this knife on this poor dumb animal, till I know how it feels when applied to the sentient parts of my own body; till I am satisfied on this head I will not use the knife.' And so saying he used the knife on his own person first; and feeling that the pain was insufferable, he gave up that trade, he gave up the associations in which he was born, and left the world and retired and thus became the great Mahomedan-Hindu saint of Maharastra, Shaik Mahomed of Shrigonda. That is one of the traits of character which makes a man great. However, it is not mere sincerity and mere earnestness that go to make a man great. He must be original. He must have imagination which brings him into contact with the infinite and the real. Such men are called geniuses. Things strike them in a way in which they do not strike us. We are so

familiar with things that we can scarcely realise the inner spirit in them; somehow or other there is an obtuseness about us which prevents us from seeing things as they are. For instance, there is a story told of Dayànanda Saraswati as regards the circumstances which led him to leave his home and become a *sanyási*. He was, as you know, a great man; there is no denying it, whatever may be our differences with him. Among the men of the present generation few men can be named alongside with him. When a boy he was sent by his father to perform worship in a Shaiwa temple during the night of a fasting day. The father's command was that the boy should sit up all through the night, and see that the water-pot which was hanging over the god was always filled and that water was continuously dripping over it. So the boy of ten or twelve went to the place and sat the night out. At about midnight he found that he was more or less getting sleepy; he could not keep his hand steady and prevent his eyes from closing involuntarily; he tried all manner of means, but still he was dozing; and he found that some of those dirty creatures which are always found in dark and close temples sat unconcernedly over the Linga, and disturbed the flowers. As soon as he heard the noise, he got up and found that the water was falling on the rats instead of over the idol. Well, that is a very common experience of us all, but it suggested to him a new line of thought which made him leave his home. It

suggested to him that the dumb mechanical worship had no power in it and that the spirit must approach the Soul of the world in some other way than this. This is only one instance. But it shows how great men are original. Originality or imagination, like sincerity of purpose, is thus an essential trait in human greatness. There is a third element again. Not only must a great man occupy a higher plane of thought and action but he must have an attraction about him. It cannot be called magnetic, or any other physical form of attraction, but there is such an attraction about him, that it inspires in those about him the same spirit which he feels of self-sacrifice and public devotion. Any man who stands by himself single and whose example and teachings have not succeeded in penetrating into the hearts and intelligences of other people in such a way that these hearts and intelligences are bound to become part of him, cannot be called a great man.

Truthfulness, great impulses, moral aims, resourcefulness to attain those aims by the bond of love and fellowship—these are the traits of character which go to make a great man, and those in whom they are best developed are the greatest of men. You have all read accounts of the life of *Buddha*. He had such a hold upon men's minds that wherever he went hundreds and thousands followed him as the Great Teacher, so that they ensured the permanent success of the movements which he inaugurated—a most unparalleled success in the world's history. Take again the story of the prophet Mahomed. A poor illiterate man, he

did not dream of religion in his youth, and yet at forty he goes into retirement, incessantly moves about in such a country as Arabia to find that he is persecuted and has to fly for life; but there was such an attraction among men and women towards him that in the course of ten or twenty years he was able to dictate terms to the largest and the most powerful potentates of the day. Here then you have a general idea of what constitutes greatness. Earnestness of purpose, sincerity in action, originality, imagination and above all the power of magnetism—we might call it vital or spiritual magnetism—these are the qualities which go to make a man great. I have thus given you my own conception of what a great man is. He is not the richest man, nor the most intelligent man, nor the most cultivated man, nor the most successful man, but a great man is he who, whether he be poor or rich, learned or unlearned, in the profession or out of the profession, successful in life, or unsuccessful in life, the great man is he who combines some of those virtues that I have just attempted to draw your attention to. Having said this much we shall turn to see whether in Raja Rama Mohana Roy some of these virtues can be found in a way to justify our regard for him as one of the greatest men that India has produced during the last two centuries and as one of the fathers of the Brahma Church movement. His is a very simple life. He was born in 1774 and he died in 1833; he thus lived for about sixty years; a time which many of us here are now nearing, and some of us

have exceeded. He was born a Brahmin, and that was one great advantage, if it is fully utilized. On his mother's side he belonged to the *Shákta* sect, which is the orthodox sect on the Bengal side. On his father's side he came from a family which was well-known for its *Vaishnavism.* So the *Shákta* and *Vaishnava* blood joined together in a sort of mutual reconciliation in producing this great man who was destined to accomplish work which this union of a *Vaishnava* father with a *Shákta* mother typified. In those old days when schools and colleges did not exist, this boy at the age of twelve left his village and went to Patna to study Arabic and Persian, which were then the Court languages. At sixteen he went to Benares and there studied Sanskrit for four years, not to be a Pandit, but to understand the real significance of the old learning. He thus became an Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit scholar, without knowing a word of English till that age. His familiarity with the Arabic and the Sanskrit philosophy enabled him at the age of sixteen to conceive a dislike to the idolatrous practices which in those parts of Bengal have reached an exaggerated form, with which most of us here are not familiar. There are idolatries and idolatries. But the Bengal system of Káli worship is something of which even we have no idea. This was the sort of idolatry which he denounced at sixteen. We might well compare notes as to what we did at sixteen with such a record. Were any of us lighted up with the fire that burnt in his heart? His father got vexed with him; and he

had to leave his home. He went outside of India as far as Thibet and there he became practically familiar with the Budhistic system. He knew Musulman philosophy, he knew the Sanskrit philosophy, and in the four years' time that he spent in travelling he became familiar with the Budhistic philosophy. After four years' travelling his father got reconciled with him and allowed him to return home. There at twenty he commenced to learn English, completing that study at about twenty-five. Till forty he spent his time in the service of the English Government. He did not rise to any very good position; but was, I believe, the Head Clerk or *Shirastedar* to the District Judge or Collector in several places. At forty he retired from the service and for the first time came to Calcutta. Till then he had not taken any part in any of the public movements. He lived twenty years more. From 1814 to 1833, his life was of incessant work which far exceeded in measure the labours of many hundreds of people like ourselves. He was at once a social reformer, the founder of a great religious movement and a great politician. These three activities were combined in him in such a way that they put to shame the performances of the best among us at the present time. Raja Rama Mohana Roy's services to the country were not confined to any particular department of human activity. He waged war against polygamy. He first denounced the practice of *Satee* in 1818 when our Presidency of Bombay came under British rule.

From that time to 1828 this crusade was carried on continuously for ten years. But not having obtained success he went on this same mission to England in 1830 when he was called to give evidence before a Parliamentary Committee that was sitting there. He was also entrusted by the Emperor of Delhi with some political mission. This crusade against *Satee* represents the most prominent side of his social activity. As regards his attempts to revive the pure Monotheism of the Upanishad period, it may be noted that after coming to Calcutta in 1814, he established a rudimentary form of the Brahma Church in a spot where people might meet to discuss and also pray, and join in prayer. From 1814 to 1828, this work was carried on with unflagging enthusiasm, and brisk controversy was kept up not only with the orthodox defenders of Hinduism, but with the Christian Missionaries. He called upon both Christians and Hindus to return back to the wisdom of their ancient sages. In the two volumes which are published of his life you will find that nearly one whole volume is devoted to the Raja's publications and pamphlets addressed to the Christian missionaries. The rest of the volume is devoted to his expositions of the *Vedantic* and *Upanishad* philosophy. He was reading and writing, preaching and protesting, refuting and discussing all these twenty years. But while he was doing all that, he did not abstain from studying the political wants and needs of his time. In those early days, when the Charter of the East India Company

was about to be renewed in 1833, he was called from India and he went to England to give most useful evidence before that Committee. Unfortunately, the climate did not agree with him and he fell a sacrifice in his country's cause, among strangers in a foreign land, far away from his dear home.

Here ends a brief exposition of the life of this great man. He started the Brahma Samaja movement and that Samaja is his living memorial. He made efforts for the abolition of the practice of *Satee*, and though he did not live to see the result, the Government felt itself compelled by the labours of this great man to take measures to stop *Satee* by legislation five years after his death. People here are not quite familiar with the enormity of this practice of *Satee* in those days. I know there are some men who still say that it was a wrong step to stop *Satee* or to abolish it. You will have some idea of the enormity of this evil from one of the pamphlets Raja Rama Mohana wrote and the petitions he submitted to Parliament. In one of those pamphlets figures are given for fourteen years, and in the Lower Provinces of Bengal alone there were eight thousand cases of *Satee*-burning during the fourteen years, or an average of six hundred per year. There was not a single family which had no case of *Satee*-burning in the last century. These Satee sacrifices were not voluntary; but women were pressed to immolate themselves. Once a woman said 'yes' in her agony of grief, her relations made it impossible for her to change her mind. If Government had not stopped it we

should have had these horrors repeated before our eyes to this day. If the credit of putting an end to these horrors belongs to any man, that credit must be given to Raja Rama Mohana Roy. *Satee*-burning was not the only horror men inflicted on themselves in those early days, but men and women used to drown themselves, or jump down from lofty precipices into the waters below and thus invite death in a hundred other forms. If there is credit due to any man for having turned the national current in the right direction in this matter, that credit is due to Raja Rama Mohana. Of his political activities I shall not say anything from this platform. Anybody who wants to know what true patriotism is, had better study the evidence that he gave and the letters he wrote to men in power over sixty years ago—long before our era of Congress meetings and Conferences.

We shall now turn to the religious movement to which he devoted his chief attention. The Atmiya Sabha of 1814, was developed in the course of fourteen years into the Brahma Samaja, established in 1828. All who wish to know what the Brahma Samaja is, not merely what it is reported to be, cannot, I believe, do better than read the Trust Deed in which are stated by that great man his views about the noble objects and aims of the Brahma Samaja movements. The spirituality, the deep piety and universal toleration which are manifest in every word of this document, represent an ideal of beauty and perfection which has not been realized by his successors, and it may yet take many centuries before its full significance is understood by our

people. The future destiny of the Brahma Samaja is concealed in the womb of time. We cannot say it may not fail. We hope it will succeed. But what its founder intended it to be is not a question which we can afford to dispute. I shall tell you what he intended it to be, and request both those who belong to the Samaja, and those who are outside its pale, to consider whether his conception of it was not as noble as any which the highest among us and in other lands have ever been able to form. What Raja Rama Mohana felt was that we had in India a nation, gifted with a religious history transcending all the records of every other race. Here was a nation, which was gifted, was well endowed, was spiritual in all its real aspirations. This nation had gradually ascended to the conception of the purest form of Monotheism that the world has yet seen. In the *Upanishads* and in the *Bhagwat Gita* it had developed—not by a mere impulse, not by the command of any single prophet, but by the slow process of growth and evolution—a system of the purest form of Monotheism that man can conceive. The higher thought of the nation had learned to place its trust in a Universal Spirit, the One without a second, in whom all lived and moved and had their being, who was the Cause of all, the Lord of all, the Friend of all, the Guide of all, the most fatherly of fathers, and most the motherly of mothers. One age after another constructed the edifice, laying brick upon brick and layer upon layer, and story after story rose.

Well, this highest conception was not only confined to Pandits, Philosophers and Shastris, but it was the common property of every class, the very lowest of the low, men who were socially not much respected nor very respectable, the poor villager, the hunter, the gardener, the fisherman, the weaver, the goldsmith, the barber, the shopkeeper—they all shared this common faith equally with the Brahmins, the Pandits, and the Yogis.

While Raja Rama Mohana was struck with this universal prevalence of the monotheistic principle, he was deeply pained at the thought that this exalted faith was turned to no practical account, because it was associated with external observances and rites which were in entire discord with it. These external rites and observances made the nation worship all manner of gods and goddesses, elemental, mythological, tribal and local divinities, with the most grotesque features and the worst inhuman associations. This polytheism had also grown side by side with the higher teaching of the Upanishads, that God was One without a second, and of the Bhagwat Gita that He alone was to be worshipped. This contrast between the monotheistic spirit and the polytheistic observances strikes every student of our religious life as a puzzle which baffles the understanding. You can well imagine how it must have struck a great soul like that of the Raja who from his very boyhood had been brought up an iconoclast and waged war with idolatry of all kinds. He brooded and thought over it, and he

worked, and suffered for it in a way of which we have no conception. The question that he put to himself was, how does it come to pass that Monolatry does not go hand in hand with Monotheism in India, when in other countries where the monotheistic principle is less exclusively professed, monolatry has been for two thousand years and more the prevailing practice? This is the question I request you to consider each for himself. I offer no solution of it myself to-day; because though I have been thinking about it for a long time I have not yet been able to find a rational and consistent solution of the difficulty. The question, you will recollect, is not of idolatry or non-idolatry. That difference relates to the method of devotion and not to the object of worship. The difference to which I have drawn your attention has a deeper source and requires our most anxious consideration. In most cases idolatry is only a consequence of this practical polytheism which prevails in the land and which leads men against the teachings of their own higher reason to think that one Supreme Will does not govern all the operations of nature, but that many gods and goddesses, good and bad deities, or *devatas*, are permitted to influence the operations of nature and the well-being of man in a hundred different ways, and it is these subordinate powers which must be propitiated each in its own way and on its own day. It is this ceaseless distraction of the mind between the devotion to the One Supreme Lord of all and the claims of the multiple small agents of good and bad influences which

is the real evil. There is image worship among the Roman Catholics and there is saint worship and *Pir*-worship among Christians and Mahomedans, but on the whole they do not detract from the monolatrous character of the devotions of these people. With us this limit has been overstepped with the consequent debasement that we see all about us. Rama Mohana Roy naturally felt pained at this modern debasement, and with a view to bring into accord our practical devotions with our monotheistic faith, he gathered together kindred souls who felt with him on this point and established the Brahma Samaja. He did not regard the Brahma Samaja faith as a new Dispensation, or a new declaration of God's purposes. He aspired only to establish harmony between men's accepted faith and their practical observances by a strict monolatrous worship of the One Supreme Soul, a worship of the heart and not of the hands, a sacrifice of self and not of the possessions of the self. There was nothing foreign in its conception, origin, or method. He wanted men and women to cherish their own ancient treasures of faith and to secure their freedom from the bondage of superstition and ignorance. This was the work which the Brahma Samaja was intended to carry out. It is not for me to say how far that promise has been fulfilled. If it has not been fulfilled, the blame is not his but ours. To us the same problem presents itself to-day, as it did to him early in the century. And it is a problem on the right solution of which our destiny here and hereafter greatly depends. In connection with this anniver-

sary I beseech you to take this great lesson to heart and try to work out its solution in such a way that the integrity of your soul may be restored. When this correspondence between the head and the heart, this concord between the flesh and the spirit is established, Indian monotheism will be a great power in the land, uniting 250 millions of men and women in a bond which shall be indissoluble. The historical differences of national creeds will continue to exist like the different styles of architecture. The Christian church will not look in outward appearance like a Mahomedan mosque or an Aryan temple, but the differences of style and form will not interfere with the spiritual unity of purpose. When this is accomplished, another great idea, the union of all religions, which Raja Rama Mohana Roy cherished deeply in his heart, will be realised, and with it people in all lands will say with one voice 'Thy Kingdom has come and Heaven has descended on Earth.'

Since this address was first delivered there are evident signs of the awakening of thoughtful minds in all countries to the necessity of securing the co-operation of all nations towards this great end. And the best evidence of it was furnished by the great Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in connection with the great Columbian exposition, the smaller Unions among Christians themselves held at New York, U. S. A. and Paris, France, this year. The great World's Temperance Union is a similar sign of the times. We may note also the fact that the missionaries from this country have been actively

working both in America and in Europe to familiarise the people in those parts with the higher spiritualism of our ancient land. Also the Theosophical movement, which represents men who profess all the known religions and yet feel that they can co-operate together in this common elevation. All these indications may be regarded as the early dawn, which will before long usher in, in full blaze, the Sun of Righteousness and Glory which will unite all nations in a common brotherhood.

VI.

COMMEMORATION ADDRESS.

THE TELANG SCHOOL OF THOUGHT.

YOU are aware of the nature of the business which has brought us together in this place on the present occasion. It is a function of a friendly and social commemoration, and must be undertaken by every one of us in the spirit which suits the occasion. A meeting like this ought to have been held earlier, and it was arranged accordingly; but owing to unforeseen engagements of the most pressing character, the managers of the Club had to put it off to a more convenient day. Death, as you all know, has been of late so very busy among us that, notwithstanding the absorbing distractions of our every-day life of toil and enforced rest, our minds are in a more serious mood attracted naturally towards those who have been gathered to our forefathers—some of them prematurely, long before their mission in this life had been accomplished. Our minds are, as each fresh loss comes upon us, with its sudden surprise, distracted

with grief for a moment; but such is the providential gift of our elastic temperament, that we soon recover our usual equanimity, and seem apparently to forget the past. It is not, however, always the case. There are times and there are seasons when even in these absorbing distractions, our thoughts are turned from the present day engagements to converse in spirit and solitude with those with whom we worked in various fields during our past lives, and whose company we now miss in the great responsibilities that come upon us as each day rolls on and makes room for its successor. It is not, therefore, without reason that our wise ancestors ordained it as a part of our religious duty that once at least in the course of the year there should be a fortnight set apart for these commemorations, so that each one in his own small sphere, and all of us in our collective sphere, may take stock of the fact that our present existence here is an existence limited by conditions over which we have no control, and that unless we teach ourselves to regard it only as the place for fitting and preparing ourselves for a better existence, we fail to understand the mission of the life with which we are so much absorbed. Last month was the month in which these commemorations were held throughout the country, in domestic circles and more at large in high places, where the claims of the dead commanded a larger circle of mourners. These commemorations remind us of our duties to those who have left this troubled life of ours, and it is to some extent with a similar object in view

that the members of this Club have felt it to be their duty, which they had long put off for various reasons, to meet together in this place, and to commemorate in a proper spirit the loss which the Club has sustained in the death of its late President, Mr. Justice K. T. Telang. Five years and more have now elapsed since that eventful departure from our midst took place of one whom we all knew so well, and loved so dearly. It was thought by the members of this Club that this long period of time should be allowed to elapse, for in the excess of our present grief we might be tempted to put too high a value upon the loss that we had suffered, and that it was far better to wait and see if, like many of our other sorrows, these five years of separation might not reconcile us to the loss that we had suffered and make us forget it, as we do forget many other afflictions that trouble our existence here. Five years have passed, and yet every one of us, I believe every one who is in this hall, and many hundreds who may not be here to-day, will admit with me that these five years have not reconciled us to the loss, and made us forget the estimation in which we held the late President of this Club during his short but brilliant career. It was on this account that the members of this Club thought that the time had now come when we could discharge this duty without being exposed to the charge that we made too much of our loss.

Of course, on such occasions, when we meet here for such a solemn purpose as this, memories rise before the mind's eyes of many familiar faces, and

the shades of the dead flit before our vision with a reality which is almost as vivid as life itself. Not to recall to your memory the great men of the past generation, about whom many of you have no personal knowledge, but whose works we read and admire—not to go so far back as that period, and confining ourselves only to the past five or six years, the memory of which is so fresh with us, our hearts and our recollections are drawn to many familiar faces whom we miss now as the miser misses his wealth, or the mother her lost child. We miss, for instance, the sturdy features of Mr. K. L. Nulkar, than whom a more sustained worker in all the higher activities of our life, a more earnest sympathiser in all that was good, did not breathe in this part of India. Another loss we feel is that of my friend Mr. S. P. Pandit, whose cast of features indicated an unbending will, coupled with a tenacity of purpose and undaunted courage peculiarly his own. His was a life, though short, of great and continuous struggles and noble achievements on behalf of posterity. We further miss the familiar face of Dr. Atmaram Pandurang who during three-score years and ten took the lead in our Society, in all good works of benevolence and charity. I prize him more not on account of his ministering to our bodily maladies, but on account of his ministering to our spiritual longings. His loss is still so fresh, and the debt we owe him has been so badly discharged by us that I do not feel myself at present disposed to say more about him. We miss again the face of

Mr. W. A. Modak, the great educationist, and a man whose life was an example to us in all things good, a man who applied himself devoutly to every secular duty. We miss him as his shade passes before our vision with a poignancy of grief that I at least cannot describe in words. We miss our Political Rishi, Mr. N. M. Parmanand, confined to his bed for ten years and more of one continuous suffering, and yet a friend from whom we never heard a word of complaint or of sorrow. In matters of religious, social or political elevation a purer life and a purer soul never lived with us and never worked with us till the last breath left him. Another gap is that left by my friend Mr. Javerilal U. Yajnik. A soul formed in a higher mould, a soul above vanity, and in its capacities equal to all that we expect in our great men, joined with humility and resignation that was unequalled by any who lived before him or who might come after him. We miss Mr. V. N. Bhagwat, a silent worker in the higher fields. I know his charity was a silent charity. It was a charity which he loved to hide from all his most intimate friends, a man whose independence of character was never sullied by any blemish of irreverence or faultfinding.

We miss all these and many more. It would be too long a list for me on an occasion like this to recall to your minds all the shadows flitting before our eyes, some more clearly perceptible than others, and we miss above all our friend, for the commemoration

of whose death we have met more especially on this occasion here. Our friend Mr. Telang was not a man whose reputation was confined to this city or this Presidency. He was India's representative, the type, I may say, of New India. Had it not been that the cruel hand of death took him away from us all too soon, there was every promise that year after year the rose that had blossomed with such beauty and with such fragrance in our midst, would have filled the whole country with its sweet scent. His simplicity of life was exemplary, his sympathies were always foremost in the support of everything that was good and true. Noble in mind himself, contact and converse with him made every one, even a stranger who visited him for the first time, discover in the man the nobility of character which only those that have this magnetic power developed in them by the gift of nature can realize. His countenance is before you all; no photograph can ever portray his features, that calm life which I believe we all realize, though it is not possible to describe it. The intellectual cast of that countenance was of a character which I had the privilege to mark in its very first stages. Some five and thirty years ago it was that I noticed in the young man who then attended the college, there was a power and force concealed which would carry him up to the very highest stages of our social and political life. There were lines in that countenance which marked him out as an intellectual giant before whom all our modest performances would look as if we were only trying to follow him, but could never

get up to him. Those who heard him speak—there must be thousands here—will remember his silver voice, his persuasive and earnest eloquence; it was all one sweet flow of reason. Those who heard him speak will remember him not as an orator who could thunder, but as one who gave light, heat, motion, and hope to the masses about him in a way to make them feel that they had profited by listening to him, even for a short space of time. Such was the man as he was seen and as he was heard, but when we went beyond the spheres of sight and hearing, and when we met the man in converse, when we saw him at work in his own house, or when we saw him as he was engaged in his multifarious duties, our estimation of him which might have been formed by hearing him or seeing him, developed into a love which we liked to cherish as a privilege. Our intimacy with him grew day by day and inch by inch into a privilege of citizenship which under no circumstances we would be induced to forego. Never out of temper himself, he always put other people into their best temper, always thinking that there was something in everybody else which deserved his admiration. As a scholar, as a speaker, as a politician, as a judge, as a member of our political and official bodies, his services are on record. Though his friends have not done their duty by him in letting his life remain unwritten, and in allowing the reminiscences of his life to be still gathered from the remarks made here and there, that work has been undertaken by an English friend far

away separated from India, and by a Parsee gentleman who, however, has not been able to understand him and his life properly. I can imagine one reason why it has been found impossible by some intimate friends of his to do full justice to the man. Their excess of love for him made it impossible for them to put their thoughts in writing in such a way as to do adequate justice to the great excellences of his character.

To those who may think that the claims of future existence have no regard for us, and that all that we need care about is our present existence, and that after death there is an end of all things to us, an end that can never be recalled to them, there is no hope and no joy in store. But most of us cherish the faith in a future existence for the soul where opportunities, denied here, are given to us in abundance ; where our powers are still further developed, and where our foibles, if any, are corrected, our temper is strengthened, and our virtues are enlarged. This is the belief of Mr. Telang's friends ; and it is this belief of theirs that gives them consolation, and partly reconciles them to the loss they have suffered in the departure of so many of our great and good men. What converse shall we hold with these spirits, who are hovering over our heads in and about this place ? What shall we converse with them ? Certainly not of our petty disappointments and sorrows ; not of the many toils and trials that we have to suffer. What shall we converse about with souls like these ? Everyone has to fix in his

own mind what he shall converse about. They all have a family likeness which distinguishes them from many of our other friends who have gone either before them or after them, to the existence from which there is said to be no return.

And while you are contemplating in your own minds what converse you should hold with these spirits, I shall suggest to you the particular features of this likeness. What are these features of family likeness which distinguish those whose memory I have brought to your recollection? Some of you may think that there is no family likeness; that there are no common features in the great and good work done by these men, which would justify my calling them a school; and still I want to show to you, if I am permitted to do so, that they do form a school. In the absence of a better name I may call that school, as representing all its best characteristics—I may call it the Telang School of Thought and action. Shall we make ourselves worthy to be the followers of this school in our present existence, either as teachers or disciples? For teacher and disciple are alike in the same condition in respect of this high spiritual converse. Teaching is learning in such matters; teaching is discipline; learning is discipline again. What then are these common features which bring all these great and good men together in our estimation? What makes all these great men and good people rise together before our minds as if they were members of one family; as if they were members of one society; as if they

were members of an association with common purposes and objects? Such of you as knew these persons intimately need hardly to be reminded of the particular and salient features of this school. I do not deny that there are other schools with distinguishing features; I should be the last person to deny that. Though my love for this school grows higher every day, still I should be the last person to deny that there are other schools, and possibly the members of those schools might have equal right to assert their own superiority. But on this occasion we have been invited as the members of this Club of which Mr. Telang, though not the founder, was a most distinguished leader. We meet here to store up in our minds in this commemoration all the lessons with which his life, his teachings, his actions, and his sufferings are so fraught; we shall carry those lessons by way of discipline and by way of encouragement to us all.

