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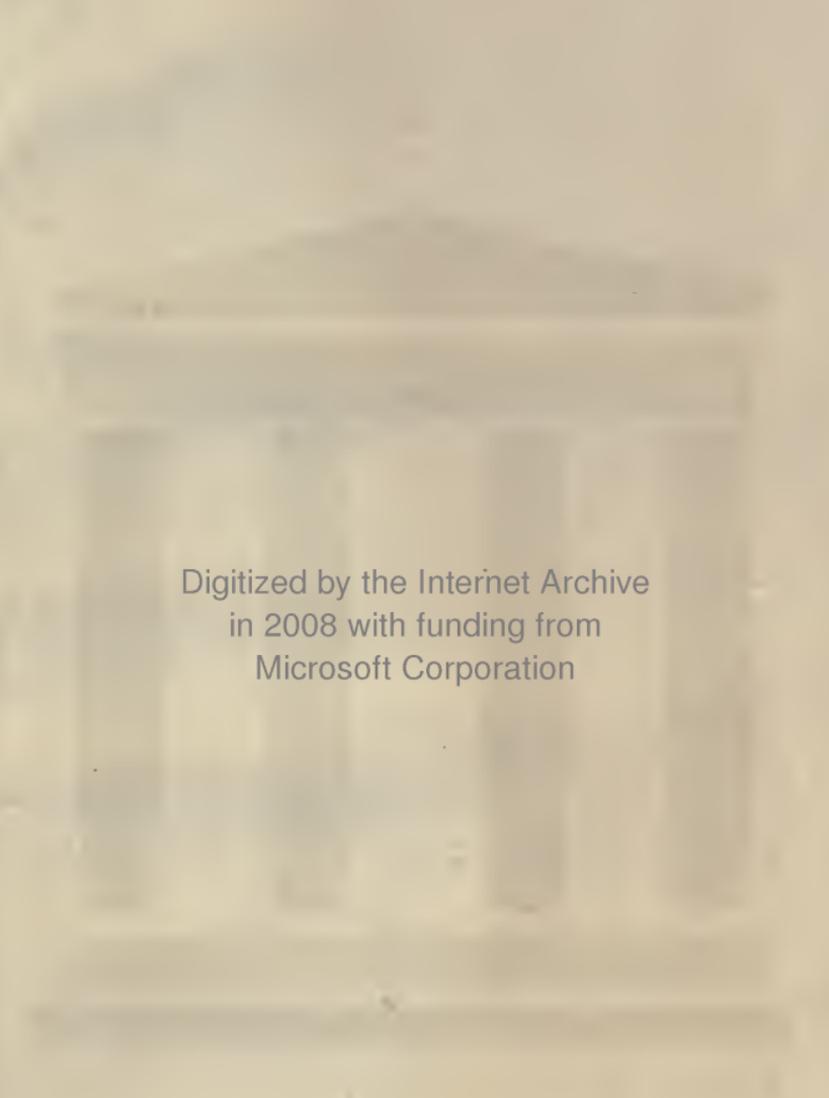
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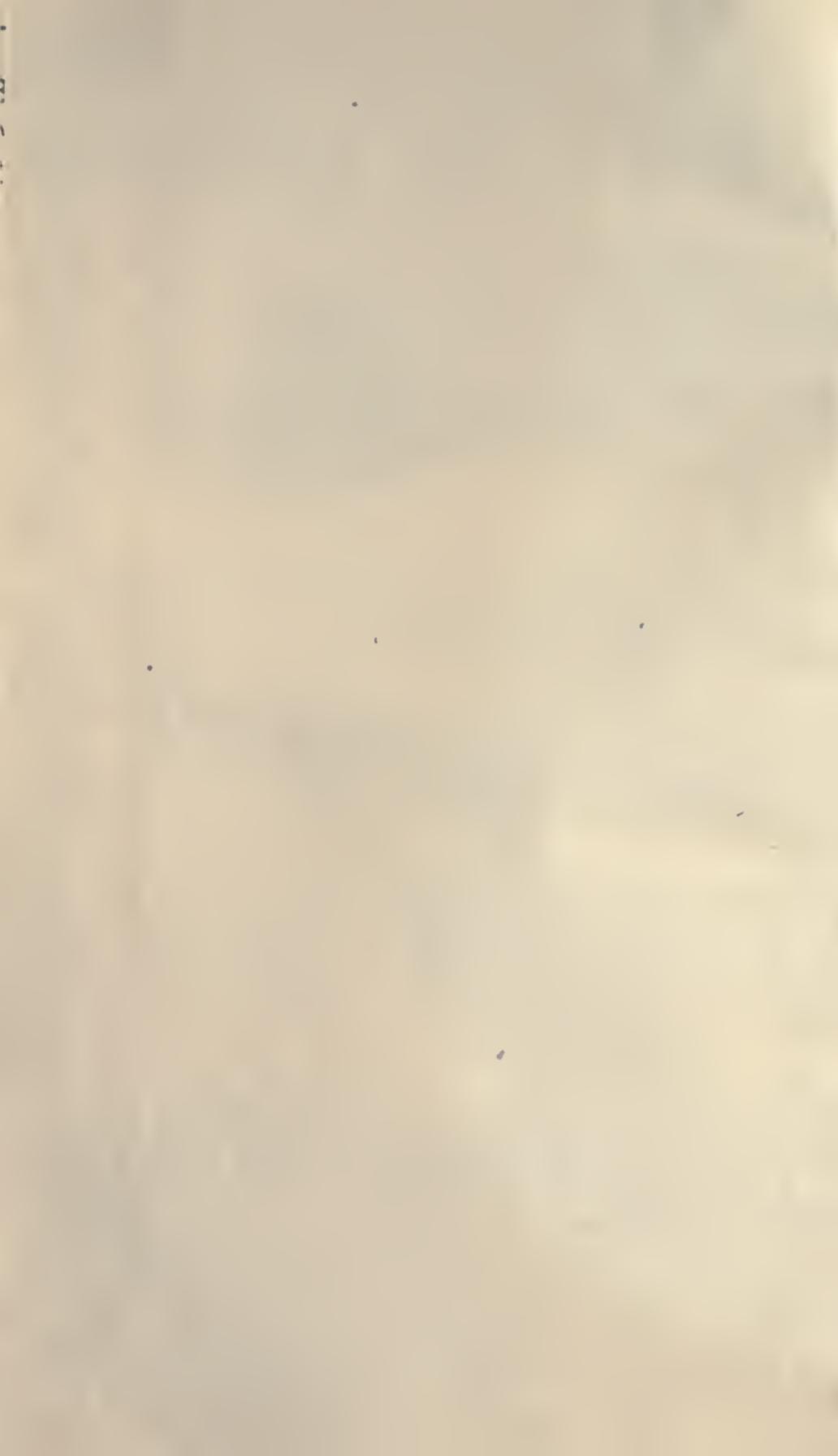


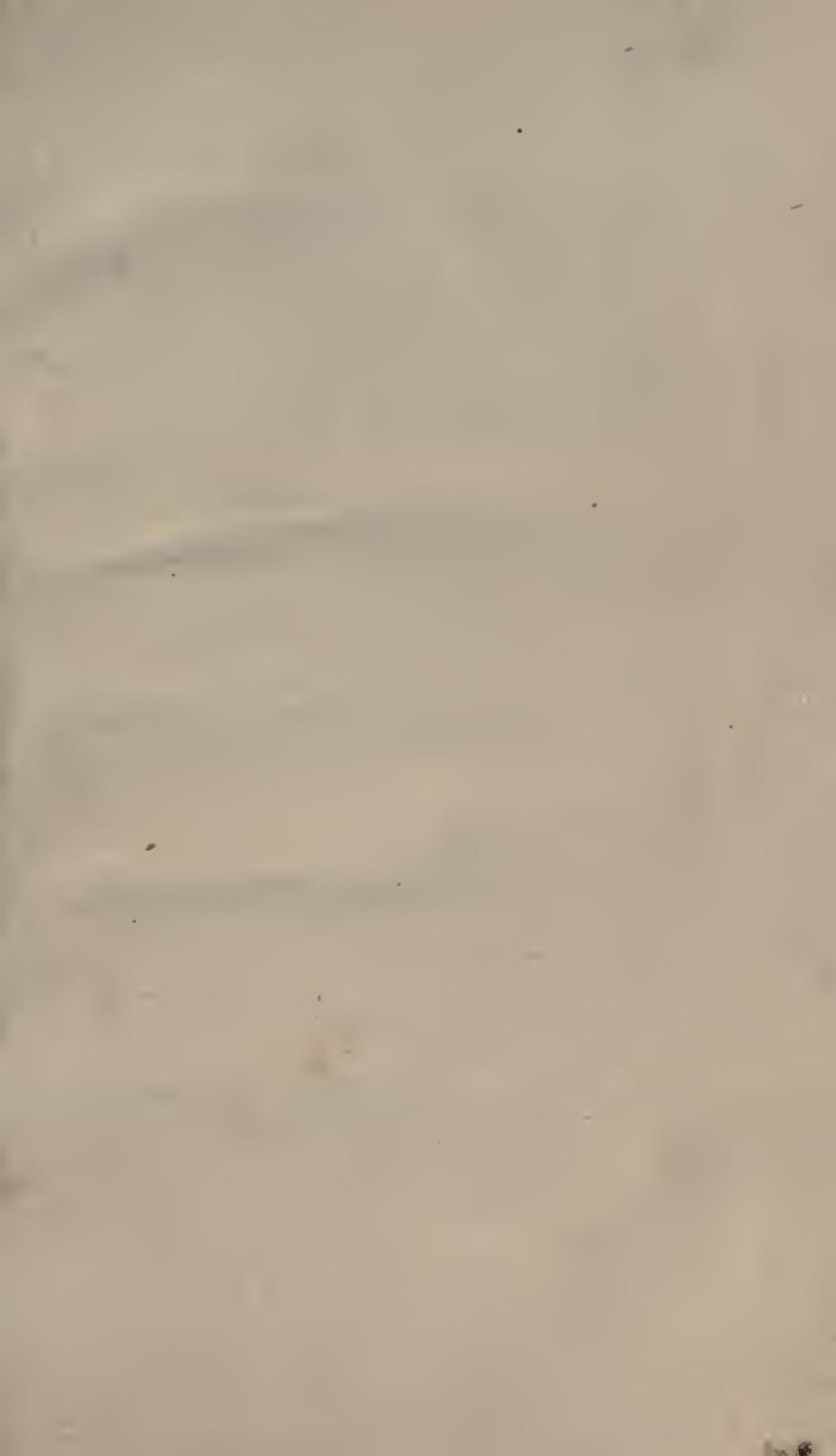
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The Spirit of Ancient Hindu Culture.

BY

MAGANLAL A. BUCH, M. A.

AUTHOR OF "ZOROASTRIAN ETHICS" AND "PHILOSOPHY OF
SHANKARA." "HOMEJEE CURSETJEE DADY PRIZE" MAN
AND "GOCULJI JHALA VEDANTA PRIZE" MAN.

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1921

MAIN



Mahatma Gandhiji

Mahatma Gandhiji

I

have the honour to dedicate this humble work as a mark of my reverence for your great soul. You have given us a new life, a new hope, a new power, and have been the pioneer of New and United India, in which the humblest and the mightiest shall be equally dealt with, in which the ancient Aryan culture shall once more be able to communicate its noble word to all humanity - the word of Love of God and man. All honour to the soul who not only conjured up such a vision, but made its realization possible!

M. A. BUCH.

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Preface.

An attempt is made in the following pages to bring out in brief the significance of our ancient Aryan Culture. The survey is necessarily suggestive, not exhaustive. No apology is needed, we believe, as regards an attempt at the presentation of the point of view of the ancient Hindus in mental and moral sciences. The whole civilization of ancient India may be summed up in the one word: Adwaita. We have, therefore, tried to understand the implications of this creed. The first chapter is meant to express the contrast between the East and the West. The second chapter was the University Prize Essay of 1913. The third chapter was a contribution to the Indian Sociological Journal. In the fourth chapter, we have tried to do justice to the virile elements of our

political thought. The fifth chapter is mainly negative, showing more what Hindu Theology is not than what it is. The sixth and seventh chapters contain a brief exposition and an appreciation of the Adwaita Vâda. We humbly crave the indulgence of our readers for some slips here and there in the book, which were not quite easily avoidable as the book was to be hurried through the press within a month.

BARODA,
25-2-1921. }

MAGANLAL A. BUCH.

ABBREVIATIONS.

Br. Up.	...	...	Brihadâranyaka Upnishad.
Chh. Up.	...	...	Chhandogya Upnishad.
Katha Up.	...	...	Katha Upnishad.
Mu.	...	...	Mundaka Upnishad.
Ta. Up.	...	...	Taittiriya Upnishad.
Ward P. & T.	...	...	Pluralism and Theism

The Spirit of Ancient Hindu Culture.

I. The East and the West: A Contrast of Cultures.

The ancient Aryan society developed in course of time a special type of civilization, a characteristic culture which is sure to interest and instruct humanity till the latest ages. Its outlook on all the main problems of life was often fundamentally different from the outlook of the modern West. A broad contrast exists between these two systems of culture, these two views of life; and it is worth our while to study it in detail.

The prime characteristic of the ancient society was its religious basis. Religion dominated law and politics, war and peace, private and public life of the

ancient Aryans. Religion was the one main interest of the old Aryan life; everything else was subordinate. The conservation and development of religious values was the one great goal before the ancient *Rishis*. Now religious life essentially centres round all those interests of man which are of paramount importance for him. It refers to the eternal longings of man and their lasting satisfaction. It places unambiguously the permanent in man above the local and temporary in him. It respects soul more than body, eternity more than time, life beyond more than the life here and now. The necessary consequence of such a view is the prevalence of theocracy. The messengers of God, the devotees of the Eternal in man, are considered the fittest and worthiest people. Hence we find the strange spectacle in India of beggars figuring more than kings and potentates in the eye of society. The mendicant Vasishtha virtually governs the kingdom of Ayodhya.

The mendicant Vishwamitra threatens king Dasharatha and shakes the very foundations of his kingdom by his wrath. The mendicant Durvasa triumphantly moves among persons of all ranks and conditions. It is veritably an aristocracy of beggars. This idea is not confined to the Hindus alone. A life of rigid poverty had equal fascination for the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Mahomedans. The highest wisdom was thus given a chance to rule all the sections of society.

All legislation was also framed with a view to render all classes of society contributory factors in the building up of a social and political structure in which the earthly interests were never allowed to usurp the place which the spiritual interests should occupy. The state was to operate as a veritable check to the aggrandisement of one class at the expense of others, to the growth of the two extremes of the rich and the poor, which render society in the

West a prey to all the modern conflicts of haves and havenots. Charity was so much inculcated among all the Eastern faiths that wealth could never become a source of oppression to the poor.

But in the West all this is otherwise. The modern Western civilization is essentially secular. It does not recognize the power of the eternal interests of man. The state is a purely human agency, having nothing to do with the life beyond the grave. The dominant fact about this system of culture is the passion for all the good things of this life. The present modern period is, therefore, eminently an economic period. अर्थ and not धर्म is its keynote. Material prosperity, economic progress, access to all the luxuries and comforts of a wealthy society are the main ends for which individuals as well as societies are striving. All its wars are industrial wars. No nation has any mind to start crusades or religious persecutions. Exploitation of the inferior races, acquisi-

tion of control over the raw materials, opening of new markets for manufactured commodities form the main purposes leading countries to long and bloody wars. Capitalistic regime is all-powerful. All power is ultimately wielded by a few millionaires. The coal-kings and the cotton-kings hold the leading-strings of the foremost Western countries. The West is piling armaments upon armaments, raising gigantic navies, constructing giant dreadnoughts and Zeppelins, for the one purpose of asserting its industrial supremacy.

The secular arts and sciences were not unknown to the people of the East. But the East was never infatuated with the economic or capitalistic dreams; and hence it always justly condemned the inordinate pursuit of material ends. It cultivated and developed some of the finest powers of the human understanding; it developed to wonderful perfection the peaceful arts of civilization. No student of history would ever pass

an adverse verdict upon the achievements of the East either in the realm of arts or of sciences. Sir Thomas Munro says :—“ I do not understand what is meant by the civilization of the Hindus ; in the higher branches of science, in the knowledge of the theory and practice of good government, and in education which, by banishing prejudice and superstition, opens the mind to receive instruction in every kind from every quarter, they are much inferior to Europeans. But if a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to convenience and luxury ; schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic ; the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other ; and above all, a treatment of the female sex full of confidence, respect and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilized people, then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe ; and if civili-

zation is to become an article of trade between two countries, I am convinced that this country (England) will gain by the import cargo."

The point of distinction, the true differentia of the East lies in the fact that these instruments of civilization were strictly sub-ordinated to the one fundamental aim of all individuals and societies, *viz*, the promotion of the highest spiritual life. While भोग or happiness is the inspiring ideal of the Western society, धर्म or moral life was the ideal of the ancient oriental society. The unfettered development of science was never held desirable among the Aryans. All the highest arts were to be secrets, mysteries confined to a few. There was esoteric culture spreading only among a few persons, a small group, which it was dangerous, or sacrilegious to render accessible to all. Even now we often find wandering mendicants in possession of very important secrets which they will never communi-

cate to a worldly person. Neither the highest अधिभौतिक,—material knowledge, nor the highest आध्यात्मिक—spiritual knowledge is to be spread among miscellaneous people. This excessive jealousy regarding the dissemination of important lore was not actuated by any selfishness. It was understood that the main purpose of human existence was the freedom from the thralldom of matter and therefore, all aspirations to secure the empire of man over nature were kept in wholesome check.

The West looks outward and emphasizes the need of building up a superb outer structure of civilization for the happiness of man. The East looked inward and emphasized the need of obtaining mastery over self and developing the soul-powers of man. The West, therefore, looks to science as the ultimate panacea for all ills; the East looked to philosophy as the last refuge for all weary and sorrow-stricken humanity. The one says: Perfect the economic and

political organization of society and there will ensue a millenium. The other says: Perfect the soul of man and that in itself will be a state of paradise. The one thinks that if the outward march of civilization is ensured, the inward will follow; the other thinks that if the inward development takes place, the outward will follow. As is well put: will you get the whole world and lose your soul? The West wants to gain the whole world but it might lose its soul. The East was prepared to lose the whole world but not the soul.

The characteristic progress of the West takes place on these lines. The perfection of machinery is its main aim. Machine is usurping the place of man everywhere. An enormous faith in the powers of the machine inspires the Westerner. One day he hopes to bridge the gulf between the Earth and Mars; one day he hopes to bridge the chasin between mind and matter. All things are to be explained in terms of Law;

there is to be no room for poetic license, for miracles in the universe. Everything will be reduced in course of time to the powers of observation and experiment. Calculation will solve all the difficulties of man. Life will become a mere mathematical problem; so will be mind; and so also will be soul. Mysteriousness which gives so much point to the sciences of metaphysics, ethics and psychology, which fills and inspires the religious imagination of humanity will all vanish; perfect light will spread itself into every nook and corner of the universe. Carlyle describes this age as the Mechanical Age. "It is the age of Machinery, in every outward and inward sense of that word; the age, with its whole undivided might, forwards, teaches and practises the great art of adapting means to end. Nothing is now done directly or by hand; all is by rule and calculated contrivance. For the simplest operation, some helps and accompaniments, some cunning abbreviating process

is in readiness. Our old modes of exertion are all discredited, and thrown aside The shuttle drops from the fingers of the weavers, and falls into iron fingers that ply it faster. The sailor furls his sail, and lays down his oar; and bids a strong, unwearied servant, on vaporous wings, bear him through the waters...Not the external and physical alone is now managed by machinery, but the internal and spiritual also...Thus we have machines for Education; Lancastrian machines; Hamiltonian machines; monitors, maps and emblems. Instruction, that mysterious communing of Wisdom and Ignorance, is no longer an undefinable tentative process, requiring a study of individual aptitudes, and a perpetual variation of means and methods, to attain the same end; but a secure, universal, straight-forward business to be conducted in the gross, by proper mechanism with such intellect as comes to hand. Then, we have religious machines of all imaginable varieties; the

Bible-society, professing a far higher and heavenly structure, is found, on enquiry, to be altogether an earthly contrivance: supported by collection of moneys, by fomenting of vanities, by puffing, intrigue, and chicanery; a machine for converting the Heathen. Has any man, or any society of men, a truth to speak, a piece of spiritual work to do; they can no wise proceed at once and with the mere natural organs, but must first call a public meeting, appoint committees, issue prospectuses, eat a public dinner, in a word, construct or borrow machinery, wherewith to speak and do it. Without machinery they were hopeless, helpless; a colony of Hindu weavers squatting in the heart of Lancashire. Mark, too, how, every machine must have its moving power, in some of the great currents of society; every little sect among us, Unitarians, Utilitarians, Anabaptists, Phrenologists, must have its Periodical, its monthly or quarterly Magazine; hanging out, like its windmill

into the *popularis aura*, to grind meat for the society.”

The East did not believe in the omnipotence of machinery and consequently often neglected it. Its grand characteristic was simplicity. It preferred direct natural methods to indirect, artificial ones. It fully knew the enormous possibilities of scientific development; it fully knew that time and space could be easily got out of man's way by the power of *Yoga*. But it also realised the dangers of unlimited growth of purely physical and psychical powers, it knew that the unregenerate man would only forge fresh shackles for himself by increasing the realm of *upadhis*, the outward adjuncts. A man whose spiritual development becomes perfected, who is completely free from all sensual and private longings, is a man who becomes *ipso facto* the sovereign of the world. He becomes a veritable ईश्वर—the Lord and Master of all things. The universe becomes plastic to every wish of his; he is

सत्यसंकल्प. यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति । विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते
यांश्च कामान् ॥ तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामां । तस्मादात्मज्ञं
ह्यर्चयेद्भूतिकामः (Mu. 3. 10). The soul becomes, in fact, a perfect master of circumstance. But not until the spiritual in man gets supreme over him, is he allowed to indulge in dreams of annexing the kingdoms of matter. The Eastern sages found out the potential dangers of an excess of the outward goods and powers and cried halt to the spirit of man in that direction. They firmly believed that man requires only a very few ideas for his salvation; if these are effectually absorbed by him, he is safe everywhere. The whole force and energy of the soul of man was bent upon the realisation of these fundamental truths. The Persians wonderfully summed up the whole code of ethics in a short formula: to bend the bow and speak the truth was the end of education. The Greek Socrates asked people to know themselves. But the analysis of the Greeks was superficial. The

Hindus summed up all the Decalogue and all Philosophy in one phrase : आत्मानं विद्धि—know the Self (not the self). Hence while the Greeks by calling man's attention to what seemed to them the fundamental fact, the knowledge of the self, became the founders of mental and moral sciences, it was reserved for the Hindus to lay deep the foundations of the science of sciences, metaphysics.

It is often said the East is spiritualistic, while the West is materialistic in its general outlook. This antithesis is true in the above sense. The East places the soul at the centre, the core of things; the West cares more for the peripheral things. It makes all the difference in the world, says one thinker, whether you place truth in the first place or in the second place. The East places the paramount interests of the highest soul-life above everything else. The West places the social and economic interests above all things. Rabindranath Tagore characterises the difference thus :

“you ask me to characterize the difference between the Eastern and Western outlook. That is very difficult although the difference is very real. In the East we are conscious through all individual things of the infinity which embraces them. When I was in England I felt there was an incessant rush of just individual things upon me; it was not a question of noise and bustle and haste only, but the whole atmosphere lacked the sense of infinity. Upon me it had the effect of hampering reflexion and meditation. No, I should not describe the difference as one between spirituality and materialism, though that is the way it is often put. I have known too many noble and devoted men in England who practise renunciation and self-sacrifice and strive for humanity to deny your Western civilization—spirituality. No country could stand the shock of this war if it lacked spirituality. But it is a different kind from ours. It is not penetrated

as is ours, with the abiding sense of the infinite."

The East cares more for the whole than the parts, the West cares more for the parts than the whole. Simplicity of the one, complexity of the other is due to this fact. The East is more synthetic than analytic; the West is more analytic than synthetic. In its pursuit of the Whole, the former often loses sight of the parts; in the pursuit of the parts, the latter often loses sight of the Whole. The East therefore cares more for unity and often sacrifices the Many at the altar of the One. The West cares more for the Many than the One; and often fails to get the One in its dogmatic assertion of the Many. The East is absolutistic in its temperament; the West is essentially pragmatic. The East gazes too much at the sky and stumbles on the earth. The West is severe in its study of the earth, but fails to soar in the sky. The one suffers from the despotism of ideas; the other suffers from

the despotism of facts. The one labours under the tyranny of the metaphysical standpoint; the other groans under the tyranny of the standpoint of sciences. The one appeals from the evidence of senses to that of soul; the other appeals from the evidence of the soul to the evidence of the senses. The one believes too much in the reality of the unseen world to have much real care for the seen world; the other believes too much in the reality of the seen world, to have much concern for the unseen world. The one has got too much imagination, too much idealism to have sure grounding in facts; the other is too full of its faith in the actual to have its vision kindled by the power of high ideals and generous enthusiasms.

