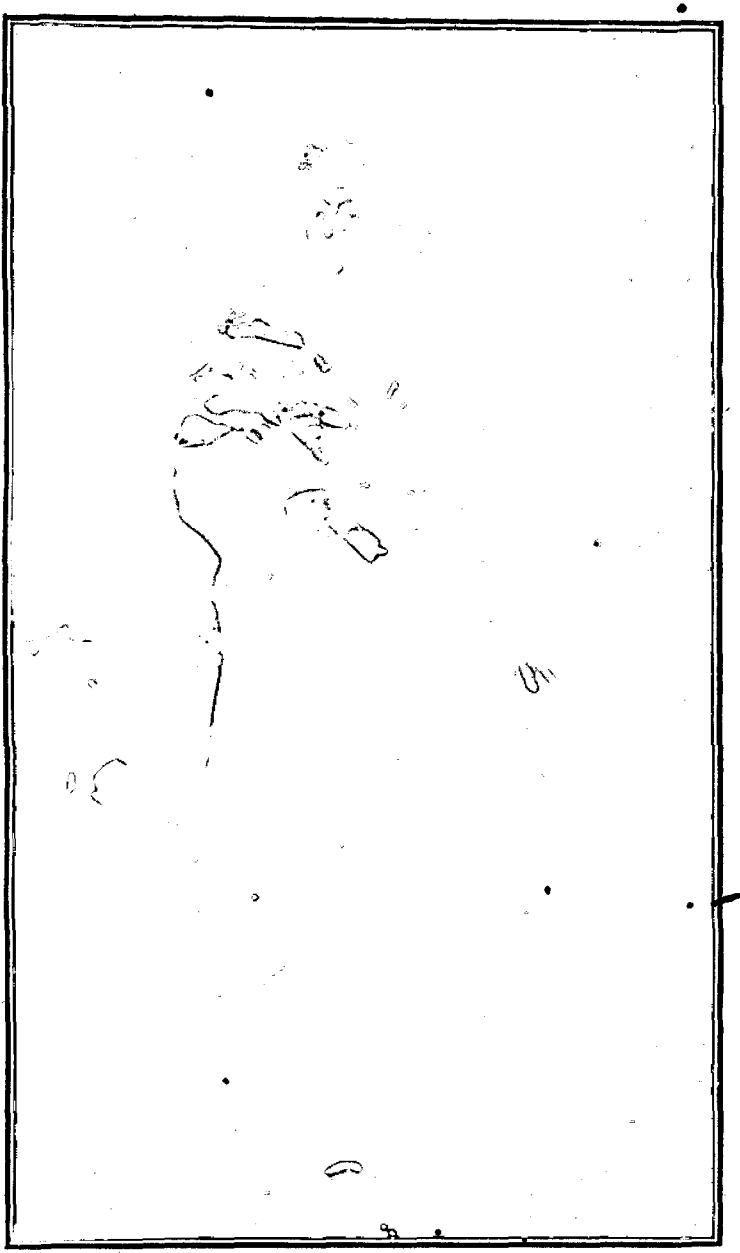


RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY

From a portrait by
R. A. Briggs, R.A.
in the Bristol Museum.

Courtesy: *"The Modern Review"*

THE RAJA: A PEN-PORTRAIT

"The Raja, in the outer man, was cast in nature's finest mould: his figure was manly and robust: his carriage dignified: the forehead towering, expansive and commanding: the eye dark, restless, full of brightness and animation, yet liquid and benevolent, and frequently glistening with a tear when affected by the deeper sensibility of the heart: the nose of Roman form and proportions: lips full and indicative of independence: the whole features deeply expressive, with a smile of soft and peculiar fascination which won irresistably the suffrages to whom it was addressed. His manners were characterized by suavity, blended with dignity, verging towards either point according to the company in which he might be placed. To ladies his politeness was marked by the most delicate manner, and his felicitous mode of paying them a compliment, gained him very many admirers among the high-born beauties of Britain. In conversation with individuals of every rank and of various nations and professions, he passed with the utmost ease from one language to another, suiting his remarks to each, and all in excellent taste, and commanding the astonishment and respect of his hearers."

MONTGOMERY MARTIN,
in the "Court Journal," London, 1833.

THE FATHER OF MODERN INDIA

COMMEMORATION VOLUME

OF THE

Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebrations, 1933

COMPILED & EDITED BY

SATIS CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI, M.A.

ON BEHALF OF THE RAMMOHUN ROY CENTENARY COMMITTEE



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210-6, CORNWALLIS STREET

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PREFACE

THE RAMMOHUN ROY CENTENARY : ITS SIGNIFICANCE

One of the most outstanding events of the year 19 was the Centenary of the death — at Bristol on 27 September 1833 — of Raja Rammohun Roy, the great Indi reformer.

The name of Rammohun Roy is associated with t earliest endeavours made in modern times to realize th all mankind constitute one family, to unite all men a women under the banner of one universal religion, obliterate all social inequalities, to give equal political stat to all the nations of the world, and, by the unhamper commerce of ideas and the amicable settlement disputes between state and state, to advance the cause universal peace and harmony. In all these endeavou Rammohun Roy was a pioneer, and of some of these he w the precursor. In all these spheres, the repercussions of l utterances and his activities were world-wide. He was bo in India, but he belonged to the world.

The hundred years from 1833 to 1933 had witness more momentous changes than perhaps any previo century in the history of the world. The significance, bo of this century and of the Centenary of Rammohun R was therefore being vividly realized by his admirers, par cularly since the Brahmo Samaj, the religious organizati founded by him, had celebrated its centenary during t years 1928 to 1930.

The celebration of the Raja's Centenary took place duri one of the tensest periods in the history of India and of t world. India, the home of many religions, had become sc with dissensions, through the application of a policy direct opposed to the spirit of Rammohun, viz. the accentuati of their differences instead of their affinities ; and palliativ brewed from expediency had aggravated, instead of heali the resultant bitterness. A powerful and wide politic movement had just failed, though backed by the immeasu able influence of one of the noblest personalities modern times. The heart of India was crying, as it we for the spirit of Rammohun ; and speaker after speak during his Centenary celebrations, apostrophized him words that had once been used of Milton,—"Rammohu thou shouldst be living at this hour : India hath ne of thee !"

Abroad, a spirit of moral anarchism born of the war had gripped the Western mind. The failure of Prohibition in America, the wide dissemination of certain types of literature and the immense popularity of certain forms of amusement, all tending to degrade public taste and morals, and the palpable lowering of the tone of the world Press, were matters of deepest concern to all morally earnest people. The League of Nations, round which had centred the hopes of a war-worn world, had been flouted by bellicose nations both in Europe and the Far East, and democracy appeared to be eclipsed by dictatorships. Russia, the largest state in the Old World, was engaged in a politico-economic experiment of stupendous dimensions, and the eyes of the whole world were riveted upon her.

