What Has India Contributed to Human Welfare?*

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EACH RACE CONTRIBUTES something essential to the world's civilization in the course of its own self-expression and self-realization. The character built up in solving its own problems, in the experience of its own misfortunes, is itself a gift which each offers to the world. The essential contribution of India, then, is simply her Indianness; her great humiliation would be to substitute or to have substituted for this own character (*sva-bhāva*) a cosmopolitan veneer, for then indeed she must come before the world empty-handed.

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If now we ask what is most distinctive in this essential contribution, we must first make it clear that there cannot be anything absolutely unique in the experience of any race. Its peculiarities will be chiefly a matter of selection and emphasis, certainly not a difference in specific humanity. If we regard the world as a family of nations, then we shall best understand the position of India by recognizing in her the elder, who no longer, it is true, possesses the virility and enterprise of youth, but has passed through many experiences and solved many problems which younger races have hardly yet recognized. The heart and essence of the Indian experience is to be found in a constant intuition of the unity of all life, and the instinctive and ineradicable conviction that the recognition of this unity is the highest good and the uttermost freedom. All that India can offer to the world proceeds from her philosophy. This philosophy is not, indeed, unknown to others—it is equally the gospel of Jesus and of Blake, Lao Tze, and Rumi—but nowhere else has it been made the essential basis of sociology and education.

Every race must solve its own problems, and those of its own day. I do not suggest that the ancient Indian solution of the special Indian problems, though its lessons may be many and valuable, can be directly applied to modern conditions. What I do suggest is that the Hindus grasped more firmly than others the fundamental meaning and purpose of life, and more deliberately than others organized society with a view to the attainment of the fruit of life; and this organization was designed, not for the advantage of a single class, but, to use a modern formula, to take from each according to his capacity, and to give to each according to his needs. How far the *rishis* succeeded in this aim maybe a matter of opinion. We must not judge of Indian society, especially Indian society in its present moment of decay, as if it actually realized the Brahmanical social ideas; yet even with all its imperfections Hindu society as it survives will appear to many to be superior to any form of social organization attained on a large scale anywhere else, and infinitely superior to the social order which we know as "modern civilization." But even if

it were impossible to maintain this view—and a majority of Europeans and of English-educated Indians certainly believe to the contrary—what nevertheless remains as the most conspicuous special character of the Indian culture, and its greatest significance for the modern world, is the evidence of a constant effort to understand the meaning and the ultimate purpose of life, and a purposive organization of society in harmony with that order, and with a view to the attainment of the purpose.[1] The Brahmanical idea

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[1] Lest I should seem to exaggerate the importance which Hindus attach to *Adhyātmā-vidyā*, the Science of the Self, I quote from the *Bhagavad Gita*, ix. 2: "It is the kingly science, the royal secret, sacred surpassingly. It supplies the only sanction and support to righteousness, and its benefits may be seen even with the eyes of the flesh as bringing peace and permanence of happiness to men"; and from Manu, xii. 100: "Only he who knows the Vedaśāstra, only he deserves to be the Leader of Armies, the Wielder of the Rod of Law, the King of Men, the Suzerain and Overlord of Kings."

The reader who desires to follow up the subject of this

is an Indian "City of the gods"—as *devanāgarī*, the name of the Sanskrit script, suggests. The building of that city anew is the constant task of civilization; and though the details of our plans may change, and the contours of our building, we may learn from India to build on the foundations of the religion of Eternity.

Where the Indian mind differs most from the average mind of modern Europe is in its view of the value of philosophy. In Europe and America the study of philosophy is regarded as an end in itself, and as such it seems of but little importance to the ordinary man. In India, on the contrary, philosophy is not regarded primarily as a mental gimnastic, but rather, and with deep religious conviction, as our salvation (*moksha*) from the ignorance (*avidyā*) which for ever hides from our eyes the vision of reality. Philosophy is the key to the map of life, by which are set forth the meaning of life and the means of attaining its goal.

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essay is strongly recommended to the work of Bhagavan Das, *The Science of Social Organization*, London and Benares, 1910.