The first common feature is that they were all hopeful men. You may perhaps not understand me when I say that this privilege of hopefulness is one which may disentitle themselves from claiming a share in; some of you may not be able to see what grounds for hopefulness can exist in our present abasement when the whole world is pointing the finger of scorn at us. And yet it is a fact that they were all hopeful. If any one wishes to become a member of this Telang school of thought and hold converse with these great teachers of this school, he must first learn the lesson that hopefulness is the

badge of the school. We should be unworthy of ourselves if we are not hopeful with our traditions which transcend the tradition of every other nation of the world. You may take the map of Asia, Europe, Africa, or America, and you will find that there is no other country in the world which presents such a continuity of existence over such a long period of time. Races and creeds have risen, thrived, and decayed in other lands, but India is favoured that notwithstanding its abasement in many other particulars, the people of this country have been preserved from dangers, as though they were a people with a special mission entrusted to them. We, of the present, or those of our ancestors of the immediate past, may not be worthy to bear the standard of that mission, but still there is the fact that we represent a continuity of creed, of traditions, of literature, of philosophy, of modes of life and forms of thought, which are peculiar to this land, and which have been carried to other countries by our illustrious ancestors in the past from this land. What is there in this circumstance, you may ask, that we should feel hopeful on this account. It cannot surely be for nothing that this particular favour has been shown to us under providential guidance. If the miraculous preservation of a few thousand Jews had a purpose, this more miraculous preservation of one-fifth of the human race is not due to mere chance. We are under the severe discipline of a high Purpose. This is one ground of the hopefulness which has been the characteristic feature of this school. They

were hopeful men, they felt proud of the past, and they were hopeful of the future. They were hopeful that if they lived under this discipline, they might in time be fitted to take their proper place in history.

What is the nature of this discipline which unites our dislocated races together and makes us one in aspiration and thought? All the creeds and civilizations are gathered in this land; all the spiritual forms and beliefs are here; all social and political experiments are being tried on a large scale; and this is the only land where you will find all these creeds represented by hundreds and thousands, and millions, living peaceably together and partaking of the charities, learning, and excellence of each in a spirit of toleration for all which you will nowhere find on the broad face of this earth. This is a discipline which has not been vouchsafed to any other country in the world. The Jews were punished in Egypt; they were taken captive to Persia and were brought back and restored to their promised land, and finally again scattered to the four corners of the world. We also have been punished for our wrong-doings, and still the providential discipline keeps its hold upon us, but we have not been scattered to the winds. We are slowly being prepared by discipline and trained to be what we were—certainly intended to be—fulfillers of the mission which has still not been fully acomplished. Our great ancestors accomplished it in part, their successors failed to accomplish it and suffered the reverses that we are now labour-

ing under, and we feel hopeful that this work has come to our hands, and we are being trained to undertake it in a proper spirit. If we can take away with us this source of strength from this commemoration, then we shall have taken the first steps in the lessons which are taught in this school.

You will recognize that this sturdy hopefulness is the golden mean between stolid indifference to change and the sanguineness of temper which desires to accomplish the work of centuries in as many decades, and the work of decades in as many years, and the work of years in as many days. The stolid indifference to change represents the decrepitude of old age, and the sanguineness of temper represents the difference between the child and the man. Many of us are still in that state of mind when every little success elates us and every little depression dejects us. Give them a little start in life, and they feel as if they have mastered the whole situation; a little piece of good fortune happens to them, and they feel that they are the luckiest men in the world. People who have got this spirit of sanguineness developed in them are, I say, clearly to be distinguished from those who, while they feel hopeful of the final result, are still weighed down with the thought that they have to undergo a long discipline, and have no heart for boisterous displays or dreams of mock revivals of past glory. The results are to be achieved in ourselves and not by change of extraneous circumstances. And these results are to be achieved, and change has to be brought about

in a way which it would be difficult to anticipate at present, but such change must come if we aspire to fulfil that mission which has been left half-accomplished. We know that we should not be over-sanguine in such matters.

Our difficulties are really not outside us but inside us, the difficulties are in us, in our inertia, in our weakness, in our physical inability to sustain hard work, in our inaptitude to work long for great results by great toil. These are our difficulties; old habits are to be changed; we have by long centuries of debasement learnt to be like little children who are disappointed on being deprived of a toy, or like old men we are irritable and querulous. We should learn to be men, stalwart puritan men, battling for the right, not indifferent nor sanguine, trustful but not elated, serious but not dejected. That is the change in character which has to be accomplished.

One word of caution is necessary here. It is not the immediate past of which we are to feel proud, but of the past of our great ancestors in whose time our philosophies were developed, our literature and sciences grew up, and our people went to foreign lands, far off to Java, to the East, and far away beyond Mongolia to the North. About these times we ought to have intense reverence. The more immediate past has brought us to our present position and stranded us into the difficulties in which we find ourselves. We are creatures of that more immediate past, we are suffering the penalty of our weakness, hesitation and self-seeking and mutual jealousies. That

immediate past has landed us into our debasement. There have been periods even in that immediate past about which we may be all as legitimately proud as of the days of our great ancestors. There have been lights blazing on the mountain tops which shone with a brilliancy as great as of the Rishis in the olden days. These lights have, however, been extinguished. They were so few and far between, and the work to be accomplished was so great that lights failed and we are to some extent involved in our own darkness; and that veil has to be lifted, and nobody can lift it unless we welcome the light ourselves. Vast agencies are set in motion, by the guiding hand whose kindness it is our privilege to recognise at every step, but it is a work which takes years and years, and centuries after centuries before it can be fully accomplished.

Now these are some of the distinguishing features of this school. What else is there to be said about the common family features of this group of great and good men that we have called to converse with us? There is this further common feature—that they all agreed in holding that the work to be accomplished is not one-sided work. The liberation that has to be sought is not in one department of life, or one sort of activity, or in one sphere of thought, but it is an all-round work in which you cannot dissociate one activity from another. Take the improvement of our physique alone. To do that you may take many decades, you may take centuries. The great falling-off that has taken place during many centuries as the result of false ideals of life, evil habits, and bad

institutions can only be counteracted by persistent efforts to combat the mischief.

But besides physical development the other duties that have to be performed are of even still more peremptory characters. And what are they? They are the improvement of the social surroundings about us. The very air in which we live and move and breathe has to be purified. These environments have to be in a sense re-ordered in a way that would help not merely our physical growth, but also our intellectual and moral growth. That was the idea in the mind of our friend, the Political Rishi. Those who knew him, lying as he had been in bed in sorrow and suffering for ten or twelve years, knew that if there was anything which preyed on the mind of that man it was not the pain that he suffered—though that pain was excruciating—but it was this thought, that some of us were attaching too much of importance to one form of evil and paid little attention to the other forms. There was the work of religious regeneration to be attended to. Not that we need go to a foreign country and borrow our faith from foreign masters. Spiritual life was developed into the highest perfection, not merely in the writings, but in the actual existence of great men who flourished in the past. We have to revive that life in us; we have not to set up a particular doctrine which separated one friend from another, and one church from another. Too much importance is attached to that. We have preserved the outward forms and symbols while the spirit has evaporated—the spirit

which teaches us to do justice between man and man, and between man and woman too, and high and low alike.

While we developed new forms of thought in philosophy, we circumvented ourselves with new temptations, and we are now in a fix, being able neither to move out, nor move with the mass, and yet the social emancipation, or if you want to call it by any other name, religious or social revival if you please—is a task that has to be accomplished.

Next there is the economical and industrial movement. Our industries are in the same condition in which they were when man first entered on the agricultural stage. Millions of people are working and toiling all the year round in a most desultory fashion, managing to eke out their living in some form or other. Labour is unskilful, capital is scarce and without organization, our material resources either not utilized or undeveloped. It is difficult to accomplish a revolution like that unaided. But Providence has placed us in a most favourable state to secure the development of this side of human character in its best form. We have been put to school under the best living captains of industry and organisation.

We have, lastly, to learn to take interest in the political well-being of our people, and, though it is thought to be a very easy lesson to learn, it is one which is most difficult to accomplish, unless ordinated with it we secure the regular development of other useful activity in us.

You may frame a system, you may fashion a machine, you may build a house, but you cannot

manufacture men in the way in which you can manufacture dead machines. You must have men to deal with this system, to live in this house, and to work this machine. There are other schools in this country proclaiming a dozen other missions. But the great characteristic feature of what I have called the Telang school is that you cannot develop the chest without developing your other organs; you cannot starve yourselves and yet desire that your muscles shall grow and your nerves have the same elasticity as before. There is an interdependence between the parts, so that it is not possible to do justice to one without doing justice to the other also. This I believe to be a very difficult lesson to learn, and yet every one of those men that I have named, every one of them lived and died in a steadfast faith in this great doctrine. I may bring to your recollection the work done by our friend, whose death we have met here specially to commemorate. He was, as you know, a writer, a social and economical reformer, and he was the most active worker in the political field. He was a man who was a great scholar; not a scholar in the old sense of the word only; but a scholar both in the old and new sense of the word. He was a scholar whom the Pandits of the West and the Pandits of the East had learnt to revere, and learnt to understand. He combined all these activities in himself, and he was trying to give a helping hand to all in other fields when he could not himself work. In such matters as these people think that they cannot help one another. I

should be the last person to entertain an idea like that. The strongest among us has sometimes his moments of weakness. A man who does not get the support of his friends at such times feels that he is left alone and sinks occasionally and sins badly. We are for a moment led to believe that we cannot make use of greater opportunities without running greater risks. This is one of the mistakes which the weakness of human nature always entails upon the strongest of our men. It should be our duty to try and remedy this weakness and to see that such a mistake may not occur. When you find that you have made a mistake you must not try to hide it or defend it, but you should seek help, and try to see that it does not occur again. That is the lesson that we have to learn from true hopefulness; that hopefulness is based on the belief that there is a mission assigned to us; that mission is not assigned by any one among us, but assigned by one who alone has the power to assign the mission. And that belief is based on a sure foundation, not on the foundation of our common sense, or our powers and our capacity. But it is a religious belief that there is this sort of guidance given to us, only on one condition, that we fully realize that we have to work our own liberation and our own betterment, and that betterment not in one field or in one direction. Our muscles and sinews have to be hardened; our hearts have to be humanized to the sense of justice in all directions; and our intellect to be freed from prejudice and prepossessions; freed from the beliefs of

superstitions which have been long dominating over us. This is a work of a very difficult character, and yet each one of us, unless he puts his hand to the wheel, can never help himself to obtain success in his own emancipation. I said that there are other features relating to this particular question which I cannot describe at present. I have thought about them, but I do not at present feel that I can do justice to them. I am quite sure that many of you here had the privilege of longer intimacy with the friend I have now brought to your recollection, whose memory we have come here to commemorate. The teachings of the Telang school are seen in the life and writings of the men whose family likeness I have brought to your recollection on this occasion. We have a duty to discharge; we all owe a debt of duty, not of course in feeding them with things which they do not want, but to feel for a moment that you are not of this world, that you are in some better existence than in this world, and that your soul converses with their souls in the other existence in order to throw off its bondage. This is an object to the accomplishment of which occasions like this should be utilized. I hope you will be able to do that work. I trust that this Club, in which Mr. Telang took so much interest, and a Club in which, I fear, there is something wanting to make it clubbable, will prosper, and that occasions which bring us together will multiply and make us feel the want of Club life, till we raise this Club to the position occupied by the Clubs of the other communities in this city.

A Club without common feelings may be said to be a rope of sand. Every one of you has got a function to perform in this connection. The common feature of Club life is co-operation and association. I believe I am not far wrong when I say that the few principles which I have tried to place before you now find response in your hearts, and there are many more to which your attention may hereafter be directed. In the meanwhile there is no reason why we may not join in common fellowship which is likely to be productive of such good results.

Address delivered at the 'Hindu Union Club,' Bombay, in 1895.

VII.

REVIVAL AND REFORM.*

THIS time last year, when we met in the metropolis of India, I ventured to say that the gathering of the Conference was held under the shadow of a great calamity. Few of us then fully realized the accumulation of miseries and sorrows which this unhappy year now about to close had in store for us. The shadows darkened and deepened in their horrors as the year advanced, and it almost seemed as if the seven plagues which afflicted the land of the Pharaohs in old times were let loose upon us, for there is not a single province which had not its ghastly record of death and ruin to mark this period as the most calamitous year of the century within the memory of many generations past. No province has suffered more from these dire visitations than the Presidency of Bombay, and we are still carrying the yoke of this hard discipline of sorrows with a patience, and I might add, courage, which baffle all description. The fight has been very unequal, and we have been

* Address delivered at the I. N. S. Conference, Amraoti, 1897.

worsted at every point, our activities have been paralysed, and our losses great beyond all previous anticipations. Speaking on an occasion like this, I cannot but give expression to the grief which presses heavy on our hearts, as we remember the faces, once so familiar in these Conference gatherings, conspicuous by their absence here to-day—soldiers of God in the great fight with evil, who have been taken away from us in the full bloom of their manhood, and whose place we can never hope adequately to fill up. One such earnest soul, the late Rao Bahadur Chintaman Narayen Bhat, was the life and light of this movement. I had fondly hoped that it would be my privilege to hand over to him the charge of this great service, for which the many great and good qualities of his head and heart fitted him so well. But this was not to be, and we have now to console ourselves with the mournful satisfaction that he died a martyr to his self-imposed labour of love and charity. In another place I have described our sense of the loss suffered by us in the death of another veteran in the fight—the universally lamented Mr. V. A. Modak. Though disabled for a time for active work, his soul was ever alive to the call of duty for which he lived and died. Friends who knew Mr. Gokuldas Leula of Sind have paid a similar tribute of their sorrow to the memory of this sincere worker, who died a victim to the plague, while administering relief to those who suffered from its ravages. A tribute of respect is also due to the memory of Mr. Kashinath Pant

Natu of Poona, and Mr. Vaman Daji Oka, well known in these parts—the Central Provinces and Berars. I might recall to your mind the names of many more whom it has pleased Providence to take away from us, but this is hardly necessary to convince you that the year's casualties in our ranks have been very heavy. When people in their impatience complain that our friends here and elsewhere are only glib talkers, and fail badly when they are called on to act, they seem to forget the most prominent feature of our experience of these great visitations—namely, that in every town and city, where distress in any form prevailed, whether it was due to famine, plague, or earthquake, or floods or hurricane, the members of the various Reform Associations and their sympathisers have always been the first to volunteer their help, and if they have lost heavily, this loss is due to the perseverance with which they maintained the fight. We, who have been spared till now, may well pay this tribute of respect to their memories on an occasion like this, when we meet together to reckon our gains and losses for the year.

As might be expected, the reports of this year's work which have been received from nearly sixty Associations, large and small, and which have been summarized up to date, complain that their work for the year has not been as successful as in the previous two years. And yet to those who can read between the lines, there are manifest signs which show that the work has been as earnestly pursued as ever. To

instance a few cases:—Under the head of Female Education, the Bethune College of Calcutta, the Girls, High Schools at Poona and Ahmedabad, the Kanya Maha Vidyalaya at Jallunder, the Sing Sabha's Girls' School at Lahore, the Maharani's Girls' School at Mysore, the Mahakali Pathashala organized by Mataji Tapasvini Bai, a Mahratta lady in Calcutta, and the Sylhet and Mymensing Unions, all show a record of progress, each in its own line of development. There is not a single Reform Association of any position in the country which has not lent its best efforts to raise the standard and popularize the system of Female Education. Many Associations, Sabhas, and Samajas maintain independent girls' schools of their own, and others have their home classes more or less actively employed in carrying on the work of the schools to educate the more advanced students. Others again have their lectures for ladies, and Ladies' Associations, such as at Ahmedabad, Bombay, and Madras, started and maintained by the ladies themselves. Though the condition of female education is still very backward, and though the experiments that are now carried on are on different lines, the signs are clearly visible that throughout India, the national awakening to the necessity of developing the moral and intellectual capacities and aptitudes of our sisters has found universal recognition.

As regards another sign of this liberal movement, which seeks to do equal justice to the rights of the female as of the male sex, it is satisfactory to note that though the number of widow marriages this year

has been smaller than that of the previous years, still all the provinces have taken part in the movement. The reports show that in all twenty-five widow marriages were celebrated throughout India during the past year :—in the Punjab ten, Bombay six, the Central Provinces four, Madras three, North-West Provinces and Bengal one each. The widow marriages in the Central Provinces have been all brought about directly or indirectly by the persistent efforts of Rao Bahadur Kolhatkar, the President of this gathering. For the re-marriages in Punjab the credit is due to Dewan Sant Ram and his friends of the Widow Marriage Association there, and in regard to Bombay the same honour is due to Mr. Bhagwandas, the son of the late Mr. Madhavdas Raghunathdas, in whose house two re-marriages were celebrated. The credit of the widow marriages celebrated in Madras is due to Rai Bahadur Vireshlingam Pantalu. There was thus not a single province in which friends of the cause did not manifest their active interest in it, which remark does not equally hold good for the previous years. The paucity in the total number was partly due to the calamities of the year, and partly to the prohibition of all marriages due to the year being a Sinhastha year. Another good sign of the times which may be noted is the fact that some of the castes, in which no re-marriages had been celebrated before, joined in the movement for the first time this year. It was also reported in the papers that the Maharajah of Nabha, in the Punjab, had exercised his influence in favour of bettering the condition of Hindu widows, and

inducing influential Hindu gentlemen to support the widow marriage movement. In the Chandraseniya-Kayastha Prabhu caste of Bombay, a similar pronouncement was made by the leaders of the community in favour of re-marriage, and it was resolved to bring up the subject before the next Kayastha Prabhu Conference to be held at Baroda. Another satisfactory indication of the times is furnished by the fact reported from Guzerat, that the Audicha Brahmin community at Damun has made a similar pronouncement in favour of widow marriage in their caste. The Widows' Homes at Baranagore and at Poona have also been successfully maintained notwithstanding pecuniary difficulties, and the numbers of widows attending the homes has slightly increased, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Shashipad Bannerjee and Professor Karve of Poona.

As regards Foreign Travel, the year has had a good record to show. Several gentlemen of the Saraswata Brahman community have returned from England, and though the *Guru*, High Priest, of the caste has refused admission to them, the reform party at Mangalore and in North Canara have succeeded in openly showing their sympathies with these men. Raja Nowlojee Rao Gujar, a scion of the princely house of Nagpore, returned from England, and was well received, and Messrs. Booti and Alonikar of Nagpore, Mr. Krishna Rao Bholanath of Ahmedabad, Professor Gokhale of Poona, and Mr. Ketkar of Gwalior, have similarly, though not formally, been admitted by some of their caste people

and the opposition has not ventured to place any difficulties in their way. Two Bhatia gentlemen, for the first time in that community, left for England with the full support of their caste. In the Punjab, several young men in the Biradadri castes, who had been to England, were admitted back without any opposition. Two young men from the Aourorbans caste went to England last year. The liberal section of the Cashmere Pandit's Sabha is strongly in favour of foreign travel. These instances show that, slowly but surely, in all parts of the country, the prejudice against foreign travel is on the wane, and that before long the orthodox community or communities will learn to tolerate these departures from custom as an inevitable change.

In regard to the question of Inter-Marriage, the Bengal papers announced an inter-marriage in high life between two sub-divisions of the Kayâstha community, which hitherto kept aloof. In the Punjab, there was a betrothal between two sub-castes of the Serin community. This was the first instance of an inter-marriage between these two sub-divisions. Many of the widow marriages have also been instances of inter-marriages, and for the first time last year two instances of inter-marriage between Madrasee and Bengalee gentlemen and ladies were reported. The North-West Provinces reports show instances of similar fusion between sub-divisions of the Kayastha caste there, and in Guzerat there is a similar tendency manifest in some of the castes to amalgamate together.

As regards the postponement of Infant marriages, the reports from all provinces show a decided tendency to increase the limits of marriageable ages of girls and boys. In the Punjab, the Aourorbans Sabha has passed a resolution that no girl belonging to the caste should be given in marriage unless she has completed her twelfth year. In the Madras Presidency, the opinion is gaining ground that the time has now come for applying to Government for legislation on the subject to fix at least the marriageable age for boys, if not for girls, and to lay down a maximum limit of age for old persons who marry young girls, on the plan adopted by the Mysore Government. The Madras Provincial Social Conference and the Godavery District Conference expressly passed resolutions on this subject. The Hindu Social Reform Association at Madras has also appointed a committee to draw up a memorial with the same object. The Hon. Mr. Jambulingan Mudliyar is reported to be contemplating the introduction of a Bill in the local Council there on this subject. There have also been individual instances in some parts of the country where grown-up girls have been married without experiencing any very bitter opposition from the caste.

Nearly all the Associations have been pledged to support the Purity movement, including the anti-*Nautch* and Temperance agitation, and the work done during the year shows considerable progress under both these heads.

To turn next to another question in which the Conference has been interesting itself for the past few years,—the Admission of Converts from other faiths,—some progress has been made during the year. The Shuddhi Sabha admitted nearly 200 Mahomedan converts this year. Hitherto the movement for the readmission of converts to other faiths back into the Hindu society was chiefly confined to the Punjab. This year, however, there have been also instances of such conversions in Bengal, the North-West Provinces, and far away in Burmah, one of them being a convert Christian and the others Mahomedans. The Shuddhi Sabha of Lahore and the Arya Samaja there have deservedly taken the lead in this movement, and it will be a source of great strength to them that the movement has been taken up in the other Provinces also. The Central Provinces report for the year show that Mr. Shanker Shastri of Jubbulpore has published a pamphlet on the subject, and it is a strange coincidence that Professor Rajaram Shastrí Bhagvat of Bombay read this year a paper before the branch of the Royal Asiatic Society there, showing how in old times the non-Aryan races were brought within the fold of the Aryan system.

As regards the reduction of extravagant expenses in marriage, a very important movement was started in Calcutta under the auspices of leading Kayastha gentlemen, including such men as Sir Romesh Chundra Mitra and the Hon'ble Mr. Madhava Chandra Ghose, who met at Babu Ramnath Ghose's

house, and passed several resolutions which are likely to be attended with good results. Nearly every one of the reports of the North-West Provinces contains details of the manner in which the Kayasthas, the Bhargavas, the Chaturvedis, the Vaishyas, the Jains, and the other castes have tried to lay down sliding scales of marriage expenditure, curtailing extravagance under many heads, abolishing *Nautch* parties, fireworks, and other useless items. In the Punjab, the Aurorbans have very considerably reduced the extravagance in marriage expenses. On the Bombay side, the Bhatia *mandal* and the Dasa Oswal Jains have successfully worked in the same direction. Even in far-off Baroda, the Dasa Porwad Bania caste people have been moving in the matter. Following the example of the Rajputra Hitakarini Sabha, many non-Rajput castes in Rajputana and Malwa have laid down rules which are enforced by the same sanctions as those of the principal Sabha.

As regards Conference work generally, it may be noted that caste Conferences are the order of the day in all parts of India. I have, on previous occasions, mentioned the gatherings annually held this week in several large towns in the North-West Provinces of the Kayastha and the Vaishya community. This year was distinguished by the holding of the first Provincial Social Conference in Madras, in which Presidency also we had two district Conferences, one on the East Coast in the Godavery District, and the other on the West Coast at

Mangalore. New associations are being formed under very favourable auspices in many parts of the country, notably in the districts of Bombay and Madras Presidencies, to support the work of the Conference and to give effect to its resolutions.

Encouraged by the success which has attended the efforts of the Mysore Government, and the Malabar Marriage Law passed in the Madras Council, two Bills of great social importance have been introduced, one in the Imperial Council, to bring under better control religious Charities and Endowments, and another has been introduced in the Madras Council to remove all doubts and codify the law in regard to what constitutes self-acquired property under the Hindu joint family system. Both these Bills have suggested subjects for discussion at the ensuing Conference this year, and it is not, therefore, necessary for me to enlarge upon their importance. There is a third measure before the Viceroy's Council which, though it relates to a particular section of the Mahomedan community, has a wider bearing which interests us all. The Memon section of this community in Bombay were originally Hindu converts, and though they embraced Mahomedanism, they retained their old Hindu customs in regard to inheritance and succession, and these customs were recognized by our Law Courts. A majority of that community, however, now desire that, in place of the Hindu customs, the Mahomedan Law should govern their succession to the property of deceased persons. The Government of India accordingly intend to pass a sort of a permissive measure, by which a member of

this community may retain or abandon the old rules by a formal declaration of his choice, which choice, once made, will be final. The subject bristles with difficulties, but the permissive legislation, if it proves a success in actual operation, will furnish a precedent which may prove of considerable help to those who wish to have more liberal laws of inheritance and succession without a change of religion.

