

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

HAVING applied in October to the Central Housing Board for sums totalling £200,000 for housing Natives and Indians in Durban, the Town Council received the following reply from the secretary of that body:—

"I am directed to inform you that your Council's application for a loan of £100,000 for providing additional native accommodation and also a sum of £100,000 for erecting houses for Indians within the Borough was considered at the last meeting of the Central Housing Board, and to express regret that there are no funds available for meeting the application."

The above letter, having been duly considered by the Council-in-Committee, the following recommendation was on the agenda for last week's meeting of the open Council:—

"That having regard to the letter from the Secretary of the Central Housing Board's regret that there are no funds available for meeting the Council's application for £100,000 for the establishment of an Indian village, and £100,000 for providing additional native accommodation, strong representations be made to the Hon. the Minister of the Interior, urging that the Government make provision for the above amounts to the Durban Town Council on its next estimates, particularly having regard to the statement of the Hon. the Minister in the House of Assembly on the 9th May, 1922, that, 'Municipalities which did their best to encourage Asiatic segregation would receive Government assistance,' upon which assurance the Durban Corporation submitted its application for a housing loan of £100,000 for the establishment of an Indian village." The above motion was carried by the Council without dissent.

Indians pay taxes no less than Europeans, but in return, they have not only no representation but they are debarred from almost all other conveniences and comforts enjoyed by Europeans. The mighty little that is spent on Indians is grudgingly spent, which fact was evident from the suggestion made at the last session of the Provincial Council that the amount spent on Indian Education should be curtailed. Having regard to the fact that the ordinary comforts that the citizens are entitled to enjoy are restricted only to the white section, the question naturally arises as to what is being done with the money derived from Indians and natives. Is it not only fair that this amount is spent on them and no where else? The excuse that they wish to encourage Asiatic segregation would seem nothing else but bluff on the Council's part to secure the above loan.

On the other hand, if this loan is granted and the work of establishing an "Indian village" as it is called commenced, the step will be one without the slightest appreciation or consent of the Indian community. Indians have strongly protested against the Government's segregation policy, and forcible imposition can lead only to dissatisfaction among the section concerned and a consequent breach of peace.

Mr. James McBride, one of Durban's leading business men, who had been on a short trip to Australia to visit his married sister in Melbourne, on his return recently, gave an interview to a representative of the *Natal Mercury*. In the course of his interview, Mr. McBride is reported to have stated:—"What struck me most was the almost entire absence of blacks and coloured people, and to my mind the 'White Australia' policy is their most valuable asset. The want of coloured labour in the North is no doubt retarding the development of that part of the country for the present, but this handicap is of little account compared with the great advantage the "all white" policy is to the country as a whole."

Lahore, Dec. 8.—In pursuance of the decision of the Punjab Government, the gaols have been emptied of the Sikh prisoners arrested in connection with the Akali agitation for the ejection of the incumbents of the shrines. The released prisoners, who up to the present have been over 50 or under 18 years of age, were cheered as they marched in procession through the streets. The control of several of the minor Sikh shrines has been voluntarily offered to the Sikh Reform Committee.—Reuter.

This is but another instance of the victory of Passive Resistance. The sufferings and tortures the Sikhs have undergone will remain as a monument for the future generations of how liberty is achieved. The Sikhs have paid a heavy price for the liberty they have obtained and they have every reason to be proud of the noble example they have set to India and to the world. The Government will have little reason to be proud of any concessions on their part, for it is not they that have given the concessions. It is the mightier and the unseen Power that has heard the pathetic cries of the innocent Sikhs.

The *Star* Bulawayo correspondent states:—

During our recent referendum campaign, practically all the Indian, native and coloured votes were secured against Union on the grounds that there is no sort of colour bar in Rhodesia. How far this is from being the case we are reminded by a fine of £25 or four months imposed upon a coloured man in the local court in connection with a mining licence. The charge was that the accused secured the licence in the name of another man, but it came out that being coloured he was not entitled to such a licence. Another affair bearing upon the same general question is a second instance of the Administration having granted a trading licence to an Indian after the Bulawayo Municipality had refused the application. It is said that this overruling of the decisions of local authorities will be prevented once Responsible Government is in operation.

The London correspondent of the *Star* (Johannesburg) writes as follows:—

Mr. C. R. Das, a Hindu lawyer, who used to make a big income from his practice at the Calcutta Bar, has now taken up the mantle compulsorily laid aside by Gandhi when that famous agitator entered prison.