This characteristic runs in all the main departments of thought and life. In the social sphere, the East stands for self-renunciation and self-denial. The West stands for self-assertion. The East looks upon life here as a mere period of pre-

paration for a higher life. Life is a school of discipline, a period of probation for the souls. It is a vale of soul-making, in the words of Keats. It has no intrinsic value; its value is merely instrumental. It is to be valued not as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. It is regarded mainly as a battle-ground for the cultivation of the highest virtues and the most saintly qualities. The world is described as a कर्मभूमि and not a भोगभूमि, a theatre of action, and not one of enjoyment. Naturally, this view leads to the adoption of an attitude of renunciation, not of assertion. Self-effacement is the highest virtue. Man's duty is to place himself in the background everywhere. Mention of one's own merits, trumpeting of one's own qualities are mere manifestations of ignoble vanity. An attitude of humility, of meekness-is much in favour with the East. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. विद्या ददाति विनयं— The highest result of culture is modesty. Renunciation,

fasting, celibacy, austerities, are all so many forms in which the Eastern spirit reveals itself. These are characteristic Eastern institutions. The modern West looks upon all these mortifications as mere perversions of human mind. It emphasizes the need of self-assertion. Self-advertisement is considered the keynote to success in life. The weakest must go to the wall. The West has no love for the weak and the helpless. These are not fit to survive. The biological criterion of vitality often usurps the place of the moral criterion. All the aggressive virtues are therefore specially cultivated. The press and the platform are largely used for the assertion of one's cause. Capacity for making successful wars-is the crucial test of a high civilization. The unwarlike races must be so much food for exploitation at the hands of the more organized and disciplined.

The East always believes in the enormous power of love. Love is the one grand secret for the cure of all human

and terrestrial ills. It has measureless possibilities in itself. The greatest Eastern personalities, — Shri Krishna, Buddha, Christ,—what have they all preached above everything else? They preached the deepening of affections, the tightening of the higher ties between man and man. Love or Bhakti in the East was meant to transcend all barriers, all divisions, all clefts. The range of Eastern sympathy is so wide and comprehensive as to include not only all humanity, but the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms. The East wants us to love our enemies, to cherish those who oppose us. It rises above all minor considerations, all worldly prudence and enjoins the practice of good to the evil, of humanity to the very monsters of cruelty. It wants to win all by the magic of love. The reiterated insistence on the doctrine of *Ahimsa* or non-resistance is merely an aspect of this belief in love. An attitude of perfect harmlessness towards all creatures, under all

circumstances is preached in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism

It is idle to say that the Eastern genius delighted in the negation of life, while the West requires its affirmation. The East believes in moral force, more than in material force; the West believes more in material force, than in moral force. Otherwise what books enjoin greater reverence for life than the books of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism? Life was not held a mere trifle; on the other hand, the life of a veritable insect, of a small budding plant was held venerable in India. As regards the conception of humanity, it is the West which is bankrupt, not the East. The Western writers openly justify in serious books of ethics their treatment of the oriental humanity. Merciless extermination of the aboriginal Indians in America, ruthless exploitation of Africans and Asiatics are sufficiently glaring proofs of the Western disregard for humanity. In the last war, the lives of millions of souls

were considered as mere food for gunpowder. The East is half-inclined to vegetarianism; the West finds it very difficult to accept this counsel of perfection.

Disinterestedness is the last word of the East in ethics. Qualities of activity, perseverance, and untiring devotion to one's work are not the monopoly either of the East or the West. Nor are the martial and heroic virtues such as courage and chivalry less honoured in the East than in the West. It is useless to say that the East is passive, while the West is active. The point of importance is whether ego is to be the centre of things or the higher idea of soul. All action animated by pride and attachment stands self-condemned in the eyes of the East. Idleness, passivity belong to *tamas*, activity with private purposes belongs to *rajas*; only the highest activity done with a view to the service of humanity, without any idea of self in it, is due to *sattva*. The

Mahâbhârata asks warriors to fight ; but without any sense of personal attachment. युध्यध्वमनहंकाराः । What a lofty gospel is this ? All actions are holy, all *pravritti* is righteous which is done in the name of God. Man, says the West, is an economic and political animal. Self-interest is the only motive power which moves individuals or societies. There is no scope for disinterestedness in the world. Man always works for his highest pleasure. Pleasure and pain are the only criteria of good or bad actions. The East has always stood aloof from the profit—and—loss philosophy. In spite of so much tolerance, and so much liberty given to speculation, it must be said to the credit of the East, that the selfish, short-sighted creed of utilitarianism was never popular here. Chârvâka was a complete nonentity in the history of India. But in the West utilitarianism, naked but not abashed, has got a very firm grip upon the very soul of the people. Never were the standpoints

of two peoples so wide asunder, so diametrically opposed as these.

Purity is another idea peculiar to the East—sincerity is the characteristic attitude of the East. The East believes in the idea of the unity of thought, word and deed. Its homage to the virtue of truthfulness is not a mere lip-homage; no virtue was regarded more highly by the ancient Aryans than perfect sincerity; nothing was more condemned than dissimulation. The West believes in dissimulation and hypocrisy. It believes in the powers of secret diplomacy. It believes in the power of propaganda, right or wrong. The very definition of truth in the hands of pragmatists has become a veritable mockery. That is truth, says the pragmatist, which answers well in practice; that is error which issues in bad consequences. Now such a concept of truth lands us in complete chaos and uncertainty. It has called forth a strong protest from no less a man than Rudolph Eucken: "The

essence of the conception of truth, and the life and soul of our research after truth, is to be found in the idea that in truth man attains to some thing superior to all his own opinions, something that possesses a validity completely independent of any human consent; the hope of an essentially new life is held out to man, a vision of a wider and richer being, an inner communion with reality, a liberation from all that is merely human.....Truth can exist only as an end in itself." (Main currents p. 78). But in the East, Truth is defined as that which is above all change; it is the most stable of all stable things: सत्यं नामाव्ययं नित्यमविकारि तथैव च । (Shanti-parva). In matters of chastity, the West has to learn much from the East. That sanctity and indissolubleness of marriage, which raises this tie above all earthly ties in the view of the East is conspicuous by its absence in the Western society. The frequency of divorce, the discussion of the problem of free unions,

the constant elopements, the repeated marriages of widows and widowers are so many scandalous features of the West. Man is reduced to the level of a brute. Immoral life is often a matter of indifference in the Western society. But the East which values chastity very highly goes to the length of preventing widow remarriage and eschewing divorce. Such things as looking at another woman or talking with her are regarded very seriously. In the West, young girls are the objects of unlimited showers of compliments and of frivolous remarks—a situation quite strange to a man in the East.

Reverence for elders, for *gurus* is another feature in which the East differs from the West. That excessive homage which the young generation is expected to pay to the mandates of its elders cannot be dreamt of in the Western society. This has its good side as well as bad. It often means rather servility on the part of the younger people. But the West errs on the other side, in

eschewing reverence from very important relations, and thus we find there the principle of rebellion asserting itself with great violence in all circles. Too much obedience is the sin of the East; too much irreverence is the sin of the West.

In politics, a very prejudicial view only can say that the Easterners are unfit for self-government; while the West is eminently fit not only to govern itself but to govern others also. This art of government is not inherent in the Western brain alone. The ancient Aryans developed splendid views on politics as on all other sciences. Nor is the capacity of combination the secret of the rule of the West over the East. The Hindus knew all the advantages of corporate life and created many local and continental organizations. Again, it is said that the East could only devise a despotic monarchy, while it is the privilege of the West to create constitutional governments. The East was not a

stranger to republican ideas and institutions; while the lawgivers freely laid it down that the ruler who was oppressive or who was weak and feeble should be overthrown and even killed if necessary. The sacred right of insurrection was understood by the millions of India, although the people were warned not to tamper lightly with the majesty of time-honoured institutions. Nor will it do to say that the East was deeply, ineradicably conservative, while the West is always progressive. The idea of an unchanging East is an exploded fallacy. Flint has pointed out that there was as much development and filiation of thought even in China as in ancient Greece.

However, it is idle to deny that in politics at present the East has to learn much from the West. But it is necessary to grasp exactly the place where the shoe pinches. Mere phrases and catchwords need not frighten us. Take the idea of democracy. The con-

consciousness that is coming over humanity that all are children of God, that there is none high or low in his eyes, that liberty and equality are the birthrights of men everywhere, is no new thing. But it is now for the first time that we witness a consciousness developing itself among the kindred forces of the world, that links up the cause of the one living in the Far East to the one living in the Far West. Everywhere people are making a rush for openings and opportunities, everywhere the soul of man cries out for freedom. Democracy is an old idea but a new fact. Compared with the new Democracy which is yet merely in the bosom of the new Age, all the republics, ancient and modern are mere mockeries. The Republic of Athens was a nominal republic; there was hidden beneath an ostentatious democracy of a direct type, a mass of millions of lives held merely at the mercy of their lords. The Republics of America and France provide

nothing but gigantic machineries for exploiting the labour populations of their own countries and of the whole world. The democracy of Great Britain—the perpetual boast of a Britisher,—the constitutional freedom considered to be the essence of British public life is nothing but a delusion and a snare. Even the British people themselves are mocked by a phantom of representative government. The only difference between personal despotisms of the old monarchic type so plentiful in the history of the East, and upto this time prevalent in the West also, and the constitutional despotisms of the modern West, seems to me to be this: that while the former institutions were fitfully mischievous, the latter are systematically focussing and organizing their enormous powers of evil. Under the old conditions of personal rule, the intellect, the character and the soul of the ruling monarch were the factors upon which the good of the people

depended. Under the new republican institutions, it is the views and interests of the governing races which count in administration. Hence, while a few personalities now and then appearing in society, had a very great chance of being sources of unqualified blessings to humanity under the old regime: now the machinery is so much overwhelming the man at every stage that there is a dwindling chance for great souls to speak out their voice boldly, and direct the policies of states and nations to their own lofty purposes and ideals. But the very fact that the republics are rigidly constitutional, comes in the way of the bold assertion of all individual genius and humanity. Hence whatever way we may look, democracy is not yet born, it is yet *to be born*. The people have not come to their own. The people now want to come to their own. The will of the people wants for the first time to embody itself in the social and political organization of the world. Humanity cannot be held in leading-

strings any longer.

The East had more faith in the character of the people and less in the constitutional machinery which should govern them, as a factor in their happiness. The West has little faith in the soul of man, but is madly in love with outward perfection. The former said: Perfect the people, let there be high ideals before them, let their education be managed in the interest of the higher life, and it does not matter much whether the legislature and judicature and executive are united or separated. The West says: Perfect the institutions, develop the technique, create organizations, divide all business into departments, appoint committees and commissions, and the people will get the millennium. The East asked men to look for the highest happiness within and not without; the West asks men to look for the highest happiness without and not within. Carlyle trenchantly exposes this trait of the West-European civilization.

“ We might note the mighty interest taken in *mere political arrangements*, as itself the sign of a mechanical age. The whole discontent of Europe takes this direction. The deep, strong cry of all civilized nations,—a cry which, every one now sees, must and will be answered, is: Give us a reform of Government! A good structure of legislation, a proper check of the executive, a wise arrangement of the judiciary, is all that is wanting for human happiness. The philosopher of this age is not a Socrates, a Plato, a Hooker, or a Taylor, who inculcates on men the necessity and infinite worth of moral goodness; the great truth that our happiness depends on the mind which is within us, and not on the circumstances which are without us; but a Smith, a De Lolme, a Bentham, who chiefly inculcates the reverse of this,—that our happiness depends entirely on external circumstances, that the strength and dignity of the mind within us is itself the creature and consequence of these.”

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It must be admitted that for such ideals as political and constitutional liberty, universal franchise, national prosperity, the East never cared much. The East always asserted its belief in simplicity. Give us a few fundamental ideas, it said, make them the common property of all, and nothing else will be necessary. The true regeneration of humanity does not lie in the perfection of the body-politic; the true regeneration must come from within. Happiness, liberty, prosperity, are not at all desirable things if they drop like apples from without, or if they are forced into existence by machinery; these must be striven after and deserved, these must be duly assimilated by the regenerate humanity. Another great idea which the West is working out is the idea of nationality. The East cared for individual and cared for humanity; but the idea of such collective entities and their magnificent possibilities as national and international organizations had not much

dawned upon it. Here lies both its strength and limitation. Its cosmopolitanism was a splendid ideal; but it remained an ideal only. In actual life it was but natural that the East, dreaming dreams and cherishing visions, lost all capacity for political initiative and fell into political and social servitude. The East possesses the right idea of a spiritual democracy; men are equal neither in natural gifts nor in outward goods; men are equal as spiritual units, as souls, as manifestations of the one Deity. The idea of the Oneness of soul in the whole creation is the only idea upon the basis of which a true and lasting democracy can be reared. But between this idea and its complete realization lies a long and weary road. Humanity can digest such a splendid lesson only by centuries of costly experience. History is unlike logic; in it sometimes centuries elapse between the first premiss and the second, and between the two premisses and the conclusion.

Such is the case with the Eastern vision of Unity. Nationality is a very sinister idea because the nations have not yet learnt their lessons in the right interpretation of the ultimate good of man as such. But there is undoubtedly a soul of good in things evil. Humanity may outgrow the idea of nationality, but at present it is a much-needed idea for various down-trodden countries.

In the fields of religion and philosophy too, the distance between the soul of the East and the soul of the West is apparently very great. Tolerance in matters of faith is the creed both of the East and the West. But beneath this outer identity of fact, there is the inner difference. The tolerance of the Westerner is often the result of a weak, diluted attitude in matters of such serious moment as God and Eternity. It is merely an aspect of the attitude of scepticism which is rampant in the Western countries. The tolerance of the East is the outcome of

its firm faith that God is the same, that there is only one Reality in various shapes, that as a man sows so he reaps. “तं यथा यथोपासते तदेव भवति ।” It is ultimately a matter of faith. यादृशी-भावना यस्य सिद्धिर्भवति तादृशी. Man is judged in the East by his character, his personal convictions, by his sincerity in all serious matters. In the East, वृत्त or character was always considered the most dominant fact about a man. The West worships a man of intellect, of brilliant oratorical powers, of acute logical capacity. He becomes a power at once. Such a man leads the public opinion, parliaments, and veritably becomes a potentate. No body enquires into his private character. A Shelley or a Byron, a Pitt or a Fox became the idols of nations, however loose their private morals were. The Eastern mind is more shrewd, looks deeper, neglects outward polish, and takes a person at his genuine, intrinsic worth. Hence the terms of great men in Sanscrit are :

सद्, महात्मन्, उदारचरित, साधु etc. Greatness without goodness has no meaning. A man becomes something only when he unites power with goodness. It is thus that we see men like Vasishtha, and Vishwamitra held in reverence in the East, men who were not merely powerful personalities, but highly moral characters also.

The East maintains its character in its faith and piety as in other things. Side by side with the highest, purest, and most impersonal conception of the Deity, flourish all forms of polytheism and image-worship. But the idea of God has begun to undergo a radical disintegration in the hands of the extreme Western thinkers. Even such an austere sage like Kant, calls the God-idea merely a regulative idea ; God is necessary to heal the breach between man's ideal and actual, between virtue and happiness ; God is necessary to give unity and law to our system of ideas ; God has thus an instrumental existence and

not absolute existence. The pragmatic and humanistic thinkers believe in an evolving God, who is *primus inter pares*, but who has to groan and travail as much as his brethren to perfect Himself. But there is the doctrine of a finite God—the ‘Invisible king’ of Wells, with all its mischievous implications, which is coming into vogue. Then there is the democratic conception of God, a God who is merely a unity of spirits, who is gradually coming to His own. Some philosophers come forward and say that we must have God for the satisfaction of our poetic and imaginative sensibilities; it does not matter if from the logical point of view He has no existence. What a relief it is to turn from these anarchic and heretical speculations, which in the name of superficial reason and analysis, are attacking and unsettling the very foundations of a healthy humanity, to the august conception of the Deity in the Upanishads, who is now the Lord and

Father of His creatures, and now the very soul of humanity and universe? His is the central presence, subsisting at the heart of endless agitation; immutable, perfect, all-powerful, infinite, the very fountainhead of all love, and mercy and goodness. Even the poorest and most illiterate peasant who bows down before the images of Rama and Krishna is the very perfection of religious spirit, as compared with the scientists of the West, who 'murder to dissect'. The sublime characters of the type of Tukaram, Chaitanya, Kabir, Tulsi and Narsinha Mehto, with their boundless devotional fervour, with their magnificent religious abandonment, were the most precious contributions made by India towards the civilisation of the world. We challenge the West to show any characters in the modern Europe and America who can compare with these.

The fact is, that the East was rather creative; the West is rather critical. The Eastern people originated brilliant

ideas in the days of the Upanishads; but they knew little of the modern methods of systematisation, interpretation and criticism. The modern Western outlook is above all critical. A critical spirit has spread over all departments of thought and life. In religion, instead of the throbbing consciousness of a devotee, or the sincere outpouring of a Vedic seer, we are now treated with the abstractions of theology. In philosophy, instead of a deep conviction of the reality of soul, of God, of eternal life which we had in the old days, the West gives us endless commentaries on these sublime ideas and points out in unmeasured terms the limitations of the conceptual faculty, the impotence of man and so on. In literature, the German scholarship gives us giant treatises which aim at organising and interpreting the whole world of knowledge. We have encyclopædias, dictionaries, year-books, bibliographies and many such attempts in the way of building up, bit by bit, a systematic

structure of experience of man in all walks of life, and all branches of knowledge. But the Eastern genius always delighting in simplicity, will prefer rather to be enchanted by a few original strains, by some creative pieces than to criticize, and elaborate by endless tirades the work of previous thinkers. The East was often dogmatic; but it was the dogmatism of a soul who healthily believed in its powers to clutch at reality. The West does us much service by making every idea, every belief an object of analysis; but too much criticism ends in sophisticating the mind of man. Theology cannot and should not replace religion, nor literature, life. Too much theorising must not unsettle our belief in some of the fundamentals of life. The wind of speculation may blow as it listeth; however it is wise to recognise here the Hercules' pillars of human activity. Rationalism is one of the most useful attitudes of the human mind in its progressive march towards

Reality. But it should never be forgotten, as Goethe said, that life divided by reason leaves a remainder, that dialectic cannot take the place of life which ultimately baffles all attempts at its being defined and circumscribed within narrow formulæ. Life is wider and richer than logic, and although the West is right in drawing attention to the importance of criticism in life, the East may check its tendency to push too far its work of criticism and point out that the West gives us stone when we ask for bread.

There are a few important differences between these two attitudes as regards some of the fundamental problems of philosophic thought. The East is considered fatalistic; the West is a believer in the free will of man. What is the place for the activity of man in the universe? Is it a regular link in the chain of events, a mere part of the vast system of mechanism obtaining in the universe? The Western belief is that

man is free, that his actions are the outcome of his self, that he has a capacity for making choice between good and evil, that as he chooses the one or the other, he becomes the author of his own fate, good or otherwise. Man is a free, autonomous, responsible being. He is not a mere spectator, but an actor and an actor on his own initiative. The spiritual power of initiating a fresh series of actions belongs to man; in fact, it is his especial prerogative to be the architect of his own fate. Man is not a thing among other things; he is an independent centre of fresh activity. Man is not only free to act, but he is a factor to be reckoned with in the universe. It is through his efforts that the day of millennium will be hastened; through his inactivity it will be inevitably postponed. Unity which the world has and will have, is and shall be largely the outcome of the joint efforts of men. Man is an active, effective partner with God, in making the universe what it is.

and what it will be. There is, therefore, the possibility of epigenesis, of fresh starts, of new beginnings in the universe. There is a large realm of ends, a large sphere of the universe, the contents of which cannot be deciphered by the most omniscient intelligence. There is of course no Chance, no accident, no whim or arbitrary fiat of God, which threatens to disturb the normal course of things, to interrupt the reign of law. But man's agency, his autonomy introduces a new factor in the universe, and transforms it from a lifeless mechanism, a block universe, into a theatre of moral activity, in which at every stage of man's progress, the alternative is clearly there before him to go this way or that.

But the Eastern metaphysical imagination delights to take vast, cosmic views of existence, in which a mere period of a few years' existence, the short span of human life cannot be said to make any mark. The universe goes on in its predetermined cycles, its endless

ground of births and deaths and rebirths. It is, as James says, the rattling off of a chain that was forged ages ago. The reign of law is inexorable in its operation over the whole realm of *prakriti* or nature, making it entirely impossible for any being to go either to the right or the left. The category of causality is supreme in its domination over the whole order of empirical existence. The law of Karma is all-powerful in the kingdom of human affairs, determining absolutely all his possibilities in the way of activity or suffering. Man was free first, when he started the series of actions, infinite ages ago ; but subsequently his very first move took away his liberty, and he became a mere tool in the hands of the powers which he forged for himself. But this introduction of the element of time creates complications. No man can move except through his own past Karma. Hence we must go on positing the past behind each life *ad infinitum* ; there is no beginning to the *samsara*.

In fact, there is a mystery attaching to the beginnings and ends of things “अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत । अव्यक्तनिवदान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥” (Gita). It is by a mysterious act of self-alienation that शिव, the supreme soul becomes जीव or individual soul; and all the roots of his prime activity are lost in this pre-philosophical period of man's existence.

Another characteristic difference in the philosophic attitude of the East and the West hinges on the reality or unreality of the world and self. The West maintains that the world is real, that empirical existence is real, and that the appeal to our ordinary experience is the last criterion or proof of reality. Whatever can come within the range of human experience is real; all else is imaginary and fictitious. A transcendental entity is a veritable abracadabra, the outcome of the absolutistic temperament of some philosophers. The last court of appeal is to the philosophy of the average man, to the vulgar commonsense

of humanity. A philosophy which cannot satisfactorily explain the point of view of the naive, unsophisticated man stands *ipso facto* condemned. Even Berkeley, who made a breach with the past and started a fruitful line of idealistic thought, desired nothing but explaining the implications of the ordinary thought of the world on such problems as matter and so on. He said that philosophers "raise dust and then complain that they cannot see." But for the attempts of the philosophers to walk over their heads, philosophy is a very simple affair.

The Western Thought has an instinctive respect for the reality of the outward world; because this is the fundamental assumption of the man in the street. But the East has an equal instinctive respect for the reality of the soul. The one begins with the world, with the ordinary starting-point of the pluralist, the Many; the other begins with the soul, with the ordinary starting-point of the absolutist, the One.

The history of philosophy has made it abundantly clear that there is no logical passage from the one to the other; if we start with the Many, it is not easy thing to evolve a real Unity which may satisfy us; if we start from the One, it is equally difficult to account for the Many. In its enormous desire to save the reality of the immediate seen world—the spatio-temporal order of things, the Western thinkers allow themselves to be shaken in their faith in a transcendent God or the Absolute. In its enormous desire to save the reality of God or the Soul or the Absolute, the Eastern sages show themselves ready to kick away the universe from their feet. There are compromising thinkers both in the East and the West, who hope to build half-way houses between the pure and majestic Absolute and the concrete and picturesque variety of the world. But uncompromising logic takes a thinker who intends to go to the roots of thought, either to the conclusion of

Hume—and we get our शून्यवाद or nihilism—or to the conclusion of Shankara—and we get the Absolutism of a rigorous, unqualified type. Now both logic and life, the demands of speculative reason and the demands of the spirit of man pull him irresistibly in the direction where the highest thought of the Upanishads as represented in Shankara leads him. A perfect reconciliation, a harmonious synthesis in which the One and the Many get equal justice, in which the Many stand on an equal level of dignity, enjoy an equal degree of Reality with the One appears intrinsically impossible. All the idealisms of the Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian type are futile attempts in this direction. The commonsense point of view can be preserved only by its being duly subordinated.