In the religious world of the West, changes of a far-reaching character were agitating the public mind, and these changes were happening almost along the very lines laid down by Rammohun Roy a century ago. Scholarly and even reverential study of other religions was being acknowledged as an important part of the preparation for the ministry of the Christian religion. The laity of the richest state of the world, that which used to support most substantially the Christian Foreign Missions—the United States of America—had just veered to the position of Rammohun, and pronounced against the further delegation of Missions of the old type to Eastern countries.

No wonder, then, that during the Centenary celebrations of Rammohun Roy, one of the most eminent of American divines exclaimed: "What a Hindu Rajah proclaimed at immense personal cost in 1833, the educated portion of Christian America accepts without serious question in the present year of grace. ... The Laymen's Report, in its spirit and essential features, was anticipated by Rammohun Roy a hundred years ago.[1]" And no wonder that the Unitarian Bishop of Rumania hailed the memory of Rammohun Roy, "who through the dynamic power of his personality and his uncompromising freedom of the spirit became the great path-maker of this century, thus giving encouragement to the present generation of this unfortunate Europe, merged into the oblivion of an anti-Christian man-slaughtering War, the terror of which still rages over us.[2]" And well might the Rev. J. T. Sunderland, a man of far-reaching vision and world-wide sympathy, characterize Rammohun "as in a large and true sense India's immortal Moses, Mazzini, and Washington, all in one[3] !"

1. *Vide* Part II, pp. 438, 439.
2. *Vide* Part II, p. 435.
3. *Vide* Part II, p. 436.

The present compilation, which is humbly offered to the public as a Commemoration Volume of the celebration of his Centenary in India and abroad, will, it is hoped, by bringing together the tributes paid to him on the occasion, help the reader to realize the unique position he holds in modern history. For, as will be perceived from its pages, not only was homage paid to his memory, during these celebrations, as the FATHER OF MODERN INDIA, but he was also acclaimed as a Prophet whose message was full of untold significance for *future* generations,—as a "Man of a thousand years" as Sir Brajendra Nath Seal put it.

THE PRESENT VOLUME : A BRIEF SURVEY OF ITS CONTENTS

In the present Volume, an attempt has been made in the INTRODUCTION to narrate, as far as practicable in chronological order, the measures adopted for organizing the celebration of the Centenary, in Calcutta, in the various Indian provinces, and in foreign countries, and the enthusiastic response these measures met with from all quarters.

In the latter portion of the INTRODUCTION are given the Proceedings of the "Preliminary Meeting" held on 18th February 1933 at the Senate House of the Calcutta University under the presidency of Rabindranath Tagore for the formation of a Central Celebration Committee. In this portion is also included the report of a similar "Preliminary Meeting" organized by students.

In PART I of the book will be found accounts of the celebrations—the meetings, divine services, processions etc.—held at various places. These have been arranged in the following order : (*a*) Calcutta, (*b*) the Provinces and States of India, Burma and Ceylon, (*c*) foreign countries.

In the report of the celebrations held by the CENTRAL COMMITTEE in Calcutta (coming after those of the Brahmo Samajes, the Rammohun Library and the Students, which had taken place earlier) have been included, not only the detailed proceedings of the functions lasting for three days, but also the impression they made on the representatives of some of the Calcutta dailies.

The CENTRAL CELEBRATION COMMITTEE organized, besides the three days' functions, an Exhibition of the Raja's personal relics, autographs, original editions of Works, etc. The classified Catalogue of these Exhibits, which comes next in order in the present Volume, will, it is hoped, be of interest to the general reader, giving, as it does, a large amount of accurate information about the Raja within a small compass.

Of the Indian provinces, the reports of the celebrations in the Andhra area and in the Punjab would probably stand out foremost in respect of the enthusiasm displayed by the organizers.

The descriptions of the celebrations in London, Bristol and Paris in the Volume possess the peculiar interest of being from the pens of eye-witnesses.

As far as practicable, important speeches delivered and papers read at these celebrations have been detached from the Proceedings, and printed in Section C of PART II of the Volume, which, with its other sections, is intended to serve as a compact repository of all valuable studies on the life and work of Rammohun Roy.

Of PART II of the Volume, the First Section is the Publicity Booklet issued by the Centenary Committee in July 1933, entitled RAMMOHUN ROY, THE MAN AND HIS WORK, compiled and edited by MR. AMAL HOME, Editor of *The Calcutta Municipal Gazette*. Its main contents consist of three monographs, viz. *The Story of Rammohun's Life* by Pandit Sivanath Sastri (with copious supplementary notes, embodying, in many instances, the latest researches on many unknown aspects of the Raja's life and character, by Mr. Amal Home), *Rammohun Roy and Modern India* by Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, and *Rammohun Roy, the Universal Man* by Sir Brajendra Nath Seal.

The Second Section of PART II is really a continuation of the First Section, and consists of tributes to, and reminiscences of, the Raja, a few of which are by his contemporaries.

From the Third Section of PART II commence the remarkable studies and appreciations of the Raja which constituted the most important element of the Centenary celebrations. Here will be found the Centenary Addresses, Papers, Sermons, Messages, etc., as well as a selection from newspaper articles that appeared in connection with the memorable event.

The reader who would concentrate on these studies to the exclusion of reports of celebrations, would find it easy, with the help of the INDEX, to locate the few speeches etc. inextricably embedded in the Proceedings in PART I of the Volume.

The pagination of the INTRODUCTION is in Roman numerals. Arabic numerals are used from PART I of the Volume. But the pages of PART I (Descriptive reports of celebrations) and of PART II (Tributes, Monographs, Centenary Addresses, Papers, etc.) are separately numbered.

The Table of Contents, the List of Illustrations and the Index of Names and Places, would, it may be hoped, be of some assistance to the reader making use of the Volume.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The best thanks of the Editor are due to : the Working Committee of the Centenary, which honoured him by entrusting him with the work ; to Mr. Amal Home, not only for the Publicity Booklet prepared by him, which forms a most valuable part of the present Volume, but also for constant help and advice given in the most unstinted measure ; to the authorities of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad and to Mr. Manmatha Nath Ghosh for several of the illustrations ; to numerous young friends of both sexes, for ungrudgingly sharing the dry mechanical portion of the editor's labours, notable among them being Messrs Asok Lal Ghosh, Birendra Nath Chakravarti and Nani Bhushan Das Gupta ; and lastly, to the Brahmo Mission Press for loyal and hearty co-operation during periods of extraordinary stress and strain.

Office of the
RAMMOHUN ROY CENTENARY
210-6, Cornwallis Street,
CALCUTTA
The 19th October, 1935

SATIS CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI

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II 33	1	(Saka, 1821)	Saka (1821)
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II 487	Page heading	DR.	PROF.
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II 513	Page heading	CHAND	CHANDRA
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Of the two illustrations on p. II 218D, the lower one represents *not* Dr. Joshua Marshman, as printed underneath, but his son John Clark Marshman (1794–1877) who assisted him in editing the *Friend of India*. No portraits of Dr. Joshua Marshman are available.

