

PROTESTANTISM IN INDIA.

BY

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[Reprinted from THE UNITARIAN REVIEW.]

BOSTON :

PRESS OF GEO. H. ELLIS, 141 FRANKLIN STREET.

1883.

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[This article is the verbatim report of an address delivered at the Ministers' Institute in Lowell, Mass., before nearly two hundred Unitarian clergymen. The address is one of a large number delivered by Mr. Mozoomdar to representative audiences in America; and the resolution adopted by the Institute is appended, as fairly expressing the hearty response of interest and sympathy with which his utterances have everywhere been greeted: "The members of the Ministers' Institute convened in Lowell hereby express their thanks for the noble exposition given by Mr. Protap Chunder Mozoomdar of the course of free religious thought in India, and especially of that form of piety known as the religion of the Brahmo Somaj. We recognize in this exposition the features of spiritual piety and intellectual freedom which appeal most strongly to our sympathy as men, our honor and reverence as those who have received of the spirit and consecrated themselves to the work of Christ. We think we see in that religious movement the advent of a faith full of promise, beauty, and hope. The generous, tender, and devout piety, which it appears to embody, appeals deeply and powerfully to our own hearts. And we are proud and glad to express, through the friend who has now addressed us, our best sympathy and our most earnest good wishes to our Hindu brethren in the faith of humanity and of truth."]

Christian Brethren, my Friends and Fellow-children of a Common Father,—Your welcome assures me, your kind greetings encourage me. You will readily forgive, will you not, the deficiencies of thought and speech in a man who comes from the other side of the globe. You will take me by the hand as a younger brother, and pardon what in me seems imperfect and unworthy.

But, before I speak, I look up to Thee, O unseen Presence, O God, whom, not knowing what to say, we call our Father. Lead us through the entanglements of this earthly life, through the delusions of false knowledge and temptations to infidelity. Deliver us from evil, from super-

stition, error, and unwisdom. Take us through the middle path between reason and faith, between philosophy and trust, between this life and the next that leads on to thy kingdom. Teach me what to speak, and teach my brethren to listen to my words in the spirit of sympathy and love; and all glory be unto thee. Amen.

I am a Hindu Protestant. I can assure you that Protestantism has been anything but unknown in India. While, however, I look back upon the principle of protest in my country, I cannot but think that this Protestantism has to answer for a great deal. I am ready to concede to it the great benefit of teaching us the guidance of a sound, clear reason: I am ready to honor it as having stimulated and educated the critical faculty in us; but, on the other hand, I am profoundly conscious how Protestantism, in India at least, has cast down spirituality. I am for the development of knowledge,—let it grow from more to more,—but I am equally for the culture of our devotional powers. Nay: when I look upon the great masses of mankind, millions of men and women who can have no opportunity for intellectual culture, I am disposed to think that greater importance should be attached to human piety, to profound prayer, to simple trust in God. My experience has been that the spirit of protest has tended to undermine that part of man's being, so much so that the case to be decided to-day is not authority versus reason, but criticism versus faith, unbelief versus piety and prayer. I might go farther, and say the case is now between religion and agnosticism, between theism and atheism. The case has a serious aspect. If I mistake not, that seriousness is not confined to my own community; but in England, in America, in all Christian countries, the case is equally serious. There is a struggle, a hard struggle, a death struggle, between religion and the absence of religion, between simple piety and what my friend Miss Cobbe calls magnanimous atheism.

It will be my endeavor this morning to present to you the ways in which we, in India, have tried to decide that case.

