THE HERITAGE OF OUR FATHERS

C. JINARAJADASA

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Theosophy and Modern Thought
How We Remember Our Past Lives
Practical Theosophy
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Flowers and Gardens
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The Message of the Future

THE HERITAGE OF OUR FATHERS

ESSAYS ON INDIAN IDEALS

BY

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NOTE

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C. J

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DEDICATION

WHAT is best in these essays I dedicate to her at whose request they were written,

ANNIE BESANT

the most Indian of the Patriots of our generation, who more than any other now living has made us love and long to preserve the Heritage of Our Fathers.

THE HERITAGE OF OUR FATHERS

LIKE as, at the coming of spring, the sap begins all unseen to flow in trees, and nature is awake to put on her new robe, so is it with every Nation to-day. Fierce currents of vitality are pouring into every Nation, bringing out of them the hidden seeds of good and evil. This vitality means a tragedy for Germany, as it means a splendid pageant of future years for many another Nation; all are affected by it, and each Nation is gathering up its forces to live anew, purified and strong. This spring-time of the world has given to India her present vitality, which makes "old men dream dreams and young men see visions". Each Nation is being forced by pressure of circumstance to weigh itself, to test itself, to know what is its own good, and what it is good for as a unit of the World State.

What is India's best, what is that best good for, as a help to the world? Our best is not in pride of dominion, nor in inventions and arts that make for a more prosperous material world. Our message has ever been to tell people what life is in its entirety and not in its fragments; we care more for the meaning

of the seed than the beauty of the flower. There never was a day when our message was so needed in the world as to-day.

The world is about to make a big experiment, and it is that of Democracy. Practically every Nation is agreed that the rule of autocracies and oligarchies and monarchies is over. No longer can citizens be thought of as living merely for the State's larger purposes, so that legislation is "for the good of the State"; we desire now that the "State" shall fulfil the good of the individual. Man, as the individual, has a new value in the State; to men's needs our eyes are being opened rather than to visions of heaven; the gospel of service to our neighbour quickens our hearts more than that of service to God. It is the Day of Democracy, the rule by Demos. But what is this new God who is to sway our destinies?

It is the Heritage of our Fathers which will teach us who is this new Ruler, so that we may in our turn teach the whole world. What do our Fathers tell us of the world and of the World-Maker?

They teach that this world-process, with its Nations that come and go, its wars and tragedies, is the life of a Mighty Man, a Great Purusha; that He lives as the life of the world, being both that world and yet not that world; that He is ourselves, as He is too the stone, the animal, the plant; that His world-work is ever a Tapas, a Sacrifice; and that He calls on us all to sacrifice with Him.

This mystery, that individual man can unite in one common act of sacrifice with the Great Man, was the Rahasya, the Mystery, of our Fathers, which they taught to a few "twice-born" men, who had renounced life and so were ready to be masters of life. To these, the few, the Highest Good was in all things and everywhere, and caste and sect, riches and poverty, high and low, had no meaning, for all enshrined a ray from the one great Light. Throughout the ages our Fathers have treasured for us this great, living Truth, and the time has come for us all now, once-born as twice-born men, Arya and Mlechchha,[1] to live it and grow by its strength. It is the living truth of a Divine Democracy.

"I am He" was the ringing chant of challenge of the seeker after the Reality; "That art thou" was his softly whispered secret, as he gazed on man and bird and beast and the cloud that bears the lightning in its womb. "That art thou" will be our message to the world, when India comes to her Self-realisation; "That art thou" is what the whole world awaits to be taught by us. For why is the world dreaming of Democracy, and of a World State which shall enshrine the spirit of Democracy? Because Demos is the Great Purusha, and he who knows this truth is the invincible leader in the world to-day.

In every Nation the Great Purusha is fashioning Himself anew; not by a miracle, not by the act of

[1] Non-Hindu.

one God-inspired mortal; but by the labours and toils, by the Tapas, of all men who reverence the Divinity in each, irrespective of caste and class, creed and sex and colour. It is because Purusha is being born anew, is unveiling new beauties in each man and woman and child, that man has a new individuality, a new right to sovereignty. Men's problems, political, educational, social, command our especial attention to-day. Why? Because the Great Purusha, "The Man" who is Eternal God, calls imperiously to be better educated, to be better housed and fed, and for greater freedom.

In every land they talk of Social Service, of Reconstruction. But in those lands of the West, the "*socius*," the neighbour, whom they try to serve, is merely man—the ignorant man, the poor man, the sick man; their eyes are blind as yet to the splendid reality. But the heritage of our Fathers teaches us that our neighbour is the God, even the One God, whom our hearts long for. In the poor man, could our eyes but see, are all the riches of the Godhead, in the sick man the virility of His omnipotent power, in the ignorant man the splendour of the Divine Wisdom. But each Divine attribute is buried deep as the gem is within the earth; and from its depth now calls upon us for release. The answering of that call is, for us who understand our heritage, Social Service. Could our Fathers have done for us a nobler deed than to teach us to find the Joy and

the Mystery of life not only in one God dimly seen in the temple, but in the myriads of Gods in the fields and the roads and in the market places? Truly India has a mighty heritage, not for her own exclusive possession, but for the whole world.

Let us teach the world this mystery of Demos who is Deus, Man who is God, the many who are One, and we shall build an Empire of the Spirit which will last to the end of time. It is for that building that the millions of India are awakening, that for them "Soul Force" is dearer than life itself. It is only because in spite of our ambitions and pleasures, in spite of Dharmas unperformed and evils permitted, we still respond to the promptings of the Spirit swifter than any other Nation, that we are becoming a people again to play our rôle in the World State. If only we remember the Heritage of our Fathers, and give it to *all* who demand it, our glories of the past shall be as the bud to the full-grown flower.

Out of every shrine, from the dust of the wayside, from the patient eyes of the toiling millions, there radiates in this land a soul force mightier than any power the world contains. It is that Force which makes us stop ourselves in the mad whirl of ambition and achievement, and ask, "Is this I?" It is that Force which makes in the eyes of the ignorant peasant the homeless wanderer, the Sannyasi, more mighty than ruler and king. It is that Force which ever whispers

in the heart of each true Indian man and woman that life is what renounces life, and that the world must be lost by bitter pain and humiliation in order that it may be found as it really is. It is that Force, when roused in a man, which makes him the reconstructor of his own world, beyond all castes and creeds, the worshipper of the Self which is himself.

For ages India has awaited this day. The Rahasya, the Secret, was preserved by sage after sage in long Guruparampara, only for this day when India shall teach it to the whole world. But teach it to others we *cannot*, unless we live it in India itself. The Democracy which has come to us from the West is here to help us to understand it; and if only we can transcend all the barriers that exist to-day between man and man, and greet the Great Purusha alike in the outcaste as in the incaste, alike in the "depressed" as in the depressing, with *equal* reverence, then the world's sceptre is in our hands. Are not all sacrifices of caste and class, of pride of family and position, worth this India's Day? The heritage of our Fathers! If only we understood it, what could we do but spring forward joyously to that Day?

So, for the sake of the patient, humble, soulful millions of this land, for the sake of its spiritual, self-sacrificing women, let us dream of India's Day, pledging ourselves to the heritage of our Fathers, knowing that, as we abide by our trust, They will abide by us till the coming of that Day.