Such is the brief record of the principal social events of the year. Many ardent spirits amongst us will, no doubt, be very much dissatisfied with the poverty of this record. At the same time we must bear in mind that hundreds and thousands, nay millions, of our countrymen regard this poor record as very revolutionary, and condemn this as one of the unseen causes which have brought about the physical and moral catastrophes upon the land by way of punishment for the sins of the Reformers. These are the two extreme sides of the question, and it is not for me to say to an audience like this, on which side the balance of truth may be found. The Arya Patrika of the Pun[illegible]jab, which is a recognized organ of the Arya Samajas there, has, in its words of advice to the Conference, expressed its view that we are radically in the wrong in seeking to reform the usages of our society without a change of religion, and it seriously suggests that we should in the first instance become members of the Arya Samaja, and this conversion will bring with it all the desired reforms. Many enthusiastic friends of the Brahmo Samaja entertain similar views and give us similar advice. All I can say to

these welcome advisers is that they do not fully realize the situation and its difficulties. People have changed their religion and yet retained their social usages unchanged. The native Christians, for example, especially the Roman Catholic section among them, and many sections of Mahomedans, are instances in point. Besides, it has been well observed that even for a change of religion, it is too often necessary that the social surroundings must be liberalised in a way to help people to realize their own responsibilities, and to strengthen them in their efforts. Lastly, these well-meaning advisers seem to forget that the work of reform cannot be put off indefinitely till the far more arduous and difficult work of religious conversion is accomplished. It may take centuries before the Arya or the Brahmo Samajas establish their claims to general recognition. In the meanwhile what is to become of the social organization? Slowly but surely the progress of liberal ideas must be allowed to work its way in reforming our social customs, and the process cannot be stopped even though we may wish it. In the case of our society especially, the usages which at present prevail among us were admittedly not those which obtained in the most glorious periods of our history. On most of the points which are included in our programme, our own records of the past show that there has been a decided change for the worse, and it is surely within the range of practical possibilities for us to hope that we may work up our way back to a better state of things, without stirring up the ran-

corous hostilities which religious differences have a tendency to create and foster. There is no earthly reason whatsoever why we should not co-operate with these religious organizations, or why they should not rather co-operate with us in this work in which our interests are common, because the majority of our countrymen hold different views about religion from those which commend themselves to these Samajas. I am speaking these words with a full sense of my responsibility, for I am, in my own humble way, a member of one, if not both the Samajas, and I am a sincere searcher after religious truth, in full sympathy with the Arya and Brahmo Samaja movements, and I hope, therefore, that these advisers of ours will take my reply in the same spirit, and will not misunderstand me. Schismatic methods of propagation cannot be applied with effect to vast communities which are not within their narrow pale.

On the other side, some of our orthodox friends find fault with us, not because of the particular reforms we have in view, but on account of the methods we follow. While the new religious sects condemn us for being too orthodox, the extreme orthodox section denounce us for being too revolutionary in our methods. According to these last, our efforts should be directed to revive, and not to reform. I have many friends in this camp of extreme orthodoxy, and their watchword is that Revival, and not Reform, should be our motto. They advocate a return to the old ways, and appeal to the

old authorities, and the old sanctions. Here also, as in the instance stated above, people speak without realizing the full significance of their own words. When we are asked to revive our old institutions and customs, people seem to me to be very much at sea as to what it is they seek to revive. What particular period of our history is to be taken as the old—whether the period of the Vedas, of the Smritis, of the Puranas, or of the Mahomedans or the modern Hindu times. Our usages have been changed from time to time by a slow process of growth, and in some cases of decay and destruction, and you cannot stop at any particular point to be put without breaking the continuity of the whole. When my revivalist friend presses his argument upon me he has to seek refuge to some subterfuge which really furnishes no solution to his own question. What shall we revive? Shall we revive the old habits of our people when the most sacred of our castes indulged in all the abominations, as we now understand them, of anima food and intoxicating drink, which exhausted every section of our country's Zoology and Botany. The men and the gods of these old days ate and drank forbidden things to excess, in a way no revivalist will now venture to recommend. Shall we revive the twelve forms of sons, or eight forms of marriage, which included capture, and recognized mixed and illegitimate intercourse? Shall we revive the Niyoga system of propagating sons on our brother's wives when widowed? Shall we revive the old liberties taken by the Rishes and by the wives of the Rishes

with the marital tie? Shall we revive the hecatombs of animals sacrificed from year's end to year's end, in which even human beings were not spared as propitiatory offerings to God? Shall we revive the Shakti worship of the left hand, with its indecencies and practical debaucheries? Shall we revive the *Sati* and infanticide customs, or the flinging of living men into the rivers or over rocks, or hook-swinging, or the crushing beneath the Jagannath car? Shall we revive the internecine wars of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas or the cruel persecution and degradation of the Aboriginal population? Shall we revive the custom of many husbands to one wife or of many wives to one husband? Shall we require our Brahmins to cease to be landlords and gentlemen, and turn into beggars and dependants upon the King as in olden times? These instances will suffice to show that the plan of reviving the ancient usages and customs will not work our salvation, and is not practicable. If these usages were good and beneficial, why were they altered by our wise ancestors? If they were bad and injurious, how can any claim be put forward for their restoration after so many ages? Besides, it seems to be forgotten that in a living organism, as society is, no revival is possible. The dead and the buried or burnt are dead, buried, and burnt once for all, and the dead past cannot, therefore, be revived except by a re-formation of the old materials into new organized beings. If revival is impossible, this re-formation is

the only alternative open to sensible people, and now it may be asked what is the principle on which this re-formation must be based. People have very hazy ideas on this subject. It seems to many that it is the outward form which has to be changed, and if this change can be made, they think that all the difficulties in our way will vanish. If we change our outward manners and customs, and change our food and dress, sit in a particular way, or walk in a particular fashion, our work, according to them, is accomplished. I cannot but think that much of the prejudice against the reformers is due to this misunderstanding. It is not the outward form but the inward form, the thought and the idea which determines the outward form, that has to be changed, if real reformation is desired. Now what have been the inward forms or ideas which have been hastening our decline during the past three thousand years? These ideas may be briefly set forth as isolation, submission to outward force or power more than to the voice of the inward conscience, perception of factitious difference between men and men, due to heredity and birth, a passive acquiescence in evil or wrong-doing, and a general indifference to secular well-being, almost bordering upon fatalism. These have been the root ideas of our social system. They have, as their natural result, led to the existing family arrangements, where the woman is entirely subordinated to the man, and the lower castes to the higher castes, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect for humanity

All the evils we seek to combat flow from the prevalence of these ideas. They are mere corollaries to these axiomatic assumptions. They prevent our people from realising that they really are in all conscience neither better nor worse than their fellows, and that the average man, whatever garb he may put on, is the worse for his assuming dignities and powers which do not, in fact, belong to him. As long as these ideas remain operative on our mind we may change our outward forms and institutions, and be none the better for the change. These ideas have produced their results, and we must judge of their good or bad qualities, as St. Paul says, by their fruits. Now that these results have been disastrous nobody disputes or doubts, and the lesson to be drawn for our guidance in the future from this fact is that the current of these ideas must be changed, and in the place of the old worship, we must accustom ourselves and others to worship and reverence new ideals. In place of isolation we must have fraternity, or rather elastic expansiveness. At present it is everybody's ambition to pride himself upon being a member of the smallest community that can be conceived, and the smaller the number of those with whom you can dine or marry or associate, the higher your purity and perfection. The purest person is he who cooks his own food, and does not allow the shadow of his nearest friend to fall upon his cooked food. Every caste and every sect has thus a tendency to split itself into smaller castes and smaller sects in practical life. Even in philosophy,

it is a received maxim that knowledge and salvation are only possible for the esoteric few, with whom only is true wisdom and power, and for the rest of mankind, they must be left to grovel in superstition and vice, with only a colouring of so-called religion to make them respectable. Now all this must be changed. The new mould of thought must be cast, as stated above, in fraternity, or all-attracting expansiveness, and cohesion in society. Increase your circle of friends and associates, slowly and cautiously if you will, but the tendency must be to turn our face towards a general recognition of the essential equality between man and man. That will beget sympathy and power. It will strengthen your own hands by the sense that you have numbers with you, and not against you, or, as you foolishly imagine, below you. The next idea which lies at the root of our helplessness is that we were always intended to remain children, to be subject to outside control, and never to rise to the dignity of self-control by making our conscience and our reason the sole guides to our conduct. All our past history has been a terrible witness to the havoc committed by this misconception. We are children, no doubt, but the children of God, and not of man, and the voice of God in us is the only voice to which we are bound to listen. Of course, all of us cannot listen to that voice when we desire it, because from long neglect we have benumbed the faculty of conscience in us. With too many of us, a thing is true or false, righteous or sinful, simply because somebody

else has said that it is so. Duties and obligations are duties and obligations, not because we feel them to be so, but because somebody, reputed to be wise, has laid it down to be so. Of course, in small matters of manners and courtesies, this outward dictation is not without its use. But when we abandon ourselves entirely to this helplessness, and depend on others' wills, it is no wonder that we become as helpless as children. Now, the new idea which should take its place is not the idea of rebellious independence and overthrow of all authority, but that of freedom responsible to God alone. Great and wise men in the past or in the present, have a claim on our regards. But they must not come between us and our God—the Divine principle seated within everyone of us, high or low. It is this sense of self-respect, or rather of respect to the God in us, which has to be cultivated, and it is a tender plant which takes years and years to cultivate. But we have the capacity, and we owe it as a duty to ourselves to undertake the task. Reverence all human authority, pay your respects to all prophets and revelations, but subordinate that reverence to the Divine command in us. Similarly, men differ from men, in natural capacities and aptitudes, and heredity and birth are factors of some importance in our development, but it is at the same time true that they are not the all-important factors that we have learnt to regard them from sheer idleness, as determining our fates by a sort of moral necessity. Heredity and birth explain many things,

but neither they, nor the law of Karma, explain all things, and what is worse, they do not explain the mystery that makes man and woman what they really are—the reflections of the image of God. Our passions and our feelings, our pride and our ambition, lend strength to these factitious agencies, and with their help, the doctrine of Karma completes our conquest, and enforces our surrender. Heredity and birth can be controlled and set back by a properly trained will, when this will is subservient to a higher Will. This misconception is very hard to remove,—perhaps the hardest of the old ideals,—but removed it must be, if not in one life or generation, in many lives and many generations, if we are to rise to our full stature. The fourth old form or idea, to which I will allude here, is our acquiescence in wrong or evil-doing as an inevitable condition of human life, about which we need not be very particular, as after all human life is a vanity and a dream, and we are not much concerned with it. It is in fact atheism in its worst form. No man or woman really ceases to be animal who does not perceive and realize that wrong and evil-doing, impurity and vice, crime and misery, and sin of all kinds is really our animal existence prolonged. It is the beast in us which blinds us to impurity and vice and makes them even attractive. There must be *nautches* in our temples, say our priests, because even the gods cannot do without their impure fairies. This is only a typical instance of our acquiescence in impurity. There must be drunkenness in the world, there must be poverty, and wretchedness, and tyranny, there

must be fraud and force, there must be thieves and robbers, and the law to punish them. No doubt these have been facts, and there is no use denying their existence. But in the name of all that is sacred and true, do not acquiesce in them, do not hug these evils to your bosom, and cherish them. Their contact is poison, and the worst poison, because it does not kill, but corrupts men. A healthy sense of the true dignity of our nature and of man's high destiny is the best corrective and antidote to this poison. I think I have said more than enough to suggest to your reflecting minds what it is that we have to reform. All admit that we have been de-formed. We have lost our stature, we are bent in a hundred places, our eyes lust after forbidden things, our ears desire to hear scandals about our neighbours, our tongue wants to taste forbidden fruit, our hands itch for another man's property, our bowels are deranged with indigestible food. We cannot walk on our feet, but require stilts or crutches. This is our present social polity, and now we want this deformity to be removed, and the only way to remove it is to place ourselves under the discipline of better ideas and forms such as those I have briefly touched above. Now this is the work of the reformer. Reforms in the matter of infant marriage and enforced widowhood, in the matter of temperance and purity, intermarriages between castes, the elevation of the low castes, and the readmission of converts, and regulations of our endowments and charity are reforms, only so far and no further, as they check the influence of the old ideas and promote

the growth of the new tendencies. The reformer has to infuse in himself the light and warmth of nature, and he can only do it by purifying and improving himself and his surroundings. He must have his family, village, tribe, and nation, recast in other and new moulds, and that is the reason why social reform becomes an obligatory duty, and not a mere pastime which might be given up at pleasure. Revival is, as I have said, impossible—as impossible as mass conversion into other faiths. But even if these were possible, they would only be useful to us if they reformed us and our surroundings, if they made us stronger, braver, truer men, with all our faculties of endurance and work developed, with all our sympathies fully awakened and refined, and with our heads and hearts acting in unison with a purified and holy will,—if they made us feel the dignity of our being and the high destiny of our existence, made us love all, work with all, and feel for all. This is the reformer's work, and this, in my opinion, is the reason why the Conference meets from year to year, and sounds the harmonies in every ear which can listen to them with advantage.

VIII.

SOUTHERN INDIA A HUNDRED YEARS AGO. *

ONCE more within a cycle of twelve years we meet for the third time in this holy region of Southern India, the birth-place of the Social Conference. Men and things have moved fast since we first met under the leadership of the late Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, the first President of the Conference. The shadow of the great calamity, which has been dogging our footsteps for the last three years, is still upon us, and its dark clouds are still thickening on the southern horizon, while it has not yet stopped its destructive work in the Bombay Presidency. The persistency with which these calamities succeed one another and intensify our suffering has made some wise men among you prophesy still more dire calamities in the years to come. These prophets derive their knowledge from observations of the conjunctions of stars and planets. We, less gifted creatures, can but bow to them as we look at

* Address, "Indian National Social Conference," Madras, 1898.

the signs below our feet, on the earth we live and move and have our being in.

A Christian missionary who worked in your Province for thirty years, more than a hundred years ago, has left on record his impressions of Southern India as he saw it in those old days, and the words of despair he has uttered fill one's mind with graver forebodings than the prophecies of our astrological observers. Abbé Dubois, whose work has been recently published, has, in one of his chapters on the 'Poverty of India,' pronounced this curse upon the people:—'It is a vain hope to suppose that the English people can ever improve the condition of the Hindus. The efforts of a humane and just government may succeed up to a certain point, but as long as the Hindus cling to their civil and religious institutions, customs and habits, they must remain what they have always been, grovelling in poverty and wretchedness. These institutions and customs are insurmountable obstacles in their path of progress. To make a new race of Hindus, you must begin by undermining the foundations of their civilization, religion, and polity, and turn them into atheists and barbarians, and then give them new laws, new religion, and new polity. But even then, the task will be half accomplished, for we should still have to give them a new nature and different inclinations; otherwise, they would soon relapse into their former state and worth.'

This pronouncement, by one who had no motive to judge us ill, and who had the best opportunities

to judge us well, would, if true, be to my mind a far worse calamity than the physical sufferings and trials we are now enduring, and which, according to some of our wise men, we are fated to suffer a hundredfold more in the near future. It is strange that these,—a Christian Missionary and our wise men should thus join their hands over the wide expanse of time and space that separates them. There are those among us who have firm faith, quite independently of the planetary conjunctions, in the gradual decay of all virtue and piety in this land when the fatal limit of five thousand years from the commencement of the Kaliyuga has been reached, and according to whom we are now just on the verge of crossing this Rubicon which separates law from anarchy, and virtue from impiety, and nothing that men can do in the work of their own salvation will ever help to avert the crisis.

In this situation we meet here under circumstances which are calculated to make us anxious and thoughtful, and to sober and moderate our enthusiasm. Here, we have met full of hope, and we find that Nature and Man, the latter as represented by an eminent Christian Missionary, and also by our own kith and kin, place this skeleton before our eyes in the midst of our rejoicings. Are we then all indulging in the fond dreams of a Fool's Paradise? Is this 'Holy Land,' peopled by one-sixth of the human race, fit for no other use than to be the accursed desert of human hopes and wishes, without the fertilizing rains of divine favour to water its dry and parched-

up plains, and no green vegetation to bless the eyes, and no sweet sounds of music to lull the ears? I, for one, refuse to believe that such a doom is reserved for this favoured region, even though it is pronounced by reverend missionaries and our own revered religious teachers. I, for one, refuse to believe that we can make no headway in the path of progress, and that the British connection with this country, with all its humane and just administration, will prove of no avail to lift us up from the mire of our wretchedness. The seeming alliance between the missionary and our wise people has this weak point in its armour of defence. According to our people, the state of the country a hundred years ago, was much better in all respects, morally and socially, than what it is now. The Missionary's despair was, however, forced upon him by the state of the country as he saw it a hundred years ago, and one can feel almost sure, from the way in which things have moved since he wrote, that, if he had lived a hundred years later, he would have joined with the contemporary men of his calling, in conferring on us his blessings instead of his curses. The formidable alliance thus turns out on examination to be not so formidable as it seems at first sight, and we can turn one of our assailants against the other, and await in hope the final result. What then was the social condition of Southern India a hundred years back, and have the past hundred years worked no permanent change for the better? This will be the theme to which I shall address my observations to-night, and I hope to

be able to show that, if things are not all as bright as we wish them to be, they are not so dreary and cheerless as some would have them to be, and that the British connection and its 'just and humane administration have brought about a change in our religion, law, and polity, of such a character as not to make it necessary that we should be all turned into atheists and barbarians, to be whitewashed again into civilisation and manners, and that, if we have not acquired a new nature, we have at least acquired inclinations and aspirations which will prevent our relapse into our former condition.

A hundred years ago, Abbé Dubois mentions that among the Nairs on the Malabar coast, women had several husbands at one and the same time, and amongst the Namburi Brahmins of that province, if a girl died unmarried, it was deemed necessary for her salvation that the corpse should be married to some Brahmin hired for the purpose, before it was burned. Then in the Madura district, there was a caste called Totiyars, among whom brothers, uncles and nephews had a common wife among them, and in Eastern Mysore there was a caste in which the mother, giving her eldest daughter in marriage, had to puncture two of her fingers. On the Malabar coast in those days, all Sudras drunk *toddy*, and Brahmins used opium. In the Carnatic hills men and women did not wash their clothes till they wore away by use. In those days again, besides the caste and sect-divisions, there were what are called the right hand and the left hand factions, in which the

low castes were divided upon such questions as the right to wear slippers, to ride on horseback, or to pass certain streets, or to sound certain music before them. All these citations are made from the first chapter of Dubois' work, and the editor of that book has found it necessary, in his desire to state the truth, that all these customs of polyandry and uncleanliness, and these factious feuds have ceased to exist. In the second chapter of the same work, mention is made of the condition of the Pariahs. That condition is bad enough even now, but the details given of their wretchedness in this work baffle all description. They were forbidden to cross Brahmin streets, or to come into Brahmin neighbourhood. On the Malabar Coast, the Pariahs were attached to the land as serfs and sold with it. In those good old days, adultery was punished with death inflicted on the woman, and that death was inflicted by the members of the caste. Expulsion from caste for breach of caste-rules was irrevocable, unless a rival faction was created by the friends of the person excommunicated. Even when thousands of Brahmins of those days, as well as Sudras, were forcibly converted by Tippu Sultan, the Brahmins who were applied to for re-admission found it impossible, even with the help of the Brahmin Government of Poona, to effect their restoration, while many thousands of Christians who had been similarly converted by Tippu Sultan, were freely admitted back into the Christian community, by the intervention of Abbé Dubois, Colonel Wilks, and

General Wellesley. The professors of the so-called Fine Arts, such as music, painting, and sculpture, belonged in those days to castes which were held to be lower in the social scale than the Sudras, and their touch was pollution. These things have now been, according to the editor of the work, all changed for the better. Adultery is not punished by death without trial, excommunication is not irrevocable, wholesale conversions by force are impossible, and there are movements to re-admit converts to other faiths when they seek such re-admission. This year, the Arya Samaja in the Punjab admitted five such Christian and Moslem proselytes. And men of the highest caste are now engaged in the practice of the fine arts. As regards the Brahmins themselves, the power of the Gurus in those days in exacting Pada-Puja was something terrible. Dubois' mentions without reserve that many had to sell their children for Guru-dakshinas. Women, dishonoured by the Guru, were called Garud Baswis or Linga Baswis, and had the stamp of Garud or the Ling branded on tender parts of their bodies. And then, these women became wives of gods, and served in the temple, till they became old and lost their attraction. In Dubois' time the girls were married at the age of five, seven, or at the utmost, when they were nine years old. Widows, of course, were not allowed to marry in the higher castes, and even the Sudras followed the example. On the fast-days people not only took no food on the 11th day, but also ate only once on the 10th and the 12th days. In Bengal, the widows

may not even drink water on the fast-days. People who happened to kill Nag, serpents, had to expiate their offence by a ceremony, called the *Pavadan*, which consisted of an incision made on the thigh or arm of the offender, or of some other person who might stand as substitute on the former's paying a large Dakhshina. In the last case, the blood was sprinkled on the body of the offender.

As regards intemperance, Dubois says, that while the Europeans are noted for their drunkenness, the Brahmins are in their turn open to the charge of gluttony, and even as regards drunkenness, he says, they were not altogether exempt from the vice, and gives an instance in which a Tanjore Brahmin's house caught fire, and, among the things saved were one vessel of salted pork and another of *arrack* or native rum. Of course, these Brahmins must have been Shakti worshippers or *vama-margis*, among whom the use of forbidden food and drink, and promiscuous mingling of men and women in indecent gatherings, were tests for admission into the secret society. The respect due from the Shudras to the Brahmins, and from women to men, was in those days best shown by uncovering the upper part of the body of the inferior person before the eyes of superiors. As regards Sati, it was the commonest occurrence to witness. Dubois himself witnessed the deaths of several Satis, among others the Ranees of Tanjore, who immolated themselves with the corpse of the deceased Raja. There were some seven hundred Sati deaths in the year 1817 in

the Bengal Presidency alone. As regards the belief in astrology, magic, omens, and palmistry, Dubois states that there was in his time almost a general belief in these superstitious fancies. These beliefs are still not extinct, but we have no idea of the influence they exercised a hundred years ago. Then again, turning to the popular religion of the country, the position of the Devadasees was recognised as so respectable, that even private gentlemen visiting each other on formal business, had to be accompanied by these attendants. There were temples in Mysore, belonging to the aboriginal gods, where fairs were held at which women cursed with barrenness, made vows to get children, and in connection with these vows had resort to the most dirty practices which cannot be described in decent language. Their gods and goddesses were carried in processions in those days, being made to mimic obscene gestures to one another. These processions may still be seen in various parts of Southern India, but robbed of much of their obscene features. Walking on burning fire, hook-swinging, piercing the cheeks and the lips or the tongue with iron rods or silver wire—these were the received forms of devotion in many temples.

I think I have said enough to give you an idea of the state of things in Southern India which Dubois witnessed with his own eyes a hundred years ago. It is quite possible, that being a missionary, he unconsciously exaggerated many points, and misunderstood many others. There are

good reasons to think that he was misinformed in many respects; but making allowance for all these defects, the general correctness of his description, especially of the ignorant classes of society, can hardly be impugned. There are fossil remains and vestiges of all these enormities and superstitions even still visible outside our larger towns in the mofussil. Even if one-tenth of the evils and vices, and obscenities, and enormities which met his eyes were true, they make up together a picture sufficiently disheartening to the most enthusiastic defender of the past. The fact is that Brahmin civilisation, with all its poetry, and philosophy, with strict rules of abstinence and purity, had hardly penetrated below the upper classes who constituted less than ten per cent. of the population. We can easily understand these phenomena from our own present experiences.

The practical question for us to consider is, whence came this polyandry and polygamy; this brutal conception of gods and goddesses; this confessed cruelty to women; these superstitions; these feuds between castes and sub-sections of castes and factions? Abbé Dubois has been very unjust to the Brahmins when he holds them responsible for all these enormities. The Brahmin civilization, whatever else it was, was certainly not a civilization which favoured polyandry or polygamy, drunkenness and obscenity, cruelty and vice. We have records which mirror the thoughts of the Brahmin settlers in Southern India. The ideal of marriage was

monogamy, and it is best typified in the story of the Ramayana, where the hero is distinguished above all men for his single-hearted devotion to his consort. The women, as depicted in the early Brahmin records, as also in the epics, are respected and honoured, left to their choice to marry or to remain single, and are oftentimes noted as composers of hymns, and writers of philosophical works. The wife, even in the rituals we now recite, is the sole mistress of the house, and as free an agent as her partner in life. The immolation in the form of Sati was not only not recognised as a duty, but second marriage was prescribed as quite open to her, if she so wished it, in all the first three Yugas. Early marriage was not dreamt of, and one of the qualifications for marriage was developed womanhood. The castes were not so strongly separated as to prevent inter-marriages in the order of the caste. As for interdining, the first three castes among themselves observed no jealous distinction. And the better specimens of the fourth caste were specially commended as servants for cooking food. Ghost-worship and Devil-worship were unknown to the Brahmin cult. As for crossing seas on long voyages, there is historical evidence that Brahmin missionaries and settlers established themselves and their religion in far-off Java, and Sumatra, and their Buddhist successors converted half the human race in Burma, Siam, China, Japan, Tibet and distant Mongolia. Even in India itself, the Aryan settlers found no difficulty in incorporating with them the

non-Aryan races into fellowship in the profession of the Aryan faith.