The author of the "Creed of Buddha" explains the point of view of the East finely. "The first, and in a sense the last, desire of the soul is to be allowed to believe in itself; for all faith, all hope,

all joy, that makes life worth living, is present in embryo in that belief: But to allow the soul to believe in itself is to make faith, instead of reason, the basis of one's philosophy of life. The answer to this possible protest is that the highest function of reason is to *prove*; and that, inasmuch as proof implies the unprovable, the philosophy that is based on reason hangs in mid-air instead of resting on the solid earth. This means that no philosophy is or can be based on reason, and that every real philosophy, including materialism itself, is based on an act of faith. But every act of faith resolves itself into faith in the source of all faith, the soul; (even the materialistic belief in the intrinsic reality of the outward world being resolvable, in the last resort, into belief in one's own self as the guarantor of its reality), it seems to follow that the soul's belief in itself is the only belief which is self-sanctioned, and therefore the only philosophical postulate which

allows the thinker to proceed at once on his way.....If the soul is to believe in itself, it must break away, finally and completely.....from Western criteria of existence. No longer bound by the crude assumption that the palpable is the real and the impalpable, the non-existent, it will begin to use its long-pinioned wings; and as it ascends from height to height, and discovers new horizons it will begin to suspect that, after all, the normal limits of human vision may not be the limits of the universe. ”

Another problem of importance in which the West parts company with the East is the problem of personality. The Western thought on the whole may be summed up in one word “Monadism.” Had there be no monads, says Leibniz, Spinoza would be right. Now the Eastern attitude is the attitude of Spinoza; the Western attitude is the attitude of Leibniz. Personality, says the Western thinker, is the highest concept revealed to us in the universe. But for person-

alities, there will be either pantheism or pancosmism. A free, self-acting, autonomous, independent centre of thought and feeling and will, is the crown and climax of evolution. Man is essentially a conative being, an acting and striving self; and in this fact lies his essence and glory, his pride and delight. Man's capacity for self-determination is the highest fact about him; it marks him off from the universe around him and God above him. Personality of man, his self-distinction from others in one way and his self-identification with others in another way, is the unique thing about him; it is the highest category, the highest value in the universe. Any scheme of metaphysics which does not recognise and do fullest justice to this category, stands self-condemned in the estimation of the West. But the Eastern way of looking at things considers this fact of individuality which creates a ground of distinction for a person, as the last taint of imperfection or rather as the very

basis of his imperfection. Individuality is *ahankâra*, it is the narrow ego in man; it is the one source of all weakness, all perversion, all misdirection in man. Man, as a separate centre, as a unique existence, as an isolated being, is false and unreal. It is in proportion as he loses himself in the higher life of humanity and the universe, that he obtains his reality. Man's emergence as an ego is the beginning of *samsâra*, the world-illusion, man's absorption of his ego in the life of the Infinite is the end of *samsâra* and the beginning as well as culmination of his higher life. Man's discovery of his self as Self, man's dying to live, man's losing himself in order to find himself, is the highest triumph of his personality. The West considers this as a lapse from the conscious to the unconscious; the East considers it as a rise from the conscious to the superconscious. Much misunderstanding exists as regards the place of personality in thoroughgoing Eastern metaphysics. In

our opinion, the true personality, says the Eastern sage with Lotze, is with the Infinite. Personality connotes capacity of perfect self-determination, perfect mastery of the self over the not-self. This is possible in the case of the supreme spirit. An individual soul when he reaches this highest point of view necessarily loses his narrow egoism, his private individuality; but he is thereby enriched not impoverished; it is the most perfect self-realisation which we can conceive of. Hegel puts it quite clearly. "In friendship, in love, I give up my abstract personality and by so doing win it back as concrete personality. The true in personality is just this, to gain personality through this absorbing and being absorbed in the other." (Quoted: Ward P. and T. 161.)

It must be, of course, pointed out that the innermost element, the core of personality with the West lies in willing and in energising. The West is essentially pragmatic, activist, volun-

taristic. The East is essentially contemplative, idealistic, intellectualistic. Effort and progress achieved through effort is the last word of the Western thought. But the East considers action as a subordinate element in life, as vulgar, of the earth, earthy, incapable of becoming an end in itself. It is not thought, but gnosis, perfect insight, inner illumination, vital realization which is the only end in itself, the real *sumum bonum*. The East is not inaptly described as the contemplative, mystical East. Its attitude is so picturesquely described by the poet :

The East bowed low before the blast,
In patient deep disdain ;
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again.

The world, to a true Easterner, is rather a metaphysical problem, a fit theme for the exercise of his subtle genius and soaring imagination. The world, to a Westerner, is a seat of action, a theatre of mighty movements,

a battlefield of conflicting forces. An attitude of a spectator or of a pure thinker is criminal. As Tennyson puts it, our business is to "to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield." Or as Longfellow describes it :-

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way ;
- But to act that each tomorrow may
Find us farther than today.
In the world's broad field of battle
In the bivouac of life,
Be not dumb, driven cattle
Be a hero in the strife.
Trust no future however pleasant
Let the dead past bury its dead ;
Act, act in the living present,
Heart within and God overhead.

But the Eastern brain long ago decided that the salvation does not lie that way ; that action argues imperfection, that it only forges fresh chains for us. " कर्मणा बध्यते जन्तुर्विद्यया तु प्रमुच्यते. " The true leader of humanity-is not a Napoleon, nor a Plato, nor an Aristotle ;

the true leader of humanity must be a seer, a true ज्ञानी who is also a तत्त्वदर्शी. Dr Deussen finely points out that the Upanishads emphasize one fundamental element of the problem by making knowledge the foundation of happiness; while Christianity aptly emphasizes the value of morality, of a life of willing and striving as a capital means for progress and perfection. The credit of finding out the true intellectual basis of a moral ideal belongs to the East; the credit of making morality a very central affair, a life of activity and progress the one most essential thing for humanity as it is at present constituted, belongs to the West. The contrast is often expressed that the Western mood of mind is राजस *rajas*, the Eastern mood of mind is सात्त्विक-*Sattvik*. Activism is the creed of the West; quietism, the creed of the East. But a *sattvik* life does not eschew activity; it only makes it an auxiliary element in its life. Nothing is more beautiful than the Eastern attitude,

so far as the inner frame of mind, the right mental temperament, the true intellectual standpoint is concerned. Here the Eastern verdict is final. But nothing is more conducive to the welfare of humanity than the outer actions and consequences, the construction of the finest mechanism in all social and political matters, the erection of useful, gigantic institutions and organizations, which we owe to the West. The world badly requires both these complementary aspects of the situation. Let knowledge grow from more to more, cries the poet; but we want more reverence. It is for the West to give us the finest machinery, the ideal systems, the perfect technical organisations; it is for the East to put soul everywhere, to inspire the right mental psychosis, to subordinate the giants of matter and force, heat and electricity to the service of the finest, highest altruistic ideas of the soul. The central thought, the basic conception, the fundamental motive and

impulse must come from the East; the superstructure, the elaboration of details, the perfection of the outer fabric of all sciences, all institutions must be borrowed from the West. It is idle to say that the beatific vision is the goal of the East; it wants *moksha*, *nirvâna*, *fanâ al fanâ*; that progress, eternal march on the basis of personality is the goal of the Western mind. Whether *pravriti* (activity) or *nivriti* (abstention) will be the ultimate Good, no one can say. The East has cast its die for a life of perfect repose in the bosom of the Infinite, for a life of eternal contemplation and eternal enjoyment. It demands unity, it demands union and absorption, it demands rest and repose 'from the fitful fever of life.' The West has thrown its weight for a life of endless efforts, for endless triumphs, for endless progress towards 'unpathed waters, undreamed shores.' The soul's wings are never furled. From peak to peak it flies, annexing new empires, making new conqu-

ests, achieving new goals and realising at each remove undreamt of possibilities. There is no pause, no quiescence, no death to the eternal life of the spirit. Perfection is only a goal, an ideal, ever stimulating us to visit 'fresh fields and pastures new,' to launch new ventures. But it is the very faith of the East that *Brahman* is an accomplished entity (परिनिष्ठितवस्तु), which does not admit of any becoming. If it may be said of man that 'man never *is*, but always *to be* blest;' it must be said of God that God always *is* and never *to be* blest. To some extent it is true that the Western conception of Reality is more dynamic as the Eastern is more static. But motion and rest, like all earthly analogies fail to convey to us the idea of the Infinite. Both aspects of the idea of the Final Good contain important elements of truth; but to us it appears that an approximation to the reconciliation of both these points of view in the history of thought is made by Buddha.

Buddha accepted the goal of *pari nirvāna* as the ideal one; but as it is said, he refused to enter the stage of supreme and ineffable happiness and repose till the last soul would, through his efforts get the same success. In this oriental way, he tried to reconcile very important ideas, the ideas of eternal progress and eternal repose, of individual salvation and collective salvation. It is the very acme of oriental idealism, the most splendid attempt ever made to unite the very divergent strands of thought.

Far be it from us to analyse exhaustively the precise traits of these two mental moods. It is a temperamental difference ultimately. A man is born either oriental or occidental in his outlook. Both these systems of culture, these types of civilisation have made important contributions towards the sum total of the Culture and Humanity of the world. It is idle to disguise differences so radical, so fundamental as these. It is useless to accentuate them too

much. But the poet, who says that the East is East and the West is West and never the twain shall meet, is laying down, after all, a half-truth. The gulf between the two standpoints is very great; it is not a geographical or historical conflict, although the terms East and West may involve such implications. It is not even an ethnical conflict. It is a conflict of standpoints, of two systems of culture, of two temperamental ways of looking at things. It is the eternal conflict between prose and poetry in human affairs. In various ways, under diverse names and phases, in all departments of thought and action, in the East as well as the West, this war of opposing forces is going on. A hard and fast line of demarkation is often misleading. Human intellect is fond of putting the question either-or and expecting the answer yes-no to all problems. It is a shallow trick of our understanding. It is fatal to the quest of Reality which does not vouchsafe

its integral vision to either of these types of mind, but to both in different aspects. Who can fathom the depths, profundities, hills and valleys of these problems? Who can put it that Idealism has got the right sow by the ear and Realism is a failure? A comprehensive insight into the problems of 'God, man, and nature,' only inspires humility and arouses a sense of appreciation for all types of thought, for all ways of seeing, for empiricism and scepticism, and dogmatism, and criticism, for idealism and realism, for monism and dualism, and pluralism. Truth is far too subtle a thing to be effectively circumscribed within the network of a word, or a formula. It especially eludes the grasp of the persons who try to bottle up the spirit and say that it is *here* and no-where else.

A synthetic union, a comprehensive harmony and assimilation of the best in each of these two facets of Reality is the dream of many souls. We believe in the possibility of such a wonderful

harmony. There is an anecdote relating to the late Mr. Gokhle, which brings into happy relief the strength and weakness of the two types of people. Mr. Valentine Chirol said: you Indians have got too much imagination, that is why you fail to appreciate the British policy. Mr. Gokhle retorted: You Englishmen have too little imagination, that is why you fail to do justice to the Indian demands. The Eastern mind must try to build up imagination on the basis of facts, the Western mind must try to put a little imagination into their study of souls. The one must moderate the tyranny of the idealistic vein by trying to master details; the other must stretch its imagination by trying to be more sympathetic. We want both self-assertion and self-renunciation, a capacity for war, and yet a disposition to peace, a mastery of machinery and yet an imaginative vision. Plato's philosopher was first trained to move in a world of abstractions, in a world of colourless essences

and ideals. But the passion for ideas was not to extinguish all sense of reality for things that lie about one's feet. The philosopher, therefore, returns to the world of shadows and accommodates his gaze and capacity to the affairs of man. The spectator of all time and existence is called upon to do justice to the many, the particulars of actual experience. Neither the transcendental nor the empirical point of view, can be allowed to overmaster humanity. Humanity must overmaster both. It may be hoped that neither science based on observation and experience, nor metaphysics based on idealistic imagination of humanity will be able to obsess humanity for long. Eternity must not swallow up time, nor time, eternity. The fundamental demands of the head and heart, of the soul and reason of man must be both duly satisfied. The humanity must assimilate the large vision, the sympathetic soul, the grand spiritual ideal of the East, and yet it must not fail to build

up a magnificent outer structure for the soul of humanity, piece by piece, under the pressure of its utilitarian instincts. Experience will teach humanity that neither Spirit can kill Matter, nor Matter can kill Spirit, that neither the One can swallow the Many, nor the Many can swallow the One, but both the One and the Many, Matter and Spirit, the Ideal and the Real must dwell side by side in close spiritual kinship, like husband and wife, each one making its own peculiar contribution towards the ultimate perfection of the Whole. Sir Rabindranath Tagore also believes in the ultimate synthesis, in the grand unity reached through enormous diversities; the grand harmony evolved by enormous conflicts and antagonisms, the East anticipating the unity too soon, the West postponing its inevitable emergence, but both creating a splendid drama, enriched with all the wealth, all the many-sided genius of the Eastern sage and the Western scientist. "Do I think that Eastern thought, the

Eastern outlook can be reconciled with the mechanism of Western civilization? I think it can and must be. In the East we have striven to disregard matter, to ignore hunger and thirst, and so escape from their tyranny and emancipate ourselves. But that is no longer possible, at least for the whole nation. You in the West have chosen to conquer matter, and the task of science is to enable all men to have enough to satisfy their material wants, and by subduing matter to achieve freedom for the soul. The East will have to follow the same road, and call in science to its aid." The essential fact should never be forgotten that Reality is one and integral, or as a poet puts it:

"God's is the Orient
God's is the Occident."

It is upon this fundamental fact that we take our stand when we give way to the optimism of the poet:

"The East and West (shall)
Mix their dim lights like life and death
To broaden into boundless day."

II. Comparison between English and Sanskrit Literature.

It is a problem of philosophy to seek unity in variety,—to strike out amidst a host of diverse instances, the multitudinous details, some grand, universal laws or generalizations, which open at once as Emerson puts it—‘the great avenues to vast kingdoms of human thought.’ To comprehend adequately any fact or group of facts, the modern science requires us to trace its connection to a number of analogous facts or groups of facts—to classify them under a known law—to assign the exact place of the law to the science and of the science to the wider science, to which they respectively belong, and thus to rise in a gradual series to what Bacon calls the highest summit of the pyramid of knowledge, till the whole problem

stands before us in the light of day, in due correspondence with the rest of the world of science and philosophy. 'All things by scale ascend to unity.' This, it is the great glory of the modern science to perceive; and it is the necessary outcome of the immense and universal progress which is associated with the Modern Period.

The science of literary and philological criticism, like many other similar sciences, rests fundamentally upon this basis of sociological comparison. If we want to arrive at grand results in the subject of literary and philological criticism, we will do well to follow diverse specimens of literature to the sources to which they trace their origin, to the times which fostered their rise and growth, and to the atmosphere which gave them their characteristic stamp. No fact is intelligible in isolation; because no fact is an unconnected phenomenon. The literature of any country or nation is not an anomalous growth;

it is a natural and inevitable product of a concourse of circumstances, which plays effective part in the form, the shape, the colour which it assumes,—the lines upon which it proceeds,—the modes in which it works,—the manifestations in which it exhibits itself—its remarkable growth in certain directions, its equally remarkable sterility in others. As we view all geological phenomena in connection with the great oceanic or climatic or atmospheric changes,—as we cannot understand a negro born of two whites, the spontaneous growth of a ‘camel in the snows of Lapland’ or ‘a reindeer in the sands of Arabia,’—so also the rise of a Kalidas in the West or of Shakespeare in the East, the growth of science and the after—Baconian development in the still, spiritual but servile land of India or a corresponding stagnation of thought and style which took place in India on the rich, the concrete, the active soil of England are irregular, anomalous, monstrous births which can-

not be dreamt of in our philosophy. The fact is that the development of a literature in a country is only an aspect of a general and wider movement of the civilization of that country. The literature of every country grows with the growth and strengthens with the strength of certain activities or declines with their decline and dies with their death, under the influence of a cooperation of a host of similar influences. "All the intellectual manifestations of a period in relation to human questions have a kindred character and bear a certain stamp of homogeneity." (Ingram's *History of Political Economy*). The rise and growth of literature in England as well as in ancient India were largely determined by the general conditions of civilizations in the two countries.

Literature thus is only a reflexion of the national mind of a people; and in order to understand rightly the main, broad characteristics of the English and Sanscrit Literatures, we must fully

grasp the stages of national development under which they grew—both in their internal and external aspects.

M. Guizot, in depicting the differentiating characteristics of the European civilization, remarks that it stands by itself in a way conspicuous for the many-sidedness or myriad-mindedness, which it presents. It is a composite growth—protean in shape and chameleon in colours—compounded of a number of heterogeneous elements. All the ancient and all the eastern civilizations, on the other hand, have been the outcome of a single idea, which logically developed itself in their creeds, manners, institutions, in a word, in their culture. In the modern European world, no one idea, no one tendency, no one element, no one form of government possesses absolute sway. The form of government is now democratic, now monarchical, now despotic, now a compound of all three. The same diversity shows itself in religions, philosophies, in all forms of deve-

lopments. In ancient India, as in Egypt, the theocratic principle prevailed; it had despotic sway there; every differing tendency was proscribed and hunted down. Thus, the modern European civilization is a complex whole, remarkable for its variety and richness. The Indian civilization, on the other hand, was a simple and logical growth of a single principle in its varied manifestations. Hence it is that we find the sameness—almost tiresome, the limitation, and monotony of the ancient world as compared with ‘the inexhaustible resource, the ceaseless expansion, the thousandfold variety’ of the modern world.

The same character manifested itself in literature. The English literature, like the French or the German, is well-known for its extraordinary range of topics—the splendid variety of subjects—the extension of its working in various spheres of thought. The course of Sanscrit literature, like the course of the oriental civilization as it developed itself

in India, has run on remarkably narrow lines; it is 'cribb'd, cabin'd and confined' in a limited world of thought, its development has been essentially one-sided. And as a necessary consequence of this fact, we see that while the Sanscrit literature presents an extraordinary spectacle of a vigorous and brilliant development in certain forms, while it is remarkable for its surpassing excellence of a few specimens of style and thought, it exhibits, on the other hand, an equally striking record of absolute or partial sterility in different fields of intellectual activity, in which the genius of English literature has exerted itself with great vigour and splendid success. It is a law in the physical world, that a body must lose in intension what it gains in extension; what it gains in range, it must lose in depth. Accordingly, the English literature has few or none of the rival specimens for the luxuriance of certain styles, in which the Sanscrit literature is prolific. But it has diverse growths; it stands

out as a multiform spectacle with varied excellence. The Sanscrit literature on the other hand, like the ancient Brahmin sages, stands up wrapt in a veil of mysticism, 'towering alone in classic dignity,' in particular forms of composition. The Sanscrit literature is aristocratic or oligarchic where only a few departments riot in luxuriance; the English literature, like the English government, is a mixed form, where various elements flourish side by side.

Up to this time we have only made an assertion; but the development of facts will furnish the necessary proof. Such an emphatic assertion of this fact was necessary; for as we shall see it is the grand clue to unveil a host of mysterious points. We shall be well able to account for a number of phenomena connected with the two literatures, if we keep in constant view this basic difference between them.

Before we proceed further it is necessary to bear in mind another important

distinction between the two literatures, based upon a corresponding distinction between the respective types of intellect and civilization offered by the English and the ancient Hindus. We have said that unity characterised the oriental civilization and the modern European civilization was signalised by a sort of complexity. The same thing was visible in religious matters. "In the East" says the historian of civilization, "the intellect is entirely religious; in Greek society, it is exclusively human." The Greeks and the Hindus, as Max Muller put it, occupied the opposite poles in the historical development of the Aryan man. To the former, the existence was full of life and reality; to the latter it was a dream, an illusion. Modern intellect, on the other hand, has at once the stamp of divinity and humanity. To the Hindus the final test is religious,—which is another name for the real, infinite, permanent, immutable, transcendental, spiritual. To the Englishman, as is expoun-

ded by Bacon, the religious domain is sharply distinguished from the human 'sphere of influence.' For the human world—there is the sharp test of reason. It is only at times that the English intellect rises into the abstract air of transcendental speculation; we then breathe the very odour of the spiritualism of the Hindus.

“ We are such stuff

As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. ”

Or when Lady Macbeth says:—

“ The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures. ”

So much so are Englishmen afraid of the cant of metaphysics that Emerson does not understand the pomp-despising, the quiet, meditative, spiritual mind of Wordsworth. “ The genius of Wordsworth, ” he says, “ is an exceptional fact in literature. ” The Hindu considers the world as one of conventional appearance only. “ The Hindus, ” as a high authority well says, “ were a na-

tion of philosophers. ” And we may compare this dictum with another similar pronouncement on the English people, which lets us into the secret of the whole matter. “ The English are a nation of shop-keepers ”-as Louis XIV and Napoleon found it. Or as one of the English critics, Matthew Arnold says-“ The English are a nation of Philistines. ” The Hindus are metaphysical; the Englishmen are physical in their ideas. To the Hindu, whatever has no influence on the life beyond death is of the earth, earthy; false and unreal as a phantom. To the Englishman whatever is transcendental, is airy, vague, metaphysical, belonging rather to the Utopia of Thomas More than to the actual workaday world. Mr. N. G. Chandawarkar, in one of his lectures as a Vice-Chancellor has given us a characteristic anecdote. One Parsee gentleman told Mr. Ranade that “ you are obtruding your religion, in season and out of season into all affairs. ” Mr. Ra-

nade's reply was: "you misunderstand us altogether. We Hindus drink religion, sleep religion—live religion. We imbibe it with our mother's milk." On the other side, the practical mind of Englishmen has been evidenced by irresistible proofs. It is characterised by strong but sometimes dull commonsense for a thousand years. This homeliness, veracity and plain habit of seeing things in the concrete "imports into songs and ballads the smell of the earth, the breath of cattle and seeks the household charm." An Englishman must stand upon fact or he is nothing. A Hindu must stand upon religious ideas or he is nothing. Byron "liked something craggy to break his mind upon." In the highest flights the English poetry is the transfiguration of commonsense. It is iron raised to white heat. There is little of what Emerson calls "oriental soaring." Bacon is capable of ideas—but is devoted to ends. Practical interest, with him, is supreme. Under the influence of Locke,

who represents the highest type of philosophy to this matter-of-fact nation, the lofty sides of Parnassus are abandoned. The English "do not look abroad into universality." Burke idealizes the English State. Goldsmith's description of him is of general application to the English Men of Letters.

"Born for the universe, narrow'd
his mind
 And to party gave up what was meant
for mankind "

The verdicts of Hallam are "dated from London." The English are full of reverence for their past. They prove themselves incapable of discerning the gigantic shadows which loom largely in the distant future. "The Essay, the fiction and the poetry," says Emerson, "have the like municipal limits." Dickens, Thackeray, Lytton all are circumscribed in these narrow grooves. Scott produces a rhymed guide of Scotland. Macaulay's history degenerates into a party pamphlet.

But if the English mind has been pinned in this way to the earth, the Hindu mind soars above till it vanishes into thin, thin air. If the former has its limitations, the other is working under conditions which go still deeper to the root of the matter. This is clearly perceptible by a comparison of the ends of knowledge as is conceived by the two peoples. Knowledge is with both the solvent of error and the harbinger of light. But in English works, it is generally spoken of as an ally of virtue, a friend to liberty and order. The Englishman does not pursue knowledge for its own sake; nor do the ancient Hindus. The Hindu of the old, orthodox type worshipped knowledge because it led to salvation,—emancipation from this world of suffering and absorption into the Highest Self. Everything is subordinated to this idea. Every treatise on philosophy, every system of logic, every work of literature is to a Hindu of no value unless it is in some way connected with

the extra-mundane end of the attainment of *nirvāna*.

The Hindus have thus shut their eyes to the outward world; but only to open them for the 'inward. Their vision on spiritual matters has been remarkably keen and profound. They have developed large theories for the explanation of the world; the Englishman refused to see beyond the knowable. "No wonder that a nation like the Indian cared little for history;" "the ideas of the Useful and the Beautiful are scarcely known to them." This fact also accounts for the development of science in England and a corresponding stagnation in the East. No Bacon could rise under the conditions, to break up from the dismal past and develop a new future. Nor did the Indian know the feeling of nationality; "his heart never trembled," says Max Muller, "in the expectation of national applause. There were no heroes to inspire a poet—no history to call forth a historian. Their struggles were the

struggles of thought; their past the problem of creation; their future the problem of existence." There is scarcely a parallel in history to the extraordinary spectacle where the inward life of the soul has so completely absorbed all the practical energies of a whole people. Thus it is that India is a cipher in the political histories of nations. But its place in the intellectual history of the world is beyond all question. The West is the guardian of the secular, the material interests of the world; the East is the guardian of the transcendental, spiritual interests of the world.