Protest against orthodox systems and authorities began in India in prehistoric times. The great system of philosophy known as the Sankhya system was undoubtedly a protestant school of thought, having for its object the subversion of theories contained in the Vedas on the subject of the genesis and evolution of the universe. But the Sankhya philosophy was not a religious system. It was clearly a metaphysical system; and the Brahmans in India are so supple, susceptible, elastic, and tolerant that, although they must have inwardly felt a secret opposition to that philosophy, they did not outwardly wage war with it, but quietly absorbed it, and assimilated it with their own thought. Hence, the origin of Protestantism in India did not give rise to that cry for fire and blood about which we know elsewhere. Yet there is no true, deep philosophy that does not influence man's faith. There is no school of thought that is wholly barren. There is no speculation that has not its practical side also. And, though the protesting philosophy of Sankhya did not seem to have any direct religious bearing, yet it went into the secret thoughts of the people. It affected the motives of action. It produced unconscious reflection; and from the fertile seed of Sankhya philosophy there sprang up and grew a mighty tree of protest, whose branches spread over the whole area of the land, and almost overshadowed all previous belief and thought. Buddhism was the logical and natural result of the Sankhya philosophy. From this seed sown by Kapila's system there rose up the great tree of Buddhism, whose branches reached from Chittagong to the passes of the Hindu Kush, from the tops of the Himalayas to the Southern Sea, nay, to Ceylon itself.

You will then agree with me that Buddhism was Protestantism pure and simple. It is generally said to have sprung up about five hundred years before Christ. Buddhism had a philosophical as well as a religious side.

I am not disposed to think that in the speculative creed of Sakya Muni there was much that could be fairly called original. In those days, as well as in later days, they found

great difficulty in extricating primitive Buddhist thought from the schools of metaphysics founded by and developed by the Sankhya and Patanjali systems; but I will not deal with that point just now.

I am concerned with the religious side of Buddhism. Here, we might at once say that Gautama meant to protest against the letter and the spirit of the Vedas. His protest was against the grand Vedic ceremonialism, which gradually had eaten up all that there was of piety and culture in the ancient Scriptures. His protest was against the authority both of the Scriptures themselves and of those who had monopolized their interpretation. Nay, he went further, and protested against the theology taught by all orthodox systems and by the authorized priesthood.

Let me, once for all, declare that I do not believe Gautama or his followers were atheists in any sense. Buddha placed the utmost importance on the pre-existence of personal Buddhas. He seemed to draw his inspiration from antecedent fountains of inspired life and teaching; and the whole hierarchy of Buddhas made up the great personal being who might very well be identified with the Being worshipped by the Brahmans as Brahma, and by others as God. If you go into the Hindu theology, you will discover that there, also, the ideal of divine nature presented is exceedingly different from your own. The stand-points of religious belief and philosophy in the West and the East have been different. Yet, so far as the Vedic idea went, Sakya Muni's position was an agnostic position. He never said there was no God, but he did not profess to deal with the theological ideas about God, which one finds in the ancient books of Hindustan. This protest was so far negative.

The protest against the authority of the Vedas, the ceremonies, the position of the Brahman, nay, even the theological principles of the old religion, was clearly a negative protest. But, if Sakya was negative here, he was constructive also,—much more constructive than he was negative. His protest was lost in the great affirmation of humanity

which he made,—an affirmation that changed all the pre-existing ethics of India, and placed its stamp upon all the moral future of that country. From the high influence of Sakya proceeded all that delicate and gentle regard for human beings, as well as for inferior animals, characteristic of modern Hinduism. The Brahmans used to cut up great beasts,—horses and cows,—and eat them, and, it is said, revived them again. The story is that, at the time of great festivals, the Brahmans would collect a large herd of horned and hornless cattle (you see they anticipated France in eating horse-flesh) and butcher them. Then; they would pile up the flesh, and cook it and eat. Afterward, they would gather up all the bones, and utter incantations over them, and so revive the animals, and let them depart in peace. It so happened on one occasion that, when the animal had been killed and the flesh was being cooked, a young Hindu priest, who had a peculiar weakness for beef,—as many others have,—not only ate what he could get, but thrust some into his pockets, if they used pockets in those days. The feast was over, the animals were being revived; but they found some bones were minus. No revival was possible, and the saints were so much exercised that from that time they gave up killing cows. But it is said this young man, fearing the wrath which he had excited, secreted the meat in the ground, and it germinated: the flesh sprang up in the form of onions, and the bones grew up in the form of garlic. And, at the present day, you find nearly the same prejudice against beef as against onion and garlic.