Das has himself recently left prison after serving six months for breaking the law relating to the unlawful assembly of volunteers. Before this, Lord Ronaldsday, while Governor of Bengal, had hoped that Das would be deflected from his misguided ways, for he was not then a conspicuous extremist. Now he is the leader of the Congress Party in Bengal, and recently he was informed that the State of Kashmir did not desire his presence if he intended to take part in political propaganda. According to news from Calcutta, Das, who has a personality with a grip on large Indian audiences second only to Gandhi's, has decided that the time has come to scrap vague idealisms and concentrate on what he describes as practical politics inspired by real ideals. It is significant that the first step advocated by him in the detailed programme which he is placing before Congress is precisely the same as Mrs. Besant's Home Rule scheme, minus the stipulation "as members of the British Commonwealth." If Das achieves what many believe to be his real object—combination with moderates on a common platform for the purpose of forcing the Government to grant drastic extensions to the Montagu reforms—events may move very fast during the next year. In some quarters it is thought that his success would imperil the reforms provided in the Government of India Act, and might even furnish good reason for the repeal of the measure designed to give India a gradual probation in the science of self-government.

A Democratic Reform League has recently been formed in Durban with Mr. H. G. Mackeytan, K.C. M.L.A., as chairman of the League. The League proposes to work for the adoption by the existing political parties of, among others, the following principles and the carrying out of them effective measures in accordance therewith:—(1) The maintenance of western civilisation and ideals and their supremacy in South Africa, (2) The maintenance of democracy in government, (3) The development with State-aid of genuine South African industries, and the encouragement, with State-aid, of suitable European immigration, (4) The recognition of the right of the native races of South Africa to develop along lines of well ordered progress in separate and adequate areas.

No mention has been made as to what policy the Democratic Reform League wishes to adopt with regard to the Asiatic question. But, seeing that Mr. Mackeytan is at the head, the segregation of Asiatics is sure to be strongly advocated, and there is little hope of the League being a blessing to the Indian community.

A PATRIOTIC MISSIONARY

THE *Natal Mercury* which has during recent years adopted a very regrettable attitude in regard to the Indian Question in this Province has in its last Saturday's issue a leaderette on Indian Repatriation. It expresses satisfaction that among those repatriated a fair proportion of women and children have been got rid of. It is, however, not hopeful of any great influx "as the conditions of life in Natal are not onerous, and the average Indian is not enthusiastic about politics, thinking far more about being his own landowner and his own master!" The treatment of Indians in Natal, it says, has not been of so harsh a nature as to induce many Indians to forsake the country. "They evince no keen desire to give up the comparatively comfortable existence they have here." Having said this, our contemporary goes on to preach that "matters, however, have changed in recent years

with the bestowal of Home or Dominion rule in India, and some of the younger and more educated Indians may, and should, feel the "call of the East," and devote themselves to the service of the country of their ancestors, thus showing their true patriotism." The paper advises the Government that "they could circularise literature setting forth the new attractions in India, establish an office in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, to assist the returned emigrants, and generally make the path easier for them, even going so far as to employ agents—a kind of patriotic missionaries—to encourage the Indians to return and afford every opportunity for young Indians and their families to establish their homes in the land of their forefathers." To put it in a nutshell our contemporary's advice is that everything possible should be done to pick Indians off to their own country.

The remark that is grudgingly made by our contemporary that the conditions of life in Natal are not onerous may be absolutely true in comparison with the conditions in India. And it is for that simple reason that Indians, with the exception of those that were brought here as slaves, had ventured to come to this country, just as the vast number of aliens have done. Indians, of course, were quite confident that being citizens of a common Empire they would receive the respect and hospitality due to them from their fellow-citizens. They are naturally surprised to see quite the reverse position—that aliens are welcomed with open arms and left unmolested while British Indians can find no room in any part of the Empire to which they belong. While financially the conditions of life here may be said to be comparatively comfortable, the conditions of life politically are wholly uncomfortable so far as Indians are concerned. If Indians have been quiet with regard to their political grievances it does not necessarily mean, as our contemporary would have us believe, that they have no grievances. Their quietude is only an evidence that Indians are lovers of peace. Had there been any other people in their place the Government and people of this country would perhaps have experienced long before now some bitter times. But Indians have been patient in the hope that some better understanding will yet be possible by negotiations between India and the Union Government. While Indians are thus patiently waiting, the *Natal Mercury* and others under its leadership seem to be concerned that the political conditions of Indians are not yet made quite sufficiently bad enough to drive them voluntarily out of this country! It is well for the *Natal Mercury* to suggest to us that we should go to India and devote ourselves to the service of our mother-country but we would ask our contemporary not to forget the Imperial aspect of the question. The British Empire has not yet decided definitely to sever its connection with India. On the contrary it is struggling with all its might to cling to India. So long as that is the position and so long as Indians are still citizens of the Empire, a part of that Empire cannot with the slightest profession of loyalty to that Empire—and indeed South Africa professes this most—ask them to clear out of their boundary. South Africa seems to forget that its present attitude is as though it had no connection whatever with the Empire. Under such circumstances it would be only honest on its part to openly declare its policy. It cannot play two parts at the same time. If South Africa were outside the

