

Many have thought that Indian civilization had run its course, had lost its vitality and could never revive and project itself into the future as a strong world force, that India would have to be managed permanently by an outside benevolent power, but after several generations of disorganization Indian culture began to show strong signs of revival and organization, and during the past generation this process has become extremely rapid.

The first real effort at a new political organization came in 1885-86 with the founding, under liberal British tutelage, of the Indian National Congress. During its early years the chief aim of this body was that of finding some way of focussing Indian public opinion and of bringing this to bear upon governmental policy and legislation. Government for many years tended to regard the Congress as a mere academic debating society which could safely be disregarded politically. Year by year the Congress gained in power and in breadth and depth of representation and began to make its influence as a political force felt upon Government. Nothing really substantial was gained until the reforms of 1919 when Education, Public Health, Sanitation, Public Works (except irrigation), Development of Industries, Coöperative Societies, Local Self-Government, and some other matters were transferred to Indian control, but without giving Indians any control over Taxation, the Budget, and Finance in general. Under such conditions the transfer was more nominal than real. Since 1919 Indian attention has been directed so persistently to the development of Nationalism and the demand for independence, and there has been so much political disorder that we have no good basis for judging how Indians might deal with Education and the other transferred subjects over which they have recently had control.

The aloofness of Government led gradually to the development of a strong radical element in the Congress. This radical wing began to gain control in 1916, but it was not until after the Great War and the disastrous affair at Amritsar in 1919 that the radical element definitely dominated Congress and began to press for complete independence. It was the Amritsar massacre which finally changed Gandhi from a moderate into an extremist. During the past fifteen years the demand for independence has spread and in-

tensified to an amazing degree. Today it is the chief factor in Indian affairs and one of the most important world problems.

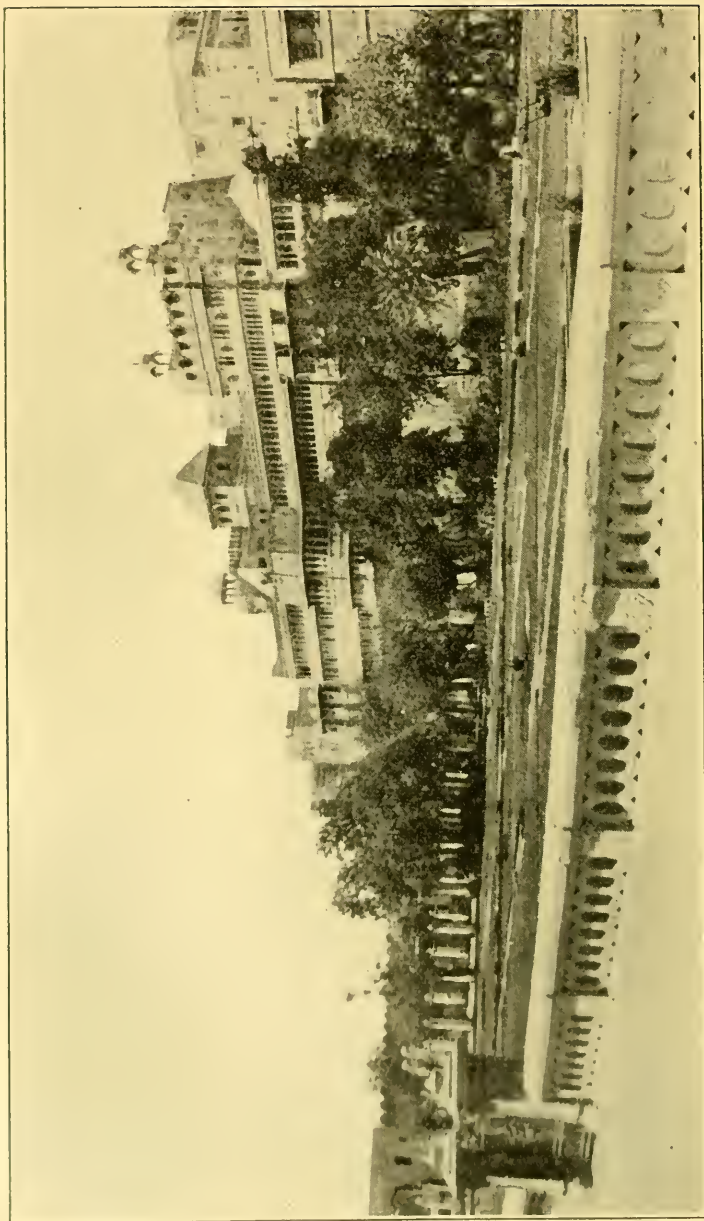
There are still moderates in India who desire independence or at least Home Rule, but who would obtain this gradually through coöperation. For some reason moderation always seems to be politically ineffective and wavers between conservatism and radicalism. In India the situation is particularly difficult since the moderates, almost without exception, are as much in favor of Home Rule as the extremists are of Independence and from time to time unwise legislation or unwise action on the part of Government tends to throw the moderates into the arms of the extremists. Government tends to reflect party politics in England and to be wobbly and inconsistent in action and legislation and in its statement of principles, to be lenient and conciliatory for a time and then suddenly to embark upon a policy of severe repression. Since Amritsar the moderates have lost control. If there is no expression of extreme opinion and no violent agitation Government considers that the Indian people are happy and contented and prosperous and that there is no need of concessions, but if there is violence the people are considered to be disorderly and unruly and incapable of responsibility.