CULTURE

"GOOD-BYE, Monsieur Gil Blas, I wish you all sorts of prosperity—with a little more taste!" Thus runs a very well known French saying which, in these days of material prosperity, it is often necessary to give to the well-to-do as an urgent warning. This is the advice the whole world is giving to Germany to-day, to have "a little more taste". No nation could have been more prosperous than Germany, before the war; and yet what a spurious culture was hers. What then is true culture, if all the technical knowledge and philosophical speculations of German professors evidently were not that?

The standard of culture was established of old in India in these magnificent words: "Arise, awake, seek out the Great Ones, and get understanding." Between knower and non-knower there are more than stellar spaces; one is, and the other is not, so far as living is concerned. But the knower—*ya evam veda*, "who knoweth thus"—is not necessarily he whose head is crammed full of information; he is the one who knows the meaning of knowledge.

Each civilisation has aimed at a perfection of thought and feeling which it considered as

characteristic of its great men ; this is the aim of true education, and modern education falls short of it because its discipline is at best for the mind, and little or no training at all is given to the feelings. When was any "B.A., B.L." ever taught in his University studies how to admire a sunset or what was bad taste in emotion ? Just as there are certain "things no fellow can do," so are there certain modes of thought and feeling which a man of culture cannot have.

Culture is best achieved by living with cultured people, and once more it is here that India of old had true wisdom, for then her sons went to the house of the Guru and lived with him and served him. Something of it is achieved in the residential system of Oxford and Cambridge through the social intercourse now and then between the "men" and some friendly and humanistic "don"; but mostly with dons, as we were told when "freshers," "manners makyth man —and the want of it the Fellow!" Still, without University life, a man may be cultured, and the possession of a degree is no hall-mark of culture. He indeed is cultured—even the Pariah at his level —who has "arisen" and is "awake," and is seeking to "get understanding".

To get understanding—this is indeed to live. For if the action be as a radiating light, wisdom is the oil which feeds it; and how shall any action be fed, except by understanding ? To understand is to dare

and to do; and that is why Socrates confessed he knew nothing, and yet was accounted the wisest man in all Greece by the God at Delphi. For, as Shri Krishna said, the most difficult of all paths is that of Action.

It is characteristic of the man of culture that he cultivates himself definitely. "The best man is he who tries to perfect himself, and the happiest man is he who most feels that he *is* perfecting himself," said Socrates; and Epictetus described the ideal man of culture in his question and answer: "What do I want? To acquaint myself with the true order of things, and comply therewith." Each age and race may be narrow in some one part of its outlook—religious, political or philanthropic—but the cultured in them have all tried to "get to the centre". We are all pantheists at bottom; however much we may refuse to acknowledge a common life with the brute and the tree and the unmoving rock, we are not happy—if to be happy is to be at home and intellectually awake—until we know about them, and *appreciate* them, and so, in a mystic fashion, make them part of ourselves. Life is monotony and tedium if we are perpetually surrounded by meaningless items in a nature's pageant which has no awakening message for us; it is only as we leave the circumference and move toward the centre that we begin truly to live. "I will be one, not many; a

whole, not a total," is the blind instinct in every soul; and all culture is the realisation of the one-ness and the whole-ness of man, or Nature, or God.

Probably among all nations, only two can be accounted as having been perfect in culture—the ancients of India and the Greeks. For both steadily kept in view a Whole as the goal; the one started with the Fact of a Whole and tried to realise its oneness in the many; and the other aimed at the Idea of a Whole, which revealed its presence as more and more a man knew of the many. So we have Schopenhauer saying of the Upanishads that they were his "comfort in life and solace in death," and Macaulay saying of the Greeks that, "wherever literature consoles sorrow or assuages pain —wherever it brings gladness to eyes which fail with wakefulness and tears, and ache for the dark house and the long sleep—there is exhibited, in its noblest form, the immortal influence of Athens".

It is characteristic of the modern age that there is very little constructive thought in all its many phases of activity; we are indeed busier than were our grandfathers, but we are far more busy-bodies in life than real busy men and women who have a clear aim and are going to it. Everything is in a state of transition, religion most of all; but not less so science, that seemed but a while ago a rock of ages, but with the dethroning of Darwinism appears now as a mere will-o'-the-wisp to lead us on to something more

vital than mere science. So too is it in art, in education, in politics. Everywhere it is the same; "the old order changeth, yielding place to new," and it seems like the onward and upward march of evolution. But to "evolve" is not necessarily to be cultured; to be the tools or victims of a Process is not to be as the Master-Maker of all things.

For the cultured man or nation has learned the lesson of evolution, and sees nature in its final results, not through her temporary achievements. The Rishis of the Upanishads state the mystic state of all souls, now and for ever, world without end; the poets and dramatists and sculptors of Greece bodied forth the artistic nature of all men, in time and out of time. "Infinity in a grain of sand, and eternity in an hour" —there is the message of India and of Greece; and it is the man or woman who realises the one or the other who has really cultivated himself to some purpose in life.

"Seek out the Great Ones and get understanding." And They, for us to-day, are not to be found in all this cinematograph of life that we are proud of as science and art and twentieth century civilisation. "Things of a day!" as Nachiketas called other but similar things, when Yama offered them to him instead of the wisdom he sought. The Great Ones can be found only in what is permanent in life. India showed the road, and Greece too, to "understanding," each with a Way.

We shall some day find our new way to understanding, we in the twentieth century, but the day is not yet. It will be through *Action for the Whole* that the new way will be discovered by the world; but as was the case with the discovery of the way through Mysticism in India, and through Art in Greece, there must first come the great men. But till they come to teach us to be One and not many, a Whole and not a sum, he who is wise will turn his glance back to ancient India or to ancient Greece. For without either India or Greece, the prosperity of the modern world is as the prosperity of Gil Blas, and there is leanness in its soul. Back to India, back to Greece—this is the message of those who have sought culture, and feel they have found.

INDIAN CULTURE IN THE WEST

In 1851 a great Western philosopher, Schopenhauer, had a prophetic vision of the effect of the Indian philosophies on Western thought. He was profoundly impressed by the teachings of the Upanishads, and declared that they would be his solace in death; with his insight into the problem of life, he saw that the Western World would undergo a great change in its mentality as the result of an influx of Indian ideas. These were the words he then used.

> In most of the pagan philosophical writers of the first century we see the Jewish theism, which, as Christianity, was soon to become the faith of the people, shining through, much as at present we may perceive shining through in the writing of the learned the native pantheism of India, which is destined sooner or later to become the faith of the people. *Ex oriente lux.*

For several decades during last century, a translation here and there from Sanskrit or from Pali had revealed to Western culture something of the philosophies of India; but that knowledge was restricted to a few who belonged to various learned Oriental Societies of Paris, London and Berlin. It was from

1875 onwards, when the Theosophical Society began its work, that cultured people in Europe and America began definitely to be interested in the philosophies of the East. The words Karma, Reincarnation, Mahatma, Nirvana and others, now requiring no explanation in the West, were made familiar by Theosophical lectures and books; and this eastward drift of Western thought has steadily grown from day to day.

Apart from Madame Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott who, as Westerns, proclaimed their adherence to Eastern ideas, there were several from India herself who stood forth as the apostles of the East to the West. There was, of course, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, but his influence was not very lasting in England, nor did it affect the thought of the time. But the definite moulding of Western thought by cultured Hindus began with a pupil of Madame Blavatsky, Mohini M. Chatterji. Mr. Chatterji held his own among the cultured men and women of London society, and made English people realise that the dark-skinned Hindu had a profoundly keen mind as well as solutions for many problems puzzling the Western thinker. Mr. Chatterji was also probably the first Hindu to lecture in America. This was in 1886.