Empire it certainly would have the right to have its own way. But being within the Empire it is in duty bound to act in a manner that will not imperil the Empire. Yes, missionaries are needed very badly. Not "patriotic missionaries" of the kind suggested by our contemporary; not those who have made it their business to merely increase Christianity. But those who could save Christianity from being killed, Christian principles, on which the British Empire is based, from being flouted, so that those who profess to be friends of the Empire may not become the very enemies of the Empire. The repatriation scheme is based on entirely un-Christian principles and its end will be a blessing not only to the Indian community but to South Africa as well as the Empire.

ST. AIDAN'S INDIAN HOSPITAL

OPERATING THEATRE OPENED BY BISHOP

For six years now, St. Aidan's Hospital in Leopold Street has been unostentatiously pursuing its work for good among the Indians and coloured population of the town. The work has not been without its reward, for numerous cases have been received since the hospital was started, and in the greater number cures have been effected. Although several donations have been received, it has only just been possible to raise the amount necessary for an operating theatre which is badly needed, and last Thursday afternoon the opening ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Natal. There was a representative gathering of both Europeans and Indians at the ceremony, while the Bishop was supported by Archdeacon Hodson, Father Harp and the Revs. Maddock, Potter and Grellier.

After a short and suitable service of prayer, the Bishop of Natal said: "My Friends,—Whatever may be the attitude of the Christian and the non-Christian public towards the work of the Indian Mission being carried on by the English Church here in Durban, there is no one, I think, who can withhold his sympathy and support from that department of the work which is visibly expressed in the hospital where we are gathered this afternoon. All men and women—and especially those who are named by the name of Him who showed, when He was on earth such tender, beautiful, and perfect sympathy with all sufferers whom He came across, to whatever nationality or class in society they belonged—know that the Mission is doing a good work in ministering to the physical sickness and weakness of their Indian sisters here in this town. How many there are of these in need of such relief we know better than we did, because of what we saw when Mr. Hickson was holding his healing mission in Durban and elsewhere. And agreed upon that, they will recognise that any extension to the buildings of the hospital, and any improvement to its equipment, which will ensure that the ministrations to these people are carried out under more favourable conditions, are good things also, and which call for their practical assistance. It is upon an improvement of the conditions under which the work in future will be one that we have just now asked God's blessing. It is a much-needed addition to the hospital that I now, in Christ's name, declare open for the use of our suffering fellows of the Indian people amongst us."

"In doing so I want to congratulate Nurse Cole—to whose unselfish, brave, and devoted service I am grateful for the opportunity of bearing public testimony—on the accomplishment of a desire she has long had, and also on the success which has met her efforts to raise the required funds. Nor ought we to forget to acknowledge the help secured through the good offices of the superintendent of the Indian Mission, from the Society for the Propagation of the

Gospel, and for the extension of the surgical work of the Mission. It was on his representations that £25 has been sent out by the Society. And here let me say how very sorry Mr. Herbert Ware is not to be here to-day. Oily engagements in connection with the Mission in the north of Natal, made in a few weeks ago, prevent him being here. I know he would like me to say that he is in perfect sympathy with what we are doing to-day, and to tell you what perhaps will be news to some of you, that the Society is sending out a second nursing sister to assist Miss Cole—Miss Kate Wells. She will be leaving England early in the new year, and her coming and help will add greatly, I am sure, to the usefulness of the hospital. Her salary will be paid by the Society which sends her."