If we glance at the history of the two literatures, our remarks shall be found verified. The English literature begins with Chaucer and gradually culminates in the genius of Spenser and Shakespeare. The tide of nature could not go further. Specialisation took place. The 16th century is devoted to dramatic literature; its mission—its characteristic work is the drama. The age of

Addison—the Augustan age of English literature creates the Essay. Its business, as Arnold says, is to make the way for modern style. The nineteenth century saw the wonderful progress of the novel. There sprang into existence and note a thousand new species of compositions. Gibbon, Mill, Macaulay, Hallam, Lecky, Grote have borne monumental part in the development of history. Pope establishes a new school of versification; “he made poetry a mere mechanical art.” Cowper inaugurated a new school—the romantic. Scott writes marvels of objective poetry. Byron creates a literature of misanthropism. Burke and Johnson moulded the tongue to new uses and left permanent mark on the literature. Johnson wrote classics; Burke spoke classics. The conversation of Coleridge, like that of Johnson, has been justly exalted into literature. In Shelley, the lyrical poetry reaches its high watermark; in Wordsworth, the philosophical; in Tennyson, the artistic. Meanwhile

literature was flooded with novels and romances. Scott was the author of the historical novel; Jane Austen and a host of other writers gave to ordinary life and daily incidents—a colour which will never die.

Such has been the varied and wonderful evolution of the English literature. What corresponding chords does the Sanscrit literature strike? The Indians have a vast spiritual development, but a feeble material development. The historical and the scientific literatures are conspicuous by their absence. How many novels have been written in the Sanscrit tongue that can compare with the splendid romances of Scott, of the novels of Dickens, Thackeray, and others? Bâna's *Kâdambari* and Dandin's *Dash-Kumârcharita* are two productions in the way of a novel. There is also the *Kathâsarita-sâgar*. But it is a cluster of tales which may be rather called folklore. Now what are the features which render *Kâdambari* conspicuous? The

story is *nil*; the grandeur of description, the revery of fancy, the play of rhetoric, the graces of style, the skilful interlacing of mythology;—it is these facts which lend a charm to the work and render it one of the works which the world will not willingly let die. The few philosophical exponents of the English people are Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Mill and Spencer. But there is the development of the same idea—the philosophical rendering of the vulgar commonsense. The Sanscrit Philosophical literature is an imperishable monument of the spiritualism of the Hindus. There were the Upanishads—an attempt of the human mind to comprehend the Supreme Being. They were the foundation of all the Hindu Schools of philosophy or Darshanas. The metempsychosis or transmigration of souls seems to be one of the fundamental doctrines of all these schools—a doctrine which was imported into the West by Pythagoras—and which was poetically

rendered by Wordsworth in his famous
 "Imitations of Immortality."

"Our birth is but a sleep and forgetting
 The soul that rises with our life's star
 Hath had elsewhere its setting
 And cometh from afar."

They may be grouped in three schools :

- (1) The Sânkhya doctrine of Kapila, which emphasizes into a dogma the transitoriness of Man and Nature and the immortality of soul. It is called *atheistic* compared to the *theistic* system of Patanjali which insists on the existence of God ;
- (2) The Nyâya system of Gautama and the Vaisheshik system of Kanâda are called the logical systems ;
- (3) The Mimânsâs-of which the latter represents the crown of Indian philosophy. It is the enunciation of Pantheism -of which Gladstone said that, next to Christianity it had the fairest prospect of becoming the world's religion. So much about philosophy. There is again a vast religious literature-the Dharma Shastras. All these writings together

with the philosophical are based upon the Vedas—the Indian Bible, which give the supreme, majestic expression of the sense and experience of Indian antiquity. There is a species of history which is styled *pûrânas*. They are 18 in number. They are vast works which contain 80 p. c. of myth and 20 p. c. of true history. But they are a sort of interpreters placed between the common intelligence and the subtle philosophical systems. Thus as we see that the religious and philosophical literature of the Hindus is a magnificent monument of the suprasensuous energy of the people.

Now let us say a few words on other aspects of the two literatures. The English thought and style have attained sweetness, richness, majesty and wonderful compass of melody from various sources. Like the English civilization, the English language has been a complicated and motley whole. The Sanscrit language is also capable of being modulated to different tunes. It is simple,

sweet and harmonious as in Kalidas ; it is lofty, earnest, deep-flowing, as in the grand and sublime pictures of Bhavbhuti ; it is musical in " the voluptuous mysticism " of Jaydeva ; it is simple, terse, striking and vigorous and immortal with the immortality of truth as in Vâlmiki and Vyâsa. But the Sanscrit verse is a characteristic form with its attendant good and evil. Every classical verse is a well-cut, nicely-polished, finely chiselled gem by itself. There is nothing like it in point of the clear-cut appearance which it presents, " the weight of thought weightily expressed," the striking melody, the stern impressiveness, the portable roundness about it. But the English versification, though deficient in these respects, has a wonderful advantage in its form of verse. There is the running continuity of thought, style and feeling, each word fusing into the next, each verse fusing into its succeeding verse and thus " in linked sweetness long drawn out " it flows on in the whole passage.

Let us at this stage notice the various points at which the two literatures come in contact. The dramatic literature has been cultivated well both in the East and the West. Shakespeare is the prince of the drama in the West; Kalidasa is equally a great potentate in the East. In both these great bards of nature, certain highest qualities shine out in equal splendour. If Kalidas has written three dramas, while Shakespeare has the splendid series which is a literature by itself, Kalidas has signalized the versatility of his genius by being the author of a few of the most memorable epics and a few of the minor classics. *Raghuvansha* and *Kumarsambhava* are masterpieces of purity of style and sentiment. In their own way, the Hindus have attained wonderful epic heights which not only compare favourably with the English epic literature as is represented in Spenser, Milton, Tennyson, but also with the Latin Virgil and the Greek Homer. The Hindu antiquity,

has been glorified in the immortal verse of Râmâyana and Mahâ-Bhârata which are two of the most colossal productions of the human genius. In the subjective poetry which has been so vastly developed of late, the Meghdutta and the Gita Govinda and a few poems of Jagannâth are meritorious classics which will be ever read with keen relish and salutary instruction till the latest ages of the world. This department of Sanscrit literature, therefore, shall bear eternal freshness, perennial interest and paramount significance which will only grow with the advance of time and civilization.

The one characteristic feature about the Oriental literature, which it is impossible to overlook, is what may seem an abnormal growth of poetical fancy. The centre from which most of these fancies radiate is woman. *Shringâra rasa* or the sentiment of love is according to the Sanscrit writers a prime sentiment—the chief of one of the nine sentiments, the presence of which is essential to poetry.

If we except the period from Chaucer to Shakespeare, the English literature has nothing like to show. Such revelry in rehetoric, such indulgence in freaks or fancy, such theatrical play of words, such grotesque forms in which the oriental wit delights to dwell, such hitting out at a flash of striking poetical similarities, are characteristics of the Eastern mind. The simplicity, the baldness, the unornamental style of the modern English language is perfectly unintelligible to the warm brain, the fervid spirits, the rich fancy, the suggestive poetry of our bards who had nourished this taste under the influence of the tropical atmosphere. The English literature, in its latest phase, is a return to the simplicity of nature. Too much indulgence in coloured speech or writing is a positive fault of taste. But this is besides a necessary condition of the times. It was easy for the ancients with a few models to cultivate to such perfection the graces of style. But the stream of literature,

as Irving puts it, has widened into a river, extended into a sea and expanded into an ocean. With a multiplicity of materials before us, it is difficult to reduce them to artistic form.

Not the least striking feature about the Oriental literature is its unappreciative attitude towards Nature. The use which the Sanscrit writers make of nature is in their poetical similarities. The lotus is an emblem of beauty, chastity and purity. It has been so much interwoven with literature that the face is ordinarily spoken of as the lotus-like face or the feet as the lotus-like feet. The moon is the husband; the night the woman; the stars the ornaments; and white light the vesture which the bride has put on. The voice of the beauty is compared to cuckoo's; her face to the full moon without the spot; the gait to that of swan; the eyes to those of deer; the whole form is conceived of as the Creation's crown of beauty; it is sometimes spoken of

as a heap of diverse excellences ; it is imagined to be supernatural in its structure. The bird *chakravāk* and his wife are the personified representatives of the separation between a lover and his beloved. Such are some of the circulating poetical fancies. But where is among them their sensibility to what Wordsworth calls " the splendour of the grass, the glory of the flower ? " How many of the poets saw in Nature what Wordsworth saw—a living and inspiring presence ? How many of them grow rapturous over the sensuous beauty of the Creation, its physical magnificence ? Their deficiency in this respect is not an accident ; it is only an outcome of their attitude towards the world of which we have said so much before.

At the outset of this essay we have remarked that the Oriental civilization exhibited itself with grandeur and brilliancy only on one side. As a necessary consequence of it, it showed at first an astonishing flight ; but soon the vigour

is exhausted; the creative energy dies; and the society falls into a stationary condition. It was so in Greece; it was so in India; it was the same in the case of almost all the ancient civilizations.

This sudden progress and consequently sudden decay made itself felt in literature. There was a grand development at first. But soon the springs are exhausted; and a fit of stagnation comes over literature. The Eastern intellect consequently ceased to be creative. This has been accounted for by various causes. It may be due to the lack of a fresh vision and susceptibility to impressions which a new set of social conditions produces. Or it may be due to the social isolation of our people and their want of peaceful intercourse with other peoples. Or it may be due to an excess of erudition; the fire may have been choked by the multiplicity of fuel. But the result is striking. The one literature is statical; the other dynamical. The one productive, the other merely repro-

ductive. There is no intellectual initiative in the East, and that kind of constructive faculty, which depends upon imagination. The talents of the Sanscrit pundits, like those of their parallel schoolmen, ran to the piling up of knowledge, the recording of facts and drawing subtle and hair-splitting distinctions. As a historian well sums up the whole thing in a nutshell :—“ The West had creative power without learning; the East had learning without creative power. ”

This, then, is the grand distinction between the later Sanscrit and the present English literature. The one is like the ever-flowing fountain; its springs are ever in vigour; it has never ceased to grow. The pundits only arranged, classified and built upon the existing materials. The English authors had the spirit of innovation; they cut out new paths, created new models and founded new schools. But the Brahmins trod only in beaten paths; they had not the audacity of genius to strike out new

ways and new methods. The despotism which they experienced in the political world was only an analogue to a parallel autocracy in the world of letters. The ambition of the English genius is to excel in novel compositions; the ambition of the Indian genius is to imitate the existing classics. A pundit's highest aspiration is to write as Kalidas wrote or Bhavbhuti wrote—to borrow his exact phrases and turns of expression. That is their best. But imitation can never rise to true greatness. To use their abilities wisely, profitably, usefully, the Sanscrit scholars must go their own way. That is the condition upon which all originality depends. Bacon's advice on this subject is very shrewd and profound:—"whereas the more constant and devote kinds of professors of any science ought to propound to themselves to make additions to their science, they convert their labour to aspire to certain second prizes: as to be a profound interpreter or commenter, to be a

sharp champion or defender, to be a methodical compounder or abridger and so the patrimony of knowledge cometh sometimes to be improved, but seldom augmented."

It has been observed in the history of the development of nations that human thought, having reached the end of a certain line of progress returns as it were to the starting-point. "Progress," says M. Gide, "moves in a circle." This fact has been exemplified in various phenomena. In the economic world, it has been noted by Jevons, that the latest development of exchange is a sort of return to the age of barter. In the science of government, direct government by the people in antique cities reappears in the guise of the *referendum* in our modern constitutions. In the science of war, universal conscription is bringing back Europe to a stage which preceded the introduction of the mercenary troops. It is in this sense that it has been said, history always repeats itself, or that

there is nothing new in the world or that everything is in a sense old, and in a sense new. The beginning and the end, the foremost and the latest epochs form a perfect cycle.

In the world of letters, this tendency strikingly manifests itself. Philologists tell us that originally the English and the Hindus belonged to the same stock, spoke the same tongue and lived as brothers and sisters under a common civilization. But separation took place. Centuries elapsed. Different civilizations developed themselves. But time came when the two nations are again united in a political union. In English literature, in its latest form we find, a taste for orientalism. The opiate of the Indian Philosophy is slowly but surely acting upon the vitals of the European speculation. A turn for mysticism, an indulgence in oriental gorgeousness of fancy, a regard for forces higher and deeper than those which are merely material, gradually prevail. Immense

consequences are likely to flow from this union. "For once," says Emerson, "there is thunder, it never heard, the light it never saw, and power which trifles with time and space."

We thus come to the end of this chapter—a chapter of far-reaching significance in the annals of universal history as marking an important stage in the relations between the East and West. The comparison, as we have seen, affords a striking illustration of the fact, which we have stated in the beginning of the essay, that literature is a product of the surrounding environment and that it is the representation of the progress of the national mind, "the form, the pressure of the age" to which it belongs. The grand differences between the East and the West, between the ancient and the modern world are picturesquely exhibited in their respective literatures. The one is characterised by a signal monotony of thought and style,—the other by an endless variety and widest elasticity in

these respects. The one is vigorous, splendid and rapid in its growth—but equally so in its decay—the other inferior to the former in these respects, has been prominently active and fruitful in numerous departments of literary activity and containing in its bosom, springs of perpetual progress. The one was in its later phases merely mechanical, with much display of talents, industry, knowledge and art; the other more creative, with a corresponding share of genius, originality and manysidedness. The one is therefore dull, with no life in it; the other is full of loveliness with its sources of interest perpetually alive. The one is therefore daily growing to become a sealed book—possessing in some of its sides a historic interest only;—the other ever new, ever fresh, ever charming,—pouring forth its mellifluous streams over infinite fields and renewing itself in perpetually novel forms of vitality. Yet the good is not all on one side, and the evil on the other. And in response to

the profound suggestion of Emerson—the West will do well to add to its richness by assimilating to itself the poetical, the rhetorical, the imaginative, the spiritual wealth of the Orient, and thus the dream of the fusion of the East and West shall be, in a wonderful way, realised.

III. The Hindu Ethical Attitude.

The most outstanding feature of Hindu ethics is its essential connection with metaphysics. Perhaps no system of morality in the world is so much dominated by ultimate conceptions as the Hindu system. It makes all the difference in the world whether one places ethics first or metaphysics first. A Hindu will place metaphysics first and ethics afterwards. His conception of Reality is primary; his conception of his own place in it follows from it. Morality has value only so far as it fits a man for his ultimate destiny, on which metaphysics alone can throw light. It has disciplinary value no doubt. It is not a factor to be ignored. It is the essential preliminary stage which every soul must pass through. It is a fine preparation for higher spirituality. It

purifies the soul ; it removes obstructions in the way of the goal ; it steadies the purpose. All this it does and much more besides. But after all it remains only the ante—chamber leading to truth. Its value remains merely instrumental. Its' role is quite secondary. It is a mere means to an end, a necessary, indispensable means : but means it remains. It is a mere handmaid to a higher, purer, deeper and more unfettered life. Moral life is a highly useful stage ; but it is a transitional stage only. It is a splendid bridge indeed, but it is nothing more than a bridge between an unmoral life and a supermoral one. Moral categories are no more final than intellectual categories. Both are eminently serviceable at a certain stage in our earthly journey in enabling us to organize the structure of our thought and the structure of our social institutions. But because, when we are infirm the power of standing and moving firmly appears to us as highly excellent, it

does not mean that there are no further stages in the possibilities of running or playing. In the same way, it is quite understandable that at the time when our characters are still in the making, when the power of temptations is great and the power to resist them is still growing, ethical life may appear as an important goal in our horizon. But it is not a final goal. It merely leads us on to the goal. Such is the Hindu view of the matter. To him the infinite comes first, the finite afterwards. Metaphysics deals with the infinite; morality is essentially finite. Moral life is, therefore, only an episode in the career of the soul.

This essentially metaphysical attitude of the Hindu mind differentiates broadly its system of ethics from other systems. The Hindu system is characterized by a depth, subtlety and complexity from which other religious systems are mostly free. It has, therefore, the defects of its qualities. It is quite well suited to

philosophical souls ; but it is not equally well adjusted to average minds. It does not possess that bold simplicity, that severe clearness, that logical consistency which the Islamic and the Zoroastrian ethical systems possess. These systems place before a man as the final alternatives, righteousness or unrighteousness. By the one you shall be saved, by the other lost. It is all-important, therefore, to cling to the former. The Hindu system says that the final alternatives are realization or non-realization : in ordinary language which, however, becomes misleading, these are knowledge or ignorance. What one does is a veritable matter of indifference from this point of view. A life of righteousness, therefore, loses that paramount importance, that radical sting which it has with other people. It is a mediocre life, after all. It is even vulgar. It is not inspired as such with any fine philosophical ideal. It is merely earthly perfection ; it has nothing of

the heaven in it. It is dull, lifeless, un-elevating. The spark of spirituality, of higher illumination, of philosophic thought is necessary to convert its dross into gold. As Shankara says: Actions are useful for the purification of mind, not for the attainment of the Absolute. The Absolute is attained not by crores of pious deeds, but by thought and knowledge. Morality fails, therefore, to excite as much interest and attention as it does in other systems. It is not final; it is not fundamental. Hence the Hindu system is not able to deduce the absolute importance of morals from its philosophical position so well as other systems do; and it often, therefore, appears more vague and shadowy as compared with them.

The result is that the philosophical concepts like *Karma*, *Maya*, *Moksha*, *Atman*, are far more prominent in Hindu thought than purely ethical concepts. More labour is spent also in elaborating huge and subtly woven structures of

thought than in developing ethical ideas. Ethics was considered as largely concerned with matters of expediency; its operation was strictly pinned down to the empirical sphere, to the phenomenal plane. to the *vyavahārika* stage. It was one of the worldly sciences which are more conducive to the success of earthly goals than heavenly ones. Morality can secure success in this life, it can guarantee happiness in future lives; it can even gain access to paradise - the world of gods and angels. But to a mind unfettered by time and space and fascinated by the conception of the infinite, what is the worth of this merely worldly success? From his point of view - from the point of view of the spectator of all time and existence, the so-called other world or heaven is 'nothing better than worldly happiness, as both are limited and temporal. Ethics, therefore, like economics or logic may claim the attention of people whose imagination is dazzled by the glamour of finite

happiness. But for the philosophic few metaphysics was the only refuge and support. Hence, it is more necessary in the case of Hindu ethics to study the metaphysical conceptions mentioned above than in the case of any other systems of ethics.

A consequence of this extreme metaphysical attitude was that the Hindu ethics ignored the importance of personality to a great extent. The concept of personality is the very highest concept in systems like Christian ethics. But to a Hindu, it is a finite determination, and as such it cannot be final. Hence much attention was not paid to the growth of independent personalities, to the development of a variety of types. One theological ideal - that of the attainment of the Absolute completely dominated the atmosphere. There was, therefore, no scope, no encouragement for the varied growth of diverse unique talents of different geniuses. Individual distinctions were not of much importance;

the underlying unity was the only reality. An over-insistence on this unity led to a flatness in growth, an impoverishment of the wealth of differences, a monotony of life. The Western ideal of personality has led people in the West to develop a diversity of types: there was freedom; and this freedom led to the growth of a picturesque variety of talents and characters. The Eastern ideal of unity reduced the importance of the difference between man and man and thus led to the cultivation of one monotonous type of life everywhere. Hence the pictures that we meet with in the Epics are all descriptions of types, not individuals. All sannyâsins have the same features, all warriors have the same characterisation, all sovereigns speak the same things and behave in the same way, all chaste ladies conduct themselves in precisely the same fashion. There may be good men and bad men, philanthropists and rascals, but all behave in typical ways; there is no individuality about them;

there is a catalogue of types; a description of different modes of life, not of different persons with strongly marked peculiarities. There is, therefore, an utter absence of dramatic picturesqueness in literature, corresponding to a similar absence in life. A series of impalpable abstractions, colourless generalities float before our eyes; but there is no play of character, no exhibition of individual traits, no variety of life. Dr. Coomarswamy remarks there is in the Indian arts no individuality. There is only a reproduction of types. In fact, this was a general characteristic of the Hindus; they paid no attention to concreteness as opposed to abstractness, difference as opposed to unity and individuals as opposed to types. The passion for the infinite emptied their ideas of the finite of much significant content.

Another typical feature about the Hindu attitude is the lack of enthusiasm which it exhibits about the interests of society. This attitude was also an out-

come of their metaphysical passion for salvation. Salvation was to be an individual salvation; it was a private, personal affair. Every man was responsible for his own deeds only; and his deeds would secure *moksha* for him only. His object was above all, to get an emancipation from the world and worldly concerns. Hence the welfare of a society or of humanity was a matter of little concern to him. Preparation for emancipation was the sole preoccupation of the best souls; and it could be pursued best apart from the din and turmoil of daily life. It was 'the flight of the alone to the alone'. It is true that the sentiment of philanthropy was deeply spread over Aryan humanity; there was no lack of ideas and even activities on this point. But what is often meant by this is the salvation of individuals, not any scheme of collective uplift; because salvation was the main aim and salvation must be strictly individual. Both the doctrine of *karma* and of

moksha were in their rigorous application individualistic doctrines; they meant; "each one for himself", not each for all. Hence all the modern ideas of nationality, patriotism, social service, internationalism were somewhat alien to the ancient Hindu ways of thinking. The individual was the main unit, not the group. The individual, therefore, was the main concern of all activities; the group was essentially a collection of *individuals*. It was not a separate, distinct, independent entity, developing its own special civilization, and having its own special unique contribution to make to the service of humanity. In fact, as individuals were not considered special entities from the ultimate metaphysical standpoint, so groups had still less chance of being considered as distinct individualities.

With this position is essentially connected the Hindu indifference towards the future of the race. If the race as a collective entity had not much interest

for the Hindu mind, how could his future interest it? No nation devoted so much attention to the development of minute detailed theories about the future of individual entities as the Hindus. How each soul would receive his exact due, how it would migrate from life to life, how it would go to higher or lower worlds; these and many other details were graphically described. But what shall be the future of the society, of the race? This question did not touch them much. The only answer possible was the theory of cyclic revolutions, the eternal procession in the same round of the whole universe, the perpetual birth and rebirth of cosmoses, the constant succession of the same four ages beginning with the golden age or *Satyuga*, and ending with the *Kaliyuga*, the age of complete decadence. The Hindus, therefore, had no theory about the progress of society. If any progress there was, it was the progress of an individual from the life of lower organ-

isms to the life of higher organisms, from the life of a man in the lower orders to one in the higher orders, from the life of moral and intellectual culture to the life of an emancipated soul. But the conceptions of nationalities, of society as an organism, of the evolution theory were not worked out by the Hindu mind as they are worked out now. This attitude called forth the remarks of some European scholars like the following. "The Zoroastrian brought two things of which the old Aryan religion in the midst of which it arose had no idea or only a dim perception; those two things were morality and hope." (Darmesteter) Morality here means a vivid idea of the social welfare and hope is the idea of the future of the society.

The conception of the highest Good was such that it must be conceived in a strictly individualistic way. Further this very fact emptied the idea of social welfare, even if it comes to exist in such an atmosphere, of much of the content

which it at present possesses. The emphasis on the spiritual as the only reality necessarily leads to a tendency to depreciate the value of earthly goods. Secular welfare, economic prosperity, amelioration of outward conditions of life; all these cannot possess that importance from the point of view of a life which places its goal in a too religiously conceived spiritual emancipation and realization which they naturally have for a more human system of ethics. The Hindu mind does not ignore the value of the good of this world absolutely. Far from that. But there is a general tendency born of the ultimate philosophical attitude, to consider them sometimes as means to a higher life, but mostly as hindrances to the life of spirit. The ultimate tendency of the Hindu mind is undeniably to depreciate the value of the life here, to ignore the value of earthly goods, to underrate the possibilities of a purely secular life. The finite is often conceived in opposition to

the infinite and to be sacrificed at the altar of the infinite. Life on earth is too often thought of as a negation and not a step to a further life beyond. Hence ascetic ideals often get ruinous predominance and at certain stages of Hindu civilization were all—powerful. Hence renunciation, celibacy, fasting, penances, extreme sacrifice of body and bodily goods are often so eloquently preached. Here Hindu ethics in its extreme tendencies may be contrasted with the Zoroastrian attitude. The Zoroastrians have an absolute and unqualified contempt for fasting or celibacy or asceticism. These are positive abominations to them. The Hindu is very fond of them and hugs them to his very bosom. These are the ideals which he always cherishes very finely. But there is here rather a want of balance in the Hindu attitude; and while their love for the spiritual is magnificent, we cannot but deplore its occasional excesses in the direction of asceticism.