The next striking Hindu personality was that of Swami Vivekananda, whose first work in America was made possible by the existence there of the Theosophical movement. At this same time another pupil

of Madame Blavatsky, Anagarika H. Dhammapala, began work in America for Buddhism. The personality of Swami Vivekananda, with his commanding figure and eloquence, made a profound impression, especially in America; the work of Mr. Dhammapala, though more evanescent, had its part also in rousing the attention of the West. One other Theosophist too did a great deal in France, England and America, especially in expounding the Vedanta, and this is Mr. J. C. Chatterji, now Director of Oriental Research in Kashmir.

Then next comes the powerful influence of Mrs. Besant who, in the dozens of books she has written and published, and in the lectures delivered in Europe and America, expounded the oriental wisdom to Western audiences. No one probably can equal her in the amount of work that has been done in the West to interest Western peoples not only in Indian culture, but also in the Indian people. Her passionate attachment to India, voiced wherever she has been, has made a profound impression on all who have come into touch with her wherever she has lectured.

The streams of thought flowing from the East to the West have had a dual effect; first, all who were in spiritual darkness in the West, and came across Eastern teaching, were at once inspired and have remained ever grateful to the Wisdom of the East; but the second effect has not been altogether as

spiritual. In the West, and in America especially, mere seekers after the occult perceived in the Eastern teaching much to gratify their ambition, and a definite cult arose of psychic practices to be used not for the liberation of the soul but distinctly for worldly advancement. It is unfortunate that certain oriental works dealing with Yoga were taken up and expounded in the West; even now there are a certain number of Indians who pose there as Gurus and are commercially exploiting the ancient Yoga of India.

Here in India we know what constitutes Indian culture and what does not; a fakir or a magic man is not recognised by us as necessarily a beacon light of spirituality and philosophy. Most of us at some time or other have seen various forms of magic, and know from first-hand observation that there is an invisible world and invisible beings; spirituality to us means, not the assurance that we survive after we die, but the certainty of a final realisation of Brahman or of Nirvana. But in the West the every-day facts of magic in India are very "big propositions" proving the existence of the unseen; and people there do definitely connect the problem of life after death with the problem of final salvation or liberation. Therefore there is a keen desire in Europe and America to get first-hand evidence, however small, of the existence of supermundane worlds; and anyone who can give any teaching towards this

proof is apt to be looked upon as highly spiritual, and, if he is an oriental, at least as a Paramahamsa !

This ignorance of the West as to what constitutes real Eastern spirituality has most unfortunately been taken advantage of by unscrupulous Indians as well as smart, business-like Westerners ; ideas have been developed out of the *Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali* in America and schools of magic established. Curiously too, here in India itself, imitators have sprung up of this Western phase of exploiting the invisible, and we have now in India schools to teach hypnotism, concentration, etc., at so many rupees per lesson.

The body of liberal thought, almost ridiculously surcharged with optimism, which is known as New Thought, has been very greatly influenced by the ideas of Hindu Yoga. This itself would be admirable, and nothing could help men so much as to have the ancient teaching of the Upanishads, that the power of the Godhead is within themselves and not without, brought down into the everyday experiences of life. But these modern Yoga teachings definitely make "a business proposition" of Yoga. If you want a situation, scan the newspaper with the determination to be drawn to the right advertisement; if you are hard up, strongly will that money shall come to you no matter from whom, and so on ; the powers of the will and imagination are prostituted. The pity of it all is that those attracted to psychic

things do not distinguish this spurious culture of the East from the real culture, and the high teaching of the Vedanta and the "rope trick" are mixed up together as both the expositions of India's greatest sages.[1]

Another regrettable phase is the interest evoked in the breath and other practices of Yoga. When the average American man or woman, living the ordinary worldly life in the nerve-racking atmosphere of America, attempts these practices under no supervision—practices which here in India are only taught by master to pupil, and under direct supervision, and only to a pupil who has renounced the world—it is obvious that they bring themselves towards the lunatic asylum. During my own six years' residence in America, I have again and again been appealed to by people who have nearly ruined their health and sanity by attempting Indian psychic practices without the Indian conditions. I have made it always a rule in the West, when asked whether Yoga should be begun or not, to reply with the one word "Don't!"

So India is profoundly influencing Europe and America, but one part of that influence is, as I have shown, not helpful to the West, as we in India have always known it was not necessary to the spirituality

[1] It is curious how the word *fakir* has undergone a transformation in America. It is there pronounced *fay-ker*, and a faker is a humbug, a fraud. Out of the noun *faker* a verb has arisen *to fake*, to make up so as to deceive, and *to fake* is quite common slang.

of the East. The West is blindly groping in the dark after another world, and so perhaps its blunders cannot be avoided. But our duty to the West does not lie merely in smiling at its psychic follies and patronisingly flattering ourselves on our superiority. The West keenly longs for what the East can give; but if the East is unaware of her own treasures, how shall she have anything at all to give? Therefore we must realise the splendid achievements of the past in Yoga and give encouragement to such as are qualified to go the ancient "razor-edged path". Learned societies should be formed to encourage Yoga and in all ways to revive spirituality.

To India is reserved an Empire of the Spirit, if only Indians will seize the opportunities before them. Swadeshi is becoming the order of the day in commerce; and Imperialism is also a dominant ideal of the Empire of which India is a part. Swadeshi in the domain of thought can build a mighty Empire of the Spirit with India as the centre, but only provided a man knows what underlies the word *Swadesha*, my Country.

AN INDIAN CONCERT

To one whose ear is trained to the polyphonic music of the West, Indian music is so weird that it is often extremely unmusical. Specially is this the case in voice music, where nearly always a nasal twang is considered proper. That it is unnatural is fairly evident when we note how strained is the expression of the singer. When therefore one comes across an Indian singer who does not all the time contort his face while he sings, nor go off into a falsetto when he attempts high notes, he is worth observation. Lately at Lucknow the writer was present at a concert, which he will try to describe, as during the concert there were manifested several characteristics of Indian music that repay study.

The musicians were four, two singers, a player on a guitar-like instrument of seven strings called a Sitar, and a drummer. The leader of the quartette was Pandit Ram Saranji of Ajodhya, who played the Sitar, and the two singers were his sons, the elder about seventeen and the younger between nine and ten. The drummer, though evidently an expert in his line, was not considered a notable person of the quartette.

The concert consisted mainly of songs sung by the singers, accompanied by the Sitar, and a harmonium played by the elder boy, with a supporting rhythm from the drum.

The first noteworthy fact was that, just as in the West there is a conductor for orchestral music, so here there was a conductor of singing. The Sitarist, Pandit Ram Saranji, all the time kept his eyes riveted on his sons, and though he uttered not a note, he sang each verse with them in his mind, and, by the expression on his face and by movements of the head, guided them in their singing. He conducted the singing, not with a baton, but with a mental voice with which he led the singing.

Now in Western music the singer sings, and the accompanist supports and accompanies; but the accompanist does not play the conductor's rôle. Here, on the other hand, the accompanist is an accomplished singer, and does not merely support but also leads. The singer in the West is supposed by the accompanist to know his business—what expression to give, and so on; in this Indian quartette, however, the leader who guided the expression was the accompanist.