It is no wonder, then, that the Indians have pursued the study of philosophy with enthusiasm, for these are matters that concern all.

There is a fundamental difference between the Brahman and the modern view of politics. The modern politician considers that idealism in politics is unpractical; time enough, he thinks, to deal with social misfortunes when they arise. The same outlook may be recognized in the fact that modern medicine lays greater stress on cure than on prevention, i. e., endeavours to protect against unnatural conditions rather than to change the social environment. The Western sociologist is apt to say: "The teachings of religion and philosophy may or may not be true, but in any case they have no significance for the practical reformer." The Brahmans, on the contrary, considered all activity not directed in accordance with a consistent theory of the meaning and purpose of life as supremely unpractical.

Only one condition permits us to excuse the indifference of the European individual to philosophy; it is that the struggle to exist leaves him no time for

reflection. Philosophy can only be known to those who are alike disinterested and free from care; and Europeans are not thus free, whatever their political status. Where modern Industrialism prevails, the Brahman, Kshattriya, and Śūdra alike are exploited by the Vaishya,[2] and where in this way commerce settles on every tree there must be felt continual anxiety about a bare subsistence; the victim of Industry must confine his thoughts to the subject of tomorrow's food for himself and his family; the mere Will to Life takes precedence of the Will to Power. If at the same time it is decided that every man's voice is to count equally in the councils of the nation, it follows naturally that the voice of those who think must be drowned by that of those who do not think and have no leisure. This position leaves all classes alike at the mercy of unscrupulous individual exploitation, for all

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[2] Brahman, Kshattriya, Vaishya, Śūdra—the four primary types of Brahmanical sociology, *viz.*, philosopher and educator, administrator and soldier, tradesman and herdsman, craftsman and labourer.

political effort lacking a philosophical basis becomes merely opportunist. The problem of modern Europe is to discover her own aristocracy and to learn to obey its will.

It is just this problem which India long since solved for herself in her own way. Indian philosophy is essentially the creation of the two upper classes of society, the Brahmans and the Kshattriyas. To the latter are due most of its forward movements; to the former its elaboration, systematization, mythical representation, and application. The Brahmans possessed not merely the genius for organization, but also the power to enforce their will; for, whatever may be the failings of individuals, the Brahmans as a class are men whom other Hindus have always agreed to reverence, and still regard with the highest respect and affection. The secret of their power is manifold; but it is above all in the nature of their appointed *dharma*, of study, teaching, and renunciation.

Of Buddhism I shall not speak at great length, but rather in parenthesis; for the Buddhists never directly attempted to organize human society, think-

ing that, rather than concern himself with polity, the wise man should leave the dark state of life in the world to follow the bright state of the mendicant.[3] Buddhist doctrine is a medicine solely directed to save the individual from burning, not in a future hell, but in the present fire of his own thirst. It assumes that to escape from the eternal recurrence is not merely the *summum bonum*, but the whole purpose of life; he is the wisest who devotes himself immediately to this end; he the most loving who devotes himself to the enlightenment of others.

Buddhism has nevertheless deep and lasting effects on Indian statecraft. For just as the Brahman philosopher advised and guided his royal patrons, so did the Buddhist ascetics. The sentiment of friendliness (*metteya*), through its effect upon individual character, reacted upon social theory.

It is difficult to separate what is Buddhist from what is Indian generally; but we may fairly take the

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[3] *Dhammapada*, 87; also the *Jātakamālā* of Ārya Śūra, xix, 27.

statemanship of the great Buddhist Emperor Aśoka as an example of the effect of Buddhist teaching upon character and policy. His famous edicts very well illustrate the little accepted truth that "in the Orient, from ancient times, national government has been based on benevolence, and directed to securing the welfare and happiness of the people."[4] One of the most significant of the edicts deals with "True Conquest." Previous to his acceptance of the Buddhist *dharma* Aśoka had conquered the neighbouring kingdom of the Kalingas, and added their territory to his own; but now, says the edict, His Majesty feels "remorse for having conquered the Kalingas, because the conquest of a country previously unconquered involves the slaughter, death, and carrying away captive of the people. That is a matter of profound sorrow and regret to His Sacred Majesty... His Sac-