The Hindu outlook on earthly life is necessarily pessimistic. But this phrase must be carefully defined. There is no belief that there is an excess of misery over happiness. The Hindu believes that there is a succession of misery and happiness. These are alternating conditions. No one is always happy. No one is always miserable. Every one is bound to be in turn happy and miserable. Nor does the Hindu disbelieve in the possibility of securing better and happier conditions by one's own deeds. Even the highest paradise is open to a man who indulges in penances and does acts of charity. An excellently conducted life here is sure to secure a stay for very long periods in regions of pure felicity for every individual. The pessimistic outlook is the result of the metaphysical passion for infinity. The misery from which a Hindu wants to fly is not physical or intellectual pain; the misery from which he wants to fly is the misery of being

under the illusion of time, space and causality. All happiness which has got the taint of finitude is misery to him. All pleasures, no matter how ethereal, how durable they are, provided they are temporal, are of the earth, earthy. The human spirit cannot be satisfied with them; यो वै भूमा तत्सुखं । नातो सुखमस्ति " What is unconditioned, alone can give happiness; there is no happiness in finitude." This is the secret of Hindu pessimism. The very conditions of empirical existence cannot satisfy a spirit essentially transcendental. In the end this attitude is quite optimistic. It offers a possibility of complete, final deliverance to all. And its state of *moksha* is a state of eternal, endless repose and bliss.

The special strength as well as weakness of the Hindu ethical attitude lies in its complexity. It favours all attitudes even the most conflicting. It as often advocates an attitude of extreme self-assertion as an attitude of self-effacement. Now it preaches the gospel of

extreme type of non-resistance, *ahimsa*: now it openly recommends merciless destruction. Now a life of poverty and meekness finds favour with it, now nothing but wealth and strength are praised high. All types of virtues even the most opposed are alternately praised and run down. All this looks like inconsistency and chaos. The fact is that the Hindu system of morality is as complicated as life itself. Simple, self-consistent, logical formulæ have a certain charm for humanity; they can be easily understood and followed. But these are hopelessly inadequate to envisage life which itself is a very complicated business. The simplicity of an ethical system is sometimes its recommendation but often it is its condemnation. Is it safe, for example, to say always: Thou shalt not kill, or that thou shalt not lie. These injunctions are quite often meaningless. The masses require cut and dried schemes; but they can never cover the existing complexity

in facts. The Hindu seers have, therefore, to preach diverse theories, because the diversity of situations requires proportionate difference in ethical conduct.

A series of dogmatic injunctions, however consistent they may be, are more often sources of deception than of true guidance.

The causes why the Hindu system is the most complicated of all systems, are many. The first cause is its metaphysical character. The influence of a vast and transcendental system of philosophy over the system of ethics growing under its sway, is not in the direction of simplicity. A metaphysical moralist is more weak, hesitating, conflicting than a pure dogmatic moralist. The former has to take account of a mass of subtle thought, while the latter has no such obsessions. Secondly, the Hindu religious system is impersonal. Many of the great religions are the creations of some historic personalities, as Christianity of Christ, Mahomedanism of Mahomed, Parsiism of Zoroaster. The Hindu reli-

gion had no such one founder. The result is that the consistency lent to a doctrine as a result of its being the outcome of one mind is lacking in Hinduism. Thirdly, the development of the Hindu faith is spread over many centuries, which witnessed the rise and fall of many types of civilization. Its doctrines are not embodied in one book as the doctrines of Christianity and Islam are. It is not the outcome of one definite set of historical conditions, but varying historical conditions. Hence while at one period, when material progress and settlement are all-important things, a set of active virtues, positive duties is emphasized: at another period, when the material wants are not pressing and people grow speculative, an opposite code of duties gets emphasis. The result is that different epochs see different ethical qualities coming into prominence; and Hinduism is thus enriched with a perfect variety of ethical reflexions. All the different

sides of life receive consideration but the stern simplicity characteristic of some other faiths is lost. The system is a picturesque mosaic, a monument of the speculative genius of a great people, containing positions of all varieties.

Another cause of the diversity of the Hindu ethical thought lies in its recognition of the fact that men occupy different situations in life, as a result of birth, race, temperament, hereditary circumstances, society, and so on. It repudiates the idea that all men, envisaged in all the variety of outward circumstances, are equal. The equality of men is spiritual, transcendental. It is not empirical equality. If there are differences of social order or classes, clearly the one set of duties cannot be recommended to all. Every different order must have a different code for it. Again, the same man passes through different stages in life: his duties in each stage are different. A man in the world and a man out of it cannot have the same

gospel preached to them. An ascetic requires a very high ideal of morality : a man in the householder's stage must have his elementary necessities looked to before he can safely practise the extreme and unqualified theories suitable to ascetics. This is the reason why outsiders often get puzzled at some contradictions in Hindu thought, which mean nothing more than the application of different sets of laws to people in different situations.

A characteristic situation is caste, proclaiming broadly the natural inequality of men. The principle of the caste-system is this innate difference between man and man. Some men are more qualified for brain-work ; others for manual work. All men are not good for all things. In its original conception the system was anything but bad. It was one of the most excellent organizations devised by man to meet the wants of society, by utilizing this fact of natural inequalities. There was no selfishness at

the root of it. Of course the difference between the Aryan and the non-Aryan or Shudra was due to racial and political necessities. It cannot be justified in the light of pure reason or abstract justice: it can only be explained. But other divisions were not the work of a set of selfish oligarchs, guided by their own interests. The order of Brahmins was the most unselfish of all orders; it reserved for itself a life of compulsory poverty and meekness. It resigned the kingdom of the world to others. It was to be a merely intellectual and spiritual class. It was absolutely necessary that all the Brahmanic culture embodied in the Vedic literature must be preserved intact and developed further. How was it to be done if not by a compulsory concentration of a small class on this work? The excessive respect paid to this high class was due to the necessity of protecting the dignity of a purely self-denying order working solely in the interests of truth and culture. All this

was true of the original conception of caste: subsequent developments were rather due to the human element in the institution. The history of caste came to be, afterwards, a history of progressive degeneracy of the Hindus.

The underlying idea of the whole Hindu ethics is the realization of the destiny of the soul. The system never teaches that the final goal can be achieved by any short cut. The goal, indeed, is very magnificent; the soul is to come to its own. It is piercing the veil of appearance and attaining the final Reality. It is to pass from non-existence to existence, from death to immortality. But its attainment is the very hardest and the most arduous task set before a man. A soul has to pass through endless processions of life and death; it has to see and experience life from every new angle and corner. It has to identify itself not in imagination, but in actuality with every conceivable type of existence. It has to satisfy all its longings. All

this education covers Yugas-centuries. The journey of a soul is very, very long. The work of preparation is huge and elaborate. But gradually through many trials, through varied experiences, through unlimited sufferings, the soul grows more and more chastened, more and more purified. It passes from the inorganic to the organic realm, and from the vegetable to the animal and from the animal to the human state, where it has to pass through various situations. In fact, the theory requires that each soul has to go through eighty-four lacs of varieties of beings till it becomes ultimately fit to enter the kingdom of God. 'अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिं' ।

IV. Ancient Hindu Politics.

The Hindus were a remarkable race. They were called a nation of philosophers. But this was only a half-truth. No doubt the most unique contributions made by Hindus to the culture of the world were in the department of pure thought and selfless action. The discovery of the Soul was the grandest of all discoveries; it is the only substantial foundation of all true spiritualism. The cosmocentric point of view which they brought forward to supplant the egocentric stand-point is the greatest gain to moral philosophy and moral life. But to emphasize all this is not to ignore the depth, the range and the variety of their thought in other spheres of life. Even if we take away the Upanishads from the vast intellectual inheritance which has come down to us from the

Rishis, we shall still be in possession of a vast treasure of political thought and experience, so rich and precious as to entitle us to call the Hindus a race of political philosophers and far-reaching statesmen.

The first essential of all civilized society is order. It is well-called Heaven's first law. It is the most essential condition of all civilization, of all progress, of all existence. Rita was held to be the one regulator of all existence; Law was the Lord of Gods and men. The greatest step forward was taken by the Vedic seers when they boldly grasped the fact of order and uniformity in the heavens, the reign of law in the cosmos, the rhythm of all natural processes. But this Law was not allowed to dominate the outer world merely; it was brought down from the heavens into the social life of man. Here also order must be fundamental. This fact of order may be due to the willing and harmonious co-operation of the human beings. A soci-

ety perfectly dominated by moral ideals, inspired by the power of perfect love and wisdom, was the ideal society of the primeval time. The greatest need of man is not the political freedom, a right of outer self-determination, but moral freedom, spiritual autonomy, a right of inner self-determination. When man is most free, he is least bound. A perfect Rishi, a regenerate saint, is a Buddha or a Christ in himself; he is as free as the heavens, outside and above all 'law and the prophets.' When society was composed of such paragons of innocence and virtue, liberty was perfect and order was the spontaneous outcome of such a state of things. Such was Satyuga.

Politics is the product of a degenerate age. The gradual decadence of inner self-government necessitates the presence of outer government. The modern age says that man is essentially a political animal. The Hindu said: man is essentially a spiritual being and incidentally he has to take to political

functions. But when men lost their virtue, a state of things arose which ended only by man's surrender of a part of his freedom to an external authority, in order to be master of the remaining part. The roots of all government lie in the weakness and violence of man. Here ancient Hindu thought so closely resembles the thought of Hobbes. Disgusted with the portent of anarchy and lawlessness, the ancient Aryans entered into a compact and elected Manu as their first king. Such is the origin of the institution of government.

The Hindu thinkers perceived very clearly the tremendous importance of law and order. A state of anarchy was an abomination to them. Hence arises the necessity and inevitableness of government. Force alone can make for stability in the universe. Even the Sun shines through terror; and the wind blows through terror. Men will fly to each other's throats, but for the terror of the king. "Like unto cattle without

their keeper, like unto an army without its commander, like unto a night without the moon, is a kingdom without a king." (Râmâyana.) But for the rod of authority, it is said, society will lose all cohesion and will be disconnected into the dust and powder of individualities. Morality will be a fiction, mutual love and respect will vanish, and all orderly activity and purposive life will be hopelessly destroyed. Force is, therefore, the basis, to a great extent, of order and law.

Reverence for the personality of king as the veritable embodiment of all order and law, as the one great force making for stability, as the one upholder of morality and religion is the duty of every citizen. The Hindus believed in the heavenly origin of all authority as long as it stood for the preservation of the majestic structure of society. A phantom monarchy is a meaningless fiction. A king is the centre of society. As a prime mover, he is the fountain-

head of all the best things in society. How can there be vitality at the outer points of circumference, when the centre was lifeless? A phantom monarchy will appear to orientals very ludicrous, if not infinitely mischievous. A king must be a true leader of men, a true नृपति not a mere mockery. The modern advocates of democracy say that if there is too much life at the centre, there will be a lack of vitality at the circumference; the Hindus believed that vitality at the centre was absolutely necessary for vitality at the peripheral parts. The modern view lays greater emphasis on the perfection of the constitutional machinery; the Hindu view on the perfection of man at the helm of affairs. The personality of the monarch was a fact of the very highest importance to the Hindus. The Germans also appreciate this position and always placed great faith in the personal factor, the vigour and efficiency of the Emperor. But the era of modern republics is fatal.

to the advent of the right type of man at the centre.

Centuries of costly experience have taught Europe that governments exist for the people, and not the people for governments. Europe required mighty cataclysms like the French Revolution, in order to see that truth. But ancient India fully realised at every stage of her existence that kingship was an institution devised to meet human needs. Monarchs must always look to the happiness and prosperity of the people. The one great criterion of successful government was the peace and prosperity of the people. प्रवर्तताम् प्रकृतिहिताय पार्थिवः । A king was called *rājan*, because he was a source of happiness to all ; he was called *nripa*, because he was the one source of protection to people. Here is a delightful picture of plenty. "During the administration of Rāma, the widows were not distressed ; and there was no fear of voracious animals or diseases. The people were saved from thieves, and

there was no other trouble. And the old were not constrained to perform the funeral ceremonies of their children. All were delighted and devoted to pious observances.....People lived for thousands of years and had thousands of children.And the trees bore fruits and flowers perpetually; there were showers at will, and the wind blew agreeably," (Rāmāyana.)

The monarch was almost the three-fourths of government. But he did not represent himself only, nor was he the representative of capitalistic interests; he stood for the interests of the people under him. He was not expected to have any private self; his whole personality must be fully merged in the personality of the nation. A king is represented as true *mābāp*; father and mother to the people. The king was the one representative not of the majority merely but of minorities as well. The lawgivers ask the kings to protect all sections of people from the tyrann-

ous exactions of the officers. Especially is Government responsible for the weak and the distressed. A king is called the eye of the blind, the gait of the lame, and the strength of the weak and the helpless. Government was not to be a wooden, soulless machine acting in a perfectly unmoral, neutral way. It was not a piece of mechanism. It was a living being, "with hands and feet." In this connection the following observations of Rabindra Nath Tagore are significant; "Moghal emperors were men, they were not mere administrators. They lived and died in India. They loved and fought. The memorials of their reigns do not persist in the ruins of factories and offices, but in immortal works of art,—not only in great buildings, but in pictures and music and workmanship in stone and metal, in cotton and wool fabrics, But the British government in India is not personal. It is official and therefore an abstraction. It has nothing to express in the

true language of art. For law, efficiency and exploitation cannot sing themselves into epic stones."

Hence we arrive at the socialistic view of the functions of Government. Nothing was more remote from the mind of the Eastern thinkers than the stupid doctrine of *Laissez faire*. The Hindus never believed in the beneficence of the automatic workings of the so-called Laws of Nature, by which the rich became richer, and the poor, poorer. Freedom of competition must presuppose equality of conditions and opportunities. Otherwise it is a freedom to rob the weak and helpless. The strong arm of the state must therefore intervene to rectify the inequalities and iniquities of the existing order. The socialistic legislation in modern states tries to encourage the insurance for the workers suffering from accidents and diseases, pensions for the old and such other things. In India, Government was always called upon to remove the miseries

of all suffering classes. "The king should protect the wealth of those that are old, of those that are minors, of those that are blind, and of those that are otherwise disqualified." Exploitation of the weaker classes, of the helpless nations was a thing absolutely undreamt of. It was instinctively perceived that the moment governments began to prey upon the miseries of the poor people, it would disappear. "The eyes of the weak, of the Muni, and of the snake of virulent poison, should be regarded as unbearable. Do not, therefore, come into hostile contact with the weak. Take care that the eyes of the weak do not burn thee with thy kinsmen." (Shanti-parva). The utmost leniency is to be exercised in matters of taxation. Any tyrannous exactions which affect the efficiency of the springs of production will ultimately recoil upon the rulers. The prosperity of the people means the prosperity of the rulers; if the cow is well fed, then the result is additional

milk for the milkman. Government was expected to look to the growth of commerce and agriculture, of arts and sciences, literature and philosophy. Government was responsible not only for secular interests of the people, but also their spiritual interests. If a scholar languishes in a kingdom, the prosperity of the king disappears.

The root belief of the ancient Hindus was that Government was responsible for the culture and civilization of the people. Such sayings as 'यथा राजा तथा प्रजा' 'राजा कालस्य कारणं' are highly significant; they proclaim the belief of the Hindus in the omnipotence of the State. Law cannot only secure freedom and justice, not only economic prosperity, but also virtue and morality. It was on this belief that Asoka had published edicts at various places. The Shukra-Niti also refers to such proclamations. "When the king properly abideth by the Penal Code without making any portion of it a dead letter, then that best of periods-

called Krita-yuga setteth in. Let not this doubt be thine, viz, whether the era is the cause of the king, or the king is the cause of the era. ”

The rule of the monarch never meant the rule of the arbitrary will or caprice of the monarch. Kings indeed were not puppets, mere mouthpieces of people's will. They held their kingdoms not as property, but as sacred trust. But it was for them to interpret properly the wishes and interests of the people. Dharma was to be supreme. Both the people and government were under its all-powerful sway. Government in those days had a very extensive sphere of jurisdiction; but it was subordinate to the laws and customs of the country. Government represented executive and judicature; it had very little legislative power.

The people were not ciphers in the administration. There were various checks to the autocratic power of the monarch. The greatest check was the

existence of a body of laws which were not his creation, but which were there to guide him and control him. Secondly, the king was to be advised and guided at every step by his ministers. The king was bound to consult them; he was even bound to follow them. It was the height of presumption for the king to think that he was wiser than his councillors. "The wise ruler should ever abide by the well-thought out decisions of councillors, office-bearers, subjects and members attending a meeting, never by his own opinions. The monarch who follows his own will is the cause of miseries; he soon gets estranged from his kingdom and alienated from his subjects." (Shukra-Niti) Thirdly, it was obligatory on monarchs to invoke assemblies on all important occasions and to place his views before them. These were not mere pageants; they were called upon to speak out their voice. "Assemble, speak together, let your minds be all of one accord;.....

The place is common, common the assembly, common the mind, so be their thought united. A common purpose do I lay before you, and worship with your general oblation." (Rig-Veda.) Vast, representative gatherings were summoned, when momentous decisions were to be taken. Even the autocratic Râvana had to call a conference of Rakshasas, when he wanted to declare war with Râma. Dasharatha summons a conference when he wanted to retire. "If what I have devised be meet," he said, "and also if it recommend itself to you, do ye accord your approval to it,—proposing what I am to do besides this, and the ways and means of effecting it. If I have thought thus solely, because it is personally agreeable to me, do ye suggest some other suitable course. The thought of the neutral persons is different from those that are concerned; and truth comes out from a friction of opposite forces." (Râmâyana.) Fourthly, the Hindus always recognized a power higher

than the kings and earthly potentates. Such a power was the Rishi. A wandering mendicant, without home, without property, he was a far greater force in society than the swords and bayonets of the warrior classes, a far more effective power than the money of wealthy plutocrats. Never was character so highly worshipped as in the ancient Hindu Society. Kings used to tremble in their own thrones, in the presence of these Rishis. They were the only persons qualified to modify old laws and create new ones. "Laws not specifically laid down in this code, should be unhesitatingly accepted, as virtuous Brahmins would lay down and interpret. Those who have thoroughly studied the Dharma-Shastras, are well-versed in the Vedas and Vedangas, and lead the life of Brahmacharins, are the living monuments of the texts of the Shrutis, should be judged as duly qualified lawgivers." Here three points must be remembered. In the Western society, we often find

that the scholars are allowed to participate in the privilege of the construction of laws. The Jurists had very great influence in the creation of the Roman Law. Dr. Wilson says about the German Laws: "Prussian administrative arrangements as they now exist may be said to be in large part *student-made*. As the Roman emperors honoured the scientific jurists of the Empire by calling upon them to preside over legal development, so have Prussian kings more and more inclined to rely upon the advice of cultured students of institutions, in the organic development of the government. Stein was above all things else a student of governments. In our own day the influence of Professor Gneist upon administrative evolution has continued the excellent tradition of student power. And because she has thus trusted her students, Prussia has had practical students: students whose advice has been conservative and carefully observant of historical conditions." (The State.)

However, a staunch republican like Wilson has to admit that this fine combination of culture and power, this free and imaginative use of brain-power is possible in a monarchy, not in a lifeless mechanism of a republic. "Of course it is much easier to give such influence to students where the government follows for the most part royal or executive initiative than where all initiative rests with a popular chamber. It is easier to get and keep the ear of one master than the ears of five hundred." Another point in which the Eastern practice differs from the Western is the power entrusted to character. The guarantee of a lofty character was a long life of perfect selflessness. There was no likelihood of personal bias, sectarian prejudices in the case of selfless mendicants. We think that this was one of the happiest traits of ancient Hindu politics. A third point to be carefully noted here is the utter lack of faith of the Hindus in the plenary inspiration of majorities.

Truth is not a problem of arithmetic; mere counting of heads cannot carry us far. Where qualitatively all votes are equal, the many must prevail over the few; where it is a problem of thought, wisdom, expert advice, and shrewd insight, the few must prevail over the many. "When the question is which of the two sides should be adopted, thou shouldst not abandon the many for adopting the side of one; when, however, that person transcends the many in consequence of the possession of many accomplishments, then thou shouldst for that one, abandon the many." (Shanti-parva.) "Even whatever a single Veda-knowing Brahmin shall determine as the law, shall be accepted as such, to the exclusion of what has been said by ten thousand ignorant Brahmins." (Manu.)

Public opinion was a powerful force even in those days when our civilization was not professedly a democratic civilization. Anecdotes are related, illustrating the influence of public opinion on

the acts of kings. Asamanja, a son of the king of Ayodhyâ, was in the habit of throwing the children of the people into the Sarayu river. The people asked the king to banish either that prince or themselves. The king at once passed an order exiling the prince from the kingdom. "The Sudhakas, the Yadavas, and the Bhojas, uniting together had abandoned Kamsa." (Shanti-parva.) Râma abandoned Sitâ under the pressure of public opinion. The relatives of kings were as much subject to law as other persons. When Bharata was told that Râma was exiled from Ayodhyâ, he asks: "Has Râma deprived any Brahmin of his wealth? or has he wronged any innocent person, whether rich or poor? Has the fancy of the prince gone after the wife of another? For what reason has brother Râma been banished?"

The guarantee of excellent government in those days lay in the exalted and unselfish character of the king. The

time – honoured tradition, the weight of the Shastras, the demands of public opinion, all combined to require of a king, an unflinching devotion to the interests of the public above everything else. “As the mother disregarding those objects that are most cherished by her, seeks the good of her child alone, even so, without doubt, should kings conduct themselves (towards their subjects). The king who is righteous should always behave in such a manner as to avoid what is clear to him, for the sake of doing that which may benefit his people.” (Shanti-parva). Râma says :—

स्नेहं दयां तथा सौख्यं यदि वा जानकीमपि ।

आराधनाय लोकस्य मुञ्चतो नास्ति मे व्यथा ॥

All private affections and sentiments in the case of a king were mere trifles light as air, when weighed against the interests of the kingdom. Kings were not allowed to waste even in private charities the money belonging to the public.

A source of menace to the liberties of the people is the group of courtiers and flatterers, surrounding the person of the king. No class, therefore, was so much an object of contempt as this class of self-seeking sycophants. " ' Thou art the greatest of all charitable men and heroes ' - such remarks he should not hear. Those who speak in this way are deceitful men. " (Shukra-Niti.)

As a guarantee against the prevalence of selfish views, the Government has to guarantee to the subjects both civil and constitutional freedom. Civil freedom is assured to the citizens : " he is the best of kings in whose dominions men live fearlessly like sons in the house of their sire. " But even constitutional freedom, which consists in people's actual participation in and control over administration, is guaranteed in the oriental monarchies. The ideal of a true Hindu statesman, true adviser of the Crown, is the pursuit of राज्यनीति (or statesmanship which looks to the interests of the kingdom),

not the pursuit of राजनीति (or statecraft which consists in pandering to the government). “ Those officers who do not explain what is good and what is harmful to the king are really his secret enemies in the form of servants. The king, who does not listen to the counsels of ministers, is a thief in the form of a ruler, an exploiter of the people’s wealth. ” (Shukra-Niti). Ample liberty of criticism is given to the public ; the governments must possess patience to bear adverse and even unfounded criticism. “ A king, seeking his own welfare shall always tolerate the calumnious remarks made by suitors, defendants, infants, old men, and sick folk, regarding himself. He, who bears ill reports (adverse criticisms) made by the aggrieved is glorified in heaven ; he, who out of pride of wealth cannot tolerate such criticisms goes to hell. ” (Manu).

The people had a considerable share in the election of their king. Monarchy was almost elective in the Vedic

period. "Be with us; I have chosen thee; let not thy kingship fall away." (Rig-Veda). Even when the institution of a hereditary monarchy became fully established, the people had a right to be consulted and to set aside the inefficient successor in favour of one more capable. Dhritarâshtra was set aside because he was blind. Dasharâtha had to consult people before he could pass on his throne to Rama. The next great interest of people was the stability of the throne. All wanton treason and sedition was abominable to the Hindus. "Firm is the sky, and firm the earth, and steadfast also are these hills. Steadfast is this living world, and steadfast is the king of men." (Rig-Veda). But the Hindu people always kept in their own hands the ultimate right of overthrowing the king, if the public interests demanded it. This was the last guarantee of good and able administration; the last check to the excesses of a groaning, heartless tyranny

is the explosion of the people's passions and the outbreak of popular will. "Away pass Agni, Varuna and Soma; Rule changes." (Rig-Veda). People can withdraw their cooperation from an unrighteous king, or depose him, or even kill him. "People do not in times of peril assist a sovereign that is wrathful, stingy, haughty, deceitful." (Râmâyana). If the king be an enemy of virtue, morality and strength, people should desert him as the ruiner of the State. In his place, for the maintenance of the State, the priest, with the consent of the ministers, should install one who belongs to his family and is qualified." (Shukra-Niti). The Mahâbhârata asks the people to destroy the king, who is either wicked or incapable. "The subjects should arm themselves for slaying that king who does not protect them, who simply plunders their wealth, who confounds all distinctions, who is incapable of taking their lead, who is without compassion, and who is

regarded as the most sinful of kings. That king who tells his people that he is their protector, but does not, or is unable to protect them, should be slain by his combined subjects, like a dog that has become mad." (Anu-parva).