Then there was clearly the conception that the voice cannot be separated from gesture. The stiff, wooden attitudes of concert-singers in the West would be incomprehensible to Indian singers, with whom gesture is inseparable from voice. Each time our two young musicians sang, the whole

body came into play, though the singers sat cross-legged on the ground. Just as in opera gesture is co-ordinated to melody, and just as a prima donna, singing her part at a concert (say the Jewel Song in Faust), cannot help swaying her body and resorting to gesture as on the stage, so was it with the two young musicians, the elder specially throwing himself vividly into his part. Hands, eyes, shoulders, head, all were made expressive of the music, for the thought in the words sung was an integral part of the melody. Nor were smiles excluded, nor clapping of hands, and clicks of fingers, in imitation of castanets. So expressive was the music that at times even the drummer came in with his contribution of movements of arms and body and limbs. Cross-legged though he was, his bent knees expressed his excitement with their movements.

Happily for one listener at least, the music was sung mostly without the usual nasal tone. It reminded one often of Gregorian music, especially in the modulations; at times one could easily imagine oneself in some Roman Catholic church where the *Passion* Music was being performed. As too in anthems, there were constant repetitions of fragments of melody, as if a sharp instrument were being repeatedly pressed in a groove to make the groove deeper.

Before beginning a song, the chief singer (baritone) tuned his voice by running over some minor modes, accompanied by the harmonium; invariably

what he sang was repeated by his brother (treble). Now both were "conducted" by the father (who also accompanied), and yet each singer gave his individual interpretation by voice and gesture. And while the harmonium accompanied the singer, and the drum backed up both, every now and then each instrument offered a little coda of its own, according to the mood of the instrumentalist. Specially was this noticeable with the drummer, who invented cadenzas of his own. Often he whipped up the rhythm, and thereby added an intensity to the melody, producing an effect not dissimilar to that produced by a military band suddenly quickening the rhythm of a march.

It was noticeable that the music was aimed at the audience, that is, from the beginning the singers sang, not into the air, as in the West at a concert, but first to the principal person of the audience, and then to others round about him. From the commencement a personal bond was thus established between the musician and his audience. The audience in return responded to the singer, nodding their heads and swaying with him, according to the sentiments expressed. Now and then there would be no singing, and the drum and the harmonium would join in a duet with such deep intensity of feeling that the audience was held tense and it was evidently a relief to them when the duet ended. Once or twice the singer himself half went into an ecstasy.

We were told that Pandit Ram Saranji learnt his music from his guru, the saintly Paramahamsa Sita Saranji, but now he himself no longer sang, but only accompanied. On his Sitar he played a piece of his own composition which showed real musical ability. He informed us that his quartette was principally a sacred quartette, that is, that they mostly sang "Passion" music, depicting some pathetic and inspiring incident out of the inexhaustible reservoir of Indian traditions. As an example, he made his sons sing some verses from the *Ramayana,* and then for five minutes discoursed on the significance of the verses. Those of the audience who knew Urdu assured the writer that the Pandit was both eloquent and suggestive as he commented on the verses. The Pandit regarded himself as a religious instructor bringing music to his aid.

During the hour the concert lasted, the writer could never forget the intensely close bond existing between the musicians and their audience; they were not singing to entertain, they were giving a message. The lack of that stiffness and conventional propriety expected of singers in the West was also most pleasing. Perhaps most of all, the message of Indian song music to the West is in the thought that song too should be conducted by an expert singer as the instrumentalists of an orchestra are by its chief.

We are told that in Greece when the girl flute-players played at banquets they not infrequently

made the guests the playthings of their moods, to laugh or to cry or to be frenzied at their will. The power of the reeds alone could not perhaps be illustrated better than by the shepherd's pipe in the beginning of the last act of *Tristan*. Why with a single instrument such a profound effect can be produced is clear to one who hears such singing as was heard at this concert at Lucknow. It is in the freedom given to the singer to express his moods, in the freedom given to each instrumentalist, within bounds, to bring in his variations, that the possibilities of Western music lie. Indian music will never, without harmony and polyphony, give that universal message that Western music gives; but Indian music, in its groove, goes into depths of feeling yet awaiting sounding by Western composers. If Indian music could gain the breadth and grandeur characteristic of Western music, or if Western music could attain to that profundity of feeling characteristic of Indian music, what music would there not be for the world! Perhaps the day will come when, in this matter of music too, the East and the West will join hands, and the whole world be brighter and happier thereby.

THE NEW SCHOOL OF INDIAN PAINTING

Out of a noisy narrow street in Calcutta we turn into a short lane, and at its end a courtyard opens, and suddenly we seem to be far away from Calcutta. Round the three sides of the court are three residences, pillared, double-storied. There is an atmosphere of peace in the courtyard. For here reside the members of a great family, whose name now is known all over the world.

In one of these residences lives Abanindranath Tagore, artist and dreamer, great in his department of Art as is his uncle, the poet, in another. A friend goes first to see if the artist is at home. He is, and he comes to welcome me.

He does not look a dreamer at all, though his work is so full of dreams, and he is the leader of the new school of Indian painting. Abanindranath Tagore is a tall, broad-shouldered man, just past forty perhaps, with a full, clean-shaven face, and there is no resemblance between him and his famous uncle. He looks a prosperous business man, but he is an artist through and through. You note that from his chhoga (dressing-gown) and the way he wears it.

The artist takes me upstairs to a large room that is his reception-room and study. They say that "the style's the man"; perhaps also the room's the man. Certainly from one glance at this room you may know Abanindranath Tagore.

How shall I describe this room? It is India, Japan, China, the East, the true East where the sun rises and the soul is at peace. I wonder whether there is another room like it in all Calcutta. Probably not, for that is India's tragedy to-day. Indians go after "other gods"—made in Germany, or in England—and know not that the fount of beauty and inspiration is at our very doors, and not in the machine-made products of foreign lands.

Imagine a large room, beautifully proportioned, and on the floor an enclosure some fifteen feet by ten. I call it an enclosure, because it is the study, the sanctuary, separated off from the rest of the room by a wooden division an inch or two high. Inside are soft mats, a low writing-table or two, and large roll-cushions to lean upon as you sit cross-legged. Outside the enclosure are low chairs of carved wood, if you should want to sit; and on the walls is—life. Life from Japan in kakemonas, and in panels by Indian artists; here too are portraits and scenes and incidents from old Mughal days, and elsewhere round the room are statuettes, paintings and carvings of all kinds. Yet they do not seem to take up the space of the room; they seem only as if peeping in upon the occupant.

There are very few of Mr. Tagore's pictures for me to see, for some two hundred of them have just been sent to Paris to be exhibited at the Luxembourg; yet there is a gem or two still left. First a miniature of his mother in such a wonderful setting as Da Vinci might have imagined; and then that picture so perfect in sentiment, the dying Shah Jehan, tended by his daughter Jahânarâ, looking out of a window at the Taj. It is the original he shows me, and it is too precious to be sent away. And just one or two more, and that is all. There are several drawings of his pupils, but I am alive just now to Mr. Tagore's work only.