INTRODUCTION

HOW THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS WERE ORGANIZED

As has been noted in the PREFACE, the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy was looked forward to during the period 1928—1930, when the Brahmo Samaj was celebrating the completion of the first hundred years of its existence. The Raja's forthcoming Centenary was a common topic of discussion on that occasion, which was graced by the presence of some of his English and American admirers of both sexes.

Towards the end of 1932, the preparation of the ground for the operations in connection with the Raja's Centenary, which, it was anticipated, would extend into several countries, and over a period considerably longer than a twelvemonth, was taken up by a number of his admirers in Calcutta. They met several times under the auspices of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj in November and December. At these meetings the following line of action was chalked out: That attempts be made to hold a Preliminary public meeting in Calcutta in the early part of the year 1933; that the active co-operation of people of all persuasions and of all walks in life be solicited and enlisted both for this particular meeting and for the subsequent celebrations; that a strong Central Committee be formed at the meeting, and steps be also taken for organizing celebrations worthy of the great Raja in all parts of India and in foreign countries where his name is held in honour; and that the poet Rabindranath Tagore be requested to preside both at the proposed Preliminary meeting and at the Celebrations in Calcutta when they come about.

Accordingly, the Poet was first approached. He most enthusiastically consented to preside on both the occasions. Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Vice-chancellor of the Calcutta University, (and son of Maulavi Obaidulla-el-Obaide, the English translator of the Raja's Persian work *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*), being requested, readily permitted the use of the Senate House of the University for the meeting.

The organizers next approached a number of leading ladies and gentlemen of Calcutta, and secured their consent to the use of their names in the letter calling the meeting as its 'Conveners.' The following Convening Letter was accordingly issued :—

Rammohun Roy Centenary, 1933

CALCUTTA, February 11, 1933.

Dear Sir,

The twenty-seventh of September next will see the completion of the hundredth year of the death of RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY.

The Raja is universally acknowledged as the herald of a new epoch in this country, and the first among the Nation-builders of Modern India. The Centenary of his death is an occasion which, we feel, should be celebrated in a fitting manner by all sections of the community in every part of India.

In order to make necessary arrangements for celebrating the occasion in Calcutta, a Public Meeting of its citizens will be held on Saturday, the 18th February, 1933, at 5-30 P. M. in the Senate House, Calcutta University, under the presidency of the Poet RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

You are cordially invited to attend the meeting.

Yours truly,

Jagadish Chandra Bose
P. C. Ray
C. V. Raman
Brajendra Nath Seal
Hassan Suhrawardy
Nilratan Sircar
Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan
Hirendranath Datta
Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary
Jatindra Nath Basu
Krishna Kumar Mitra
Kshitindranath Tagore
B. C. Ghosh
Ramananda Chatterjee
Bhikkhu Dhammapala
Sri Devamitra
(Mahabodhi Society)
Shivananda
(Ramakrishna Mission)
Swami Satyananda
(Hindu Mission)
Ayodhya Prasad
(Arya Samaj)
Foss Calcutta
(Metropolitan of India)
H. Pakenham-Walsh
Allan Cameron
P. G. Bridge
G. H. C. Angus
Johan van Manen
Sitanath Tattvabhushan
P. K. Sen
N. C. Sen
S. C. Mukerjee
S. C. Roy
Giris Chandra Bose
Heramba Chandra Maitra
J. R. Banerjea
G. C. Ghosh
Gobindamohini Sinha
(Dowager Lady Sinha)
Ganada Debi
(Mrs. Satyendranath Tagore)
Kamini Roy
Sucharu Devi
(Mourbhanj)
Golapsundari Devi
(Mrs. Harimohan Roy)
Abala Bose
(Lady J. C. Bose)
Hemlata Devi
(Mrs. Dwipendranath Tagore)
Sarala Ray
(Mrs. P. K. Ray)
Sarola-Devi Chaudhurani
Indira Devi
(Mrs. P. Chaudhuri)
Sushama Sen
(Mrs. P. K. Sen)
Monica Mahalanobis
(Mrs. S. C. Mahalanobis)

Charulata Mukerjee (Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee)
Abul Kalam Azad
A. F. M. Abdul Ali
Mohammad Akrum Khan
Mujibur Rahman
A. K. Fuzlul Huq
Wahed Husain
Sinha of Raipur
Manmathanath Ray Chowdhury (Santosh)
Sris Chandra Nundy (Kasimbazar)
Prodyot Kumar Tagore
Reshee Case Law
Profulla Tagore
Saratkumar Ray (Dighapatia)
Narendranath Law
G. D. Birla
Badridas Goenka
Debi Prasad Khaitan
Nand Lal Puri
Gurdit Singh
Prabhudoyal Himatsingka
Anandji Haridas
Abanindranath Tagore
Dinesh Chandra Sen
Pramatha Chaudhuri
Jaladhar Sen
Bijay Chandra Mazumdar
C. C. Ghose
Manmathanath Mukerji
N. N. Sircar
P. C. Mitter
Khwaja Nazimuddin
B. P. Singh Roy
Jogendra Chunder Ghosh
Narendrakumar Basu
Nares Chandra Sen-Gupta
C. C. Biswas
B. C. Chatterjee
Satyananda Bose
B. K. Basu
Surendranath Mallik
U. N. Brahmachari
Devadatta Ramakrishna Bhandarkar
Hiralal Haldar
Syamaprasad Mookerjee
S. C. Mahalanobis
Bhupatimohan Sen
Surendranath Das-Gupta
Pramathanath Banerjea
Charuchandra Bhattacharyya
Bidhan Chandra Roy
Kiran Sankar Roy
Nirmal Chandra Chunder
Jogesh Chandra Gupta
Santosh Kumar Basu
J. N. Maitra
Pran Krishna Acharji
Gananath Sen
Dwijendra Nath Maitra
Surendranath Tagore
J. C. Mukerjee
Annada Charan Sen
W. C. Wordsworth ("Statesman")
Tusharkanti Ghosh ("A. B. Patrika")
Hemchandra Nag ("Liberty")
Sashi Bhushan Mukherjee ("Basumati")
Satyendranath Mazumdar ("Ananda Bazar Patrika")
Gopal Lal Sanyal ("Bangabani")

All the dailies of Calcutta gave prominent insertion to the above letter, the publicity thus afforded to the proposed meeting contributing in no small measure to its success. On the appointed day, the spacious Senate House, its vestibules and its approaches were all filled to overflowing. A description of the Meeting, with the Resolutions adopted and the speeches made in it, is given in the next section of this INTRODUCTION. The Presidential Address of Rabindranath Tagore will be found on pages 3 to 6 of Part II.