The question thus recurs again, how it happened that institutions and practices so essentially just and pure, so healthy and considerate, came to be deflected from their natural growth, and made room for the distortions which struck Abbé Dubois as so monstrous and excite surprise in us even at the present day; how the chivalry and honour of our noble ancestors disappeared, and their spiritual worship gave way to ghost and demon-worship, the ministers of which in many cases are the descendants of these same old Brahmins? Unless we find some working solution which satisfactorily accounts for this transformation, we shall never be able to find our way with sure steps out of this labyrinth. Abbé Dubois' explanation is obviously untrue. The fact appears to be, though I speak with diffidence, and subject to correction, that the Brahmin settlers in Southern India and the warriors and traders who came with them were too few in numbers and too weak in power to make any lasting impression beyond their own limited circle upon the vast multitudes who constituted the aboriginal races in the Southern Peninsula. In North India, where their power was more distinctly felt, they appear to have been about the commencement of the Christian era submerged by fresh hordes of Scythians or Shakas, of Huns and the Jats or Goths who subverted the Roman Empire. In Southern India it was not foreign invasion, but the upheaval of the aboriginal Dravidian races which brought about pretty nearly the same

results. There is a tone of despondency and panic in the Puranas written about this time which can only be explained by some such phenomena. However this may be, this is certain, that when Hinduism revived from the depression into which it had fallen, in consequence of the rise of Buddhism, it did not revive in its old, pristine purity, but in the more or less adulterated form as we now see it even at the present day. In their anxiety to destroy Buddhism, and later on the Jain faith, the Brahmins allied themselves with the barbarism of the land, represented in the countless multitudes whom they had till then contemptuously treated as Sudras, and as out of the pale of their early institutions. From being sages and prophets, poets and philosophers, they descended to the lower level of priests and *purohitas*, and thus sacrificed their independence for the advantage of power and profit. The gods and goddesses of the Dasyus, or the Rakshasas, who had no place in the old pantheon, were identified as being more or less pure forms of the old Brahmanical Triad, or rather of the two divisions of Shaiva and Vaishnava cults. The old elastic system of the three divisions of the Aryas and the fourth non-Aryan section became crystalised into local and professional castes of which the Brahmins became the priests; and these sub-divisions became strict and insurmountable barriers. Such a change as this could not be brought about without a surrender, all along the line, to the brute force of barbarous influences. Woman ceased to be an object of respect, and became the subject of distrust and

jealousy who always must remain dependent on her relations. The institution of Sati, found in all barbarous nations, was introduced; marriage by choice gave way to the practice of sale in marriage; and polygamy and polyandry became legalized institutions. Brahminism, having failed to conquer from want of power, allowed itself thus to be degraded and conquered by the multitudes whom it failed to civilize. As priests of the castes and the aboriginal gods and goddesses, it became their interest to magnify for their advantage the old superstitious beliefs; and with a view to justifying this action, books, called the Mahatmas, were composed in the names of the Puranas, and new texts were introduced, condemning all the old approved institutions, such as celibacy, sea voyages, late marriages, and widow marriages as being unsuited to the new Kali-yuga, and therefore forbidden, though practised in old times. This seems to me to be the only possible explanation of the change of front which we see in the old records. Of course, in the midst of this degradation, the spirit of the old civilization was not entirely extinct, and the great Acharyas, who flourished in Southern India, and the equally great saints and prophets who succeeded them, entered their protest against this cruelty and wrong and degradation of the priesthood, and held up the light on high with the independence of the old Rishis. Their labours bore no permanent result, because of the irruption of the Mahomedans which soon followed, and the establishment of Moslem power aggravated the old evils by

the example which the Mussalmans set to the subject races. Even the Mahomedans, however, were not able to extinguish the old fire completely, and the spirit of righteous self-assertion and of faith in God, which had distinguished Brahmanism from the first, only wanted an opportunity to regain its old liberty.

If this account of the deflection or corruption of Brahmanism be approximately correct, it furnishes us with a clue by which we can trace back our steps in this labyrinth of confusion. The opportunity so sorely needed has come to this country, and slowly but surely priest-ridden and caste-ridden India is loosening its coils of ages. Abbé Dubois was unjust to the old civilisation when he thought that we should have to unlearn all our past, and to commence with atheism and barbarism, and then take our religion, law, and polity from our foreign masters. Even if the task were possible, the remedy would be worse than the disease. We have not to unlearn our entire past,—certainly not—the past which is the glory and wonder of the human race. We have to retrace our steps from the period of depression, when, in panic and weakness, a compromise was made with the brute force of ignorance and superstition. If this unholy alliance is set aside, we have the Brahmanism of the first three Yugas unfolding itself in all its power and purity, as it flourished in the best period of our history.

This is the work of the Reform movement. Last year I spoke of 'Revival and Reform,' and I tried to show how *Reform* was not *Revival.* The line of thought developed above shows that the work of

Reform is really the work of *Liberation,—liberation* from the restraints imposed upon an essentially superior religion, law and polity, institutions and customs, by our surrender to the pressure of mere brute force for selfish advancement. Our nature has not to be changed. If that were necessary, escape would be hopeless indeed. Our inclinations and aspirations have to be shifted from one quarter to its opposite, from the more immediate past of our degradation to the most remote past of our glory. We need no foreign masters for the purpose. It is enough if they keep the peace, and enforce toleration to all who work for righteousness. Super-imposed laws will not do service to us, unless as in some extreme cases, the Surgeon has to be sent for to stop hæmorrhage and allow the Physician time to heal the patient. This work of liberation must be the work of our own hands, each one working of himself for his own release. It is in this spirit that the work has been carried on during the last thirty years and more.

For the last twelve years, the Conference has been trying to establish a bond of union between the several associations and individuals who are working in this direction in this and in other parts of the country, and to publish the results of that work for the information of all concerned. Measured from year to year, the progress seems small, and in many years the harvests are not plentiful. The year about to close has been on the whole a lean year, owing to causes which need not be detailed here, the plague being the principal cause among others. The results of this

year will be placed before the delegates in a summary form at the first preliminary meeting to-morrow morning. One general observation may be made on this occasion. The question is often asked, who are the heroes and martyrs in this reform work?—the prevailing impression being that unless heroes and martyrs are forthcoming, no cause can make progress. I would say in answer that to the extent that this impression is true, the cause had its heroes and martyrs in Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar, Pandit Vishnu Shastri, Mr. Karsandas Muljee and Mr. Madhavadas Raghunathdas, and even now we have Rao Bahadur Kolhatkar, our President of last year, Dr. Bhandarkar, our President of one of the previous years, our honoured President this year, Pandit Viresalingam Pantulu, Prof. Karve, and others who require no mention, who have in their own lives set an example which shows that the fire is not yet put out altogether. Dr. Jaising, and Mr. Dwarkanatha Gangauli, who died this year, may also be mentioned, one as the life and soul of the Shudhi Sabha, and the other as the practical reformer from among the Brahmo community. It is not given to all to be heroes and martyrs in such a cause. But, it is given to every one to be an earnest and genuine worker. In that capacity the names of hundreds may be mentioned who are unknown beyond their own circles, and whose work therefore, is one of pure love and self-sacrifice. Lala Devraj and Lala Munshiram of Jallundhar, Lala Hansraj and Lala Ruchiram of Lahore, the late Gokuldas of Succur,

Mr. Dayaram Gidumal of Sindh, Mr. Lal Shankar of Ahmedabad, Mr. Damodardas Goverdhandas, the late Dr. Atmaram Pandurang who died during the year, Babu Shashipad Bannerjee, Babu Rash Behari Mukerjee who also died this year, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, Mr. R. Venkatratnam of your part of the country, Mr. Vishnu Pant Mahajani of Berar and Lala Baijnatha of N.-W. P., may be mentioned in this connection as persons about whose genuine devotion to the cause there can be only one opinion. In spiritual, if not in temporal matters the remark is true that a man's wealth is measured not by what he has in the way of possessions outside himself, but by what he is or may become in the way of his own development from year to year into higher and fuller life. Liberties bestowed on us by foreigners are concessions forced on us by the force of circumstances. These are not really ours, they are possessions only and not developments. But, when multitudes of people in different parts of the country yearn for a change in their social surroundings, and each in his place seeks to work it out at great sacrifice of his present interests, it can hardly be but that those yearnings and struggles must bear fruit. One of our most popular saints has in his own inimitable way, described this fruit to be the strength which comes from the resolve to be better; and judged by this test, there can be no reason to doubt that this desire to be better, and this resolve to strive for it, are both growing in all the many races that dwell in this land. Other influences

are co-operating to help on the work, and make it smoother and easier of accomplishment. But without such a desire and such a resolve, these forces would be powerless to act. We have therefore, no reason to be depressed by the calamities and by the prophecies of evil to come, and of our unalterable doom pronounced by our own or other people. The harvest is ready to the hand of every one who is prepared to give his honest labour for the day, to earn his rest for the night in life and after life.

IX.

HINDU PROTESTANTISM.*

ONCE more we meet on this platform to take stock of our gains and losses of the year that is about to close. Many familiar faces that cheered us in our work and helped us with their sweet encouragement, have left us, and their vacant places have not yet been filled up in our hearts and memories. The sad reflection comes upon our minds as we recollect these losses, whether after all this Theistic movement is or is not destined to out-live those who first founded it in our midst twenty-eight years ago, and if we were left upon our resources, this feeling of dismay might overpower us with its heavy weight. The fact, however, is that the movement has struck its roots deep in the past, and its growth in the future may, therefore, safely be expected to embrace a longer period than is represented by the lives of the present generations of our leaders. During the last few years I have been trying to set forth from this platform, and in

* Anniversary Address at the Prarthana Mandira, Bombay, 1895.

other places also, the past history of the origin and progress of what has been well described by our saints and prophets for two thousand years and more, as the Bhagawata Dharma, of which the present Samaja movement is only a faint reflection and a humble off-shoot. One of the essential features of the Bhagawata Dharma is its Protestant character. As among the Jews, prophet after prophet has risen among us, and in their lives and precepts have protested against and denounced certain habits of thought and principles of action which have an inveterate tendency to encrust the true spirit of our faith and to give a human coating which obscures from view the essentially divine element. Bhagawata Dharma may, therefore, be safely described as Protestant Hinduism, and I would bespeak your favourable attention to-day to the chief feature of this long continued protest, which has done such great service in the past, and which is likely to do still greater service in the future. Our students are tolerably familiar with the fact that the searching of the spirit, and the cleansing of the heart which culminated in the growth of Protestantism in Western Europe were contemporaneously working as powerful agents in this our own country, and with a similar beneficial result. The Christian leaders of modern thought protested against the supremacy of the Latin language as a vehicle of expression and thought in the schools and churches. They protested against the excess of the ascetic ideas of the monks of different orders, and the necessity of priestly intervention in

all rites and ceremonies. They protested against indulgences, and they protested against pilgrimages, fasts, confessions and casuistry. They protested against the image-worship and relic-worship and pompous ceremonies, which did not tend to elevate the heart and the mind of man. They succeeded in their own time wonderfully, not only by the direct effect of their action in their own communities, but still more by their reflex effect on the Roman Catholic Church, which not only purified itself in the struggle and kept up its authority over a large part of Europe, but with renewed vigour, has again been able to raise its head as the oldest and noblest representative of constituted authority in its struggle with emancipating reason. The need for protest was not over with the century which produced Luther and Calvin, Knox and Latimer. The established faith has always and everywhere a tendency to grow too rigid and authoritative, too mechanical and formal to retain the celestial fire pure and burning. The Puritans and the Covenanters of the seventeenth and the Wesleyans and Methodists of the last century are all valuable only as protests against the weakness and corruption of the established order of things. I need not pursue this topic further here, as my main concern is to trace the growth of the Protestant movement in our own country. With a view to prevent misapprehensions I may at once state, for the information of my audience, that I have based my own history of this movement on the biographies of saints and prophets,

not written by any one of us, but by writers such as Nabhaji, Uddhav-Chidghan, Priyadása, and rendered familiar to us by Mahipati's great work written more than a century ago. Mahipati's collection makes us acquainted with the history of one hundred saints and prophets, out of which about fifty are from Maharashtra, and the rest from other parts of India. The saints and prophets, it may be noted, include about ten women, and as many Mahomedans, and the rest, about eighty, comprise about an equal number of Brahmins and non-Brahmins, and among these last are representative men of all castes and creeds: butchers, spinners and weavers, goldsmiths, barbers and mahars, kings and farmers, bankers and soldiers. This is the most noteworthy feature of the leaders of the Protestant movement in India. No country in the world can present such a galaxy of pure and pious men born in humble circumstances, who struggled and strove for the cause, and won it not by their own strength, but by their humility. The genuinely natural character of the movement is attested by the fact that it spread to all classes and touched all hearts, both of men and women, and of Hindus and Mahomedans alike. There is always good reason for despondency and despair, so long as any movement is not so general in its character. This has been the weakness of the Samaja movement, both of our own and of the Arya and Brahma Samaja, that they have failed as yet to stir the heart of the nation, and their influence is only operative over a few souls brought up in a particular

atmosphere. It is on this account that the study of this old history becomes to us a matter of paramount importance. These one hundred men immortalized by Nabhaji and Uddhav, Priydas and Mahipati, cover a period of five or six hundred years, and even yet the stream has not been dried up altogether. We have next to see what were the principal features of the protest that these men raised each in his own place and time, each in his own manner and method. Their struggles led to neither wars or bloodshed nor persecutions, inquisitions, or banishments. They worked silently as God's spirit works in us, silently but surely. These men protested against the supremacy of the old Sanskrit language as a vehicle of learning, and they enriched, each in his own time, the stock of their vernacular treasures. The battle of the Vernacular against the Classics is not of our own time only. It is an old, old struggle. Pandits pounced upon Ekanáth and Tukaram for daring to popularize the old learning so as to make it accessible to the meanest of the mean. The story of the drowning of Ekanath and of Tukaram's works at the bidding of the Pandits is well known. The same struggle was maintained by Ramdas against Wáman and by Rasal against Namadev. The Saints conquered in the end, and so far the growth of the vernacular in each province of India has been the measure of the growth of the protestant element in that province. The protest was raised

by these men against the tendency to exaggerate the importance of rites and ceremonies as helps to the growth of the religious spirit. Rites and ceremonies are after all symbols, and if their symbolical character is not vividly presented to the mind, they obscure the religious vision, and usurp the place of the purity of heart and of true devotion for which they were intended to be auxiliaries only, and not masters. Nearly everyone of the saints worked for righteousness in this direction, and it would take too long if I were to enumerate the triumphs they achieved. Jesus' protest against the Pharisees and Sadducees was reproduced in the lives of every one of these men in their struggles with orthodoxy and Brahminism. Their success in this department has not been equal to that which they achieved in breaking down the monopoly of Sanskrit learning, but anybody who can read our Smrities and religious ordinances and compare their strictness with our present customs and practices, can alone measure the greatness of the work already achieved. The third protest raised by these saints was against the hold of the Yoga system of austerities and the supposed powers it conferred on the Yogi of performing wonders. In this direction the success is almost complete. Our countrymen have learned to discern the vanity of their foolish attempts to strive after occult power, which even, when possessed in full, means no real gain. The contrast exhibited in the lives of Dnyandev and Changadev, and of Dnyandev himself

and Namdev, typifies this feature of the protestant movement with remarkable accuracy, and leaves nothing to be desired. The fourth feature of the movement was directed against the relaxation of the strictness of caste rules and distinctions. The inclusion of mahars and barbers, cobblers and butchers, the inclusion of women and Mahomedans among the saints, represented an enlargement of view to which you will scarcely find a parallel elsewhere. The lives of Ekanath and Kabir, Ramdas and Tukaram, typified the highest efforts of true religion in this direction. The success here is not so permanent and assured as in other respects, but still much ground has been gained. The next protest was raised against cruelty and impurity, against animal and human sacrifices, against the worship of cruel deities and the performance of Shákta rites. The success here is complete. The next ground of protest was equally strong against Polytheism, though not against idolatry, except in the advanced sects of Nának and Kabir. The saints were practically worshippers of one God, and their efforts not to admit a multiplicity of rival gods was heroic. The protest was equally loud in favour of proclaiming that God was a loving God, and that his spiritual Providence cared for the meanest of His creatures with more than a mother's and father's love. This sense of a loving God who spoke to and walked with, and comforted the worshippers, that sense is our richest treasure, though the stories told of this inter-communition with men have been often of

a very grotesque character. These then are the points in which Indian Protestantism has done us service, and if we are true to our great ancestors, this is the work and these are the lines on which we should carry on the struggle. Coming in contact with Mahomedans the Hindu Protestant Saints made converts of thoughtful Mahomedans by making concessions which implied an unity of Providence, whether it was called Ráma or Rahim. We have come in contact with Christianity and we have our own concessions to make. But, whatever we give in or take from our surroundings, one thing we must never forget—that it is not a movement started by a few English educated natives, and that its founder was this or that man in Bengal or the Punjab. The movement is older than Modern India, and it is not confined to the English educated classes in the towns. Its roots lie deep in our history and we must study it there all along the line if we want to understand how we really stand, and whither we have to go. Authority in matters of faith is as essential as authority in matters of secular happiness. Authority is not a creation of the imagination. We cannot create the same which teaches us to bow to noble and good men of the past, and we cannot dispense with their help. We must seek them as our guides. Our domestic guides are in such matters to be preferred to foreign guides, because these last have not been the flesh of our flesh, and the bone of our bone. If we would bear that in mind and work the movement

on the lines of the Bhagawata Dharma in the times to come, success is sure, because it is His work, and He will carry it through by the hands of poor men if only we swear fealty to Him and hold by Him through good and bad report.

N.B.—*The substance of this Paper is made up from the notes of the lecture taken at the time by a sympathetic friend. It, however, fails to reproduce the fulness of the treatment contained in the original address. In fact, Mr. Justice Ranade had deemed it necessary on this account to treat this subject in a more systematic manner in one of the chapters, "The Saints and Prophets of Máháráshtra," in his "History of the Rise of the Maratha Power." Extracts from the said chapter are with the author's permission, attached hereto, for a fuller elucidation of the subject.*—EDITOR.

We propose in this chapter to trace in rough outline the history of this religious upheaval in Western India. Our main sources of information will be the voluminous biographies of the saints and prophets of Máhárashtra, written by one of our own poets, Mahipati, towards the close of the last century, long before British influence was felt in these parts as a factor of any importance. Like the political struggle for independence, the religious upheaval was also not the work of a single man, or even of a single century. Its early commencement can be traced even anterior to the Mahomedan conquest of the Deccan. Under the rule of the Yádav kings of Dévgiri, Dnyándév, the first saint and prophet of Máhárashtra, wrote his famous commentary on the

Bhagwadgitá in the spoken language of the country. Mukundráj, who lived under the Ballál Kings, also wrote his famous work, the first of the kind in Maráthi, in the twelfth century. The Mahomedan invasions for a time seem to have paralysed all activity, but gradually the national spirit regained its healthy elasticity, and just about the time of the rise of the Maráthá power we had a galaxy of saints and prophets, whose names have become household words with the people of the country. The stream continued to flow in full tide for two centuries, and then it appears to have dried up, and with its ebb, the political domination also became a thing of the past. Roughly speaking we may state that the history of this religious revival covers a period of nearly five hundred years, and during this period some fifty saints and prophets flourished in this land, who left their mark upon the country and its people so indelibly as to justify Mahipati in including them in his biographical sketches. A few of these saints were women, a few were Mahomedan converts to Hinduism, nearly half of them were Bráhmins, while there were representatives in the other half from among all the other castes. Maráthás, *kunbis*, tailors, gardeners, potters, goldsmiths, repentant prostitutes, and slave girls, even the outcaste *Mahárs*. Much of the interest of this religious upheaval is centred in the facts we have noticed above, as they indicate plainly that the influence of higher spirituality was not confined to this or that class, but permeated deep through all strata of society, male and female, high and low,

literate and illiterate, Hindu and Mahomedan alike. These are features which the religious history of few other countries can match or reproduce, unless where the elevating influence is the result of a widespread popular awakening. In Northern and Eastern India a similar movement manifested itself much about the same time. Nának stirred up the Punjáb to rise, and made a supreme effort to reconcile Hinduism with Mahomedanism. Chaitanya in the far East sought to bring men back from the worship of *Shakti* and *Káli* to the faith of the *Bhagawat;* while Rámánand and Kabir, Tulsidás and Surdás, Jayadév and Rohidás, contributed each in his own way to the work of spiritual enlightenment. Their influence has no doubt been great and abiding, but it cannot be compared with the work done by the saints and prophets of Maháráshtra. The names of Chángdév and Dnyándév, Nivritti and Sopán, Muktábái and Jani, Akábái and Vénubái, Námdév and Eknáth, Rámdás and Tukárám, Shaik Mahomed and Shánti Bahámani, Dámáji and Udhav, Bhánudás and Kurmdás, Bodhlé Báwá and Santobá Powár, Késhav Swámi and Jayarám Swámi, Narasinha Saraswati and Rangnáth Swámi, Chokháméla and the two potters, Narahari Sonár and Sávatiá Máli, Bahiram Bhat and Ganésh Nath, Janárdanpant and Malopant, and many others that might be cited, furnish an array which testifies to the superior efficacy of this movement in Maháráshtra. The Bráhmins in these parts furnished a much larger proportion of saints and prophets than was the case in any of the

other parts of India where the *Kshatriya* and *Vaishya* castes furnished a much larger contingent than the Bráhmins.

As is the case with all biographies of saints, the popular imagination attributes to these persons wonderful and miraculous powers, notably those of raising the dead to life, healing the sick and feeding the hungry. The stories which are told of the way in which they were helped by supernatural agency in their mission of love may or may not be accepted in these days of vigilant criticism. As Mr. Lecky has remarked, it is the atmosphere of child-like credulity which predisposes men to require and accept these wonders and miracles as events of ordinary occurrence. The saints and prophets themselves did not claim miraculous powers. They were meek and suffering men who placed their trust in Providence, and their trust was justified beyond their expectations, often-times to their own surprise. The moral interest of these biographies centres however, not in their miraculous feats, but in their struggles, and in the testimony their lives afforded in vindication of the eternal verities of the moral law and man's higher spiritual life. It is with this aspect of their life that we are more immediately concerned in the sequel, and we hope to show that in this respect the work they accomplished was priceless and blessed beyond all comparison.

There is a curious parallel between the history of the Reformation movement in Western Europe and the struggle represented by the lives and

teachings and writings of these saints and prophets, who flourished about the same time in Maháráshtra. The European reformers of the sixteenth century protested strongly against the authority claimed by the priests and the clergy with the Roman Bishop at their head. The clergy and the Pope represented a tradition of authority which had come down from the remote past, and had done signal service in its own time in humanising and civilizing the hordes of the barbarian conquerors who devastated the Roman provinces. In course of time, the priests, instead of being the servants, claimed to be masters and rulers, with temporal and spiritual powers, and intermediaries between God and man. The exercise of this intercession was hedged round by numberless rites and ceremonies, and in course of time many abuses crept in and alienated general sympathy. These abuses assumed their worst forms about the time that Luther rebelled against the authority which issued indulgences and levied Peter's Pence, not as charity, but as a tax to subserve the temporal power of intriguing Popes and their vicious Cardinals. The Reformation in Western India had its counterpart in this respect. Ancient authority and tradition had been petrified here, not in an ambitious Bishop and his clergy, but in the monopoly of the Bráhman caste, and it was against the exclusive spirit of this caste domination that the saints and prophets struggled most manfully to protest. They asserted the dignity of the human soul as residing in it quite independently of the accidents of its birth and

social rank. The circumstances of their own birth and education naturally predisposed some of these preachers to take up such a position. As observed above, nearly half of them were of castes other than Bráhmans, and some of them of very low castes indeed. Many of the Bráhman reformers also had some stain in their inherited purity which led or forced them to rebel against all artificial restraints. Dnyándév and his brothers and sister Muktábái were born to their father after he had retired from the world and became a *Sanyási*, monk. His spiritual guide, Rámánand, came to know that this *Sanyási* had not obtained his wife's willing consent to a change of *Ashram*, and he ordered him to go back to his native place and live with his wife. The children so born to the *Sanyási* became marked objects of caste aversion, and the Brahmans refused to perform the Initiation ceremony when the brothers reached the proper age. The children remained in this unrecognised condition all their life, and were revered notwithstanding this defect in their caste respectability. Another saint, Málopant, was married to a low-caste girl, whose caste was not discovered till after the marriage, and the husband did not abandon her, but only held no intercourse with her, and when on her death, he performed her death-rites as usual, a miracle was displayed which satisfied his worst enemies, that Málopant and his *Mahár* wife were both holy by nature. Jayarám Swámi's master, Krishnadás, was similarly married to a barber girl, and

the inferiority of her caste was discovered after marriage. The holy life of the man had, however, such an effect that at last, after much persecution, even the high priest Shankaráchárya of the day raised no objection. Eknáth, it is well known, made no secret of the little importance he attached to caste distinctions. He fed a hungry *Mahár* at his house, and, when out-casted, allowed himself to be taken to the river for purposes of purification, when a miracle took place by which the merit of feeding a hungry *Mahár* was proved to be far greater than that of feeding many hundred Brahmans, for the former merit cured a leper of his foul disease, when the latter failed to make any impression on him. A very common miracle is reported to have been performed by many of the saints, notably by Dnyándév, Eknáth, and Nágnáth, when, on the refusal of the Bráhmans to officiate on *Shráddha* ceremonies in their places for breach of caste regulations, the deceased fathers of the obstinate Bráhmans were made to descend to earth, and shamed their incredulous sons into the belief that their caste exclusiveness was wholly out of place. In Namdév's biography, his God of Pandharpur, who had allowed Námdév to invite Brahmans to a feast and himself partook of that feast with the saint, was Himself excommunicated, and then the story relates how Dnyándev, who was present in spirit, remonstrated with the Bráhman persecutors.

He said :—There was none high or low with God. All were alike to him. Never entertain the

thought that I am high born, and my neighbour is low of birth. The Ganges is not polluted, nor is the wind tainted, nor the earth rendered untouchable, because the low born and high born bathe in the one, or breathe the other, or move on the back of the third.