[4] Viscount Torio in *The Japan Daily Mail*, November 19th–20th, 1890. The whole essay, of which a good part is quoted in Lafcadio Hearn's *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, is a searching criticism of Western polity, regarded from the standpoint of a modern Buddhist.

red Majesty desires that all animate beings should have security, self-control, peace of mind, and joyousness... My sons and grandsons, who may be, should not regard it as their duty to conquer a new conquest. If per chance they become engaged in a conquest by arms, they should take pleasure in patience and gentleness, and regard as (the only true) conquest, the conquest won by piety. That avails both for this world and the next."

In another edict "His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King does reverence to men of all sects, whether ascetics or householders." Elsewhere he announces the establishment of hospitals, and the appointment of officials "to consider the case where a man has a large family, has been smitten by calamity, or is advanced in years"; he orders that animals should not be killed for his table; he commands that shade and fruit trees should be planted by the high roads; and he exhorts all men to "strive hard." He quotes the Buddhist saying, "All men are my children." The annals of India, and especially of Ceylon, can show us other Buddhist kings of the same temper. But it will

be seen that such effects of Buddhist teaching have their further consequences mainly through benevolent despotism, and the moral order established by one wise king may be destroyed by his successors. Buddhism, so far as I know, never attempted to formulate a constitution or to determine the social order. Just this, however, the Brahmans attempted in many ways, and to a great extent achieved, and it is mainly their application of religious philosophy to the problems of sociology which forms the subject of the present discussion.

The Kshattriya-Brahman solution of the ultimate problems of life is given in the early Upanishads.[5] It is a form of absolute (according to Śankarāchārya) or modified (according to Rāmānuja) Monism. Filled with enthusiasm for this doctrine of the Unity or Interdependence of all life, the Brahman-Utopists set themselves to found a social order upon the basis provided. In the great epics[6] they represented the

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[5] Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads,* translated by A. S. Geden, London, 1906.

[6] The Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana. These can be stud-

desired social order as having actually existed in a golden past, and they put into the mouths of the epic heroes not only their actual philosophy, but the theory of its practical application—this, above all, in the long discourses of the dying Bhīshma. The heroes themselves they made ideal types of character for the guidance of all subsequent generations; for the education of India has been accomplished deliberately through hero-worship. In the *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu[7] and the *Arthaśāstra*[8] of Chānakya—perhaps

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ied in the prose translations by P. C. Ray and M. N. Dutt, published in Calcutta.

[7] This most important document is best expounded by Bhagavan Das, *The Science of Social Organisation*, London and Benares, 1910; also translated in full in the *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxv. "Herein," says Manu (i. 107, 118), "are declared the good and evil results of various deeds, and herein are expounded the eternal principles of all the four types of human beings, of many lands, nations, tribes, and families, and also the ways of evil men."

[8] N. N. Law, *Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity*, London, 1914. The following precept may serve as an example of the text:

the most remarkable sociological documents the world possesses—they set forth the picture of the ideal society, defined from the standpoint of law. By these and other means they accomplished what has not yet been effected in any other country in making religious philosophy the essential and intelligible basis of popular culture and national polity.

What, then, is the Brahman view of life? To answer this at length, to expound the Science of the Self (*Adhyātmā-vidyā*) which is the religion and philosophy of India, would require considerable space. We have already indicated that this science recognizes the unity of all life—one source, one essence, and one goal—and regards the realization of this unity as the highest good, bliss, salvation, freedom, the final purpose of life. This is for Hindu thinkers eternal life; not an eternity in time, but the recognition here and now of All Things in the Self and the Self in All.

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that the king who has acquired new territory "should follow the people in their faith, with which they celebrate their national, religious, and congregational festivals and amusements."

"More than all else," says Kabīr, who may be said to speak for India, "do I cherish at heart that love which makes me to live a limitless life in this world." This inseparable unity of the material and spiritual world is made the foundation of the Indian culture, and determines the whole character of her social ideals.

