GUJARAT UNIVERSITY

HOMAGE TO TAGORE

[Tagore Birth-Centenary Lectures]

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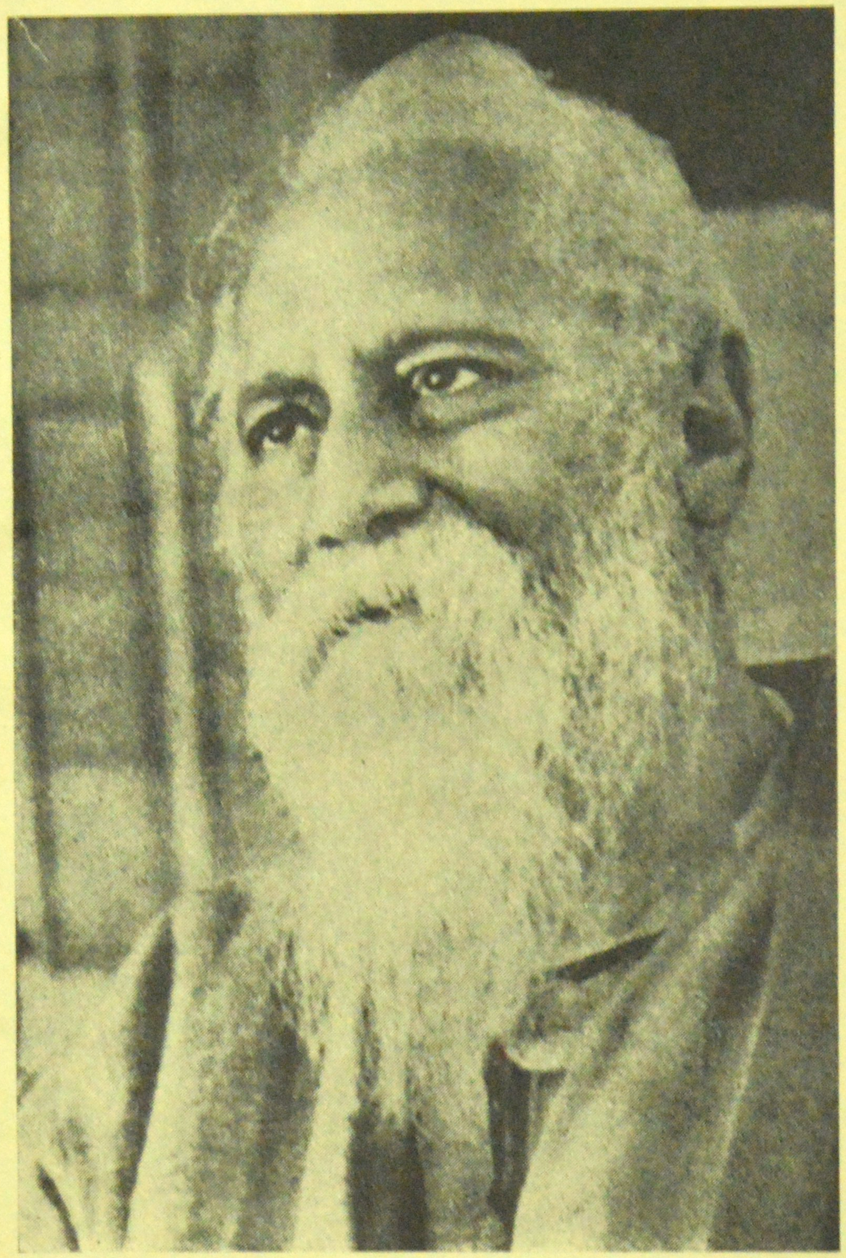

Rabindranath Tagore

[Courtesy : Vishva-Bharati, Calcutta]

PREFACE

It is gratifying to find that our commendable tradition of paying homage to our great men has continued with greater vigour than before since we achieved our freedom. It was, therefore, in keeping with this tradition that the Birth Centenaries of four of India's great sons — (1) Rabindranath Tagore, (2) Prafullachandra Ray, (3) Pandit Motilal Nehru, and (4) Pandit Madan Mohan Malavia, great in their respective fields, viz. (1) Poetry, Art and Culture, (2) Science, (3) Politics, and (4) Education — were celebrated in our country during the year 1961–'62. Glowing Tributes were paid to these great men from all over the country and it was in the fitness of things that the Gujarat University joined this chorus of homage by arranging suitable programmes.

Indeed, the celebrations of the birth centenary of the great poet, Rabindranath Tagore were held all over the world. It was our great good fortune that Gujarat University could secure the services of eminent and learned scholars for a symposium of inspiring discourses on the life, literature and work of Rabindranath Tagore. We, therefore, take special delight in publishing these discourses in book-form. This collection will doubtless give vicarious delight to a large number of persons who attended the lectures while providing excellent reading to a much larger number who could not attend them.

Our grateful thanks are, of course, due firstly to the learned lecturers Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar, Shri Masti Venketesa Iyengar, Shri Kazi Abdul Wadud, Shri Saumyendranath Tagore and Prof. Humayun Kabir, who out of sheer regard for Tagore and for the University accepted our invitation at considerable personal pains to themselves.

We are also grateful to Shri Mehdi Nawaz Jung, Chancellor of the University and Governor of Gujarat, who presided over the valedictory function and to Shri L. R. Desai, Vice-Chancellor of the University, who presided over its inauguration.

We have arranged to get such lectures as were delivered in English translated into Gujarati and vice versa, with a view to making these lectures available in Gujarati and English editions. All the lectures except that of Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar were originally delivered in English and I am thankful to Prof. R. D. Vasavada of H. L. College of Commerce, Ahmedabad for his excellent translation of this lecture.

A noteworthy feature of these celebrations is that it has occasioned instituting of 'The Tagore Memorial Lectures' in Gujarat University as per the relevant resolution of the Syndicate passed in its meeting held on 7-1-1961. It will no doubt enable the teachers and students of Gujarat University as also the general public to listen year after year to lectures on literary and cultural subjects by eminent persons. It will not be out of place here to record with a sense of gratitude that a special fund of Rs. 25,000/- has been created for this purpose with the financial assistance from the University Grants Commission and the State Government.

Ahmedabad-9.
Date: 1-12-1963.

K. C. Parikh
University Registrar.

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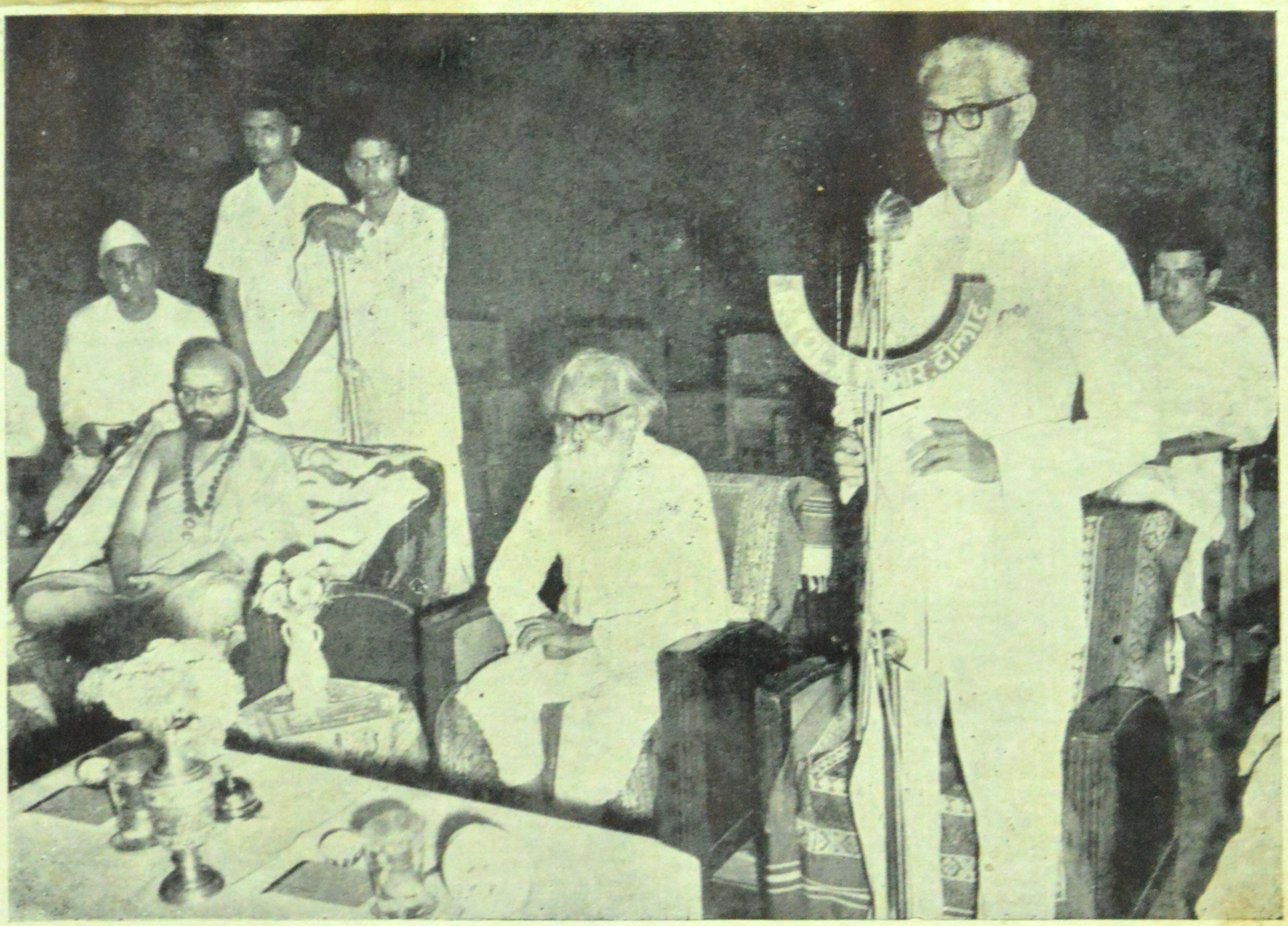

Shri L. R. Desai, Vice-Chancellor of the University, welcomes Shri Kaka Saheb Kalelkar. His Holiness Jagadguru Shankaracharyaji of Dwarka (first from left who is also seen by the side of Shri Kaka Saheb

I. THE BARD OF INDIAN CULTURE

1

I thank my old friend Shri Lalbhai Desai who also was my colleague in our initial efforts to establish basic education, for inviting me to address you on behalf of the Gujarat University. My relations with this University date back to the days when the Bombay Government thought of setting up regional universities and appointed the Mavlanker Committee.

My friend Shri Maganbhai Desai once invited me to deliver a Convocation address. This second invitation enjoins me to inaugurate this series of lectures. The subject selected for me by Shri Lalbhai is dear to my heart. I met Gandhiji in Tagore's Shantiniketan. I cultivated devotion for both of them at the same time. I came to cherish devotion for both of them on seeing the brilliance and urbanity that both possessed in spite of the difference in their temper and attitude. Indeed, my own view of life was enriched by the character, poetry and life of both, and they helped me in building up my insight into seeing unity in diversity in our culture. My address this evening is the recognition of the debt of gratitudes, I owe to both these great seers.

Nobody can have a clear picture of what is meant by Indian culture. Culture, I believe, is as diffuse as the very air and still unusually predominant. It is not only impossible to define it, but it is also not easy to give a clear picture of it either.

If this is the difficulty with general culture, it is much more regarding Indian culture which is composite in character.

All ancient cultures were fundamentally religious. Even to-day famous politicians are talking about the Christian culture.

It should not be mistaken as a forgotten phenomenon because few men talk of the wars of the Cross and the Crescent. Who does not comprehend the overt tug of war between Islam and Christianity in Africa to-day?

Hinduism is not a mere religion with us, but it is a vast family of creeds. The culture of all of them was homogenious, though there might have been occasional conflicts among these members of the commonwealth of creeds, which were united by essentially. similar philosophy and character. That is why our growth has been peaceful and assimilative.

There have been a number of changes in our culture. Our saints never attached any importance to untouchability, and yet the society at large had tolerated untouchability on the grounds of cleanliness in life. Some of them believed that it had a place in our culture. Such recluses considered themselves above general social behaviour and that alone was their back-ground of the practice of untouchability.

In our ancient Indian culture the existence of four classes (*varnas*) and eighteen sub-castes is accepted. Many times religious reformers carried on a crusade against it, but they did not succeed. It used to be believed till very recently that the system of race and caste is the characteristic feature of the Hindu culture. Now we strive to do away with caste distinctions, though to-day that zeal to do so is of secondary importance among our political leaders.

So a universally acceptable form of Hindu culture cannot be precisely determined.

And now-a-days we talk in the terms of Indian culture which includes besides the Hindu culture, the Pathans, the Mogal, the Portugese, the French and such other cultural elements and social ways of life. The influence of the Western protestant and science oriented education on it is also now predominant in our culture.

In a country of such a composite culture, when we call Rabindranath the bard of Indian culture, we must seriously

consider what elements in this culture we believe to be primary and what secondary.

Whatever cultural work Rabindranath did, he did not do it as our official representative. He accepted from the Indian culture those elements which he thought to be pure, enduring and important. This, however, he did with such tact, skill and what is more, with such grace that the Indian people do not bother to think whether what Rabindranath has sung about is strictly consistent with their culture. Rabindranath assumes in a natural manner and without any voice of dissent becomes the representative of India on the score of his capacity, genius and character. So while describing Rabindranath as either a representative of Indian culture or its poet, we have proudly to take a bird's-eye-view of what he approved of from our culture, what he opposed humbly but firmly, and about what he was indifferent. We have admired him before and will do so again in future : but we must be clear at the same time of his mission, work and ideas.

I propose to develop the theme of to-day's lecture keeping in mind this trend of thoughts. Along with this it will also be necessary to think of Rabibabu's and our country's life and growth.

And we should think also of the activities of those five or seven great men who were contemporaries of Rabindranath and who showed to the world the quintessence of Indian culture. The propriety of all this will be understood if you will listen to me from this point of view.

2

I have to speak to-day, of Poet Rabindranath as the 'Bard of Indian Culture'. Among those who exerted unusual and universal influence on the modern age, the main are only two — Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. The influence or impact on Gujarat of both of them is unparalleled.

There are other sons of India who wielded powerful influence. They will be referred to in to-day's address but they all in one way or the other are included in these two. Both of them have their roots in India and the sphere of their activity also was largely India. Even so, their impact or influence has been felt over the entire mankind. Both of them are really daring thinkers. Without distinctive ideas, leadership of the people is not possible, but one's main field was literature while leadership of the people, struggle and work was the field of the other.

Of the two I have to speak mainly of the Great Poet Rabindranath; but Gandhiji will have to be mentioned while talking of Rabindra. Being from the beginning a devotee of both I can explain Rabindra, only by talking of both of them. I have a special satisfaction while doing so, that in Gujarat though we have great reverence for Gandhiji, we have never restrained ourselves in our sincere appreciation of Rabindra, nor shall we ever do so.

Gujarat has gained a lot from Rabindra. The ashramites had stayed in Shantiniketan as guests before Gandhiji left South Africa for good and came to live in India. (I first met Rabindranath and Gandhiji at Shantiniketan only.) Since then students of Gujarat — young men and women — have derived benefit of the atmosphere of Shantiniketan by staying and studying there. In other ways also, Gujarat has gained immensely from Rabindra and from his literature and has also gratefully appreciated his services. We have accepted him as an educationist: but we knew him (Rabindra) mainly as a poet. In doing so we have taken the word 'poet' in its wider connotation. We call him a bard who understands and then explains the secret of life by presenting its beauty.

There is not a single form of literature that Rabindra has not touched, and whatever field of literature he took up, he contributed some thing original to it by virtue of his genius, and as a result our own view of life has become deepened,

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universal and enriched. His work is quite rich in poetry, plays, songs, short-stories, novels, etc., but even in the sphere of religion, philosophy, natural sciences, language, etymology, translation and such other diverse subjects as also on some of the important issues confronting India, he has given us thought-provoking articles and essays.

He mastered histrionics, dancing and music along with literature and lastly even painting; and showed originality in each of them. And for the proper development of all these activities he conducted Shantiniketan, Shriniketan and Vishwa Bharati and imparted his entire spirit to them.

He accepted invitation from quite a few countries in east and west after he became famous, and his influence spread in foreign countries in the wake of the English translation of 'Gitanjali' which won the Nobel Prize. He acted as a virtual ambassador of Indian culture; and in addition to explaining to the world our essential view of life derived from history, he discussed from a higher plane and yet in an intimate way, the problem of finding permanent solutions for many complicated issues of the entire world of the human life.

Ordinarily, Rabindranath never entered into controversies or discussions; but he was never afraid of being misunderstood or unpopular in stating essentials in unmistakable and clear terms. On the one hand, look at, Europe and America and the other China and Japan. The histories of such countries are different, their attitudes to life diverse, their self-confidence unusual, and their capacity and tendency to misunderstand those who hold different opinions about them is wonderful; and still Rabindranath had no preferences and no prejudices. His heart was full of sympathy and so he was convinced that ultimately good thinking would achieve its own blessed end.

Rabindranath thus became a representative of Indian culture and because of that he also became the Universal Man. Indian culture for Rabindranath was not either a

historical document or a lifeless model of art to be preserved in the museum of the world; but it was to him a distinct and living embodiment of the life-spirit taking its time-honoured place in the court of the Universe. He brought forward only the eternal and living elements of Indian culture. He did not attempt, out of blind pride for the past to bring back to life those elements which were outmoded and dead. Mankind everywhere is one, and so we must have sympathy and regard for every country, nation and culture. As he explained to his countrymen that they need not sit at anybody's feet believing themselves to be small, so also he impressed upon them to keep away from the vainglorious idea that they were the teachers of the world.

Within the court of the universe all races, nations and dynasties have their own missions. The great Muse of History educates mankind by success as well as by failures in the efforts made by each according to the scheme of Almighty Architect of fate. Let us bring to the world in a chastened and friendly spirit our joy and our fear, our tragedy and our triumph, in all details of whatever efforts that have fallen to our lot. His view of life was to derive benefits from the work of others and to progress by unstinted co-operation. He did not quite understand the concept of Gandhiji's non-co-operation and so in the beginning got indignant at it. But he became quiet when he understood the idea of pure co-operation behind Gandhiji's non-co-operation with the Government.

From the very beginning he had entertained an ambition that his University which he had named 'Vishwabharati' should become a centre where scholars from all over the world would come and live and carry on cultural give-and-take. He believed that there is much that India can give and there is quite a lot worthy to be taken from other countries. Indeed he was convinced that sharing with other cultural leaders of the world the anxiety for world's good is India's natural duty compatible with her self-respect without nursing any pride or vanity.

After having done what a single individual can do and inspiring a number of persons in a variety of fields of activity at the proper time Ravibabu established the 'Vishwabharati'.

To-day that institution receives maintenance grant from the National Government; and it is quite in the fitness of things that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, ever anxious for world peace and welfare, is the Chancellor of that University.

That is why we call Rabindranath the Bard of Indian Culture in the fullest sense of the term. Let us now examine the formation of Rabindra's attitude to life.

About a hundred years ago, i.e. in 1857, the Indian people declared their dislike for the British rule. One hundred years before that event the British established their authority in Bengal; and the city of Calcutta built by them became the Capital of the British authority and to a certain extent a centre of the British culture. Acknowledging the importance of that rule and that culture, Raja Ram Mohan Roy gave to Bengal the inspiration to reconstruct a new society on the basis of the bright elements of our culture and taking whatever is worth accepting from the British without being lost in a blind protest against it. We should not forget that as Ram Mohan Roy was familiar with the main currents of Hindu culture and civilisation so was he aware of 'Islam' which came from Arbastan and the Iranian (Persian) culture and civilisation which nourished it. He had the measure of the effect of Islamic civilisation on Hindu religion and culture. The vulgar rot or decay of the orthodox Hindu religion and society he has observed in the life of Bengal. That is the reason why he performed the double role of a religious and a social reformer and established the 'Brahmo Samaj'. He thus invited the wrath and opposition of the orthodox upon himself, by separating himself from the Hindu fold and religion. Even the new association began breaking up and had its two or three separate branches. The 'Brahmo Samaj' started ridiculing the orthodox Hindu beliefs by calling its way of life "Hinduani". Ram Mohan Roy and

his companions like Maharshi Debendranath and Keshavchandra Sen proved in more ways than one that though they accepted the influence of Islam and Christianity, their roots were in the ancient Upanishads and they explained to the people that they had not severed themselves from old ancient traditions.

During that period Paramhansa Association came to be started in Western India. It led to the establishment of Prarthana Samaj as it grew and reformed itself. Here the main persons were the mighty Ranade and the world-renowned scholar Bhandarker. Mahadev Govind Ranade tried to make the people understand that the Prarthana Samaj is the new and purer form of our Bhagawat religion. Dr. Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarker in his own way explained to the people that Prarthana Samaj was doing and carrying on what exactly holymen like Tukaram did for religion in their own times.

In this part of our country the same work was begun by Bholanath Divetia and others in Gujarat when they formed the Abhangmala. Brahmo Samaj in Bengal and Prarthana Samaj in West India did in their own times excellent work; but its appeal remained confined only to those who knew English. Gandhiji christened this entire movement as the 'religion of the educated'. I said the same thing in other words on the occasion of a celebration connected with Prarthana Samaj in Ahmedabad. I said that the activities (work) of Prarthana Samaj is the bass-viol (Tambura) of man's religious activities. The sound of the Tambura is not called music by anybody, but without that sound music can never exist. Music becomes music and gives delight to the listeners only when its rise and fall are in keeping with the tune of the Tambur. Nobody will call it music when a man cries loudly or shouts audibly. Music is not possible without restraint, rhythm and mutual co-ordination; so also no religious activity is capable of being pursued without intellect, integrity, concern for universal welfare wedded to a faith in the good and readiness to try all attempts to gain deep spiritual experience.

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his companions like Maharshi Debendranath and Keshavchandra Sen proved in more ways than one that though they accepted the influence of Islam and Christianity, their roots were in the ancient Upanishads and they explained to the people that they had not severed themselves from old ancient traditions.

During that period Paramhansa Association came to be started in Western India. It led to the establishment of Prarthana Samaj as it grew and reformed itself. Here the main persons were the mighty Ranade and the world-renowned scholar Bhandarker. Mahadev Govind Ranade tried to make the people understand that the Prarthana Samaj is the new and purer form of our Bhagawat religion. Dr. Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarker in his own way explained to the people that Prarthana Samaj was doing and carrying on what exactly holymen like Tukaram did for religion in their own times.

In this part of our country the same work was begun by Bholanath Divetia and others in Gujarat when they formed the Abhangmala. Brahmo Samaj in Bengal and Prarthana Samaj in West India did in their own times excellent work; but its appeal remained confined only to those who knew English. Gandhiji christened this entire movement as the 'religion of the educated'. I said the same thing in other words on the occasion of a celebration connected with Prarthana Samaj in Ahmedabad. I said that the activities (work) of Prarthana Samaj is the bass-viol (Tambura) of man's religious activities. The sound of the Tambura is not called music by anybody, but without that sound music can never exist. Music becomes music and gives delight to the listeners only when its rise and fall are in keeping with the tune of the Tambur. Nobody will call it music when a man cries loudly or shouts audibly. Music is not possible without restraint, rhythm and mutual co-ordination; so also no religious activity is capable of being pursued without intellect, integrity, concern for universal welfare wedded to a faith in the good and readiness to try all attempts to gain deep spiritual experience.

Our culture is a vast tradition of a series of spiritual and social experiments. The Hindu religion does not connect itself with any one religious preacher or any one religious book giving prominence to him or any religious practices that he might have initiated. It is a vast flow of life born of the confluence of many tributaries as is the case with the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, the Indus, the Narmada and the Sabarmati. It flows continuously. It goes on receiving new waters. It spreads its waters far and wide and regularly preserves its freshness and progress and thus turns into a blessing by adjusting itself to the challenges of time.

Rabibabu sang of this Hindu culture—now the Universally respected Indian culture —having properly understood its mission in his famous poem— हे मोर चित्त ! पुण्य तीर्थे, जागो रे धीरे अेइ भारतेर महा मानवेर सागरतीरे। Rabibabu's patriotism is expressed in his supremely beautiful song—'अयि भुवनमनोमोहिनी'. It has in it love for the nation, patriotism, and the laudable desire for man's welfare. That song brightened the patriotism of its own times.

'जनगणमन' is the revised and enlarged edition of the same. There is in it a sense of national unity, the meeting of the East and the West, and the realization that the Dark Age is over and Dawn has broken on the world.

But the Bard of Indian Culture and Civilization has achieved his supremely glorious expression only in the song— 'हे मोर चित्त ! पुण्य तीर्थे'.

The significance and the distinctiveness of the form of Indian culture that Rabindranath saw can be understood only when we will have either a bird's-eye-view or an air-plane-view, so to say, of its entire growth.

I have always classified our religious and social reformers in two categories. The ancients used to divide our philosophy into 'athiest' and 'believers'. The Buddhist and Jain philo-

sophy along with Charak did not believe in the Vedas; that is exactly why they have been termed 'athiests'—'नास्तिको वेदनिन्दकः'. It is not important whether you believe in God or no. Some systems which accepted the authority of the Vedas did not believe in God; they are called atheistic branches of knowledge (philosophy); but none calls them irreligious. Those who used to convince others of their philosophy without any reference to the belief in God were known as atheistic but they would quote verses from the Vedas. This distinction or difference is only confined to philosophical disputes; but a more significant difference is evident in the social set-up. We should distinguish between those who believe in the four castes or 'Varnas' in one way or the other the orthodox class and those who do not believe in the four castes or 'Varnas' are the reformers. The followers of Buddhism were indifferent to this caste-idea. They also were rather indifferent to any attempts at social organisation being given to the idea of renunciation and other-worldliness: so they seemed to believe was the case with the Jains. Saints can be had, only form the Shravakas and so it would not do to dis believe the Shravakas. But that religion and that discipline was meant only for those desirous of ultimate renunciation and still continues to be meant for them.

The Buddha or Jain ideal of life cannot contain within itself the two-fold ideal of 'भुक्तिं मुक्तिं च विंदति'.

Even the Sikhs can be counted as reformers. They do not have any regard for caste or subcaste — it is a different story that they could not do away with untouchability. The Lingayats of the South turned out to be more vigorous opponents of the caste-distinctions but ultimately they themselves ended in forming caste by themselves. The tendency to form a caste is so deeply ingrained in the Indian temper that those who could not be within the orthodox fold came to have a sort of caste of their own. The features of the caste came to exist in some form even with the Islam and Christianity which spread in India later on.

I am not referring here to the distinctions maintained clearly or vaguely by those who turned Musalmans or Christians leaving the Hindu fold; but the whole of Muslim Society and the entire Christian brotherhood behave as if they are a distinct separate caste. Thus they maintain and promote their own segregation by encouraging their sectarian interests instead of enriching and strengthening India's national unity.