To return from this digression. The humanity which you find at the present time in India is traceable to the influence of the teachings and life of the Buddhist founder and his disciples,—not only that, but physical purity and self-negation also. I cannot think of any other religious system that inculcates the same principles of self-conquest, of the annihilation of carnality, of hatred and enmity, as I see in the religion of the Buddhist. Humanity was divine; love, the chief virtue. Self-conquest, self-discipline, destruction of the passions,

removal of worldly-mindedness, are all taught as the only morality by Buddhism. Physical purity, intellectual wisdom, and humanity for all living beings were the three grand elements which entered into the Hindu character from Sakya Muni's Protestantism. But, afterward, the Brahmans fought with Buddhism, and swept it out of Hindustan. You find the Vedic culture still retained, as well as the Buddhistic morality. You find the spirit of Buddhism among the Hindus, though the letter of Buddhism itself has passed from the country.

The second protest after this was the protest of what is known as the Puranas. When the Brahmans once more found their power coming back to them and that Buddhism was gone, the Brahmans and the whole nation set up an immediate and great protest against mere intellectualism, mere critical culture, mere development of reason. Reason was decried, underrated, and classed as a secondary faculty. Reason was found to be insufficient to give rest, purity, profound joy, communion with God; and the Puranas began to be composed, the great Mahabarat was written, the Bhagavat was sung.

The rise of this great religious poem is illustrated in a very interesting anecdote. Vyasa, the compiler of the Vedas, after his great scriptural labors, sat down in the woods one day, extremely disconsolate and dejected. He was restless and dissatisfied with himself. The divine sage Narada, a sort of universal messenger of the deities, descended to him, singing sweet strains of the love of Hari, and playing on his veena of three strings. He came to Vyasa and said, "O Vyasa, why art thou so disconsolate, why dost thou look so sad?" And Vyasa answered, "I have written the great books of the Vedas and the Vedanta, and I have compiled them into a repository of religious wisdom; but, behold, my own mind is not satisfied and at peace." Narada replied: "O Vyasa, very well might that happen. Thy work thou hast written has been the work of the intellect. The intellect never gives peace nor brings us to Paradise. Cultivate thy heart, O Vyasa, develop thy

religious emotions, sweeten thy piety, try to find out the tender depths of Hari's love, then thou shalt have peace." It is said after that Vyasa began to compose another great book, the Bhagavat,—not the *Gita*, but the Bhagavat Puran which gives tender accounts of God's love and of his dealings with the sinning and sorrowing world.

Thus, then, here in the Puranas you find the second protest against the same pride of intellect, against the same harsh, objectless disciplines of mind, the practices of Yoga and Karma, against abstractions and negations,—in fact, against Buddhism,—that Buddha made against the Vedas.

But, as the system of Sakya had a decided affirmative side, so the protest of the Puranas has a positive, constructive side. It has the constructiveness of piety, the affirmations of Bhakti, and the deepening of love to a God of providence, the heightening of faith and trust in a personal, active God. In fact, it was positive individual piety. These principles are scattered over the different Puranas. They are gathered and embodied in the great book known as the Bhagavat Gita, a collection and synthesis of all antecedent and existing schools of piety and profound thought. The importance of the *Gita*, therefore, cannot be exaggerated; and you find in that, as you now find in the Brahmo Somaj, a gathering together, a picking up of all the great principles of teachings which the Hindus had known before,—namely, Yoga, Bhakti, Guyan, and Karma.

If we come down the stream of centuries, we find that the critical and originating power of the Hindus is nearly gone; that the Mohammedans have come like mountain torrents pouring over the fertile plains of the great country. You find Hinduism and Mohammedanism side by side. But, during this time, India was not lacking in protests. The next period of protest very singularly happens to be almost coeval with the age of Luther in Europe.

In the latter half of the fifteenth century, you find two great reforms in the Punjab and in Bengal, protesting against the system of caste, and protesting against popular idolatry, against bigotry and sectarianism of all kinds.

The great prophet of the Punjab was Gurn Nanak, the founder of the Sikhs, the brave Sikh warriors who met the British breast to breast, and for a long time proved to the invading armies that the old Aryan spirit of heroism and courage was not entirely extinct. Nanak was the founder of the Sikh theism, and father of the Sikh nation.