It is not possible here to enter into details, but it is certain that the Hindus evolved an excellent system of administration of justice from very early times. Justice was cheap, easy, and not differential in its treatment. True, men belonging to different castes were to receive unequal punishments. This was a blot on the ancient system; but it can be partly explained by the fact that the highest culture and character must be granted certain immunities, if these were not to be destroyed. But no personal partialities were allowed to deflect the course of justice. " Be he thy preceptor, or be he thy friend, he that acts inimically towards thy kingdom, should be destroyed." (Shanti-parva). " King Janaka punished him that is wicked,

even if he be his own son; but never doth he inflict pain on him that is virtuous." (Vana-parva). The rich and the poor alike are to be judged equally by the officers without being influenced by greed. "The tears of those who have been falsely charged with any offence, destroy the sons as well as the cattle of a ruler, who mind his own comforts only." (Râmâyana). The story of a dog presenting itself for justice at the court of Rama and Rama's granting its request illustrates how extremely anxious the ancient kings were to do even-handed justice to all persons. Under no circumstances, should the guilty be allowed to escape so free. A relaxation in the system of administering justice ends only in multiplying crimes. "If sin findeth not a punisher, the number of sinners becometh large. The man, who having the power to prevent or punish sin doth not do so, knowing that a sin hath been committed, is himself defiled by the

sin. " (*Adi-parva*).

It remains for us to deal briefly with the foreign policy of ancient governments and the principles underlying these. The Hindu writers had never any illusions with regard to the idea of perpetual peace. There are pacifists and there are jingoes in all societies; but pacifism of the ancient Hindu society did not take the extreme form of a passion for extinction of war altogether from the affairs of man. A complete annihilation of the combative instinct is often a wished-for thing, but with reference to single individuals under certain circumstances, not with reference to societies or States. War is always considered an indispensable part of the machinery of civilization; its occurrence in all societies is but a normal part of the processes of nature. *A war* may be righteous or unrighteous; *a war* may be avoidable or inevitable; but *war* is both righteous and inevitable, an indispensable instrument to restore the healthiness, the normal

balance, the just and essential relationship of States. It was a deep-rooted belief of the ethical writers of India that destruction is as much an essential part of the processes of progress and civilization, as construction, that the extinction of effete forms, the extermination of lawless and wicked individuals and even groups of individuals, the punishment and death of the unrighteous are the very essential conditions of all new and healthy growth or the conservation of the useful parts of the social structure. Morality is not always negative; it is not another name for passivity or abstention or inaction of all types. It is both positive and negative, both constructive and destructive, both aggressive and quietistic, and hence is neutral with regard to the general question of peace and war in society.

Pacifist tendencies, however, often break out; innate inhumanity of the war of man against man, of brother against brother, is much felt and expressed. Various arguments, some moral, some

economic are pressed into service. It is said that losses on both sides are very heavy; hence it is not a profitable business for either the victors or the vanquished. Accident plays a great part in the results. Every war becomes the starting-point of fresh wars. If an enemy is not annihilated, he creates future troubles; if he is annihilated, it would be an unpardonable crime against all humanity. It is butchery in its essence. Arjuna becomes a pacifist and gives vent to his lamentations in the *Gitâ*. A special evil of war is mentioned; traditional civilization is likely to perish, and sexual lawlessness is likely to prevail among the surviving females.

These fits of maudlin humanitarianism were never in favour with the Rishis. Force is the basis of all law and order. 'The ape and the tiger' within us are all-powerful; the unregenerate man knows of no restraint except physical force. The biological law of the survival of the fittest often operates

ruthlessly ; and war is one of its instruments. In this universe, force alone can command respect. " Without piercing the vitals of others, without achieving the most difficult feats, and without slaying creatures, like a fisherman (slaying fish), no person can obtain great prosperity. Without slaughter, no man has been able to achieve fame in this world, or acquire wealth, or subjects. Indra himself became, by the slaughter of Indra, the *great* Indra. Those amongst the gods that are given to slaughtering others are adored much by men. Rudra, Skanda, Shakra, Agni, Varuna, are all slaughterers. Kala, and Vayu, and Kubera, and Surya, the Vasus, the Maruts, and the Vasudevas, are all slaughterers. Humbled by their powers all people bend to these gods, but not to Brahman, or Dhatri, or Pushan at anytime." Slaughter, indeed, is the law of society, and all persons consciously or unconsciously resort to it. " I do not behold the creature in this world that

supporteth life without doing any act of injury to other animals. Animals live upon the animals; the stronger upon the weaker. The mungoose devours the mice; the cat devours the mungoose; the dog devours the cat; the dog again is devoured by the spotted leopard. Behold, all these again are devoured by the Destroyer when he comes! This mobile and immobile universe is the food of living creatures.....The very ascetics cannot support their lives without killing creatures.....What higher duty is there than supporting one's life?" (Shanti-parva). All minute scruples, therefore, as regards the morality or immorality of war must yield to the higher necessities, the imperative law of every being and every social group, viz, self-preservation.

War is the one great means to bring about the triumph of the righteous and the destruction of the wicked. Its foundations are laid in justice and equity. Non-destruction of the wicked is as

great a sin as destruction of the righteous. " Possessed of great energy, his name is *asi* (sword). For the protection of the world, and the destruction of the enemies of the gods, I have created him. " (Shanti-parva). " Then comes war, for which purpose came into being, weapons, armours and bows. Indra invented these contrivances for putting the Dasyus to death. Religious merit is acquired by putting the Dasyus to death. " - (Udyoga-Parva). There is an amount of truth in the doctrine that might is right. The pacifist nations of the East must especially remember this. A triumphant war covereth a multitude of sins. All abstract discussions on the question of right and wrong, in the face of portentous situations making call upon a people's manhood, are apt to be meaningless pedantry, or diseased sentimentalism. Individuals as well as nations must go down and disappear, if they fall victims to mere hair-splitting distinctions of right and wrong, mere

calculating lore of less and more, mere verbal sophistries of refined casuistry, in the hours of their trial. A tremendous amount of true spiritualism is necessary to earn and maintain power for years to come in the face of a vigilant and devouring world. Impotence, helplessness, are not synonyms for higher virtues; true virtue is virility as its very root meaning shows. It is the same with our word *purusha*, so intimately connected with *paurusha*. "And it is useless to argue, upon seeing certain footprints on the ground, whether they are the wolf's or not; even so is all discussion upon the nature of righteousness and the reverse. Nobody in this world ever sees the fruits of righteousness or unrighteousness.....It is from power that righteousness springs. Righteousness rests upon power, as all immobile things upon the earth.....There is nothing that powerful men cannot do. Everything is pure with them that are powerful." (Shanti-parva). The Western ideal of

imperialism was not unknown among the Hindu politicians. An extension of power is necessary to insure an extension of the sphere of righteousness, an extension of one's culture and civilization. But when the Hindu kings spread far and wide their empire, they did not establish plantations, colonies, markets for goods, dependencies meant to bear all burdens but excluded from all privileges, the spheres of influence, which were merely spheres for the exploitation of the weak and the helpless humanity, for the slow extermination of whole races, for the cruel destruction of manliness, morality and culture. The extended kingdom became a part of the empire; and all the benefits and privileges of the conquering king became automatically extended to the conquered regions. The idea, therefore, of a *Sārvabhauma* kingdom did not mean in most cases the extension of the empire of the organized brute over the unorganized man, of the organized robber and butcher over the unorganized

saint and philosopher, but meant the triumph and spread of true statesmanship, of higher civilization, of broader humanity. "It is true, kings desirous of victory afflict many creatures, but after victory they advance and aggrandise all. By the power of gifts, sacrifices, and penances, they destroy their sins, and their merit increases because they may be able to do good to all creatures. The reclaimer of a field, for reclaiming a field, takes up both paddy blades and weeds. His action, however, instead of destroying the blades of paddy, makes them grow more vigorously. They that wield weapons destroy many that deserve destruction. Such extensive destruction, however, causes the growth and advancement of those that remain." (Shanti-parva).

The general principle to be observed in all warfare is that war must be righteous both in its aims and methods. All acts of wanton aggression, all attacks on helpless neighbours, all adoption of un-

fair tactics are ruled out of court. "Manu, himself, has said that battles should be fought fairly. The righteous should always act righteously towards those that are righteous.....Even he that is wicked should be subdued by fair means. It is better to lay down life itself in the observance of righteousness than to win victory by sinful means." (Shanti-parva.) Persons equally well situated with respect to arms and equipment should exchange swords; there is no chivalry in attacking an unarmed person, or one who is unconscious, or one who is flying from the battle-field. Women, and children, and helpless persons should never be slain. The rights of conquest should not be abused. The true test of honesty of motives lies in the way in which the victor acquits himself. Both parties may claim right on their side in the beginning, but if the victors afterwards fall to devouring the vanquished, their hypocrisy stands unmasked before the world. A perilous

temptation to do one's worst occurs in the case of the victors of the field ; and shortsightedness, which would ruthlessly exploit the advantage is not rare. Under such circumstances, morality of nations must place definite limitations upon the exercise of the privileges of victory. It is not only more in accordance with sound morality and broad humanity, but also with true expediency and far-reaching statesmanship, to root out all future mischief, and to gain new allies by a policy of conciliation towards the vanquished, than to aim at mere immediate gains. "Having won the victory, he must worship the deities, and virtuous Brahmins, give gratuities to the conquered country, and declare a general pardon. Thus having ascertained the intention (of the ministers etc, of the conquered king), he shall reinstate a scion of that family on the throne of the country, and determine his duties and obligations. He shall ratify the laws and usages of the country, and

glorify the newly appointed king and his ministers, with presents and gems. With the acquisition of gold or territory a king does not prosper, so much as with the acquisition of a true and steady ally. An ally, virtuous, grateful, contented, devoted and resolute in his undertakings, even if he be weak, is recommended as worth having." (Manu) Very fine words for the authors of the Treaty of Versailles!

War, however, is a very rough business; its conduct, after all, can never satisfy the demands of a straight-laced morality. Its very essence is destruction; and all ordinary maxims of morality completely fail in a crisis. No party, therefore, is expected to be more honest than its opponents. Deceit must be matched by deceit, and crookedness by crookedness. In extreme crises, all means are justified for the ultimate end. "When the number of foes becomes great, the destruction should be effected by contrivances and means." (Shalya-parva.)

“In days of yore, Vālmiki sang this verse on Earth, viz.—Thou sayest, O ape, that women should not be slain! In all ages, however, men should always with resolute care, accomplish that which gives pain to enemies.” (Drona-parva). “People generally, as also those versed in the Scriptures, always applaud those means which are certain over those which are uncertain....The enemy’s force, even when fatigued, or wounded with weapons, or employed in eating, or when retiring, or when resting within their camp, should be smitten. They should be dealt with in the same way, when asleep at dead of night, or when left of commanders, or when broken, or when they are under the impression of an error.” (Sauptika-parva.)

It was clearly recognised that the countries which were too much obsessed by pacifist tendencies could not hold their own in the existing state of international insecurity and political brigandage. The best way to prevent war is often said to

be in the preparedness for war. "Even as a serpent devoureth animals living in holes, the earth devoureth these two, viz, a king who is incompetent to fight, and a Brahmin who does not sojourn in holy places." (Udyoga-parva). " (A king) must covet what has not been acquired, assiduously protect what has been acquired, augment what has been kept and protected, and distribute the augmented wealth among the worthy recipients." (Manu). A world-empire is the goal of all great emperors. " It hath been heard by us that in the Krita age, having brought every one under their subjection, Yauvanashuin by the remission of all taxes, Bhagiratha by the kind treatment of his subjects, Kartavirya by the energy of his asceticism, the lord Bharata by his strength and valour, and Māruta by his prosperity,—these five became emperors. But thou, O Yudhishtira, thou who covetest the imperial dignity, deservest it (not by one but) by all these qualities, viz:

victory, protection afforded to thy people, virtue, prosperity and policy." (Sabha-parva). The world-empire is a fine ideal; but what excellent foundations of it are laid down here !

The general principle of foreign policy is here enunciated : " By means of all political expedients, a king should so acquit himself that his allies, foes, and indifferent sovereigns may not acquire a higher supremacy than his own self. " (Manu). It is understood that self-preservation is the highest law for the State. It is its foremost duty to maintain its own existence and power as unimpaired as possible. History was not able to show in the time of the Mahâ-bhârata, any more than at the present time, any world-organization which could effectively keep within due limits the ambitions of aggressive powers and assure to each State its own just rights and privileges. Naturally, every State was well advised to take law into its own hands and deal effective justice to

its own lawless, hostile and aggressive neighbour. All means that would lead to success were to be unhesitatingly adopted. "If thy son, friend, brother, father, or even spiritual preceptor becometh thy foe, thou shouldst, if desirous of prosperity, slay him without scruples. By curses and incantations, by gifts of wealth, by poison, or by deception, the foe should be slain." (Adi-parva). "By slaughtering its population, by tearing up its roads, and by burning and pulling down its houses, a king should destroy a hostile kingdom. He should be far-sighted like the vulture, motionless like a crane, vigilant like a dog, valiant like a lion, fearful like a crow, and penetrate the territories of his foes like a snake." (Shanti-parva).

V. Hindu Theology : Polytheism, Pantheism and Image-worship.

Three words are often said to characterise the Hindu attitude in matters of theology : polytheism, pantheism and image-worship.

I

Any one who has an intimate acquaintance with Hindu thought will perceive the absurdity of describing the Hindus as a nation of polytheists. Unity of godhead is one of the most deep-rooted beliefs of all genuine Hinduism, Vedic and post-Vedic. एकं सद्विप्राः बहुधा वदन्ति. "Reality is one ; sages describe it variously." The Upanishads repeatedly emphasise the fundamental unity and identity of the ultimate Reality. "He who sees many as it were, goes from death to death." Indeed, the Hindu philosopher has staked everything on the

unity of Brahman; the independent existence of the world, of monads, the personality of God are all sacrificed at the altar of the Absolute.

But this rigorous monism is too much for men of ordinary intelligence. For religious purposes, man requires personal God, before whom he can prostrate himself, and whose sympathy he may seek. The masses, who are steeped in the visible and tangible world of forms, colours, and sounds, can be satisfied only with symbols and images, with a human God and not the Absolute. All men cannot be cast in one religious mould; uniformity of theory and practice in matters of faith is not possible for persons of varying talents, temperaments, and enlightenment. A Hindu is, therefore, free to adopt one thousand and one ways of approaching the Deity, may worship pure Brahman in the sacred recesses of his heart, or may worship any one of its manifestations which makes a specially touching appeal to

him. But he is assured that there is unity of essence behind diversity of manifestations, that whatever way he may resort to, he is, in fact, worshipping the same Deity. सर्वदेवनमस्कारः केशवं प्रति गच्छति ।

Equally misleading is the title of pantheism with regard to Hindu theology. In the first place, the ordinary charge against pantheism, viz, that it arrives at its goal by a process of abstraction is not correct with reference to the philosophy of Adwaita. Logic must always break down in its attempt to envisage Reality; Life alone can unravel its secret. All Hindu philosophy was characteristically styled *Darshana*. It believed in the direct realisation or intuition of the Absolute; and when it placed our knowledge of Brahman on this rock of Anubhava, no criticism can dislodge it from that. Here it is akin to mysticism, and parts company with pantheism. Secondly, as a consequence of the above position, the result that was obta-

ined was not a mere negation, not an abstraction, not a mere x. It was the most positive concept that was reached. Our ordinary conceptions of man, nature, God, are all abstractions; it is only when we see them in the light of the Whole that we grasp their true meaning. Thirdly, Brahman cannot be described like the Substance of Spinoza, as the lion's den to which all things went, but from which none returned. Brahman alone can be the true principle of explanation for all things from God to a blade of grass. It is the one thing upon which all knowledge and all reality rest. Fourthly, the principle of Maya enabled the Vedanta theory to save the objective validity of morality and freedom of will. Of course these concepts have no absolute validity in the metaphysics of Brahman; but objective validity they have. Every individual can determine his own destiny; and he is subject to no law except that of karma. Responsibility for one's deeds is strictly enforced by

making the Law of Karma inexorable in its operation. But, above all, the Vedânta differs from ordinary pantheism inasmuch as it believes not only in the immanence, but also the transcendence of God. The Western pantheism says that God is immanent in the universe. The Hindu pantheism says that the universe is immanent in God. This is not a difference of words, but of thought. तावानस्य महिमा ततो ज्यायांश्च पूरुषः । पादोऽस्य सर्वाभूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि॥ “Such is his greatness ; yea the Lord is even greater, all beings constitute one quarter of Him. His immortal three quarters are in heaven.” (Chh. Up.)

II.

Much was said on Image-worship in the early period of the British Rule in India: It was the time when the missionaries who fondly hoped to evangelize the East, were directing their first offensive against our spiritual fortresses. And they pitched upon the idol worship as one of the weakest points in the whole struc-

ture. The world was, in their calculations, divided into two hostile camps; the image-worshippers and the worshippers of pure God. All the Hindus were to be indiscriminately swept into the first category and the advanced faiths of Christianity, Islamism, Judaism and Zoroastrianism were assigned an honoured place in the next class.

It was no wonder then that while the missionaries in their zeal thought that they were shaking the very centre of the Hindu system, they were in fact breaking their heads against the outermost fringes of the system. Our sleep was not interrupted; nor our digestion disturbed by the hammer-strokes of these zealots. 'Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.' We were quite assured that whatever may be the fate of the idol-worship in the world, Hinduism would not be affected by it. It was not an essential feature of the Great Faith, under the mighty wings of which we have sheltered ourselves, much

less was it the centre of it. Idol-worship may come or go; but Hinduism will remain for ever. It is a *Sanatana* faith, one which does not merely rule either the past, or the present, or the future, but all time.

Now these controversies provoked by the attacks of an aggressive Christianity are almost dead. The great offensive has spent itself. Yet backed by mighty organizations, financed by millionaires, supported by the powers that be, the missionaries' efforts have taken another direction. The effort has grown more subtle; but none the less it is equally ineffective.

Although much juice has been extracted out of this controversy, it is still a very important matter to know exactly where we stand in this affair. Conscious missionary efforts have failed; but the new environment ushered into our country by the Western education is very effective in undermining the fabric of our time-honoured beliefs. A wave

of scepticism in matters spiritual has passed over the educated people; and all our institutions have got to be on the defensive. The first generation of the neo-Hindus went so far as to throw away the sacred images from their houses, to ride rough-shod over the old customs. A sort of secularism, godlessness, and even pro-Christianism were in the air. This state of things soon ended. A national reaction set in violently against these 'new bigots and fanatics' and we are now again attaining to a fairly critical spirit in these matters, which is disposed to judge of all these in an impartial light, with always a strong tendency to be partial towards our own Eastern spirit.

It is in the light of this new spirit that we may sit in judgment over the subject of image-worship. The first question which an impartial student of human institutions will ask is, what is the extent of this belief among different peoples? Every institution must be

studied with special reference to its history, its rise, growth and decay in the light of the epochs of civilizations in which this history unrolled itself. Judged in this way, we find that image-worship was a normal characteristic of most of the societies we know of, at a particular stage of their development. It is not a universal fact. Some very savage people have not developed it. Such are the Hottentots, for example. But the absence of it may be due to either a developed civilization or a certain limitation of the genius of the people. In many cases, where idolatry did make a very late appearance in society, it was due mainly to an absence of an artistic consciousness among the people. In all cases where it appeared, it argued some advance of religious evolution in the people. Its antecedent was often fetish-worship. Often it was a relapse from a purer faith. In India there are few traces of the phenomenon in the Vedic times. In China, Japan

and Rome, it was a late growth.

The fact that image-worship was once a general institution clearly points to its usefulness to man at a particular stage of his life. It must have satisfied certain needs of his nature. Not only so, but people often and often fall into idolatrous ways, although these may not have the support of their religions. Thus the Jews were at one time grossly idolatrous. It was only a reaction against excesses of it that led to the adoption of a purer attitude. The Buddhists, although their creed had nothing to support the super-natural element, took to the worship of the images of Gautam Buddha and other saints. The Mahomedans, too, have got their mosques, their Kaaba, and their institution of Mohurrum. The Roman Catholic people were and are almost as pompous in their religious ceremonies as the Hindus. The Hindus and the Chinese are largely addicted to the worship of the images of their gods.

Now what should we say as regards the worth of this institution? An advance was clearly made upon the preceding forms of worship, when men called in the assistance of art to help them in giving a definite expression to their religious consciousness. Men rise slowly in the scale of civilization. They have also their period of infancy as well as ripe adolescence. At an early period, when man is struggling to give expression to himself in all sorts of ways, anything that came to him was most welcome; it would give him immense relief to vent himself out, to give an objective shape to his subjective fancy. In this sense, image-worship was and is an expression, an objective formulation of the religious idea of a god or goddess, at a particular stage of man's evolution. Thus man creates God as God creates man: God by planting religious consciousness in him; man by evolving out of his self that consciousness.

It is a matter of common observation

that the capacity for appreciating concrete things is developed first in us and an aptitude for abstractions requires a good deal of education. A few philosophers may at all times revel in a world of ideas, and hypostatize the concepts. The whole world of matter is dissolved into a series of sensations and a philosopher considers them as mere symbols which reveal an ideal world of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. But it is not given to all to move in these transcendental regions and to reduce the world to a 'bloodless ballet of categories.' Most of us require for our satisfaction something nearer, more concrete, more tangible than the vague and airy adumbrations of philosophers. Here the grades of capacities vary considerably. But one fact stands out in bold relief. The masses always require as a rule more or less visible, pictorial, figured representations of the Infinite. God must speak to every man in his own language. And man must speak to God in his own lan-

guage. The fact of cardinal importance is not the language or the medium of expression, but the fact, or the matter of expression. Unity and Variety, One and Many, Finite and Infinite, Subject and Object, Individual and Absolute, these are very deep and subtle questions of philosophy and to expect the masses to grasp them intelligently and to make use of them is quite an absurdity. Hence all those who are not so highly trained as to be capable of breathing the pure air of the impalpable essences, and those who are especially fond of seeing the abstract through concrete, picturesque language of the world must be allowed to have their own way of approaching and worshipping God.

Image-worship is symbolic worship. It is the worship of supernal realities through the symbols which are supposed to represent them best. It is the translation for the time being of the infinite in terms of the finite, of the spiritual in terms of the material, of the invisible

in terms of the visible, of the timeless and spaceless and formless, in terms of time, space and form, of the whole in terms of the part, of the universal in terms of the individual. A logician might suppose that this is nothing but a jungle of contradictions, a meaningless jargon. But these contradictions appear hard and rigid in the world of a logician only. They melt away very rapidly into air, as soon as they are placed in an atmosphere of feeling and imagination. The poet's 'fine frenzy' gives to airy nothings a local habitation and a name. A great *Bhakta* or devotee similarly accomplish the miracle of seeing the Unseen, having the vision of the Invisible. It is thus entirely conceivable that we can worship great God through our own humble symbols. It may be a limitation of our faculties that imposes on us this symbol-worship. But what does it matter, after all? The most important fact is not the medium of our communion with the Deity, but the

communion itself. To argue that God must be approached in one way and one way only; or not at all, is to confound the accidental thing with the essential. Are we not to walk, because we cannot fly? Are we to put a seal on our lips because we cannot always be as eloquent as Burke or Gladstone? This attitude reminds us of a king of Spain who preferred to die rather do things which ought to have been done by his servants. On this point we have a clear pronouncement in the *Bhagwad-Gita*. It is stated there that some approach God's spiritual Self (अव्यक्त); while others may worship the visible forms, who cannot follow the more arduous path. And also ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

But this is not all. There is a considerable value in image-worship for men at all stages of their lives. All those who believe in a personal god do well for the purposes of worship in symbolizing the Deity by means of convenient images. That would serve them in con-

centrating his mind. A religious atmosphere is easily created round one's household images and in temples, which all, who are followers of the same faith, can easily breathe. Children and untaught masses can easily catch the secret and read the language of the Infinite in such ways. For the time being, all feel that they are in a sanctified place, where there is not kingdom of man but kingdom of God. Thus idols and temples serve their devotées in conjuring up religious atmosphere, in uniting all the people in their religious ways of worship and in systematizing the exercises of faith. A faith in images does not take away one's faith in the omnipresence of God. The very fact that the images are legion shows clearly that God is not partial to one form to the exclusion of others, but that any person may choose that particular form which his education and inclination point out to him to be the most convenient.