Even the Arya Samajists objected to the caste, but in doing so, very nearly accepted the 'Varna'. So they approved of the caste in the form of Varna. Along with the Musalmans, the Sikhs, the Christians and the Jains, they not only became a sort of separate caste but they gloried in that separatist tendency. They did not become completely estranged from the Hindus as they believed in the Vedas. In the event of differences of opinion with the Muslims or the Sikhs, they very often assume leadership of the Hindu society.

Gandhiji's influence over the entire country is so profound that there would naturally have been a caste of those who believed in Gandhian ideas because of their insistence on Khadi, untouchability and equal respect for all religions (and it would have been a tremendously big caste). But Gandhiji did not permit the formation of such a caste from among his followers by his attitude of concern for total welfare, of assimilation and adjustments with all, and of universal uplift. What developments will take place in future cannot, of course, be predicted; however, the eternal abiding influence of the pioneer will not allow the Gandhian activities to crystallize themselves into a sect or a separate caste. Among the followers of Gandhiji there is on the one hand an insistence on all-embracing universal unity and on the other there is every one's preference for his own distinctness; it appears from this that there is no hope or fear of an attempt at mobilising the Gandhians into forming a caste of their own. They would always have the desire to serve all and to identify themselves with the whole of the nation and the whole of mankind.

From this analysis it can be inferred naturally, that religions separated from politics do not tend towards being organised. The tendency of culture is always to broaden itself and to embrace the entire universe gradually and will continue to be the same. That supremely assimilative Indian attitude is going to receive tremendous strength from Rabindranath's literary activities.

One can see (there is) the importance of the celebrated sayings of Upnishads in both Rabindranath's family-traditions and the traditions of the Brahmo Samaj. They bear the stamp of the influence of the teaching of the Buddha and the Buddhist history. One can discern in our culture the influence of whatever has been the Protestant contributed by the Protestant professors from the Christian religion and culture. The modern culture has fully appreciated the part played by Islam in breaking caste barriers and in removing idol-worship of numerous Gods and Goddesses.

In spite of modernity having been accepted, considerable latent acceptance of the Hindu view and tradition is discernible in theosophy and its patent acceptance in Ram Krishna, etc. Ram Krishna Paramhansa, Vivekanand, Aurobindo Ghosh and Gandhi. Gandhiji, instead of making the Hindu Society lax, made it progressive and reformist because his method of preach ing his ideas was peaceful and non-violent. And that is the reason why Ravindranath and Gandhi, in spite of differences in their attitudes and ideas, came to complement and support each other. It remains to be seen whether the pupils of both henceforward allow this vitalising element to endure.

We shall now examine those main ingredients of Indian culture and civilization which are accepted by all to-day and which have proved to be effective.

The most important element in Indian culture is the soul and the firm faith in its power. That soul is the free idea and it is all-powerful in its purest form and our ultimate aim could only be its worship—this is our fundamental faith.

The soul is itself a spark of the Divine—that it is an atom of the divine is more or less, in one way or the other, accepted.

It is our faith also that not only in all men but in all animals too, there breathes the same identical life and spirit and heart and soul. This identity is not capable of being discovered in philosophical discussions but it could be seen pervading everywhere as a distinct characteristic of the temper. The Indian mind does not take offence at seeing this tendency. That is why our ultimate goal appears to be to realize the final unity of universe by subordinating all points of difference. The above statement may not sound true to-day when differences are made out where there were none, when even in trivial matters points of difference are brought to the surface and separatist organizations are built up; but at the same time all people accept the ideal of world unity and substantially agree to work for it.

Those who tried to realise the ideal of the unity of self with the universe through purified existence have all uniformly said that this self-universe unity can be realised only by means of the purest love.

The dedicated perceived while striving for such a realisation that wherever the senses are the agencies and where passion became dominant and powerful, the love to that extent gets corrupted, and in the end the place of love is usurped by vulgar passion.

When this pure love awakens itself and becomes active, it takes the form of selfless service. Those that have developed this technique have always been proclaiming on the strength of their experience that for realising the identification of self with the Supreme, indeed, the perfect instruments are selfless service and purest love.

When such love and similar service flow towards the divine or comes to be devoted to God, love takes the form of devotion and service results into worship.

However, devoid the idea of service may be of any reward, it has in it the sentiment of doing good to others, of obliging and of assisting others in times of distress and also of making good others' deficiences; and hence it is believed that the person performing service is superior. On the contrary the idea is always present that the one accepting worship is superior to us; that he is lending fulfilment to our life by accepting our service and thus we are under his obligation.

The pull of the senses must be resisted and self-restraint cultivated for acquiring a sense of self-dedication, service and self-abnegation. It is recognised in every quarter that only then can one have the realisation of the spirit; only then can its strength increase and an atmosphere of universal good and welfare be generated. This self-restraint, according to Rabindranath, should be spontaneous and natural and not the result of efforts. Unfortunately in practice, we find there is an element of artificiality introduced it, which obviously cannot enrich life.

To cultivate the culture of the self (soul) the ancients showed three ways—those of knowledge, devotion and action. Uptil now we have gone on believing that one has to select any one of these three for oneself according to one's nature and one's work. To-day we can see that life-discipline is constituted when knowledge, action and devotion are fused together. To acknowledge all these three facets simultaneously is Indian culture. Here the idea is that knowledge is the foundation of the Discipline of life. Of course, action is everything in the scheme of life-discipline. Action is chastened only through knowledge; it thus becomes selfless and creates no bonds. Devotion, we know, is the aroma of a disciplined life. Devotion is not something different and distinct from either selfless service or worship. Love in its purest and passionless aspect and service inspired by such love is the supreme technique to experience and cultivate that sense of identity with all men, all dynasties, nations, peoples and cultures and thus enrich one's own existence. To dedicate to such service of love, oneself, fully and freely is the true ecstacy of life and its genuine success and fulfilment.

The utterances of our saints, our sacred books and the sayings of our Rishis are the very documents—are the very evidence—of the faith they built up out of experiences and experiments done by our leaders of thought, our teachers, our great men, our saints, our ancient sages and seers and our holy incarnations of great souls. They must all be respectfully studied. It will just not do to be full of sloth in this respect. The truth of all these utterances cannot be imposed on oneself or on others. Imposition from above takes away the intrinsic secret of the matter. It converts inspiration into a mere burden. Education is a process of development, not of harassment. The indispensable and natural feature of this Indian civilization and culture is its equal respect for all religions, faith in all approaches and techniques to realize the Divine; and its cherished universal vast ideal is to promote mankind's evolution by means of all these diversified ways and means.

To make use of one's own life and to sacrifice one's life in the understanding and explaining of this vast, universal, generous, all-powerful culture and to sing about it is truely life's blessed fulfilment.

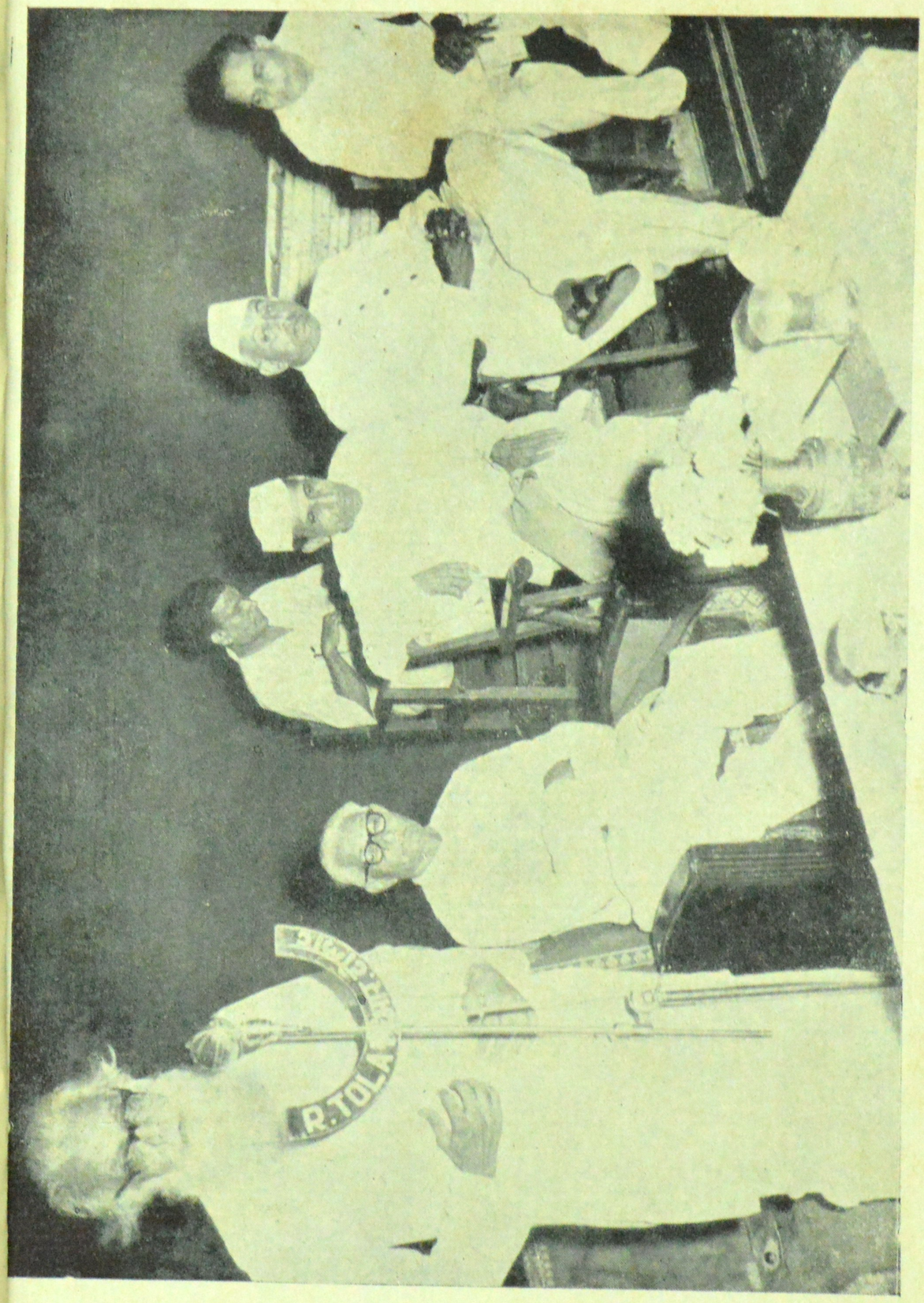
Kabir had said that, "renounce if you must, then renounce without rancour". Peaceful renunciation is productive and potent. We also say that restraint must be fragrant and it turns towards good only if others are attracted to restraint having known its wide-spread fragrance. Even Saint Tukaram entreats endearingly the congregation that for all success your heart should first be glad and full of joy. Rabindranath has proclaimed in song, in the sweetest manner possible, the same beauty, the same joy, the same fragrance, the same assimilation. Rabindranath has clothed defeat, death, humiliation, distress, and such other painful emotions in the garb of beauty. He sees every aspect of life with the Divine spark of beauty in his eyes and so his literary discipline can be called in this new interpretation as the religion of beauty.

Tagore never forgot that the world is not free from conflict. He appreciated the heroes of the struggle. He had boundless regard for Mahatma Gandhi, it is true, who made man's soul the battle ground for conflict for spiritual ends, but he always insisted that life must be full of an aroma. I had written to revered Bapu once that his renunciation, his sacrifice is like the burning of incense. You consume yourself (in the flame of suffering) and the resulting fragrance sweetens the surrounding atmosphere; then who would dare pity your struggle ? Rabindranath too, in course of time began appreciating this form of Gandhiji's technique of insistence on truth.

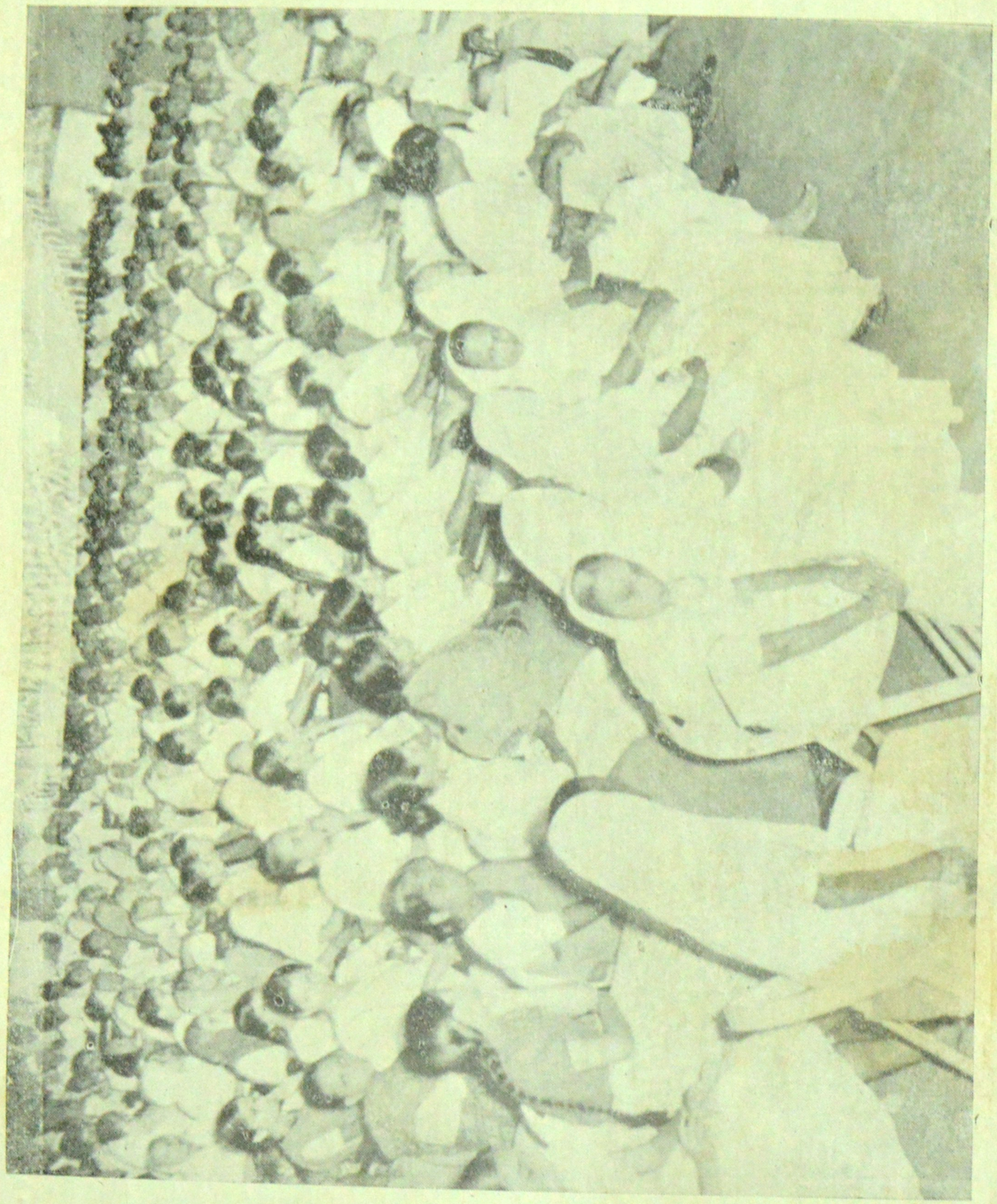
3

Let us now think a little of those elements in Indian culture which were not seriously taken into account by religious thinkers and social reformers like Rabindranath though they were once believed to be main features of Indian culture worn out by time. The most important of them are the Four Castes and many sub-castes. People believe that the sub-divisions of the main four castes are the sub-castes. As a matter of fact, it is not true. The Four Castes are the different organs of one society. The hands, the feet, the head are the organs and the nose, the ear, the tongue and the skin are the senses of the same identical body. They all together constitute the body. In the same manner the society is constituted by the Four Castes. The castes have no independent existence. The society cannot efficiently function even without one caste as all of them are the vital organs of the society.

Some castes are, like the varnas, organs of society but according to the original idea of the tribe, every caste is by itself a complete social entity however circumscribed. If you may not call it a society; call it a 'guild', if you like. Every guild is a distinct separate and self-contained, autonomous social group. The breaking up of mankind into such smaller groups is detrimental to the progressive development of man, and now, in modern times, it is bound to create, conflict and thus spread decay; it cannot survive except with blind



Shri Koka Saheb addressing the teachers and students of the Gujarat University on the occasion of the Tagore Birth Centenary Celebrations : 19th Sept., 1961



A part of the Audience listening to Shri Kaka Saheb Kalelkar on 19th Sept., 1961

arrogance. "The moment the caste expands, the sentiment of belonging to a small varna gradually vanishes and the moment varna-consciouness grows, the caste distinctions will lose their significance."

That is the reason why Gandhiji said, "Caste killeth but Varna saveth". But Gandhiji, did not stop merely at that. None can refute Gandhiji's concept of Varna because he made it thoroughly scientific and general; and still he did not bother to recognise or establish such varnas. He said with all humility that in the modern machine age all should belong to one caste — the caste of social servants — the Shudras. Once we succeed in bringing out the shudra in us by exercising the religion of service the Brahman, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya — all these three varnas — will emerge at the appointed hour. Those foreigners who understood the Hindu Caste System used to say to Gandhiji that they could observe in Gandhiji's person the best of all the four castes of the Hindus; and Gandhiji used to retort that even then he would prefer to be called a Shudra, so that he remained aware of his duty and devoid of any sense of privilege or authority.

When many persons talk of scheme of the four stages of life they think implicitly of the caste-system. Gandhiji committed the same error for many years. Later on it dawned on him that the scheme of the four stages is something different. Caste-system divides society, while the idea of four ashramas (stages) thinks of dividing an individual's life.

It can be easily inferred that Rabindranath accepted the ashrama-scheme of life. In the beginning 'Shantiniketan' was named by him as 'Brahmacharyashram'. At the time of the foundation of Shantiniketan, Rabindranath not only believed in ashrama-scheme but had also given a form of discipline to its contents by first lending to those contents his willing support. He first took himself the initiation and then offered it to others. The Ashrama-scheme was acceptable to Gandhiji also. He called his institution 'Satyagraha Ashram'. But that discipline or

ashrama is not one of the ashramas of the original four ashramas. The 'Satyagraha Ashram' was established by accepting the ideal of the state of celibacy for all the four stages of life and not only for the first or the initial stage. Even householders were expected to act according to the rule of celibacy. But there was no strictness that the one who was admitted to the Ashrama must accept this rule of celibacy. His 'Satyagraha Ashram' had a regard for the final stage — the stage of renunciation — but it did not approve of it. It was the contention of Gandhiji that it was desirable that all may cultivate non-attachment preached in the Gita; but of those who had volunteered for service start donning brown robes of 'Sanyasa Ashram', their service will be imperfect. People run to perform any service essential and superfluous for the Sanyasis; and they feel shy to accept any service from them and think that it is a sin to do so. Hence Gandhiji's advice was not to accept the formal ochre-coloured Sanyasa stage though approving of the sentiment of detachment. According to Gandhiji, Ashram meant a way of life of service, self-restraint and renunciation.

I told Gandhiji that in the Gita you find the support for the four varnas; it can, therefore, be argued that indirectly in the Gita there is the mention of the serving student, the stage of celibacy, the householder performing shradhdha ceremonies of the departed forefathers and also of the Sanyasa Ashrama when the worship for fire is abandoned : but as there is clear and explicit reference, acceptance and detailed explanation of the Varna-system in the Gita, there is nothing of the sort regarding the four ashramas. Shri Krishna, it is true, lived the life of celibacy in the Ashrama of Sandipani with friends like Sudama is true; but nowhere does he seem to be supporting the first stage of life. And the Gita does not have any special regard for the life of formal renunciation of a Sanyasi after abandoning the life of a householder and its worship of three fires. Gandhiji carefully listened to what I said and plunged himself into thought. He appreciated my that observation, but did not express any opinion on it.

In the beginning Gandhiji strongly supported the caste-system. He saw in it the seeds of our own humility and the religion of self-restraint. Lateron he turned to be an opponent of the caste-system, and started encouraging inter-caste and inter-communal marriages. He thought that it was the best remedy to do away with untouchability : but he never publicly advocated such marriages. He not only preferred inter-caste and inter-communal marriages but was also prepared for inter-religious marriages.

In the Indian culture with the inferior–superior caste distinctions and differences, the element of privilege and authority got introduced. We, however, think that this is not in keeping with the spirit of the time to-day; we also say that there is a sense of pride at the back of the sentiment of higher–lower caste distinction and the differences in privileges and rights based on them; we declare that this is not an essential ingredient of the Indian culture but a perversity, and that it should be removed. And so we are able to say that Rabindranath was already reformed and used to preach this reformist attitude.

Now the next point is about the idea of monotheism (one God) which is at the root of Hindu religion and Indian culture; but there are from the very beginning numerous gods and goddesses because of a variety of techniques of worship. Besides it so happens that with the passage of time some old gods and goddessess recede in the background and some new gods and goddesses get introduced from somewhere. In order to bring some semblance of order in the chaotic conglomeration of numerou gods and goddesses there was introduced in the Hindu religio the worship of the five main Gods. Subsequently because of Islam and Christianity our original monotheism got better encouragement. Rabindranath in his childhood was brought up in monotheistic traditions. The Brahmo Samaj was deeply affected by the Unitarian Church of the Christians. And so, as he abondened the concept of the four castes, the authority of the sacred books and all those numerous gods and goddesses,

he also left off the sectarian differences of the Shebites and the Vaishnavas, and the Buddhists and the worshippers of the Mother-Shakti. He no longer accepted the sacred thread and the Shraddha included in the sixteen sanskaras; but he was prepared to offer a new form to Shraddha. Every one he believed should do mental Shraddha of elders and sages and this sense of gratitude is deeply rooted in the Indian ethos and that will not do any harm to us.

Rabindranath had absolutely no regard for the cult of Shakti Pooja (worship of the goddess of Shakti, i.e., Power) because, of those corruption that had spread though it. He has poured considerable ridicule on the worship of gods and goddesses and on the theory of mantras and charms in his play 'Achalayatan'.

To make use of sacred sayings of the ancient books for concentration, meditation and contemplation is one thing; but to go on ignorantly repeating some chants for the purposes of acquiring some harmless or magic power is another.

Rabindranath's dislike for the Shakti-cult had gone to such an extent that he did not like the way of worshipping the Almighty by apprehending him in the form of the Mother. He was not quite enthusiastic about the patriotic clarion call of the song 'Bande Mataram' for the same reason.

As he nursed a protest against the Shakti-cult he also did not accept the idea of the devotion to the preceptor and the surrender to the authority of the preceptor.

What an irony of fate that the one who firmly believed in not recognising any one as his preceptor and who never desired to be a preceptor to any body, came to be called 'Gurudev' in the large family of Shantiniketan. Even Gandhiji while talking to the admirers of Rabindranath referred to him only as 'Gurudev'.

The result of it was that some people spread an impression that Gandhiji considered Rabindranath as his Guru (Preceptor).

It simply escapes one's understanding as to how people can believe that sort of a relationship between them as the sadhana of the life of both of them was distinct from each other. But if devotees are not blind in their devotion where would blindness find refuge? The truth is, as we have a saying from the upnishads, that he only will be saved, or will be able to realise the essential truth of the learning of the Vedas who has the same respectful devotion for the Guru as he has for God. On the strength of this idea there grew up a section of opinion believing that sadhana consists only in implicity accepting fully whatever the Guru says or commands and in dedicating one's all to the Guru whether you be men-pupils or women-pupils. As against that Rabindranath stated that in matters spiritual none can become anybody else's preceptor. One has to find one's own way towards spiritual regeneration. Gandhiji keeping in mind the authority of the ancient sayings like the above mentioned ones said that once the Guru has been found, there is no gainsaying but dedicating one's all to him. But no human being can be such a Guru. God himself is the Guru. And the sadhana of life is to carry on a search for this Guru. Once he is found we would surely attempt to identify ourselves with him.

Thus the sadhanas of Rabindra and Gandhi though separate and distinct were both completely elevating and uplifting; and it is gratifying that the Indian culture benefited from both of them.

We see in Rabindranath the same compassion and charity as we see in Gandhiji's idea of equal respect for all religions. But Gandhiji was trying to bring all approaches together being himself a believer in synthesis, while Rabindranath never hesitated to accept whatever was good from all the sadhanas having the same goodwill for all approaches. Thus, Eclectic impulse and impulse for synthesis are completely different from each other; but still in both the autonomy of the self remains unrestricted.

The Indian culture has recognised all approaches to God that man has been able to evolve. Everybody tries to attain a

position higher and higher but the background of each one is never the same.

The culture of India has not allowed to continue those techniques of approach which destroy man's humanity. As for instance, the mysterious sect of the Kāplīākās was spread to various places of the country but the better people in society did not permit it to survive. Decadence and corruption had entered the sect of the Shakti; even it might be continuing to-day to be (decadent and corrupt). But the holymen lowered its prestige by severely criticising it. So the Shakti-cult lost its face and tried to survive surreptitiously, secretly; hence the proverb अंतः शाक्ताः बहिः शैवाः सभामध्ये च वैष्णवाः। Thus at that time (during that period) the holymen did the work of cultural reform. To-day it is imperative for our religious reforms and leaders of culture to see whether it is necessary now to have this diversity of techniques of worship (of the divine). Really speaking, the subtle distinctions of techinque of worship among the followers of the Shakti-cult, Shebites, the Vaishnavas, the worshippers of Ganapati the Lingayats, the Sikhs, the Jains, the Buddhists, have been feeble and faint as time passed. If they survive, they do it on the strength of a sense of regard and pride for the pioneer of the cult concerned and an element of spiritual strength embodied in it; and as they continue they go on sustaining unnecessary and irrelevant distinctions among them by carrying on philosophic disputes. One man will give a trial to different techniques at different times. But it is neither in the interest of religion nor it is promoting culture to go on with this tendency of hereditary grouping of persons according to the different sects to which they belong.

There will spread a healthy climate of culture in the country if those (sects) which have their origin from the Hindu culture do not organise small hereditary groups based on differences of philosophy, worship and taste. And then this will have its repurcussions on the religious groups of Islam, Christianity, the Jews, and the Parsis (Zoroastrians). There are innumerable

divergent approaches among thinking people such as the Atheist, the follower of Charvak, the materialist, the agnostic, the rationalist, the mystic, the believer in the concept of Dwait and the believer in the Adwait; but they have not organised themselves in to separate castes for the sake of these differences. There are cases of orthodox Hinduism that the father is a believer in the philosophy of Dwait and the son is a believer in the philosophy of Adwait. Among the Sikhs, the Sikh and the orthodox Hindu marry each other. A Jain and a Vaishnav do marry in Gujarat. In Goa some Christians and the rest Hindu members of the same family assemble to worship the family-deity. Hindus and Muslims had a remarkable unity in Sindh, almost a relationship of belonging asitwere to one family. The desire for political advantage and the consequent jealousy grew and with it the unity was lost, and as a result an atmosphere was generated that it would never do without running a race for material gains. Due to all this, Indian culture broke into pieces; and the separate pieces began to quarrel and fight among one another and hence to-day there is that wretched state of affairs which never was in our country at any time in history. That is why to-day we specially evoke the names of Gandhiji and Rabindranath who were not overtaken by this frenzy (of separatism) to save our country from this strange disease. There is an urgent need to-day to search for the true content, the genuine form of the Indian culture — the all India civilization of all religions — if we enter into philosophic disputes it would lead us nowhere. We would be able to survive only if we possess the sincere and compassionate tolerance and a true understanding of life.