How far this increasing demand for Home Rule or for Independence has permeated the masses it is impossible to say. It is strongest, naturally, among the educated upper and middle classes which represent about one-tenth of the total population.

Many British conservatives, especially army-men, argue that Indian Nationalism is in no sense a mass movement; that it has no essentially economic or political or cultural background; that it is an artificial movement of religious fanaticism, the reaction of a conservative Hinduism against western civilization, managed by a few disgruntled Brahmans for their own aggrandizement. They argue that the masses are becoming happier and more prosperous and more contented year by year and that if a few hundred Brahman leaders were deported or executed and machine guns used freely a few times there would be no more Indian Nationalism.

To anyone who has followed carefully the development of Indian Nationalism since 1885 this analysis of the situation must seem to be fallacious.

During the past fifty years Indians have been making a more and more careful study of economics from the Indian point of



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view and have been forming an Indian school of economics. The view has rapidly been gaining ground that India's connection with England has not been to India's economic advantage. To the fiscal policy of Government is ascribed the impoverishment of the people and a great drain of Indian capital caused by the decline or virtual destruction of the old Indian hand-industries, the heavy land tax, and the payment of Home Charges or the "Drain" in the narrower sense of the word.

Action by Government merely hastened the inevitable decline or destruction of these Indian hand-industries, but it must be said that Government did nothing to soften the shock and to help India take its place in the new industrial system. The incidence of the land tax and its effect upon Indian economics and the poverty of the masses is much disputed.

The "Drain" is that portion of India's debit for which, in that year, she receives no material equivalents in goods or money. For practical purposes the "Drain" may be said to equal the "Home Charges," that is to say debt charges or interest on loans, payment for stores unobtainable in India, pensions and furlough pay, the upkeep of the India Office in London, etc., to which some would add the maintenance of the Indian army or at least the British part of it. This amounts to between one hundred and one hundred and fifty million dollars annually. Some would extend this to what they call the "Hidden Drain," which covers not only returns from commercial services performed by foreigners, and returns to foreign capital invested in the country, but also such intangible things as the "ruinous fiscal policy" of Government.

This prevalent Indian attitude is an important factor in the present situation. Whatever may be thought concerning the "Drain" it cannot be accepted as constituting the whole reason for India's present poverty. During the early years of the Company there is no doubt that the actual drain of money from India was a large item. Whether the "Drain" of the later period can be regarded as adequately compensated for in a non-economic way by services rendered is open to dispute. "Is orderly government and peace an adequate compensation for commercial and economic exploitation?" is a persistent Indian question. However, since India has been drawn into modern world economics there seems to be no escape from the conclusion so aptly stated by Vera Anstey: "In conclusion it can be said that India's economic future depends, in the

main, not upon the inauguration of particular schemes of development, or the adoption of particular lines of policy, but upon more fundamental social reforms and organization, directed towards controlling the size of the population, breaking up the over-rigid social stratification, stimulating enterprise and energy, promoting education, and replacing the forms by the spirit of religion."