How, then, could the Brahmans tolerate the practical diversity of life, how provide for the fact that a majority of individuals are guided by selfish aims, how could they deal with the problem of evil? They had found the Religion of Eternity (*Nirguṇa Vidyā*); what of the Religion of Time (*Saguṇa Vidyā*)?

This is the critical point of religious sociology, when it remains to be seen whether the older idealist (it is old souls that are idealistic, the young are short-sighted) can remember his youth, and can make provision for the interest and activities of spiritual immaturity. To fail here is to divide the church from the everyday life, and to create the misleading distinction of sacred and profane; to succeed is to illuminate daily life with the light of heaven.

The life or lives of man may be regarded as

constituting a curve—an arc of time-experience subtended by the duration of the individual Will to Life. The outward movement on this curve—Evolution, the Path of Pursuit—the *Pravṛitti Mārga*—is characterized by self-assertion. The inward movement—Involution, the Path of Return—the *Nivṛitti Mārga*—is characterized by increasing Self-realization.[9] The religion of men on the outward path is the Religion of Time; the religion of those who return is the Religion of Eternity. If we consider life as one whole, certainly Self-realization must be regarded as its essential purpose from the beginning; all our forgetting is but that we may remember the more vividly. But though it is true that in most men the two phases of experience interpenetrate, we shall best understand the soul of man—drawn as it is in the two opposite, or seeming opposite, directions of

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[9] It is a common convention of Indianists to print the word "self" in lower case when the ego (*jivātman*) is intended, and with a capital when the higher self, the divine nature (*paramātman*), is referred to. Spiritual freedom—the true goal—is the release of the self from the ego concept.

Affirmation and Denial, Will and Will-surrender—by separate consideration of the outward and the inward tendencies. Brahmans avoid the theological use of the terms "good" and "evil," and prefer to speak of "knowledge" and "ignorance" (*vidyā* and *avidyā*), and of the three qualities of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. As knowledge increases, so much the more will a man of his own motion, and not from any sense of duty, tend to return, and his character and actions will be more purely *sāttvic*. But we need not on that account condemn the self-assertion of the ignorant as sin; for could Self-realization be where self-assertion had never been? It is not sin, but youth, and to forbid the satisfaction of the thirst of youth is not a cure; rather, as we realize more clearly every day *desires suppressed breed pestilence*. The Brahmans therefore, notwithstanding the austere rule appointed for themselves, held that an ideal human society must provide for the enjoyment of all pleasures by those who wish for them; they would say, perhaps, that those who have risen above the mere gratification of the senses, and beyond a life of mere pleasure, however refined,

are just those who have already tasted pleasure to the full.

For reasons of this kind it was held that the acquisition of wealth (*artha*) and the enjoyment of sense-pleasure (*kāma*), subject to such law (*dharma*)[10] as may protect the weak against the strong, are the legitimate preoccupations of those on the outward path. This is the stage attained by modern Western society, of which the norm is competition regulated by ethical restraint. Beyond this stage no society can progress unless it is subjected to the creative will of those who have passed beyond the stage of most extreme egoism, whether we call them heroes, guardians, Brahmans, Samurai, or simply men of genius.

Puritanism consists in a desire to impose the natural asceticism of age upon the young, and this position is largely founded on the untenable theor-

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[10] *Dharma* is that morality by which a given social order is protected. "It is by *Dharma* that civilization is maintained" (*Matsya Purāna*, cxlv. 27). *Dharma* may also be translated as social norm, moral law, order, duty, righteousness, or as religion, mainly in its exoteric aspects.

ies of an absolute ethic and an only true theology. The opposite extreme is illustrated in industrial society, which accepts the principles of competition and self-assertion as a matter of course, while it denies the value of philosophy and discipline. Brahman sociology, just because of its philosophical basis, avoided both errors in adopting the theory of *sva-dharma*, the "own-morality" appropriate to the individual according to his social and spiritual status, and the doctrine of the many forms of *Īśvara*, which is so clumsily interpreted by the missionaries as polytheistic. However much the Brahmans held Self-realization to be the end of life, the *summum bonum*, they saw very clearly that it would be illogical to impose this aim immediately upon those members of the community who are not yet weary of self-assertion. It is most conspicuously in this understanding tolerance that Brahman sociology surpasses other systems.