Rabindranath was a poet. He was not a poet and a singer who possessed the versifying talent of cleverly manipulating the language into metrical composition through mastery of prosody. In his poetry he searched for truth, thought of social good, got a clear conception of the element of divine by simultaneously thinking of nature, human-heart and social life. He worshipped that Life-Deity who becomes manifest when all the

above elements in the consciousness get fused and integrated. This is why I call Rabindranath a poet using the word poet in the original Vedic meaning.

His idea of education was to find out by trial and experiment how to learn to respect humanity based on individual liberty and initiative, on one's own true nature, one's religion, one's consciousness of belonging to one's own country, and on one's own culture and civilization. He was convinced that there is equal place in education for learning of knowledge and learning industrial skill and he used to insist that with utilitarian industrial skill there must always be beauty implicit in it. It was his cherished conviction that if festivals, painting, drama, dance, music, poetry, etc., had their place in life, they all must have a place in education and the progress of industry. I do not know in details what experiments, he made or what he has written about the subject of architecture and building-construction. But one can decide for himself what exact form or shape Indian culture can be given in every field of life if once one has known Rabindranath's attitude to life and realised his art of living; and if in this respect various experiments are made there is not going to be any harm. But on the contrary we shall become rich in the matter of culture and will cure our tendency to borrow from the 'West' in almost everything, and will also remove the cultural poverty of our age.

Swami Vivekanand, Rabindranath, Aurobindo Ghosh, Gandhi and Radhakrishnan — these five are the main bards of our culture. Their impact on their own country is different from their influence on other countries. Radhakrishnan wields a greater influence in foreign countries, than in our country. He has worked as a teacher in his own country, but did not lead the people. His art of presenting the Indian Civilization and Culture in a style and language that foreigners can understand our culture is simply wonderful. Swami Vivekanand offered our Vedant philosophy to the world; made the people familiar with the concept of Jnanayoga (discipline of knowledge), Bhaktiyoga (discipline of

devotion) and Rajyoga. He explained to his countrymen the vital element and the distinctive character of Hinduism and also made a profound impression on the people of other countries without despising either the Christian faith or any other religion. He shook the belief of the Western world that Christianity is the best religion. Radhakrishnan accomplished the same with his 'Hindu View of Life'. An American gentleman after reading that book told me 'If this is Hindusim, I am a Hindu'. I told him that it is a matter of joy that you have been struck by the beauty of Hinduism; but you will be able to say 'You are a Hindu' in the fullest sense of the term only when you appreciate, the tolerance, the tendency to assimiliate and the acceptance of the principle of evolution which has been the very texture of Hinduism.

Radhakrishnan made the flow of Indian philosophic thought spread through the entire world by presenting the whole history of Indian philosophy in a language which the West can comprehend and in a delightful and mature style. Even such small books as 'The Religion We Need' and 'Kalki' have influenced the world well.

Aurobindo Ghosh laid a strong foundation of a world-culture by presenting to the world the Dhyanayoga, the Rajyoga and the Purnayoga. He did this on the basis of the highest Shakti form of the knowledge of the Supreme Vedantic thought.

Gandhiji got his sense of cultural values from the surrounding atmosphere of orthodox pure Hinduism; got himself acquainted not through the actual and deep study of a number of books but through the contacts with holymen (good men) and through his familiarity with the atmosphere of the country, with the traditions of Jainism, Islam and Christianity. From all of them whatever he thought worth taking he accepted respectfully, and gradually built up a self-power by acting upon them and thus exhibited in his own life the synthesis of all these traditions.

It was Gandhiji's distinction that his Sadhana was individual but it was more social and national. And he used it for

serving all the races and civilizations of the world. In others we get the glimpse of the personality of the those individuals; but in Gandhiji's activities one can see the intense cultivation of the self or the soul-power.

One gets in Rabindranath the alchemy of the Indian assimilative traditions, their poetry and their philosophy. The success of Rabindranath is that in his works the Indian mind and spirit get revealed in their vastness and charity and that is why even the foreign readers feel that this poet gives them such food as nourishes specially the heart and also one's view of life and one's own thoughts.

Tagore's worship was the worship of the deity of life, the good in life, the universal man and the ideal expressed in the saying of the Upnishad—यत्र भवति विश्वं अेकनीडम्।

How wonderful it is that without projecting Rama and Krishna, Yogvashishtha and Bhagavadgita in any special way, he put before the world the very essence of Indian civilization and culture.

I think that Rabindranath did not refer to Rama and Krishna as he did not believe in our idea of incarnation and the scheme of the Varna-hierarchy.

If there was any one who without entering into a dispute about Dwait or Adwait or a special Adwait, rendered a beautiful synthesis of all the three, it was Rabindranath. He only presented the sweet devotion in its pure form. He clothed the philosophy of Vedanta and Sufism in the seductive charms of poetry and gave it such an attractive form, that to have a look at it came to be an education by itself. From the stories and parables from the Indian Puranas as also from the legends and Jataka-stories of Buddhas, and from the historical incidents of mediaeval times, he borrowed only that portion which according to him was for the good of man kind (मनुष्याय हिततम). Here he has made good use of every element—the strivings of the Marathas, the sacrifice of the Sikh religious teachers, the culture of the Moguls and the positive faith in life of the general people.

Thus he expressed the spirit of India in an affluent manner, but in doing so he used more his perosnality and talents and authority in showing the points of agreement and identity of the Indian culture with the world-culture rather than the points of distinction and difference.

The people of the West—of England, America, Germany and Russia gave a big ovation to him as they were dazzled by his genius, then after accepting his greatness they felt their pride a little wounded thinking that a man from the East was overwhelming and captivating the hearts of the people of the West. They suspected their admiration for Rabindranath and so began a searching analysis of their respect for Rabindranath and Rabindranath's message. At present some in the West feel that they were unnecessarily taken in (by Tagore's writings). This sense of repentance is not going to last long as it is the result of vanity and they are uneasy because they know it. But we know that the influence of Tagore's works on the West is not capable of being wiped away. The materialists are sure to disapprove Tagore's vision of life. But this vision once acquired becomes a part of our life and our culture.

So much for Tagore's influence on the West.

If we look into our affairs chronologically it would be evident that the prestige of Tagore-family in the public life of Calcutta was immense from the very beginning. The influence of that family was particularly great right from the days of the East India Company. This family welcomed the contact with the West without any fuss, and brought about reform in the social and religious life keeping the self-respect and preserving the beauty of the indigenous customs and traditions.

The conservative Brahmins of Bengal could not understand it; they started thoughtless opposition. The Tagores were considered inferior Brahmins. As against this the followers of the Brahmo Samaj began ridiculing the orthodox—the more conservative Hindus. We know that Rabindranath profited by

this mutual boycott. He got a rich religious diet from the father and still could remain free from the domination of religion.

One finds a curious mixture in Rabindranath of the devotional literature of the Vaishnavas, the worldly Vedanta of the religion of the Bouls, and a gentle romanticism or bohemianism of all the three.

The unusual awakening after the partition of Bengal, the spirited movement for the Swadeshi and boycott, and the resultant anarchism constitute an important though a temporary phase in Rabindra's life. Patriotism at the cost of character was simply unacceptable to him. He could recognise it to be insanity masquerading as love for one's own country. When he got the clear and complete idea of it, he kept himself out of it, allowed himself to be misunderstood and began giving constructive form to his activities after settling down at Shantiniketan.

Not at the cost of character but with the strength of character how one's country can be devotedly served — when this ideal he saw in Gandhiji, he gave him the title of the Mahatma and came to develop an affection for him. He did not fall into the trap of those interested in spreading wrong notions (about him). He declared without any reservation his differences (with Gandhiji) and lost no opportunity of whatever possible co-operation with him keeping himself deeply occupied with his own activities.

He sang of the beauty, the flavour of the highest ideals of Indian culture; he sent its message to all Asian countries. He presented before Europe clearly the bright aspect of Indian culture and ultimately taking the position of the Universal Man he proclaimed for world-co-operation. He predicted with uncanny insight and a bleeding heart that there can only be complete destruction at the end of the fever of Western imprerialism.

Rabindranath offered to the world an illustration of how the vision of a pure individual living naturally, but intensely, is vast, clear and constructive.

The true appreciation of Rabindranath will be only then when the repentant West will understand the significance the view of life that Rabindranath cultivated and the work that he did to realise it. It seems to be the scheme of the Almighty for this age that Rabindranath and Gandhiji — great peaks of human greatness — contemporaries — will throw beautiful light on each other's work and will complement each other.

Rabindranath's influence is not like that of a torrent but is like the air or the atmosphere silently doing its own work. Gandhiji had uttered it in public in 1926 and 1927 that Rabindranath is the best ambassador of our culture and the work of cultural contact and co-operation or synthesis is safe in his hands.

We are to-day saying the same thing in a spirit of gratitude, in the terminology of the Vedas when we say that Rabindranath is the great Bard of traditionally rich Indian culture. He has proved that we have a place of honour and affection in the family of nations. And the matter of great satisfaction for us is that both of them have got in Jawaharlalji an heir to serve mankind by integrating the work of Rabindranath and Gandhiji.

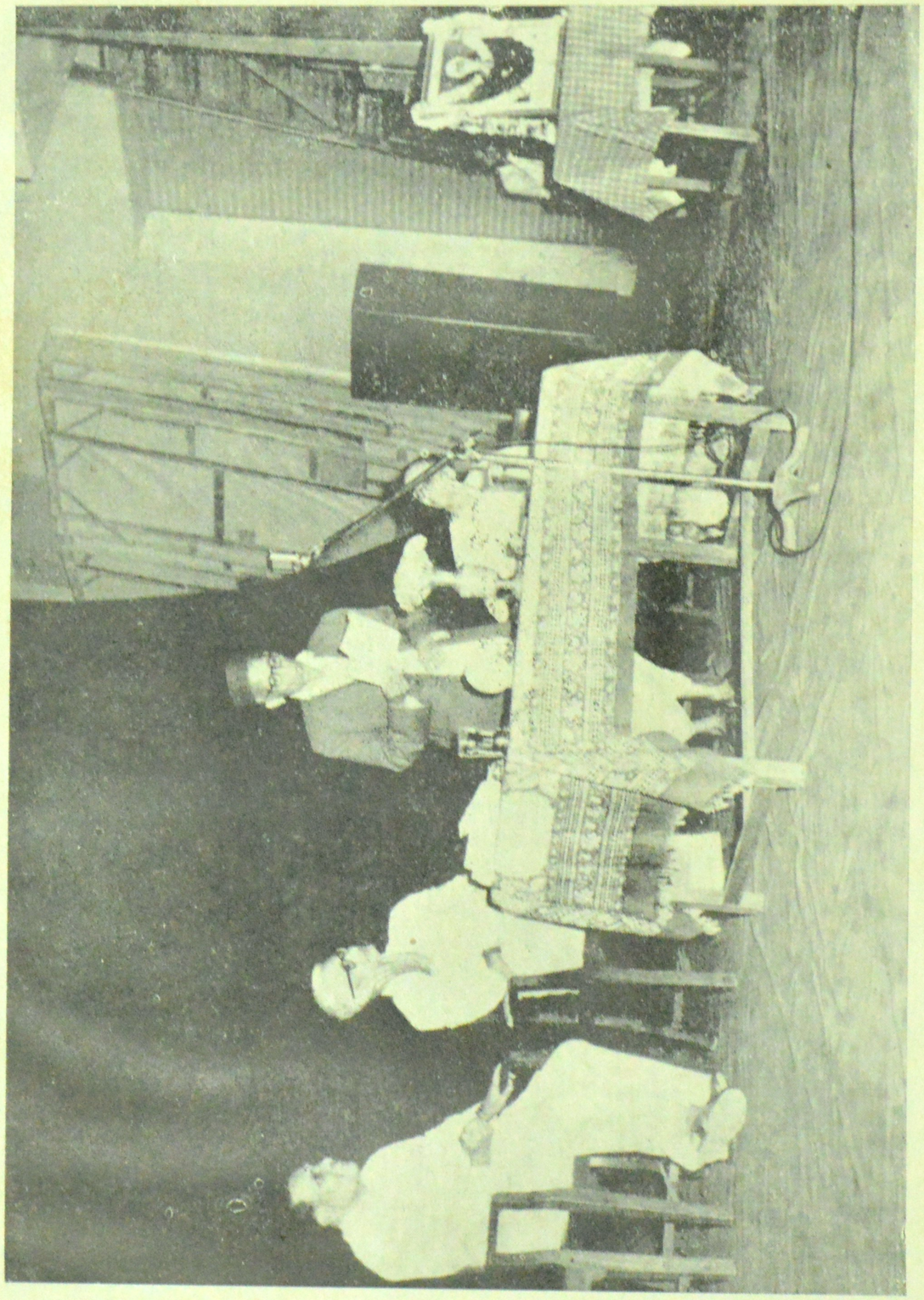
2. TAGORE — AN ARTIST AND HUMANIST

I have first of all to say how grateful I am to the Gujarat University and its Vice-Chancellor, for the honour done me in inviting me to participate in this series of lectures on our great countryman Rabindranath Tagore.

Indeed the feeling that it was an honour to have been invited was so strong that it overcame all the promptings of prudence that I should request to be excused from the task. First of all the subject itself : 'Tagore — An artist and humanist.' Is artist put in here in the restricted sense of painter ? And does the word humanist demand exposition from the point of view of philosophy ? Secondly, I know the poet's literary work mostly only in English. Is that good enough ? Yet I decided to accept the honour, for Tagore's literary work is the greater part of his work as an artist, and without much knowledge of Bengali, I have loved and enjoyed this work. You, my audience, besides, are in all likelihood to a large extent in the same position as myself in this respect. I could, therefore, do my best and expect that you would make allowance for the defects in my equipment.

So you find me here today, very happy to stand before so cultured an audience, and very happy to have the opportunity of joining in paying homage to a great son of our motherland.

This year being the hundredth year of the poet's birth, and the highest authority in the land, and institutions all over the country, and in many countries abroad, having decided to celebrate the centenary, we are hearing a great deal about Tagore programmes everywhere. This seems to have hurt some person or persons. It seems such persons said that we are making too much of Tagore. This view of the poet is not new to me. I and a friend paid a visit to Shantiniketan in 1933. In



Shri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, addressing the teachers and students of the Gujarat University on the occasion of the Tagore Birth Centenary Celebrations : 20th Sept., 1961

the journey from Calcutta to Bolpur, we met in the train two young Bengali gentlemen who were also going to Shantiniketan. One of them wore very thick glasses for shortsight. They were both in very high spirits and were singing. One of the songs began with the words, 'ganēr nishān rakta nishān'. So we gathered that they were members or admirers of the communist party. They asked us where we came from and why. When we said we came from Mysore and wanted to see Tagore the spectacled gentleman said: 'What is there to come from such a distance to see?' The other gentleman agreed with him. The attitude is also very old. You read in the Mahabharata that when Yudhishtira decided to offer *agrapuja* to Sri Krishna, Sisupala and his friends stoutly objected. Recent example is not wanting either. Bernard Shaw once came to the stage to please a thousand spectators who had seen a play of his with delight. With the great ovation he received could be heard one long, loud and distinct hiss. When the ovation ended Bernard Shaw turned in the direction of the hiss and said, "Sir, I myself agree with you, but what are we two against such numbers?"

Something similar may well do as an answer to those who think we are overdoing the adoration of Tagore, if we wished merely to put them down. But something more is called for in this case. We have all of us to remember that Tagore was more than just a great writer. Barrie was a writer of as fine a gift, and Tchekoff of comparable achievement. They were born in the same year as Tagore, but England and Russia do not celebrate their birth centenary in this way. Tagore in winning the Nobel award restored to self-respect a nation whose spirit had drooped under prolonged subjection to foreign domination. It was the counterpart in the intellectual world of the victory of Japan in Port Arthur in war. This was the first half of our Paradise regained. It was completed by Mahatma Gandhi who by his martyrdom in life no less than in death restored to us the blissful seat, our independence. So when we celebrate Tagore, we celebrate

as a people our restored liberty, our regained soul. And when a man has ceased to be merely man and become a great idea can we celebrate him too much ?

But I wish at times that we had celebrated him a little more, and differently, when he was alive. Homer dead, we are told, was claimed by seven cities down whose streets he had walked begging unheeded when alive. Tagore had to beg for Shantiniketan and found that our people did not respond. "I do not know how to beg," he said, reporting this to Mahatma Gandhi, and the Mahatma said, "I shall do it for you; I have done it all my life and have learnt how to do it." The Government was then alien, and the people not sufficiently awake. I wish also that more of us would read a little more of the work of the poet : this particularly when I hear men who never learnt anything from the poet refer effusively to him as Gurudev; men in high station blunder in reading scripts on the poet's work prepared by their assistants; and persons who never met the poet giving out reminiscences of him. It would do us all good if we insist on whoever talks of Tagore being able to repeat from memory at least one poem from the Gitanjali. For non-Bengalis the poem might be the poet's prayer for our country beginning with the words, "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high." A Bengali in such case would of course know many more pieces.

There is peculiar propriety in this celebration being undertaken in Ahmedabad, for your city is one of the only two places in India outside Bengal that find mention in Rabindranath Tagore's reminiscences. He spent some time in his formative years in these places and they fed his spirit and nursed his talent. I believe that the old palace in Ahmedabad in which he stayed provided the atmosphere for the story "The Hungry Stones". Later in the years of his world fame Gujarat exercised the privilege of honouring the poet by inviting him to preside over its literary conference here (1920), and he then delivered an address which is one of the finest statements of his literary credo.

The other place in India outside Bengal finding mention in the reminiscences being Karwar in Karnataka, is there some special appropriateness also, in a writer from Karnataka taking a part in this series of lectures ? If there is, I request permission to enter the claim. That appropriateness, if any, is enhanced by the fact that when I went to Shantiniketan in 1933, I as a vegetarian received hospitality in the Gujarati Students' Hostel there.

I have been asked to speak of Tagore as artist and humanist. The combination of the two aspects of the poet's personality is important and should be kept in mind. There could be a disquisition on Tagore as artist only : his humanism would then come in as one of many aspects of the personality. In the present case the matter for consideration is the Poet's Humanism; in considering it, we have to study how the fact that he was an artist influenced his stand as humanist. Tagore's humanism took a particular shape because he was an artist. This does not mean that all artists who are humanists would be like Tagore. There are artists and artists, and each has his own lineaments. Tagore was one type of artist and he was so made that he had to be a humanist. As artist-humanist he was, therefore, unique or nearly unique. It was a case of

> "Gaganam gaganākāram Sāgarah sāgarōpamah."

An artist, it has been said, is born, not made: and he is an artist because of his temperament, "Why am I a fool" asks Patroclus in Troilus and Cressida, and Thersites replies: "make that demand to your creator". If some one had asked Shakespeare why he was a dramatist, that greatest of artists would perhaps have replied with a smile which meant, ask my maker. This temperament makes the artist sensitive to beauty and rhythm, makes his joy and pain deeper, and impels him to give shape to the impression of that joy and pain. Faculty, experience and expression, all three are necessary. The means of

giving shape may be words, or tune, line or colour, or mimetics and movement, or plastic or unplastic material. Rabindranath was a born artist. He worked most of his time with words and tunes, and employed mimetics sometimes to express his view of life, and when past seventy began painting also. In this as in his poetry and drama he was an artist; but in this talk, I shall not discourse on that part of his work, firstly for the reason that I have not studied the art of painting even to the small extent to which I have studied literature, and secondly for the other reason that the artist and humanist side in Tagore had found all the expression it needed in his writing and the painting was an overflow. Asked what his pictures meant the poet said it was for them and not for him to make it clear. If they were silent he was equally silent. Speaking, however, without putting on the mantle of an art critic, I may say that such meaning as the pictures convey seems to be the very meaning of the many poems and songs and plays in which his spirit had deposited the best of his experience.

Looking back on his early life when over fifty years old, Tagore said that what constantly recurred to him was the Bengali jingle "Jal pade patha nade". This to the child poet was the first poem of the arch poet and the rain pattered and the leaves quivered again and again the livelong day in his consciousness. A second thing he remembered was a doggerel ballad that Kailas the steward of the family himself composed and rattled off. The young poet was the hero of the ballad and there was a heroine in it, but that in the ballad which moved this boy and set wonderful joy pictures flitting across his vision was the rapid jingle of the frequent rhymes and the swing of the rhythm. A third thing that delighted him was what he called the infants' classic

"Vrishti pader tapur tupur nadey ela ban."

"The rain falls pit-a-pat, the tide comes up the river."

The single fact that rhyme and rhythm were so fascinating to the child is sufficient indication that his temperament was

artistic but many a child might feel this fascination and yet not grow up to be a poet. Something more in the temperament is required for this and we have indication of it in the poet's description of how as a boy he spent his day sitting near a window which he was interdicted by his servant guardian from leaving. The passage is characteristic:

> "Just below the window of this room was a tank with a flight of masonry steps leading down into the water; on its west bank, along the garden wall, an immense banyan tree; to the south a fringe of cocoanut palms. Ringed round as I was near this window, I would spend the whole day peering through the drawn venetian shutters, gazing and gazing on this scene as on a picture-book. From early morning our neighbours would drop in one by one to have their bath. I knew the time for each one to arrive. I was familiar with the peculiarities of each one's toilet. One would stop his ears with his fingers as he took his regulation number of dips, after which he would depart. Another would not venture on a complete immersion but be content with only squeezing his wet towel repeatedly over his head. A third would carefully drive the surface impurities away from him with a rapid play of his arms, and then on a sudden impulse take his plunge. There was one who jumped in from the top steps without any preliminaries at all. Another would walk slowly in, step by step, muttering his morning prayers the while. One was always in a hurry, hastening home as soon as he was through with his dip. Another was in no sort of hurry at all, taking his bath leisurely, followed by a good rubbing down, and a change from wet bathing clothes into clean ones, including a careful adjustment of the folds of his waist-cloth, ending with a turn or two in the outer garden, and the gathering of flowers, with which he would finally saunter slowly homewards, radiating the cool comfort of his refreshed body, as he went. This would go on till it

was past noon. Then the bathing-place would be deserted and become silent. Only the ducks remained, paddling about after water snails, or busy preening their feathers, the livelong day."

This child, so like Amal in the poet's play 'Dakghar', wistful and helpless, dreamy yet observant, is a poet in the bud. He is the type that will become the man who "will watch from dawn to gloom the lake-reflected sun illume the yellow bees in the ivy bloom; nor heed nor see what things they be; yet from these create he can forms more real than living man, nurselings of immortality." The readiness to sit composed for a length of time, the joy in watching the actions of people who come and go, and the registering of the details of the action in each case, are the outcome of a sensitiveness which leads to depth of impression and joy in expression.

Tagore's earliest exercises in poetry dealt mostly with personal feelings. A little perfunctory schooling but a great deal of lessons at home and a good deal of miscellaneous reading gave the artist ample opportunity to grow as he liked, and the atmosphere of liberty in which he lived led him to try new modes in song and composition. Of 'Evening Songs' his first significant book the poet later said: "As poems my 'Evening Songs' may not have been worth much, in fact as such they are crude enough. Neither their metre nor language nor thought had taken definite shape. Their only merit is that for the first time I had come to write what I really meant just according to my pleasure. Even if those compositions have no value that pleasure certainly had."

A poet so made might well have remained just a poet and become even a great one as Keats in English did, without going outside the world of his own feeling, but the environment in which Tagore's poetic faculty developed gave play to his interest in his fellowmen, which was part of his make-up. He had taken birth in a household of the reformist Brahmo Samaj. He had

a number of elder brothers and other relatives who were engaged in various walks of life and distinguished themselves in them. He came into contact with many types of men and was drawn into various activities in literary criticism, social service, political agitation and commercial enterprise. He could not remain subjective even if he would. Let us admit that he would not, and, therefore, could not. Like Shelley in English literature to whom he was compared by contemporary literary criticism, the young poet felt keen interest in the world of work and engaged in it with ardour. In these days an awakening came to him. One morning the poet happened to be standing on the veranda of their house in Sudder Street and looking towards the end of the street and the grounds of the school opposite.

> "The Sun was just rising through the leafy tops of those trees. As I continued to gaze, all of a sudden a covering seemed to fall away from my eyes, and I found the world bathed in a wonderful radiance, with waves of beauty and joy swelling on every side. This radiance pierced in a moment through the folds of sadness and despondency which had accumulated over my heart, and flooded it with this universal light.
>
> "That very day the poem, 'The Awakening of the Waterfall', gushed forth and coursed on like a veritable cascade. The poem came to an end, but the curtain did not fell upon the joy aspect of the Universe. And it came to be so that no person or thing in the world seemed to me trivial or unpleasing. A thing that happened the next day or the day following seemed specially astonishing."

This poem called 'The Awakening of the Waterfall' was a record of the experience by which Rabindranath's individual spirit began its pilgrimage to union with the universal spirit. "How the ray of the sun has entered my life this morning! How into the darkness of the cave has entered the song of the birds of morning!" says the poem. Broken were the bonds that held the poet in himself. He will now pour out in pity and over-

flow the world with song. How much his story, how much his joy, how much his realisation! "The spirit is full to the brim and is overflowing."

Bhidyatē hṛdayagranthih chchidyantē sarva samṣayāh
Kshīyantē sarva karmāni yasmin dṛshtē parāvarē.

said the seer of the Upanishad. Rabindranath took the first step to that state of mind when he had the experience recorded in this poem. The consequence, he tell us, was that, that afternoon he welcomed cordially a man who had seemed absurd to him previously. The mantle of the fellow's oddity and foolishness seemed to have slipped off and "the person so joyfully hailed was the real man whom I felt to be in no way inferior to myself and moreover closely related."

"Finding no trace of annoyance within me at sight of him, nor any sense of my time being wasted with him, I was filled with an immense gladness, and felt rid of some enveloping tissue of untruth which had been causing me so much needless and uncalled-for discomfort and pain."

Yasmin sarvāni bhūtāni ātmani ēva anupaṣyati
Sarva bhūtēshu chātmānam tatō na vijugupsatē.

"When you see everything in the universal spirit and the universal spirit in everything then you cease to feel disgust at anything." The features of the passersby seemed wonderful and the sight of two smiling youths walking across with arms over each other's shoulders a matter of great moment. For through it the poet "could see the fathomless depths of the eternal spring of joy from which numberless springs of laughter leap up throughout the world."

The poet had never before marked the play of limbs and lineaments which always accompanies even the least of man's actions; now he was spell-bound by their variety, which he came across on all sides, at every moment. Yet he saw them

not as being apart by themselves, but "as parts of that amazingly beautiful greater dance which goes on at this very moment throughout the world of men, in each of their homes, in their multifarious wants and activities."

"Friend laughs with friend, the mother fondles her child, one cow sidles up to another and licks its body, and the immeasurability behind these comes direct to my mind with a shock which almost savours of pain."