The most touching incident, however, is that which occurred in the persecution of the out-caste *Mahár* Chokhámélá for his having dared to enter the temple of Pandharpur. When remonstrated with for his temerity, Chokhámélá replied that his God took him inside by force, and he did not go of his own accord. He remonstrated with the Bráhman worshippers of the temple in this strain—What availeth birth in high caste, what availeth rites or learning, if there is no devotion, or faith? Though a man be of low caste, yet if he is faithful in heart, and loves God, and regards all creatures as though they were like himself, and makes no distinction between his own and other people's children, and speaks the truth, his caste is pure, and God is pleased with him. Never ask a man's caste when he has in his heart faith in God, and love of men. God wants in his children love and devotion, and he does not care for his caste. The Bráhmans, as might be expected, were not converted by this preaching of high wisdom, and they complained to the Musalman officer of the place, and he, like another Pilate of the Bible story, ordered Chokhámélá to be punished by being tied to and driven by a team of bullocks, and tortured to death in

this cruel fashion. God, however, miraculously delivered his worshipper, and baffled the oppressors, for the bullocks would not move from their place. The story of Bahiram Bhat is also interesting in this connection. Being a *Shástri*, he did not find rest in Bráhminism, and therefore became a Mahomedan under the impression that its monotheism would satisfy the cravings of his heart, but failing to find the satisfaction he desired, he returned back to Bráhminism. Both Bráhmans and Mahomedans found fault with him for these changes of faith, but he disclaimed being either Hindu or Mahomedan. Bahiram Bhat challenged the Brahmans to make him a true Bráhman as long as his circumcision mark was not removed, and he challenged the Mahomedans to fill up the holes in his ears, which showed that he was still a Hindu. The Mahomedan converts to Hinduism, represented by Shaik Mahomed's followers even to this day observe the *Ramjan* fasts and the *Ekadashi* fast, and make pilgrimages to Mecca as also to Pandharpur. There are many other saints of great renown who, like Kabir, Nanak and Manik Prabhu, are claimed both by Hindus and Mahomedans as belonging to their respective communities, and worshipped and reverenced as such by both. These examples will suffice to show how the lives of these men have tended to elevate the national conception of man's spiritual nature, and shake the hold of caste intolerance.

The result of all this elevated teaching is seen in the fact that caste exclusiveness now finds no

place in the religious sphere of life, and it is relegated solely to the social concerns of men, and even there its restrictiveness is much relaxed, as any one can judge who compares the Bráhmans of Southern India, with their exclusive caste prejudices, and their abhorrence of even the shadow of the lower castes defiling Bráhman streets, with the comparative indifference shown in such matters in the Deccan portion of Máhárashtra. This feeling of indifference is most accentuated at the time of the annual Pandharpur pilgrim gatherings, and the mixed greetings with which the Lord's Feast is celebrated on the last day. Just as in Europe, men ceased to believe that the priest was a necessary medium between God and man for purposes of salvation, in this part of India, the domination of the Bráhman caste as the Gods of creation, whom the other castes should serve and worship, lost much of its potency, and men and women, high and low, came to feel that they were free to attain salvation by faith and love in spite of their low origin.

The European reformers protested further against the institution of the Monastic Orders, and celibacy of the clergy, and the unnatural retirement of women who exiled themselves from the world and became nuns. There was a counterpart of this same protest in the way in which our saints and prophets raised their voice against self-mortification and fasts, and meaningless penances and endless pilgrimages. The same spirit prompted them to condemn austerities practised by those who followed the *Yoga*

system with a view of acquiring the power of working wonders which, it was supposed, the *Yogis* enjoyed in consequence. This contest between *Yoga* and *Bhakti* is well illustrated by the encounter of the proud Chángdév with Dnyándév, when the former, in reliance on his *Yoga* powers, rode on tigers, and used serpent whips, and was put to shame by Dnyándév riding on a wall. There was a similar encounter between Dnyàndév and Námdèv, when the former, by the exercise of *Yoga* powers, became small in size, and drank the waters of a deep well, while Nàmdév, by his devotion, brought the waters to overflow the well for all time, so that all who passed by, and felt thirsty, might drink to their hearts' content. These stories most beautifully typify this feature of the teaching of the saints and prophets of Máháráshtra.

The story of Kanoba Páthak, who was upbraided by a Bráhman of Benares for his inordinate love of children, and astonished his critic by throwing away his child into a well with seeming indifference, illustrates the vanity of the vows of celibacy, which cannot by themselves produce equableness of mind, and indifference to pains and pleasures. Eknáth all his life lived with his wife and children, and so did Turkárám and Námdév, though they were not blessed with sympathetic female relations. Bodhhale Bawa, Chokhámélá, Dámájipant, Bhánudás, the two potter saints, and many others lived in the midst of their families. Dnyándév's father, who had become *Sanyasi* without obtaining the free consent of his

wife, was directed by Rámánand to return to his home, and live with his wife. All these incidents prove that a very high conception of the sanctity of family-life was realised by these saints and prophets, and they did their best to correct the national weakness which shrinks from trouble and anxiety by retiring from the world's conflict. The lives of the female saints have a special interest in this connection. The biographies relate that owing to their devotion and implicit faith, God helped them out of their difficulties by assisting them in their daily household work, and by assuming strange disguises, permitted them the freedom they wanted to serve him without being missed by their jealous relations. There is a danger in all such stories of making Providential intervention too cheap, but this fault is more than balanced by the high moral which underlies these accounts. The sanctity of married and family life was nobly vindicated by these saints and prophets, and this was a signal moral triumph over the past traditions of asceticism.

All students of modern European history are aware that the Reformers achieved their most permanent success in the liberation of the national intellect from the thraldom of scholastic learning, and the oppressive preponderance of the classical Latin, in which all the best books were till then written. The Bible was, by the help of these Reformers, for the first time made accessible to all, high and low, and the monopoly of learning, till then enjoyed by the

priests, was shaken to its foundations. Here, in India, the process of liberation was carried out on the same lines. The professors of the old Sanskrit learning found for the first time, to their great surprise, that the saints and prophets addressed the people, both in speech and writing, in their own vernacular, and boldly opened the hitherto hidden treasures to all and sundry, men and women, Bráhmans and Shudrás, alike. The final victory was not achieved without much struggle and considerable suffering. Dnyándév was the first adventurer to stray into these forbidden regions, and his example was followed by Eknáth and Rámdás, Námdév and and Tukárám, Váman Pandit and Muktéshwar, Shridhar and Moropant. These last four gifted men are more celebrated as authors and poets than as religious teachers, but they derived their inspiration from the same sources. It is true the *Védás* and the *Shástrás* were not translated as the Bible was, but there was a sufficient reason for this difference. These early Marathi writers knew that modern India, after the Buddhistic revolution, was less influenced by the *Védás* and *Shástrás* than by the *Rámáyana* and *Mahábhárata*, the *Bhágawata Purána* and the *Gita*, and these latter works were translated and made accessible to all. The pioneers in this field, Eknáth and Tukárám, were each made to bear the brunt of Bráhman opposition. Their works were not burned as in Europe, but they were ordered to be thrown into water. The river gods, however, so the story runs, would not let them be destroyed, and the works

remained dry and would not sink, and thus became more famous than ever. Váman Pandit, the great Sanskrit scholar, who would not deign to speak or write in the popular language, as unfit to be used by a Pandit, was, when brought in contact with Rámdás, made to see the error of his ways ; and a Bráhman translator of the *Rámáyana* named Sâlyâ Rasál, who was over-proud of his superior learning, was similarly put to shame by a message from his goddess that he should get the work corrected by submitting it to the revision of the tailor Námdév. Dnyándév also was made the instrument of performing a miracle, by which a buffalo was said to have recited the *Védas* by heart. This story is obviously an allegorical parody of the mental condition of those who prided themselves upon their ability to recite the *Vedas* without understanding their contents.

The struggle between the claims of the Classical Sanskrit and the Vernaculars, of which we hear so much in these days, is thus an old conflict, the issues in which were decided in favour of the Vernacular or living languages long ago, and whatever scholars and antiquarians may urge to the contrary, there can only be one answer to the question,—the answer which was given by the saints and prophets when they laid Sanskrit aside as useless for their work, and spent all their energies in the cultivation and growth of their mother tongue. It may safely be said that the growth of the modern vernaculars in India is solely the result of the labours of these saints, and

that the provinces which showed most decided tendencies in the way of reform, also showed the most healthy development of their vernacular literature.

The Protestant reformers in Europe achieved another change of great importance in the way in which they raised their voice against the excesses to which image-worship and saint-worship were carried in the Roman Catholic Church. On our side, also, this protest was raised, but it did not assume the iconoclastic form which the Protestant reformers, especially the stricter sect among them, adopted. Polytheistic worship was condemned both in theory and in practice by the saints and prophets of Mahárashtra. Each of them had his own favourite form of the divine incarnation, and this worship of one favourite form left no room for allegiance to other gods. Rámdás, for instance, worshipped God under the name of Ráma ; Ekanáth and Jayarám Swámi worshipped Him under the name of Krishna, Tukárám, Chokhámélá and Námdèv under the name of Vithobá ; Narahari Sonár and Nágnáth under the name of Shiva ; Janárdan Swàmi and Narasinha Saraswati under the name of Dattátraya; Moryá Gosávi and Ganéshnáth under the name of Ganpati, and so on for the rest. Strange stories are told in these biographies of the way in which the saints, when they visited other shrines, refused to see the image in the form in which they did not worship God, and as a consequence the image manifested itself to them in the form familiar to them. The supremacy

of one God, One without a second, was the first article of the creed with every one of these saints, which they would not allow anybody to question or challenge. At the same time, as observed above, the iconoclastic spirit was never characteristic of this country, and all the various forms in which God was worshipped were believed to merge finally into one Supreme Providence or *Bramha*. This tendency of the national mind was a very old tendency. Even in Védic times, Indra and Varun, Marut and Rudra, while they were separately invoked at the sacrifices offered for their acceptance, were all regarded as interchangeable forms of the One and supreme Lord of creation. This same tendency explains the comparative indifference with which the saints and prophets treated the question of image-worship. It is a complete misunderstanding of their thoughts and ideas on this subject when it is represented that these gifted people were idolaters in the objectionable sense of the word. They did not worship stocks and stones. In Védic times there was admittedly no idol or image worship. It came into vogue with the acceptance of the incarnation theory, and was stimulated by the worship of the Jains and Buddhists of their saints. Finally, it got mixed up with the fetish worship of the aboriginal tribes, who were received into the Aryan fold, and their gods were turned into incarnations of the Aryan deities. The saints and prophets, however, rose high above these grovelling conceptions prevalent amongst the people. Idol worship was denounced when the image

did not represent the Supreme God. Both Tukárám and Rámdás have spared no words in denouncing these aboriginal and village gods, and their frightful rites and sacrifices. In the life of Bhánudás, it is stated that he told the King of Vidyánagar that the Goddess he worshipped served his God at Pandharpur in a menial capacity as a sweeper, and the king found it to be the truth when he visited Pandharpur. In the lives of two other saints, it is stated that the Goddess Káli, to whom human and animal sacrifices were offered, was so frightened by the protest of the saints in the name of Hari against such cruelty, that the sacrifices were given up by the command of the Goddess, not only for the time, but for all time. These illustrations will serve to show in what light image-worship, as an aid to devotion, was utilised by these saints, and unless this distinction is borne in mind, it will be impossible to understand the true position occupied by these teachers in this important matter.

There is one point, however, in which the reforming saints and prophets in this country differed essentially from those who were working in the same cause elsewhere, the contemporary Protestant reformers in Europe. From the Védic times downwards, the *Aryán* gods have been gods of Love and Brightness, of sweetness and of light. There were, of course, terrible gods also, such as Varun and Rudra, who inspired awe and filled the mind with terror. But the national tendency was to dwell with affection on and contemplate chiefly the bright side

of divine Providence, unlike the Semitic idea which dwelt upon the terrific manifestation of a distant God whose glory could not be seen save through a cloud, a severe Chastiser of human frailties, and a Judge who punished more frequently than He rewarded, and even when He rewarded, kept the worshipper always in awe and trembling. This conception lies at the root of all Semitic religions, and it is to the credit of Christianity that it attempted and partly succeeded in bridging the gulf by securing the intervention of God incarnate in the flesh, as Jesus Christ, who suffered for mankind and atoned for their sins. This intervention was never found necessary in the *Ayran* religions of Greece or Rome, or of India. God with us has always been regarded more as a father and a mother, a brother and a friend, than a judge and a chastiser and a ruler. Not that He does not judge, or rule; but He judges, rules, and chastises with the love of a father or a mother, ever ready to receive the repentant prodigal son back into his arms. The orthodox Bráhminical conception does not bring out this feature of a kindly Providence so prominently as it is found to be realised in the teachings and life's experiences of our saints and prophets. They are emphatic in their assertions that they were able to see their God, and hear His words, and walked and talked with Him, and held intercourse with Him. In their higher moments they, no doubt, describe Him as One Who did not speak, but their most normal condition of mind was one of satisfaction when they realised His presence as we realise the presence of sensible

things. The *Yogis* and the *Védántis* only talk in their waking dreams of being one with God, but Námdév and Tukárám, Eknáth and Dnyándév, were not content with this distant and difficult union, which did not last during all the moments of their conscious life, and compared their own happiness in such daily intercourse with God as being above all the attainments of *Yoga* and *Védánt*. We may believe the miracles ascribed to these saints or disbelieve them, but we cannot disbelieve their emphatic statements on this point. All the love that in Christian lands circles round the life and death of Christ Jesus has been in India freely poured upon the intense realisation of the every-day presence of the Supreme God in the heart in a way more convincing than eyes, ears or the sense of touch can realise. This constitutes the glory of the saints, and it is a possession which is treasured up by our people, high and low, men and women, as a solace in life beyond all value.

As a consequence of this conception of God's relations with man, the supreme efficacy of devotional Love, *Bhakti*, over all other methods of attaining to His knowledge became the cardinal creed of these *Vaishnav* sects. There is not a life in all these sketches drawn by Mahipati in which *Bhakti* and Faith, *Bháwa*, are not emphasized as being far superior in virtue to all other forms of worship, such as the performance of rites and ceremonies of external worship, pilgrimages and ablutions, self-mortifications and fasts, learning and contemplation.

These have relation only to the body or the mind, while the Spirit is what God desires to see engaged in His service. The rites and ceremonies may be performed as indifferent matters, just as food may be taken and thirst quenched, and the rest of sleep enjoyed, as they come naturally without effort or unnecessary anxiety about them. The best ablution is when the senses are drowned in the ocean of God's presence about us, and the same presence is made to fill us inside and out. The best sacrifice and the highest *Dána* or gift is when we surrender ourselves to His sweet will and for His service, and claim nothing as our own. The best mortification is that which makes the spirit humble before Him, the best contemplation is when His glory is sung with all our powers. Neither knowledge nor *Yoga* powers, health nor wealth, nor children nor possessions, not even *Mukti* freedom from birth and death, is desirable in itself. What is desirable is to be always full of love for Him and His works, including all creation, men and animals. Námdév cried while removing the bark of a tree, because he thought he saw blood coming out from the stroke of his axe, and he struck himself with the axe to see how he felt, and realise what the tree might feel. Shaik Mahomed, being sent by his father to practise the butcher's trade, first cut his own finger with his knife to see how the animal would feel, and the pain he felt drove him to forswear his trade, and retire from the world in which such pain had to be inflicted for earning one's livelihood. Tukárám felt that

there must be something wrong about him, when, on seeing him, the sparrows left the field he was sent to watch, though he did not intend to disturb them. This intense spirituality and absolute surrender of Self may sound somewhat unreal to men not brought up in the atmosphere these saints breathed. But, there can be no doubt about the fact, and there can also be no doubt that the national ideal of spiritual excellence has been shaped by these models. It may be that a stronger backbone and more resisting power are needed in the times in which we live, but in an account of the saints and prophets as they flourished more than two hundred years ago, we cannot afford to interpolate our own wants and wishes.

It may be interesting to note how these saints thought and spoke, and how, when they came in contact with a militant religion like Mahomedanism, they faced their troubles and conquered them. The lives of Námdév, Rámdáṣ, Eknáth, and others are full of such incidents. The most noteworthy fact in this connection is that several Mahomedans became converts to the Hindu Faith, and obtained such a public recognition that their help was invoked by the Hindu authors who wrote in those times, along with the Hindu saints. Shaik Mahomed and Kabir may be cited as examples of this catholic spirit of recognition. On the other hand, Tukárám and Eknáth were so influenced by their contact with Mahomedanism that they composed verses in Urdu of so catholic a character

as to be unobjectionable to the strictest Mahomedan. Rámdás did the same when one of his disciples, Udhav got into trouble at Bédar. The story of Dámájipant, a servant of the Bédar Kings, is well known to all. In a time of famine he distributed the Government stores of grain among the poor, and on being taken to task he was relieved by an unexpected remittance of the full value of the grain to the King's treasury. The saints came out well in their struggles with their foreign rulers, and they prevailed not by fighting nor by resistance, but by quiet resignation to the Will of God. There was a tendency perceptible towards a reconciliation of the two races in mutual recognition of the essential unity of Alláh with Ráma, and by the time Shiváji appeared on the scene, this reconciliation seems to have been almost complete, though occasional outbursts of Mahomedan fanaticism were not altogether unknown even then.

We have thus noticed all the principal features of the religious movement, which, commencing with Dnyándév who lived in the fifteenth century, can be traced to the end of the last century as a steady growth in spiritual virtues. It gave us a literature of considerable value in the Vernacular language of the country. It modified the strictness of the old spirit of caste exclusiveness. It raised the *Shudra* classes to a position of spiritual power and social importance almost equal to that of the Bráhmans. It gave sanctity to the family relations, and raised the status of woman. It made the nation more humane, at the same time more prone to hold together by mutual

toleration. It suggested and partly carried out a plan of reconciliation with the Mahomedans. It subordinated the importance of rites and ceremonies, and of pilgrimages and fasts, and of learning and contemplation, to the higher excellence of worship by means of Love and Faith. It checked the excesses of polytheism. It tended in all these ways to raise the nation generally to a higher level of capacity both of thought and action, and prepared it in a way no other nation in India was prepared to take the lead in re-establishing a united native power in the place of foreign domination. These appear to us to be the principal features of the religion of Mahárashtra, which Saint Rámdás had in view when he advised Shiváji's son to follow in his father's footsteps, and propagate this Faith, at once tolerant and catholic, deeply spiritual and yet not iconoclastic.

X.

I AM NEITHER HINDU NOR MAHOMEDAN.*

THIS time last year, I had occasion, at the inauguration of the Conference held at Madras, to speak on the subject of "Southern India a hundred years ago." To-day I find myself far away in the north, surrounded on all sides by the traditions of a civilization older than the oldest known to history, the land of the Aryan race settled in India, tracing its descent from the self-born Swayambhu Manu, where the Solar dynasty flourished for thousands of years, the land of the Ikshwakus, of Dilip and Raghu, of Dasharath and the incarnate hero Rama, with his illustrious brothers and the still more honoured wife Sita, the land where Vasishtha and Vishvamitra lived and flourished, the home of all that is beautiful and true, and lovely and godlike in Aryan history. This favoured land of yours gave birth also in later times, to Shakhya Muni Buddha, who has been well described as the perfection of

* Address, "Indian National Social Conference," Lucknow, 1899.

humanity in its highest and noblest development, and whose "Wheel of law" still regulates the thoughts and feelings of half the human race in its efforts to attain beatitude. The south and the north thus contrasted together, suggest recollections that are so overpowering, that I am tempted on this occasion when we meet to inaugurate the work of the Conference at Lucknow, to dwell for a few moments on this subject, and I bespeak your thoughtful attention to the lessons it suggests. Far in the South, which is now the stronghold of Brahmanical ideas uninfluenced by outside contact, the Aryan civilization no doubt made its way, but it continued to be an exotic civilization confined to a small minority of Aryan settlers, so few in numbers, that they were overwhelmed by the influences of the earlier Dravidian dominion. It never made its home in those remote regions, and the common people continued their adhesion to their old faiths under new names. What the effects of this subordination were, was depicted in my address at Madras in the words of a foreign missionary who lived and worked a hundred years ago, and who had exceptional opportunities of studying these effects. I propose this time to draw your attention to the turn which the Aryan civilization has taken under the influences represented by the conquest of this part of the country by the Mahomedans, nearly a thousand years back. The one factor which separates Northern India from its Southern neighbours, is the predominant influence of this conquest by the Mahomedans, which has left its mark permanently

upon the country, by the actual conversion to the Mahomedan faith of one-fifth of the population, and by the imperceptible but permanent moulding of the rest of the people in the ways of thought and belief, the like of which is hard to find on the Malabar or Coromandel Coasts. I propose to draw my materials from the Mahomedan philosophers and travellers who visited India, both before and after the Mahomedan conquest had changed the face of the country. Owing to the absence of the historic instinct among our people, we have necessarily to depend upon the testimony of foreign historians. That testimony is, however, unexceptional, because it was for the most part given before the Mahomedan domination had effected the separation which distinguishes the old India of the past from the modern India in which we are now living. This domination also separates the line which marks off southern India, of which I spoke last year, from the north, in one of the most representative centres of which we are met here to-day. At the outset, we must have a correct understanding of what northern India was before Mahmud of Gazni made his numerous expeditions for the plunder of its far-famed cities and temples, at the commencement of the tenth century. Fortunately for us, we have a witness to this period of our history in the writings of Alberuni, whose work on India was written shortly after the time that Mahmud crossed the Indus as a conqueror of infidels. That work has been translated by Dr. Sachau, a professor in

the Berlin University, and in its English form, is now accessible to us all. Alberuni was a native of Khorasan, his birthplace being near Khiva. Mahmud of Gazni conquered Khorasan, and Alberuni had thus to shift to Gazni which was then the seat of a flourishing empire, the rulers of which were great patrons of Mahomedan learning. Alberuni was in special favour with Masaud the son of Mahmud, and he was thus enabled to travel throughout India, where he spent many years, having mastered the Sanskrit Language. He was a philosopher by profession and temper, and had a special liking for Indian philosophy, which he studied with the same care and attention that he bestowed on Plato and Aristotle. His work on India consists of eighty chapters, relating to Religion, Philosophy, Caste, Idolatry, Civil Polity, Literature, Science, Mathematics, Medicine, Geography, Astronomy, Cosmogony, Alchemy and Astrology. His took great pains to give a full description of all that was known to the Hindus under these several heads, and being naturally not a bigoted Mahomedan, his book shows that he wrote his whole work with a single desire to promote the cause of true learning. While Alberuni shows a great regard for the Hindu Philosophy, Astronomy, and Medicine, he was not slow in finding out the weak points of the Indian character. In his chapters on caste and idolatry, in the condemnation he pronounces on the want of practical aptitudes of our people, and in their devotion to superstitious observances, Alberuni did not spare his censures.

He contrasted the democratic equality of the Mahomedan people with the innumerable divisions of the Indian races. He notices the helpless position of the women of India, and the filthy customs and habits of the people in those days. He gives praise to the few educated Brahmans whom he separates from the superstitious multitude whose fallen condition he deplores. Even among the Brahmans, he notices the verbosity of their writings and the word-splitting which passed for wisdom. He notices the greediness and tyranny of the Hindu princes, who would not agree to join their efforts together for any common purpose, and the timidity and the submissiveness of the people who, in his expressive language, were 'scattered like atoms of dust in all directions' before the invading Moslems. The prevailing feeling among the Mahomedans of the time was that the Hindus were infidels, and entitled to no mercy or consideration, and the only choice to be allowed to them was that of death or conversion. Alberuni did not share in these views, but they were the views of his master Mahmud of Gazni and of the hordes who were led by him on these expeditions. Another traveller, Ibn Batuta, a native of Tangiers in North Africa, visited this country about a hundred years alter Kutubuddin established the Afghan kingdom at Delhi. Like him, he was taken into favour by the then Delhi Emperor, Mahmud Taghlak, under whom he acted for some time as a Judge of Delhi. Ibn Batuta travelled more extensively than Alberuni. He travelled from the extreme west of Africa to the

extreme east of China, and went round the coast from Malabar to Coromandal. He was, however, neither a philosopher nor a scholar. His journal of travels is interesting, but he did not observe the manners and customs of the people with the same mastery of details that Alberuni's work shows on every page. The only points which struck Ibn Batuta in the course of his travels through India were the rite of Sati of which he was a witness, and the practice of drowning men in the Ganges, both of which struck him as inhuman to a degree he could not account for. He also notices the self-mortification of the jogees and their juggleries, in describing which last he mentions the fact that in the presence of the emperor, he saw a jogee raise his body up in the air and keep it there for some time. Another traveller, Abder Razzak visited India about 1450 A.D. His travels lay chiefly in the southern peninsula, Calicut, Vijayanagar and Mangalore. The narratives of two other travellers, one a Russian and the other a Venetian, who both visited India in the fifteenth century, are published by the Hakluyt Society, and afford most interesting reading. The general impression left on the minds of these travellers was a respect for the Brahmans, for their philosophy and attainments in astrology, but for the common people, the vast multitudes of men and women, their sense was one of disgust and disappointment. Abder Razzak expressed this feeling in his own words in a reply to the invitation of the King of Vijayanagar. He said to the king, 'If I

have once escaped from the desert of thy love, and reached my country, I shall not set out on another voyage even in the company of a king.' In Southern India, these travellers found that both men and women besides being black, were almost nude, and divided into innumerable castes and sects, which worshipped their own idols. This abuse of idolatry and caste struck every traveller as the peculiar characteristic of the country, and gave them offence. The practice of self-immolation, or Sati, and of human sacrifices to idols by being crushed beneath the temple car are also mentioned. Finally, we have the testimony of the emperor Babar, who in his memoirs thus describes this country;—'Hindustan is a country which has few things to recommend. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society or of freely mixing together in familiar intercourse. They have no genius, no comprehension of mind, no politeness of manners, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning and executing their handicraft work, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture. They have no good horses, no good flesh, no good grapes or musk-melons, no good fruits, no cold water or ice, no good food or bread in their bazars, no baths, no colleges, no candles, not even a candlestick. They have no aqueducts or canals, no gardens, and no palaces; in their buildings they study neither elegance, nor climate, nor appearance, nor regularity. Their peasants and lower classes all go about naked tying on only a langoti. The women too have only a lang.' The only good

points which Babar could find in favour of Hindustan were that it is a large country and has abundance of gold and silver, and there is also an abundance of workmen of every profession and trade for any work and employment.