At this point we must digress to speak briefly of the doctrine of reincarnation, which is involved in the theory of eternal recurrence. This doctrine is assumed and built upon by Brahman sociologists,

and on this account we must clearly understand its practical applications. We must not assume that reincarnation is a superstition which, if it could be definitely refuted (and that is a considerable "if"), would have as a theory no practical value. Even atoms and electrons are but symbols, and do not represent tangible objects like marbles, which we could see if we had large enough microscopes; the practical value of a theory does not depend on its representative character, but on its efficacy in resuming past observation and forecasting future events. The doctrine of reincarnation corresponds to a fact which everyone must have remarked; the varying age of the souls of men, irrespective of the age of the body counted in years. "A man is not an elder because his head is grey" (*Dhammapada*, 260). Sometimes we see an old head on young shoulders. Some men remain irresponsible, self-assertive, uncontrolled, unapt to their last day; others from their youth are serious, self-controlled, talented, and friendly. We must understand the doctrine of reincarnation at any rate as an artistic or mythical representation of these facts.

To these facts the Brahmans rightly attached great importance, for it is this variation of temperament or inheritance which constitutes the natural inequality of men, an inequality that is too often ignored in the theories of Western democracy.

We can now examine the Brahmanical theory a little more closely. An essential factor is to be recognized in the dogma of the rhythmic character of the world-process. This rhythm is determined by the great antithesis of Subject and Object, Self and not-Self, Will and Matter, Unity and Diversity, Love and Hate, and all other "Pairs." The interplay of these opposites constitutes the whole of sensational and registrateable existence, the Eternal Becoming (*samsāra*), which is characterized by birth and death, evolution and involution, descent and ascent, *sṛishṭi* and *samhāra*. Every individual life—mineral, vegetable, animal, human, or personal god—has a beginning and an end, and this creation and destruction, appearance and disappearance, are of the essence of the world-process and equally originate in the past, the present, and the future. According to this view,

then, every individual ego (*jivātman*), or separate expression of the general Will to Life (*ichchhā, tṛishṇa*), must be regarded as having reached a certain stage of its own cycle (*gati*). The same is true of the collective life of a nation, a planet, or a cosmic system. It is further considered that the turning point of this curve is reached in man, and hence the immeasurable value which Hindus (and Buddhists) attach to birth in human form. Before the turning point is reached—to use the language of Christian theology—the natural man prevails; after it is passed, regenerate man. The turning point is not to be regarded as sudden, for the two conditions interpenetrate, and the change of psychological centre of gravity may occupy a succession of lives; or if the turning seems to be a sudden event, it is only in the sense that the fall of a ripe fruit appears sudden.

According to their position on the great curve, that is to say, according to their spiritual age, we can recognize three prominent types of men. There is first the mob, of those who are preoccupied with the thought of I and Mine, whose objective is self-

assertion, but are restrained on the one hand by fear of retaliation and of legal or after-death punishment, and on the other by the beginnings of love of family and love of country. These, in the main, are the "Devourers" of Blake, the "Slaves" of Nietzsche. Next there is a smaller, but still large number of thoughtful and good men whose behaviour is largely determined by a sense of duty, but whose inner life is still the field of conflict between the old Adam and the new man. Men of this type are actuated on the one hand by the love of power and fame, and ambition more or less noble, and on the other by the disinterested love of mankind. But this type is rarely pan-human, and its outlook is often simultaneously unselfish and narrow. In times of great stress, the men of this type reveal their true nature, showing to what extent they have advanced more or less than has appeared. But all these, who have but begun to taste of freedom, must still be guided by rules. Finally, there is the much smaller number of great men—heroes, saviours, saints, and avatars—who have definitely passed the period of greatest

stress and have attained peace, or at least have attained to occasional and unmistakeable vision of life as a whole. These are the "Prolific" of Blake, the "Masters" of Nietzsche, the true Brahmans in their own right, and partake of the nature of the Superman and the Bodhisattva. Their activity is determined by their love and wisdom, and not by rules. In the world, but not of it, they are the flower of humanity, our leaders and teachers.