There is no use in mourning a glorious past which is supposed to have been rich and prosperous, or in hoping that this will return immediately and automatically with independence. Taking India as it is today there are many elements in Indian civilization which will keep India poor, under modern conditions, whether she be independent or not.

For over a century, through the medium of an education conducted in English, a large section of the upper and middle classes has been brought closely into contact with western literature and thought with its message of freedom, independence, democracy, and patriotism. This introduction to the world of western thought cannot fail to have had a deep effect upon the Indian mind.

Through archæology and the study of Sanskrit literature western scholars have begun the reconstruction of ancient Indian history with its message of Indian greatness and power before the Muhammadan conquest, and to a greater and greater degree Indian scholars have been taking part in this reconstruction of the ancient greatness of their country.

It cannot be denied that these two elements give a strong political background to Indian Nationalism.

Moreover, gathering strength during the peace and order of British rule, there has been taking place a gradual revival of Hindu culture after the four hundred years or so of somnolence and disintegration brought about by Muhammadan rule; Indians are developing an increasing pride in Indian literature, religion, and philosophy, in Hindu customs and institutions and modes of life and thought, and a determination not to become completely westernized through the medium of an exclusively English education, a western industrialism, and a western organization of society. There is a growing realization that India may have something to give as well as to receive. Undoubtedly this gives a cultural background to Indian Nationalism. At present it may not be a great mass movement, but there are clear indications that it is spreading and going deeper year by year and that it will soon become irresistible.

When British rule began in India the old Indian education was in decadence and Indians knew little about their ancient civilization and their ancient literature. The new English education led at first in educated circles to much scepticism and rationalism and to an uncritical absorption of western thought. It soon became evident, however, that western ideas were not working very well in actual practice in the West, that western theories of society and western religion were not producing a Golden Age in the West, and a reaction set in which led to the development of a very critical spirit towards western civilization in all its practical phases and theoretical presuppositions. This spirit of criticism was intensified by a developing self-consciousness of India's former greatness and the intrinsic merit of many of her social, religious, and philosophical ideas. There is at present in India practically no inclination to adopt *in toto* western civilization and religion. India has become disillusioned about the West. There is, to be sure, a definite reactionary religious element which has been intensified by extreme political agitation, but even in such a reactionary as Gandhi the leaven of some western ideas and of some western criticism of weaknesses in Indian religion and social life has been working. To say that the whole of Indian Nationalism is due to a reactionary religious element is to exaggerate unduly what is only one conservative phase of a much larger cultural movement. The Japanese war with Russia and the Great War served to deepen and intensify Indian cultural consciousness as a part of the awakened cultural consciousness of Asia.

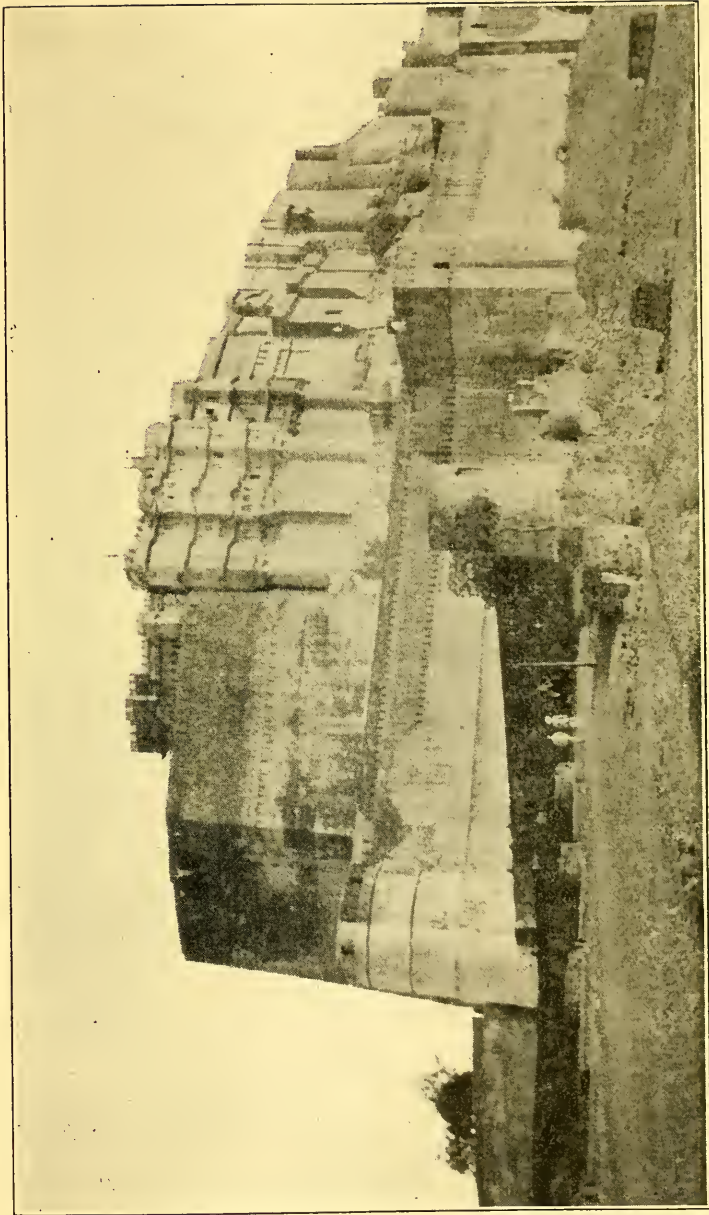
I doubt whether the rigorous repressive measures which have recently been put into operation will be successful in the long run. Even if successful or partly successful at present they are likely to intensify antagonism and drive it into subterranean channels as was the case in Russia before the revolution.