The reformer in Bengal was Chaitanya, a man from whose influence there arose a mighty tidal wave of piety that overwhelmed the whole of that province and Orissa.

These two men, one in the extreme east and the other in the extreme west, greatly agitated society. Mohammedanism had greatly fostered a disbelief in caste. Mohammedan saints and sages—because, believe me, there are high-minded, pious men among the Mohammedans also—had proved to the Hindus that they must not be sectarian, exclusive in their religious fraternity. Above all, the great Emperor Akbar, with whose reputation India still rings, tried to bring the Brahmans and Mohammedans and Persians together; and he even had some Christian missionaries in his court. He held religious councils every Thursday with these men, discussed religious subjects, and produced and spread a great influence of catholic tolerance and fraternal sympathy.

All these influences together took shape in the protests subsequently made against popular idolatry, against caste and narrow sectarianism. The new reformers admitted Mohammedans into their community, a greater revolution than which could not be conceived in Hindu society. All castes, even the most degraded, were embraced by Nanak and Chaitanya. Even women were admitted into religious fellowship. Men and women were allowed the same privileges. Hindu society was convulsed with feelings of anger and impulses of fanaticism, when these two men made the progress they did in widening the circle of religious sympathy. But there, also, you find a great affirmative emphasis given to piety, to love, to faith, to the forsaking of worldliness and carnality, to devotion, and to personal purity.

Now, I must come down to later times. The Mohammedans, like locusts, came and went till they blew away forever, none knew whither. Their sceptre of iron was broken like a reed. Their despotism was crushed like a pillar of sand. Their star set. Christian England peeped into India, like the welcome dawn after a night of storm and darkness. England and England's Christianity descended upon Hindustan, and a new era broke upon us like a flood of light; and this fourth period of protest is that to which you and I belong.

The Brahmo Somaj is the legitimate offspring of the wedlock of Christianity with the faith of Hindu Aryans. You know that the Brahmo Somaj began with a loud, fearless protest. You have heard the name of Rajah Ram Mohun Roy. I believe that about this very time Prof. Max Müller is fulfilling an agreeable duty, and is commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of that great Hindu with a lecture in the town of Bristol, where the Rajah died. But, although you know his name, you do not know the bitterness of persecution against him. You do not know how the poor and the wealthy, the learned and the vulgar, nay, even the relatives and friends of that great reformer, banded themselves into a mighty phalanx of opposition, before which even *his* fearless spirit now and then trembled. The protest which the Brahmo Somaj made against polytheism, against ceremonialism, against idolatry, was manly and unmistakable. But then, here again, there was a strong affirmation made. That affirmation was the affirmation of simple monotheism, the oneness of God. "Ek-meva-dwitwium" is the great Sanskrit motto; "Alla-ho-Akbar" is the great Semitic cry borrowed from the Arabs; "Our Father in heaven" was the echo with which India reverberated when Ram Mohun Roy laid the foundation of his great church.

Speaking, then, of these four different periods of protest, I want to impress upon your minds the fact that there are certain common elements in them. These elementary principles are entirely consistent with the mental nature of the

Hindu: they run and interweave themselves with all the various reforms the outlines of which I have tried to lay before you.

The first is faith in a personal centre. Buddhism and Puranism and the religion of Chaitanya and Nanak—in fact, all Hindu reforms—magnified the importance of one or more personal centres in religion. Abstract principles in *India* have not produced much good. They are for the speculator, for the metaphysician, for the man of solitude, the recluse, the individual ascetic. The hundreds and thousands and millions of the people want to see religion concrete, incarnate, personified. Religion must pervade and embody itself in men and women, in practical lives, in actual prayers and devotions that can be seen and heard and lives that can be touched and watched. Buddha, therefore, though he was so agnostic in many things, said that one of the deadliest sins which a man could commit is distrust in the character of the spiritual preceptor. The Hindu writings are so full of the same sentiment that the Brahmans, who have always been teachers of religion, have made a mischievous use of that doctrine by the monopoly of all privilege and personal homage.