These classes constitute the natural hierarchy of human society. The Brahman sociologists were firmly convinced that in an ideal society, *i.e.*, a society designed deliberately by man for the fulfilment of his own purpose (*purushārtha*),[11] not only must

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[11] *Purushārtha*. This is the Brahmanical formula of utility, forming the standard of social ethics. A given activity is useful, and therefore right, if it conduces to the attainment of *dharma, artha, kāma* and *moksha* (function, prosperity, pleasure, and spiritual freedom), or any one or more of these without detriment to any other. Brahmanical utility takes into account the whole man. Industrial sociologists entertain a much narrower view of utility: "It is

opportunity be allowed to every one for such experience as his spiritual status requires, but also that the best and wisest must rule. It seemed to them impossible that an ideal society should have any other than an aristocratic basis, the aristocracy being at once intellectual and spiritual. Being firm believers in heredity, both of blood and culture, they conceived that it might be possible to constitute an ideal society upon the already existing basis of occupational caste. "If," thought they, "we can determine natural classes, then let us assign to each its appropriate duties (*svadharma*, own norm) and appropriate honour; this will at once facilitate a convenient division of necessary labour, ensure the handing down of hereditary skill in pupillary succession, avoid all possibility of social ambition, and will allow to every individual the experience and activity which he needs and owes." They assumed that by a natural law, the individual

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with utilities that have a price that political economy is mainly concerned" (Nicholson, *Principles of Political Economy*, ed. 2. p. 28).

ego is always, or nearly always, born into its own befitting environment. If they were wrong on this point, then its remains for others to discover some better way of achieving the same ends. I do not say that this is impossible; but it can hardly be denied that the Brahmanical caste system is the nearest approach that has yet been made towards a society where there shall be no attempt to realise a competitive equality, but where all interests are regarded as identical. To those who admit the variety of age in human souls, this must appear to be the only true communism.

To describe the caste system as an idea or in actual practice would require a whole volume. But we may notice a few of its characteristics. The nature of the difference between a Brahman and a Śūdra is indicated in the view that a Śūdra can do no wrong,[12] a view that must make an immense demand upon the patience of the higher castes, and is the absolute converse of the Western doctrine that the King can do no wrong. These facts are well illustrated in the doc-

[12] Manu, x. 126.

trine of legal punishment, that that of the Vaishya should be twice as heavy as that of the Śūdra, that that of the Kshattriya twice as heavy again, that of the Brahman twice or even four times as heavy again in respect of the same offence; for responsibility rises with intelligence and status. The Śūdra is also free of innumerable forms of self-denial imposed upon the Brahman; he may, for example, indulge in coarse food, the widow may re-marry. It may be observed that it was strongly held that the Śūdra should not by any means outnumber the other castes; if the Śūdras are too many, as befell in ancient Greece, where the slaves outnumbered freemen, the voice of the least wise may prevail by mere weight of numbers.

Modem craftsmen interested in the regulation of machinery will be struck by the fact that the establishment and working of large machines and factories by individuals was reckoned a grievous sin; large organizations are only to be carried on in the public interest.[13]

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[13] Manu, xi. 63, 64, 66.¶ A truly progressive society is only

Given the natural classes, one of the good elements of what is now regarded as democracy was provided by making the castes self-governing; thus is was secured that a man should be tried by his peers (whereas, under Industrial Democracy, an artist may be tried by a jury of tradesmen, or a poacher by a bench of squires). Within the caste there existed equality of opportunity for all, and the caste as a body had collective privileges and responsibilities. Society

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possible where there is unity of purpose. How rapidly the social habit can then be changed is well illustrated by the action of many of the Allied Governments in taking control of several departments of industrial production. It is only sad to reflect that it needed a great disaster to compel so simple an act as the limitation of profits. In the same way vast sums are now spent on caring for the welfare of an army of soldiers who would be, and will again be, left to the tender mercies of the labour market in times of peace. If the nation were as united in peace by a determination to make the best of life how much could not be accomplished at a fraction of the cost of war? If a nation can co-operate for self-defence, why not also for self-development?

thus organized has much the appearance of what would now be called Guild Socialism.