British rule has prepared the ground for increasingly vital contacts with the West and for the reception of western ideas, has formed the basis for an Indian Renaissance. The influence of Christian missionaries has been great, not so much because of their direct evangelistic work and the number of converts made but because of their indirect influence upon social and reform movements. Even greater has been the effect of higher western education which, since the famous Minute of Macaulay in 1835, has been conducted in English. But education in India has been too exclusively literary

in character and too top-heavy. It has paid much more attention to University education for the upper classes than to elementary and secondary and technical education. It has been too bookish, but it has opened up the world of western thought to millions of people.

The Christian influence upon Hinduism has manifested itself in two ways. First, in a sort of eclecticism which tries to harmonize Christianity and Hinduism, but which distinguishes carefully between Christianity and western civilization and between the higher ideals of Hinduism and the lower popular beliefs and practices. For its Christianity it goes back directly to the New Testament. It distinguishes just as carefully between what it considers to be the vital elements in Hinduism and the later accretions of medieval Hindu civilization. For its Hinduism it goes back chiefly to the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. Most characteristic of this tendency is the Brahma Samaj or "Theistic Society." Its object is the worship of one eternal, unsearchable, and immutable Being, the author and preserver of the universe; the promotion of piety, morality, and charity, and the strengthening of the bonds of union among men of all religious classes and creeds. Images and sacrifices are forbidden. The ritual consists of readings from the Veda (especially the Upanishads), an address, and the singing of hymns. It has also been active in matters of social reform. It is an ethical theism of much the same type as our Unitarian Church. Its members are few in number but exert a much greater influence than the number would indicate, but this influence hardly touches the masses.

Secondly, a counter reformation grew up inside of Hinduism. The Arya Samaj, which with a membership of about half a million is the best example of this, would purge Hinduism of what it considers to be later medieval accretions by going back to the oldest Mantra part of the Vedas as a "Divine revelation" which, if correctly interpreted, contains perfect and complete truth. Its founder, Dayanand Sarasvati, by the most incredible interpretations, succeeded in persuading himself and others that everything worth knowing, even the most recent inventions of modern science, were alluded to in the Vedas. The members engage in a considerable amount of active educational work and social service in the effort to remove later medieval superstitions and to reestablish Hinduism in its former Vedic purity. The Arya Samaj denounces child-marriage, would permit the remarriage of widows, would abolish purdah and



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other disabilities of women, and do away with untouchability. Further, it would go back of the rigid caste system of modern Hinduism in which social status is determined by birth alone to the earlier system of *varṇas* or classes. "*Varṇas* of all persons should be determined according to their qualifications, accomplishments and character in the twenty-fifth or the sixteenth year, according as they are males or females."