Such was the picture presented to the Mahomedans when they entered India through the passes in successive hordes for three or four centuries. A great portion of the disgust and disappointment felt by these Mahomedan invaders may be set down to ignorance and the pride of race. At the same time, it is always of advantage to know exactly how India appeared in its strong and weak points to intelligent foreigners, such as those I have mentioned above. The question for consideration to us at the present moment is, whether in consequence of the predominance of the Mahomedans for five centuries, which intervened from the invasions of Mahmud to the accession of Akbar, the people of India were benefited by the contact thus forcibly brought together between the two races. There are those among us who think that this predominance has led to the decay and corruption of the Indian character, and that the whole story of the Mahomedan ascendancy should for all practical purposes, be regarded as a period of humiliation and sorrow. Such a view, however, appears to be unsupported by any correct appreciation of the forces which work for the elevation or depression of nations. It cannot be easily assumed that in God's providence, such vast multitudes as those who inhabit India were placed centuries together

under influences and restraints of alien domination unless such influences and restraints were calculated to do lasting service in the building up of the strength and character of the people in directions in which the Indian races were most deficient. Of one thing we are certain, that after lasting over five hundred years, the Mahomedan empire gave way, and made room for the re-establishment of the old native races in the Punjab, and throughout central Hindustan and Southern India, on foundations of a much more solid character than those which yielded so easily before the assault of the early Mahomedan conquerors. The domination, therefore, had not the effect of so depressing the people that they were unable to raise their heads again in greater solidarity. If the Indian races had not benefited by the contact and example of men with stronger muscles and greater powers, they would never have been able to reassert themselves in the way in which history bears testimony they did.

Quite independently of this evidence of the broad change that took place in the early part of the eighteenth century, when the Mogul empire went to pieces and its place was taken up not by foreign settlers, but by revived native powers, we have more convincing grounds to show that in a hundred ways the India of the eighteenth century, so far as the native races were concerned, was a stronger and better constituted India than met the eyes of the foreign travellers from Asia and Europe who visited it between the period of the first five centuries from

1000 to 1500. In Akbar's time, this process of regenerate India first assumed a decided character which could not be well mistaken. No student of Akbar's reign will fail to notice that for the first time the conception was then realized of a united India in which Hindus and Mahomedans, such of them as had become permanently established in the country, were to take part in the building of an edifice rooted in the hearts of both by common interests and common ambitions. In place of the scorn and contempt, with which the Mahomedan invaders had regarded the religion of the Hindus, their forms of worship, their manners and customs, and the Hindus looked down upon them as barbarous Mlenchas, whose touch was pollution, a better appreciation of the good points in the character of both came to be recognized as the basis of the union. Akbar was the first to see and realize the true nobility of soul and the devotion and fidelity of the Hindu character, and satisfied himself that no union was possible as long as the old bigotry and fanaticism was allowed to guide the Councils of the Empire. He soon gathered about him the best men of his time, men like Faizi, Abdul Fazel and their father Mubarak, the historians Mirza Abdul Rahim, Nizamudin Ahmed, Badauni and others. These were set to work upon the translations of the Hindu epics and Shastras, and books of science and philosophy. The pride of the Rajput races was conciliated by taking in marriage the princesses of Jaipur, and Jodhpur, and by conferring equal or superior commands on those princes.

These latter had been hitherto treated as enemies. They were now welcomed as the props of the empire, and Maharaja Bhagwandas, his great nephew Mansingha for some time Governor of Bengal and Kabul, Raja Todarmal and the Brahman companion of the Emperor, Raja Birbal, these were welcomed to court, and trusted in the full consciousness that their interests were the same as those of the Musalman noblemen. The Emperor himself, guided by such counsel of his Hindu and Mahomedan nobles, became the real founder of the union between the two races, and this policy for a hundred years guided and swayed the councils of the empire. A fusion of the two races was sought to be made firmer still by the establishment of a religion of the Din-i-Ilahi, in which the best points both of the Mahomedan, Hindu, and other faiths were sought to be incorporated. Invidious taxation and privileges were done away with, and toleration for all faiths became the universal law of the empire. . To conciliate his subjects Akbar abjured the use of flesh except on four special occasions in the year, and he joined in the religious rites observed by his Hindu queens. In regard to the particular customs of the people relating to points where natural humanity was shocked in a way to make union impossible, Akbar strove by wise encouragement and stern control, where necessary, to help the growth of better ideas. Sati was virtually abolished by being placed under restraint which nobody could find fault with. Re-marriage was encouraged, and marriage before puberty was prohibited. In these and

a hundred other ways the fusion of the races and of their many faiths was sought to be accomplished, with a success which was justified by the results for a hundred years. This process of removing all causes of friction, and establishing accord went on without interruption during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shahajahan. Shahajahan's eldest son, Dara Sheko, was himself an author of no mean repute. He translated the Upanishads, and wrote a work in which he sought to reconcile the Brahman religion with the Mahomedan faith. He died in 1659. This period of a hundred years may be regarded as the halcyon period of Indian history when the Hindu and Mahomedan races acted in full accord. If in place of Aurangzeb, Dara Sheko had succeeded to power as the eldest son of Shahajahan, the influences set on foot by the genius of Akbar might have gathered strength, and possibly averted the collapse of the Mogul power for another century. It was, however, not to be so, and with Aurangzeb's ascent to the throne, a change of system commenced which gathered force during the long time that this emperor reigned. Even Aurangzeb had, however, to follow the traditions of his three predecessors. He could not dispense with Jaising or Jaswantsing who were his principal military commanders. In the reign of his son, whole provinces under him were governed by Rajput, Kayastha and other Governors. The revival of fanatic bigotry was kept in check by the presence of these great Rajput chiefs, one of whom, on the re-imposition of the

Zezia, addressed to the emperor a protest couched in unmistakable terms that the God of Islam was also the God of the Hindus, and the subjects of both races merited equal treatment. Aurangzeb unfortunately did not listen to this advice, and the result was that the empire built by Akbar went to pieces even when Aurangzeb was alive. No one was more aware of his failure than Aurangzeb himself, who in his last moments admitted that his whole life was a mistake. The Marathas in the South, the Shikhs in the North, and the Rajput states helped in the dismemberment of the empire in the reign of his immediate successor, with the result that nearly the whole of India was restored to its native Hindu sovereigns, except Bengal, Oudh, and the Deccan Hyderabad. It will be seen from this that so far from suffering from decay and corruption, the native races gathered strength by reason of the Mahomedan rule when it was directed by the wise counsel of those Mahomedan and Hindu statesmen who sought the weal of the country by a policy of toleration and equality. Since the time of Ashoka, the element of strength born of union was wanting in the old Hindu dynasties which succumbed so easily to the Mahomedan invaders.

Besides this source of strength, there can be no doubt that in a hundred other ways the Mahomedan domination helped to refine the tastes and manners of the Hindus. The art of Government was better understood by the Mahomedans than by the old Hindu sovereigns. The art of war also was singu-

larly defective till the Mahomedans came. They brought in the use of gunpowder and artillery. In the words of Babar, they "taught ingenuity and mechanical invention in a number of handicraft arts," the very nomenclature of which, being made up of non-Hindu words, shows their foreign origin. They introduced candles, paper, glass, household furniture, and saddlery. They improved the knowledge of the people in music, instrumental and vocal, medicine and astronomy, and their example was followed by the Hindus in the perversions of both these latter sciences into alchemy and astrology. Geography and history and literature were first made possible departments of knowledge by their example. They built roads, aqueducts, canals, caravansarais, and the post office, and introduced the best specimens of architecture, and improved our gardening, and made us acquainted with the taste of new fruits and flowers. The revenue system as inaugurated by Todarmal in Akbar's time, is the basis of the revenue system up to the present day. They carried on the entire commerce by sea with distant regions, and made India feel that it was a portion of the inhabited world with relations with all, and not cut off from all social intercourse. In all these respects, the civilization of the united Hindu and Moslem powers represented by the Moguls at Delhi, was a distinct advance beyond what was possible before the tenth century of the Christian era.

More lasting benefits have, however, accrued by this contact in the higher tone it has given to the religion and houghts of the people. In this respect,

both the Mahomedans and Hindus benefited by contact with one another. As regards the Mahomedans, their own historians admit that the Sufi heresy gathered strength from contact with the Hindu teachers, and made many Mahomedans believe in transmigration and in the final union of the soul with the Supreme Spirit. The Mohorum festival and saint worship are the best evidence of the way in which the Mahomedans were influenced by Hindu ideas. We are more directly concerned with the way in which this contact has affected the Hindus. The prevailing tone of pantheism had established a toleration for polytheism among our most revered ancient teachers who rested content with separating the few from the many, and establishing no bridge between them. This separation of the old religion has prevented its higher precepts from becoming the common possession of whole races. Under the purely Hindu system, the intellect may admit, but the heart declines to allow a common platform to all people in the sight of God. The Vaishnava movement, however, has succeeded in establishing the bridge noted above, and there can be no doubt, that in the hands of the followers of Ramananda, especially the Kabirpanthis, Malikdasis, Dadupanthis, the followers of Mirabai, Lord Gauranga on the Bengal side, and Baba Nanak in the Punjab in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, the followers of Tukaram, Ekanath and Namdev in the Deccan, Babalalis, Prananathis, Sadhs, the Satnamis, the Shiva-Narayans and the followers of Mahant Rama Charan of the last two centuries—this elevation and the purification

of the Hindu mind was accomplished to an extent which very few at the present moment realize in all its significance. The Brahma and the Arya Samaja movements of this century are the continuations of this ethical and spiritual growth. Caste, idolatry, polytheism and gross conceptions of purity and pollution were the precise points in which the Mahomedans and the Hindus were most opposed to one another, and all the sects named above had this general characteristic that they were opposed to these defects in character of our people. Nanak's watchward was that he was 'Neither Hindu nor Mahomedan, but that he was a worshipper of the Nirakar, or the Formless.' His first companion was a Mahomedan, and Mahomedan authors pay him the compliment of saying that his teacher was a Mahomedan. The Hindus naturally do not admit this claim, with reason on their side. There can be no doubt that, while calling himself neither Hindu nor Mahomedan, Guru Nanak wanted to establish a union between the two faiths. Lord Gauranga had also Mahomedan disciples. Mahomedan saints like Shaik Mahmud, Shaik Farid and Mahmud Kazi were respected by both Hindus and Mahomedans. The abuses of polytheism were checked by the devotion to one object of worship, which in the case of many of these Vaishnava Sects was the Supreme God, the Paramatma, and the abuses of caste were controlled by conceding to all, Hindus and Mahomedans alike, the right to worship and love the one God who was the God of all.

In the case of the Shikhs, the puritanic spirit developed even under persecution, into a coarse imitation of the Mahomedan fanaticism directed against the Mahomedans themselves; but in the case of the other sectaries, both old and new, the tolerant and the suffering spirit of Vaishnavism has prevailed, breathing peace and good-will towards all.

Such are the chief features of the influences resulting from the contact of Mahomedans and Hindus in Northern India. They brought about a fusion of thoughts and ideas which benefited both communities, making the Mahomedans less bigoted, and the Hindus more puritanic and more single-minded in their devotion. There was nothing like this to be found in Southern India as described by Abbé Duḥois, where the Hindu sectarian spirit intensified caste pride and idolatrous observances. The fusion would have been more complete but for the revival of fanaticism for which Aurangzeb must be held chiefly responsible. Owing to this circumstance, the work of fusion was left incomplete; and in the course of years, both the communities have developed weaknesses of a character, which still needs the disciplining process to be continued for a longer time under other masters. Both Hindus and Mahomedans lack many of those virtues represented by the love of order, and regulated authority. Both are wanting in the love of municipal freedom, in the exercise of virtues necessary for civic life, and in the aptitude for mechanical skill, in the love of science and research, in the love of daring

and adventurous discovery, the resolution to master difficulties, and in chivalrous respect for womankind. Neither tne old Hindu, nor the old Mahomedan civilization was in a condition to train these virtues in a way to bring up the races of India on a level with those of Western Europe, and so the work of education had to be renewed, and it has been now going on for the past century and more under the *Pax Britannica*, with results to which all of us are witnesses in ourselves.

If the lessons of the past have any value, one thing is quite clear, viz., that in this vast country, no progress is possible unless both Hindus and Mahomedans join hands together, and are determined to follow the lead of the men who flourished in Akbar's time, and were his chief advisers and councillors, and sedulously avoid the mistakes which were committed by his great-grandson Aurangzeb. Joint action from a sense of common interest, and a common desire to bring about the fusion of the thoughts and feelings of men, so as to tolerate small differences and bring about concord—these were the chief aims kept in view by Akbar, and formed the principle of the new divine faith formulated in the Din-i-Ilahi. Every effort on the part of either Hindus or Mahomedans to regard their interests as separate and distinct, and every attempt made by the two communities to create separate Schools and interests among themselves, and not to heal up the wounds inflicted by mutual hatred of caste and creed, must be deprecated on all hands. It is to be feared

that this lesson has not been sufficiently kept in mind by the leaders of both communities in their struggle for existence, and in the acquisition of power and predominance during recent years. There is at times a great danger of the work of Akbar being undone by losing sight of this great lesson which the history of his reign and that of his two successors is so well calculated to teach. The Conference which brings us together is especially intended for the propagation of this 'Din' or 'Dharma,' and it is in connection with that message chiefly that I have ventured to speak to you to-day on this important subject. The ills that we are suffering are, most of them, self-inflicted evils, the cure of which is to a large extent in our own hands. Looking at the series of measures which Akbar adopted in his time to cure these evils, one feels how correct was his vision when he and his advisers put their hand on those very defects in our natural character, which need to be remedied first before we venture on higher enterprises. Pursuit of high ideals, mutual sympathy and co-operation, perfect tolerance, a correct understanding of the diseases from which the body politic is suffering, and an earnest desire to apply suitable remedies—this is the work cut out for the present generation. The awakening has commenced, as is witnessed by the fact that we are met in this place from such distances for joint consultation and action. All that is needed is that we must put our hands to the plough, and face the strife and the struggle. The success already achieved warrants

the expectation that if we persevere on right lines, the goal we have in view may be attained. That goal is not any particular advantage to be gained in power and wealth. It is represented by the efforts to attain it, the expansion and the elevation of the heart and the mind, which will make us stronger and braver, purer and truer men. This is at least, the lesson I draw from our more recent history of the past thousand years, and if those centuries have rolled away to no purpose over our heads, our cause is no doubt hopeless beyond cure. That is, however, not the faith in me; and I feel sure it is not the faith that moves you in this great struggle against our own weak selves, than which nothing is more fatal to our individual and collective growth. Both Hindus and Mahomedans have their work cut out in this struggle. In the backwardness of female education, in the disposition to overleap the bounds of their own religion, in matters of temperance, in their internal dissensions between castes and creeds, in the indulgence of impure speech, thought, and action on occasions when they are disposed to enjoy themselves, in the abuses of many customs in regard to unequal and polygamous marriages, in the desire to be extravagant in their expenditure on such occasions, in the neglect of regulated charity, in the decay of public spirit in insisting on the proper management of endowments,—in these and other matters both communities are equal sinners, and there is thus much ground for improvement on common lines. Of course, the Hindus, being by far

the majority of the population, have other difficulties of their own to combat with ; and they are trying in their gatherings of separate castes and communities, to remedy them each in their own way. But without co-operation and conjoint action of all communities, success is not possible, and it is on that account that the general Conference is held in different places each year to rouse local interest, and help people in their separate efforts by a knowledge of what their friends similarly situated are doing in other parts. This is the reason of our meeting here, and I trust that this message I have attempted to deliver to you on this occasion, will satisfy you that we cannot conceive a nobler work than the one for which we have met here to-day.

XI

A THEIST'S CONFESSION OF FAITH.

IT is often made a matter of reproach to the numerous theistic organizations which are springing up in all parts of the world, and notably so in this country, that they have little or no elements in them which correspond to the earnest religious wants of mankind, and which will secure to them permanent success in their conflict with the established religions. Their fundamental beliefs are few and indefinite, their solutions of the great problems of life and eternity are full of difficulties and qualifications, their rise and progress are illustrated by no instances of heroic self-sacrifice and austere devotion, their precepts, their hopes, and their promises, bear no warrant of authority on their face to satisfy the religious instincts of the mass of mankind. The followers of established creeds proclaim with pride that Pure Theism has never been hitherto the religion of any considerable body of people, and there is nothing to show that there are better chances for it in the future. If we do not dive beneath the surface, or inquire for ourselves,

and more still, if we take the professed apostles of most of these new-born movements at their word, it would seem as if there were but too many reasons to justify this pride and confidence on the part of those who feel themselves secure under the wings of one or other of the established religions, and refuse to risk their tiny bark on the waters of vague speculation. Many enthusiastic leaders of the Brahma Samaja movement have been heard deliberately to declare that the only cardinal points of Theism necessary to constitute it a religion of mankind, the only articles of its confession of faith, are the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of man. These are the only points which it is absolutely necessary to hold fast to for purposes of regeneration and salvation. And with fifty years of working history, our leaders seem content to lisp this same story of early childhood. There is no attempt at grasping in all earnestness the great religious difficulties which have puzzled people's faith during all time, and driven them to seek rest in revelation. Neither the old nor the new sections seem to be aware of any such necessity. Religion has only an emotional character in their eyes, the difficulty is not of the understanding, but of believing in faith. It is not intended by anything that is said here to under-rate the importance of the work now progressing in our part of the world; but for the purposes of the present inquiry, this fact of the limited and precarious grasp which the Brahma leaders seem to possess of the great mass of religious

doctrines developed in the course of centuries of earnest inquiry by the best minds of all times, confirms the view we have taken before, that the theistic movements, both here and abroad, deserve in a great measure the reproach which is so pointedly cast in their face by the followers of the several established religions. To come nearer home, our friends of the Prarthana Samaja seem to be perfectly satisfied with a creed which consists of only one positive belief in the unity of God, accompanied with a special protest against the existing corruption of Hindu religion, viz., the article which denounces the prevalent idolatry to be a sin, and an abomination ; and it is ardently hoped that a new Church can be built in course of time on such a narrow foundation of belief. To a greater or less extent, this same oblivious indifference to the great difficulties which stare in his face when an earnest inquirer starts upon his search of the domain of religious thought characterizes all similar movements in Europe and America, with a partial exception in favour of the Unitarian Church. The fact is, that these movements owe their origin to an iconoclastic spirit which is dissatisfied with the fulness and details, and, as it is called, dogmatic assertiveness of established religions, and in the first effort of reaction—from which stage none of them have yet emerged,—they necessarily partake of the one-sided character stamped upon them by the force of their repulsion from existing creeds. Thus and thus only can we explain the self-satisfaction which

good and pious people feel in what they call the concern of religion with the emotional side of their nature, with the heart alone to the exclusion of the reason, notwithstanding the fact that they unconsciously borrow in an eclectic way their complement of intellectual beliefs from the very religions which they condemn, though of course, they borrow the word without the sanction of the spirit which consecrates the word.

It is time, we think, to venture on an earnest attempt to remove this reproach. The doctrines of Pure Theism, it may be true, have never constituted the professed religion of any large section of men, but that fact does not dispose of its claim in the future. The rites of idolatry, and propitiation by visible sacrifice, and the duty of religious persecution, these and many more beliefs have constituted the essential characteristics of all the old religions, but long prescription has in no way prevented their final banishment from all the more advanced faiths of the present age. It is not therefore, true to say, universally that there has been no progress, no change in the religious feelings and convictions of the races of the world; and to be sure, there is absolutely nothing to shut out such a prospect from the future. Nay more, there are manifest signs that in a truer sense than at any time past, the kingdom of God is near at hand.

The evidence of history is therefore, not conclusive, as we have shown before, to dissipate the Faith we profess to have in the establishment of

a universal kingdom of God on earth below in place of sectional churches, and these theistic movements now surging up to the surface in all quarters of the world are indications in the same direction which have no small probative force of their own. At no time in the world's history has the prevailing religion of the country satisfied all the higher minds in it, a large number have always struggled to rise above it to a purer inspiration and a holier knowledge. There is no reason why this fact should be lost sight of, and if it be properly understood, it will not fail to carry the conviction that the proud boast of the expounders of established religions, that they alone satisfy the religious instincts of mankind, and furnish final answers to the inquisitions of the Soul, is not justified by the facts, that they are not so strong inside as the superficial looker-on seems to think, and that the comparison after all is not so decidedly unfavourable to the new theistic religion as on a first survey it strikes the eye to be.

It will be also seen on closer inspection that the so-called authoritative solutions are really no solutions of the difficulties, some of which are simply incomprehensible with our limited capacities, and that, where the intellect fails to keep its grasp, the chasm cannot be leapt over on the wings of faith, which too often is degraded to stand a substitute for ignorant credulity. Faith has a function of its own, and we do not under-rate its supreme importance. But it is simply out of place when it

is appealed to in vain attempts at making the incomprehensible easy of comprehension.

We propose, then, such a survey for ourselves; not with the hope of making any original contribution to the Philosophy of Religion, but simply of bringing together the floating ideas which flit like shadows before the mind's eye of most of us, of determining the quality of truth which is demanded, or which it is possible to attain to, in such inquiries, of passing under review nearly every question which has been discussed or determined with apparent finality by one or the other of the established religions, of separating those doctrines about which certain knowledge may be attained, and unanimity is possible, from others which involve the mind in helpless contradictions, and thus demonstrate, if demonstration were wanted, that further progress in those directions is not permitted, and that it is simply self-deception to expect people to understand these mysteries by force of a so-called faith, or by the help of revelation.

We shall pursue this inquiry according to the historical method, the only method which is likely to lead to appreciable results. Starting with an *a priori* set of principles, framed after a model of our own individual thoughts, would simply be begging the question, and land us in chaos. We shall best illustrate our meaning, if we therefore, commence the inquiry by simply laying down the entire range of subjects which it is necessary for any definite system of religion to have surveyed and measured in their

depth and height, if it puts forth pretensions to win the joint allegiance of human intelligence, and the human heart. As is very natural, theology is on all sides connected with the kindred sciences of nature and of mind, and the borderland of disputed territory is as yet unsettled. We shall, however, accept the ascertained results of the respective sciences as postulated to be true, and try to reconcile our conclusions to them as best they may be reconciled.

What is then the range in its entire extent of the Science of Religion ? What is the nature and character of the questions which in one or other of the established religions and theosophies of the world have been started, discussed somehow, and determined by the force of reason or by the voice of authority ? Before we proceed with the enumeration, there are two preliminary points to be determined :—First, the extent and character of the assurance of certainty obtainable in the solution of these religious difficulties ; and secondly, the intermediate position which religion occupies between Ethics and Metaphysics, in that it is concerned equally with both the practical and speculative faculties of our nature. All religions founded on Revelation bear willing testimony to the fact that absolute Certainty, that is, mathematical certainty which is based upon a hypothetical state of facts, is not attainable in these matters. The assent, though it is free from all conscious doubt, is based on conviction which is not free from liability to error. It is to fill up this gap, to give this double assurance by the

sanction of authority, that revelation is deemed necessary. This consensus of testimony as to the qualified character of the truth certainly attainable by us in these matters, is an important piece of evidence, and we gain little by trying to hide this state of things from ourselves. Even independently of this indirect argument, there are cogent reasons which help us to a similar conclusion. The problems of religion relate to the unconditioned and the transcendental, they concern the infinity of time, relate to the origin of things, to the nature and character of spiritual existence, and to principles of divine government. They are all problems which partake of the complex character of social and psychological facts, about which absolute certainty in the sense specified before is admittedly unattainable, and in the case of these religious difficulties, besides the complexity of determining causes, we have the additional element of the transcendental character of the subject-matter introduced. Though religious knowledge, therefore, partakes largely of the character of simplicity and directness of *a priori* truths, yet we frankly allow that the assurance of certainty felt is never free from doubts and difficulties, and cannot be compared with the strength of conviction in those departments of thought which the *a priori* philosophers think, owe nothing to experience. While we are free to allow this point, we must at the same time insist that on some points, which may be regarded as the cardinal principles of Theism, the certainty of assurance is of a very high order indeed, higher than is

attainable in social science, in politics, or in ethics, and higher far than is actually found sufficient to compel and justify men to act in most matters of practice. The testimony of the established religions may be appealed to with confidence in this respect, for, it is on all hands admitted that, independently of revelation, the evidence in favour of all the great universal truths of religion is very cogent and strong. Revelation lends merely further sanction; it confirms, it ratifies truths already perceived and acknowledged. This is its special function. As none of the revelations can claim to have an eternal origin, but all have had an historical growth and development, being limited to particular times, to particular countries, to particular tongues and tribes, they are obliged in the conflict of their pretensions to allow this common ground to each other, and found their own special superstructure thereon.