In a just and healthy society, function should depend upon capacity; and in the normal individual, capacity and inclination are inseparable (this is the "instinct of workmanship"). We are able accordingly to recognize, in the theory of the Syndicalists, as well as in the caste organization of India, a very nearly ideal combination of duty and pleasure, compulsion and freedom; and the words vocation or *dharma* imply this very identity. Individualism and socialism are united in the concept of function.

The Brahmanical theory has also a far-reaching bearing on the problems of education. "Reading,"says the *Garuda Purāṇa*, "to a man devoid of wisdom, is like a mirror to the blind." The Brahmans attached no value to uncoordinated knowledge or to unearned opinions, but rather regarded these as dangerous tools in the hands of unskilled craftsmen. The greatest stress is laid on the development of character. Proficiency in hereditary aptitudes is assured by pupillary succession within the caste. But it is in respect

of what we generally understand by higher education that the Brahman method differs most from modern ideals for it is not even contemplated as desirable that all knowledge should be made accessible to all. The key to education is to be found in personality. There should be no teacher for whom teaching is less than a vocation (none may "sell the Vedas"), and no teacher should impart his knowledge to a pupil until he finds the pupil ready to receive it, and the proof of this is to be found in the asking of the right questions. "As the man who digs with a spade obtains water, even so an obedient pupil obtains the knowledge which is in his teacher."[14]

The relative position of man and woman is also very noteworthy. Perhaps the woman is in general a younger soul, as Paracelsus puts it, "nearer to the world than man." But there is no war of words as to which is the superior, which inferior; for the question of competitive equality is not considered. The Hindu marriage contemplates identity, and not equal-

[14] Manu, ii. 218.

ity.[15] The primary motif of marriage is not merely individual satisfaction, but the achievement of *Purushārtha*, the purposes of life, and the wife is spoken of as *sahadharmachārinī*, "she who cooperates in the fulfillment of social and religious duties." In the same way for the community at large, the system of caste is designed rather to unite than to divide. Men of different castes have more in common than men of different classes. It is in an Industrial Democracy, and where a system of secular education prevails, that groups of men are effectually separated; a Western professor and a navvy do not understand each other half so well as a Brahman and a Śūdra. It has been justly remarked that "the lowest pariah hanging to the skirts of Hindu society is in a sense as much the disciple of the Brahman ideal as any priest himself."

It remains to apply what has been said to immediate problems. I have suggested that India has nothing

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[15] Manu, ix. 45. "The man is not the man alone; he is the man, the woman, and the progeny. The Sages have declared that the husband is the same as the wife."

of more value to offer to the world than her religious philosophy, and her faith in the application of philosophy to social problems. A few words may be added on the present crisis[16] and the relationship of East and West. Let us understand first that what we see in India is a cooperative society in a state of decay. Western society has never been so highly organized, but in so far as it was organized, its disintegration has proceeded much further than is yet the case in India. And we may expect that Europe, having sunk into industrial competition first, will be the first to emerge. The seeds of a future co-operation have long been sown, and we can clearly recognize a conscious, and perhaps also an unconscious, effort towards reconstruction.

In the meantime the decay of Asia proceeds, partly of internal necessity, because at the present moment the social change from co-operation to competition is spoken of as progress, and because it seems to

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16 I do not mean the present war, as such, but civilization at the parting of the ways.

promise the ultimate recovery of political power, and partly as the result of destructive exploitation by the Industrialists. Even those European thinkers who may be called the prophets of the new age are content to think of a development taking place in Europe alone. But let it be clearly realized that the modern world is not the ancient world of slow communications; what is done in India or Japan today has immediate spiritual and economic results in Europe and America. To say that East is East and West is West is simply to hide one's head in the sand.[17] It

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[17] I should like to point out here that Mr. Lowes Dickinson's return to this position (*An Essay on India, China, and Japan*, and *Appearances*, both 1914), is very unfortunate. He says the religion of India is the Religion of Eternity, the religion of Europe the Religion of Time, and chooses the latter. These phrases, by the way, are excellent renderings of *Pravṛitti dharma* and *Nivṛitti dharma*. So far as Mr. Dickinson's distinction is true, in so far that is as India suffers from premature *vairāgya*, and Europe from excessive activity, so far each exhibits an excess which each should best be able to correct. But an antithesis of this sort is

will be quite impossible to establish any higher social order in the West so long as the East remains infatuated with the, to her, entirely novel and fascinating theory of *laissez-faire*.