Yet, atrocious as the conduct of the Brahmans might have been, you Christians cannot but bear testimony to the fact that, without a personal centre, Christianity would have been nowhere. What is Christianity without the Son of Man? What were the principles which you preach from your pulpits, if not sanctioned by the lives, characters, and influences of martyrs and saints who gave their life in commemoration and testimony of their belief? Personal centre, then, is a great matter; and the history of religion without incarnated personalities would be the play of "Hamlet" with the part of Hamlet left out.

The second fact upon which all reformers insisted was the fervor of devotional culture. In every school of Hinduism, you will find the essence of true religion to lie in a sense of union between the soul and the super-soul, the spirit within and the spirit without. In the secret of bind-

ing man's heart and God's spirit lies all true religion. Such is the verdict of Hinduism.

There are four schools of piety in Hinduism. One is called the Yoga School, the second the Bhakti School, and the third the Guyan school. The fourth is the Karma School. The first or Yoga discipline (the word Yoga means union), by meditation, introspection, abstraction, and realization of God's spirit within and without, aims to arrive at perfect blessedness. There is an absolute control of all physical powers: the flesh is forgotten, the mind concentrates itself on the Supreme Mind, ignores all conditions and circumstances of the world, ignores life and death, ignores all distinctions, desires, virtues, vices, joys, sorrows, nay, existence itself. The mind, thus freed from conditions, immerses itself in the infinite mind; and, to borrow a metaphor from the Hindu, as the arrow penetrates its mark and is covered and concealed by the spot it hits, so the mind is shot into the infinite depths of God's nature, and is concealed thereby entirely. That is the beginning of all true piety.

The second is the same union realized, not through thought, but through love or emotional worship. Bhakti means love, devotion, tender feelings to the God of love. Only when, by childlike trust and development of tender emotions, the mind becomes wholly absorbed in God's merciful dealings so that there is an excitement, a self-forgetfulness, a loosening of passions, desires, and bodily propensities, does piety begin. Nay, the excitement of devotion becomes a passion, the passion becomes an enthusiasm, the enthusiasm becomes an inebriation, a great intoxication of divine love. Hence, in the cultus of Bhakti, you hear of trances, loud songs, dances, eccentricities, the wild, primitive manifestations of drinking the new wine of the love of God's dispensation to man, of God's presence and love and special providence toward the devotees.

The third form of cultus lies through the purely intellectual powers. The reasoning faculty goes into the laws and arrangements of the world, fact beyond fact, truth

deeper than truth, and is wholly immersed in the ocean of intelligence that is in the universe outside and inside. The intellect of God is perceived by human intelligence. Man's mind is absorbed by God's wisdom. The philosopher becomes devout, God-seeing, nay, God-intoxicated. That is the cultus of Guyan.

The fourth form of piety is the discipline of work. This includes all ceremonies, duties, good works. The devotee absolutely consecrates himself to the fulfilment of religious ordinances. So you see that, whether it be the culture of meditation or the culture of the feelings or the culture of reason or the culture of practical work, religion in India means absorption in God, oneness of the human spirit with the spirit of the Divine Being.

One predominant element of Hindu religious movements is the fact of ceremonialism. Every Hindu reform that has had its birth in India has tried to embody and utter itself through deep, great symbols and sacred emblems. What is religion? They will say it is an unutterable impulse; it is an upheaval of the soul; it is a transcendent flight on the part of the human mind toward the infinite azure of God's bosom. It expresses itself in prayers, in watchings and meditations. Not satisfied with expressing itself in that way, it expresses itself also in sublime sacraments, transcendental acts, symbols, and mystical signs. It is only an attempt on the part of the heart to express its sublime sense of divine and unutterable relations. It is worship through nature of nature's God. And all over the world, wherever religion has had its sway and its day, has it not tried to utter itself in the same way,—through sacraments and ceremonies, through baptisms and eucharists, through fire and water and sky, through flowers, incenses, and decorations, by the laying on of hands and other ways? Destroy all these ceremonies, and see if religion does not become a great mass of dry sawdust, a barren shipload of icicles, glittering but cold, benumbing, striking the soul to death. Hence, you find in all reforms in India the supreme importance of symbols and sacraments is recognized.