This awakening was the definite beginning of humanism in Tagore. Now it might be as well to state clearly what we mean by humanism in this context.

What is humanism? The use of the word in the sense now usual seems to be recent and the meaning seems to be still developing, but the substance of it seems to be interest in the welfare of man as man.

Interest in the welfare of man as man means that you will accept no distinction as between man and man, that you deny institutions which make such distinction, that you serve man not men, that is mankind as a whole, and not this or that race or group to which you belong, that you work for raising the individual to the highest altitude of which he is capable, and that the individual enjoys giving himself up for the good of his fellowmen. We moderns are apt to think that this emphasis on man is dental of what in the past was called God. It is possible that this is so in what Western thinkers call humanism. In Tagore the human and divine are not in conflict. The divine has stepped down from its height and become human and the human has to rise from the smallness of the self and become divine.

An impulse from the vernal wood, said Wordsworth, will teach you more of man, of moral evil and of good than all the sages can. Of course, you have to be sensitive to the impulse. Wordsworth spoke too of the light that never was on sea or land with which the artist mind invests the world. Still another

poet prayed to God for the vision by which he would know that beneath his feet was a star and God's word in every voice. With this sensitiveness, this inner light, this vision of the artist, the God of Rabindranath's life dowered him in most abundant measure.

Rabindranath developed both as poet and humanist from this time on to the very end of his life. First as administrator in his estate he mingled with the life of the people and identified himself with their joys and sorrows. Later, he took part in the struggle for political freedom and undertook educational reform. When his achievement as poet found recognition by the award of the 'Nobel Prize' he felt the call to serve the whole world. "To the open road, to the emancipation of self, to realisation in love."

The pictures we have of the first stage of the poet's growth are of great interest:

One day, while he was giving audience to his tenants, five or six boys made their appearance and stood in a primly proper row before him. Before the poet could put any question their spokesman, in the choicest of high-flown language, started: "Sire! the grace of the almighty and the good fortune of your benighted children have once more brought about your lordship's auspicious arrival into this locality." He went on in this strain for nearly half an hour. Here and there, he would get his lesson wrong, pause, look up at the sky, correct himself, and then go on again. The poet gathered that their school was short of benches and stools. "For want of these wood-built seats," as he put it, "we know not where to sit ourselves, where to seat our revered teachers, or what to offer our most respected Inspector when he comes on a visit."

The poet interrupted the young orator before he had done, promising to arrange for the necessary number of benches and stools. Nothing daunted, the boy allowed the poet to have his say, then took up his discourse where he had left it, finished

it to the last word, saluted him profoundly, and marched off with his contingent. He probably would not have minded had the poet refused to supply the seats, but after all his trouble in getting it by heart he would have resented bitterly being robbed of any part of his speech. So, though it kept more important bussiness waiting, the poet had to hear him out.

On one occasion the poet found a band of gypsies settled on the banks of a stream.

"I frequently watch the doings of the family nearest me. They are dark but good-looking, with fine, strongly-built bodies, like north-west country folk. Their women are handsome, and have tall, slim, well-knit figures; and with their free and easy movements, and natural independent airs, they look to me like swarthy Englishwomen.

"The man has just put the cooking-pot on the fire, and is now splitting bamboos and weaving baskets. The woman first holds up a little mirror to her face, then puts a deal of pains into wiping and rubbing it, over and over again, with a moist piece of cloth; and then, the folds of her upper garment adjusted and tidied, she goes, all spick and span, up to her man and sits beside him, helping him now and then in his work."

"If we begin to attach too much importance to the applause of Englishmen," he wrote in a letter in 1893, "we shall have to be rid of much in us that is good, and to accept from them much that is bad.

"We shall grow ashamed of going about without socks, and cease to feel shame at the sight of their ball dresses. We shall have no compunction in throwing overboard our ancient manner, nor any in emulating their lack of courtesy. We shall leave off wearing our *achgans* because they are susceptible of improvement, but think nothing of surrendering our heads to their hats, though no head-gear could be uglier."

Sometimes one or other of our simple, devoted, old ryots came to see him and their worshipfu homage was so unaffected!

"How much greater than I are they in the beautiful simplicity and sincerity or their reverence! What if I am unworthy of their veneration? Their feeling loses nothing of its value.

"I regard these grown-up children with the same kind of affection that I have for little children but there is also a difference. They are infantile still. Little children will grow-up later on, but these big children never."

On one occasion when the poet was in his boat on the Padma two cowherd lads were grazing their cattle just in front of the poet's boat. The cows were munching away with great gusto, their noses plunged into the lush grass, their tails incessantly busy flicking off the flies. The raindrops and the sticks of the cowherd boys fell on their backs with the same unreasonable persistency, and they bore both with equally uncritical resignation, steadily going on with their munch, munch, munch. "These cows," says the poet, "have such mild, affectionate, mournful eyes; why, I wonder, should providence have thought fit to impose all the burden of man's work on the submissive shoulders of these great gentle beasts?" "To make poems of pity", would not doubt been the reply of one who was a poet though not known as such.

Here is another incident. As he was sitting at the window of the boat, looking out on the river, one day, the poet saw, all of a sudden, an odd-looking bird making its way through the water to the opposite bank, followed by a great commotion. It was a domestic fowl which had managed to escape impending doom and jumped from the boat and was trying frantically to win across. It had almost gained the bank when the clutches of its relentless pursuers closed on it, and it was brought back in triumph, gripped by the neck. The poet told the cook that he would not have any meat for dinner.

"I really must give up animal food," he says. "If only we do not allow our heart to grow callous, its protest against cruelty is always clearly heard; and yet we go on perpetrating cruelties easily, merrily, all of us. In fact, any one who does not join in is dubbed a crank."

The poet grew into what Buddha called *maitri*: "I feel that the highest commandment is that of sympathy for all sentient beings."

With the knowledge of life outside grew the knowledge of the life inside also.

"The mind of man," he says in another letter, "works in just the same mysterious fashion as outside Nature — so it struck me yesterday. The blood-stream rushes on, the nerve-strings vibrate, the heart-muscle rises and falls, and the seasons in man's being change from one to another. What kind of breezes will blow next, when and from what quarter, of that we know nothing." In another letter: "I feel like a living pianoforte with a vast complication of machinery and wires inside, but with no means of telling who the player is, and with only a guess as to why the player plays at all. I can only know what is being played, whether the mode is merry or mournful, when the notes are sharp or flat, the tune in or out of time, they key high-pitched or low. But do I really know even that?"

Continual brooding over the without and the within brought insight: "When my little daughter delights me," he says in a letter of 1894, "she merges into the original mystery of joy which is the Universe; and my loving caresses are called forth like worship. I am sure that all our love is but worship of the Great Mystery, only we perform it unconsciously. Otherwise it is meaningless." It was no doubt when the insight deepened into realisation that the poet agreed with the seer of the Upanishad and asserted:

Ānandād hi ēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē, ānandēna jātāni jeevanti, ānandam prayanti abhisamvishanti.

He grew into sympathy with the under-dog here. "One great point about work is that for its sake the individual has to make light of his personal joys and sorrows; indeed, so far as may be, to ignore them. I am reminded of an incident at Shazadpur. My servant was late one morning, and I was

greatly annoyed at his delay. He came up and stood before me with his usual *salaam*, and with a slight catch in his voice explained that his eight-year-old daughter had died last night. Then, with his duster, he set to tidying up my room."

One evening the poet was reading an English book of criticism, full of disputation about Poetry, Art, Beauty, and so forth. As he plodded through the discussion, his tired faculties seemed to have wandered into a region of empty mirage, filled with the presence of a mocking demon. The night was far advanced. He closed the book and flung it on the table; and blew out the lamp with the idea of turning into bed. No sooner had he done so than, through the open windows, the moonlight burst into the room. The poet had a shock of surprise. "What, forsooth, had I been looking for in the empty wordiness of the book? There was the very thing itself, filling the skies, waiting silently for me outside, all these hours!" The poet recorded this experience in a poem.

I shall pick up just one more picture from these letters.

"There is another boat at this landing place, and on the shore in front of it a crowd of village women. Some are evidently embarking on a journey and the others seeing them off; infants, veils and grey hairs are all mixed up in the gathering.

"One girl in particular attracts my attention. She must be about eleven or twelve; but, buxom and sturdy, she might pass for fourteen or fifteen. She has a winsome face, very dark, but very pretty. Her hair is cut short like a boy's, which well becomes her simple, frank, and alert expression. She has a child in her arms and is staring at me with unabashed curiosity, and certainly no lack of straightforwardness or intelligence in her glance. Her half-boyish, half-girlish manner is singularly attractive, a novel blend of masculine nonchalance and feminine charm. I had no idea there were such types among our village-women in Bengal.

"None of this family, apparently, is troubled with too much bashfulness. One of them has unfastened her hair in

the sun and is combing it out with her fingers, while conversing about their domestic affairs at the top of her voice with another, on board. I gather she has no other children except a girl, a foolish creature who knows neither how to behave or talk, nor even the difference between kin and stranger. I also learn that Gopal's son-in-law has turned out a ne'er-do-well, and his daughter refuses to go to her husband."

What an eye for details, what interest in personality, what insight into character, and lastly how fine a sense of humour! The man who could write that was an artist-humanist complete. The writer of this letter and those referred to earlier is bound to have fruitful ideas about what constitutes happiness for mankind and to speak about them and write about them and, if he has the energy and the opportunity, to attempt to give shape to them in life. Tagore did this.

A humanist would in the first place wish to be as good a man possible. Tagore did this for himself and for all persons. The goal is self-realisation. To the men who reached it he gave a name hallowed by use over the millenia in Sanatana Dharma, *rishi*. This was natural to him. In his father Devendranath Tagore he had seen a man who had reached realisation and been called *maharshi* by his fellow-men. Because he had seen a *rishi* and loved him and revered him the poet could say with confidence that to be a *rishi* is the ideal for the individual. The thing is possible. The thing is beautiful. Many had reached the state in the past and experienced the fullness of the life.

Right living is a question of values. Man is spirit first and body next. He should place spiritual good first. If he does not, the question "tatah kim" will haunt him. In the last resort, "ātmārthē prithivīm tyajēt."

One text gives rishis five attributes. Every adjective in the description is important. Happy in their realisation, their spirits perfected, free of attachments, full of peace, in tune with the highest: this is the very farthest of far-lying goals thought of by men for the race. It is so far that the teachers of Sanatana

Dharma posited many births in the world in which the individual soul would slowly grow up to it. Those who do not believe in rebirth can only say: it is not for realisation by everyone, or by many, but everyone shall have it as the ideal.

The best course for putting the individual on the way to the ideal is the scheme of ashramas. "This fourfold way of India attunes the life of man to the grand harmony of the universe, leaving no room for unrestrained desires to pursue a destructive course, leading them on to their final relation with the Supreme." There was a time when the great thinkers of ancient India led such disciplined, purposeful lives in communion with Supreme, and their spirit was at work not only in religion but in state-craft, warfare, commerce, literature and art. Not only did Maitreyi say, but the whole country was echoing to her cry: Yēnāham nāmritā syām kimaham tēna kuryām? What shall I do with that which brings not immortality?"

Tagore expounded the ideal and the details of the discipline in language of the highest beauty both in Bengali and English and kept it in view in his own personal life all the years that he lived.

As he desires that every individual should grow to his highest stature, the humanist is deeply interested in education. He knows that man is part of nature, that his growth is healthiest if his educational surrounding is natural, if he is taught in his mother-tongue, and his schooling bears a close relation to his life. Tagore's experience of school had been unpleasant and his ideal impelled him to start his school in Shantiniketan. His main idea in starting the school was that the surroundings should be natural, that the children should be so taught that they would like instruction and that they should have a feeling of liberty in the environment.

On this and other important aspect of the poet's writings and activities you have no doubt either heard or are going to hear separate lectures. I shall, therefore, content myself with a

few observations under each head just to complete the picture of the artist humanist. That a foreign language cannot be the right medium for instruction, was to Tagore's mind a truism which would bore men to sleep anywhere, except in our country. When we are compelled to learn through the medium of English, the knocking at the gate and the turning of the key take away the best part of our life. The ideas come late and the tedious grinding over grammar, and a system of spelling which is devoid of all rationale take away our relish for the food when it does come at last. He stated this in his reminiscences. He gave evidence to this effect before the Calcutta University Commission. When later he was invited to address an annual convocation in the Calcutta University he delivered the address in Bengali. A second point of great importance on which the poet insisted was that our education should not make us foreigners in our own land. "Many of our boys and girls," he said, "are now being brought up in the way Europeans live in this country. They have nannies to look after them...They have been uprooted from a forest and transplanted to a European flower-box. A grown-up Bengali is, of course, free to adopt European ways if he likes to do so, but why should Bengali parents go to such lengths in bringing up their children in the European way? I once heard a westernized boy cry out to his mother at the sight of some relatives of his who were dressed in the Indian style, 'Mamma, Mamma, look .. a lot of babus are coming.' I can hardly imagine a worse degradation. Such youngsters, when they grow up, will be unfit for Bengali society and unacceptable to European society, and doomed to live as social outcasts."

Humanism refuses to brand any man as common. "We are all kings in the kingdom of our king." It carries the best of knowledge to all the population. In the past in India this was done by specially trained men who communicated their wisdom to crowded gatherings in villages, reciting the epics, expounding the scriptures, reading from the Puranas; the community arranged for the performance of plays founded upon the early myths

and legends, dramatic narration of the lives of ancient heroes, and the singing in chorus of songs from old religious literature. Through these means the people though technically illiterate realised that it is a great thing to live as a man. They were aware of the sanctity of social relationships and constantly practised sacrifice and self-control. They were urged and supported in this course by ideals collectively expressed in the one word Dharma.

That is how you found villagers playing symbolic drama in which the gardener who is God stops a person from carrying away from his garden the soul which is his property; the fisherfolk singing the songs addressed to Tara praying for mukti; the Bauls of Bengal composing songs addressed to the man of their heart and despising the wealth which keeps its owners like full pots left on the bank away from God while their poverty makes them empty pots and takes them close to him.

The humanist is against all exploitation of man by man: of the lower caste by the higher catse; of the weaker nation by the stronger nation; of the poor by the well-to-do; of labour by capital; of the village by the city; of the non-white races by the white. All people have to be taught self-respect.

There is a story, the poet said, that a kid went weeping to the Lord and said, "Lord, how is it that all creatures seek to devour me?" The Lord replied, "What can I do, my child? When I look at you, I myself am so tempted." Even God cannot guarantee that justice will always be done to the weak and the undeserving.

The poor, in the words of the parable employed by Swami Vivekananda, are tiger cubs brought up to feel like sheep. We have to teach them that they are as fully men as any one else.

Not self respect only, but self-reliance and co-operation have to be taught to the people. This is real swaraj, mere political independence is not. It is essential that all over the country centres should be set up in which the responsibility for swaraj

is accepted fully. The people's welfare is an amalgam of several ingredients. Health, recreation, the activities of the body and mind thrown together in one combination, they make the picture complete. We must have before us, in many parts of the country, examples of different types of revived life. India as a whole must first be made true in a concrete form in some corner of the land.

If the people of even one Indian village make the village their own re-creation, the first long step towards the solving of the problem would have been taken.

To provide one such centre as an example the poet established Sriniketan as a twin institution with Shantiniketan to teach modern methods in agriculture, develop rural industries and otherwise also rouse the people to a healthy new life.

It follows that the humanist cannot tolerate any institution that treats one human being as lower than another and inflicts disabilities of one sort or another upon sections of the population. Caste in our country as now practised is one such, Infant marriage, enforced widowhood were others. Narrow orthodoxy and the subordination of woman in the household others. Tagore wrote against these institutions and customs incessantly in satire in earlier poems and in mellow tone in the later. When he found that in his own group, the Brahmo Samaj, the pulpit was available only to the Brahmin to preach from he protested and got the restriction abolished. Such institutions harm not merely those who suffer but those also who cause the suffering. In a poem in the Gitanjali a prisoner who is held in an unbreakable chain is asked to say who it was that wrought his chain. "It was I," says the prisoner, "who forged this chain very carefully. I thought to hold the world captive and worked at the chain. When the work was done and the links were complete and unbreakable, I found that it held me in its grip."

This applies to the relations between race and race. The correct attitude is that of Hammergren the Swede who felt

great reverence for Ram Mohan Roy and came to India and lived the life of his people and ended his days in their service, and of Margaret Noble who adopted the name Sister Nivedita, and of C. F. Andrews. Just the contrary is the type that thinks that the white man as the stronger should take advantage of the weakness of the coloured man and exploit it. An example was that of Messrs Grojan and Sharp who said of Africa and the Negro: "We have stolen his land. Now we must steal his limbs." And this, not for the good of the negro; as they said they had seen too much of the world to have any lingering belief that western civilisation benefits native races.

The humanist of necessity loves his country, and if it becomes necessary engages in politics, but being a lover of mankind as such refuses to accept all its implications. Tagore engaged in politics from his earliest years. "Politics are against my nature," he said, "but born to an abnormal situation, I cannot help taking part in it." We may remember Bernard Shaw's remark regarding Ireland: a man with a broken limb can think of nothing else. While yet a boy the poet wrote against the vainglory of Lord Lytton's Durbar. When Lord Curzon partitioned Bengal the poet engaged in the anti-partition agitation, wrote songs, led marches and addressed gatherings. When the tragedy of Jalianwala took place and the Government condoned it he protested and returned to the Viceroy the Knighthood he had accepted some years earlier. He sang of golden Bengal and prayed for the awakening of his country in words which I have referred to and cried victory to the ordainer of the fortunes of the land of Bharata in a song which is now our National Anthem. But politics as practised by the average man goes against the humanist grain. In the activities of the anti-partition movement he found that people were unscupulous. He gave a picture of them in the novels at 'Home and Outside', and 'Gora'. He wrote later "of the dissipation of politics whose goal is success, whose path is the zig zag of compromise—that politics which in every country has lowered the standard of morality, has given rise to a perpetual contest of lies and

deceptions, cruelties and hypocrisies, and has increased inordinately national habits of vulgar vainglory."

Patriotism to the mind of the humanist, ceases to be the love of a geographical unit and becomes devotion to the highest ideals which the people who have ever lived in it have cherished. "I love India", said Tagore, "but my India is an idea and not a geographical expression. Therefore, I am not a patriot. I shall ever seek my compatriots all over the world." "I have come into touch with this idea in faraway places of Europe and my loyalty was drawn to it in persons who belonged to countries different from mine: the idea of 'purusham mahāntam āditya varnam tamasah parastāt'. Let India stand for the co-operation of all the peoples of the world.

This humanist idealism brought Tagore into seeming conflict with Gandhiji in connection with what was called the non-co-operation movement. Non-co-operation in that context was short for "non-co-operation with evil". There was no difference between the poet and Gandhiji in this respect. The poet practised non-co-operation with evil when he renounced his Knighthood. What Gandhiji prescribed to our people was just this. But the single word "non-co-operation" used by itself caused confusion and led the poet to bewail the harm it would do. So great a friend of both the great men as Romain Rolland was led to believe they had clashed. The poet and Mahatmaji, however, loved each other so well that their personal relationship remained unscathed.

In fact the humanist in Tagore was so strong that he could see that Gandhiji was such a leader as our country had not had for centuries. He named him with Buddha and Christ and praised him for preaching goodness not merely in the individual but in national life.

It was inevitable that nationalism both as an instrument of exploitation and as the apotheosis of separatism should have been intolerably offensive to the poet. He first noticed it, he

said, in 1916 in Japan; a population whose creed had been courtesy and beauteous living had become vulgar and boastful because it had adopted the attitude of Western nationalism. His vivid imagination gave him a picture of what the world would be like if this attitude gained ground everywhere. So he went from country to country preaching against it. Part of the preaching emphasised the need for friendliness between the East and the West. It was easy to say East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet. It was not simply the poet of the materially prosperous West that said this; the protagonist of what is proud of being the spiritual East also says this. The poet pointed out that there is a future for mankind only if both East and West give-up this narrow outlook. It is true that the poet of the West had also said that when two strong men stand face to face there is neither East nor West but we have to accept identity of interest between the East and West not for the exceptional men only but for all the populations. The East and West are like Vasishtha and Vishwamitra of our Puranas or Mary and Martha of the Gospels. The world needs the spiritual and material activity of both hemispheres. The two must co-operate and make possible a better life for all mankind.

If the thing we call a nation is evil a league of several such evil things can not be other than evil. Of the League of Nations then attempting to save the peace of the World the poet said at a reception in London in 1931 :

> "I am not competent to deal with international relationships between different countries, but, as I have said, your politicians really represent the spirit of aggressiveness which leads towards separateness. I know you are trying to do something to rectify the mischief through the League of Nations, but the nations are not represented by their idealists but only by their politicians. I do not think it is right that the nations should be represented by their politicians in a work which has for its object peace all

> through Europe. To my mind it is like a band of robbers being asked to organise the police department."

What, one wonders, would the poet have said about the U. N. O.?

A humanist will not accept facile generalisations such as that the West is materialistic and the East spiritual, that science is materialistic and religion spiritual. He knows by a hundred things that many Europeans are capable of generosity, courage and self-sacrifice, and that many easterners are narrow-minded, weak and selfish. He knows that science is pursuit of truth and all such pursuit is spiritual. The poet wrote :

> "In a spiritual sense, India said one day that ignorance is bondage, knowledge is deliverance, and we free ourselves by attaining truth. What is untruth ? It is to know oneself as integrally separate. To realize one's unity with the entire universe, to merge the individual soul into the universal soul, is to know truth. We cannot even conceive today how wonderful it was for the ancient Indians to bring so great a truth to the reach of the human mind.
>
> Fundamentally similar to the deliverance sought by ancient India in the spiritual sphere is the deliverance that modern Europe is trying to attain in the material sphere. Here, too, ignorance is bondage, and knowledge deliverance. The truths of science are leading the human mind from isolation to universality, and linking individual power to universal power."

The humanist desires a fair distribution of the good things of life as between sections of the population. Tagore, therefore, liked what Russia had achieved in this respect. "The ups and downs produced by the inequality of wealth are healthy only within a limited range. Large fortunes and luxurious living form high walls or segregation. They produce worse divisions in society than physical barriers.

"Some people believe that the solution is to be found in the abolition of the idea of property...

"I do not believe that inequality in wealth can ever be completely removed by force. The disparity inherent in man is sure to assert itself. There is also the difference in temperament. Some love to hoard money while others have no such inclination, so that unevenness in wealth is created."

The remedy is in teaching the well-to-do to use their wealth for social service and thus share it with their fellow-men.

The humanist insists on woman being given a high place in society. Woman on her part should not think that she differs from man merely in biological function, that psychologically she and he are the same. That would be to make the mentality of the human world exclusively male and reduce it to utter inanity. Life finds its truth and beauty not in exaggeration of sameness but in harmony. Woman in the West seems to be denying this difference in the new age but this is merely in protest from a position of economic dependence created by man's history hitherto. Yet in societies truly alive to woman's special excellence woman is literally worshipped. She is Devi, the idea of God in an eternal feminine aspect. Not that she is always well treated, but our women have known that they should accept suffering, that they should fulfil their mission in life and that this has spiritual meaning. That, however, has been confined to the home so far. The present age is asking women to come out of their segregation and restore the spiritual supremacy of the essentially human in the world of humanity. Womanliness is not chiefly decorative. Like vital health it imparts not only the bloom of beauty to the body but joy to the mind and perfection to life.

The humanist values only that in religion which promotes human welfare. Ceremonial and ritual as such have no value for him. "Leave this chanting and singing and counting of beads. Whom dost thou worship sitting in this dark corner? Open thy eyes and see thy God is not before thee."

Where then is he ?

"He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil!

"Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation, he is bound with us all for ever.

"Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow."

Naturally the temple built by a king out of the labour of a famished people cannot be a dwelling for God. Saint Narottam in a poem of Rabindranath's, sent for by the king, refuses to go to that temple for worship. The king says "Leave my kingdom." "Yes," the saint says: "banish me to the place to which you banished God earlier."

Patriotism, religion, science, machinery, all institutions, all knowledge are susceptible of a right and a wrong use. Which of them shall we choose? "Kasmai Devāya havisha vidhema?" The humanist is punctiliously for the right use in every case.

Men began with forming communities, growing into a people, necessarily in geographical enclosures. Now geographical barriers have ceased to be real and men look forward to a great federation of man, the meeting of human races. Bhumaiva Sukham. Our aim today is to make one country of this earth.

Udaracharitanan thu Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. The great mind of man is one. When we understand this we respect the differences between man and man that are real, yet realise that they are one. Unity is not in uniformity but in harmony.

The process of consolidation has to proceed step by step. India has to gather herself together. Asia should base her

structure of culture on a synthesis of the cultures in all her countries. Then East and West have to grow into one by sympathy and understanding.

Asia cannot play her part in the world by becoming an exaggerated West. The gorgecus East was famed in the past not merely for pearl and gold but for wisdom. To give up our heritage and adopt Western knowledge in its place would be to buy spectacles at the expense of our eyesight. It is because our people have done this that our educated community is not a cultured community but a community of qualified candidates. This kind of dependence on the West must end and the East must recover itself it if it is to make her contribution to the final synthesis.

To improve on our inheritance is like strengthening our own legs for walking, merely to borrow from others is to walk on artificial legs. To see by our light is to depend upon the sun of our system and to have full vision; to depend upon others is to see by the light of a star. That star is a sun but it is the sun of another system. It may give us enough light just to see but for not for full vision.

With the object of bringing together our inheritance and making it available to the world Tagore established Viswa-bharati. Its motto is "Yatra vishwam bhavati eka nidam": where the world finds its one nest. India is the seashore of universal humanity and has always treated its guest as God.

What a wide field the poet's thought covers! Tagore often said that he was only a poet but immediately after this apology for venturing into alien territory he proceeded to discourse quite confidently on matters lying within such territory. He was not wrong and this for a very important reason, that, properly speaking, there is no such thing as a separate territory for poetry excepting perhaps lyric poetry. History, philosophy, religion, economics, sociology, politics and administration have each a separate field. What, excluding them, is the field for

poetry? Poetry has jurisdiction in all these fields, only its attitude is different from that of the formal study of these subjects. Study is largely thought. Poetry is largely feeling. To the economist talking of the economic man, Ruskin, pointed out that no real person was purely economic. This is what poetry feels about all the subjects of study. "You are dealing with live human beings," it says, "pray take care how you may hurt them." You have heard of Emerson's squirred which said to the mountain, "It is true I cannot carry forests on my back but neither can you crack a nut". The poet has not the scholar's and student's fund of knowledge but the scholar and student has not the poet's insight. This is why a poet like Tagore seems to take all knowledge for his province and feel that no subject under the sun is beyond his ken.

The width that we see in the poet's speculation we see in the creative writing too. In the satirical poems of an early period the poet poured ridicule on the conditions of society in Bengal. In the patriotic poems he formulated ideals for the nation and told tales from history to give the people a pride in their motherland. In the play, "Chitrangada" he dealt with the position of woman in life; in the poems on childhood and in the play "Post Office" with the claims of childhood to tenderness; in the play "Rathayatra" (Car of Time) with politics; in Mukta-dhara with the machine; in "Raktakaravi" with materialist greed; in the "Palataka" verse narratives again with social subjects but in a mellowed, not satirical, mood. Thus, the integrated personality of the artist-humanist showed in the discourses on any topic the intuition of the artist, and in the creation in literature, the wisdom of a man of the world.