Under these circumstances, it is in

the highest degree undesirable to give a rude shock to popular belief by proclaiming a crusade,—an indiscriminating crusade against idol-worship, in all its shapes and forms. To take away images, with which the normal religious life of a people is closely bound up is to destroy the very roots of faith among these people. When Luther had accomplished his mission against the Papal faith, his wife told him how it was that practically he had taken away all religion. And how many of us, who have lost our faith in images, keep up our religious fervour and submit to daily prayers and communions, which were a constant feature of the life of our fathers and forefathers? The crucial test is the test of faith, of religious emotion, and of religious habits. If the quality and quantity of these are insured to a certain degree among us, it is a matter of comparative indifference whether we are image-worshippers or not. But these are largely taken away from our life along with the images and

temples of our forefathers, and if their place is taken by a bundle of cold, intellectual beliefs, the loss in our spiritual life will be grave indeed.

From another point of view, it seems to me that not less of image-worship, but more of it is wanted in our lives. Spread of it both extensive and intensive in our daily lives will be a very great gain to us. Let me make my meaning clear. A firm belief in the immanence of God, a living faith that every thing in the world is a spirit, are bound to work wonders in our usual out-look on life and nature. If God is everywhere, if all things both small or great, material and immaterial, living or inanimate reveal the perpetual presence of the Almighty, does it not follow as a corollary that a right attitude towards the world would mean a universal extension of image-worship to all objects? As our feeling of the Reality of the unseen and His omnipresence, deepens and widens, more and more objects will be-

come the centres and sources of revelation to us of Godhead. A child in faith may be able to see God in a few images; an accomplished devotee would see Him everywhere. It is above all a question of the development of sympathy. Auguste Comte asked us to read God in Humanity; Gautam Buddha taught us to feel His presence in all animal creation; the great nature-priests like Wordsworth enable us to detect His Self in objects of nature; the seers of the Upanishads will have us see the One in the Many, the Absolute in all its manifestations. Thus a man whose capacity for finding out his own likeness, his own self in the outer world is very much developed will be able to see the presence of spirits, monads, individualities in various objects. His sociality will have a very wide range; he will fraternise with the whole creation. Intimacy, friendship, love will grow and strengthen between himself and the outer objects and thus all matter will be spiritualized, and will

be a society of kindred spirits of various grades of development.

It is not our intention here to idealize this institution ; we mean only to mark out what amount of value lies beneath this phenomenon. Being essentially a human institution, it does not always keep up its best and purest character. Not a few grovelling people take idols themselves as gods. This is the great danger of all institutions, of all symbols and particularly of image-worship. It is the danger of materialization. The pure spirit which was the underlying character of the institution is largely forgotten ; and the institution becomes fossilized. Unable to maintain the original position, incapable of keeping alive the pure idea and of sustaining themselves at the spiritual height which was once kept up, subsequent people, the common masses fall into really idolatrous ways and begin to worship the images themselves and not God or Gods they stand for. This fall-

ing off is due to the low level of the average mind and also to the inherent nature of all human institutions. It is against such excesses of idolatry, against the worship of mere forms which do not stand for any spirit and which have no spiritual message to deliver, that the great reactions of an iconoclastic type are directed.

A more philosophic attack against the institution is made by pointing out the underlying anthropomorphism. Are we justified in making God a man, in conceiving Him in our own terms? It may be said in reply that anthropomorphism is unavoidable, because man is our point of departure in whatever way we may look at the Deity. We should, however, avoid the dangers incidental to anthropomorphism, by attributing only the highest attributes to Him and by keeping in mind the limitations of our own nature.

What, then, is the future of image-worship? The world is at present divi-

ded between those who are professedly idol-worshippers and those who are not. At present there is going on a sharp conflict of beliefs. The tendency is clearly in the direction of avoiding idol-worship. In India, the majority of the revivalist movements, especially of the last fifty years, are decidedly opposed to image-worship. A considerable section of the people is neutral; but its belief in the institution has clearly waned. The younger generation does not take to the worship of the traditional images of the house very easily. If this tendency is evidently visible in the ranks of the educated classes, it will surely in course of time, with the progress of education leaven the whole lump. Thus the forces already at work tend to the eventual disappearance possibly of the custom altogether. Hence there is no necessity of undertaking active propaganda against it. But though too much of deliberate image-worship may pass away, some of it will always survive in various forms, among

the lower strata of people. Alfred Lyall says:- "Idolatry is only the hieroglyphic writ large, in popular character; it came because unlettered man carves in sticks and stones his rude and simple imagination of a god; and the manner of expressing the notion by handiwork continues among even highly intellectual societies, until at last the idea becomes too subtle and sublime to be rendered by any medium except the written or spoken word." (Asiatic Studies ii. 151)

V. Hindu Metaphysics.

The roots of Hindu philosophy are very deep. It was no mere intellectual restlessness, no passion for unity, no desire to secure consistency that drove the Hindu sages to philosophise. Nor was it an idle curiosity or the feeling of wonder which led these men to think out deeply their thoughts. It was discontent which was responsible for the great philosophic ventures of the Rishis; but discontent with what ?

Whoever finds satisfaction in the world as it is, in the existing institutions with their boundary walls, can never be a true metaphysician. The spirit of man, if it happens to be content with the world as it presents itself to us on its first appearance, is foredoomed to a life of placidity and repose. An easy-going optimism, a determination to see only the rosy side of things, and to

ignore all hitches, discordances and maladjustments, is the outcome of such a state of mind. Any system of philosophy built up by such a spirit is bound to be superficial. It may administer some comfort to a man here and there; it may serve to give satisfaction to his desire for temporary relief, for artificial happiness. A system of thought which owes its origin to the intellectual restlessness of some metaphysicians, or the poetic imagination of others, can be a very good luxury for the academic idlers or sensitive souls; but it cannot hold out very high hopes for humanity in general.

It is the very essence of a sound philosophy of life that it goes to the root of things. Sciences can afford to build up temporary halting-places for the spirit of man; poetry and painting, architecture and music can afford to be sources of relief now and then to the overlaid soul of man. But philosophy cannot afford to be light-hearted; it cannot

end in merely giving palliatives for the human ills. It must be radical and thorough-going in its inquiry. Its very mission is to examine the whole structure of existence, to trace the very roots of our experience, to investigate Reality as it is. It will be faithless to its best traditions if it fails to satisfy the most pressing requirements of thought and logic. It should survey the whole world of knowledge and reality, all the pre-suppositions of arts and sciences calmly, impartially, dispassionately. It must work in the 'dry light' of pure thought. It is not its business to respect the verdicts of religious consciousness of some peoples or the tender sensibilities of others. Whatever conclusions we are led to by hard, persistent thought on the fundamental problem of reality must be accepted by it, whether we like them or not. There cannot be one system of truth for the rich and another for the poor, one for the happy and another for the suffering classes, one for the

intellectuals and another for the masses, one for the Christians and another for the Hindus, but the same for all who are sharers of the same lot in this world, who participate in the same fact of existence.

The Hindu philosopher, therefore, attacks this fact of existence and finds in it the root cause of our sufferings. The sting of all phenomena here is their evanescence. The seer looked outward and found a multiplicity of fleeting forms; the seer looked inward and found a chaos of conflicting waves of thought and feeling. This dominance of the Law of Change, the fact of perpetual movement, this constant appearance and disappearance of all forms of being struck the ancient Rishis as the fact of facts and law of laws with regard to this universe. The story of Nachiketas brings out vividly the main-spring of philosophic thought in India. Nachiketas asks the third boon of Yama: "When man dies, there is this doubt. Some say 'he exists;' some again, 'he does not':

This I should like to know, being taught by thee." Yama replies : "Choose sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years, herds of cattle, elephants, horses and gold; choose a vast territory on earth, and live thyself as many years as thou desirest. Ask for some other boons that you think equal to this, (such as) wealth and long life. O Nachiketas, be (a king) of the wide earth. I will make thee the enjoyer of all desires. Whatever objects of desire that are difficult to get in the world of the mortal, let thee ask for them all according to thy choice;—these fair nymphs with their chariots and musical instruments—such are indeed not obtainable by man—let thee be attended on by them whom I give thee. But ask not anything about death." Nachiketas replies : "All these are most transient, O Death. They wear out all sense—vigour of the mortal. Moreover, all lives are short indeed. So keep thy horses, dance and song for thyself."

Man never gets satisfied with wealth !” The story of Buddha is equally significant: And the Exalted One, so the story runs, spoke to the five monks thus: “The material form, O monks, is not the Self. If material forms were the Self, O monks, this material form could not be subject to sickness, and a man should be able to say regarding his material form: my body shall be so and so.” In the same way he says the sensations, the perceptions, the consciousness are not the Self. Then he goes on: “How think ye then, O monks, is material form permanent or impermanent?” “Impermanent, sire.” “But is that which is impermanent, sorrow or joy?” “Sorrow, sire.” “But if a man duly considers that which is impermanent, full of sorrow, subject to change, can he say: that is mine, that is I, that is myself?” “Sire, he cannot.” “Therefore, O monks, whatever in the way of material form (sensations, perceptions etc. respectively) has ever

been, will be, or is, either in our cases, or in the outer world, it is not Self; this must he [in truth perceive, who possesses real knowledge. Whosoever regards things in this light, turns himself from material form, turns himself from sensation and perception, from conformation and consciousness. When he turns therefrom, he becomes free from desire; by the cessation of desire, he obtains deliverance; in the delivered there arises a consciousness of his deliverance; re-birth is extinct, holiness is completed, duty is accomplished; there is no more a return to this world, he knows." (Oldenberg).

The whole effort of the Hindu philosophic mind was directed to finding out the most stable of all stable things. Here begins the contrast between Buddhism and the Advaita philosophy. The world, indeed, is a fleeting show; human beings are mere abstractions; all facts outer and inner, belonging to matter or mind are in themselves meaningless. To turn

away from the empirical world is the beginning of wisdom ; but it is not its completion. We may well say that where Buddhism ends, Advaitism begins. The Hindu seer might begin with pessimism just like the Buddhist. The doctrine of *Mâyâ* is there making the whole *Samsâra* an illusion. But the doctrine of *Mâyâ* is the foundation of a truly spiritual view of life and reality. The empirical view gives way to a transcendental view. The world of facts gives way to the world of personality. Apart from the personality of man, his own world collapses like a house of cards. Apart from the personality of the Supreme Being, the whole world becomes an illusion, or *avidyâ*. It is *Atman* which puts all things in their proper setting and becomes the source of explanation to all things. It is the one light which illumines the dark world. It is *Brahman* which explains the whole cosmos ; it is the truth of the universe. The pessimism of the Buddhist is thus replaced by

the superb optimism of the Upanishads. The world characterised by the limitations of time, space and causality which choked and suffocated the infinite spirit of man gives way to a world in which time, space and causality become mere tricks of the understanding, in which all the worldly categories cease to obsess our vision.

It requires an extraordinary philosophic insight to find out that Atman is the truth of all things. The Greek philosophers also started out on the great philosophic venture of finding out the secret of the universe. Thales came out and said that water was the truth of the universe; another philosopher explained the whole world in terms of the air; a third traced the world to the Infinite; a fourth philosopher thought that the riddle of the universe could be solved by number. A step forward was taken when nous or intelligence was described to be the one explanation of the world by Anaxagoras, who thus

became the founder of idealism. In the same way, the Upnishadik sages hit upon different explanations, till ultimately they came across the right one. What is Brahman?—they asked. Brahman is that from whence things are born, in which they live, and into they are again remerged at the time of death. (Ta. Up.). Then a series of hypotheses were devised to meet this requirement. One Rishi said it was food (or matter) which was true Brahman. “ He perceived that *annam* is Brahman, for from *annam* these beings are produced; by *annam* when born they live; and into *annam* they enter at their death.” (Ta. Up.). Deeper reflexion convinced the Brahman sages that life is more important to the universe than matter. “ He perceived that Prâna is Brahman, for from Prâna these things are born; by Prâna when born they live; into Prâna they enter at their death. ” (Ta. Up.). But a higher stage of reality lies there before the inquirer. It is mind. Un-

conscious vitality is at a lower level of reality than conscious life. "He perceived that Manas is Brahman, for from Manas these beings are born; by Manas when born they live; into Manas they enter at their death." But higher than consciousness which merely perceives is consciousness which arranges and organizes. Vijnâna or intellect is described as the truth of things. Then Ânanda is considered to be Brahman, the factor governing the whole universe. It is sympathetic joy which unites; it is analytic reason which dissects things. The heart understands intuitively its own business, where reason or discursive intellect merely knocks at the outermost fringes of thought.

The conflict between various elements goes on for supremacy in this universe. Now intellect is held forth as the Law of all things, now will is brought forward as the central reality. Now joy or ânanda, now *rasa* or flavour is said to be a sufficient explanation for reality.

But the greatness of the Upanishadik metaphysics lies in this that it did not interpret the Absolute either in terms of thought alone, or will alone or feeling by itself. The Absolute indeed is the central reality making a life of thinking, feeling, and willing possible. But to make its life purely intellectual, or purely volitional, or purely emotional is to mutilate it and thus to miss its whole meaning. The Greek idealism culminated in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, who idealized the intellectual element in man and universe and made it the central principle of all experience. Plato went so far as to dissolve the whole world into a series of types or ideals or pure concepts. But the contemplative life of a spectator of all time and existence growing rapturous over the sights of perfect Truth, and perfect Justice cannot lead us very far. The Hebrew genius then followed and laid emphasis on the volitional aspect of human nature and made

moral life of willing, striving and achieving a central one for attaining the goal of salvation. Among the modern idealists, Kant divided the world of experience into a world of pure reason and one of practical reason. Subsequent thinkers placed the essence of the universe in an Arch-Thinker or in a perfected Will. But it was the characteristic excellence of the ancient Hindu sages that they avoided all these abstractions and rose above them to find in Atman—the one source of knowing, feeling and willing, the spiritual basis of the lightless world of facts. “Know the Self to be sitting in the chariot, the body to be the chariot, the will charioteer, and the mind the reins. The senses they call the horses, the objects of the senses their roads. When he (the Highest Self) is in union with the body, the senses, and the mind, then wise people call him the Enjoyer. Beyond the senses there are the objects, beyond the objects, there is the mind,

beyond the mind there is the will, the Great Self is beyond the will." (Katha. Up.)

Far from underrating the importance of the ideal of personality, Hindu thought finds in it the one supreme ideal. What is meant by this is that while all things have their meaning in the light of the personality, it itself is unique and indescribable. Atman or the ultimate self-consciousness is the key to the structure of reality; it being known, all else becomes necessarily known. Atman is the one fact making all else possible; it is the source of all sensation, all thought, all knowledge. "Thou couldst not see the seer of sight, thou couldst not hear the hearer of hearing, thou couldst not think the thinker of thought; thou couldst not know the knower of knowing. This thy Atman is within every being, all else is full of sorrow." (Br. Up.). The inner Personality makes not only the orderly world of knowledge possible; it also renders possible the whole world

of feeling. Things become objects of some feeling only when they stand in some relation to our Self, when they fall into the universe of our Self. "Verily everything is not dear that you may love everything; but that you may love the Self, therefore everything is dear. Verily the Self is to be seen, to be heard, to be perceived, to be marked, O Maitreyi! When we see, hear, perceive and know the Self, then all this is known." (Br. Up.).

From Atman Hindu thought jumps to Brahman. The deepest part of ourselves is the same as the deepest part of the universe. Here is one great truth of philosophy: there is the unity of the Self and the Self is identical with Brahman. The whole world receives its meaning in the light our Self. But my world is not very unlike my neighbour's. Hence the need of an infinite Person—the Supreme Self. "He is the one God, hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the Self within all beings, watching

over all works, dwelling in all beings, the witness, the perceiver, the only One, free from all qualities. ”

Now this theory is a splendid type of spiritual monism, no doubt; but it has to overcome two obstacles; one from the side of personality of man; and another from the side of the independence of the outward world. It is said that this unity is reached at too great a cost, if it means the annihilation of our personalities, our independence as selves. Here the question is: What is the true view of personality? Personality is defined as the synthesis of the universal and individual. The Advaita view emphasises the former, the Western view emphasises the latter aspect. The Western view is thus expressed by Professor Seth: “Each self is a unique existence, which is perfectly impervious to other selves—impervious in a fashion of which the impenetrability of matter is a faint analogue.” Kant perhaps first emphasised this idea of

every human being, being a person, a self-conscious and a self-determining being, and an end in himself. Now what is the precise value of this uniqueness about us? To a certain extent this intensification of the feeling of self in us is of immense value. It enables us to devote ourselves to self-perfection. But the value of this intensification is in proportion to the expansion of self. If there is growth of intensification of self-consciousness, without corresponding growth of its expansion, we get a bloated, over-vain, very selfish being. In the intellectual world, an individual apart from universal is an abstraction. Such an individual has no real existence. If Self merely means something which one-self is and which nobody else is, it means a veritable nothing. An absolutely independent individual is a fiction. In the moral world, an individual apart from the universal is a monstrosity. A perfect egoist who believes that all things exist for him, that all human beings

must serve him and that he in turn must not serve a single person other than himself is almost inconceivable. Hence intensification of personality is welcome only when there is a corresponding expansion of it. It may gain in depth as well as in breadth. If it connects itself with other persons' interests and thus widens its circumference, its intensification would mean its greater usefulness for society. Now if a personality gradually identifies itself with broader and broader circles till it embraces all humanity and all existence, its intensification would not mean an egoism but an altruism of the highest type. Yet it would remain as a separate soul-centre. But in feelings, in interests, in opinions, it has ceased to stand for any abstraction but for a reality. In this way the egocentric view gives way to cosmocentric view. Man attains the fullest stature of personality, when he is really universal in his loves and opinions and nominally an individual, when he

becomes fully the organ for the divine life, the messenger of God, the creature of His Will.

This is the truth expressed by such sayings as 'we should die to live.' There is nothing more fatal to a man's life than egoism or will-worship. The whole teaching of Gita is directed to show that the head and front of a man's offending is his belief in his self as the author of actions, in his ahankâra. The same is the testimony of the *Theologia Germanica*. "In true light and true love there neither is nor can remain any I, Me, Mine, Thou, Thine and the like, but that light perceiveth and knoweth that there is a good which is above all good, and that all good things are of one substance in the one good, and that without that one there is no good thing." "Be assured, he that helpeth a man to his own will helpeth him to the worst that he can. Nothing burneth in hell but self-will. Therefore it hath been said, Put off thine own will, and there

will be no more hell. As long as a man is seeking his own good, he doth not yet seek what is best for him, and he will never find it. For a man's highest good would be and is truly this, that he should not seek himself and his own things, nor be his own end in any respect, either in things spiritual or in things natural, but should seek only the praise and glory of God, and His holy will."

The theory that men are impervious spiritual atoms introduces all the vagaries of pluralism in our philosophy. There are certain distinctions which appear hard and rigid in the world of thought, but these often melt away in the world of emotion. The distinction between man and man, and man and God may appear at times to be absolute. But the fact that we have got unlimited capacity of love refutes the doctrine which raises an impossible barrier between these entities. "Our highest joy is in love. For there we realize the freedom of will in others. In friends, the will meets

our will in fulness of freedom, not in coercion of want or fear ; therefore, in this our love, our personality finds its highest realization." (Tagore). The whole point is, which is more fundamental in our conception of personality—the element which separates us or the element which unites us ? Rabindranath Tagore puts it finely :— “ But the life in which the consciousness of separation takes the first place and of unity the second place, and therefore where the personality is narrow and dim in the light of truth this is the life of self. But the life in which the consciousness of unity is the primary and separateness the secondary factor, and therefore the personality is large and bright in truth—this is the life of soul. The whole object of man is to free his personality of self into the personality of soul, to turn his inward forces into the forward movement towards the Infinite, from the contraction of self in desire into the expansion of soul in love.”

It is thus that we see truth in the saying of Coleridge about Milton that his egotism was the revelation of a spirit. All great men are egotists in one sense or other; but their egotism is not an ugly exhibition of their private self, but the flash and outbreak of fiery and divine spirit. The greatest personalities of the world like Buddha and Shri Krishna had no private property in self; they lived solely for humanity. Naturally, their egotism only meant their deepening and widening consciousness of the interests of humanity. The only way to develop one's personality is, therefore, to shift one's centre of gravity from one's individual affairs to the affairs of the world.

In other words, the true personality is with the Infinite. It is only in the case of the Infinite being that there is no mine and thine, no inside and outside. All the universe is driven into its mighty fold. Its centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere. All

individuality must disappear; because it is nothing but selfishness and self-consciousness. "Suppose that all human beings felt habitually to each other as they now do occasionally to those they love best. All the pain of the world would be swallowed up in doing good. So far as we can conceive of such a state, it would be one in which there would be no 'individuals' at all, but an universal being in and for another; where being took the form of consciousness, it would be the consciousness of another which was also one self—a *common* consciousness. Such would be the *atonement* of the world." (R. L. Neetleship).

We may, therefore, say that personality is the highest concept with the East. The East refuses to believe that the metaphysical difference between man and man is ultimate. It loudly proclaims that Atman is one, that Atman is the truth of all beings and all things, that Atman is the innermost self of each of

us whether our lot is cast in the East or the West. Atman, however, is not a fact, but a problem (with most of us); it has to be acquired, realized with infinite patience. Here we shall cite the evidence of two of the greatest modern Rishis in support of this view, one Western and the other Eastern. Emerson calls this fact of personality the Over-soul, which stands for the unity, connecting us with all others. It is "the common heart of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission. All goes to show that the soul in man is not the intellect, nor the will, but the master of the intellect and the will, in the background of our being in which they lie. When the soul, whose organ he is, breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love. The blindness of the intellect begins, when it would be something of itself. The weakness

of the will begins when the individual would be something of himself. ' Rabin-dranath Tagore expresses the same fact: " What is it in man that asserts its immortality inspite of the obvious fact of death? It is not his physical body or his mental organization. It is that deeper unity, that ultimate mystery in him, which, from the centre of his world, radiates towards its circumference; which is in his body, yet transcends his body; which is in his mind yet grows beyond his mind; which, through the things belonging to him, expresses something that is not in them; which, while occupying his present, overflows its banks of the past and the future. It is the personality of man, conscious of its inexhaustible abundance; it has the paradise in it that it is more than itself; it is more than as it is seen, as it is known, as it is used. "

Another objection to the theory of the Vedânta is that it swallows up the whole world of matter. Here it cannot

be too often repeated that the Vedānta believes in the empirical reality of the world, as much as in the transcendental ideality of the spirit. The spirit has no objection to the existence of matter, if it acknowledges its own ultimate supremacy. Pure Atman out of all relation to Anatman is as much of an illusion as a pure Anatman (not-Self) out of all relation to Atman (Self)- "They enter the region of darkness who pursue the transitory. But they enter the region of still greater darkness who pursue the eternal. He, who knows the transitory and the eternal combined together, crosses the steps of death by the help of the transitory and reaches immortality by the help of the eternal." (Ishopnishad). The Vedānta is concerned to deny the ultimate validity of the pluralistic standpoint. It is the vulgar view of the commonsense of humanity, and philosophy begins by transcending it. The absolute reality of the One *ipso facto* establishes the comparative unrea-

lity of the many. The many *as many* are unreal; as having their source of existence and intelligibility in the One, are real. This point is of capital importance in the philosophy of Adwaita. Variety begins to have meaning, interest, and value for us when it ceases to be a mere maniness; when we begin to establish laws, relations, uniformities in it. It is, in other words, the unity which lends significance and charm to diversity. Diversity as diversity is another name for chaos; it merely indicates the break-down first of intelligence, and hence of all sympathetic intercourse. This is the significance of the doctrine of Mâyâ, and this doctrine, such a vital part of all true Adwaita, is as old as the oldest Upanishads. "The ultimate goal of the finite ego, and not only of it but of the non-ego—the final goal, therefore, of the world—is its annihilation as a world." (Schiller). "Fully to realise the existence of the Absolute is for finite things impossible. In order thus to

know we should have to be and then we should not exist" (Bradley quoted by Prof. Radhakrishnan.)