The artist tells me he has never been taught Art, and has never been to an art school. That I can well understand, for I was told a similar thing by Paul Troubetzkoy, the foremost of Russian sculptors. It is better so, sometimes; we poor seekers of life through Art have it given to us sometimes from a fresher fount by those uninstructed and untrained in the art schools. I ask him if he has been to Italy, and he says no. When he goes to Florence and sees Cimabue, Giotto, Fra Angelico, Fra Lippo, Perugino, will he recognise that he is of the brotherhood of the "primitives"? I wonder! But one needs to have consorted with those "primitives" of Italian art, and then to have been thrown into the hurly-burly of modern art salons, to appreciate the work of Tagore. It is not a

thing you can explain, this charm of simplicity and innocence, and above all purity, through which divine intuitions play. I wonder to myself whether Tagore is not an Italian "primitive" reincarnated. But this much is certain, that India has a genius whom the world will honour the more it comes to know him.

His message has already been taken up by the other artists of his school, and the day is not far off when every Indian home will delight to possess pictures of the "Tagore school". Just also as the "primitives" of Italy led the way to the height of achievement in Italian art, so is it surely with this school; they are the forerunners of the great Indian school of painting that is bound to come, expressing in line and colour and shape something of that hidden message of art which is everywhere in India.

TAGORE'S NEW PLAYS

THE four plays in this book [1] have a message both for India and for the world. For the world, they tell of the life of this ancient land where God is nearer than man, and life is the great illusion and death the dawn of the Reality. For us in India, they give the message of change, how all things change, even scriptures and philosophies, in order that the One that never changes may retain Its eternal nature.

In the first play, we have an old ascetic, the Yogi of the ancient ideal. Life passes before his eyes in succession. Two women and a villager gossiping about their vanities, a furious villager planning to retaliate upon his enemy, two students wrangling on the philosophical merits of two professors, a flirtation between two flower girls and a man, a beggar crying for alms, these pass before the Sannyasi. And he glories in his detachment:

> What sights of man I have seen! Can I ever shrink back into the smallness of these creatures, and become one of them? No, I am free. I have not this obstacle, this world around me. I live in a pure desolation.

[1] *Sacrifice and Other Plays.*

Then comes "Raghu's daughter," who is shunned by all because her father had defied the people's laws and their Gods, and would not perform the old religious rites. She is helpless, alone, longing for protection. The Yogi will not give the help she needs, lest he be dragged once more into the illusion, and hardening his heart flees away. But time passes, and he seeks the maiden, the darling now of his old heart. But it is too late, and she has gone. "I am seeking," he says :

Woman : Seeking whom ?
Sannyasi : Seeking my lost world back.—Do you know Raghu's daughter ? Where is she ?
Woman : Raghu's daughter ? She is dead.
Sannyasi : No, she cannot be dead. No. No.
Woman : But what is her death to you, Sannyasi ?
Sannyasi : Not only to me ; it would be death to all.
Woman : I do not understand you.
Sannyasi : She can never be dead.

In the next play, "Malini," we have intense dramatic action. Malini is a King's daughter, and the people murmur against her because of strange ideas which she has, and demand her banishment. Voluntarily she goes out to the people. But then a miracle happens ; the people, led by the orthodox Brahmans, see in her their Goddess, and the old spirituality succumbs to the new. But not all ; two men there are, Supriya and Kemankar, friends from boyhood and supporters of the old order. Kemankar leaves to plot the King's overthrow, leaving behind Supriya as his agent. Supriya too succumbs to the

influence of Malini, and finally betrays to the King a plot of his friend and leader Kemankar. Kemankar is thus treacherously captured.

The King offers great rewards to Supriya :

King: Do you not know that a King's love is not unsubstantial? I give you leave to ask for any reward that comes to your mind. Tell me, what do you want?

Supriya: Nothing, Sire, nothing. I shall live begging from door to door.

For Supriya knows that to usher in the new he has betrayed the old represented by his friend. Yet, since he loves Malini, he cannot refuse the gift of her.

Then, at the request of Malini, the rebel Kemankar is to be pardoned, and the two friends meet. Now Supriya supremely loved his friend, but faith came to him only with the new God.

Kemankar: Tell me, why have you done this?

Supriya: Friend, you will not understand me. I had to keep my faith, even at the cost of my love.

Kemankar: I understand you, Supriya. I have seen that girl's face, glowing with an inner light, looking like a voice becoming visible. You offered, to the fire of those eyes, the faith in your father's creed, the faith in your country's good, and built up a new one on the foundation of a treason.

Supriya: Friend, you are right. My faith has come to me perfected in the form of that woman. Your sacred books were dumb to me. I have read, by the help of the light of those eyes, the ancient book of creation, and I have known that true faith is there, where there is man, where there is love. It comes from the mother in her devotion, and it goes back to her from her child. It descends in the gift of a giver and it appears in the heart of him who takes it. I accept the bond of this faith

which reveals the infinite in man, when I set my eyes upon that face full of light and love and peace of hidden wisdom.

Now swiftly follows the climax. By the ancient bond of friendship, Kemankar demands that both put to test their faith *before death :*

Kemankar: Dear friend, bring before death that which you deem your best and immortal.

Supriya: Friend, let it be as you wish.

Kemankar: Then come to my heart. You had wandered far from your comrade, in the infinite distance —now, dear friend, come eternally close to me, and accept from one, who loves you, the gift of death. (*Strikes Supriya with his chains, and Supriya falls.*)

Kemankar (*Embracing the dead body of Supriya*): Now call your executioner.

King (*Rising up*): Where is my sword ?

But the new spirituality stands the final test, for Malini cries out, " Father, forgive Kemankar ! " for the new spirituality understands the old, and so proves its greatness.

In the third play, " Sacrifice," dedicated to " those heroes, who bravely stood for peace when human sacrifice was claimed for the Goddess of War," once again we have the struggle between the old and the new. Kali, the mother, demands blood sacrifices; but the King's servants have slain in sacrifice a beggar girl's goat. The goat was her darling, the joy of her life. Before the idol, she cries out :

Mother, art thou there to rob a poor girl of her love ? Then where is the throne, before which to condemn thee ? Tell me, King.

In Aparna's cry of grief, the King hears the REAL voice of Kali, the Mother, and thenceforth forbids animal sacrifices. The Brahman priests rebel, his queen turns against him, his brother plots his death; yet the King stands firm to serve the real Mother. How the drama works itself out I will not here describe.

In the last play, "The King and the Queen," Tagore takes up a theme that has fascinated many Western dramatists. It is the theme of the "Life-force," a something that works its will in a way that is un-moral to our morality. The King passionately loves his queen, but it is a surging, torrential love, and he cares for nothing but her. The kingdom's miseries have no message while he listens to the message of his love for the queen. But she hears, and tries to shape his love of her for public welfare also. The King is but the tool of a will and cannot be guided. She leaves him to save the people. The Life-force now leaves the channel of love and digs for itself a new channel, that of war and conquest. As senseless as he was in loving, so is he in his martial valour, and he drags down with him in a great cataclysm his queen and his country:

> My passion is for war—it is neither for greed nor for cruelty, its fire is like love's fire, that knows no restraint, that counts no cost, that burns itself, and all that it touches, either into a flame, or to ashes.

So truly is the Life-force, when we are its tools, till we understand the mystic truth, "Kill out desire

of Life," and stand apart from the Life-force ; then the "wheel of birth and death" is ours. For, as Tagore puts into the mouth of the King: "You sit alone upon your peak of greatness, where I do not reach you. You go to attend your own God, and I go seeking you in vain." For verily, verily, "That art *Thou*, O Shvetaketu," but it takes many an age of evolution before we realise that within us, and not without, nor in another, is *That* ; and till that realisation is ours, we are as the King of this tragedy, swept by the tide of life into seas of misery.