The Proceedings of this Meeting being reported in all important papers in India, wide public interest in the forthcoming Centenary was speedily and efficiently aroused.

The Presidential Address of Rabindranath Tagore was a most remarkable utterance. It drew pointed attention to the fact that Rammohun Roy was the first all-round Internationalist of the modern age, the first 'Universal Man'. "Rammohun", said the Poet, "was the only person in his time in the whole world of Man, to realize completely the significance of the Modern Age. He knew that the ideal of human civilization does not lie in the isolation of independence, but in the brotherhood of interdependence, of individuals as well as of nations, in all spheres of thought and activity." The Address was reprinted not only everywhere in India, but in English, continental and American papers as well, and appreciative quotations from it came back to India during the year in communications received by the Centenary Committee from the most unexpected quarters of the globe.

The spirit in which the organizers of the celebrations in different parts of the country should work was also indicated by the Poet in the following words :—"Let me hope that in celebrating his Centenary we shall take upon ourselves the task of revealing to our own and contemporaneous civilizations the multi-sided and perfectly balanced personality of this great man."

By its Second Resolution the Preliminary Meeting appointed a "General Committee" of about 400 members, which forthwith held two meetings, the first for adopting a Scheme of Celebration (reproduced on pp. 152—155 of Part II of the present Volume), and the second for appointing a Working Committee of about 70 members, which was vested with all powers and entrusted with all duties in connection with the celebrations. These meetings were held in March 1933.

The newly formed Working Committee met usually once a month. It classified and sub-divided its various functions, and appointed 12 Sub-committees. Some particulars of these Sub-committees, as well as names of the Office-bearers will be found on pp. 156–158 of Part II.

The first question to be decided by the Working Committee was : When should the celebrations at Calcutta be held ? The 27th of September fell within the Puja holidays, when all public institutions were closed for a fairly long period, and it was usual for many of the leading people of Calcutta to be out of town. It was consequently felt that any functions held at that time would be comparatively poorer in attendance, and also be shorn of a part of their representative character. It was settled, however, that the Brahmo Samajes and the Rammohun Library of Calcutta would observe that date by means of public meetings. It was therefore decided that the celebrations should take place during the Christmas week.

The next Resolution of the Preliminary Meeting was about organizing celebrations in other parts of Bengal besides Calcutta, in the other provinces of India, and in foreign countries. In order to give effect to this Resolution, correspondence, both with institutions and with individual admirers of the Raja in various stations in India, was at once commenced. In course of this correspondence it transpired that the difficulty about holding celebrations in September was peculiar to the Eastern provinces of India as well as to the Punjab. But the Raja's admirers in other provinces of India as well as in England and America decided to have their celebrations in September or October.

The need of supplying organizers with suitable literature on Rammohun began to be felt as soon as this correspondence was entered upon. A book which would throw light on the Raja's life, on his activities, and on his peculiar character as a world-figure, which would explain the Scheme of Celebration conceived by the Central Committee—which would be at once clear and concise—was felt to be an immediate necessity.

The compilation of such a handy volume was entrusted to MR. AMAL HOME, Editor of the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, who brought it out in July, under the title RAMMOHUN ROY, THE MAN AND HIS WORK. Though he modestly called his compilation a Publicity 'Booklet', it was a fair-sized book of over 150 Royal 8vo pages, replete with valuable information, and profusely illustrated. The Centenary Committee distributed broadcast numerous copies of the book. All organizations for celebrating the Centenary in India, in England, and in America, and all important Indian newspapers and libraries were supplied with free copies. The Press in India was unanimous in the praise, both of its valuable contents and of its admirable get-up. It was priced at annas eight, which was about half the cost of production. Consequently the brisk sale it commanded, coupled with the appreciation it universally received, gave the forthcoming celebrations just the publicity they needed. Not only so; subsequent events showed that everywhere at Centenary meetings speakers and writers had drawn largely upon the valuable information and the illuminating studies forming part of it. Thus, the success of the celebrations was to a very great extent due to the assistance received from the Publicity Booklet. This Booklet has been incorporated in the present Volume.

But to resume the thread of our narrative. Early in August, the following Circular Letter was addressed by one of the Joint Secretaries of the Centenary Committee to all individuals as well as all organizations in India that had, by that time, intimated their readiness to hold celebrations :—

Rammohun Roy Centenary

[1833—1933]

GENERAL COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT :

RABINDRANATH TAGORE



210-6, Cornwallis Street,

Calcutta.

The 3rd August, 1933.

DEAR BROTHER,

You have, I believe, seen in the Calcutta papers that the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, which falls on the 27th September 1933, is proposed to be celebrated in all parts of India.

In the Inaugural Meeting held in Calcutta under the presidency of the Poet Rabindranath Tagore for the organization of these celebrations, three Resolutions were adopted, the first calling upon the citizens of Calcutta, the second calling upon the people of Bengal, and the third calling upon the people of other provinces of India, to take steps to celebrate the Centenary in a befitting manner.

In that meeting it was resolved that admirers of Rammohun Roy in all parts of India should be requested to meet together to organize similar celebrations in their respective cities. I beg to request you, therefore, on behalf of the Central Celebration Committee, to take early steps to organize a Centenary Committee in your city, composed as far as possible of all sections of people resident there.

A copy of the Centenary Publicity Booklet, *Rammohun Roy, the Man and his Work*, issued by the Central Committee, is being forwarded to you. The Scheme of Celebration adopted by the Calcutta Committee, including the Conferences etc. to be held during the Christmas week, will be found in the Booklet. Some of the suggestions contained therein may be found useful by you. The Booklet will also, we hope, help the preparation of speeches and discourses on Rammohun Roy. ...

From all parts of the world numerous letters full of expressions of deep reverence for Rammohun Roy, and warm sympathy for those who are organizing the Centenary in India, are being received. Rev. J. T. Sunderland of the U.S.A. has sent us a remarkable message of appreciation of the Raja, ending with these words,—"I am sure that when India becomes once more a free and great nation, as under God she is sure to do at no distant day, she will recognize Rammohun Roy as in a large and true sense her immortal—what shall I say—MOSES ? or MAZZINI ? or WASHINGTON ? or all in one ?"

We hope you and your friends will take up this sacred and solemn duty with enthusiasm. Kindly let us know early what steps you are taking for organizing celebrations in your city.

Yours truly

(Sd.) SATIS CH. CHAKRAVARTI
Joint Secretary, Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee,
210-6, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

The above letter, with which was forwarded a copy of the Publicity Booklet, met with eager response from every province. Arrangements for celebrating the Centenary were commenced everywhere with great zeal.