The Ramakrishna Mission is one of several small movements which would carry this tendency farther by mission work abroad, preaching in the West certain of the higher phases of Hindu philosophy, and defending Hindu civilization. Vivekananda, who is perhaps the best exponent of the Ramakrishna Mission and who was present at the Congress of Religions at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, remarks: "We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative, we must do it or die. The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought."

In general, in spite of large conservative and reactionary groups, the effect of Christianity and western civilization upon Hinduism has been a slow but noteworthy tendency to democratize and energize Hindu society. The ideal of active social service is developing rapidly. Neo-Hinduism, aroused by contact with the West and arising to defend itself under the impulse of a new humanism, is beginning to slough off some of the features which are most objectionable to the West.

The old vernaculars which had been used almost exclusively for a religious literature in verse have been polished and reshaped and are becoming vehicles for literary expression of a much more general character. This new literature, especially in Bengali and Marathi, is doing much to diffuse new ideas and reshape old ideas. English, which is the language of all higher education, has furnished an easy means of communication between men from all parts of India no matter how different their own vernaculars may be.

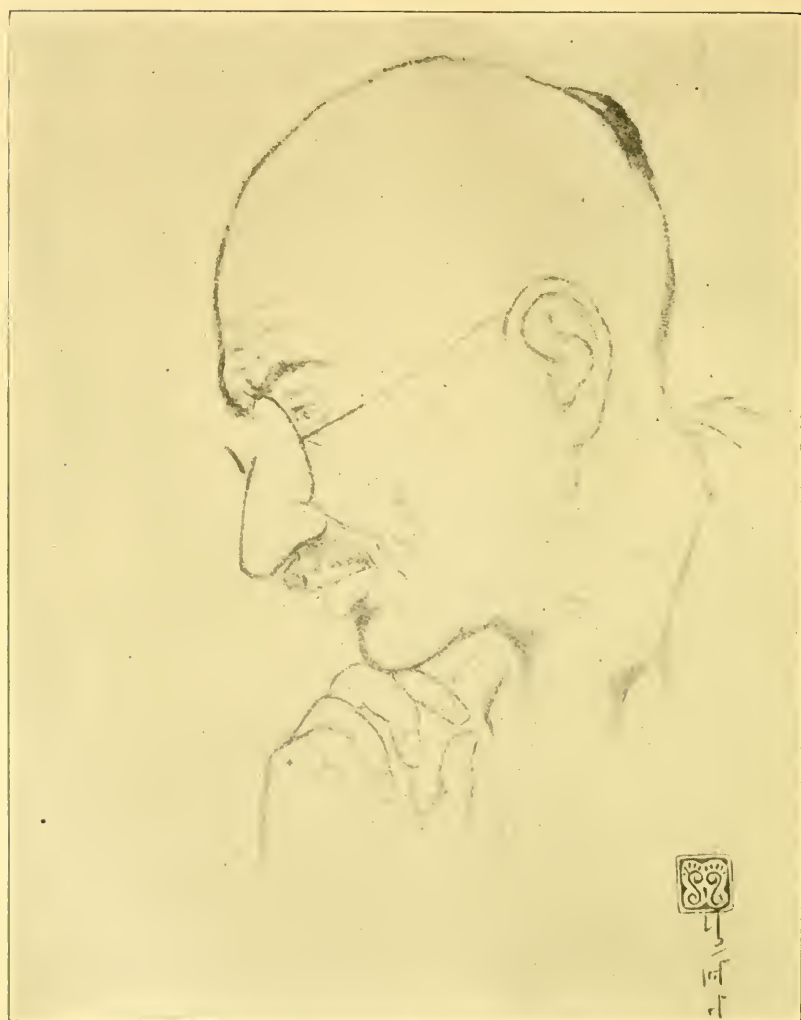
The Nationalists have not developed very definite and concrete constitutional plans. Their energy has been directed chiefly to generalities, to criticism of Government, to the defence of Indian culture and civilization, and to campaigning for *svaraj* (independence). It must be remembered that the goal of British policy in India has

never, until recently, been defined authoritatively, and that any suggestion of the introduction of a parliamentary system in India has frequently been repudiated by the British government as a whole or by a large conservative element in it. When the whole practical situation was so nebulous and intangible concrete plans could hardly be expected. Only since the Great War has there been the vague beginning of concrete constitutional plans.