In the last place, every religious reform in India has tried to bring back the primitive apostolic simplicity to earth which civilization has corrupted. Poverty in India is not considered a curse. In England, I find poverty is a shameful reproach, a social and moral leprosy. The pauper is untouchable: one is polluted if he comes in contact with him, and they hurry him off and shut him up in safety. But, in India and throughout the East, the cry is, Blessed are the poor. Poverty has been the sacred badge of our learned men and pious saints. Our greatest Sanskrit professors have been mendicants. Poverty has been the attribute of our greatest religious reformers. Sakya Muni, the only son of a great king, went about from village to village begging for alms. So did every other reformer. Poverty has always been found to be favorable to the growth of religion. Our religious men and philosophers have never cared for the "almighty dollar." They made no allusions to the needle and the camel passing through it. In India, they have always been tolerant and kindly to the rich, but have never entangled themselves with a superabundance of gold and silver. Whenever a mighty prophet arose, he wanted to bring back the ancient asceticism, self-denial, humility, fasting, watching, homelessness, that the flesh might be sacrificed, that the spirit might grow. So apostolic simplicity, self-denial, indifference to earthly goods, have formed an invariable feature of our religious revivals.

But, at the present moment, Protestantism pays no heed to these principles. It protests against everything. To what has this protest against personal influence and devotional fervor, ascetic self-denial and solemn sacraments, led? You protested against the pope: the pope is dethroned, and all ministers have lost their hold upon their flocks. Every man of influence and genius is denounced as a pope. You protest against the infallibility of the Church: the Church has forfeited its ancient position, and a hundred churches have crowded the roadsides, each setting up a sharp rivalry against others, and sects, denominations, and congregations fly at each other's throats. Mr. Cook told me the other

day that I was standing in the vestibule of Christianity. I reflected on that compliment; and I thought I would prefer to make my escape from the vestibule rather than rush into the arena, where the theological gladiators were thrusting knives into each other's hearts.

You protest against the Bible; and the authority of the Bible decays gradually, till the Sacred Scriptures become as any other vulgar book, a mere mass of printer's ink and waste paper. A cold, loveless, dogmatic, carnal, socialistic spirit overruns the world; and men in the abodes of devotion patronize tea-parties and dances and all sorts of social profanities. One after another, the great landmarks of religion disappear; and you stand at the threshold of agnosticism, infidelity, prayerlessness, the cold abodes of spiritual death, where he who enters in never returns to tell the tale.

In the Brahma Somaj, for a long time—nearly thirty years—this was our state. We protested first against the idols, and then against the infallibility of the Scriptures, then against Providence, then against prayer, till our former leader fled from our church; and we were greatly exercised how we should establish the wisdom and love and power of God. Men held counsel together; and, when the proposition was before the meeting as to whether God was good, they called for a show of hands!

From the year 1830 until about the year 1860, this went on, stage after stage; and every one prophesied the death of the Brahma Somaj was not far off. Men were crippled by cold rationalism. They were inflated with the pride of intellect. They quarrelled among themselves; and it was only the genius of a single man—to his glory be it said—that, by his personal resources and persistent piety, kept up the movement. About the year 1860, a band of young men joined that institution, headed by one whose name you have heard,—Keshub Chunder Sen. They entered with prayer and faith and repentance. Faith, prayer, and repentance became the great battle-cry of the younger section of the Brahma Somaj. Faith, repentance, and prayer could not but introduce into our midst the sweet, serene