How to reach the Absolute? It is not intellectual apprehension of Brahman that is required here. ज्ञान is the effort not of intellect merely, but the whole consciousness of man to know the Infinite. Plato's guardians were required to study mathematics first in order to understand dialectic afterwards. But the Vedânta requires the aspirants for *moksha* to be trained and purified by practice of the highest morality and the highest self-renunciation. There are four pathways to Reality: Karma, Bhakti, Jnâna, and Yoga. But the beatific vision takes place through neither of these alone but Anubhava or direct intuition. Kant pointed out that the transcendental unity of apperception could not be itself an object of consciousness; it was unknown and unknowable. He thus became the father of agnosticism, though quite unconsciously. The meta-

physical doctrine of Self as the ultimate Reality requires to be completed by the psychological doctrine of Anubhava or intuition as the one way to realise the Absolute. Even the best attempts of the Western philosophers are vague and tentative; they are still groping dimly towards the truth. But in India this fact over-shadowed all others and philosophy was emphatically called Darshana.

The doctrine of Adwaita is often translated into its Western equivalents. Some characterise it as pantheism, forgetting that the Absolute of the Vedânta is both transcendent and immanent, and that ample scope is reserved in the Vedânta for the doctrine of a personal God for the purposes of worship. The Vedânta must also be carefully distinguished from the subjective idealism of Berkeley. Both mind and matter, the subject and object are mere abstractions according to the Vedânta. The true in both is the innermost spirit—it is not an idea, but a soul, a personality, a centre

of existence, consciousness and joy. It differs from the Critical Philosophy, as the Thing in itself of the latter is, after all, a pure abstraction. But the Adwaita agrees with the Critical Philosophy in one point: both consider it impossible to know the Absolute by means of the intellect. Here the Adwaita theory parts company with the Kantian theory and becomes mysticism. A mystic element enters into most of the greatest systems of philosophy. Philosophy when it comes to the Absolute has to confess its own inability to give an adequate account of it. The very limitations of the conceptual view of things make it almost impossible for philosophy (which is, after all, an appeal to reason) to take us into the secret of the ultimate Reality. Hence it appears that philosophy, if it goes to the root of things, must either be agnostic or mystical. Schopenhauer and Bergson believed in the capacity of the human souls to intuit the Highest Reality. In the emphasis which they

placed upon this fact, they were mystics. Schopenhauer says that all higher knowledge is due to "an immediate intuition, and as such is the work of an instinct, an *aperçu*, a flash of insight. It is not the result of a process of abstract reasoning." Bergson "holds that if by mysticism one understands 'a certain appeal to the inner and profound life' his philosophy is mystic as all philosophy must needs be." The Vedânta also carries philosophy from the abstract world of speculation to the lively, concrete world of life and experience.

भियते हृदयग्रंथिः छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥

VII. The Doctrine of Adwaita.

Adwaita is the last word of Eastern metaphysics. It stands or falls by the ultimate truth or falsity of this view. Its highest teaching, its noblest practice, its supreme triumph, its crown and its glory, lies in this one word. It sums up all civilization in the one word: Om. Its highest eloquence becomes its most perfect silence. Dumbness, and not logical articulateness, feeling and not thought, intuition and not intellection is the only way in which we can express ourselves. Any attempt to adumbrate it in the feeble tongue of man merely exposes the completeness of our bankruptcy, the impotence of our conceptual and logical self, the break-down of our intellectual resources. It is above all categories of a metaphysician,—it is *sui generis*; the absolutely unique thing; it is itself.

Yet there can be no greater illusion than to believe that the logic of the Absolute leads us to a mere negation, to a mere abstraction, to a dead, featureless, bloodless, fleshless, colourless unity. The Absolute is not the negation of life; it is not the negation of experience; it is not the extinction of consciousness. It is the blossoming of all life; it is the perfection of all experience; it is the veritable enriching of our consciousness. Take any book of the Vedânta and you will be convinced that nothing is farther from the thought of an Advaitist philosopher than the contemplation of zero or a mere X, or a perfect neutrum as the very goal of all human endeavours, as the very terminus of all our peregrinations. A Vedântist is driven on and on by his innermost demand for a more perfect life, a more perfect experience, a more perfect existence than any we can dream of here and now. He is more affirmative than the most affirmative of the Wes-

tern pluralists and pragmatists; he is more positivistic than the most matter-of-fact systems of the West; he is more in touch with life, more at home in reality, more akin to the centre and core of things, more rooted in life, experience, existence, consciousness than the most activistic, most humanistic, even the most hard-hearted realistic of thinkers. A Vedantist, in fact, is the arch-hedonist, arch-utilitarian, arch-empiricist, arch-realist. Royce has clearly pointed out that the mystics are the truest empiricists; and this is so true of our absolutist philosopher. No theorist is he; no abstractionist, but the very lover of the heart and soul of life and the world. Here is a paradox. The Vedântist flings away time, because he cares more for time than any pragmatist; he flings away space, because he cares more for space than the greatest land-grabbers of the twentieth century; the Vedântist flings away the whole universe, because he cares more the good things

of life than any millionaire or multi-millionaire. It is the profoundest instinct for life within it that drives the soul to the system of the Adwaita; here it hopes to find "more life and fuller" than any it finds elsewhere. 'पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते.' What remains after all negations of the lower planes of reality, after all annihilations of empirical *Upadhis* is not emptiness, not nothingness but the very fulness of joy, fulness of consciousness. The Adwaitist frequently asserts that he demands more of happiness than the most perfect Epicurean; 'यो वै भूमा तत्सुखं । नात्म्ये सुखमस्ति ।'

The Adwaita is much misunderstood because of the limitations of our language and thought. Some persons who are so much in love with these wrappings, these 'clothes,' these outward husks of our spirit that they cannot think of any life, any reality except in the terms of these. It is ultimately all a question of experience. An untutored man in the street finds it very difficult to see a soul

apart from the body, a vulgar scientist finds it very difficult to distinguish the mind from the brain, the soul from the organism. His philosophy primarily demands the absolute reality of his matter-of-fact assumptions. But the deeper a man goes, the more intimate, the more central aspects of reality become revealed to him. In proportion, therefore, as his emphasis on these fundamental experiences grows firmer, his grip of superficial aspects of our nature becomes less and less decisive. The more a man lives in the deeper life of the spirit, the less attentive he naturally becomes to the trifles of this life of body. A man who establishes his centre in the heart of the cosmos, in the Soul of the Universe becomes fundamentally a different man from one who finds his centre in the private ego, or the national ego and so on. Of course, there is no question of negation. The circumference of such a personality takes in all experience, all existence, as the circumference

of the personality of a man of a narrower vision takes in possibly the experience even of a mystic and absolutist. But what is central to one is peripheral to another. What is innermost to an Absolutist may be outermost to a pragmatist, and *vice versa*.

The question is : which is the more comprehensive attitude of these two? The Adwaita system is more all-embracing, more comprehensive, more synthetic than most of the rival speculative systems. It does justice to all facts from the great soul to a blade of grass. It assigns to each level of reality its appointed place in the Whole. The perceptual reality, the conceptual reality, the spiritual reality are all duly recognised. Its cardinal distinction, however, lies in the fact that it is almost the only structure of thought which does not merely make a lip-homage to the soul of man, but makes it the one centre and source of reality. The loftiest idealisms of the West do not go far enough : most

of them are shipwrecked on the rock of Self. The Adwaita says: Beyond the senses, there is *manas* (mind), beyond the mind there is will. The Western thought in its highest flights goes so far; but when the East takes a further jump, beyond the Buddhi there is the great soul, the Western thought gets dizzy and parts company with it. The Western thought recognizes dimly what the Adwaita considers the very bedrock of all Reality. All the searchlights of modern science cannot procure for the Westerner any insight into the Life of the Universe. A scientist ransacked all the heavens with his telescope and came to the conclusion that he could not find out God. The Western scientist may employ all its finest apparatus but it will fail to discover this fact of facts. Hence we feel that no idealism is so comprehensive, so far-reaching, as the spiritual idealism of the East.

The greatness of Adwaitism lies precisely in its catholicity. It lies in

its powerful perception of the fact of soul as the basis of the Universe, and all other facts as veritable paraphernalia. It is not a naked monism we get here. Monistic this system is, as monistic as a system can be, which tries to do justice to all types of reality. Its achievement of Unity is indeed one of its greatest triumphs. Unity, it should never be forgotten, is the very goal of philosophy. No philosophy which fails to give us this Unity, which lands us in a mere maniness or togetherness, can satisfy the soul of man. In science, the highest triumph is the triumph of law and reason over details and particulars; in conduct, the highest conquest is the conquest of the self over its conflicting chaos of desires; in religion, the possession of all other realms by the God-idea is the most superb possession; in philosophy, the conquest by the Absolute of all other principles is the highest conquest. Thought wants unity, conduct wants unity, facts want unity.

The Adwaita gives that unity which can completely satisfy us. Ultimate unity is its one great word. In terms of time, we may say that it is both behind us as well as ahead of us, that we begin with it as well as end with it. But it is essentially timeless; time is in it; space is in it; causality is in it, but it is above time, space and causality.

The greatest demand of the religious-consciousness of man is this ultimate Unity. The hypothesis of God is invented to meet this demand; the hypothesis of the Absolute is invented to meet this demand. Or rather, we have got a progressive revelation of God in the evolution of this highest consciousness. The religious spirit of man cannot be satisfied with a finite God; it is a misinterpretation, a perverted reading of our innermost aspirations to think that man demands finite God. A finite God is a contradiction in terms; infinity is His essence. Even man is a finite-infinite being; how can God be

finite? It is gross idolatry, a pure anthropomorphism, a mere opportunism in philosophy to erect the wants of a plain man into the supreme criterion and absolute standard in metaphysics. An analysis of the religious consciousness of man clearly shows that an infinite, omnipotent, all-wise, all-good God is the most indispensable groundwork of all these great religions of the world. The unity and infinity of God are the most essential features of the God-consciousness in man. Anything short of that would fail to give consolation to our religious nature.

The infinity is defined in the Upanishads as "where one does not see another, does not hear another, does not know another.....there is infinite." Even in our present mood, our everyday life we may like difference, concreteness, picturesque, variety; do we like alienness? Variety is lovable because of the presence of Unity there; differences are lovable because of the underlying identity.

The limits of our understanding are the limits of our sympathy. The underlying fact is the same in both, the discovery of identities in differences. The Law of Identity must dominate, whether we like or not, all thought, all feeling, all life. Science and philosophy which are the most powerful elaborations of the human intellect stand or fall with the Logic of Identity; all love, all emotional relationships, all religious life also stand or fall with the fact of identity. All evolution is nothing but the progressive manifestation, the revelation of the self in the not-self. All alienness, all hostility, all discord is due to an imperfect understanding, a circumscribed vision. Let the insight of the soul be perfect, let there be all light; and we will be able to find connections, relationships, harmonies, perhaps never dreamt of before. A touch of light will make the whole world kin intellectually; a touch of love—the inevitable outcome of light—will make the

whole world kin emotionally. Are we not able to see that the one great effort of man in the building up of all relationships, in the pursuit of sciences, in the organization of all institutions, in the extension of areas of all political and economic spheres of influence, is the establishment of the relation of friendship, of fraternity with all things great and small? The Advaita carries this Logic of Identity which is latent in all events to its legitimate conclusion and establishes a state of perfect harmony, of complete identity, of order, law and uniformity as the very goal of the spirit of man. The perfect repose it promises is not the static motionlessness of an idler or a piece of stone; such a thing belongs to the *tamas*, the quality of darkness, of inertia in man and nature. The perfect repose means the death of all vulgar, aimless striving, of hurry, fever, restlessness of the soul of man; it is the awakening at the same time of higher thought and joy and life, of true

adwik existence. Can we believe in action for action's sake? Do we think that a mere procession from goal to goal will bring with it ineffable peace to the soul of man? What is the difference between such a progress, endless go and a mere whirl of atoms or shifting of dust? In fact, all human analogies fail us. We have only a hint of another order of existence; we can see it through a glass darkly. We feel sure that the realization of our goal must bring us to the end of our earthly journey; it must bring us peace, harmony, joy, higher spiritual life of our soul. It is the feeling of at-homeness, we crave for; and that we are promised by the Adwaita metaphysics. It marks some fundamental difference in our temperaments that while some love the energising itself, others like the goal of energising, while some love all the wild and picturesque diversity of man and nature, all its jars, shocks, conflicts, and discords for the mere passion for variety, others love

them merely as a means to the attainment of a higher, more synthetic, more comprehensive unity. The Adwaitists love quality more than quantity, depth more than breadth, intension more than extension. They, therefore, lay it down that the highest happiness of the highest soul is the greater goal for man than the greatest happiness of the greatest number. It scarcely needs to be remarked that the two coincide in the Adwaita view. The Adwaitist's goal promises greater emotional satisfaction to man than any other view. It takes the mystic experience to be the highest experience possible to us. Its secure foundation lies not in its intellectual feats, but in this fact of Anubhava, personal experience of the highest type. No philosophy can refute this. The same sense of oneness, at-home-ness, of rest and repose, of supreme satisfaction which a lover occasionally gets from his ecstatic contact with the soul of the beloved which the true Bhakta and Yogi (devotee) gets from

his beatific vision of God, the Vedântist hopes to get at the end of his journey, as the highest prize for all his efforts.

But the Adwaita theory, above all, lays claims to being the most logical of all systems. Shankara has built up a monism of a severely rigorous, logical type. If we abandon ourself to thought, we inevitably arrive at one of the two great alternatives either Humian scepticism or Shankar's Adwaita. There is no half-way house between these two. A dumb, speechless scepticism is an impossible attitude of mind. The only alternative is to believe in the Absolute of Shankara. Empiricism takes us to the scepticism of Hume; it finds in it its culmination and its death. But if we believe in transcendental reality, if we refuse to take the matter - of - fact point of view of the plain man and the scientist as final, we will be inevitably led to an idealism of the type of Shankara. All the other idealisms are more or less inconsistent; the ideal march of

pure thought would drive out all such factors as *saguna Ishwara* or personal God, separate individualities of souls and so on. The transcendental Reality is one not many; if once we posit it we are irresistibly driven to surrender all other distinctions.

A tree is judged by its fruits; and people will naturally urge the utilitarian stand-point here. What difference does it make to us whether we accept the Adwaita metaphysics or not? What are the practical effects of such a creed? It is said that Absolutism means the death of morality. Not a bit of it. Absolutism is rather the strongest defence and bulwark of morality. If we do not believe in transcendental realities, where shall we be? Empiricism will take us to pleasure and pain and such other tests; ethics will merge in biology; it will be profit-and-loss business; it will lose that objectivity, that sacrosanctity which belongs to it in a world where the highest interests of spiritual life are

conserved by the presence of transcendental realities. Morality divorced from the higher faith and inspiration, which true religion gives, becomes a negligible factor capable of all sorts of interpretations in the hands of empirical casuists. Morality requires to be securely founded on the belief in the soul of man and in God whose presence guarantees the eternal validity of the moral laws. The Absolutist philosophy is the spiritual philosophy *par-excellence*; under its inspiration all noble conduct, all sublime life may vigorously flourish. Take away the Absolute, take away the transcendental factor and the human society will be reduced to a menagerie of beasts or a conglomeration of atoms.

The possibility of a super-moral life does not weaken the ordinary springs of conduct. It only makes us firm in our ordinary moral attitude, because man does not jump from the unmoral to the super-moral, but has to go through a process of education in which the ethical catego-

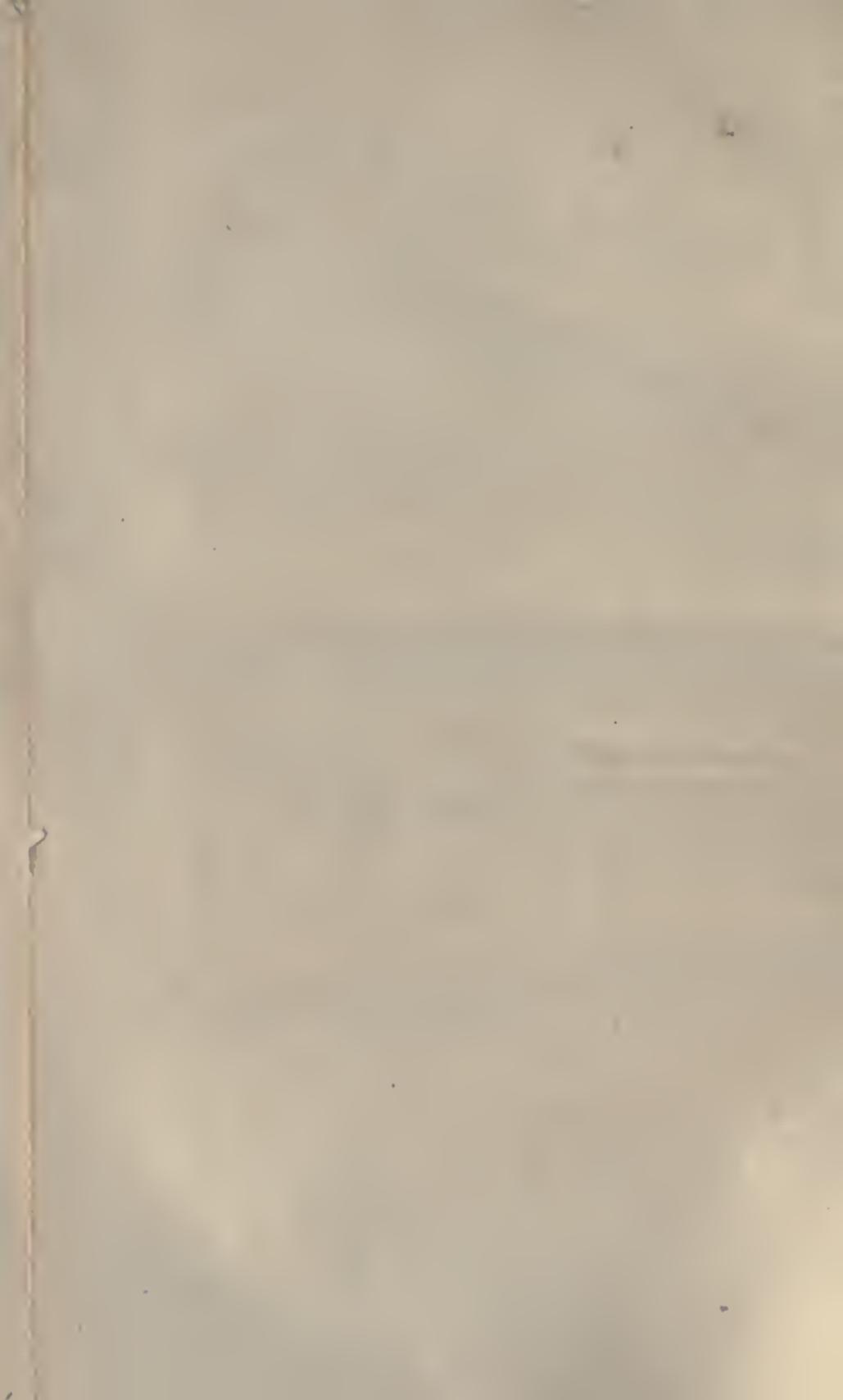
ries are ultimate. Laws both of nature and morality; both mechanical and teleological categories dominate the man who is still an object among other objects. But for a *tyāgi* or one who has transcended the ordinary human standpoint, no such restrictions exist. It is, however, not to be imagined that a *siddha* or an accomplished saint behaves in any way he likes. Morality and immorality, largely consist in certain stand-points; if these are transcended, no such things exist.

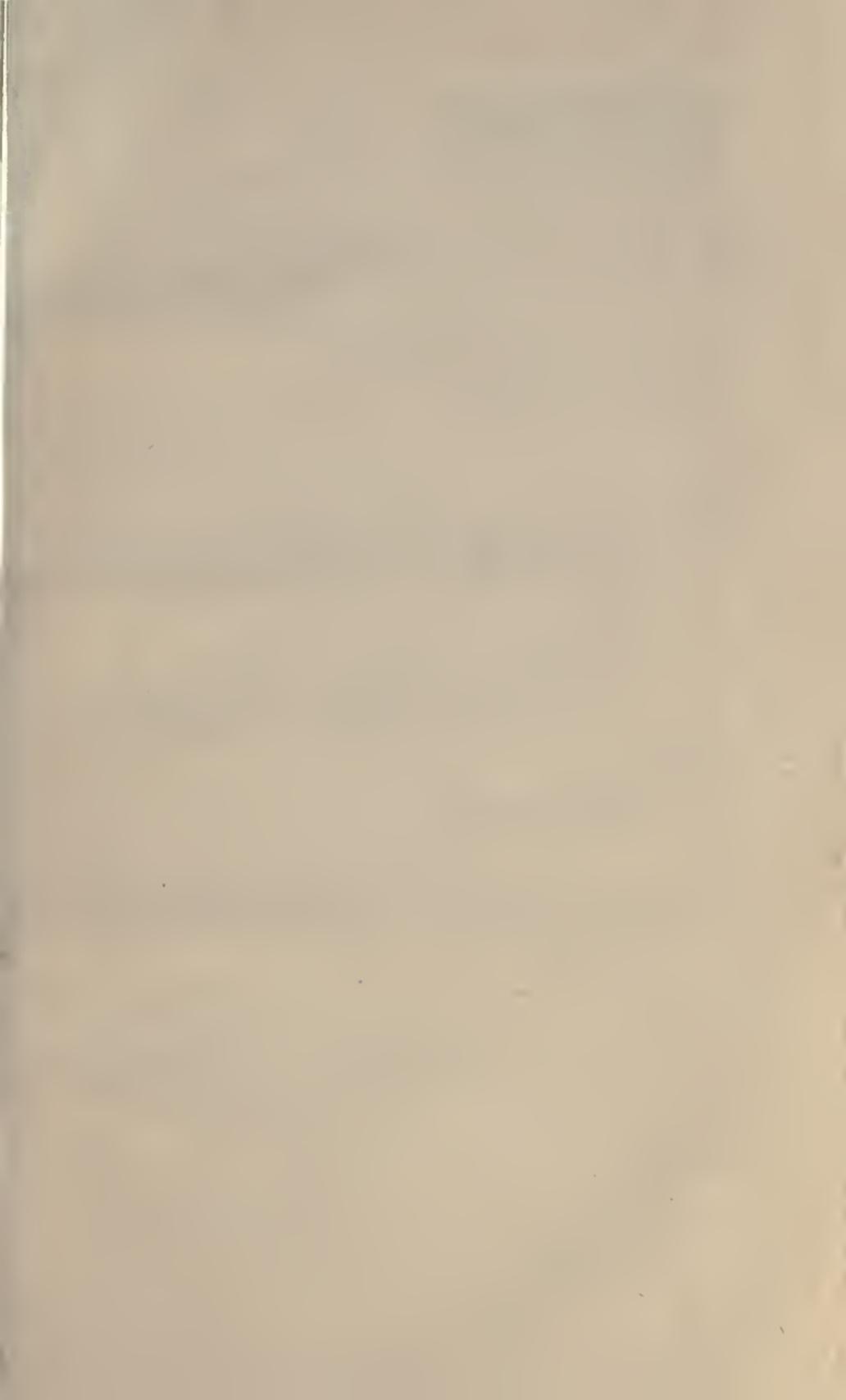
The Vedānta claims to supply the supreme basis to the very highest life man can lead. The greatest vice of the present age is individualism. In individuality, in narrow egoism lie the roots of all men's ordinary virtues and vices. Man looks at all things from his own private stand-point; his ego is the centre of all reality for him. Humanity cannot advance very far as long as this viewpoint is not transcended. All the diseases of the present age are due to the fact that people imagine that the meta-

physical distinctions of the most ultimate type divide man and man. The great gulf between egoism and altruism still remains to be bridged. The Vedânta supplies the true intellectual basis for the fundamental unity of man. Believe in the oneness of soul, identify the narrow ego with the Self of the cosmos, and all *meum* and *teum*, all local prejudices, all provincialisms, all sectarian, racial, national differences will be subordinated to a higher fact, a nobler law—the fact and law of the identity of the spirit of man and man, and of man and God.

A higher structure of world-civilization can be built only on altogether different foundations than those upon which the statesmen at present are rearing their fabric of States. A great change in the very psychosis of man, in the very angle of the vision of his soul must take place before man can be reconciled to a higher life implied by the idea of the millennium or

perpetual peace. Jesus Christ dreamt the dream of universal brotherhood and Gautama Buddha also found it possible to love all life human and infra-human; but a truer intellectual basis for this superb idea was laid down by the ancient seers when they proclaimed in unambiguous terms that spirit alone is real and that all spirits are ultimately one. It can be thus easily seen that the Vedânta is not only emotionally satisfying, nor logically consistent; it is the one supreme basis of all knowledge, all thought, all spiritual life.





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