Tagore's humanism led him to take not only all knowledge for his province but the whole world for his stage. He told England that her love of Empire was eating into the vitals of her tradition of freedom; America, that money was not every-thing; Italy, that her tyranny was degrading her; Russia, that to use force to change men's opinion was not wise; Japan, that

she should be herself and not a bad imitation of the west; India that uniting against the foreigner is not the whole of nation-building. He put heart into China and Germany and called to the countries of Asia to come together and build up the composite culture that belonged to all of them and prepare to make their contribution in due time to the world's stock of wisdom.

Using the words humanist and humanism so often one is tempted to ask is this a school of philosophy and is Tagore a philosopher ? The question has been asked and the answer given that Tagore is not a builder of systems and so, presumably, not a philosopher; and this in a tone implying that a poet loses in stature by being a philosopher. This is to get into unnecessary trouble with words. What is philosophy ? Is it thought ? feeling ? intuition ? experience ? Are the Upanishads philosophy ? Do they each build a system ? Tagore was nursed in an atmosphere of Upanishadic teaching and his statement of his spiritual experience is of the same kind. It is poetry and philosophy together; and poetry remains unscathed when it is philosophic in this sense.

The substance of Tagore's spiritual realisation is this. Man is not an accident in creation. As the tree is implicit in the seed so was man with all that he stands for implicit in creation even millions of years before his arrival on the terrestrial scene. Now that he is here man has to realise the best of which he is capable. No one individual mind can do this. Only the Universal human mind which comprehends all time and all possibilities of realisation can. "The Isha of our Upanishad, the super-soul which permeates all moving things, is the God of this human universe whose mind we share in all our true knowledge, love and service, and whom to reveal in ourselves through renunciation of self is the highest end of life."

Renunciation here is not negative. It shows itself in universal love :

He prayeth best who loveth best
All creatures great and small
For the dear God who made us
He made and loveth all.

Not only has he made them and is he loving them. He is there in them.

Ēvam to pandithaiah jnātva
Sarvabhūta mayam harim
Kriyatē Sarva bhūtēshu
Bhaktiravyabhichārini.

That is why one who loves man with no thought whatever of God will still be enrolled first among those whom love of God has blest. This is what happened to Abu Ben Adhem, may his tribe increase.

For to make room for God, the poet said, it is not necessary to deny man.

Next, is humanism a religion ? What is religion ? An attempt to lead life to its highest good, placing it in line with ultimate reality. Between the crude practices of primitive people and the nirguna sadhana of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, there can be and are a thousand such attempts. Each such attempt without exception is religion. We of recent generations accepting the ways of the West think we have done something very courageous when we question the idea of God and fancy that we are Jack the giant-killer when we deny the idea. But there have been schools of thought in sanatana dharma leaving God out of account as severely as any agnostic of us all. Jabali in the Ramayana was a pratyakshavadin. Of him Vasistha said :

"Jābālirapi jānītē lōkasyāsya gatā gatim."

The divine and human are not so discrete as we sometimes think. Jesus Christ who called himself the son of God called himself also the son of Man, and Rama whom his own generation seems to have deified as the Romans deified their emperors told those who called him God : Atmānam mānusham manyē Rāmam Dasarathāthmajam.

The important thing is not what one believes but how one behaves. My religion is good if my life is good. Of Sankhya and Yoga Bhishma said to Yudhishtira.

Ubhechaite mate tatwe mama tata Yudhishthira anushthite yatha sastre nayetam paramam gatim.

Their " darsana " is " bhinna " but their " achara " " tulya ". In truth what we commonly call so many religions are parts of the one religion that mankind has been building up over the centuries. As there have been teachers who formulated their own ideas of religion there have been others who tried to combine these ideas and form syntheses. One such attempt was made by Auguste Comte early in the nineteenth century. He found room in it for all the teachers of mankind that we know and he called it the religion of Humanity. Tagore made such another synthesis and called it the Religion of Man. He gave an idea of it in his Hibbert lectures. The teachings of the Upanishads and the Gita, of Zarathustra and Buddha, of Laotze and the latest science are all part of it. It included the idea of a Jeevana Devata of the Lord of his life who lived in his life and the idea of the Primordial Being described in the Upanishad as

Ēsha dēvō Vishwakarmā mahātmā
Sadā Janānām hrdayē sannivishtah

and contains the promise : " Ya ētadviduh amritāstē bhavanti."

" What humanises all material progress, " the poet said to an American audience in 1930, " is the Person in the heart of all beings. I have known that Person in the depth of my being. Only when you come to him will there be peace."

Having preached peace and goodwill among men all his life and finding himself in the middle of the second world war when eighty, the great sentinel, as the mahatma called him, gave a final cry of warning and closed his eyes in hope which was too like despair.

" I look back on the stretch of past years and see the crumbling ruins of a proud civilisation lying heaped as garbage out of history ! and yet I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in Man, accepting his present defeat as final. I shall look forward to a turning in history after the cataclysm is over and the sky is again unburdened and passionless.

" Perhaps the new dawn will come from this horizon, from the East where the sun rises; and then, unvanquished Man will retrace his path of conquest, despite all Darriers, to win back his lost heritage.

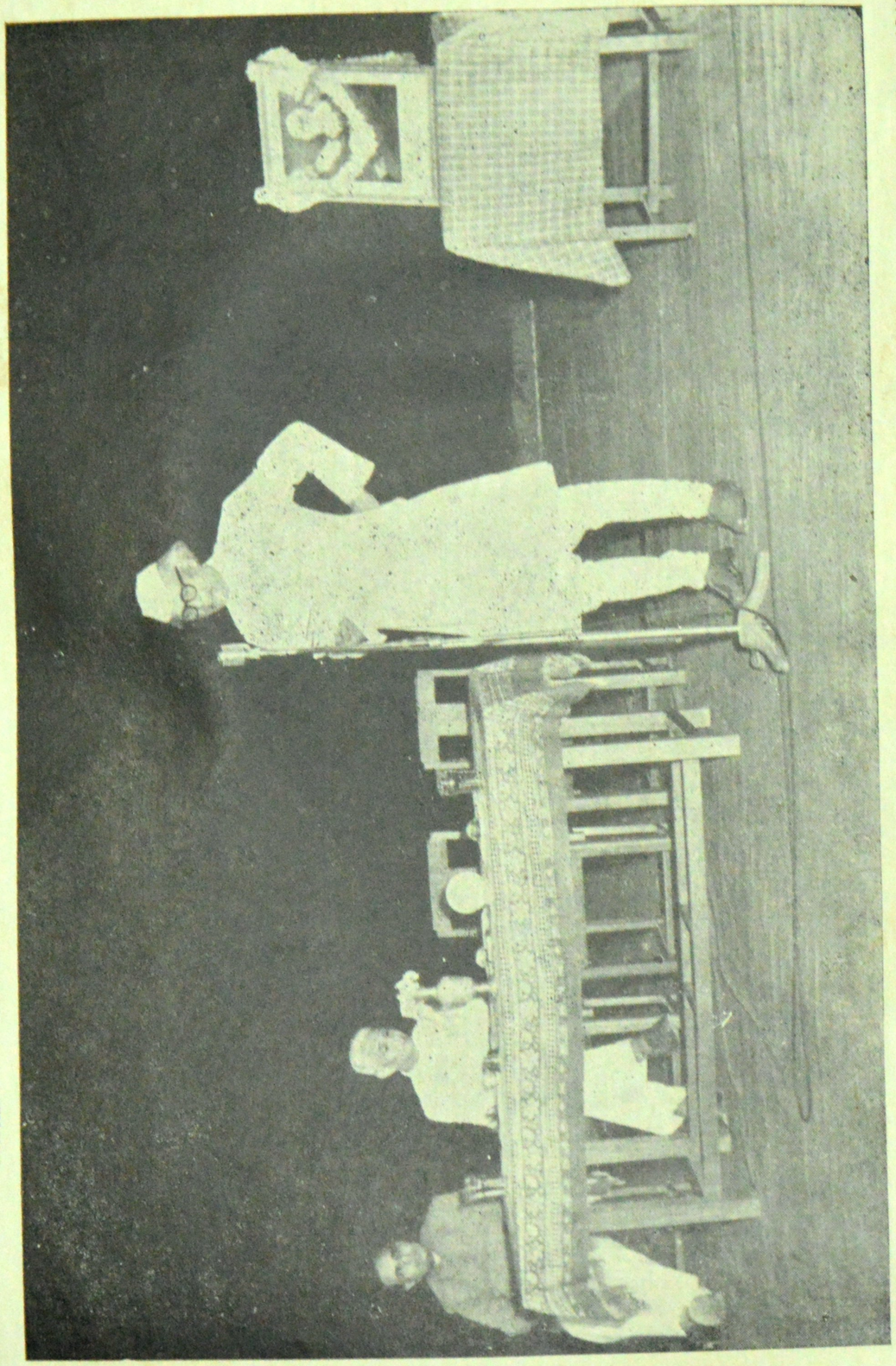
" The hour is near when it will be revealed that the insolence of might is fraught with great peril; that hour will bear out in full the truth of what the ancient sages have proclaimed :

Adharmēnaidhatē tāvat tatō bhadrāni paṣyati
Tatah sapatnān jayati samūlastu vinasyati."

Today after twenty years, that cry of warning is even more valid for the hope is even more like despair. A son of India who knows that he is a son of man repeated the cry two weeks ago in Belgrade and in the Kremlin. Will the great ones of the earth heed it ? What are the chances ? As we cannot be sure, let us hope, they will.

To Devaki in bondage the Lord came as son and liberator. To India in bondage, He came not as one but as several sons and as of the greatest among them as Gandhiji and Tagore. The one struck off her political, the other her cultural, fetters. Men like these are from God, are of God. " Yadyad vibhūtimatsatvam srīmad ūrjitamēva vā tattadēva avagaccha twam mama tējōmsa sambhavam. " They come in accordance with the promise

"Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glanir bhavati Bhārata abhyutthānam adharmasya Tadātmānam srijāmyaham." Blest be the womb that gave them birth. Blest are we who may call them ours. Or shall we say "who may call ourselves theirs? For it does make a difference. "God is on our side," said some one to Abraham Lincoln in the course of the war to liberate slaves. "My dear Sir," said Lincoln in reply, "that may be, but I am content with being on God's side." We know Krishna was on Arjuna's side in the Bharata war because Arjuna had been on Krishna's side all his life till then. Tagore and Gandhiji are ours only if we make up our mind to be theirs. The son that Devki bore liberated not only her but the world from the Demon Kamsa. Gandhiji and Tagore were required for the liberation of this world from a Kamsa. Kamsa means or implies a grip. We are all held in a demon-grip till our Lord liberates us. The world is now in the grip of the demon of greed and power-intoxication and pride. Let us pray that the Gandhi-Tagore message of Truth and Beauty may be the means in this age of freeing it from that grip and saving mankind.



Shri Kazi Abdul Wadud, addressing the teachers and students on the occasion of the Tagore Birth Centenary Celebrations : 21st Sept., 1961

3. TAGORE'S ROLE IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF INDIAN THOUGHT

Any approach to Tagore, particularly to his ideas, must be preceded by a consideration of the age and the environment which witnessed his birth and also his flowering; for, he was, like all men and women who have left their mark on human history, very much a child of his age and environment. And by the age and environment of Tagore we should, in the first instance, understand the environment of the illustrious family in which he was born and the age of the province which was during the years of his growth so full of ferment in almost all spheres of life, and after that, we should take into consideration the age and environment of the wide world also with the significant trends of which both his family and his province were so much in accord.

It should be noted in this connection that the view that Tagore was more or less a Romanticist of the English order is not only an inadequate estimate of him as a *litterateur* and as man, but a misleading one too, as will be seen presently.

But we have no time for any detailed notice of either his environment or his age. We would indicate only in outline some of their marked features. About his family, Tagore himself has said :

> "Our family which was Brahmo in persuasion was free of the various restrictive rites and observances prevailing in the modern Hindu Society. This not-very-wide distance was, I believe, responsible for the very strong regard of my elders for those ideals of India which were held to be universal and perennial.....their enthusiasm naturally initiated me, quite early in my life, into a way of thinking which may be stated thus :

the greatest gifts which our lives can bestow on us receive their nurture in our inner selves alone. Their is not, it is true, any dearth of worthy and covettable things beyond the confines of our particular likes and dislikes; but we cannot call them our own till we have assimilated them in our inner nature."

To this should be added that it was not only the sustaining lessons of national and patriotic awareness that he imbibed from his great family but the lessons of high rectitude and quiet submission to devine will also as so amply shown in the life of his father Maharshi Debendranath Tagore.

Of the memorable age of his province, we would mention only some outstanding events of the century :

The Fort William College was started in 1800; it contributed substantially to the development of Bengali prose. Ram Mohan Roy settled in Calcutta in 1815 and went on publishing in quick succession his epoch-making pamphlets on the Vedanta, on the Suttee, on the Precepts of Jesus, and the like, which stirred Calcutta and the outside world by their far-reaching and strikingly novel thoughts. The Hindu College — the citadel of Western learning so to say — was established in 1817. The Brahmo Sabha or the Brahmo Samaj — the Hindu Theistic Church — was inaugurated in 1828 and its rival, the Dharma Sabha, was established in 1830. Derozio, the rationalist and gifted teacher of the Hindu College, was forced to leave the College in 1831. Ram Mohan died in England in 1833 after he had pleaded ably for his country's administrative reforms and had left a lasting impression of his massive intellect on England and France. The somewhat aggressive rationalism of the Derozians and their zeal for Western ways of life dominated Bengali in the thirties and the forties of the century. Young Debendranath and his twenty friends formally joined the Moribund Brahmo Samaj in 1843 and carried on vigorously their researches into the Vedas; they declared in that decade that the foundation of their religion was no Book nor any Prophet or *Avatar*, but the purified and illuminated human heart. The great

Vidyasagar advocated remarriage of Hindu widows in 1855 and had the measure enacted in 1856. Modern Bengali literature including drama, poetry and fiction was ushered in the fifties and sixties of the century by Michael Madhusudan Dutt and others. Keshavchandra Sen, the Young Brahmo leader galvanised educated Bengali life and to some extent educated Indian life in the sixties and seventies of the century; schism among Brahmos occurred in the same time. The hardening of the British attitude towards educated Bengalis and Indians after the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857 and the Indigo Disturbances in 1860 and the consequent deepening of political consciousness among Bengalis and Indians in the seventies and the eighties as shown in the following events: the advent of the National Theatre and Bankimchandra's *Bangadarshan* in 1872, the establishment of Surendranath Banerjee's Indian Association in 1876 and the Indian National Congress in 1885, and Sir Syed Ahmed's and Syed Amir Ali's counter-movements among Musalmans in the same time, emergence of strong Hindu Revivalism and Obscurantism (as an offshoot of political consciousness among them) and Young Tagore's encounter with them in the eighties and nineties. Vivekananda's and Ramkrishna's wide fame and vogue after 1893 (the year of the Chicago Religions Congress) and Tagore's apathy to their teachings which emphasised monkhood and of the mediaeval tendencies. In 1900 Tagore completed his fortieth year and assumed the stature of a great writer and thinker. He not only thought on problems facing his people and country, but those facing the wide world also and gave Europe this solemn warning against her imminent danger:

"Behold Nationalism rushing headlong to Death,
With its cargo of self-aggrandisement
towards submerged rocks."

Events of Bengal and India and the world after 1900 need not be recounted as they are well-known.

From even this scrappy account of Tagore's age and environment, it is clear that he was born in an age that was really dynamic.

But dynamic ages are capable of not only big jumps forward but unthought-of strides backward also. At least in the Bengal of Tagore's youth we find such conflicting thoughts strongly operative in the Bengali mind simultaneously. This peculiar mental imbalance of the educated Bengalis—due, of course, to various reasons the chief of which was the strong political rebuff they experienced—may explain the marked decline of Bengal in subsequent years. But it is also to be noted that this state of divided mind among his contemporaries spurred Tagore to his noteworthy achievements because he steadily refused to be drawn into any bypath of reactionist mentality and stuck to the broad way of creative thoughts opened up by Ram Mohan and his highly gifted successors. We have known how Debendranath and his friends gave a bold rational basis to their religious thought. Let us have a glance at the leading thoughts of Ram Mohan, the initiator of the awakening in Bengal and India. Ram Mohan called himself a disciple of Shankaracharya.

But in the reforms he advocated, he clearly emphasised the life of the house-holder and not that of the *Sannyasin*. The religious reforms he advocated were also actuated by his sense of urgency for the social amelioration of the Hindus as will be evident from his following remarks:

(*a*) Hindu idolatry more than any other pagan worship destroys the texture of society.

(*b*) As religion consists in a code of duties which the creature believes he owes to his Creator, and as "God has no respect for persons but in every nation he that fears him and works *righteousness*, is accepted with him", it must be considered presumptuous and unjust for one man to attempt to interfere with the religious observances of others, for which he well knows he is not held responsible by any law either human or divine. Notwithstanding, if mankind are brought into existence and by nature formed to enjoy the comforts of society

and the pleasures of an improved mind, they may be justified in opposing any system, religious, domestic or political, which is inimical to the happiness of society or calculated to debase the human intellect having always in mind that we are children of one Father who is above *all* and through *all* and in us *all*.

Our great nineteenth-century leaders were deeply religious, in other words, God-fearing. But it is clear that their religion rested much more on a strong secular basis than on any metaphysical abstraction. A favourite saying of Ram Mohan was: "The true way of serving God is to do good to man." And this may be said to be the dominant idea of all our important leaders of the nineteenth century including Tagore. So our nineteenth century, in other words our modern age, may be singled out by this one great characteristic: its life-view is much more secular than metaphysical while the life-view of our previous centuries was markedly metaphysical. And this secular proctivity assumes in Tagore's vast literature—in his poetry as well as in his prose—a form which is not only bewitchingly pleasant to our sentiments but deeply convincing to our understanding also. Tagore is thus a fulfilment, in the domain of literature, of our deepest nineteenth-century aspirations.

So the supreme contribution of Tagore to Indian thought is his stimulating emphasis on this worldliness as opposed to the others worldliness of our bygone ages. He may be said to have rejected, almost root and branch, *mayavad* which pervaded Indian thought so long. Innumerable lines from Tagore can be cited in support of this contention. I shall quote only a sonnet of his written in his youth and another short poem written towards the end of his life. Here is the sonnet:

कहिल गभीर रात्रे संसारे बिरागी
"गृह तेयागिब आमि इष्ट देव लागि।
के आमारे भुलाइया रेखेछे अेखाने?"
देबता कहिला "आमि"।—शुनिल ना काने।

सुप्तिमग्न शिशुटिरे आँकड़िया बुके
प्रेयसी शय्यार प्रांते घुमाइछे, सुखे।
कहिल "के तोरा ओरे मायार छलना?"
देबता कहिला "आमि"।—केह शुनिल ना।
डाकिल शयन छाड़ि "तुमि कोथा प्रभु"।
देबता कहिला "हेथा"।—शुनिल ना तबु।
स्वपने काँदिल शिशु जननीरे टानि—
देबता कहिला "फिर"।—शुनिल ना बाणी।
देबता निश्वास छाड़ि कहिलेन "हाय,
आमारे छाड़िया भक्त चलिल कोथाय"।

One grown dissatisfied with life said at dead of night,
"I will give up health and home for my God who is my all.
"Who have kept me here in delusion?"
God said, "It is I." But he did not hear.
With the sleeping child pressed to her bosom.
His dear wife was sleeping in peace on a side of the bed.
He said, "Who are these snaves of *maya*?"
God said, "It is I." But none heeded.
He left his bed and cried, "Where art Thou my Lord."
God said, "Here I am." But he did not hear still.
The child cried in sleep and clung to its mother.
God said, "Return." But he did not hear His word.
God sighed and said, "Alas,
"Where is my devotee going leaving me behind."

The short poem of his old age runs thus:

रूपनाराणेर कूले
जेगे उठिलाम।
जानिलाम ए जगत
स्वप्न नय।

रक्तेर अक्षरे देखिलाम।
आपनार रूप
चिनिलाम आपनारे।
आघाते आघाते
बेदनाय बेदनाय;
सत्य जे कठिन।
कठिनेरे भालोबासिलाम से कखनो करे ना वंचना।
आमृत्युर दुःखेर तपस्या ए जीवन,
सत्येर दारुण मूल्य लाभ करिबारे,
मृत्युते सकल देना शोध करे दिते।

On the bank of the Rupnarayan
(On the bank of Forms divine)
I woke up.
I realized—this world
Was no dream.
In letters of blood I saw
My own self,
I knew myself
In blow after blow
In pain after pain;
Truth is hard indeed,
I loved the hard,
It deceives never.
This life is a penance of sorrows until death,
For the realization of the terrific value of truth,
For paying off all debts by death.

In the Indian Philosophical Congress of 1950, some of our philosophers mooted that Shri Aurobindo had refuted Shanker's *mayavad* while others did not concede the point. Whatever may be the position of this hoary *mayavad* in the domain of philosophy

and metaphysics, it is now a fact that in our literature — I mean modern Bengali literature particularly — *mayavad* stands discomfited by the genius of Tagore so much so that none of our *litterateurs* worth the name will now dare treat of it seriously. Of course, it is not yet time to say that *mayavad* which wielded so much power for centuries stands discomfited for all time to come.

Tagore, however, desired such an eventuality as *mayavad* meant for him distortion of life — almost negation of it. But he desired heart and soul a healthy display of life which was in his eyes something divine. Indeed he did not pine for any other form of divineness :

दूरे जाबार खेयाल हले सबाई आमाय घिरे दाँडाय —
गाँयेर आकाश सजने-फूलेर हातछानिते डाके आमाय ।
फुरायनि, भाई, काछेर सुधा, नाइ जे रे ताइ दूरेर क्षुधा;
अेइ जे अे सब छोटोखाटो पाइनि अेदेर कूल किनारा,
तुच्छ दिनेर गानेर पाला, आजो आमार हयनि सारा ।

All surround me if I think of going afar off —
The village-sky beckons me with its clusters of *Sojne'*-flowers.

I have not exhausted yet the nectar near at hand,
I therefore hunger not for the far off;
These little things about me — I have not known yet their end,
I have not finished yet the trivial round of songs I began.

This does not, of course, mean that he set his face against all 'far off' things; but it does mean that life with its many limitations and sorrows of which he was fully conscious was for him a really significant and lovable thing and he desired that our sincerest thoughts and endeavours should be directed towards achieving its possibilities. In a famous letter written in

his youth, Tagore said that he was not sure if his heart yearned more for unbounded beauty or for human love with its joys and sorrows and unions and separations.

In fact, both these aspects of his mind were deeply real for him and combined to give his thoughts unique distinction. His thoughts are indeed a blending of a new *Brahmavad* (avowal of the all-pervading blissful Brahman) and a new Humanism in which scientific thoroughness has been inspired by love. This element of love has provided Tagore's thoughts with a firm basis of reality and a regaling idealism at one and the same time. Let us view briefly some of his thoughts.

In education he insisted on instruction through the mother-tongue at a time when our leaders of education were much enamoured of English. He did not belittle English but maintained clearly that without a good grounding in the mother-tongue people ran the risk of being superficial both in thought and in expression. It may be noted in this connection that Tagore received his early education through his mother-tongue for a fairly long period.

Nature-centred education which he introduced was a daring novelty indeed. But really it was a permanent contribution to the educational thought of our land where nature is benign in a large measure. His insistence on simple living for the teacher and the taught alike with their sense of dedication to some noble end is, of course, not an easy proposition; but a little thought will convince us that it is indispensable in some form or other if we believe that education can shape men and women better. Tagore's new *Tapovan* has about it an element of idealism no doubt, but the chief thing about it was imostentations and willing simple living and the refreshing neighbourship of nature. These are highly desirable values indeed.

In politics his ideas were singular for his age. While his contemporaries were practically unanimous in their view that the way to Indian swaraj was being blocked by the Britishers

alone Tagore pointed out repeatedly that India's internal impediments, such as communal and provincial disharmony, casteism and various other sorts of deep-rooted mediaevalism were no less real, and unless these were got rid of or softened down Indian nationhood could not thrive and Indian swaraj also could not be assured of a stable basis. Our swaraj has, of course, been won, and mainly by political fights. But now we are realising that the challenge of India's internal disharmony and various sorts of backwardness is menacing indeed. Some of Tagore's suggestions for combating these evils are:

(*a*) A better life-view which will uphold wide prevalence of reasonableness and healthy moral principles and will emphasise welfare for all.

(*b*) Exchange of ideas among communities and provinces is to be encouraged. Their differences are not to be obliterated, but are to be so assisted that they may in due course assume nobler forms and be helpful to one another and to the growth of Indian nationhood that way, e.g., he supported the functioning of Hindu and Muslim Universities, but looked forward to their widening of vision in course of time. He warned that precipitate action in these complicated affairs will not help, on the contrary will retard, our progress.

He took a prominent part in the swadeshi movement of Bengal in 1905. But though he criticized the British rulers strongly for this hautiness and imperialistic designs, he never uttered a word of hatred against them, and was never tired of exhorting his countrymen to the path of self-help. His approach was not then considered sufficiently realistic, but the realistic methods of those days are now being found barren. Tagore's gospel of self-help will never run that risk.

But Tagore's political thoughts are closely connected with his social thoughts which are also distinctive. Let us turn to them.

Aristotle called politics the architectonic science, i.e., the science which fashioned all other sciences. His idea still holds sway in Europe and America where the State is the greatest thing in the life of the nation as well as of the individual. Tagore read Guizot's and Renan's political writings with care and was well acquainted with this attitude of European thinkers. But he held that in India and China that supreme position in the life of the nation or country was assigned not to the State but to Dharma, i.e., religions and moral laws or principles. According to Tagore, the State occupied a much less important position in India and China than Dharma or religions and moral laws, and it was for this reason that civilisation in these lands did not go to pieces with the loss of political independence.

We understand now more clearly why he laid so much stress on self-help for his countrymen in all their dealings with the Britishers also, for, he wanted to keep the latter within their bounds. But subsequently he modified his position to some extent. In his famous essay, कर्तार इच्छाय कर्म ('*The Master's Will*) written in 1917 he wrote to the following effect:

> " The greatest values any nation has realized are not for itself alone, but are to be shared with others. The scientific approach and endeavours of Europe and the sense of solidarity and leadership among her masses are such values and to the English rulers of India it is a divine trust for the betterment of the condition of the Indian masses. India's past has, it is to be admitted, proved for her to be a dead weight also in certain respects, of which she must be relieved and her forces of youth and initiative released thereby, God desires such a fulfilment. "

This fervent appeal to the British rulers of India is a fervent appeal to the creative intellect of the Poet's countrymen also, and, so read, it reveals how alert the Poet was about the changed condition of the world including his own country and people. But, though he acknowledges greater usefulness of the State in our country his dictum of self-help for our people is

still sound because our people are so various. Here even a capable state machinery will prove ineffective if people are not responsive and co-operative among themselves.