The leaders of Indian Nationalism fall into three well-marked groups which represent three very different tendencies of thought.

The aim of the Liberals has never gone beyond that of colonial self-government. Leaders such as Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Pheroz Shah Mehta, Sir Surendranath Banerjea, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale have been very outspoken in their criticism of Government. In his budget speech for 1912 Gokhale remarked, "A top-heavy administration, much too costly for our resources, a crushing weight of military burdens, and a scheme of taxation which, though not more burdensome in its total incidence than in other countries, presses much more heavily on the poorer than on the middle and upper classes of the community" and in speaking before the Decentralization Committee said, "The cry of the people everywhere is that the car of administration should not merely roll over their bodies, but that they themselves should be permitted to pull at the ropes." Although critical of Government and demanding Home Rule they have drawn the greater part of their cultural background from the West. Their ideal was that of forming an Indian nation, but their democratic and constitutional ideas were drawn from western writers. Their moderate policy dominated the Indian National Congress until 1915-16. Since then the spread of the other two tendencies of thought and the drift towards non-coöperation or even towards violence has been so rapid that their present role is comparatively insignificant.

The second group, which seems at present to be the most influential one, consists of those who are dominated by a romantic attitude towards ancient Indian civilization and who work for the revival of a supposed Golden Age of Indian civilization either in exactly the present form of Hinduism or in a purer form of Hinduism from which many medieval accretions have been removed. Their whole cultural background is Indian, they have great distrust of the West in general, of its political, social, and economic institutions,



MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
(From a portrait study by Pullnbhari Dutt)

and especially of its industrialism. Politically they have been dominated by a sort of philosophical anarchism which would minimize the function of the state or actually destroy it and leave as the dominating element more or less self-sufficient village organizations and caste groups. The best government is that which governs least. This ideal of merely coördinating the social life of groups (of federalizing and decentralizing) is the antithesis of the present western tendency of extending more and more the principle of the sovereignty of the state until it guides or controls practically all activity within the state. They do not believe that the industrialism of India is inevitable or desirable and would revert to a rural India. Joined to this is the conviction (as best exemplified in Gandhi) that their task is moral rather than political. The basis for all development consists in the cleansing and purifying of the individual. This tendency coincides with what has been said above about the nature of Indian religion as being directed primarily towards an individual realization of salvation. If individual *swaraj* (self-rule) is gained political *swaraj* (self-rule or independence) will take care of itself.

On the whole Gandhi can better be understood from a religious point of view than from a western political point of view, and his service to India has been greater in this respect than in a purely political respect. He tends to put moral and social conundrums rather than to discuss concrete political problems. His is a nationalism of self-supporting villages and an economics based on the hand-plough and the spinning-wheel. Although politically his influence will amount to little he has been an enormous moral force in Indian society and a rallying-point for the Indian sentiment of nationality. He has striven hard for the removal of untouchability, for raising the social position of the outcastes and low castes, for the prohibition of liquor and drugs, for the removal of purdah (seclusion of women), for the equality of men and women, for Hindu-Muslim unity, for a doctrine of non-killing and non-violence which shall permeate the whole of social and political life. Fundamental in Gandhi during the later part of his development is a revolt against the intellect. He says that up to the year 1906 he relied on appeal to reason, that in that year he found that reason failed to produce an impression when the critical moment arrived, and that since 1920 the conviction has been growing upon him that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by