A few minutes ago I congratulated Nurse Cole on her success in raising funds for this addition which we have just now opened. Last, however, there should be any mind as to doing, and I felt you should go away disappointed at having had no practical way of showing your sympathy this afternoon with the medical side of the Mission, I should like to make it clear that for the operating theatre much is still needed to furnish it complete, and that for the purchase of this equipment further funds are required. I am sure that out of the gratitude you have to Almighty God for the good health which you enjoy, and out of sympathy with those less fortunate than yourselves, you will give generously to the collection which is now going to be made. For such generous giving you have the encouragement contained in the words of Him, whom many of us believe to be the Saviour of the bodies as well as of the soul of men. It is not proposed to stop the good work where it stands to-day. In the future we wish to see a much larger place erected so that the hospital can accommodate male as well as female patients. At present only a few males can be taken in and their sleeping places must necessarily be on the verandah. Should anyone wish to send donations for the enlargement of the present place, they should be addressed to St. Aidan's Hospital, 91, Leopold Street."—*Natal Mercury*.

CAN EUROPE RECOVER?

(By MR. C. F. ANDREWS)

The truth about the state of Europe has only slowly filtered through to India and the East. But the time has now come when the crisis which has been reached can be no longer concealed. It is becoming realised that in spite of Europe's imposing structure which still fills the perspective of history and looms large on every horizon of the mind, there is a tottering and a crumbling going on in Europe since the War which, if not arrested, must soon end in collapse.

Earthquake shocks are still running across the ground from Russia westward. They are felt in every western capital. It is not only Moscow, Peking and Kieff which to-day are shadows of their former greatness, hollow shells where before human life was the thing and science was alert. Warsaw, Cracow, Vienna, Bucharest, Constantinople, Budapest, all alike show signs of impending doom. The inevitable trend of desolation further and further to the West has set in. What is being realised at last by the whole western world is the naked fact, that since the Great War, which began more than eight years ago, the economic condition of Europe, instead of rapidly improving has gone from bad to worse. As the years have gone by, one country after another has sunk into practical bankruptcy; paper money has become valueless on exchange abroad; the amenities of civilisation have vanished, and society as a mutual co-operative bond has given place to individual greed, selfishness and despair. As though under a dark shadow of eclipse, even the country in Europe in turn has been passing into the darkness and it would seem as though the shadow

would creep further and further over the map of Europe westward until the shores of the Atlantic are reached. The Latin countries, Italy, Portugal and Spain, are no more immune than the regions of the Teuton and the Slav.

H. G. Wells, indeed, in one of his recent publications, looks further still into the future and predicts that this extinguishing of the light in city after city in Europe will react upon America itself; that darkness may at length overshadow the western cities beyond the Atlantic and not the European cities alone. He points out that when a dead rot sets in there is no possibility of telling where it will stop. He marks the significance of the fact that, already unemployment, both in the United Kingdom and in the United States has reached unheard of proportions. The men who are willing to work and have no work to do, number millions instead of thousands. The downfall of credit in one country immediately affects the neighbouring countries round it, just as a fiercely burning house in a densely populated street involves the neighbouring houses in its own conflagration. Thus the mind of Mr. G. H. Wells, who himself has seen most of the countries with his own eyes since the War, can now conceive no other picture, as events are moving forward, than that of the collapse of Europe and with it finally the collapse of America in spite of its coffers bulging with useless gold. There is, he tells us, only one avenue of escape. The whole mentality of Europe and America must be changed.

Maxim Gorky has presented before the eyes of an almost incredulous world a picture which is even more sombre in its colour and tone than that of H. G. Wells. His warning is given to the whole of Europe and it has found its translation in every language.

"Dr. Nansen," writes, "that great heart burning with active love of humanity has given us concerning Russia, a terrifying picture of reality. But, in truth, the reality itself is even more terrible than his picture. For the heart of Europe has grown callous. Not even all Dr. Nansen's persuasive force will penetrate the deep, the indescribable indifference of the Europeans to-day. Nansen, Keynes, Nitli, and a few others, writing to uphold the voice of reason and conscience in humanity, have uttered flaming words on the need of awakening the love of one's neighbour and restoring between European states the relation of reason and justice. But as yet, there is nothing to lead us to hope that any great sympathy has been aroused for the millions of Russia. Men of the race of Leo Tolstoy and Dostoevsky are dying of starvation and sinking into cannibalism. There is, as yet, nothing to encourage us to hope that the irrefutable evidence, which has now been produced of the pillage of Germany, will ever move to pity those who are obstinately aiming at her economic destruction."