Naturally, the organizers in Calcutta and in the mofussil had to consult one another very frequently through correspondence on various matters of detail, particularly in respect of the auxiliary measures to be adopted for the success of the celebrations. Some of these measures may be mentioned here. Illustrated pamphlets, both in English and in the provincial vernaculars, were published and distributed free at various places ; a tri-colour portrait of the Raja (the frontispiece of the present Volume) was printed and distributed at Centenary meetings ; celluloid medallions with the portrait of the Raja, to be worn as badges, were distributed among children ; bright-coloured cloth badges, with the Raja's picture and the words "Rammohun Centenary, 1833-1933" printed thereon, were prepared for the use of Volunteers ; portraits of the Raja were prepared, were presented to, and were formally unveiled in, several public buildings; halls and roads named after the Raja were opened at various places; and fine Commemoration Volumes were published by certain of the Provincial Committees.

Next, the Central Committee addressed the authorities of newspapers throughout India, and of the Unitarian organs of England and America, requesting them to publish special articles on Rammohun Roy, and, if possible, to issue special Centenary Numbers, on dates proximate to the 27th of September. This request was generously complied with. Some of the articles that appeared in the papers are reproduced in the last section of Part II of the present Volume.

[A similar appeal had to be made a second time to the papers of Calcutta and of mofussil stations in Bengal later on, when the Calcutta celebrations due in Christmas week were approaching ; and this second appeal also met with an equally enthusiastic response.]

For the Calcutta celebrations the following functions were decided upon : a Convention of Religions ; a Women's Conference ; two sittings of a General Conference ; and an Exhibition of Rammohun's Relics. As in the case of the Preliminary Meeting held in February, Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Vice-chancellor, Calcutta University, was approached, and he kindly placed the Senate House at the disposal of the Centenary Committee for the Convention of Religions and the Conferences, and also a room in the Asutosh Buildings for the Exhibition of Rammohun's Relics.

The Circular Letter printed below was next addressed by the Centenary Committee to eminent persons throughout India, inviting them to read papers at the Calcutta meetings in Christmas week. Representatives of all denominations were invited to take part in the proposed Convention of Religions, not, as is usual at such Conventions, to give expositions of their own doctrines, but to contribute studies on Rammohun Roy from their various standpoints. The papers invited for the General Conference were also expected to be studies on Rammohun Roy from other points of view.

Rammohun Roy Centenary

1833—1933

GENERAL COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT :

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

210-6 Cornwallis Street,
Calcutta
The 28th October, 1933.

DEAR SIR,

This year the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy is being celebrated with reverence and enthusiasm by his admirers in most of the important towns of India, and in certain cities in Europe and America. The Centenary Committee of Calcutta has decided to celebrate the event in this city during the Christmas week. Rabindranath Tagore will preside over the meetings in this connection. Besides his presidential address, tributes paid to the Raja and messages sent on the occasion by his eminent admirers in the East and the West would be read.

The contemplated meetings include :

(*a*) A Convention of Religions, in which papers conceived in the spirit of the Raja, and emphasizing the elements of Monotheism, the Essential Unity of all religions, and the Brotherhood of Man would be read by representatives of different faiths.

(*b*) A General Conference, in which papers dealing with the various aspects of Rammohun Roy's life and work would be read.

(*c*) A Women's Conference, in which women of all sections would meet to honour the memory of the great champion of their sex.

The Centenary Committee earnestly and cordially invite you to help the Celebrations by your presence, and also to contribute a paper for any of its meetings.

It is considered desirable that a paper should not take longer than 15 minutes in the reading. It has also been decided that all papers should be printed and distributed. They should, therefore, reach this Office by the 30th November, after which date a small Sub-committee would proceed to arrange and co-ordinate them, so as to avoid overlapping as far as practicable.

It is respectfully suggested that the paper to be contributed by you may deal with the following subject. (*The suggested subject was mentioned here.*)

It would be a great kindness if a reply is received by return of post.

Yours truly,

OFFICE OF THE
RAMMOHUN CENTENARY
COMMITTEE,
210-6, Cornwallis Street,
CALCUTTA.

.....
Secretary,
Rammohun Centenary
Committee.

The spirit and the manner in which the above invitation was responded to would be evident from a perusal of the addresses and papers, some of which are remarkably penetrating studies of a great master-mind. Even a cursory glance at the lists, of speakers and their subjects, and of the messages and greetings received by the Central Committee, would suffice to convey an idea of the success attained by the Calcutta celebrations.

The descriptive reports of these celebrations, including glowing accounts of those at Calcutta, given in Part I of the present Volume, and the speeches and papers printed in Part II, bear ample testimony to the unique and world-wide homage paid to the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy. The East and the West united in honouring him. Provincial, communal and political differences were set aside and a unanimous chorus of praise was raised in this country to the memory of the FATHER OF MODERN INDIA.

Almost all the proceedings of these celebrations were recorded in Indian papers. In those cases where the organizers have omitted to forward their reports to the Central Committee, the descriptions in this Volume are based on the accounts given in the newspapers.

The Punjab Centenary Committee held three successive celebrations at Lahore, deciding to hold their main celebrations during the anniversary festival of the Brahmo Samaj in January 1934, and at other stations in subsequent months. The celebrations in that province were therefore continued to May 1934.

The Central Committee raised, in round figures, a sum of Rs. 6080. The total cost of the celebrations (including some assistance given to mofussil centres) was Rs. 5290. The balance of Rs. 790 was utilized by the Working Committee towards the cost of the present publication.

The Centenary celebrations were responsible for a number of important publications connected with Rammohun, which, though not actually coming within the purview of the present Volume, should be mentioned here. Mr. Amal Home has referred to Prof. Biman Behari Majumdar's "History of Political Thought from Rammohun to Dayananda[1]" in his Foreword to *Rammohun Roy, the Man and his Work*, which forms the first section of Part II of this Volume. The *Bangiya Sahitya Parishad* of Calcutta undertook to publish, under the General Editorship of Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, a comprehensive Centenary Edition of the Raja's Works, including in it some books hitherto unpublished. This Edition is now under preparation, and the first volume will be shortly out. The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta also made arrangements for publishing an Edition of his Works, and brought out a volume in 1934. Prof. U. N. Ball of Dyal Singh College, Lahore, brought out a Life[2] of Rammohun Roy, and Prof. Nalin Chandra Ganguly contributed a volume[3] on the Raja to the "Builders of Modern India" series.

Two western ladies, one belonging to France and the other to the United States of America, were stimulated by the Centenary celebrations to do research work of a most valuable character about the great Raja. Madame L. Morin of Paris, who attended the Calcutta celebrations of December 1933, unearthed from the French archives certain data which considerably reduced the conjectural period of the Raja's stay in Paris. (*Vide* pp. 365, 370 of Part II.) Miss Adrienne Moore, an American student, who was preparing for the M. A. degree of the Columbia University, chose *Rammohun Roy : His possible influence on American thought, with special emphasis upon periodicals* as the subject for her thesis. The labour she has bestowed on her thesis and the valuable addition it would prove, when published, to the existing literature on Rammohun, can be gauged from the fact that it contains a complete list of books, magazines, tracts, etc. —in fact everything in print—*by* or *on* or *containing references to* Rammohun Roy in many of the principal libraries of America, England, and the continent of Europe.