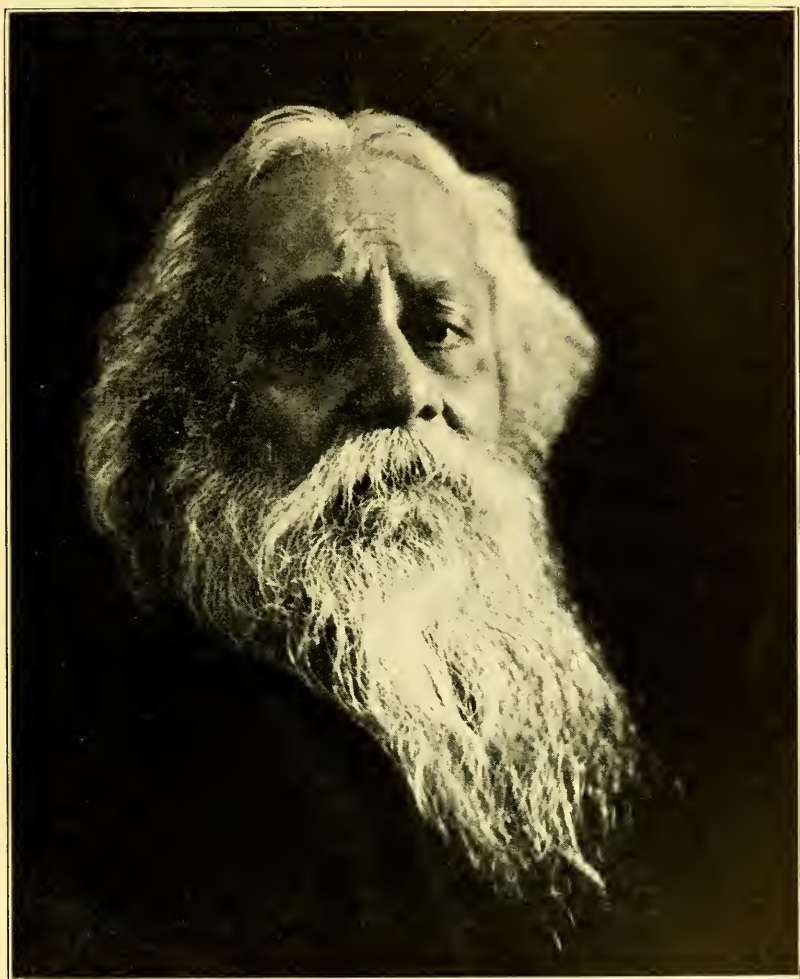
reason alone. "Ultimately one is guided not by the intellect but by the heart. The heart accepts a conclusion for which the intellect subsequently finds the reasoning. Argument follows conviction." Rabindranath Tagore remarks in criticism of Gandhi: "From our master, the Mahatma—may our devotion to him never grow less!—we must learn the truth of love in all its purity, but the science and art of building up Swaraj is a vast subject. Its pathways are difficult to traverse and take time. For this task, aspiration and emotion must be there, but no less must study and thought be there likewise. For it, the economist must think, the mechanic must labor, the educationist and statesman must teach and contrive. In a word, the mind of the country must exert itself in all directions."

In spite of the presence of large groups of ultra-conservatives who would interpret Hinduism strictly according to the letter of the law and continue it unchanged there is in this group a widely diffused leaven of indirect western influence towards the development of a Neo-Hinduism marked by the abolishment of untouchability, the raising of the age of marriage, the remarriage of widows, the doing away with purdah (seclusion of women), and social service of various kinds. This is interpreted, however, not as a direct copying of the West but as the lopping off of what are to be regarded as decadent medieval developments and the reverting to an earlier and purer form of Hinduism.

Politically the methods of the Romantic Idealists have been partly violent, as in the case of Tilak and his school, and partly non-violent, as in the case of Gandhi and his followers.

The third group is made up of those who like Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghose, and Rabindranath Tagore would make a synthesis of Indian and western ideas, giving up such elements in Hinduism as seem to be unreasonable and adapting to Indian use such western knowledge and ideas and institutions as seem to be suitable and reasonable. At present they seem to be overshadowed by Gandhi, but are likely to have increasing influence in the future.

As opposed to those who would see in Indian nationalism only a reactionary religious element dominated by a few Brahman leaders Pal sees the beginning of a real national movement growing out of an awakened consciousness of Indian culture. "For real national movements are always automatic. The movements of the masses whether of men or of matter are not really deliberative and con-