Reconstruction in our land was, in Tagore's view, a really up-hill work, and as such, admitted of no short-cuts. He could not, for this reason, approve of the methods of the Bengal revolutionaries though he was deeply moved by their self-sacrifice. In Russia he praised highly their leaders' gigantic efforts for the all round welfare of the common people who had so long been neglected everywhere. But he did not see eye to eye with them in their assigning less importance to the individual. With all his praise for Russia he preferred for India co-operative methods both in production and distribution.

About the reconstruction of our villages he said:

> "When I desire that our villages should be revived, I never mean that there should be any revival of the old village outlook. The old village outlook consists of such notions, scholarship and understanding and such convictions and activities as are isolated from the outside world and are not only separate from the modern outlook but hostile to it. The scholarship and intellect of the modern world are worldwide in scope though its heart's sympathies are not so worldwide yet, we are to bring that life to our villages, whose constituents are never insignificant and circumscribed, which never belittle or shroud any aspect of human nature."

That no aspect of human nature should be belittled or shrouded was something like an article of faith with Tagore. It admitted of no compromise. He disagreed with Mahatma Gandhi in regard to the universal plying of the Charkha on that score.

From even this short account of Tagore's ideas, it is, we presume, fairly clear that he played an important role in the reconstruction of Indian thought. Genius has been called a

subverter of values and Tagore was a great subverter indeed in regard to some age-old Indian values. We have seen how, impelled by his profound sense of life, he set his face against the all pervading *mayavad* of his land quite early in his literary career and succeeded in showing its hollowness. We have also seen how he has imparted more earnestness and sense of reality to problems facing our education, our social reconstruction and our politics. The contribution are really epoch-making, and so, will take time to be comprehended fully.

We have laid some stress on Tagore's sense of reality. It is a crucial point so to say about him without a proper comprehension of which his readers run the risk of being lost in the almost bewildering luxuriance of his themes and moods. But Tagore's sense of reality must not be confounded with that of our present-day realists. They, as a rule, believe in some sort of blind evolution in which matter — and not spirit — predominates. But Tagore, while fully conscious of the value of material conditions of life never undervalues spirit. In fact, that great spirit which he calls the creative spirit in human history is in his eyes the most important thing so far as man is concerned, and he is never weighed down by pessimism because he is ever inspired by this creative spirit. Here Tagore takes his place in the rank of our ancient seers who called human beings sons of Immortality — *amṛtasya putraha*. But Tagore, it must not be missed, indulges in no metaphysical speculation. He takes his stand on a much more tangible basis — on the basis of every day life as we see it.

This marked sense of the real as well as of the ideal which we find dominant in Tagore gives his thoughts a deeply significant position in the new life we have embarked on. He is *par excellence* the poet and seer of the Indian Renaissance of which we often talk but of whose possibilities we are yet unmindful to a large extent.

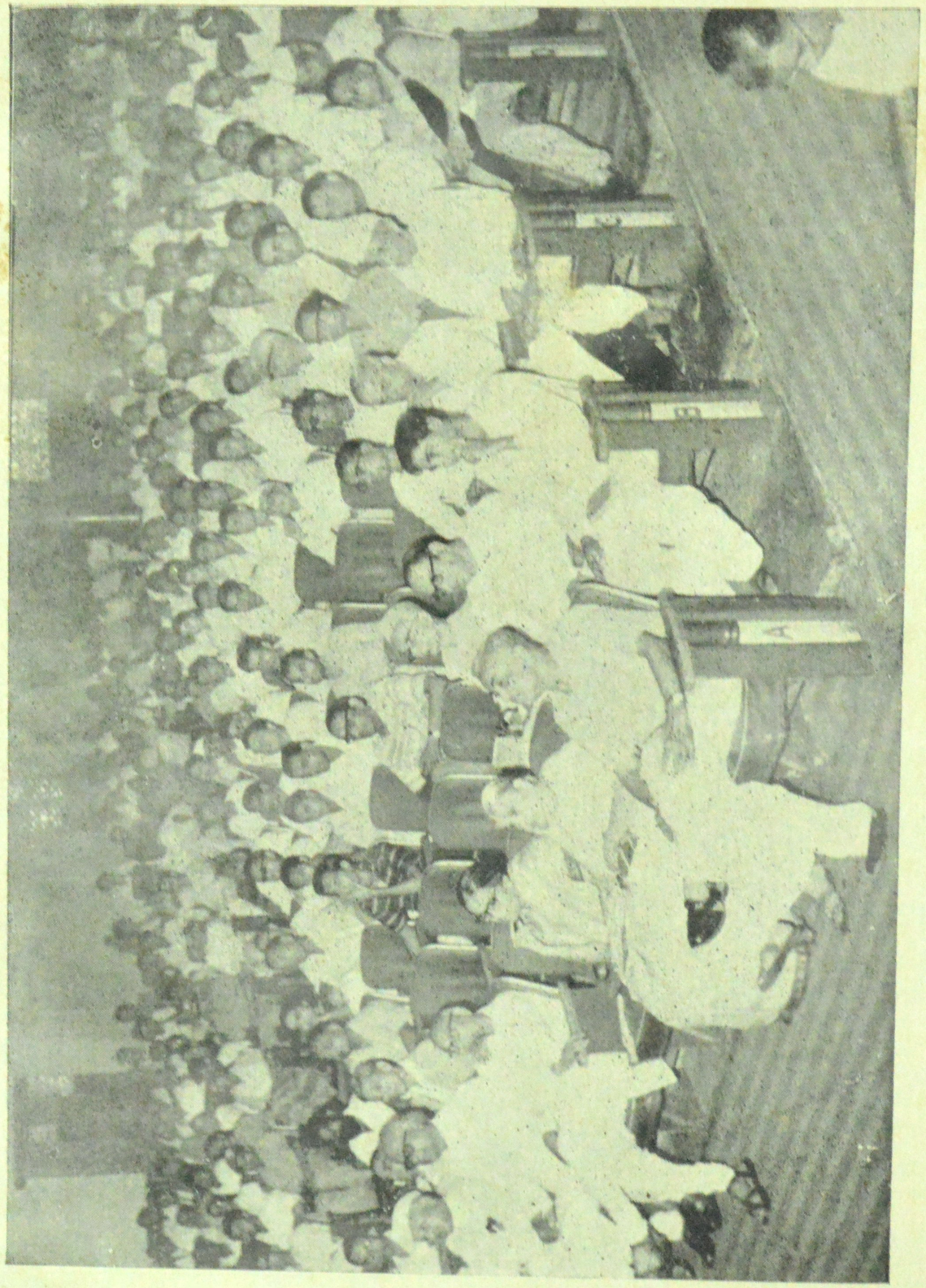
Let me conclude by quoting these famous lines of Tagore:

तुमि तो गड़ेछ शुधु ए माटिर धरणी तोमार
मिलाइया आलोके आँधार
शून्य हाते सेथा मोरे रेखे
हासिछ आपनि सेई शून्येर आड़ाले गुप्त थेके।
दियेछ आमार परे भार
तोमार स्वर्गटि रचिबार।

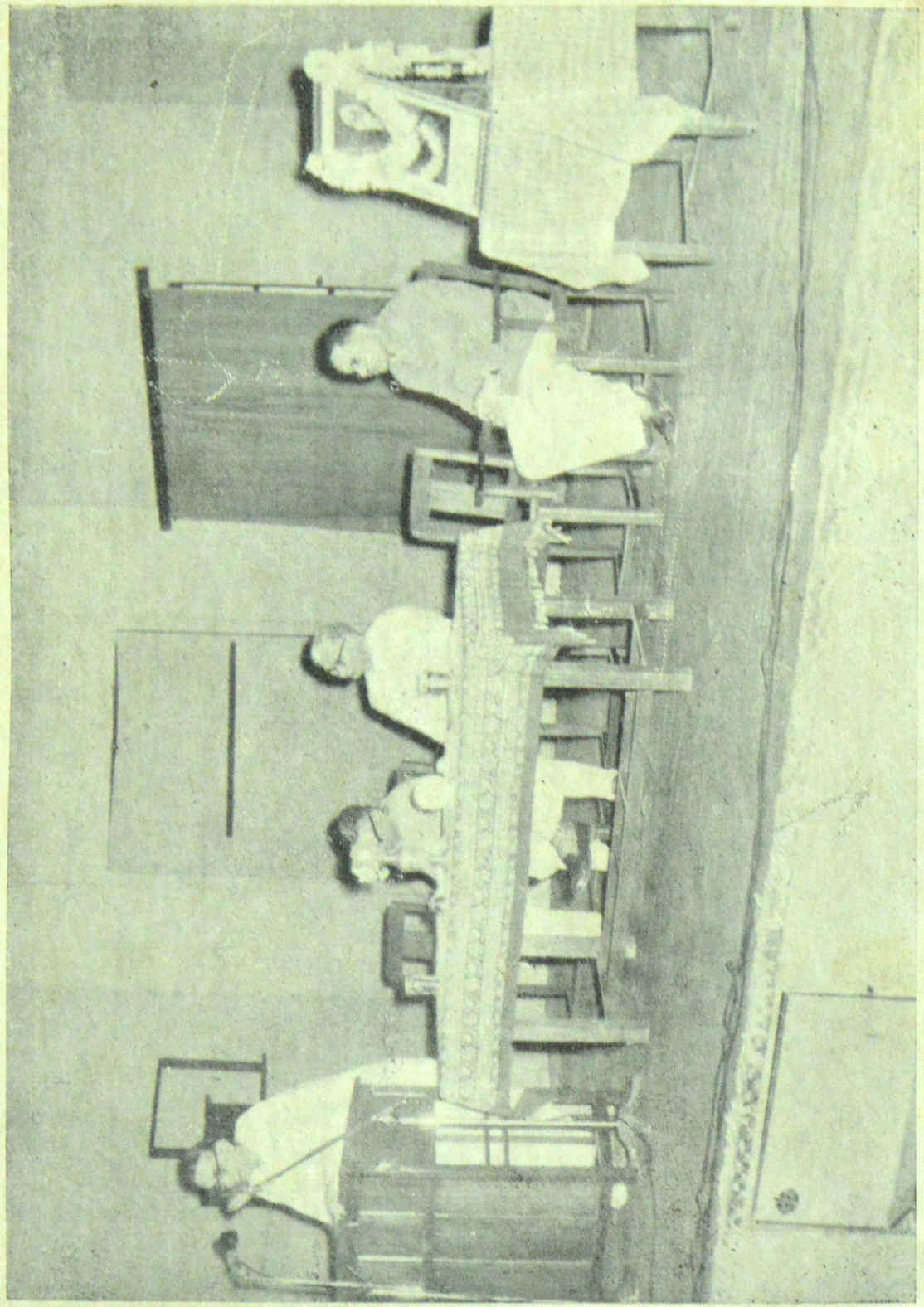
"Thou hast created this earthen earth of Thine
Mixing darkness with light.

Thou hast placed me there with nothing in my hand
And hast concealed Thyself smiling behind that nothing.
Thou hast placed on me the responsibility
of creating Thy Heaven."

So man's destiny, according to Tagore, is not the ancient *Nirvāṇā*—absorption into the Supreme Reality or Nothingness—but to be the helper of the Evercreative Spirit.



A part of the Audience listening to Shri Saumyendranath Tagore on 22nd Sept., 1961



Shri Saumyendranath Tagore, addressing the teachers and students of the Gujarat Universi

4. RABINDRANATH TAGORE ON AESTHETICS

The world of man is governed by certain laws which are peculiarly its own. They are an embodiment of the vital experiences of the human consciousness in a process of evolution. They form a part of the historical process that is in operation since centuries. The absolute necessity of evolving a feeling of oneness with all is one such law. There is a consciousness of unity in man, a feeling of unity with all that have their being in this wide universe. Neither in the world of animals nor in the world of plants does this consciousness of unity exist. In the midst of the different currents of the stream of life, man is faced with the problem of achieving unity. But then how is he to reconcile the conflict between the personal and the universal aspects of human existence ? Science tries to solve it by dissolving the personal into the general. Philosophy tries to solve it by denying the truth and the validity of the personal. But art reconciles the conflict between the personal and the universal by proving that at their deepest depth they are one and the same thing. It does so by the harmonious blending of knowledge with feeling, and feeling with imagination.

Rabindranath Tagore is one of the very few supreme artists of this world. He had realised that there is an underlying unity which, with its unceasing flow encircles the various aspects of our existence — our knowledge and emotions, our thoughts and feeling. The Poet writes, " It is some untold mystery of unity in me, that has the simplicity of the infinite and reduces the immense man of multitude to a single point. This one in me is creative. Its creations are a pastime through which it gives expression to an ideal of unity in its endless show of variety. Such are its pictures, poems, music, in which it finds joy only because they reveal the perfect forms of an inherent

unity." (Creative Unity.) In his creative works Tagore has given expression to this unity and has lent it depth, splendour and dimension by the power of his superb imagination. Being a supreme artist, Tagore had realized the creative significance of this feeling of unity. He had created literature of all varieties — poems, songs, novels, short stories, dramas and essays. But that is not all, in the person of Tagore we witness a very strange phenomenon, an unique amalgam.

We had in this world great creative artists. But in the history of literature we had hardly a parallel when a creative artist is at the same time a great theoretician of literature. One is filled with wonder to see two completely different aspects of human mind manifested in the personality of Rabindranath Tagore. The artist in him realized the complete unity with reality. He also experiences the peculiar taste of reality. In him surged the pure delight — Ānanda of existence. From rasa — the taste of reality — he derives Ānanda and imbued with Ānanda he plunges into creative activity. The artist goes through the various processes of 'leela' — the interplay of the individual with the universe. He experiences Ānanda in existence and creates forms, which are unique, individual, and at the same time universal. But the theoretician of literature in his analytical work moves from categories to categories. He need neither have the realization of beauty, which the creative artist has to have, nor need he have the intrinsic feeling of oneness with reality. The theoretician's task is just to analyse the different categories and to dissect the various components of an aesthetic feeling. These are two absolutely opposite functions of the human consciousness.

But an extraordinary thing happened in the world of literature, where in the person of Rabindranath Tagore, we had the unique example of this magnificent blending. On the one hand we find in Tagore a creative personality of the highest excellence; on the other hand we witness in him a theoretician of literature of the most profound type. We have known the Greek masters of aesthetics, the contemporary aestheticians and also the various

ancient masters of the theory of aesthetics of our own land. But we have never known a person who is one of the great poets of the world, and at the same time is one of the profoundest theoreticians of literature.

It is necessary that before we take a plunge in the various aspects of Tagore's ideas on aesthetics, we disabuse our minds completely and throw out the junks of certain wrong notions regarding aesthetics. The prevailing misconception about aesthetics is that it is primarily concerned with beauty. Tagore rejects this notion about aesthetics. He says, "Aesthetics has nothing to do with beauty." Aesthetics or aesthetic feeling has, for its subject, not beauty, but Ānanda, which is mind's pure delight in existence. The mind feels pure delight when it comes into intimate contact with existence, and then it realizes itself and achieves its fulfilment in creativeness. Aesthetics is the study of man's pure delight in existence. Tagore says, "Every realisation of truth in its purity is Ānanda. One can never have the pure delight in existence unless one has this realisation of the innermost truth of unity with the entire creation in a very special and individual sense. One sees reality with the eyes of a singular and unique 'I', the like of which there never was and never will be. In the uniqueness of man's personality, creativeness has its source and origin. It is in this uniqueness of human personality, that Ānanda has its abiding home."

The Poet says that the role of Ānanda in literature is to make us see the particular in its true manifestation. It is not seeing things and people as a class; it is not the understanding of things in the collective, where their peculiarities and their individualities are blurred, and where they lose their uniqueness and become one with the great monotonous mass of objects. Ānanda's role in literature is to give us the gift of realisation of the unique in every object and in every individual. It is the vision of the particular, in its true manifestation that gives one such an intense delight. And that is the mission of 'Ānanda' in literature and art.

It may be pertinently asked : Is each and every intense realisation a source of Ānanda to us ? Tagore says, yes. He says, "even sorrow is Ānanda." Because in sorrow one has the most intense realisation of one's self. Sorrow is not the opposite of Ānanda — pure delight. Happiness and sorrow are opposites, but sorrow and Ānanda are not contradictory forces. In sorrow one has intense realization of one's inner being. Therefore, it is Ānanda. In this process of aesthetic feeling, we find three elements — an outer world and an inner world and also the individual who takes pure delight in them. How does the individual experience this delight ? Wherefrom does this delight spring in him ? What is that which gives him this feeling of oneness with existence ? What does this oneness with existence generate within him so that he feels this Ānanda ? Our ancient Acharyas in treatise on aesthetics and so also Rabindranath in his essays on aesthetics have said that it engenders 'rasa' in the mind of the individual. What is this 'rasa' ? It is that peculiar element in a thing that give rise to joy and delight. The poet says that 'rasa' is the taste of an object in its unalloyed and pure manifestation. If one has experienced this taste of an object one gets within oneself a special feeling which is not alloyed by self-interest. As soon as there is 'rasa' in one's mind, one at once feels in one's innermost self the delight of being in perfect harmony with existence.

Thus from 'rasa' comes Ānanda and from Ānanda comes creation or creative activity. This is the aesthetic process which works not consciously, but unconsciously or subconsciously in an artist. In him there is that inter-linked process of 'rasa', 'Ānanda', 'prakash', — that is self-expression, and 'srishti', — that is creation. But we should bear in mind one distinctive feature of 'rasa'. All our great Acharyas have pointed out, that 'rasa' does not depend on external stimulation. One's emotions get roused within one's own self by an automatic process and that causes a downpour of feelings on the soil of one's mind. Ānandabardhan a great master of the theory of literature while describing this process, says, "if one is

completely lost to one's own happiness and sorrow, then how can one ever have 'rasa' — that unalloyed taste of things ?" One won't have any time for such an experience. 'Rasa', therefore, has nothing to do with the external stimulation of happiness and sorrow. When emotions of anger, fear and surprise are engendered in one for worldly reasons, then they are related to the worldly feelings of everyday existence, but when for reasons of art these feelings are roused, then they do not at all depend on any external object for their origin. That is why they give Ānanda. If they are caused by the sorrow and happiness of our everyday life, they could never generate Ānanda. It is an automatic process within the creative self that gives one the feeling of 'rasa' which in due course causes Ānanda, which in its turn is responsible for that special kind of activity that leads to the creation of art.

After clearing away some of the difficulties inherent in abstract concepts, let us examine the various aspects of Tagore's ideas on the meaning of art, the purpose of art, and the forms of art. And what is Tagore's concept of art ? He says, "to make the world one's own through feeling, through Ānanda, the spirit's pure delight in existence, and then to universalise this intensively personal reality is art." What does this definition of art imply ?

Firstly, there is Ānanda. There is that spirit of pure delight in existence, the delight that we find in the world of objects. We realise it neither through our knowledge, nor through our analysis of the objects nor by the categorisation of the different processes of life. Through our feeling we receive this delight by an emotive process. It is the result of the feeling of oneness with the universe achieved through emotions. This achievement is an intensely personal reality. It is not a reality achieved by a collective process. It is something which each one may feel, but each feels in his own peculiar and personal way. It cannot be felt in a group, nor uniformly by all. It is not true at all that when all of us are huddled together, this coming together

generates in us one and the same feeling. It is not a feeling that is felt and shared alike by individuals of a crowd. It is an intensely personal feeling which is then put into a form that is universal.

Our ancient masters have called this process, the process of 'Sādhāranikrita', that is to say the process of universalisation of the personal. So long as this is not done, there is no art. The feeling must be personal, but the form and expression must be universal. The universalisation of an intensely personal realisation is art. The poet says: "To detach the individual idea from its confinement of everyday facts and to give its soaring wings the freedom of the universal—this is the function of the poetry." (The Creative Ideal.) How does this process of the universalisation of the intensely personal realisation take place? Who is this 'I' that takes to creative activity, and brings about this artistic creation? There are many 'I's in an individual. One 'I' enjoys life's daily pleasures; another 'I' looks dispassionately at life and tries to find out the link between different phenomena of life; there is another 'I' which goes deeper into reality and evolves a system. All these different 'I's and many more 'I's in a bundle from the composite 'I' that we call the personality of an individual. Now, out of all these 'I's, which is this 'I' that creates? Which is this 'I' that is really at the bottom of all these creations, which feels Ānanda, enjoys an intensely individual feeling and universalises it thereafter? This 'I' is the 'I' who is the pure onlooker of life's flow; it is the 'I' who does not participate in everyday's mundane existence. It is that 'I' who looks impersonally at the stream of life, yet has no desire to reap any benefit from that current. Not being tied with life either by greed, or by desire or by the feeling of possession, this 'I' is completely detached. It is the creative activity of 'I', the onlooker, whose vision has not been blurred by the ego, nor clouded by the dust of life's everyday necessities. It is the pure onlooker who alone is capable of experiencing the feeling of Ānanda, of realising this intensely personal reality and universalising it. Rabindranath says: "Art is the manifestation of 'I' who is a pure onlooker."

In 'Sādhanā', Tagore has illustrated the meaning of this disinterested attitude of the artist in the following words: "One day I was out in a boat on the Ganges. It was a beautiful evening in autumn. The sun has just set; the silence of the sky was full to the brim with ineffable peace and beauty..As our boat was silently gliding by the precipitous river-bank riddled with nest-holes of a colony of birds, suddenly a big fish leapt up to the surface of the water and then disappeared, displaying on its vanishing figure all the colours of the evening sky. It drew aside for a moment the many-coloured screen behind which there was a silent world full of the joy of life.

It came up from the depths of its mysterious dwelling with a beautiful dancing motion and added its own music to the silent symphony of the dying day. I felt as if I had a friendly greeting from an alien world in its own language; and it touched my heart with a flash of gladness. Then suddenly the man at the helm exclaimed with a distinct note of regret, "Ah what a big fish!" It at once brought before his vision the picture of the fish caught and made ready for his supper. *He could only look at the fish through his desire, and thus missed the whole truth of its existence.*" (My emphasis—S.T.)

Art, therefore, has nothing to do with the necessities of life. Tagore says: "Art is the delight untained by necessity. It is the immediate consciousness of reality in its purest form, unobscured by the shadow of self-interest, and without the least attempt made to furnish us with moral or utilitarian recommendations. It gives us joy as does the self-revealing personality of our own." (The Religion of an Artist.) Art has nothing to do with preaching of morals or any utilitarian principle. Art does not preach. It does not say: be good, do not drink, chant 'mantras' everyday and be moral. Art never usurps the role of a Sunday-school teacher. Art has nothing to do with moralisation. Rabindranath Tagore says: "It is quite irrelevant to raise the issue whether there is 'Tamoguna' (wickedness) or 'Rajoguna' (goodness) or whether there are all the attributes of Sankhya

philosophy in 'Macbeth'. Irrespective of the presence or absence of all these qualities, 'Macbeth' has become a complete drama. By the manifestation of its 'Rupa' and not by the analysis of its components, does creation give the proof of its own existence."

Art is not utilitarian either. It has nothing to do with the determination of climate suitable for a particular crop or with the decisions arrived at regarding the crops to be grown and the manure to be used for that highly laudable purpose. Art has nothing to do with such matters so important for agriculturists or economists. Art has no utilitarian purpose, and is delightfully free from the taints of moral preaching. It does not divide the world into moral and immoral sectors; it does not teach institutional morality. It gives one the taste of an aspect or aspects of life in its entirety. In that taste of life, there can be the taste of a drunkard's life, of a saint's life, of the life of a sinner or that of a very moral man who has graduated from a school of theology. One can have all sorts of experiences. Art, therefore, has nothing to do either with necessity—as it has no utilitarian recommendation to offer—nor has it anything to do with the preaching of moral standards. It deals with the immediate consciousness of reality and the pure delight in existence that is derived from it.

Moreover, it is a personal reality. According to the Poet, art is "a creation of an uniquely personal yet universal character". But how does a personal reality become universalised? What is that process through which this personal experience of reality passes through to get universalised? Tagore says: "This personal-cum-universal reality which transcends space and time, belongs to all times and place in the world of Man." How, then, is it achieved? It is achieved by a mental state of complete detachment. He says, "this poem, no doubt, owes its form to the touch of the person who produced it, *but with a gesture of utter detachment*. (My emphasis—S.T.) It has transcended its material—the emotional mood of the author...Directly a poem

is fashioned, it is eternally freed from its genesis, it minimises its history and emphasises its independence." Thus, bacause there is detachment, therefore, it has within it the germinal growth of universalism. If it was not detached from personal aim and from personal life it could never have been universalised. In Tagore's opinion, the moment a poem is fashioned, it starts freeing itself from the context of the person who creates. It does not go on saying that it is produced by a certain person who belongs to a certain family or to a certain race. It is completely free from the personal context and reference because there is a gesture of the purest detachment in it. If there was not the feeling of detachment in art, it could never be universalised.

Art, therefore, cannot afford to have the stink of a particular place or of a particular time. There are of course instances of art and literature in every country which exude strong odour of a particular locality or particular time. So far as they have succumbed to the fetish of geography or to the demands of the contemporary period of time, they have failed in their mission of art. Great art is for all times. It transcends fragmented time by the intensity of its feeling of utter and purest detachment.

Tagore points out that in art the person is very important; not the subject. He says, "in discussions on philosophy, the person who discusses it, is not important; the subject is important. In literature, the theory is unimportant; the person is the really important." (Japan Jātri.) In other words, in literature, it is what one feels, is important, not the subject matter. Literature and art record an experience of a particular subject by an individual who feels and understands the subject in his own personal and unique way, and who has moreover in his feeling achieved unity with the universe. One sees the world through one's own eyes—the magic eyes of the individual's unique personality. That is what literature is and means to offer us. Shakespeare has composed poem on the moon, so also have

Keats, Tagore and many other poets. The subject is the same: it is the moon. Wherein lies then the difference in the poems of these poets? Why do the poems based on the same subject — moon — have on us different emotional impacts? It is just because each poem bears testimony of the unique personality of its creator. That uniqueness is really of the essence of art. It is not just the subject matter, but the individual and unique magic patterns of creation by different artists.

It is interesting to note that the person who is so important in art is not at all important in philosophy or in science. In one of his world-tours when the Poet was on his way to Japan, the poet had in his travel-diary written about a particular morning. He wrote — "this morning I am looking at nature, which has put on a 'sāri' of saffron-coloured waves, a 'sāri' with a border of green fields. Here I am a disinterested onlooker of life. If this onlooker expresses something of this with lines and words his very own, that becomes art, that becomes literature." (Jāpan Jātri.) He further says: "Nature and human nature are assuming forms ceaselessly in human heart. The picture drawn with words by the intensely alive personality of an individual, becomes literature." In numerous of his essays Tagore has brought to our notice the purpose, the meaning and the essence of literature. He has pointed out to us the difference in approach to reality of a scientist and of an artist. In Tagore's opinion a scientist is also a pure onlooker. He does not look at an object with the eyes of self-interest.