Maxim Gorky goes on to point out that with the economic destruction of Germany the collapse of the whole of Europe must come; and yet men are mad enough to be ready to face their own destruction, rather than forgo their revenge. Before the war he was enthusiastic about the civilisation of the West. But since the war, he has lost faith in the genius of Europe. For the peoples of Europe have become tainted and coarsened in spirit, as though some vile poison from within had been destroying her noble nature. All the brilliant intellect of Europe now seems to him to have been warped by the war fever, to have been blinded by the war passion. This has been the overwhelming tragedy of modern history, acted out before the eyes of living men. Can Europe survive? Can humanity recover from this creeping paralysis which has attacked the brain of the world?

"Europe," Maxim Gorky continues, "is still to-day the centre of the creative activities of the world of mind, whence have radiated the arts and sciences and technical gifts, that have already produced such marvels. I do not forget, at the same time, that her politicians and exploiters, names which are really two

different words for the same thing, have been accustomed to flay their victims alive. Yet we must remember that Europe spread through the world the ideas of equality and the wealth of her scientific culture. Her very rapacity has given birth to salutary protest. Her very insensibility has engendered aspirations towards a finer humanity. Such has been the feature of the past. But it seems to me that Europe, in our own day, has lost irrevocably her moral authority as a creator of the things of the spirit. After four years a bestial war of white Christendom, and in her present callousness towards the agonies of Russian peasants who are starving, she is losing the respect of the people of Asia and Africa. Her moral prestige is vanishing before their eyes."

In the same article, from which I am quoting, Maxim Gorky states that this shifting of the moral centre of gravity in the human world away from Europe may bring about consequences which are hard to estimate or even to imagine. The change has come so suddenly like an earthquake shock, that it is difficult to see what can be immediately placed like scaffolding in place of that which is decayed in order to prop up the tottering edifice of humanity and avoid the collapse of the world. These shocks of earthquake may not be over and it is not clear what may happen next if they continue.

"I am not," he says, "a man of politics, I am only a Russian, conscious of the great importance of Europe to Russia and the rest of the world; conscious also of the prodigious brain of Europe which has conceived the vast creative ideas of humanism and socialism. Through wonderful scientific achievements and indelible labour Europe has endowed the whole world with an admirable technical equipment. All this I acknowledge. But I do not forget that the Europeans are a minority of the population of the globe; nor do I fail to remember that there has been formed within the European community itself an extremely numerous class of men for whom nothing is uplifting; whose servile labour and humiliation and hunger, the natural result of an abominable class system,—deaden and destroy their minds and bodies. All this drives me to the belief that as formerly in the days of the Roman Empire, so now with this new Empire of the West, the collapse of Europe will result on the one hand from the pressure of the foreign races from the outside, and on the other hand from the explosion of noxious gases accumulated within,—rapacity and envy, greed and retaliation. Those who in Europe have long had for their motto, "After us the Deluge!" will no doubt make mock at these ideas of mine. But it would be much better to devote a little thought to them. It seems to me that they contain truths worthy of practical consideration by all serious and upright men."

I have quoted largely from Maxim Gorky's statement concerning Europe because he has himself suffered more than most men the anguish of what had been taking place in his own country and among his own people. He is not speaking from the lips of others, but rather giving painfully in detail what he has felt in his own person and from his own experience.

I will take another witness who has come into the midst of Europe from America. Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, the Editor of the *Nation* writes as follows:—

"Out of the mass of contradictions certain facts stand out beyond cavil; economic Germany is steadily and rapidly going down hill towards Austrian conditions, just as Austria is steadily approximating Russian conditions. If the present dog-in-the-manger policy of France continues, Germany will unquestionably collapse, and with her will go down not only Austria but France as well. In the eyes of every unbiased observer from America, whether official or unofficial, and of the many men of the other nations, with whom I have talked, there is no doubt that there can be no salvation for Germany and no safety for Europe until the reparations question is settled on a basis of com-

mon sense, justice and the actual possibilities of the German people. The Versailles Treaty must be made a scrap of paper *at once*. There is not a day to be lost; and we must free ourselves from the thought that, it is simply a French or German question, *it is a question of saving Europe*. Finally, I repeat, as Germany goes, so goes Europe. This is a commonplace."

Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, whom I have quoted above, declares that he is not a pessimist, as many are. He still has hope. But the sands are running out every day and the collapse may come at any moment. Even if it should come, all is not yet over. For a revolution may, even in the end, be a round about road to recovery. But the cost to the world in suffering and misery would be indescribable, and at this stage in the world's history, we ought to have found some means of escaping from such futile and unnecessary pain. Mr. Villard ends his most solemn warning with these words:—

"If strife comes again, it will be the murder of brothers in the most desperate of all civil wars and it will lead to nowhere. For the final truth is, that until the economic situation is cured, no German Government can do else than live from day to day; and the control of those economic conditions lies not in the hands of Germans who are now in power; it rests in Paris and London, and in the last resort in Washington."

One further writer on this subject has called for the serious attention of all thinking men at the present time. The work of Oswald Spengler,—"Der Untergang des Abendlandes," "The Downfall of the West," is regarded as a most apocalyptic by many thousands of thoughtful readers and has given rise on the continent to a new cult, which has been given the ugly name, 'Spenglerismus.' Herr Spengler has undertaken the same task that Mr. G. H. Wells undertook in writing his "Outline of History," but unlike H. G. Wells he finds in human history a recurrent theme which may be called the decline and fall of Empires. World civilisations, according to Spengler, go through their periods of growth and decline in the same manner as individual human lives. The time of the decline of the West has come, and the European War ushered in the death throes of the great civilisation that the earth has ever seen. There is no escape from ineluctable fate.

Since this book was written, much has gone to strengthen this theory of decline. Those who have come out from Europe, "serious and upright men" as Maxim Gorky would call them, have told us what is happening there to-day,—the incredible poverty; the misery of unemployment; the slow but never pausing westward menace of typhus fever; the ill-clad, hunger-stricken people of Russia and Poland; the breaking down of the 'cordon sanitaire'; the spread of that still more ultimately disintegrating disease, the scourge of modern Europe, syphilis; the desperate decay of sexual morality; the reckless financial speculation and the squandering of money, with the motto,—“Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,” carried everywhere into practice. Nothing can well be darker than the account which has reached us of European conditions since the fatal years of war.

On the other side, as every witness who comes from Europe reports, there is a pathetic turning to the East on the part of thoughtful men and women for enlightenment in the midst of this intolerable human misery.

This was the meaning of the more than royal reception, which the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore received in Central Europe, where he was looked upon by all as a prophet and a spiritual teacher from the East. This is also the meaning of the earnest and enthusiastic study of his works. They are regarded as those of one from the midst of another world of ancient wisdom, which Europe in her impiety had too long rejected and despised.

Recently, there have come to hand, through the newspapers and through correspondence, remarkable

testimonies from almost every country of Europe, which show with what earnestness and enthusiasm the Poet's writing are being taken up and read and studied. Editions in Germany, amounting to an almost incredible number of copies, are being produced. The translations are being made, both from the original Bengali and from the English. To show with what keen insight and interest the people of Central Europe are following his work, it may be mentioned that before even a month had passed, from the time of its publication in India, the Poet's new Bengali drama, called Mukta-Dhara, ('The Waterfall') had been made the subject of a long review in the *Vossische Zeitung* of Berlin. The appreciation and understanding displayed by the reviewer were very noticeable. In the Literary Review of the *New York Evening Post*, the correspondent from Germany writes as follows:—

"Another tendency, leading away from the humdrum of every day life, turns towards the East. To many, the far distant East is the land of fulfilment. For them, Rabindranath Tagore is the bringer of healing. It is beyond belief with what avidity his writings, gentle and vague and quite of another way of thinking from that which is characteristic of the German, are consumed by the German reading public. None of the great German writers has found so general a distribution for his books among all classes as the sage of the Ganges. It is the German philosophers who have directed the eyes of the German educated classes towards the East. There is, for instance, Oswald Spengler, whose decadence of the Occident, ('Der Untergang des Abendlandes') created a sensation; and Count Keyserling, founder of the School of Wisdom at Darmstadt, whose "Diary of an Itinerant Philosopher" (*Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen*) ranks as a signal achievement. Count Keyserling is a professed adherent of the Indian Philosophy, of which Rabindranath Tagore is the great exponent. As Count Keyserling is the most eminent, at any rate the most spirited German philosopher of the hour, his books strike responsive chords among German educated readers."