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1. Since published by the Calcutta University. (1934)

2. *Rammohun Roy, A Study of his Life, Works and Thoughts.* U. Ray and Sons, 117-1, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta. (September 1933)

3. *Raja Rammohun Roy.* Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 5 Russell Street, Calcutta. (1934)

THE PRELIMINARY MEETING

held on 18th February 1933 at the Senate House, Calcutta.

Citizens of Calcutta representing all sections and communities mustered strong at the Meeting. The keenest enthusiasm was displayed, and the Meeting was so largely attended that even the spacious Hall of the Senate House did not prove sufficient for all who sought admission, many having been crowded out.

A Loud-speaker was installed, without which it would have been impossible to make the speeches audible from the other end of the Hall.

Among those who attended were, Her Highness the Dowager Maharani of Mourbhanj, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Justice Manmatha Nath Mukerji, Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Sir Nilratan Sircar, Lady Sircar, Sjt. Hirendra Nath Datta, Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra, Dr. B. C. Ghosh, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Sjt. Hem Chandra Nag, Dr. Sundari Mohan Das, Dr. Hiralal Haldar, Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, Mr. Prasanta C. Mahalanobis, Dr. Kali Das Nag, Mr. Amal Home, Capt. N. N. Dutt, Rai Bahadur Khagendra Nath Mitra, Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, Maulavi Wahed Husain, Maulavi Abdul Karim, Principal B. M. Sen, Sjt. Satyananda Bose, Sir C. V. Raman, Right Rev. Bishop H. Pakenham-Walsh, Sja. Sarala Devi Choudhurani, Mr. Stapleton, Sjt. Dinendra Nath Tagore, Mr. J. N. Basu, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Sjt. Satyendra Nath Majumdar, Mrs. Kamini Roy, Mrs. P. K. Sen, Dr. Nares Chandra Sen-Gupta, etc.

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, in proposing Rabindranath Tagore to the chair, said that he was the fittest person to take it, when they had assembled to take steps for the celebration of the Centenary of the great man who was the herald of a new epoch, and whose hallowed memory had inspired the nation for the last one hundred years in diverse ways.—The proposal was duly seconded.

The Poet then took the chair and delivered his Address, which will be found on pages 3 to 6 of Part II.

Her Highness the Dowager Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mourbhanj then moved the first Resolution, briefly referring to the influence of the Raja upon the life of her illustrious father Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen :—

> That this meeting of the citizens of Calcutta, convened for the purpose of making necessary arrangements for the celebration of the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, offers its homage to the memory of the Raja, who heralded a new epoch in this country, and was the first among the nation-builders of Modern India, and calls upon all sections of the people of this country to co-operate in making the celebration a success.

Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Vice-chancellor, Calcutta University, *in seconding the Resolution, said* :—"Ladies and gentlemen, the pleasant task of seconding this Resolution has devolved on me. It is a great privilege—indeed, a great honour—of which any man may be proud, to second or to support a Resolution to do homage to the memory of the late Rammohun Roy. The Raja was certainly a great *wali*, a seer, who was gifted with foresight, and he saw into the future so far back as 1823, when he wrote his famous Despatch to Lord Amherst, advocating the introduction of Western sciences and of the English language as the medium of instruction, in this country. There is a peculiar fitness, therefore, that the inaugural meeting for the arrangements for paying tribute to his memory should take place in the hall of this University, the first to function in India. There is a peculiar appropriateness also, that so many persons associated with Rammohun Roy should be present at this meeting and take some active part in it.

Miss Collet in her Biography of Rammohun Roy mentions that the first book from the pen of Rammohun Roy, the *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* or 'A Gift to Monotheists', written in Persian with an Arabic Preface, was for the first time "rendered into English by a learned and enthusiastic Mahomedan" gentleman, and the name of my father is given there as having translated it. I feel proud that in 1884, the year of my birth, this translation was published by the Adi Brahmo Samaj, under the management of Babu Rajnarain Bose, the father-in-law of my distinguished countryman Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, who is present here and is going to support the motion.

The Resolution itself has been moved by Her Highness the Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mourbhanj. She is the worthy daughter of that great reformer Keshub Chunder Sen, a worthy successor and follower of Rammohun Roy, and today, we have in the chair, the sun of our literary firmament, the septuagenarian poet-philosopher Rabindranath Tagore, son of Maharshi Debendra Nath, the immediate successor of Rammohun Roy.

With great pleasure I beg to second the Resolution."

Sjt. Hirendra Nath Datta, *in supporting the Resolution*, called attention to the fact that to make the celebration of the Centenary a success, as it deserved to be, the co operation of all sections of people was necessary, without distinction of creed, caste or colour. He pointed out that Rammohun Roy was a cosmopolitan, a server of humanity, and therefore in the celebration of his Centenary a note of cosmopolitanism must be struck. Rammohun was born for the world and gave himself to the world. If any sect or nation were to try to appropriate him and brand him with their sectional hall-mark, it would be offering an insult to his memory. To call him a mere reformer would not also, the speaker proceeded, be doing him full justice. He was more than a reformer ; he was a regenerator—the herald of a new epoch—the prophet of a new age. It was not possible for his contemporaries to measure his true greatness. This is not to be wondered at, seeing that, as ordinary

mortals, we are all more or less infected with what the speaker called the 'Sisupala-complex.' Prophets and Paigambars, when they appear, are invariably misunderstood and reviled with contumely. That was the case with Srikrishna, with Buddha, with Christ, and with Chaitanya. Why should it have been otherwise with Rammohun ? Now, however, as a whole century had elapsed since his death, the time had certainly arrived when we could all join together, and meeting on a united platform offer our respectful homage to the memory of the departed great man.

Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra, in supporting the Resolution, said :— "Sisters and brothers, I heartily support the Resolution which has just been moved and seconded. Raja Rammohun Roy preached a new gospel of love. He was a seer. When he was young, he studied the scriptures of all the great religions of the world, and came to the conclusion that God is One, and all men are one. He preached that as God is One and all men are one, God is the common Father of all, and all men and women are brothers and sisters. His study of the religions of the world led him to inaugurate the science of Comparative Religion. A cardinal principle of the religion he preached was love of God and love of man,—nay, not only of man, but of all created things. This was the essence of his religion, which is acceptable to all men and women of the world. Therefore, it is fit that we should all combine to make the observance of the Centenary of his death a success."

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. Justice Manmatha Nath Mukerji then moved the Second Resolution :—

> That this meeting is of opinion that steps should be taken to celebrate the Centenary of the death of the Raja in a fitting manner in Calcutta and other places in Bengal, and for this purpose, a General Committee consisting of ladies and gentlemen whose name appear in Appendix A be formed, with power to add to their number, representatives from different districts in the province being co-opted later on for an all-Bengal celebration.