Wherein, then lies the difference between a scientist's outlook, his vision of life and that of a poet? According to him the difference between art and science is that in science one knows the subject, in art one's ownself. In art one knows the artist's personality, in science the subject. In art one knows the object through emotion, in science through knowledge. When we know something by knowledge, the knower is secondary; the object of knowledge is of primary importance. When we know the thing by emotion, we know ourselves and the object is a thing of secondary importance.

In science we know the object, in art we know ourselves through the object. In art we know the particular and the unique, and in science we know the type. In art we know the individual, in science we know the kind. Rabindranath says: "The artist finds out the unique, the individual which is in the heart of the universal. When he looks on a tree, he looks on that tree as an unique, not as the botanist who generalises and classifies." (What is Art?) In art we have personal choice and individuality, in science we have impersonal interest in truth. Science is impersonal, but art is highly personal. Religion is also an impartial curiosity about truth, but partiality, choice and selection is the religion of art. In science we go from the particular to the general. In art we raise the curtain of the general in life and see behind the curtain that display, the 'leela' of the particular. Herein lies the difference in approach to reality between a scientist and an artist. Both are detached onlookers of life. This is how the Poet has analysed the difference in approach to reality of a scientist and an artist.

Tagore then poses the question; what is the purpose of artistic creation? And he answers: It is nothing but to reveal oneself. The revelation of one's ownself is creation. An artistic creation is the expression of what one feels about a particular object, not mere recording of what that particular object is. What a particular object is, is a matter for the scientist to deal with, but what one feels about that particular object, is the subject matter of art. Tagore says: "Bare information on facts is not literature, because it gives us merely the facts which are independent of ourselves. Repetition of the fact that the sun is round, water is liquid, fire is hot, would be intolerable. But a description of the beauty of the sunrise has its eternal interest for us because there it is not the fact of sunrise, but its relation to ourselves, which is the object of perennial interest." (What is Art?)

Moreover, one cannot fathom the mystery of an artistic creation by tearing it to bits by a process of analysis. Because

the harmonious manifestation of a thing is very much more than the parts it is made of. Rabindranath says: "In analysis there is no difference between a piece of coal and a piece of diamond, but in the magic of creation there is a difference.... Because in material they are one but in manifestation they are different. In the realm of art one does not talk about an object from the view point of what the object is, but what it signifies to one's feeling and what one feels about it. Tagore says: "In art man reveals himself and not his objects." If one analyses a rose in a laboratory, one sees that the rose is composed of so much of coal and so much of various other chemical components. That is what the rose is to a scientist. But to the artist that rose appears in its completeness, in its harmony, in its beauty. Artistic creation really tries to bring home to us an object in its completeness, an object which has revealed its completeness to our feeling. Tagore observes that in artistic creation the creator gives testimony of what he feels about a particular object, not the recording of what that particular object is. In the Poet's opinion, man gives proof of his intelligence in matters of knowledge, and in his efficiency proves his worthiness. But in his own creation, man gives introduction to his own self. He says: "That a star is a fiery object is the attribute of the star, but that the star is an object of mysterious beauty, is a special creation of the spirit." The attribute of its being an object of mysterious beauty does not belong to the star. It is a quality that man has attributed to it. It is an object which so to say has been re-created by the artist's creative self. Tagore says: "When I know that the star is a fiety planet, I know the star, but when I know it as a beautiful object, I know myself." The purpose of art is, therefore, to "reveal man's wealth of life, which seeks its freedom in forms of perfection which are an end in themselves." (The Religion of an Artist.)

Tagore says further—"to externalise the emotions of heart, to translate feelings into language, to transform one's personal thing to a thing for world humanity, and to transform

an ephemeral object to an eternal object—this is the purpose of art." It is the purposeless enjoyment of 'Bhāva'—emotions. Rabindranath says: "The revelation of a work of art is a fulfilment in itself." (The Creative Ideal.) He adds: "In genuine literature whatever appears to be having a purpose, is incidental and short-lived. Whatever has as its object the narration of a particular incident shall be termed either philosophy or science or history. Literature, however, has no purpose."

Tagore further says in the "Poet's Religion"—"the water-vessel taken as a vessel only, raises the question, 'why does it exist at all?' Through its fitness of construction, it offers the apology for its existence. But where it is a work of beauty it has no question to answer, it has nothing to do, but to be." If one can put in a particular form what one feels about a particular object, then that is creation, that is self-expression. But what is the significance of this creation? Tagore says: "to reveal oneself is creation." It is the expression of the wealth of human spirit. It comes from 'Oisharjya' that inner wealth of man's spirit. Every emotion that is not hitched to one's own necessity nor bind one's life with fetters of such necessities generates that inner wealth in one's mind. This inner plentitude has not its genesis in the passion for accumulation, it is non-cumulative, and by its spirit of freedom fills one's heart with joy. Artistic creation is formed with the wealth derived from one's disinterested contact with life.

Creation is an expression of the overflowing of life's experience, feeling and emotions. Art and Literature emerge out of this over-flow and abundance of the spirit. They are not created out of poverty of the spirit. According to Tagore every emotion that does not just serve one's necessity is wealth. He says: "When it does not serve any necessity, when it gives pure delight, the delight which is so personal and so unique, then it is bound to be universal at the same time." But how is this splendour that the mind achieves, is acquired? Wherefrom does this splendour emanate? It comes from the feeling of unity

with others. The moment, the heart feels its union with the cosmos, with everythings around itself, with the inner world and the outer world, a splendour is born and this energy blossoms forth in creative activities. Says Tagore: "The splendour that the mind achieves through unity with others desires expression. Where man is alone, he cannot express himself. When the realisation of fulfilment is felt within through unity, man cannot hold it within himself. He must surrender that realisation in the hands of all, in the hands of eternity." Thus, it is clear that the real source of creative activity is the feeling of unity. Tagore says: "When man is alone, he cannot express himself." No man can express himself if he is ego-bound in his spirit, if he has not got the feeling of unity and if he is isolated and selfish. Such a man is afflicted with an immeasurable poverty of spirit. Creation can never well out from the spring of such pitiful poverty.

Tagore has pointed out that with the realisation of unity with the universe man can no longer contain himself within himself. By inner compulsion he must surrender that realisation in the hands of all, in the hands of eternity. No power on earth can keep him imprisoned within his own self. He must just transcend the source from which his life-current is following out and surrender it to eternity. But how is this feeling of oneness achieved? That achievement is the task of Kalpana — imagination. We cannot achieve this unity in a material way, we cannot feel the unity with the whole world in the objective sense. Sitting in Ahmedabad, one cannot feel unity in an objective way with the whole world. But by the power of imagination, one can have the feeling of unity between oneself and the universe. Imagination is that creative power in us, which unifies us with all. "The function of imagination," says the Poet, "is to flow from one to all. When the boundary of imagination is not rigid, then it carries out its function properly." Then we get out of the shell of our narrow self and flow towards all. Because imagination enters objects which are not of our mind and makes them surcharged with mind. There are things

outside our mind, but our imagination comes and unifies us with those objects. That is the task of imagination.

The role of the subject-matter in literature has grown in importance in recent times. In the modern age, lot of undue emphasis and importance are being attached to the subject-matter of art and literature. It is claimed that the excellence of a drama, or a poem, or a novel depend on the excellence of the subject. Like all our great Ācharyas of the theory of literature, Tagore also has rejected the idea that the excellence of literature depends on the subject. In the opinion of the ancient masters, the subject-matter plays a wholly unimportant role in art and literature. Literature is not judged good just because a particular subject has been treated by it but because the subject has been given a worthy form. In art what one makes of the subject, is of importance. In other words, the subject which is a thing apart from the unique personality of the creator, does not lend its beauty and excellence to literature. It is what the creator has made of the subject with the inner wealth of his creative personality, is of importance. It is the personal magic of the artist that creates something unique even out of dust. Literature is not dependent on the material or on the subject which it deals with. It is solely and deeply concerned with the 'Roopa', that is with the form which it assumes in language. What one feels and the form that one gives to it, that is of great importance in literature. In 'Sāhitya Vichār' (Discussion on literature) Tagore says: "Literature is not dependent on the material with which it is made, but with the form which it assumes with language which is 'Rasamaya', i.e., which has the power to give the taste of reality."

In 'Sāhitya Roopa' (form in literature) he writes: "The excellence of literature is not to be found in the excellence of material. If the material has assumed a genuine and unique form then it abides for ever in the heaven of literature. Keats has written a poem on autumn. If we analyse the poem from the point of view of the subject, we get hardly anything. But

there is a magic manifested in the form of the poem." In 'The Creative Ideal' the Poet writes: "For a poem the subject is completely merged in its poetry, like carbon in a living plant which the lover of plants ignores, leaving it for the charcoal-burner to seek." He further remarks—"The subject is the material wealth for the sake of which poetry should never be tempted to barter her soul, even though the temptation should come in the name and shape of public good or some usefulness."

In contemporary literature and art, realism has been persistently demanding its place of honour by its loud insistence of its own importance. Modern age swears by realism. But what is very strange is that it has failed to see the deep cham of difference that exists between realism of everyday life and artistic realism. The real in art is related to artistic creation only, and it has no truck with naturalism. Artistic realism owes no allegiance to nature. It owes its allegiance to the ideal of perfect representation and to the laws governing artistic form that the artist tries to give to the object of his creation.

About this artistic realism Tagore says: "If the poet is born with a consciousness full of sensitive longing, if he establishes relationship with the world by his own self, if he refuses to deal with the world according to the dead tenets of tradition and scriptures or refuses to be governed by the laws of the multitude, then he will have no doubt at all in his mind about the realness of his feeling that is born of his contact with the world."

The relationship established with the world must be an individual relationship, free from the bondage of tradition, and free from the pressure of collective understanding of things by the masses; when the artist forges his relationship with the world, he gets the taste of reality and this creation bears witness to this realisation by creating a form which is perfect.

Whatever is, therefore, necessary for the perfect representation of an object or of an emotion, is to be considered as realism in art. The European artist paints a horse. It is a true to life

picture of the horse. Its neck with the beautiful arch, the manes, the slender hoofs, even the hairs of the horse's tail—all are reproduced with such faithfulness to minor details that there is hardly any difference between a photograph and a picture of a horse.

The Chinese artist paints a horse. He draws only the head, neck and the four legs of the horse. The rest of the body is drawn by two bold and suggestive lines. That makes the whole picture. Yet looking at this picture one sees a horse with defiant eyes and angry manes running in mad gallop through a field stretched up to the horizon. One gets a complete feel of the horse, of the field trembling at the touch of the horse's hoofs, of the swirling clouds of dust and the touch of the distant horizon. The artist has achieved this result by emphasizing certain aspects of the horse, by minimizing certain other and by omitting most of the details of the horse's body. Only by this process has the Chinese artist been able to endow the horse of his picture with an unique artistic reality.

But the horse drawn with meticulous exactitude of details by the European artist who is loyal to realism and naturalism, is inert, static and dead. The picture suggests nothing, give us no clue to the moods of the horse. Such a horse drawn with an eye to realism is completely devoid of artistic reality. Rabindranath says: "The trader in art bears witness to reality, the Guni (the connoisseur) in art, dears witness to truth. We see objects with our eyes, but there is no other way of seeing truth, but by the eyes of our mind. If we want to see a object by our mind, then we will have to curb the tyranny of the object of our eyes. We will have to admonish the exterior form, the 'roopa' of an object by reminding it courageously—you are not the finality, you are not the sumum bonum. You are only a vehicle for expressing something." In other words, literature does not bear witness to that which passes as reality in the world. It assumes infinite forms and bears witness to truth hidden within those forms. Art deals with this reality, and not with the superficial reality.

In Art reality has a completely different connotation. Tagore has very beautifully analysed and expressed it in one of his articles called '*antar-bahir*', — Internal and External. He says, "in our country, the Greek artist had once upon a time fashioned statues of Buddhadeva doing penance. Those sculptures were exact representation of a body emaciated by the denial of food. There one could count each and every rib of Buddhadeva. The Indian artist has also created the stone images of Buddhadeva, but in them there is no realistic history of Buddhadev's fasting. It was not meant for the procurement of a doctor's certificate. They did not give any importance to exterior reality, and, therefore, they could express the truth." These artistic creations could express the truth of Buddhadeva by denying the reality of his fasting, not by showing how many ribs were visible as a result of his fasting or how emaciated he had become due to fasting. Art is not the mirror of nature. It is not imitative. Facts become true in art when they bear witness of 'rasa'. Only then facts achieve their freedom in literature. Realism in art consists in bringing out the essence of the object it wants to represent. That cannot be done by giving importance to the external and unimportant details.

At the very outset I have pointed out that aesthetics does not deal with beauty, it deals with 'Ānanda', that is with the mind's pure delight in existence and with the creation that results therefrom. But generally speaking, many a theoretician have said that beauty, the manifestation of beauty, is the aim of art. Tagore says, manifestation of truth in nature and in human nature is beauty. What goes on in the name of beauty in our everyday life, has nothing to do with art. In the parlance of everyday life, we say of some thing that it is a beautiful shoe or it is a beautiful furniture, or a beautiful picture. Here in the expression 'beautiful' lurks one's feeling of sensuous desire or it is the expression of one's necessity. One wants a beautiful shoe or a beautiful house or a beautiful furniture; all these are objects of sensuous desire and of necessity. This sensuous desire and necessity has nothing to do with the concept of beauty in art. Beautiful in art is not

an object of sensuous desire. It is neither an object of necessity nor an expression of necessity. The beautiful in art signifies, in the opinion of our 'Ācharyas' of literature in India, 'Pratyksha gocharatā' that is the most intense and complete manifestation of the thing described. If any form makes us feel the presence of an object intensely then that form is 'Sundara'—beautiful. You see an old beggar-woman sitting at the roadside. Life has left marks of pain, sorrow and privation on her face. But when you look at her, she immediately makes herself felt and seen by you by the intensity of her expression. She is 'pratyaksha gochar' to you. By the distinctiveness of her expression she has appeared before your mind's eye in complete manifestation. If she has done that she is then should be considered beautiful by the standard of Tagore's concept of 'sundara'.

Let us now take the case of a woman who is considered beautiful by the prevalent standard of judgment, but her face has no character, there is nothing distinctive about it. She, therefore, is not considered beautiful by Tagore's conception of a thing beautiful in art and literature. Tagore says, "In art we do not want the Gunavān—the virtuous one, but we want the Rupavān—the beautiful one. Anything which is visible to our mind's eyes by the distinctiveness of its appearance is beautiful." This 'Pratyaksha gocharatā' that makes you feel the presence of an object in your mind's eyes, is what makes a thing beautiful in the realm of art. Here Tagore makes a distinction. He uses two words—'Sundara' and 'Monohar'. He says, the region of 'Sundara' (beautiful) is limited; the region of 'Monohar' (that which captivates the heart) is wide and extensive. What is considered by common standard as not beautiful, may be by the standards of art 'Monohar' that is an object that captivates the mind. He says, "the Ragas (melodies) 'thumri' and 'tappa' are 'Sundara', but the melody 'Tori' is 'Monohar'." He further says, "Jaidev's 'Lalita Lavanga Latā' is 'Sundara', but 'Vasanta pushpāvaranang bahanti'—of Kalidas is 'Monohar'. One is of the ear, the other is of the mind; one has sweetness, the other has character." According to Tagore, the difference

between 'Sundara' and 'Monohar' lies in the difference that exist between objects that are pleasant to the eye and objects which bring joy and delight to one's mind. Anything which is visible to our minds' eyes by the distinctness of its 'roopa', anything which appears distinctly particular and individual to us among the vague generalities of existence, is 'roopavān' and 'Monohar'. This is how Tagore has analysed his concept of 'Sundara'—beauty and the beautiful.

The question of form is a matter of great importance in art, because without form, 'roopa', art has no existence. Art is not a formless abstraction. It must assume a 'roopa'—a form. What are the characteristics of this form in art and literature? Tagore says, "it must be unique, but never abnormal." In order to achieve uniqueness, our young writers today indulge in abnormality. They consciously try to write something grotesque, something out of the ordinary. They indulge in a very conscious selection of abnormality. In the 'Religion of an Artist', Tagore says, "in all great art, literature or otherwise, man has expressed his feeling that are usual, in a form that is unique and yet not abnormal." The feelings are not something which are abnormal, they are the usual feelings of life. In his 'The Religion of an Artist', he has expressed something very significant. He says, "I have read some modern writings in which the coming out of the stars in the evening is described as a sudden eruption of disease on the body of darkness. The writer seems afraid to own the feelings of a cold purity of a star-sprinkled night which is usual, *lest he should be found out as being commonplace.* (My emphasis—S.T.) The flag that a Maharaja hoists in the sky is new today but old tomorrow. But the flag of light that flies on the chariot of the sun is eternally youthful through millions of years. From the point of view of realism, the image may not wholly be inappropriate and may be considered as outrageously virile in its unshrinking incivility. But this is not art. This is a jerky shriek, something like the convulsive advertisement of the modern market, that exploits mass-psychology against its inattention.

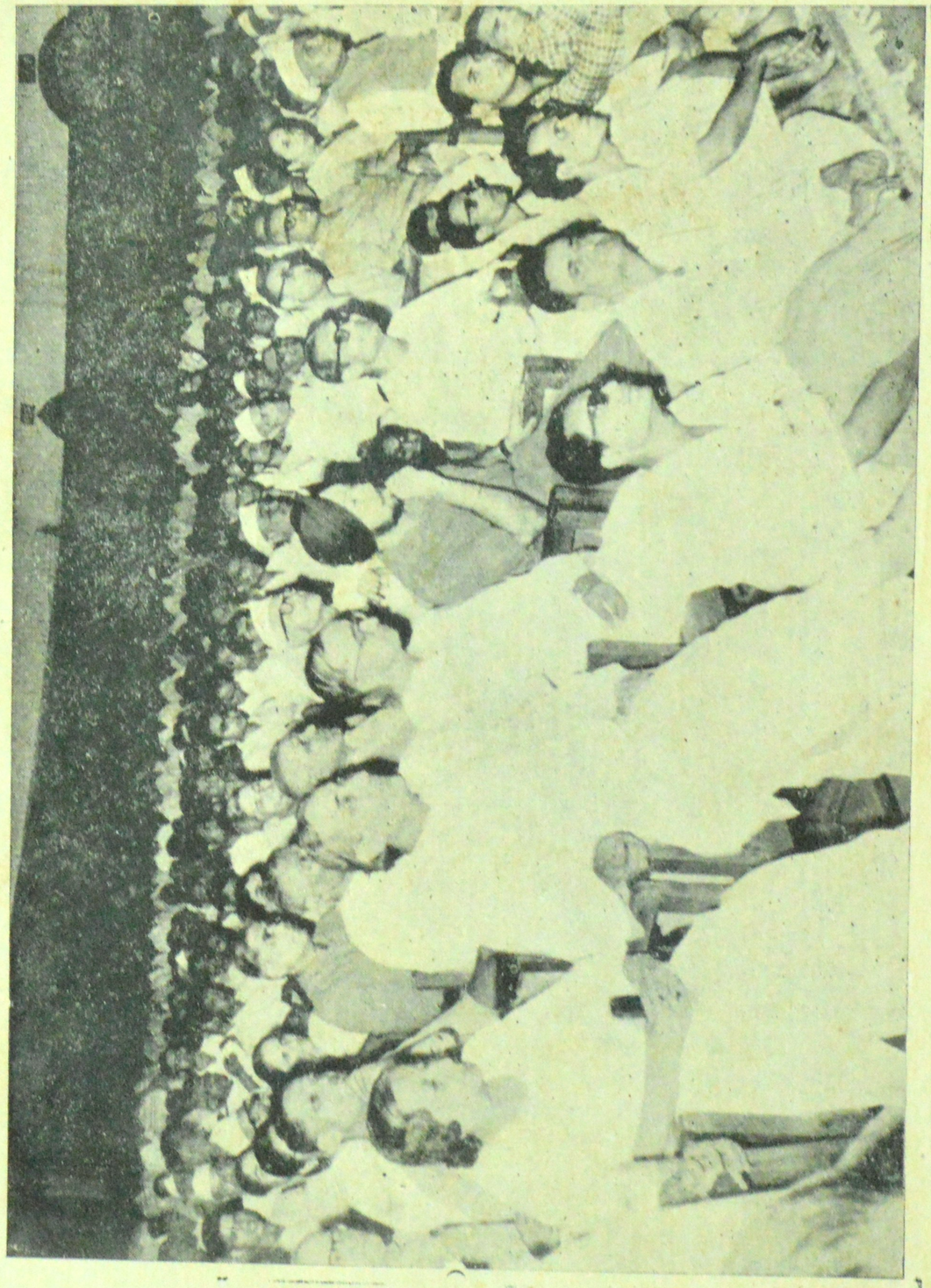
To be tempted to create an illusion of forceful through an over-emphasis of abnormality is a sign of anesthesia. *It is the waning vigour of imagination* (My emphasis—S.T.) which employs desparate dexterity in the present-day art for producing shocks in order to poke out into a glare the sensation of the unaccustomed. When we find that the literature of any period is laborious in the persuit of a spurious novelty, in its manner and matter, we must know that it is the symptom of old age, of aenemic sensibility which seeks to stimulate its palsied taste with the pungency of indecency and the tingling touch of impertinence."

The present-day craze for newness in literature is allied to this hunt for novelty. Tagore has described it by two words: 'nootan'—new and 'naveen'—eternally youthful. In his opinion, "there is a difference between 'nootan' and 'naveen'. 'Nootan' is the 'dharma' of a specific time, 'naveen' transcends fragmentary time, it belongs to eternity."A writer hints about something out of the ordinary in order to prove the excellence of his creative power. That is 'nootan' which tries to captivate our mind by its cheap glitter. 'Naveen' gives us 'Ananda' by its inner effulgence which shines through its form. It is the vehicle of delight for all times. Tagore writes, "Those who indulge in abnormalities, call themselves youthful. But I call them youthful the firmament of whose imagination is crimson with the age-old hues of the morning sun, who have not to order a cup of blood from the butcher's shop to paint their dawn crimson." This is where the difference lies between 'nootan' and 'naveen'. One is the insanity or the craze for novelty of the modern age, the other is the inner beauty of a thing assuming a form at once simple and pure, and which is true for all times. Tagore has very rightly pointed out that "when there appears a bankruptcy in creative power, man then vaunts and brags about newness. He who has not the power to offer the nector of ever-lasting youthfulness in the cup of the old, hunts for something out of the ordinary in order to prove the excellence of his creative power."

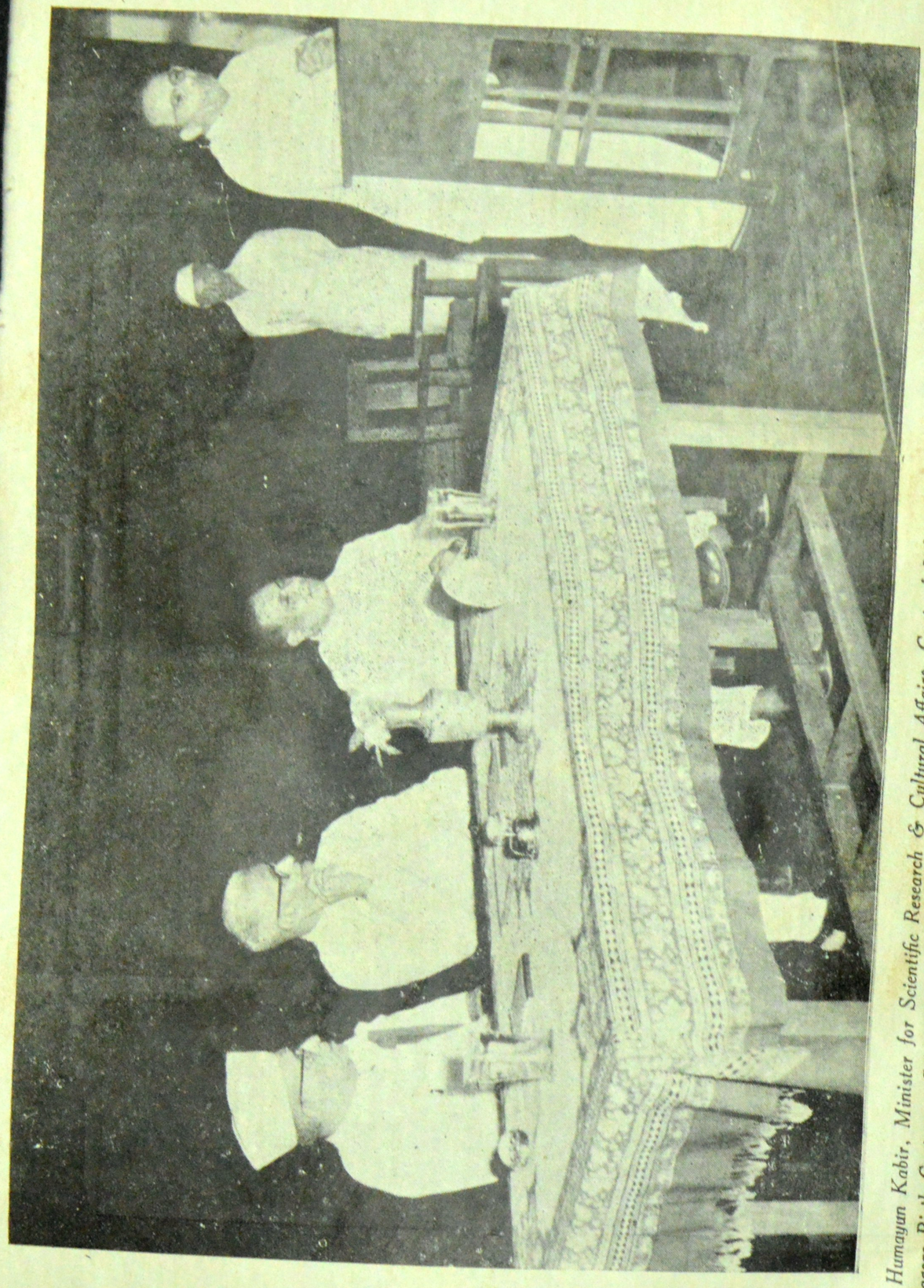
And writing about the characteristic features of contemporary literature, Tagore says, "When I read the poems of the contemporary poets of England, then most of them appear to me as poets who are not of this world. *They are the poets of the world of poetry.* (My emphasis—S.T.) In England for centuries poetry has been created. *At last it has reached a stage when the necessity of going to the source of poetry is considered not so importance.* (My emphasis—S.T.) In other words *the poets are not feeling the necessity of singing from their heart. Now songs are made out of songs.* (My emphasis—S.T.) When words come from words, not from pain, words then weave intricate patterns; the feeling, not being a direct realisation of the heart, cannot attain simplicity. Feeling or emotions do not have trust in their own selves, therefore, they have to rush towards exaggeration and newness.

This leads us to the concluding question : What type of a person is a literateur or an artist ?

Tagore says, "art wells out of the spring, where our intelligence, our emotions, our desires and our experience, all are blended into one flow of complete unity and harmony." He further says, "the observant man creates science, the speculative man creates philosophy, but the complete man creates art." He says, "Goethe has written about botany, biology and physiology, he has written about history and about science, but Goethe who wrote Faust, was not a departmental man who had speciality in science, or was a specialist in biology or botany. It was Goethe the complete man in whom mingled currents of historical, scientific and other knowledge and who was much more than a sum total of all these different branches of knowledge, who had created Faust." So, for Tagore it is only this complete man who creates art and literature.