In one of the most thoughtful of the smaller English magazines, there is a significant passage concerning Italy from the pen of a writer who has been paying a visit recently to all the great intellectual centres of the South of Europe. After contrasting Italy's attitude at the Peace Conference with that of Great Britain, when Italy urged the abandonment of all indemnities and Great Britain pursued throughout the game of grab, the writer goes on to state as follows:—

"In the Italian cities, and especially in that perennial fount of thought and culture, Florence, there are stirrings of new life. A remarkable number of new movements and little independent groups have arisen, criticising, questioning, exploring. Cultural and philosophical they are in some cases,—academic we might say,—but reaching out in thought to a wider and deeper understanding of other peoples, religions and to the restless body of the workers. Mazzini is becoming more of a force in the minds of that young Italy, which desires to see ideals expressed in political forms; groups are especially devoted to the study of thought and policy. The influence of the East is most marked. It is as though many noble minds find it impossible to dissociate the religion of Jesus from the vast ecclesiastical organisation with which they are familiar, and from a discredited Christendom, and are therefore turning back to more ancient wells of inspiration. Here also, as most notably throughout Germany, the study of Rabindranath Tagore has become a serious and widespread cult. All this is symptomatic of the deep discontent with the materialism of the West."

A singularly touching letter came recently to the Poet from a University student in Northern Germany. It shows more vividly than almost anything else that I have recently read, the spiritual earnestness and the moral determination of Young Germany, in the midst

of sufferings and privations, whose intensity can hardly be imagined. A passage in it runs as follows:—

"Sir, we are seeking to serve the international reconciliation of the different peoples of Europe by means of the youth of each country, always believing in the great ideas of humanity."

"We, young men and students, who had been witnesses of the destruction in the old order of things, which was composed of different states and Governments for winning power and organisation for capitalistic aims,—we, the youth of Europe, have learnt, under the huge sacrifice of blood which the West had to give, that all is lost if the soul dies in isolation by itself. We know that the most important thing of life is the spirit of goodness and friendship."

"When I looked into your eyes, Poet, on meeting you in Stockholm last year, I felt the deep correlation between the Oriental and the Occident spirit. I am sure that we should work together, the youth of India and the youth of Europe. As the representative of the 'International League of Youth' for reconciliation and peace, I shall undertake a journey to Italy, Spain and Greece next winter for discourses and personal conferences in favour of our international practical idealism. I shall speak there to the different students of the different Universities. The number of those among the young in Europe, who are wishing for peace and reconciliation, is growing greater. We do not trust any more in the omnipotence of organisation. To prepare our hearts and to bring them one to another, that is the ultimate meaning of our doing. We have heard the call from the East and we listen to it. I am greeting you in the name of all the young men who love you."

In France, the situation has been somewhat different hitherto. The bitterness of the suffering of the past still remains. The word of peace and reconciliation has not yet been uttered except by a band of the most devoted internationalists at whose head stands Romain Rolland. In his supreme moral integrity and his burning spiritual conviction, he leads the way forward in French literature, to-day, to a goal that is universal rather than national. Again and again, in his writings, he expresses his deep admiration and reverence for the Indian Poet, Rabindranath Tagore.

What is longed for so earnestly by the people of Europe to-day, as they turn to India for spiritual help, in their hour of need, is not the strident voice of 'nationalism,' of which Europe herself has grown sick and tired and almost desperate. For over large areas of Europe it is true to-day to assert, that Nationalism is now as heartily detested as it was ardently desired before the War.

The message from the East that Europe needs in living form is the message of the Buddha and the Christ,—the truth, that evil can never be overcome by evil, but only by good; that the secret of the higher life of man lies in forgiveness, not in taking vengeance; that higher justice consists in love, and not in retribution. The message that Europe needs is the truth of unity instead of intensive strife,—the message running through all the Upanishads, which tell of the Advaitam whose nature is joy, the Universal One in whom all things subsist, the One without a second in whom all beings are united. It is the same message, which Christ himself declared in personal ways to man, when he said,—"I and my Father are one."

This message of unity and love is at the very centre of all Indian life and thought. It has been lived in India for countless generations and has made India humane.

It is true that Europe has plundered Asia and often shamefully despoiled her. Yet in the hour of Europe's need, all this will be forgotten. For, in India, there is the heart to forgive the past. The question remains,—Has India still the power to sound the universal note which once was truly hers? Has she, in her political subjection, the spiritual strength to move the world? I, for one, believe that she has; and when

that note is sounded out of her own supreme experience and with her supreme conviction, then Europe at last will understand the true mission of India among the peoples of the earth.—*The Indian Review.*

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