In moving the Resolution Justice Mukerji said :—"Ladies and gentlemen, the Resolution that has been entrusted to me is really consequential to the one that has already been adopted. It is not necessary for me to read out to you the names comprised in my Resolution. You will find them in Appendix A. Raja Rammohun Roy was the first and foremost among the splendid band of my own race who made it possible for us to be—who made it possible for us to feel—that we all belong to one nation of people—no matter what their race—no matter what their caste—no matter what their colour. Every nation has got an individuality of its own, and Raja Rammohun Roy was the truest representative of the Indian nation. It is in the fitness of things that a General Committee should be formed to take steps for the purpose of doing honour and paying homage to the memory of the most representative man of our race.

There should be a Committee with representatives of all sections of people from every conceivable point of view. It is our object that this General Committee will afterwards form a small Working Committee in order to give effect to all our plans. With these few words I commend this Resolution, and I ask you, after it has been duly seconded, to carry and adopt it."

Seconded by Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjea, and supported by Dr. B. C. Ghosh and Dr. D. N. Maitra, the Resolution was unanimously carried.

Sir C. V. Raman then moved the Third Resolution :—

> That this meeting is further of opinion that the Centenary of the death of the Raja should be similarly celebrated in other parts of India, and for this purpose ladies and gentlemen whose names appear in Appendix B be requested to organize an all-India Celebration Committee.

In moving the Resolution Sir C. V. Raman said :—"Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to propose this Resolution. It is not necessary for me to make a long speech. Our beloved Poet, in his own inimitable fashion, has made it clear that Rammohun Roy was a great figure, of whom the whole of India should feel justly proud. I confess, I find a little difficulty to understand the reason which led the organizers of this meeting to separate the contents of Resolution II and Resolution III. I cannot, however, legitimately complain, because it is this separation that has given me the honour and privilege of speaking on behalf of the other parts of India. I do not think I need say very much further. I feel sure that the Resolution will have enthusiastic response from all parts of India. The Committees that have been formed are sufficiently representative to ensure the success of the celebration. I would like to add just one word. My feeling is that just to the extent that these celebrations are a success, to the same extent India as a whole will show herself worthy of the great life of Rammohun. I feel it also to be a matter of personal pride for me to stand here and move this Resolution. I am second to none in my admiration for the Raja. As our Poet has said, he represents the spirit of the modern age in India. No higher praise could be given him."

Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, in seconding the Resolution, said :—"Ladies and gentlemen, I have much pleasure in seconding the Resolution so ably put by my friend and colleague Sir C. V. Raman. Rammohun Roy was an all-India man. The greatest personalities of Bengal have all along been Indians first and Bengalis afterwards. Such was also the case with Rammohun Roy. Such is the case with the President of our meeting, Dr. Rabindranath. I have no doubt that the Committees that are being formed in other Presidencies will co-operate with the Committee of Bengal. I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that so far as the Bombay Presidency is concerned, the celebration of the Centenary will be carried on with great *eclat*."

Principal Rajani Kanta Guha, in supporting the Resolution, said :—"I have great pleasure in supporting the Resolution. While supporting it, I should like to appeal to the young men of Bengal, who, I see, have come here in large numbers, not to forget on the occasion of this Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy that it is to him that they owe in a large measure the English education they are receiving now. I would appeal to them to think of Rammohun as the ideal student,—I would ask them to think of his unquenchable thirst after knowledge,—and I would also appeal to them to think of the glowing patriotism of Rammohun Roy. I would entreat them to ponder day and night over the great saying which may be considered the motto of Rammohun's life :—'I am a man, I consider nothing pertaining to man as alien to me.' "

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the Chair was proposed by Sir Nilratan Sircar, and seconded by Dr. Nares Chandra Sen-Gupta.

Dr. N. C. Sen-Gupta, in seconding the vote of thanks, said :—"Ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in seconding the vote of thanks moved by Sir Nilratan. I need not dilate upon the feeling which must be very prominent in the minds of every one of us, that it is a singular piece of good fortune that the Preliminary meeting of the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy is presided over by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. It is a singular piece of fortune, not only because Rabindranath is undoubtedly the greatest figure of India today, which makes him the fittest person to preside over the meeting, but also because in a very true sense, Rabindranath is the successor of Rammohun in Bengal and in India of today. A century ago, when India was merely a name and a mystery to the world, Rammohun shot forth like a rocket in the European sky, and dazzled the eyes of everybody, who thereby came to know that India was living,—India which could send out a teacher fit to take his place in the first rank of all teachers of the world. A century has passed by, and for over half a century after that time, India has been known to the world by the name of Rammohun Roy. And a century after Rammohun, India has had the good fortune of sending out another man to the world to establish her position,—her right to a place on the top—to a place in the front rank of the nations of the world. It is a clear piece of good fortune therefore, I say, that Rabindranath presides over the Preliminary meeting of the Centenary of the death of Rammohun Roy. I therefore hope that you will carry the Vote of thanks with acclamation."

The meeting then separated.

[*The Appendices referred to in the text of the Resolutions appeared in the Programme of the Meeting, and have been omitted here.*]

STUDENTS' PRELIMINARY MEETING

Following closely upon the Preliminary Meeting of the public held on Saturday the 18th February 1933 at the Senate House for organizing the Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebrations, a largely attended meeting of students was held on Tuesday the 21st February 1933 at the Rammohun Library Hall under the presidency of Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Vice-chancellor, Calcutta University, in order to make necessary arrangements for holding a Students' Rammohun Centenary celebration.

Among those present were Dr. Kalidas Nag, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Prof. Mohitosh Roy Chowdhury, Prof. Sarojendra Nath Roy, and a large number of ladies.

Sir Hassan Suhrawardy in paying his tribute to Raja Rammohun referred to his many-sided activities, and said, "As a Moslem I feel proud in the fact that Rammohun Roy began his religious reforms after his study of the Quran at Patna. What we Indians are thinking today, he professed a century ago; for nobody, I think, will now believe in things like *Suttee*, or untouchability, or other similar social customs which the Raja was the first to challenge in the strongest terms." At the latter part of his address Sir Hassan appealed to all students to join the Centenary, and thereby to avail themselves of the opportunity of showing their respect to the great departed soul.

Prof. Mohitosh Roy Chowdhury, speaking about Rammohun's social, political and religious activities, drew the attention of the students to the importance of establishing a Rammohun Study Circle.

Mr. Gangapada Bose, a University post-graduate student, in a neat speech moved the following Resolution, which being formally seconded, was passed by the meeting:—"Resolved, (*i*) that this meeting of students, convened for the purpose of making necessary arrangements in connection with the Students' Rammohun Centenary, pays its tribute to the memory of late Raja Rammohun Roy as the Inaugurator of the Modern Age in India, and (*ii*) that a Committee with power to add to their number, consisting of the following professors and students coming from different educational institutions, be formed to carry on all programmes in connection with the said Centenary."