The rapid degradation of Asia is thus an evil portent for the future of humanity and for the future of that Western social idealism of which the begin-

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only conceptually possible, and no race or nation has ever followed either of the religions exclusively. All true civilization is the due adjustment of the two points of view. And just because this balance has been so conspicuously attained in India, one who knows far more of India than Mr. Dickinson remarks that she "may yet be destined to prepare the way for the reconciliation of Christianity with the world, and through the practical identification of the spiritual with the temporal life, to hasten the period of that third step forward in the moral development of humanity, when there will be no divisions of race, creed, or class, or nationality between men, by whatsoever name they may be called, for they will all be one in the acknowledgment of their common Brotherhood" (Sir George Birdwood, *Sva*, p. 355).

nings are already recognizable. If, either in ignorance or in contempt of Asia, constructive European thought omits to seek the co-operation of Eastern philosophers, there will come a time when Europe will not be able to fight Industrialism, because this enemy will be entrenched in Asia. It is not sufficient for the English colonies and America to protect themselves by immigration laws against cheap Asiatic labour; that is a merely temporary device, and likely to do more harm than good, even apart from its injustice. Nor will it be possible for the European nationalist ideal that every nation should choose its own form of government, and lead its own life,[18] to be realized, so long as the European nations have, or desire to have, possessions in Asia. What has to be secured is the conscious co-operation of East and West for common ends, not the subjection of either to the other, nor their lasting estrangement. For if Asia be not with Europe, she will be against her, and there

[18] The ideal of self-determination (*sva-rāj*) for which the Allies claim to be fighting.

may arise a terrible conflict, economic, or even armed, between an idealistic Europe and a materialized Asia.

To put the matter in another way, we do not fully realize the debt that Europe already owes to Asiatic thought, for the discovery of Asia has hardly begun. And, on the other hand, Europe has inflicted terrible injuries upon Asia in modern times.[19] I do not mean to say that the virus of "civilization" would not have spread through Asia quite apart from any direct European attempts to effect such a result—quite on the contrary; but it cannot be denied that those who have been the unconscious instruments of the degradation of Asiatic society from the basis of *dharma* to the basis of contract have incurred a debt.

The "clear air" of Asia is not merely a dream of the past. There is idealism, and there are idealists in modern India, even amongst those who have been

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[19] For example—and without the least ill-will—the English in India who unconsciously created social confusion simply because they could not understand what they saw, and endeavoured to fit a co-operative structure into the categories of modern political theory.

corrupted by half a century of squalid education. We are not all deceived by the illusion of progress, but, like some of our European colleagues, desire "the coming of better conditions of life, when the whole world will again learn that the object of human life is not to waste it in a feverish anxiety and race after physical objects and comforts, but to use it in developing the mental, moral, and spiritual powers, latent in man."[20] The debt, then, of Europe, can best be paid—and with infinite advantage to herself—by seeking the co-operation of modern Asia in every adventure of the spirit which Europe would essay. It is true that this involves the hard surrender of the old idea that it is the mission of the West to civilize the East; but that somewhat Teutonic and Imperial view of *Kultur* is already discredited. What is needed for the common civilization of the world is the recognition of common problems, and to co-operate in their solution. If it be asked what inner riches India brings to aid in the realization of a civilization of the world,

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[20] S. C. Basu. *The Daily Practice of the Hindus*, 2nd ed., p. 4.

then, from the Indian standpoint, the answer must be found in her religions and her philosophy, and her constant application of abstract theory to practical life.

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