It is perhaps scarcely legitimate to ask if an artist ever consciously intends to convey any definite message in any work of his ; the artist creates because One greater than he creates, and sometimes the artist himself is not conscious of his message. But I think Tagore has definite ideas which he means to convey to his audience, and which he shapes artistically with his craft. Two great leading ideas I find in all these plays. The first of them is the thought that Humanity is the supreme Reality, and that it is among the joys and griefs of our fellows we find the *Brahman* we seek. The ancient teaching was *Neti, Neti*, "Not This, Not This"—that in no manifested form of existence is Reality to be found. But Tagore holds that all Reality, so far as we are concerned, is a peace of heart, a glorious state of illumination, which brings the whole world into our heart, rather than takes us away from that world.

The second great thought is the supreme spiritual beauty of Womanhood. "Raghu's daughter" who was despised, Malini both simple and supremely wise at the same time, Aparna the beggar girl, Sumitra the Queen, all stand in clear contrast to the men, and each just gives that sweet and mystic touch to life that gives it an entrancing reality. This "*Ewig-weibliche*" of Goethe's, the "Ever Womanly," who "draws us upwards and onwards," which all artists have everywhere recognised, Tagore sees in the Hindu woman. Through the women of his imagination he expresses the truth well expressed by another poet:

> There is more
> Of God's own meaning than a man may guess
> In woman that is Woman.

But this Hindu "woman that is Woman" whom Tagore sees is the Hindu woman of the past, and of the future, but not of *to-day*. For among the docile millions of Indian women, belittled by social laws, how can there arise the real Indian woman? For she will only come when men need her. *And the men do not ask for her to-day.* Most of them are content with the existing Indian woman, the child-mother and meek servitor who, when she is old, becomes so often, when her opportunity comes to wield power, the tyrant in her home. The men *cannot* now appreciate the real Indian woman. For instance, where are the Indian women to act the rôles

of women in these plays of Tagore? No man nor youth, trained in conventional Indian drama, can act them. It is only in the West that men will discover the grasp of a great Reality which Tagore gives them in these plays; it is there they will see in the art of the actress something of the hidden art of Tagore which he cannot put upon the printed page.

Yet it is something to have one who dreams of the Indian woman of the past who will once again come to her own in a New India. As in the fairy story of the West, the Sleeping Beauty sleeps on till the Prince comes, and kisses her and wakes her to life again. We talk to-day of the *Motherland*. Perhaps if we talked a little more of the Mothers' Land, and the Wives' Land, and the Little Sisters' Land, we should then have in our midst many Princes who would recall to life the myriads of sleeping Beauties of this ancient land. But before that day comes, all must *sacrifice*. How many are there of the so-called "patriots" of to-day who will sacrifice the Old India for the New? Upon that depends the new dawn, when the Hindu woman awakens from her long sleep to be "woman that is Woman".

THE FUTURE OF INDIAN DRAMA

Those of us at Calcutta during Congress week who saw Tagore's play *The Post Office*, will certainly never forget it. Sir Rabindranath Tagore is a world celebrity now for his poetic and spiritual writings; this we all knew of him. But little did we realise what a perfect actor he is too. To see a Tagore play, staged by Tagore in his own private theatre, and to see Tagore himself act in it, was indeed a revelation to those that had the privilege.

The first hint of what delights were in store for us was in the cards of invitation. They were not gilt-edged, round-cornered, Videshi, commonplace cards; they were Swadeshi and unique. Printed on yellow Bengal-made paper, the touch of the artist was in them, in every bit of them. Then when we came at six to Sir Rabindranath's house and were led into the theatre room, it was one deep sigh of contentment; for it was a perfect room. Imagine a long room, with a high dado of brown; Swadeshi lounges and homespun mats and rugs; soft, tender lights; only one picture and that simple, without even a frame, but evidently proud of itself amidst perfect surroundings; an alcove with a marvel of a Japanese screen,

placed and lighted to show its wonderful beauty; imagine at the end of the room a drop-scene of black, within the middle of it a red sun and across it two lotuses and a lotus leaf; and then over the drop scene the straw-thatched edge to represent a village dwelling—this was the theatre where *The Post Office* was acted in the original Bengali.

The Post Office, in its English translation by Debabrata Mukherjea, gives scarce a fraction of an idea of the play as we saw it acted. It is not my aim here to review the play and discuss it; my thoughts were led, as I saw the dramatic art of Tagore, to the future of Indian drama, and to Tagore's part in that future. Now the Indian drama of to-day is readily understood in its historical significance if we know the history of the Greek drama; the two lines of growth are distinctly parallel. As are Indian plays to-day, so were Greek plays to start with—that is, traditional and conventional. The dramatist took one of the many legends which all knew, and dramatised it; in Greece, it was Orestes, or Prometheus, or one of the other legendary heroes; in India it is Rama and Sita, or Damayanti, Prahlada, etc. The plays were not problem plays; the audience knew beforehand the main incidents. They know in the Indian drama that the slain will be brought to life by a God, and that everything will end happily. Now from a stage of simple conventionalism—at first with one actor and a chorus, then two actors and lastly with three—

Greek drama passed on to develop into one of the greatest dramatic arts the world has ever seen; it became, as Cicero said, "the imitation of life, the mirror of human intercourse, the expression of reality". None can say that the Indian drama is "the expression of reality"; on the Indian stage, life is shown according to traditional Indian dramatic conventions. But Indian drama cannot stop here; it is only the first stage. What the next stage is we know from a history of Greek drama, as also from a study of modern European drama, in both of which we see the later stages of the dramatic art.

Now the value of Tagore is that he has sensed the next stage; perhaps others in Bengal have been his precursors, but Tagore is the first to claim the world's attention. In the one play which we saw, we saw the adaptation of Western technique to Eastern drama; everything was true to reality. The dress of the actors, their speech, their gestures, the furnishing and appurtenances of the room, were "true to life". Yet the whole play was Indian through and through. As Greek drama changed from being declaimed poetry to dramatic speech, from its early grand and stiff construction to something more rapid and vital, so has the drama become in Tagore's hands. He has also done one further thing; it is what was said by a great critic about Greek drama: "There is perfect freedom from those pairs of lovers who have been our tyrants since modern drama began."

The Post Office of Tagore, though it was perfectly staged and acted—it could not have been better staged even by the Irish players who acted it in London with all the technique and resources at their command—from first to last retained its Indian quality. First and foremost it was symbolic; the little boy whom the doctor orders not to go out of doors, in order to recover from his illness, is but ourselves; for when the world's doctors—we call them the Shastras, or Mrs. Grundy, or public opinion—tell us not to go out of the doors of our little selves, we are like the boy Amal of the play, who is forced to contemplate out of his window the hill which he longs to climb. The boy longs to be out of doors and the doctor forbids. Only one gives him comfort, an old man (acted by Tagore) who tells the boy of the things his heart longs for. He comforts the boy with the story of a letter which will presently come from the king; for near the boy's house is a post office, and what can it be there for but to bring a letter from the king to the boy? As the boy lay on his bed, longing for the letter, as the letter finally came, as the king himself came, we who saw it all that evening understood. It was not a play merely that we saw, we also looked a little into ourselves.