This point will be better understood in the sequel of the argument. What we have said already will suffice to indicate the position we take up. It will serve as a postulate throughout our argument, and will be a sufficient answer to the scoffing sceptic who insists upon our removing all doubts out of his way before he will yield up his disbelief.

The other point, the double-sided character of religion as a practical and a speculative system of belief and conduct, need not detain us long for the present. We simply wish to guard ourselves from the confusion of those who, in their search of reasons, end in mistaking metaphysical disquisitions as the

only department of religion worth their serious thought, and from the other extremity of those, who, in their search of a guide to practical duty, deny the distinction between morality and religion, or come to look upon a formal set of observances as the essence of their system. A glance at the list which follows will satisfy the candid inquirer that this double relation has been acknowledged in all established systems, which is *prima facie* indicative of a strong natural necessity in the constitution of our common spiritual nature impelling us in this double direction.

With these prefatory observations we shall now proceed to state the principal Articles of the Faith of those who believe on a system of pure Theism as underlying all religions and giving to these religions the claim they possess upon the allegiance of men of all races and creeds. We shall attempt to state these positions with as much precision and freedom as the subject admits.

I. The Theist believes that there is a religious or spiritual element in our human nature; that the human Soul has spiritual wants and spiritual senses, connecting it with the world of spirits, and directing it to God. The existence of this religious faculty is proved by the fact, that in all times and countries and in all races of men, religious worship has prevailed, as also from the inner spontaneous moral consciousness which each one of us feels, that man is a helpless dependent being, dependent upon a power beyond and over him, mysterious and sublime.

II. The measure of assurance or certainty of conviction which men can attain to in matters of religious doctrine has not the character of mathematical demonstration, based on a hypothetical state of facts. It is, however, equal to the certainty we feel regarding the facts of our consciousness. The assurance upon the great and cardinal points of religion is, thus, of a very high order, indeed, higher than is attainable in social science, and higher far than what is found sufficient to make man act in most important matters of practice. The questions of religion, being of a complex character, like social and political facts, and being concerned about transcendental things, it is not possible with our limited vision to attain to more than the strength of practical moral conviction on such subjects.

III. There are, moreover, some problems in religion of the unconditioned and therefore insoluble sort, the characteristic quality of which is, that the human mind, conditioned as it is, cannot logically conceive either the positive or negative position to be exclusively true, and yet cannot pause between the two extreme positions. The origin of the world, the origin of man, the relation between God and the created Universe, between the spirit or mind and the world of matter, are some of these problems.

The Theist honestly confesses his inability to resolve absolutely these problems, for they lie beyond the sphere of our limited intellect. But he has strong moral conviction on some of these

points, which is sufficient for the purposes of Life and Eternity.

IV. There are, moreover, other problems the full scope and surroundings of which are not seen by us with our present limited faculties, and though as regards them, the mind is not reduced to the helplessness of forming no final conclusion, and does take up its position intuitively, and also on a balance of evidence, strongly in one or the other direction, the conviction is not free from perplexing doubts which cannot be set at rest. The Theist accepts this perplexity as a condition of knowledge and faith, and reconciles himself to it. The origin of evil, physical and moral, the imperfect liberty man enjoys, the precise destination of the Soul after its separation from the body, and its pre-existence,' are some of the questions which partake of this perplexed character.

V. The religious consciousness of mankind has two aspects—intellectual or speculative, allied to and progressive with philosophy, and the practical, which is a kin sister to the moral elements of our nature. Though there are many systems of theology and ethics, there is only one religion and one morality. Love of God, and love of man, though practically inseparable, spring from two distinct though allied elements in our constitution, and as the religious element of the two is the more strongly and deeply rooted in human nature, it has a great influence in forming the moral type or ideal, and lends its sanction in securing the practical observance of morality.

VI. The Theist believes in the gradual and progressive development of the idea which man's religious consciousness has formed of the Power beyond us which controls man and the world of matter. The central idea of Theism, the existence of one God, is only gradually grasped as the conditions of the highest action of the mind are more and more perfectly developed.

VII. The Theist believes that the object and scope of religion is to teach man to regard God as the absolute object of reverence, faith, and love; to inculcate voluntary and self-conscious obedience to the law of God as discovered by our instinct, reason, conscience, and religious emotions; to teach man partially to attain to God's goodness in his nature here; to realise his relation to God, and to fit himself for a higher existence.

VIII. The Theist believes that our sense of helplessness and dependence implies an absolute God on whom this dependence rests. The idea of God is therefore, given by reason and intuition, and as such is natural. This natural consciousness is confirmed by *a priori* and *a posteriori* reasonings, and by the testimony of history, study of nature, and the dictates of enlightened conscience.

This conception of God is a necessity of our self-consciousness and involves no contradiction. The idea of God thus discovered is,—that God exists, a living being or spirit, exists as one Supreme Being, Cause of all Causes, unconditioned in time or space, Supreme Ruler of the Universe which is regu-

lated by His providence, Pre-eminent in power, wisdom, goodness, love, justice, and holiness: Lord, Father, Judge, and Moral Governor of all human souls.

IX. God is not merely a power or simply a force, nor nature in its created or developed state as the universe of matter, nor in its potential or seed-like form or germ, nor is He the great elements of earth, water, fire, air, nor the sun, the moon nor the stars, nor the principle in the body of nature. There are not many Gods, nor a hierarchy of Gods, nor deified good and bad powers, nor principles of light and darkness, of matter and spirit, of Prakriti or Maya and Purusha. God is One and without a second and not many persons,—not a triad, nor a duality of persons. Neither is He self-absorbed Bramha resting in contemplation, and indifferent to what happens in the world of matter and spirit.

X. The Theist believes that the precise character of the relation existing between God and the material creation is a mystery which transcends our knowledge. Material creation out of nothing is an impossible conception; with our limited vision we can neither conceive a time when the universe was not, and commenced to be, nor that the Universe was co-eternal with God. We can neither hold that the Universe is only the expansion or emanation or manifestation of God's extended being, nor that the Universe is without any real being, a mere vision or appearance, only seen by us objectively distinct by reason of our ignorance. The Theist, however, while

confessing his inability to solve this mystery, feels no doubt that God shapes and regulates nature by His providence, as is evidenced by marks of skilful design and kind disposition indicative of an intelligent being actively presiding over the operations and formations of inanimate and animate matter, and giving them existence, motion and life, and controlling them for His purposes. His influence is thus immanent everywhere in space and time, actively, vitally, and essentially present everywhere. The perpetual growth, decay, formations and renewals of the material world are an exhibition of God's power to the senses. The existence, motion and life of matter is from God. The various objects of the material, organic, and animate worlds, in their involuntary, mechanical, chemical, vital, instinctive, and rational energies, reveal different degrees of Divine influence according to the capacity primarily bestowed upon them.

XI. The Theist believes that the human soul is a spirit, that is, has a being by itself, and is not a form or activity of matter as physically understood, that this soul has various powers of perception, reasoning, and volition, a feeling of pleasure and pain, a sense of right and wrong, &c. That the soul is moreover, immortal, and lives after death, which separates it from the body. The Theist does not believe that the human soul is one and identical with God, and is only seen to be distinct through human ignorance. The Theist believes that the human soul has a distinct and subordinate existence,

and is not an emanation or a reflection of God's being. The Theist moreover, believes that there are as many souls as there are human beings. While there is evidence sufficient for convincing us of the practical truth of these several positions regarding the soul, the Theist confesses his inability to remove all perplexities and doubts regarding them, and lays no pretension to the possession of any thorough and accurate knowledge regarding the nature or origin, existence or the destination of the soul, and its connection with the Divine Spirit, and whether it was created by or whether it was co-eternal with God. The Theist believes that, as in the universe of matter, God's influence is actively immanent everywhere, so in the world of spirit does His influence form the essence and the life of the human soul in its nobler aspirations and workings.

XII. The Theist believes that God's will governs and regulates inanimate and unconscious matter by a scheme of general or uniform providence, and that the same Will governs self-conscious and voluntary spirits by a scheme both general and of special Providence. Both schemes of Providence conduce to the glory of God and the welfare of his creatures. This scheme of special Providence is, moreover, a moral government, and has its sanctions in the misery and happiness which follow as the physical consequences of moral or immoral conduct, as also in the satisfaction or discontent, degradation, or edification, of the conscience within. The fact that God is a moral governor in no way conflicts with the voluntary and limited

freedom of man's activities, at least so far as we have a foresight of their good and ill consequences, and can with effort avoid the one and secure the other. In this world, these sanctions are not uniformly and fully operative, there is often delay, there is an apparent impunity to vice, there is oftentimes apparent misfortune attending moral conduct. This causes perplexity and doubt, but in no way disturbs our conviction that the special scheme of God's Providence is a moral government.

XIII. The Theist believes that our present state of existence is one of trial and preparation, a state of probation and discipline in virtue and piety, qualifying us for a future sphere of existence. There is the liability to go wrong, there are temptations in our way, external and internal, which draw us away from what we often know to be right and proper. This fact shows we are under probation and trial. These difficulties, temptations and dangers, require in us habits of self-denial and discipline, and submission to present pain for future pleasure; our present state is therefore, one not merely of trial, but of discipline also. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that we are endowed with the capacity of improving ourselves by experience and the growth of the active and passive habits, which inculcate self-government, as the practical principle of all virtue, and pious submission to God's will. Our present existence is peculiarly fitted to be a state of trial and school of discipline; the snares that surround us tend to educate us in habits of self-government, and the

sight of the world and its defects promotes due feelings of dependence on God, and the length and continuance of temptations contribute to perfect our righteous habits.

XIV. The Theist believes that the soul is immortal, and that, according to its deserts in this life, will happiness or misery be meted out to it in the other world. The particular mode of this dispensation is a mystery of the insoluble sort. Whether the soul before tenanting this body has passed through previous stages of existence, and must pass through successive transmigrations hereafter, the quality of which is determined by its conduct in this life, or whether the soul lies in a state of dormancy till the resurrection day, when it shall rise up with its human body for judgment, or whether it lies in a state of purgatory undergoing purification, as also what kind of organism our spiritual being is clothed with, and what the pleasures and pains with which it is surrounded in its after existence are, these are problems over which hangs a dark veil which we are forbidden to remove. The Theist confesses his inability to form any conception of the regions of Heaven and hell, but he feels satisfied that the pains and the pleasures to be there experienced cannot be of a sort which are cognizable through our sensuous organism, and his trust in the goodness and mercy of Providence enables him to hope that, as the whole scheme of God's government is intended to promote the growth of the soul's capacities and perfect its powers, the final consummation of His

benevolence will not come in the shape of eternal damnation and misery of any one soul in creation. The Theist rejects the doctrine of eternal punishment for the sins of a finite life as inconsistent with the existence of a Being who is perfect mercy, justice and wisdom.

XV. The Theist believes that man has a measure of free agency sufficient to fix the responsibility of his acts on him, and to enable him to achieve by effort self-conquest. At the same time, the Theist is quite ready to confess that the influences of the time and the place he is born in, and of the society in which he moves, and early education, and associations, and physical temperament in a great measure restrain the unconscious freedom of man. These restraining influences have been variously represented in different religious systems, as Karma or Pralabdha, —the virtue of influence of acts committed in a former state of existence,—as the three-fold attributes of matter Satwa, Rajas and Tamas, as the conflict of good and bad principles, as the compulsion of superhuman beings, gods and demons, pulling in diverse ways, as the Fates or Destiny. The Theist steers midway between the extreme doctrines of unrestricted free agency, and fatalism, both of which positions are clearly untenable.

XVI. The Theist confesses his inability to account for the existence of moral evil,—for what we call physical evil is simply the result of our imperfect knowledge,—except on the supposition that this existence is a stage of trial and discipline, which it

can hardly be if there were no evil in life's way. Although free will does not necessarily imply liability to sin, the Theist at the same time admits that sin exists as a fact, and that it cannot be explained away as shadow or negation only, or as mere imperfection, or a mistake, or as a quality of matter, or a falsehood, or a delusion. The origin and final cause of sin is a mystery which is absolutely insoluble with our present vision of the purposes of God's Providence.

XVII. The Theist believes that the doctrine of original sin tainting the soul with an inborn corruption, the result of the disobedience of the first progenitors of the human race, has no foundation in fact, and is inconsistent with our idea of the perfect rectitude of God's distributive justice.

XVIII. The Theist believes that the doctrine that God has predoomed from all time some souls to bliss, and predetermined others to eternal misery, has no foundation in fact, and is inconsistent with the perfection of God's character.

XIX. The Theist believes that there is virtue in prayer, and a supreme necessity of holding communion with God, as a daily duty to edify the human heart. We should pray for God's help to guide us in life's difficulties, and his light to enable us to see the path of virtue and holiness. While it is thus our duty to pray, the consummation of the prayer should be entirely left to the disposition of His Providence, as knowing what is best for our welfare.

XX. The Theist believes in the virtue of heartfelt and abiding repentance to purify the soul. Instantan-

eous or death-bed repentances which leave no abiding effect have little or no virtue about them. Repentance, to be of any avail, must be followed by a strengthened determination and an increased power to resist the temptation our first weak submission to which gave occasion to the sorrow. It is in this renewed strength in after-endeavours that we feel the purification of the soul by sorrow and repentance. It is never too late for repentance. God's grace in these matters acts with a suddenness and an effect none can foresee beforehand, and our daily prayer must be to secure the help of this grace to lift us up when we fall into sin.

XXI. The Theist believes than man's salvation is effected under God's grace by faith, devotion, prayer and submission to God's providence, by the love of man and love of God, which these instil into our hearts, and by the practice of virtue and piety. In the absence of love and devotion he has no faith in the virtue of mere repentance, or of works of outward charity, of the practice of severe austerities, of the knowledge of our true Being and of our real identity with God, or of sacrificial rites of worship, though the effectiveness of these and various other ways for the purpose of salvation has been strongly insisted upon in diverse systems of Faith, and they may be cultivated with advantage as an aid to salvation.

XXII. The Theist holds as a cardinal article of his faith that all men and women are equally the children of God, and in his sight no distinction obtains between man and man. It is not for man

to limit God in his methods. His spirit is abroad in all on the earth, and in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him.

XXIII. The Theist believes that when the human soul, tried and purified by self-government and resignation, acquires habits which enable it, while in the body, or on leaving the body, to escape its trammels and its lusts, to enter into more intimate relation with God, and realise vividly the blessings of God's presence and holiness, and recognize Him to be the Lord, Father and Judge, in whose service the soul is bound by love and admiration,—this consummation of the soul is salvation. Translation into other worlds to enjoy sensual pleasures, or absorption into God's essence, or awakening to a sense that the human soul is identical with God, or gradually sliding into the state of passionless Nirwana, these views about salvation held by the votaries of different religions are all more or less vitiated, as being the result of a too aspiring or sensuous vision, and are besides opposed to our own inner consciousness.

XXIV. The Theist believes that incarnation or actual assumption of human flesh by the Divine Spirit is both an unnecessary and incredible supposition. God sheds his influence with bountiful abundance upon favoured men, and these men so exalted incarnate His influence. All holy men, the moral heroes and martyrs of this world, are of His making, like the clay in the potter's hand, and embody in spirit

God's influence or grace. All the different incarnations may be most consistently explained in this manner, and it avoids the absurdities of immaculate conceptions.

XXV. The Theist believes that God reveals himself in external nature, and in the inner world of our mind, and in history. These are his permanent and public revelations. When favoured souls, in all times and countries, are born, inspired with a prophet's vision, a poet's fire, or a great preacher's eloquence, a philosopher's wisdom, or a martyr's self-surrender, then the vision and the fire and the eloquence and the wisdom and heroism are Divine, that is, special gifts of God, and what these favoured men see, feel and teach, and their whole life, are a special sort of a higher and a truer revelation in the only tenable sense of the word. All other book revelations are now merely reflections, and being as a matter of course, local and temporary, their value is only relative and provisional.

XXVI. The Theist believes that, when the human mind has passed through its fetish and polytheistic stages, and attained to the conception of one Supreme Spirit presiding over the Universe, the worship of idols becomes a folly, and that, with men so advanced, the usual defence put forth on behalf of idolatry, that it serves to steady our faith and make us realise the Unseen more vividly, is not grounded in actual fact. At the same time, the Theist freely allows that idolatry is a stage of progress from the form of worship of pure and simple fetishism, and

as such, idol worship renders a service in preventing men from sinking lower into savages. When, however, the lowest stage has been once passed, and men can conceive a Supreme Lord of the Universe, the practice of idolatry is strictly speaking a degrading rite. The associations of idol worship humanize, or rather brutalize our conceptions of God. The myths which soon gather about it, representing as they often do the worst licence that obtains in human society, complete the destruction of all exalting faith, by blunting the conscience and deadening the intellect.

XXVII. The Theist believes that miracles in the sense of occasional breaches of the uniformities of Nature are both unnecessary and incredible, and that it is far more likely that those on whose evidence credit is claimed for miracles were misled in what they saw or heard, than that the usual course of things was interrupted and violated for a moment. The Theist believes that the testimony of external signs is of little value in matters of faith, that the worker of miracles is not necessarily a preacher of Truth, and that the continuance of the universe of matter in its ordained course, equipoised between all manner of distracting forces, is a greater standing miracle in favour of Theism than any number of violations of this uniform course, supported by mere human testimony can be, which are invoked to establish the divine origin of most of the established religions.

XXVIII. The Theist believes that the practice of austerities and the virtues of ascetic life defeats the

main end of our existence in this world. It deprives us of the education and discipline of self-government, which living in society has a tendency to foster in us. Asceticism defeats, moreover, the great end of creation. As an institution it is mistake. But in the case of individuals, unequal to the world's conflict, flight from temptation may be the only escape, and if the ascetic devotee improves the occasion, and lives a holy life, there is but little reason to find fault with such conduct. Retirement from the world at the proper season of life may be, moreover, often a duty, after all our worldly engagements are fulfilled. At the same time, in a society too much given up to self-indulgence and luxury, the example of men vowing to spend their manhood in unselfish work, and in the practice of poverty, chastity and austerities, is good as a protest, and is productive of the most salutary consequences.

XXIX. The Theist believes in the virtue of congregational prayer, and regards it as an institution which must always supplement private devotions, as it quickens ardent faith by the contagion of example, disarms men's exclusive pride, and by placing us all on the only level we occupy in God's sight as his children, habituates us to regard all mankind as our brethren in God, our common Father.

XXX. The Theist believes that the institution of an organized body of priests is of great use in conserving the interests of religion. The organization of a hereditary priestly caste, or a close body

of men with special interests of their own as opposed to the mass of the laity, is, however, productive of great mischief, and as far as possible must be discouraged. It must be remembered, however, that this matter is one of mere form and government, and not of divine ordination, and does not go to the root of religion. The positive necessities of society must to a great extent regulate this organization of priesthood, whether it is to be an order of birth, or ordination, or election for superior gifts. An order of men selected for the priestly office, and devoting their life's best energies to its discharge, is absolutely necessary in the best interests of religion.

XXXI. The Theist believes that for purposes of congregational prayer, temples and prayer-houses, large and tasteful, are absolutely needed. On occasions, the pomp and splendour of worship, music and artful decoration, if these do not tend to obliterate from the mind that heartfelt prayer and thanksgiving are the essentials of all worship, are great helps in humanizing the minds of men, and inspiring them with devotion.

XXXII. The Theist believes that the observance of occasional festivals and anniversary days is an institution which is absolutely needed in the present circumstances of society, as inspiring men with especial devotion, and drawing them away for a time at least, from the absorbing interests of the world, and solemnly warning them to look to their account with God. Men, moreover, are so weighed

down with the cares of life, that express occasional relief for brief holiday times is necessary to unbend the soul, and let it enjoy rest and quiet ease for a moment under the shelter of religion.

XXXIII. The Theist believes that the solemn events of life, births, initiations, marriages and deaths, ought to be clothed with a religious sanction, and that these occasions should be marked with special services and observances invoking God's blessing on the parties concerned, so as to impress them with the solemn responsibility of the acts so commemorated, and that such occasions should be celebrated by the practice of free bounty to the poor and the helpless. It is in this connection only that *Shraddha* ceremony in the honour of the dead may be performed on occasions to edify the soul.

XXXIV. The Theist believes that religious teaching should chiefly be directed to the inculcation of the unselfish and austere and self-denying virtues; that error on the side of charity, mercy, benevolence and self-restraint is welcome, for the natural selfish instincts are sufficiently strong to correct any occasional excess on this side. Religious enthusiasm too, is so rare a gift that we cannot make too much of it, where it is found in any strength, though oftentimes, if ill-regulated, it has a tendency to slide into fanaticism.

XXXV. The Theist believes that the notion of local sanctity which induces men to go on pilgrimages has a foundation in reason, in that strange places by their natural scenery or their historical associations,

are oftentimes more fitted to move the religious passion or devotion in the soul than those with which men have grown familiar, and this help to religion should not be neglected. At the same time, this feeling of local sanctity is in great danger of dragging the soul into the bonds of fetishism, and therefore, must be kept under proper control.

XXXVI. The Theist believes in the great influence for good which contact with superior or sanctified souls exerts in developing the religious temperament in us. At the same time, the absolute necessity of a *Guru*, teacher, or a mediator or a priest has been asserted in such extravagant terms in some systems of faith, that one cannot protest too emphatically against the assumption that no man can save himself except by his own single efforts.

XXXVII. The necessity of a mediator or redeemer between God and man is also so strongly insisted upon in some religions that we must always be on our guard not to forget that the work of regeneration is one of self-effort alone, and cannot be done by substitution. The assistance of a teacher or a friendly guide or master, endowed with superior gifts and virtues, is of course necessary in all cases, but there is a limit to their usefulness; and the ultimate efforts and the struggle must be all one's own, and neither mediator nor teacher can help us much. No man has supererogatory merits which he can spare to save other souls from perdition, and the doctrine of a substitutive or purchased salvation of one soul by the superior merits of another is not grounded

in our consciousness, and is moreover opposed to our experience of God's government.

XXXVIII. The Theist believes that the rights of individual conscience are paramount over all other considerations of mere political and social expediency, and are limited only by the fact, that there is no outrage done to morality, and that the toleration of no man's right extends to the imposition of any restraint upon the equally free exercise of other people's rights. No man or body of men can set up claims to infallibility in matters of religion, and such claims, when set up, must be resisted, because they are false, and, if once allowed, they tend to dwarf men's intellect, reduce them to a slavery, which is the more mischievous for being unconscious.

XXXIX. The Theist acknowledges no distinction between the province of Reason and the province of Faith in matters of religion. Faith is practical and earnest reason. Authority has therefore, no more potent claim in matters of religion than in kindred social and political sciences. It is to be revered and not lightly questioned, but beyond this the immunity does not extend to prohibit the use of reason in matters of Faith.

XII.

CONGRESS AND CONFERENCE

THE idea of holding periodical gatherings in each Presidency for the discussion of Provincial matters of public interest is a legitimate off-shoot of the great National Gatherings which have now become an institution of the land. This year these gatherings have been held in all the three Presidencies and it is obvious that this success indicates a healthy growth of public sentiment. In the Madras Presidency the political gatherings in that Province have always been accompanied by the friends of Social Reform utilizing the occasion on the analogy of the great national gatherings of the Congress and the Conference to meet together for the discussion of social subjects, and though hitherto in the political Conferences held in this Presidency, it has not been found possible to follow this example, it is a matter of great satisfaction to find that our Satara friends have realized the necessity of supplementing the work of the Political

* Address, Provincial Social Conference, Satara, May, 1900.

Conference by inviting the friends of social reform to come together and take stock of our gains and losses in the social sphere of our activities. Owing to the circumstances under which this work had to be undertaken at Satara we have had to content ourselves with a very brief programme, but it is to be hoped that the seed sown to-day will bear a rich fruit hereafter.

ADVANTAGE OF SUCH GATHERINGS.

I know there are those among us who see no advantage in holding local or national gatherings of this sort for the consideration of social topics. There are others who think that, though such gatherings may have their uses, they should not be joined together in place and time with the political meeting, as they only serve to distract the attention of the workers and lead to no practical results. It may be of use to attempt a brief reply to both these objections.