Teachers and students of the Gujarat University, listening to Prof. Humayun Kabir, Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, Government of India : 23rd Sept., 1961



Prof. Humayun Kabir, Minister for Scientific Research & Cultural Affairs, Govt. of India addressing the teachers of the University on the occasion of the Tagore Birth Centenary Celebrations; 23rd Sept., 1961 : Shri Mehdi Nawaz Jung, Chancellor of the University (first from left) presiding

5. TAGORE'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

I should, at the outset, like to thank the University for giving me this opportunity of participating in the Tagore Centenary Celebrations that the University has organised.

We are coming here just now from another pleasant function, where the Chancellor, in another capacity, gave us the opportunity of dedicating to the memory of Tagore, a room in the Raj Bhavan which was occupied by Tagore. In a way, our Chancellor is also an artist in his house. I have seen the very beautiful house that he built in Hyderabad. About this Tagore wrote a poem, that the firmness and the strength of the rocks must change into the comfort and the intimacy of the home. And that transformation has also taken place in Shahibag. I am reminded of this, because, in a way, this transformation is also the keynote of Tagore's attitude towards education. He was one of those who believe that it is through education that the individual transforms himself and the basis of the social life he lives. He has left on record his own childhood experiences, of which one amusing incident comes to my mind. It will, I think, probably amuse many of the audience here as well. When he was a child of four or five, his parents had engaged a private tutor for him and his elder brother. But Tagore thought that going to school was great fun. His parents at first would not allow him because he was too young. But he became so persistent, that in the end, out of sheer exasperation, they allowed him to go to school, for reasons we do not know. Whatever may be the reason, the private tutor gave him a resounding slap and said, "You are crying to go to school today, but a day will soon come when you will cry even more in order not to go to school." Tagore said, "I have never heard a truer prophecy in my life." And by the time he was 14, or may be 15, he had

decided that the type of school to which he was sent, was not the place for him. Again, he has left it on record, when he started his own school at about 40, that it was a strange irony of fate, that the child who refused to go to school, should, in course of time, become a school teacher himself and devote all his attention and energy to ensure that the children did not run away from the school! He succeeded, because the methods which he adopted, the motivation which he provided and the attitude with which he started made his school a place of joy for children.

Tagore's educational ideas developed very largely out of his own experiences. He had spent his childhood mainly under the domination of servants. Many families in India, in different parts of the country — very rich families, have continued this tradition till quite recent times. This domination of servants, and confinement in a room, shut up in a house away from nature, these were two facts which Tagore could never forget. And, therefore, when he started his own institution, he ensured that two conditions would be satisfied. That there would be no domination, but freedom for the child. And freedom became the keynote of Tagore's educational idea, freedom from the domination of men and freedom from the domination of walls.

Because Tagore had spent his whole childhood shut up in a room — not even a room, but in a narrower space he developed a love for the open sky. He has recorded another amusing incident. One of his servants who had read the Ramayana, read it effectively but not very wisely, used to put Tagore in a particular spot in a room and drew a circle about him and said, "You remember what happened to Seeta when she crossed the boundary which Laxmana had drawn?" And, therefore, the servant told Tagore, "Do not move out of this circle. If you do, evil things will happen to you." And, there was the poor boy, with his vivid imagination, wondering as to what would happen if he crossed the boundary of the circle. I suppose he was tempted to cross again and again, but somehow was held up on the way.

One of the reasons why he was able to remain within the boundary was that the servant used to place him near the window, and through the shutters of the window, he looked upon the world outside. And he has left on record that this half revelation of the world outside, the suggestion of the mysterious world outside haunted his imagination, filled his days and hours and kept him company. So, when he started his own school, the two basic principles on which the school was built, were freedom — freedom from all kinds of rigid traditions, freedom from the domination of the servants in every sense of the term, i.e., not merely domestic servants. We are all servants in various ways, we are servants of superstitions, we are servants of traditions, we are servants of conservatism, we are servants of blind faith, we are servants of our own habits, we are servants of conventions which grow in society. And Tagore felt that freedom from all kinds of servitude, freedom from all kinds of slavery, must be the keynote of education.

Tagore also felt that freedom must be linked up with nature and this freedom must grow in harmony with nature. From the outset, he also emphasised the free development of the individuality of the child. I will soon come to the question of the development of the personality of the group and nations. We must remember that in insisting on the free development of the personality of the child, he never forgot the environment and insisted on the need of harmony with the environment. Again and again he said, people are comparing the ideals of Ancient India with the ideals of Europe. In that comparison, one short answer is that in Europe the approach of man to nature has always been to dominate nature — to conquer nature — not only to conquer nature in the physical sense, but also to conquer nature in the form of human society, of human environment. And that is why, throughout the nineteenth century, the keynote of the European outlook was competition, struggle for existence, survival of the fittest. Tagore believed that it is not the survival of the fittest that justifies human society. It is not the struggle for existence, it is not the

survival of the fittest or the strongest which gives a particular character to the human society and to the human individual, but the ideal of making all fit to survive, of bringing ethical ideals in place of the natural law of the struggle for existence.

Tagore held that the true ideal must be one of harmony—harmony with the human environment and harmony with the environment of nature. Again and again he said, when the European colonisers went to different parts of the world, they cleared forests and slew the inhabitants. They destroyed forests and built up villages, they built up towns, they built up cities, they built up cosmopolitan cities. But everywhere it was the question of domination of nature by man. In India, the forests were overcome, but not extinguished, natives were conquered but not exterminated. That was, Tagore said, the ideal of what we call Tapovana, where men lived in harmony with nature and the natural environment. Tagore, therefore, held that in all educational development there must be a constant contact with nature; the beauty of the morning, the splendour of the night, the rise of the sun at the dawn, the play of the clouds in the sky in the autumn, all these things should come in freely into the consciousness of the child. He held that we should look at them as so many auxiliaries to education. They are not fringes of experience, but they are at the very core of experience, because they mould the human personality. They give the human personality the capacity of adjusting itself to the diversity of nature.

These were the basic ideals which Tagore put in practice in all his educational development and educational experiments. He believed in freedom, not only from authority of every type, but also freedom in harmony, freedom in harmony with the environment. And, therefore, he held that the discipline of such a society, the discipline of such an educational institution must be an internal discipline, which must grow from within. Every child must learn to respect the personality of other children, every child must learn to pay heed to the requirements, the wishes, the needs and aspirations of other children, and in this

way they would grow up in society. Tagore again and again proclaimed that what has been the bane of Indian society for ages is the building up of rigid institutions, which he called 'Achalayatan' the fortress that cannot be removed, which constitutes an impediment to the free expression of the human spirit. Again and again he said that the young must be allowed to breathe fresh air, and in this way alone, the child can develop his personality in harmony with society, in harmony with nature.

Of the other important experiments that he carried out, one was the idea of teaching through mother-tongue. Today, in India, this is an idea which is taken for granted. If anybody seeks to teach in a language other than the mother-tongue of the child at the elementary and even the secondary stages, he will be laughed out of court. People will probably think he belongs to the lunatic fringe of humanity. Today it is taken for granted. But when 60 or 70 years ago, Tagore preached the idea of teaching through the mother-tongue, it was a revolutionary idea. Today we cannot realise what a great change it brought about at that time. Tagore's approach to the mother-tongue was not based on any antipathy to any other language; but on one of the fundamental psychological truths — one of the basic principles of education, viz., we must go from the known to the unknown. The stress on the unfamiliar imposes a burden on the child. In an essay he wrote, I think in 1892, i.e., about seventy years ago today, he said that most of our children read in an unfamiliar language about unfamiliar things. The young English child may feel pleasure, when he reads "Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water . . ." for he may have gone up the hill to bring a pail of water. When he reads of daffodils, or when he reads of snowballs, he reads about things he knows. And when he writes about these things, they are all within his experience and the text-books only repeat what he already knows. But to the young Indian child sweltering in the heat of the plains of Bengal, or the plains of Ahmedabad, the idea of snowballs, the idea of a

daffodil, the idea of Jack and Jill going up the hill, is a double burden: there is the burden of the unfamiliar language and there is the burden of unfamiliar subjects — unfamiliar things.

Tagore felt that the child's mind cannot develop if it is crushed between these double wheels. He, therefore, said that the child's education should be free from the bondage of an alien atmosphere, from the bondage of an alien subject, from the bondage of an alien language. But simultaneously, Tagore said, we must not deny the riches of the world outside. Whoever knows India alone, does not know India, he said. We remember a famous poem of an English poet who said, who loves England alone does not love England. For Tagore, whoever loved India alone, does not love even India. In order to love India we have to love the world.

From very beginning of his career as a teacher, one of Tagore's favourite pastimes was to read English poetry to school children. He taught them in Bengali, he wrote stories for them, he wrote text-books for them; but also at the same time he read to them English poetry. He read not only what he regarded as diluted special material for children, but also serious literature of high quality. I remember, in one of his books he writes that in his days there was no distinction between what is called children's literature and adult literature. But nowadays, a peculiar concoction has been manufactured, the concoction called the children's literature, in which the milk of literature has been diluted so much with the water of childishness, that it is neither satisfying, nor does it give strength to the growing body. Again Tagore said that for every book that the child reads as a text-book, he requires probably ten books to read for amusement, for entertainment. Ten story-books for every text-book ! A small child has a very small body, but all the rooms of his house are not sufficient for him. He is constantly running out of the house, because even a large house is not able to contain his energies. Similarly, for everything he reads as a text-book, he must have ten story-books; he must

have books for amusement, he must have books of imagination, and in this way the personality of the child will develop.

Tagore held that if these principles are followed, the principle of progress from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the more difficult, and always in a spirit of freedom, always paying due regard to the environment, the child will be continuously expanding his conception of the environment, and ultimately he will accept the whole world as part of his heritage. On this basis, Tagore later developed his Viswa Bharati University. But before I come to the Viswa Bharati University, I would like to make a passing reference to his idea of the school as an asrama. In the first phase of his educational thought his major emphasis was that we must bring in the mother-tongue, we must bring in the Indian languages, because in that way alone, the child will be at one with the environment. When the child is at one with, acquainted with the environment, there comes the question of expanding his experience. Tagore felt that the best instrument of imbibing the best traditions of the country, imbibing the ideals of the country, is the residential school. For, he refers pithily, perhaps a little sarcastically to over-fond parents, parents who are not always the best teachers of the children, who sometimes, through their short-sightedness try to impose their will on children. If on the other hand children live in an environment where the children and the teacher can live in harmony with nature, where they have constant contact with one another and the teacher can impart his ideals, transmit his ideals in the mind of children, the best educational standards can be achieved.

One thing we must not forget. Tagore placed the greatest emphasis on the teacher. He believed that without a real teacher, no system of education can succeed. And I am sure, every one in India who is concerned with education, will realise how true that statement is. Early in 1905 or 1906, in one of his addresses at the time of the foundation of the National Council of Education, Tagore said that it is a strange habit of our country that whenever we think of an educational institution,

we think first of the building, then we think of the furniture, then we think of the library, then we think of the laboratory and after we have thought of all these things, when all our money is spent, we think of the teacher. And because there is neither the money nor the energy, the teacher is very often not found, because, he said, teachers are not so easy to find. We can't just go out in the street and say I want a teacher, and the teacher will come. We cannot just publish particulars in a newspaper and say that I want a teacher, and a teacher will come. That way, Tagore said, we may get instructors — products of the factory, but not a teacher, a real teacher. A real teacher is one who by his daily experience, communicates to his students, something of his passion for knowledge, something of his own life and character. And where there is no life and character, there is no real teacher, Tagore said.

Tagore used two beautiful similes in this context. One simile he used was that teaching or education is like lighting a lamp from another lamp. But if the lamp itself has gone out, how are you going to light other lamps? And very often, one who was once a distinguished teacher, becomes, in course of time, an extinguished teacher. And when there is an extinguished teacher, the process of lighting comes to an end. And in another imaginative simile, he said, where there is a living stream and the water is continuously flowing, the water is continuously replenished, there is movement and there is life, and that water is life-giving. But even the purest of water, if it becomes stagnant, if you put it in a tank, or you put it in a reservoir, if you do not allow water to flow, if you do not allow sunlight to come and play upon it, if you do not allow the purifying processes of nature continuously to revive it, that water becomes stagnant. Tagore said that a teacher who does not learn himself, or a teacher who does not renew himself, or the teacher who is not in constant contact with the currents of knowledge in the world, or the teacher who is not bathing in the flow of knowledge, that teacher is like a stagnant pool; and the stagnant

pool can give you disease, but cannot give you health; can give you not knowledge, but only information.

These were the ideas which Tagore placed before himself, and they are as true today, as they were when he stated them. Of course, I must say that these are not ideas which Tagore discovered for the first time. These are ideas which are as old as human being. They are all fundamental ideas, all basic ideas; they are almost eternal. But great men come and remind us of these ideas again and again. They restate them in a changed environment. And I think it will not be an exaggeration to say that many of the most significant experiments in India today owe their origin to the ideas which Tagore reformulated — restated, some sixty or seventy years ago. Refer to the question of mother-tongue, take the question of activity in schools, take the question of having fruitful work as a part of the school curriculum. Some sixty years ago, Tagore said that the school must be a living centre. It must also be a place where the economic processes of society are repeated; the school must be a place where there are productive activities — productive activities in tune with the society of the day.

Tagore always believed in going forward; he never believed in standing still. And he said, never stand still; for one who stands still, goes back. Many of you will remember the story of 'Alice in Wonderland'. When there is a race between Alice and the queen of hearts, Alice discovers that she is where she was after running for an hour or two as fast as she could. And in her surprise she said, what kind of a country is this that she was running for two hours, and yet is where she was? The queen replied, yes, that is the country we have here. If you want to stay where you are, you have to run for all you are worth. That is the condition of the modern world. Even if you have to remain where you are, you have to run fast. If you want to advance, you have to run still harder. That was also what Tagore said: Go forward always. At one time the bullock cart was the symbol of progress; but today, when the whole world has advanced, it has not remained the symbol of progress, but become

a symbol of backwardness. The man who takes pride in (the bullock cart today, or the man who takes pride in) standing still today, is not keeping abreast of the world; he is swept away like 'Alice in Wonderland'. Therefore, Tagore said, move forward. Identify yourself with the whole world. Establish your unity or identity with the world. Establish unity with the entire mankind. Claim the whole world as your heritage.

Again and again Tagore proclaimed that the special glory of India was that India was a laboratory where all the races of the world could come and live; where all the civilisations could flourish; where all the great religions of the world could live side by side, out of which could develop an attitude of life, a spirit of understanding and compassion, which could be significant not only for India, but for the whole world. And today, I would like to relate to you the significance of his message to the whole world.

I recently travelled in Europe and Africa. Everywhere I found there was an unprecedented homage to the memory of this man who was not a propagandist in the strict sense of the word, nor a political leader. And normally that type of homage is paid only to political leaders in their life time. But here was a man who proclaimed again and again that he was a man who prided in being human, who prided in the fact that he had all those desires, all those failings, all those aspirations, all those lapses, all those fears, all those faults, all those disappointments, which ordinary human beings in the world share. This man was honoured throughout the world, and I think, the significance of it lies in this message, a message which the modern world needs. I was in the University of Genoa in early June, and I spoke of Tagore. After the speech, the Italian Radio told me that it has every month a five-minute programme in which it surveys the entire world. Five minutes for the entire world, and that too, once in a month! And the representative said, he would be able to give one minute to Tagore; that would be the limit. If five minutes are devoted to the whole world, one minute to Tagore was not in itself an unfair proposition. I said, it is

easier to speak for hours, but it is rather difficult to point out the significance of Tagore in one minute. It is difficult to say all one has to say in five minutes, but certainly very difficult to do so in one minute. Finally, however, I said something like this: the significance of Tagore is that he stood for the cultural freedom of every individual, every group, every race, and at the same time, believed in their co-operation based on the universality of reason.

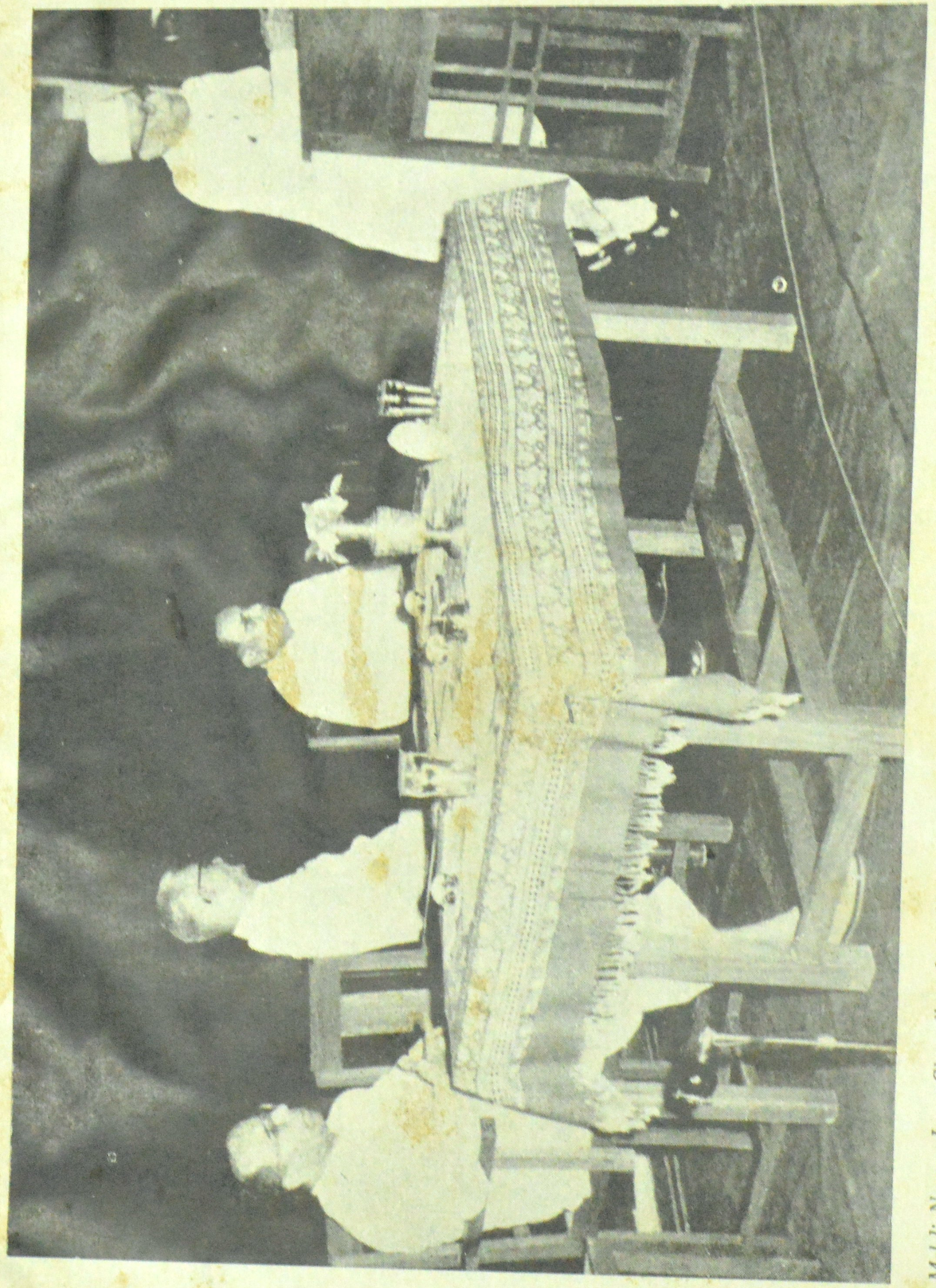
I think, this is probably the special glory of Tagore. There has never been such a champion of individual freedom, of the right of the individual to grow to his fullest stature in the modern world. Again and again he proclaimed that the peculiar glory of India is that here we have sought to embrace all. Here we have diversity of customs, diversity of races, diversity of religions, diversity of languages. But we should be proud of our diversities and not ashamed of them. The moment the diversities of India disappear, India would not be India. We are diverse in religions, we are diverse in customs, we are diverse in traditions; but in spite of all these diversities, we have a basic and underlying unity. It is very strange that we in India have not followed this symphonic pattern in our music. Our music is melodious. Our whole outlook of life has been a symphony, in which many different sounds have contributed, and they have contributed due to the universality of reason.

Tagore said that it was the universality of reason which gave India this power of reconciling our differences in a larger whole. He describes the 'Upanishada' as perhaps the first science of the human mind: universal principles laid down for all times and for everybody, valid from age to age, valid for all countries, valid for all time, valid for all men; universal principles which transcend the limitations of a particular time or particular experience. These two principles counterbalance one another: on the one hand the greatest emphasis on the full development of every individual, every group and every race, and on the other, their unity in the larger interest of humanity as a whole. This

combination is what the world needs today. Any idea that the whole world will ever have the same political belief, or the same economic system is bound to fail, those who hold those ideas are probably living in a fools' paradise. In the modern world, such demands for homogeneity and uniformity are dangerous, because, whenever you suppress an individuality, that individuality will express itself with double force. If individuality could be suppressed by force, there are many languages in Europe which would have disappeared. The Polish language would not have been on the surface of the earth, if political power, or even educational domination could have suppressed that language. In spite of this, the Polish language survived, and shall survive. It is in this way that individuality will survive. And if individuality is saved, the group is saved, the nation is saved. Their combination leads to the larger totality of the world—a world in which there is not only one monotone, a world outlook in which there is no regimentation, but a world outlook in which all the diversities are unified.

This ideal of unity in diversity was the ultimate idea of education towards which Tagore was moving. And in one of his most magnificent essays, the Unity of Education which I ask my friends to read if they have not done so, he said, a day has come today when let alone tribalism or caste loyalties, even nationalism has become outmoded. This does not, however, mean that differences will disappear, for then we will have an internationalism which will be largely a milk and water affair, we want men who will be international and also national, we want a world enriched by the contribution of every group and enriched by the memory of the many civilizations which have flourished in different parts of the world; we want an internationalism which is the stronger by the willing acceptance of nationalism on the basis of universality of reason, of the willing acceptance of whatever values have been achieved in the course of man's quest towards better life.

In the national anthem which Tagore has given us, we find one of the finest formulations of this ideal. Tagore gave us a



Shri Mehdi Nawaz Jung, Chancellor of the University, addressing the teachers and students. Prof. Humayun Kabir, Minister for Scientific Research & Cultural Affairs, Govt. of India (first from left), the lecturer of the day, is seen by the side of the Vice-Chancellor Shri L. R. Desai

message which is not only national: it belongs to the whole of humanity. Tagore speaks of "Jana Gana Mana Adhinayaka" — not the lord of the heart of the Indian people alone, but the lord of the heart of all the people of the world. "Jaya Hai Bharat Bhagya Vidhata"— Victory to the arbiter of India's destiny who is the lord of hearts of all the people of the world. And then "aharaha taba ahvana pracharit suni taba udar bani; Hindu, Bauddha, Sikh, Jaina, Parasik, Musalmana, Kristani." Day and night his message goes to the world. Hindus, Bauddha and Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Mussalmans and Christians all unite.

In our national anthem, he further says —

"Poorava Paschima ashe,
Taba Simhasana pashe
Prem hara hay gatha"

The East and the West come
And bow before thy Throne
And the bonds of love are knit.

In the unification of east and west, the message which India has to give is one of peace and benediction for all mankind. There may be clashes at times, there may be difficulties at times, but —

Patana abhyudaya bandhur pantha
Yuga yuga dhabit yatri
Hey Cheera Sarathi taba ratha chakre
Mukharita patha dina ratri.

In the march of man towards fulfilment, there are rises and falls; there are ups and downs; but throughout the ages, the arbiter of India's destiny has been the lord of the hearts of all the people of the world. If India is true to that cause, if India is true to that message of the 'Upanishads', the message of Buddha, the message of Gandhi, the message of Tagore, which is the true message of India expressed again and again by all her great sons, then and then alone can we accept the ideal of Tagore in our educational system, in our social outlook, in our political belief, in our relations with other countries, and in our relations with one another,

ગુજરાત યુનિવર્સિટીનાં
પ્રકાશનો

૧. **ગુજરાતી ભાષા અને સાહિત્ય**—પુસ્તક ૨
[નરસિંહરાવ ભો. દિવેટિયાનાં વ્યાખ્યાનોનો સંગ્રહ (ભાષાંતરકાર : શ્રી. રામપ્રસાદ પ્રે. બક્ષી)] ... ... રા. ન. પૈ. ૮·૦૦

૨. **હિન્દુસ્તાનની જ્ઞાતિસંસ્થા**
[લે. જે. એચ્. હટન; અનુ. શ્રી. પાં. ગ. દેશપાંડે] ... ... ૮·૦૦

૩. **સમાજશાસ્ત્રનાં મૂળતત્ત્વો** [લે. ડૉ. તારા પટેલ] ... ૪·૫૦

૪. (૧) **"સમાજ"**—ખંડ ૧ ... ... ૧૦·૦૦
(૨) **"સમાજ"**—ખંડ ૨ —કાચું પૂઠું ... ૧૨·૦૦
—પાકું પૂઠું ... ૧૩·૦૦
(૩) **"સમાજ"**—ખંડ ૩ —કાચું પૂઠું ... ૧૧·૦૦
—પાકું પૂઠું ... ૧૨·૦૦
(૪) **"સમાજ"**—ખંડ ૪ —કાચું પૂઠું ... ૮·૦૦
—પાકું પૂઠું ... ૯·૦૦
[લે. મૅકઆઇવર અને પેજ : અનુ. ડૉ. અક્ષયકુમાર ર. દેસાઈ]

૫. **પરિમિત અંતર કલન** [લે. શ્રી. ગુલાબભાઈ ર. દેસાઈ] ... ૬·૭૫

૬. **ફ્રી-યુનિવર્સિટીના વર્ગો માટે :**
(૧) સાહિત્યસંચય (ગુજરાતી) ... ... ૨·૫૦
(૨) ગદ્યસંચય (ગુજરાતી) ... ... ૨·૦૦
(૩) અર્ધમાગધી ગદ્યપદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૧·૭૫
(૪) પર્શિયન ગદ્યપદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૩·૦૦
(૫) હિંદી ગદ્યપદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૩·૨૫
(૬) હિંદી ગદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૩·૦૦
(૭) સંસ્કૃત ગદ્યપદ્યસંગ્રહ ... . ૦·૭૫
(૮) ઉર્દૂ ગદ્યપદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૫·૦૦
(૯) ઉર્દૂ ગદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૪·૦૦
(૧૦) અંગ્રેજી ગદ્યપદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૨·૫૦
(૧૧) અંગ્રેજી ગદ્યસંગ્રહ ... ... ૨·૦૦

: પ્રાપ્તિસ્થાન :

ગુજરાત યુનિવર્સિટી કાર્યાલય
નવરંગપુરા, અમદાવાદ-૯