figure of the prophet of Nazareth, who prayed and trusted, who lived and died, teaching the world how to pray and how to trust. Thus, Christianity came and mixed with our old Oriental rationalistic, cold faith; and, from that time, we grew. Gradually, piety and spirituality had deeper hold upon us. We determined to purge our church from every taint of idolatry and immorality, to purge our households and our hearts. We introduced reforms, which brought on differences between the younger and the older members. That resulted in the expulsion of the younger members, who were pursued with vilification and calumny. That only helped us the more in our spiritual career, and, about the year 1870, our spiritual infancy was matured into youth, and Keshub Chunder Sen visited England. During the next ten years, our churches multiplied, our reforms grew, our schools and newspapers were started, our missionaries labored ceaselessly. During the last three years, our troubles and trials were intensified; and, in response to our unremitted devotions and disciplines, we received the pentecostal descent of the Spirit of God in the New Dispensation of the Brahmo Somaj. We felt that we had been hitherto groping, seeking after God, if perchance we might find him. We now found that his spirit of love, blessing, forgiveness, truth, wisdom, and holy revelation, descends to *seek* us. The New Dispensation, finding us in the midst of our sins, trials, struggles, raised us up to fresh ideals. That is all the difference between man's seeking God and God's seeking man. In the former career of the Brahmo Somaj, it was entirely man's effort, with occasional light from God. But, after we conceived the idea that the Spirit was giving us a New Dispensation, our prayers got to have a depth and meaning that they had never known before. Great ideals and great models, great systems of reconciliation, great schemes of brotherhood, of reformers in other lands, the unity of religious philosophers, of prophets, Scriptures, sacraments, presented themselves to us in our devotional exercises. We began to cultivate the principles of the four different Hindu religious schools, we began "pilgrimages to

the saints." Christianity, Christian churches, Christian missionaries, had been well recognized facts in India. Christianity rose before us like a mighty, heavenly structure touching the clouds; and we felt the great principles of that religion reaching our hearts. If we were not to be false to the teachings of our own forefathers, could we be false to the teachings of that great prophet of the East, Christ Jesus and his disciples? They have come, and are changing the face of the country, revolutionizing our manners and institutions, our households and our souls. Jesus has conquered India.

The great problem to us, then, is how we may reconcile Christianity with Eastern religions, the West with the East, Europeans with Indians; how unite them as with an electric current that shall produce common sympathies, common thoughts, and common fraternity.

In the light of these great facts and ideals, we felt there was another dispensation coming, indeed. This is all that we mean by the New Dispensation. You ask me: "Why do you place so much importance on Chunder Sen? You make him your pope, your infallible guide." I repudiate that charge. Before three or four thousand men in the town hall of Calcutta, Keshub Chunder Sen declared that he was not only not an inspired prophet, but that he was a vile sinner, unworthy to touch the shoe latchet of Jesus and of Paul,—nay, not of men like Luther, our own modern saint. He said that he only felt that he had a great commission, a great work to do, and singular faculties given him for that purpose. He professed to follow the voice of God in what he did. And let me tell you that; if we all love him, it is only as our dear, well-trying minister and elder brother, only in conformity to that great principle of personal influence which all reformers in India have taught, and without which no religion can be comprehensible to the masses of men.

You charge us, again, with mysticism. Everything which the Occidental mind does not understand it sets down as mysticism. I forget who the great literary character was who said, in order to make a Scotchman understand a joke,

it was necessary to make a surgical operation. And I must confess, in order to make the heavy Occidental comprehend the faith and spirituality of the Oriental requires more than a surgical operation. When piety utters itself in uncommon language, which you are not used to hear, you say at once, That is mystic. Whenever there are metaphors and parables and appeals to the Spirit of the Universe and of Life, you cry out, That is mysticism. When one meditates or retires into the woods or walks under the stars or stands still before the great, mighty sea, absorbed in communion with the Being or Beauty or Power or Infinite Glory whom eyes and ears cannot realize, you say, That is mysticism. With such critics I cannot deal. What I can say is that our Church of the New Dispensation means to be true to the ideals and examples of those, in every land and nation, who see divine things with faith-illumined eyes. In the flight of birds, in the blooming lilies of the field, in the sunset glory of the sky, in the mysterious suggestions of the dawn, with Jesus and all the prophets, we behold God.