As regards the first difficulty it seems to me to arise from a confusion of ideas, which is very prejudicial to the right appreciation of our duties both in the political and social sphere. The underlying assumption is that in politics our duties consist chiefly in stating our wants and grievances to strangers who have been placed by Providence in command over us and who are ill-informed about our real condition. Politics in this sense means simply formulating claims for gifts or favours which

require no other action on our part. While in the social sphere our duties lie more exclusively with the regulation of our own actions in which outside help is not needed for guidance or control. As I understand it, this distinction between the two spheres of our activities is based on a radical mistake. The integrity of any human being cannot be broken up into separate spheres of activities of the sort contemplated by those who raise this objection. For the sake of convenience you may say that the rose has its beauty and its fragrance, but you can no more separate the fragrance from the beauty, and any attempt to do it can only end in the destruction of both. What is true of the individual is true of the collections of individuals whom we may call by any name, tribe, class, or community. These communities are organizations and you can no more separate their activities except provisionally and for the time. Every little village in our land, however poor it may be, has its temple and its chowdi, its resting place and watering place, and every town or city must have its township civic life made up of interests which are not wholly political or religious or commercial. The shops and the bazars, the temples and the theatres, the schools and the hospitals, the courts and the barracks, the young and the old, the men and the women, the poor and the rich—it is this variety and concourse which constitute the interest of village, town, and city life. Some may rule, others obey ; some may advise, others follow ; but the distinction is only provisional and not in the

nature of things. You cannot even build a house of your own where you do not keep a place for strangers or the wayfarer. You have to provide for the Gods' place of worship, a place where the thirsty, hungry, and the sick, may be cared for, and there is no man so poor and so selfish that he does not share in all these varied interests and recognize their claims. Each concern has to be attended to in its own time and in its own way, but it is the whole collection which makes it a human interest. What is true in our private concerns is equally true of our public life. Politics is not merely petitioning and memorialising for gifts and favours. Gifts and favours are of no value unless we have deserved the concessions by our own elevation and our own struggles. 'You shall live by the sweat of your brow' is not a curse pronounced on man, but the very condition of his existence and growth. Whether in the political, social, religious, commercial, manufacturing or aesthetical spheres, in literature, science or art, in war or in peace, it is the individual and collective man who has to develop his powers by his own exertions in conquering the difficulties in his way. If he is down for the time, he has to get up with the whole of his strength, physical, moral and intellectual, and you may as well suppose that he can develop one of these elements of strength and neglect the others, as try to separate the light from the heat of the sun or the beauty and fragrance from the rose. You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights, nor

can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economical system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideals are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economical, or political spheres. This inter-dependence is not an accident but is the law of our nature. Like the members of our body you cannot have strength in the hands and the feet if your internal organs are in disorder. What applies to the human body holds good of the collective humanity, we call the society or state. It is a mistaken view which divorces considerations political from social and economical, and no man can be said to realize his duty in one aspect who neglects his duties in the other directions.

THE FAMINE CRISIS.

As an example the present crisis of the famine may well be considered. If our social arrangements were as perfect as they might be made, half the terrors of famine would vanish and the political problem would be much simplified. There is no question which is *purely* political any more than social or economical, or even religious ; and they make a fatal mistake who suppose that these are separate departments in our composite nature. The same forethought, the same resolution, the same historical spirit, the same comparative scrutiny and the same strenuous endeavours are needed in all the spheres of our activity, and therefore, it will not

do for us to say that in politics our duties are clear but not so in other spheres. The whole man has to be developed and perfected for his own advantage and the glory of God, and it is only a conception like this which can strengthen our efforts and crown them with real success. It is on this account that when we take stock of our wants our mind must be open on all sides ; the eyes must see, and the ears hear, the hands move and the feet support. This can only be done by our devoting attention to all claims. Owing to our difficulties of everyday life of toil and sorrow, we cannot always find time for all things. When we therefore, meet for one purpose of taking thought of our political condition, that is just the time when we have the spirit of unselfish devotion stirred up in us to approach our internal man in its most tender moments, and there is an obvious convenience in seeking to utilize the advantages of time, place, Company and the enthusiasm which springs from association with equals, and you will thus see why the Congress and Conference gatherings have been joined together. If I had the choice we should long since have added other spheres of work so as to make the national gathering really national in name and aims. The claims of some kind of work might be more absorbing. than those of others, but each must have its time and place, and proportional attention devoted to it, and I am glad to see that these considerations have weighed with our friends in inviting us to this gathering at Satara on the present occasion.

But it may be said that our social fabric is not the work of human hands like the political institutions under which we live, and that in regard to these social customs the law has been laid down from time immemorial and we have only to follow it and it is not for us to attempt changes to suit our exigencies. This is another of those misconceptions for which there seems to be no excuse except a false pride, which makes us cherish dangerous delusions. As a matter of fact the social arrangements at present are admittedly not those for which we can plead the sanction of the great Law-givers whose names we revere in lip worship but whose behests we disobey at every step. Most of the customs which we now profess to follow run counter to the practices observed in the old times, when the Institutes were written. The dependent status of women, the customary limits of the age of marriage, the prohibition of marriage to widows in the higher castes, the exclusive confinement of marriage to one's own division of the sub-castes into which the country has been split up, the ignorance and seclusion of women, the appropriation of particular castes to particular professions, the prohibition of foreign travel, the inequalities made by the license enjoyed by men and the abstentions enforced on women, the jealous isolation in matters of social intercourse as regards food and even touch, indiscriminate charity to certain castes—for all these and many more alienations from the old standards you cannot hold the old Law givers responsible. They

are the work of human hands, concessions made to weakness, abuses substituted for the old healthier regulations. They were advisedly made by men whose names are not known to our Ancient History. They are interpolations made to bolster up the changes introduced about the times when the country had already gone from bad to worse. They are innovations for which no sanction can be pleaded. It may be they were made with the best intentions. Admittedly, they have failed to carry out these good intentions, if any, then entertained; and in seeking to upset them and restore the more healthy ideals they superseded, the Reformers of the present day are certainly not open to the charge that they are handling roughly our time-honoured institutions. It is rather for the Reformers to take their stand as defenders of these ancient ordinances and denounce those who have set God's law at definance to suit their own purposes.

THE INEVITABILITY OF REFORM.

But, even if this were otherwise and even if it could be shown by a long special pleading that the changes made are to some extent proper deductions from the old texts, it is quite plain that no lapse of time can bar the way of reform, where such is needed by the exigencies of our present difficulties. Above all mere ordinances of Institutes, stands the law Eternal of justice and equality, of pity and compassion, the suggestions of the conscience within and of nature without us. We can no more resist the stream of

these influences as working for righteousness than we can roll back the tide. All real prudence would dictate that we should take full measure of these influences and decide how far we must accommodate ourselves to the inevitable. All classes of society, Reformers and anti-Reformers alike, unconsciously admit the force of these considerations. The only difference between the two consists in the fact that while the latter yield unconsciously and under pressure, the former seek to use conscious effort to accomplish the same purpose, and between the two victory must be for those who do not wish to drift, but wish to be guided by the admonitions of their inward monitor and the lessons of past history. People will visit England whether their elders like it or not, and the force of circumstances will prevail. The education of women will similarly be encouraged as each year rolls on. The limits of age for marriage will be raised. Inter-marriage restrictions will be dissolved. Caste exclusiveness must relax and the greatest freedom predominate in all transactions between man and man. As prudent men the question for us will be, shall we float with this current or resist it? As these influences are Providential, our duty is clear and this duty becomes more pleasant, when we find that in so acting we are not only obeying God's law, but also returning to the ways of our forefathers, over-stepping the obstacles put in by our fathers in the way.

There is one objection still which hampers the way of Reform. Granted that reform is desirable,

it is still claimed that only the ecclesiastical heads of the different communities and the caste elders alone have legitimate authority to act in such matters, and that it is not for a miscellaneous crowd of people like ourselves to claim this privilege. To a certain extent the caste elders and even the Acharyas are moving in the right direction. In the great caste conferences held in all parts of India the Kayastha, Vaishya and other organisations that might be named without number, there are visible signs of the dead bones heaving with life of a new spirit. Even the Acharyas in the South, when moved by Native Rulers, and in some cases when not so moved but spontaneously have put forth efforts to promote what is right and proper. There is therefore, no occasion to quarrel with these agencies. They however, have their vested interests at stake and it will be more than human if they look at these things in the same light as we who feel the pinch are disposed to regard them. Their co-operation should be welcomed, but the question does not close here. The duty is cast upon us to see that the commonwealth to which we belong is not endangered by any vested prejudices. We can never forego the right of every human being to act in concert with others of his own way of thinking and make the effort to better our condition with the light that is given to us and with the help that religion and history afford us. Of course, our powers are limited, but the work of education consists in increasing the strength of the powers

by propagating both by precept and example what we feel to be right and proper. We may fail or even miscarry, but the effort will do us incalculable good, and the very failure will serve as a warning. This is the law of all progress and we can claim no exemption from it.

Lastly, it has been said that we are so split up into sects and divisions, castes and sub-castes, that no common concert is possible for the best of us, and that if we mean real work we must begin with castes and sub-castes and not indulge in the dream of joint action at least, for many centuries to come. This argument is double-edged and has been used by those who do not feel with us, to damp our energies in the political as also the social sphere of action. When we examine it more carefully we find that it is more fallacious than true. Castes and sub-castes have no doubt their particular preferences and dislikes, their own evils and iniquities to account for, and as we see everywhere from the reports of the Social Conference their best men are manfully struggling to cure these evils. It should, however, not be forgotten that this caste difficulty is the main blot on our social system. The great fight has to be maintained here and not on the outskirts. Quite independently of this circumstance, the differences between the castes merge into minor matters by the side of their great similarities. In the social sphere of our activities all castes and even creeds are alike defective in not recognizing the claims of justice and equality, and according to the respect and freedom

due to the female sex, and cherishing the abuse claimed by men as men and by the members of one class of men to the disparagement of other castes. This furnishes the common platform on which all can act, and it is only the education received on this common platform, that can command the elevation and freedom, which alone will help us to be taller, wiser and better individually and collectively.

I have thus, attempted to forestall by anticipation many of the objections which might be and are urged by those who are not disposed to be friendly to the work of our social emancipation. With the work that has been done in the different Provinces by more than a hundred Associations that are in full sympathy with the cause of social progress, it is not my purpose here to deal. The reports of the Conference for the last thirteen years furnish a living record to which all can refer with advantage. It is a record which does not show large achievements in accomplished facts, but to those who can read between the lines the spirit that animates this work, there is a land of promise opening its vistas before them in a way to encourage the most despondent. To go no further back than the past five months, I find from the notes of events kept with me that even in this year of distress some seven re-marriages took place: three in the Punjab, one in Bombay, one in the North-West Provinces, one in Madras and one in the Central Provinces. In Bengal, where the widow marriage movement commenced in Pandit Ishwar Chandra

Vidyá-Ságar's time as many as forty-six marriages were celebrated, thirty were celebrated since and forty-one more celebrated among the Brahmos, making a total of one hundred and seventeen. Including the Central Provinces and the Berars, the Bombay Presidency has, during the last thirty years, since the movement began, shown more than a hundred such marriages distributed equally between the Gujrathis and the Deccanis. The Punjab and the North-West Provinces show a total of more than thirty, and Madras presents nearly the same figure. The total of marriages would, therefore, be about three hundred throughout India in the several Provinces, in the higher castes.

Miss Manning's 'Indian Magazine,' in one of its recent numbers gave the total number of Indian residents, mostly students studying in England, to be three hundred and fifteen, of whom nearly half, or one hundred and forty-one, were Hindus, seventy-nine Mahomedans, sixty-one Parsees and twenty-two Native Christians. These figures show how the wind is blowing and how the stream of events is steadily on the right side. The Native papers in the Punjab show that during the last five months some seven admissions of converts from Christian and Mahomedan Faiths were made by the Árya Samajis, and there is an active controversy going on for the wholesale admission of some hitherto despised castes. The success of the Bethune College in Calcutta, and Female Schools and Colleges at Jullunder, Poona, Ahmedabad, and Mysore has been full of promise in this as in previous years. Among legislative

events next after the passing of the Mysore marriage laws, the most noteworthy event during the past five months has been the enactment of the Hindu Gains of Learning Bill by the Madras Council. The local Sabhás, such as the Deshamukha and Kunbi Sabhás in the Berars, the Rajput in the North-West Provinces, the Saurâshtra in the Madras Presidency and the Khatris in the Punjab have held their meetings and passed resolutions in favour of marriage reform under good auspices. Many instances of late marriages have taken place throughout the country, also of inter-marriages in different parts of India. This is, no doubt, a brief record, but as observed before it is full of promise.

The present crisis through which our part of the country is passing under the stress of plague and famine has intensified the necessity of taking adequate steps for alleviating the distress suffered by all classes. There are particular directions in which all social reform organizations might work with advantage in such a crisis. Many thousands of poor orphans have been rendered homeless, and although they are supported through famine by private and Government charity, the time is coming when with the rains on us, this charity will cease to flow and the unclaimed orphans will have to be provided for when the distress is over. Missionary Societies have pledged themselves not to effect conversion while the distress is at its height, and they are prepared to give over the children to those who will claim them. The rest, who will be unclaimed, will

have to be cared for by these societies, and people everywhere must consider the question how to deal with these poor children. Freedom to return to their community is a charity which we all can display, if we have the largeness of heart to understand the issues involved. The economical question here becomes one of religion and social amelioration. Equally affecting is the claim which has been urged on behalf of hundreds of child-widows who have been rendered miserable in consequence of the famine and the plague visitation. In normal times their condition was bad enough, but their misery has been aggravated by the misfortune of these hard times, and those who have any heart to feel for their wrongs might well be asked to take thought as to how their misery might be alleviated. The question of postponing marriages to the latest limit of marriageable age—to the age of puberty, while the visitatons are upon us, will not fail to attract the attention both of the Reformers and of those who profess to be indifferent to this subject. These and other matters will, I doubt not, engage the attention of friends who are assembled to-day. We shall not be able to take any immediate action here, but if these matters allowed claims on our thoughtful consideration, when we go to our places the work of reform cannot fail to lead to some useful results. For this and work like this, concerted action is needed, and concerted action is only possible under existing circumstances when we think and work together.

A committee consisting of all those who sympathise with the progress of Reform is, therefore, sorely needed in this part of the country to co-operate with similar workers elsewhere, and it is with this view that our work to-day will chiefly consist in forming such a committee and laying down the lines on which it is to work. This is a duty in which I trust you will all join, and join with a heart that will suffer no disappointment, but will strain every nerve, each within his own sphere, to bring about the practical well-being of our people in which the well-being of every individual is involved. This is the message that I was commissioned by friends elsewhere to communicate to you here, and I now commend this subject to your anxious care in the full conviction that the work is one in which we can all co-operate with advantage and in which no progress is possible without such co-operation.

XIII.

VASHISTHA AND VISHWÁMITRA.*

ABOUT this time last year I had occasion, at the inauguration of the Conference held at Lucknow, to dilate on a text of Nánaka, in which he proclaimed himself to be 'Neither a Hindu nor a Mahomedan.' To-day, I find you have come together in the extreme North-West corner of India, in the land of the Five Rivers, the original home of the Aryan settlers, who composed the Vedic hymns and performed the great sacrifices. You have met to-day in the land of the Rishis, where Vashistha and Vishwamitra lived and flourished at a time when the caste institution had not taken its root in our Indian soil, when men and women enjoyed freedom and equality, asceticism had not overshadowed the land, and life and its sweets were enjoyed in a spirit of joyous satisfaction. The Punjab, during its eventful history, has well deserved the compliment, that it is the land of the Rishis. The question, then, naturally arises, who were these

* Inaugural Address, Lahore Conference, 1900.

Rishis? What was the condition of society when they lived? What thoughts stirred them, and what actions ennobled their lives and their struggles? For most of us, long habit has rendered it impossible to imagine a state of society where men were not split up into petty divisions of caste, with its artificial barriers, limiting men's activities and narrowing their sympathies. It is a revelation to many of us to be taken back to two or three thousand years ago; to a state of society when class divisions, such as Brahmins and Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudrás, were unknown, or not well established, and the only distinction recognized in practice was between the Áryans and non-Áryans. To illustrate the gulf which separates our own times from the days when the Rishis flourished, we need only mention the fact that Lopámudrá the daughter of the king of Vidarbha was given in marriage to Agastya. Another Rájá, by name Lomapáda gave his daughter Shántá in marriage to one Rishya-Shringa. The King Trinabindu also thus gave his daughter Gou to Pulasti, and Bhagiratha gave his daughter Hansi to Koutsa Rishi. The king Sharyáti's daughter Sukanyá was given in marriage to Chyavana Rishi. Instances where the Brahmans gave their daughters in marriage to kings were also not uncommon. Thus Shukráchárya's daughter Devayáni, was given in marriage to Yayáti and Shuráchárya's daughter Kritwi to Anuha. Independently of marriage alliances, stories are told where Rishis, who were born in royal houses, or were Rajarshis, became, by their sanctity

and devotion, entitled to be called Brahmarshis. One Priyamedha was so elevated, and Shini, Gárgya, and Trayyáruni were also so promoted to the status of Brahmarshis, and their progeny to that of Brahmins. Also Mudgala and Gritsamada, who were before kings, became thus Brahmins. The Brahmins, on their side, felt no scruple in learning the Dhanurveda, or archery: Agastya Muni, as is well known, was skilled in Dhanurveda, and conquered the non-Áryan king Ilvala, and the Kálakáeyas, who were pirates on the sea-coast. Agniveshya was also noted for his skill in archery, and he was the teacher of Dronáchárya, himself a great Brahmin commander in the wars of the Máhábhárata. His son Ashwattháma, and his brother-in-law Kripa were similarly renowned. Instances where Brahmins caused the ruin of the kings of the day by their curses are, no doubt, more frequent than those where kings cursed the Brahmins and brought about their ruin. As illustrations of the first class, we may mention stories about King Nahusha and Vena Rájá. Nahusha, as is well known, had by reason of his superior merits become the occupant of Indra's throne, but he made the Brahmins carry him in a palanquin, and Agastya Muni resented the ill-treatment and cursed him, which led to his downfall. King Vena was similarly dethroned. Similarly, Vashistha's curse against Sahasrárjuna enabled Parashuráma to lop off his numerous hands. Vashistha is also mentioned as having cursed Rájá Kalmáshápáda, and Rájá Trishanku became Chándála in consequence of the curse. On the other hand, Vashistha himself

did not escape unharmed. There is, besides, the story of Ambarisha, who was persecuted by Durvása, and in the result Durvása had to entreat Ambarisha to grant him pardon and withdraw the Sudarshana which perpetually followed him and gave him no rest. As regards the women, numerous stories are told of their remaining unmarried throughout their lives, and of their engaging themselves in the pursuit of devotional exercises or in the study of philosophy. The story of Ambá, who remained unmarried all her life, is well known. She wanted to marry with Shalva, but he would not take her and she would not accept the choice made by Bhishma for her. The daughter of Kunigarga also remained unmarried during life. Gárgiváchaknavi, Vadaváprátitheyi and Sulabhámaitrai—all these are historical names of women who passed their lives in celibacy and engaged in discussions on philosophic subjects in the court of Janaka.

Perhaps, the most instructive of these ancient stories is that which is connected with the rivalry of Vashistha and Vishwámitra. Both these names occur in the Vedic hymns, and though their rivalry is noticeable even in these early hymns, they furnish no authority for the legend which gathered round their names in the period which succeeded the composition of the hymns. Vashistha is a great exponent of Brahmin orthodoxy The legends seek to make out that Vishwámitra was not by right a Brahmarshi. He was only a Rájarshi, and aspired to be a Brahmarshi. Vashistha would not support him in this

ambition, and that accounted for their strife. Throughout the story Vishwámitra represents the view of those who try to admit the non-Áryans into the Aryan community and seek to elevate them. The story of Trishanku, for instance, notwithstanding its exaggeration, has a moral of its own. Vashistha had without justice condemned Trishanku to be a Chándála simply because he aspired to go to heaven by the force of his merits. Vishwámitra took up his cause and performed the Yagnya, because Trishanku had saved his wife and children during a great famine. The result was that Trishanku was accepted in heaven notwithstanding the curse of Vashistha. The story of Shunah-shepa, who was the son of a Brahmin, and was purchased as a sacrificial victim to be offered to Varuna in the place of the king's son, who was first promised, is also full of the same liberality on the part of Vishwámitra, who saved the Brahmin's life by his mediation. The result of the conflict between Vashistha and Vishwámitra was a complete victory on the part of the latter, for Vashistha admitted Vishwámitra's claim to be a Brahmarshi. Vashistha's line was continued by his grandson, Paráshara, Krishnadwaipáyana, Vaishampáyana, Yádnyayalkya, Shukra Muni and Jaimini, all belonged to the orthodox side. Vishwámitra's family was connected by alliances with that of Bhrigu, Jamadagni and Paráshara. The great Rishis who colonised Southern India were undoubtedly Agastya and Atri, who with their wives Lopámudrá and Anusuyá occupy a prominent place in the story of the Rámáyana. King Ráma stopped in

their Áshram, and Válmiki's description of these Áshrams presents a picture of these holy settlements, which does not lose its charm even at the present day. These settlements were the pioneers of civilization in Southern India. There were similar establishments in other parts of India, on the borders of the civilized kingdoms. The Rishi, with his wife and his numerous pupils, kept herds of cows, cultivated the land, and founded colonies or cities, and helped the Rajas from the north to establish their power in the south. Jamadagni's story of the conflict with Kártavirya, and the subsequent wars between Parashuráma and the sons of Kártavirya, no doubt refer to such expansion of power. King Ráma himself was helped by Agastya in the final struggle with King Rávana. Parashuráma is said to have similarly carried on a war with the Rákshasas, which was put an end to by the mediation of Vashistha. The early Rishis were great both in peace and in war. In this respect the Rájarshis were as great as the Brahmarshis. Risabhadeo, for instance, had one hundred sons, of whom nine devoted themselves to meditation and philosophy and eighty-one followed the Karma-márga, and the remaining ten ruled over kingdoms. King Janaka was great as a sovereign ruler, and greater still as a saint. Vámadeo was noted for his piety, devotion and knowledge, which came to him in his mother's womb. The Brahmin Rishi Báláki was taught higher philosophy by Ajátashatru, the Rája of Káshi. It may be seen that there was no monopoly of learning in those early times and Rájas and Brahmins sat at

the foot of each other to learn wisdom. There was, in fact, no permanent division of functions between the two orders and, therefore, they were somewhat like the temporal and spiritual lords we know of England. They could interchange place, and did, in fact, so interchange them in numerous instances.

This brief account of the time when the Rishis flourished in this country naturally leads to the inquiry as to how it was that in course of time Brahmin Rishis came practically to monopolize the title and deny it to the Rájas. The story of Vashistha and Vishwámitra furnishes some clue to a solution of this difficulty. The great names of Agyastya and Atri, Vashistha and Jamadagni, Bhrigu and Bháradwaja, Paráshara and Vámdeo, Vaishampáyana and Yágnyavalkya, Válmiki and Vyás, Kapila Muni and Shuka Muni, naturally carried influence with all classes of people. The Rájarshis were not much known for their authorship, and when these old families succumbed to foreign conquerors in the early period of the Christian era, the new Rajput, or Ját, conquerors had no hold on the popular mind, and the Brahmins retained or increased their hold on the affections of the people. The Puranic literature which had its birth about this time confirmed this superiority of the Brahmins, and the result was that the term Rishi came to be applied only to Brahmins, as being the only literary or cultured class of the time. Their predominance continued unchecked, except so far as the Vaishnava movement came to the relief of the non-Brahmin classes. The Vaishnava movement has struck

its deepest root in the Punjab, where the ten Gurus, from Nának to Guru Gobind Sinh, have effected a change the like of which no other part of India can exhibit. The Granth Sáhib has taken the place of the old Vedas and Puránas, and the Gurus and their descendants occupy the place of the Brahmins. Since the establishment of the British rule new forces have been in operation, and the road is now again open by which the best men of all classes might aspire, as in the past, to be the true Rishis of the land. A movement which has been recently started in the Punjab may be accepted as a sign that you have begun to realize the full significance of the need of creating a class of teachers who may well be trusted to take the place of the Gurus of old. The chief point, however, that is to be considered in this connection is, who should be these Gurus of the future. It is with this view that I have endeavoured to place before you a brief account of the true Gurus of the past, namely, the Rishis who were both Brahmarshis and Rájarshis, only distinguished from one another by their individual inclinations and abilities. We must keep that ideal before us if we mean to prove ourselves the worthy descendants of our earliest ancestors. Of course, the teachings and the methods and the subjects taught in these days must be made to suit our new exigencies and environments, but the spirit animating the teachings must be the same as that which led the first settlers to cross the Vindhyá Range, and establish their colonies in the South. By reviving our ancient traditions in

this matter we may hope in the near future to instil into the minds of our young generations lessons of devotion to learning, diversity of studies and personal loyalty to the teacher without which no system of school or college education can ever bear any fruit. This, however, is not all. In addition to these lessons, our new teachers must know how to introduce their pupils to a correct appreciation of the forces which are at work in the wider world outside, and which, in spite of temporary checks or seeming reverses, represent all that is best in human efforts for the elevation and happiness of man. Our teachers must enable their pupils to realize the dignity of man as man, and to apply the necessary correctives to tendencies towards exclusiveness, which have grown in us with the growth of ages. They must see that our thoughts, our speech, our actions are inspired by a deep love of humanity, and that our conduct and our worship are freed where necessary from the bondage of custom and made to conform as far as possible, to the surer standard of our conscience. We must at the same time, be careful that this class of teachers does not form a new order of monks. Much good, I am free to admit, has been done in the past and is being done in these days, in this as well as other countries by those who take the vow of life-long celibacy and who consecrate their lives to the service of man and the greater glory of our Maker. But it may be doubted how far such men are able to realize life in all its fulness and in all its varied relations, and I think our best examples in this res-

pect are furnished by Agastya with his wife Lopámudra, Atri with his wife Anusuyá, and Vashistha with his wife Arundhati among the ancient Rishis, and in our own times by men like Dr. Bhandarkar on our side, Diwán Bahádur Raghunáth Row in Madras, Maharshi Debendra Náth Tagore, the late Keshab Chander Sen, Babu Pratáp Chandra Mozumdár and Pandit Shivanáth Shástri in Bengal, and Lálá Hansa Ráj and Lálá Munshi Rám in your own province. A race that can ensure a continuance of such teachers can, in my opinion, never fail, and with the teachings of such men to guide and instruct and inspire us, I for one, am confident that the time will be hastened when we may be vouchsafed a sight of the Promised Land.