Along this road surely must the Indian drama now go; the old legends are good, and the best perhaps as yet for the masses. But our eyes are opened now to life, and there is something heroic to be seen

to-day by us in every man and in every woman. The Gods are about us performing miracles, but we call the Gods to-day man and woman, Brahmana and non-Brahmana and Panchama, Indian and Nationalist and Bureaucrat. It is the life of these that is the miracle we would witness; it is in their griefs and joys, in their temptations and victories that we find the new commentaries to the old Vedas. This indeed is the function of the dramatist: neither to make us happy nor grieved, but purified and strong; to wean us away from the world as Will to reverence the world as Idea; to teach us to be, as Plato said, "serene creators of immortal things". Tagore has learned this new art, carried to such great perfection in the West on the technical side; yet he has retained the old, old outlook of India, subjective, symbolic, and synthetic.

One additional step can the Indian drama go, and it is the step pointed out by Richard Wagner. Music is an integral part of the old Indian drama, but it is traditional music. Let that music now be as Wagner showed it could be, in the "*leit-motif*" as he called it, intensely true to each character, to each situation, psychological, then we should have the perfection of dramatic art.

In some ways, drama is everywhere in India; nearly everyone is a born actor, and the drama is a vital element of the Nation. But as the Nation's life changes, so must the drama change too. Tagore has

shown the direction of the change. As he gave his benediction to the National Congress on its opening day, so did he crown the National Week by showing us what an Indian play, by Indian actors, in an Indian theatre, could be. I think even our Bureaucrats would admit—at least those that had any artistic sense—that a Nation that could produce and stage such a play is thrice worthy of Self-Rule. For where art is, there is life ; and the loftier, serener, more symbolic is that art, the nearer is man to God.

TEMPERAMENTS

It was a very clever woman who said that men and women could be classified into three groups—minds, souls, and temperaments. It is one of those dinner-table witticisms that have more in them than seems at first sight, for it gives a faint clue to what Carlyle called "the mystery of a Person". The "mind" is the person who can only go from fact to fact, doubting and testing, mistrustful of the imagination, slowly, however, coming to a vast generalisation, which when once made is never lost sight of; he is cautious, on guard against enthusiasm, but unwaveringly loyal to what at last he gives his faith to. There is more character than brains, in the sense that action does not follow from a clearly recognised principle of action, but leads up to that principle after many actions that are good, bad, or indifferent.

The "soul" is the person who is instinctively sensing principles, and tries to justify them in his conception of himself as a doer. He is serene, sensitive to ideas, but also lacking in tenacity and purpose. He is led away from the immediate application of the idea by a desire to know how that idea is linked to other ideas; he has usually plenty of brains, but the

character is deficient in not being able to direct itself and things round it to fulfil a scheme of action which it sees as desirable. The "soul" is little interested in the means; he is an idealist, always contemplating an end.

The "temperament" is full of feeling, and states a concept in terms of powerful emotion. The emotion may be crude, or it may be one of great and lofty inspirational value. The concept is being continually developed in a hundred and one ways of feeling. But as feelings, when full of pure enthusiasm, are vehicles for intuitions, he is continually sensing, rather than seeing, newer and newer phases of the idea; indeed sometimes so many new phases does he sense that he is confused by his manifold vision, and cannot select the one particular point of view best suited to the action desired. The "temperament" is thoroughly alive to the feeling aspect of life, and when he tries to rationalise his emotions, becomes very artistic in his thought and action.

This inner essence of a man, which characterises the cultivated people round about us, is seen in the aggregate as a national temperament. Consider, for instance, the English temperament. It is unresponsive to ideas, as ideas; they must first be shown to be "practical," as having some value, not in a problematic future but now. It is very much given to action, but the action is directed, as it were, to the four points of the compass by turns, as if no principles were aimed

at or specially desired. Nowhere is this so clearly seen as in the history of the British Constitution, which, "with its compromises, its love of facts, its horror of theories, its studious avoidance of clear thoughts," Matthew Arnold has sarcastically described as a "colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines". The distaste for change characteristic of the English, so well evidenced in all political reforms, is well described by one of the keenest observers of the nation, Disraeli, in words that were true in 1834 about the Reform Bill [1]: "England, though frightened at the reality of Reform, still adhered to its phrases; it was inclined, as practical England, to maintain existing institutions; but as theoretical England, it was suspicious that they were indefensible."

Yet these defects of the national temperament are far outweighed by its sterling virtues. The very refusal to consider ideas and ideals till they can be shown to be practical, turns the character to idealise the present and make the utmost out of it. A work begun is not dropped, because some better way of doing it is shown; the quiet determination to "see this thing through," with its doggedness, with its loyalty to work and to worker, is a priceless example to all nations that care to contemplate it. And probably there is no better way of expressing the best

[1] But Disraeli's description applies just as well in 1918 to the attitude of the average Briton in India to the Indian Reforms for Home Rule.

in the English temperament than in Thackeray's words :

> Who misses or who wins the prize,
> Go, lose or conquer as you can ;
> But if you fail, or if you rise,
> Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

In thorough contrast to all this is the Latin temperament, as exemplified by the French. A Frenchman is "all nerves" ; he does not separate his life into compartments labelled religion, art, politics, and home life. He is, consciously or unconsciously, aiming at a synthesis, and is very much like a Greek reincarnated. He revels in ideas, because they are ideas, and his test of them is not their "practical" quality, but rather their relation to a synthesis. But his excess of emotion makes him go off at a tangent ; he has too much temperament. He "gets up steam" very quickly, but that means he "boils at low temperatures". "There will be no revolution to-day" —because it was raining—well describes one weakness of the Latin temperament.

But on the other hand the priceless contribution of the Latin peoples to the world is clear thought. "If it is not clear it is not French," is well known as the final test of what is best in French literature ; and this clarity is demanded not only in thought but also in feeling. Saint Beuve voices the instinct of the cultured Frenchman to all things in life when he says : "In France the first consideration for us is not

whether we are amused and pleased by a work of art or mind, nor is it whether we are touched by it. What we seek above all to learn is, whether *we were right* in being amused with it, and applauding it, and in being moved by it."

The "soul" temperament could not better be exemplified than by the typical Indian. Taine was right up to a certain point when he said that, "to write an Indian poem, we must be pantheistical at heart, a little mad, and pretty generally visionary". "Pantheistical at heart" truly describes the essence of the Indian temperament and of all Indian literature expressive of it. The Greek and the French are seeking the synthesis; their intuitions tell them that "the One remains," though "the Many change and pass," and the whole nature is brought into play to sense this Unity. But the Indian temperament starts out with the synthesis. "I am That" is the undertone to all that is best in Indian life. If the Indian temperament is "pretty generally visionary," it is not because of a search for the Light, but because the Light has been seen, and by comparison the shadows of an evolutionary world are not very attractive to contemplate.

Wherever a typical Indian goes in western lands, he is at once liked; he has what the French call "charm". This attractiveness is something that radiates from within his soul; his gentleness and courtesy are in such marked contrast to what is

considered "manly" among Anglo-Saxon peoples. Ignoring for the moment the deficiencies in his character, the Indian's contribution to the World-Soul is the knowledge of a Unity behind all diversity. His religion affects his bathing and dining; his craft is a mode of realising "I am That," and at Sarasvati Puja he reverences his books if a pandit, his fountain pen if a clerk, his ledger if a merchant, and his tool if a workman. Browning may cry jubilantly, "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world," but only an Indian can say it with full intellectual conviction. For to the Indian, as to no other religionist, heart and brain and hand, nature and man and God, can be realised as one, if he only looks within.