Courtesy of Zlata Llamas

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

scious like those of individuals, but are impulsive, automatic, and unconscious—Social activities are acts, not of considered and deliberate choice, but really of what may be called unconscious cerebration—They (the nations) simply follow automatically the impulse of their own nature or personality; which means, in other words, the spirit of their nationalism, the genius of their social organism; and in so doing, automatically, preserve the continuity with their own past.” “The word of Indian evolution is ‘Dharma; the word of European evolution is Right. And these two words seem, to my mind, to completely sum up the fundamental difference between India and Europe. Dharma is the law of renunciation, Right is the law of resistance. Dharma demands self-abnegation, Right, self-assertion. Dharma develops collectivism; Right individualism. Dharma works for synthesis; Right lives and grows in antitheses. Dharma is the soul of order; Right the parent of revolution.” “The ideal lies in the harmony between the two (Indian and European civilizations). This harmony, this synthesis, between spirit and matter, between nature and man, between the individual and society is the supreme need of our age.” “In fact, economic advancement will not remove but simply increase the political unrest in the country and add materially to the complexities of the political problem, especially if this advance should follow, as it is almost sure to do just now, the lines of economic progress pursued in Europe and America.”

Many have argued that India is uncivilized and disorderly and unfit for independence because it has never organized itself into one united and lasting empire. But India is as large as Europe, and although Europe has never developed into a single state Europe is not considered to be uncivilized. There are in India greater racial differences than in Europe. The caste system seems to owe its origin principally to the effort to bring about a political and social coöperation between these racial groups, while preserving so far as possible the racial integrity and the cultural dominance and purity of the Aryan minority without allowing it to diffuse itself through the culture of the aboriginal majority and become completely submerged. The social and religious system of Hinduism, which is a synthesis of Aryan and Dravidian elements, has diffused over India a uniformity which is at least as great as the uniformity spread over Europe by Christianity. Further, the period of British rule

has helped to weaken diversities of interest and to form a unity of sentiment based on common needs and common fears which has slowly been developing into a national spirit not only among the various Hindu groups but among Hindus and non-Hindus.

To a considerable degree India has developed a common civilization, although this has been more incoherent than the closely organized and institutionalized civilizations of western nations. India is not yet a nation, but a nation in the making. The forces which might cause groups with varying interests to coöperate towards the formation of a nation seem, at present, to be gaining in strength over those which might cause disruption. The presence of such a large Muhammadan minority whose religion is so fundamentally different from Hinduism, and the fact that one-third of India consists of Native States whose rulers are absolute monarchs constitute the chief difficulty in the situation. There seems to be, however, a growing tendency towards coöperation between Hindus and Muhammadans, and the Native States are beginning to feel a solidarity with British India and to be willing to coöperate with it towards the formation of some sort of a political unity.

I am inclined to think that this growing sentiment of nationalism in India will not result in a simple democratic nationality but in some sort of a federal nationality of coöperating groups. The ideal of a united democratic India is infinitely remote and the insistence upon this by the British government has served to retard rather than to hasten Indian political development.

The weakest feature of the program of the Romanticists who now seem to be in control of the situation is their tendency to regard religion as the one great unifying and controlling force in the political sphere. There is need of closer objective practical study of the political, social, and economic interests of all the various communities which must coöperate towards Indian Nationalism. If India is to emerge from her medievalism a civic spirit and a new humanism must accompany, if not dominate, a purely religious spirit. Even the Synthesists, especially men like Tagore and Ghose, have been dominated by an almost exclusively literary and religious outlook. More than anything else India needs the formation of a new class of Kṣatriyas, but one better adapted to the new conditions than the old nobility, which should take the lead in practical affairs

and in government and, buttressed by men of literature and religion, guide India on her new path.

India's independence, in some form or other, seems to be measurably near. A spirit of non-coöperation may, to a certain extent, be effective against a foreign government, but a spirit of coöperation within Hinduism itself (and coöperation really represents the highest ideal of Hinduism) is the only thing which can revivify a Hinduism which has grown sluggish and stagnant, and a spirit of coöperation between Hindus and Muhammadans and between British India and the Native States is the only thing which can hasten independence and save an independent India from political chaos.

India will not become completely westernized socially and religiously and philosophically. There is and there probably always will be a struggle between Romanticists and Synthesists, but India has been brought so actively into the current of world affairs that she cannot shut herself up into seclusion and regain a romantic past. Slowly but surely a synthesis will be made. Many unessential matters in Hinduism, matters which cannot stand the test of a higher critical knowledge, will atrophy, but the basic and essential ideals will stand out only more clearly as a result and are likely to have some formative influence on the West.

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