You complain of sacraments and symbols in the Brahma Somaj,—as if Christianity itself had not found its noblest edification and its beatitudes in celebrating those grand observances which shall remain so long as Christianity remains. Christianity shall continue to baptize its converts in the waters of repentance, and administer the communion in commemoration of that ever memorable parting. Christianity shall sanctify itself in eating the flesh, in drinking the blood, in assimilating the character of the blessed Son of God. If, then, you Christians realize so much blessedness through your sacraments, how can you protest against our imitating you on one or two points? We Orientals have been used for generations to symbols, and need them to express our sentiments in outward deeds. We have to deal with millions of men who have neither read Hegel nor Kant, neither Strauss nor De Wette, nor are they familiar with the latest conclusions of Bible criticism. They want some vivid embodiment of truth. Ideas can only reach the masses through national mediums.

For a long time, the Brahma Somaj was accused of rationalism. It was said to be a religion for a handful of educated, rationalistic men, that it did not appeal to the instincts and imaginations of the masses. And now that we follow the example of our forefathers, and discover for it the spontaneous forms, practically acceptable to the millions, you turn up your noses and say, "Why, that is sacramentalism, that is mysticism!" But, my good friends, contemplate the condition of the people, their antecedents, their nature, their instincts, their capabilities, their surroundings, their circumstances. Can you, from your Protestant experiences in the West, tell us how to popularize abstract religion? Are not the masses in Protestant countries rushing into secularism, unbelief, and vice? You have no experience to give us, but plenty of theories and criticisms. That is not fair. It is the object of the Brahma Somaj to reconcile philosophy with simple popular faith, Protestantism with Roman Catholicism. We use symbols and sacraments, not every day, not weekly or even monthly; but now and then, on special occasions for special purposes, we resort to them, to work upon the imagination and emotions of the people, and give them tangible mediums of religious feeling.

This is the position of the Brahma Somaj in faith, in prayer, in love to God and man. We follow those disciplines, those rules, examples, and teachings which religious men have laid down in our country from age to age, and in every country and every age.

Our missionaries profess to take the vow of poverty and asceticism. They live without salary or remuneration, often in want of bodily necessities. They practise Yoga (devout communion), Bhakti (fervid, devout love), Gyan (devout wisdom), and Karma (all devout performances). They accept their religion as the new dispensation of the age.

And now one word of appeal. By our protest against orthodox Hinduism and idolatry, we have incurred the risk of suffering all the social penalties that Hindu society can inflict. By taking our women out of the seclusion of the zenana, we have incurred the responsibility of being

considered impure men and women. Orthodox society has abjured us, and we look up to the enlightened sympathies and higher character of the sons and daughters of the West. Will you deny us your sympathy, your love, and your fellow-feeling? Because a nation of Orientals continues to live as their ancestors for uncounted ages lived, will you visit us with abuse and reproach? I cannot believe it.

When I spoke to my friends in England, hundreds and thousands of them came forward, and offered me the right hand of fellowship. I have not been in this country long; but, when I have spoken to my friends here, they have not been slow in wishing me God-speed. We need your love, your blessing. Our work is a great work. Our mission is not an easy one. We have to reconcile unreconcilable problems. We have to simplify religion, to bring the primitive into the modern, to bring harmony amid conflicts of philosophy, faith and science between apostolic rigor and modern improvement. God help us, and may your blessings follow us. In that hope only does the Brahma Somaj proceed in its work of protest and its work of reconstruction.

O Spirit of God, bless us all. Unite us in a brotherhood. Let the East call out to the West and the West to the East, till the whole world becomes one field, wherein thou shalt be the Shepherd and we thy sheep. And we thy children will ascribe unto thee glory, here and forevermore. Amen.

RUSSIA

IN EUROPE,
SHOWING
PALE OF JEWISH SETTLEMENT.

English Miles
0 50 100 150 200

- 1 BAL TIC PROVINCES
- 2 GREAT RUSSIA
- 3 LITTLE RUSSIA
- 4 WEST RUSSIA
- 5 SOUTH RUSSIA
- 6 KINGDOM OF KAZAN
- 7 " " ASTRAKHAN
- 8 " " POLAND
- 9 LIETTENANCY OF THE CAUCASUS
- 10 GRAND DUCHY OF FINLAND



Poland.

Pale of Jewish Settlement.

Russian Territory from which the Jews are excluded.