Every worker in every land, who has discovered that "the work's the thing," has discovered the Temperament of temperaments, the Mind of minds, the Soul of souls, that "cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning". As Art brings all men of all creeds to one Creed, so does Work, when a worker realises that "man is the *spirit* he worked in, not what he did, but what he became". Minds, souls and temperaments are but tones in one harmony; and to those on earth that long to hear fragments of the Divine Harmony, national temperaments are precious things indeed. If for sake of gain, or through fear of pain, a Nation renounces its priceless possession, the end has come for its life as a Nation, however

much it may be territorially still one. And however many be the number of its conquerors, that Nation is still unfettered and free that cherishes its temperament, and keeps it as a treasure for future generations.

GOD THE NATION

THE process all round us of the making of the three hundred millions in India into a Nation is a phenomenon that future historians will understand better than we can in the present. The problem is specially unique, for the largest Nation which has hitherto felt the sense of Nationality, which is Russia, has only half the population of India. England has forty millions; the United States ninety; a Nation of three hundred millions distinctly "staggers" the imagination.

Many take for granted that Nationality means a common racial origin. This is not always the case; even in Britain we find strong internal racial differences, though for external action the English and Scottish and Welsh are united. Here, in India, we talk of England and the English, of "English rule," and so on, using "English" to denote the British element. It will not do to talk to audiences in Scotland of the "English" in India; the Scotch resent being included in the term English, and clamour for the term "British". Tennyson made the "English Nation"

say to Queen Alexandra, when she came as a bride to England :

> Saxon and Norman and Dane are we ;
> But all of us Dane in our welcome of thee.

In spite of these heterogeneous elements, with the Scotch and the Welsh and the Irish contributing, there is the " English people," who make " England" the Nation.

In Russia, Slavs, Tartars, Letts, Poles, and other races, are working together as a Nation ; it is the same in Hungary. There can be a Nation made of different races.

If a common racial descent is not essential, is a common religion ? This seems to be the case at first in western Nations ; they are all Christians, whatever sectarian differences various races composing a Nation may have among themselves. Roman Catholic and Church of England, Wesleyan, Presbyterian, and the rest are after all Christian, but above the sectarian differences is the common tradition of Christianity. But Russia is an exception to this rule as regards western Nations ; from the religious standpoint, the Russian Nation is made up of Christians, Muhammadans, and Buddhists.

Is it numbers that make a Nation ? A few hundred thousand Athenians made one of the most glorious Nations the world has ever seen ; thirty-two years ago here in India, before the Indian National Congress was born, the three hundred millions of the Indian

peoples were not, and did not show symptoms of being, a Nation. Not race, not religion, not numbers make a Nation. What then does?

It is a mysterious something that baffles final analysis. Just as the chemist who can analyse all the chemical constituents of a plant yet cannot explain why it *grows*, so too is it with the historian, who can merely note the effects but cannot give the clue to the causes which make a Nation. Sometimes a subject people through being oppressed grows into Nationality; this was the case of the English Colonists in America who revolted and made the United States of America. But this was not the case with the Japanese, who have to-day a keen sense of Nationality and patriotism. We can therefore but speculate why a Nation becomes.

If one accepts the theory that human events are guided by a Divinity according to a plan, then perhaps we may find a theory of Nationality that satisfies. For if a Divinity guides the destinies of all humanity, each Nation must be an integral part of His vast plan; He must have for each a work to do. A Nation then "becomes" only because God has decreed it. From the moment a people realises itself as a Nation, it has a mission to perform; and since that mission is fore-ordained, the mission is divine.

It will be obvious to one accepting this theory, that all Nations have not the same divine mission; Providence surely is wise enough to follow the

general course of evolution which brings growth and advancement, not by a juxtaposition of like parts, but by creating diversities which are mutually dependent. One Nation may have strongly the spirit of adventure and colonisation; another may be commercial and stable; while a third may be idealistic and revolutionary. Yet all three are required for the general growth of all humanity.

Now such a theory as this, unprovable as it is *a priori*, does nevertheless *a posteriori* fit in with many facts. One of these facts is the mysterious character of Nationality, often imaged by peoples as personified in an Angel. Angels are considered "exploded superstitions," but professorial explosions in classrooms explode nothing. Saint George for England, Saint Denis for France, may be myths, but they are dynamic myths, which fire the imagination of a whole people in a time of trouble and sacrifice. The angel myth links generation to generation, and has the elements of a forceful religion. Here in India it is "the Mother," whose many peoples compose the "Motherland". Similarly in Russia, the Russians talk of "Holy Mother Russia". A people becomes a Nation because there appears behind them, and overshadowing them, an Angel, a Deva, a Presence, a Minister of the Divine Plan, who lives his life in the land and through the people, and unlocks the hidden genius of his people and lays it at God's Feet as his contribution to the welfare of the world.

Another great fact is that Nationality, when once born, can never be crushed out. Rather that water should run uphill than that a people chosen for a Divine Mission should fail to fulfil it. They may need to suffer; generations may pass in succession before the Nation comes to its full self-realisation, because heroes are lacking and the majority will not sacrifice; autocracies and bureaucracies may try to crush out the young shoot of Nationality; but the Nation will come to its own, nay, must come to its own, in spite of all hindrances.

It is this divine fire behind Nationality that inspires the warrior to heroic deeds, the statesman to bôldness, starving men and women to starve longer, in order that the Nation may come into being. For to grow into a Nation, or after being so grown to fulfil the divine rôle made for it, becomes a supremely religious duty, with such a consecration as brushes aside hunger and starvation, suffering and torture, as mere nothing. It is the realisation of the Presence behind the Nation that sustains the martyr in his martyrdom, and keeps lit the flame of patriotism when it is almost crushed out by persecution.

It is true that, at the making of a Nation, not all who compose it feel at once the mystic impulse to Nationality. The poets and dreamers feel it, because they are intuitive and so can anticipate the future. All who live in the future feel it, and this accounts for the fact of students being patriots. The middle-aged

man, with his career built up by him, lives largely in the present, counting its gain and loss; the vision of the student is into the future, and therefore by temperament he is more imaginative and intuitive. Patriotism, therefore, and self-sacrifice quickly sway him, while it takes months and sometimes years before the calculating merchant, or the "cautious" lawyer or farmer succumb to their influence. But let a single imagination alone, whether of poet or "agitator" it matters little, sense the Nation to be, the Nation has then come into being. One by one the martyrs, the "witnesses" to Nationality, come and work, some to succeed and some to fail. Each is truly a consecrated priest in a Divine Mystery, for the life of a people as a Nation is a new expression of the life of God which could not manifest so long as they were merely a people.

Nationality, in its fundamental essence, is one form of Religion. For religion makes men spiritual, and to be spiritual means readiness to suffer for an ideal, and willingness to give up what is most dear to one's personal self in order that thousands may be benefited. It is Nationality that makes poets, creates arts, and establishes civilisations. And a people becomes a Nation because behind them, guiding them, is a Presence. Who can tell what that Presence is? One thing is sure, that he who discovers what that Presence is has found one of the many roads to God.

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