A strong and representative Committee, with Prof. Satis Chandra Ghosh, Secretary, Post-Graduate Teaching in Arts, Calcutta University, as *President*, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Prof. Mohitosh Roy Chowdhury and others as *Vice-Presidents*, and Mr. Gangapada Bose as *Secretary*, was formed.

THE FATHER OF MODERN INDIA

COMMEMORATION VOLUME

OF THE

Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebrations, 1933

PART I

DESCRIPTIVE REPORTS OF CELEBRATIONS

(With the exception of brief speeches, the Reports in Part I do not include the addresses and sermons delivered, the papers and messages read, and the hymns sung at the celebrations, these being given in Section C of Part II. The serial numbers of such addresses etc., as printed in Section C of Part II, are indicated in the Reports in Part I by small numericals used as 'superior figures'.)

CONTENTS OF PART I

(A) CELEBRATIONS AT CALCUTTA

[(1) Celebrations in September 1933 by the Brahmo Samajes and the Rammohun Library. (2) Celebrations in December 1933 by the Students of Calcutta. (3) Celebrations in December 1933 by the Centenary Committee.].

(B) CELEBRATIONS IN THE PROVINCES AND STATES OF INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON

(C) CELEBRATIONS HELD ABROAD

(A) CELEBRATIONS AT CALCUTTA

(1) CELEBRATIONS IN SEPTEMBER 1933 BY THE BRAHMO SAMAJES AND THE RAMMOHUN LIBRARY

[*The small numericals used as 'superior figures' indicate the serial numbers of the addresses etc. as printed in Section C of Part II.*]

The meetings organised during the winter months of 1932-33 by the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta, for taking measures for the formation of a strong representative Committee for the celebration of the Centenary, and the 'Preliminary Meeting' of the Calcutta public held on 18th February 1933 in the Senate House of the University under the presidency of RABINDRANATH TAGORE for the appointment of a Central Celebration Committee, have been described in the **Introduction.**

As the actual date of the Centenary, viz. the 27th of September, 1933, happened to fall within the Puja vacation, when it is usual for many prominent citizens of Calcutta to go out of town, the above Central Celebration Committee decided to hold the Calcutta celebrations during the Christmas holidays.

Enthusiastic meetings commemorative of the Raja's life and work were organised in September, however, by the Brahmo Samajes and the Rammohun Library. These meetings culminated in a joint public celebration on the 27th September by the following institutions :—

The ADI BRAHMO SAMAJ, founded by Raja Rammohun Roy, 55 Upper Chitpore Road. *Secretary*, Mr. Kshitindra Nath Tagore.

The BHARATVARSHIYA BRAHMO SAMAJ, (the Church of the New Dispensation), founded by KESHUB CHUNDER SEN, 89 Machuabazar Street. [The Road has subsequently been re-named as 'Keshub Chunder Sen Street'.] *Secretary*, Dr. Bimal Chandra Ghosh.

The SADHARAN BRAHMO SAMAJ, 211 Cornwallis Street. *Secretary*, Mr. Annada Charan Sen.

The RAMMOHUN LIBRARY, 267 Upper Circular Road. *Secretary*, Mr. Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya.

The joint celebrations on 27th September were held in the Hall of the Rammohun Library.

Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta.—The preparatory meetings for, and the celebration of, the Rammohun Roy Centenary took place in the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta, according to the following programme.

There were five preparatory meetings on Saturdays, viz. on 26th August, and 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd September. On 26th August Prof. Dhirendranath Chowdhury Vedantavagis, M.A. delivered a lecture on *The Religion founded by the Raja.* He pointed out clearly how Indian religious life and thought had deviated, for about 2500 years since the foundation of Buddhism, from the path traced by the Rishis of the Vedas and Upanishads, and how the Raja had rediscovered the true religion of the Hindus, and how it bade fair one day to be the Universal Religion of humanity. On 2nd September Prof. Rajani Kanta Guha, M.A. delivered a lecture on *The Influence and work of the Raja in building the Indian Nation.* On 9th September Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, B.A. delivered a lecture on *The Social and other reforms inaugurated by the Raja.* On 16th September Dr. Hiralal Haldar, M.A., PH.D. delivered a lecture in English on *The Universal Religion of the Raja.* On 23rd September Mrs. Kamini Ray, B.A.*, the renowned Bengali poetess, presided over a meeting in which Miss Jyotirmayi Ganguli, M.A., and Mrs. Kumudini Basu, Sarasvati, B.A. spoke on *The work of the Raja for the amelioration of the condition of Hindu women.*

On 17th September, Sunday, the evening service was conducted by Prof. Dhirendranath Chowdhury Vedantavagis, M.A., who preached a sermon on *The Religious Sadhana of the Raja*, mentioning the performance by him of the difficult *vrata* of Purascharana 22 times. On 24th September, Sunday, the morning service was conducted by Babu Srischandra Ray, Vedantabhushan, B.A., who preached a sermon on *The Religion of the Raja.* In the evening the service was conducted by Prof. Rajani Kanta Guha, M.A., who preached a sermon on *Raja Rammohun and Brahmaupasana.* On 25th September, Monday, a service was conducted in the morning by Mrs. Avanti Bhattacharya for ladies. In the evening Prof. Dhirendranath Chowdhury Vedantavagis, M.A. delivered a lecture on *Rammohun, the Pioneer and Prophet of the New Era.*

On 26th September morning, Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan conducted divine service in English, preaching a sermon on *The Methods of the Raja's religious sadhana.* In the evening Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, B.A. delivered a lecture on *The Raja's Services to India*, with special refer-

*Mrs. Kamini Ray passed away on the 27th September, 1933, the very day of the Raja's centenary, *i.e.* barely four days after the date of this meeting.

ence to the Bengali language, and to other reforms inaugurated by him.

On 27th September, the main day of the celebrations, divine service was conducted in the Samaj Mandir at 7 A.M. by Babu Satis Chandra Chakravarti, who preached a sermon on *Rammohun, the Man.*[119] (From 9 A.M. the same day, joint celebrations were held in the Rammohun Library Hall.)

On 28th September, there was divine service in the Mandir in the morning and evening. Babu Pratul Chandra Som and Babu Bhabasindhu Datta respectively conducted the services, and spoke on the various aspects of the Raja's religious teachings.

The Joint Celebrations at the Rammohun Library.—The *twenty-seventh of September 1933, the actual date of the* Centenary, was observed in the Rammohun Library Hall under the joint auspices of the Calcutta Brahmo Samajes and the Rammohun Library in the following manner.

In the morning at 9 A.M. there was 'kirtan' sung by Sjt. Bhabasindhu Datta, followed by divine service conducted by Sjts Sures Chandra Sankhya-Vedanta-Tirtha, Benimadhab Das, and Krishna Kumar Mitra. The service was well attended.

At 6-30 P.M. a Memorial Meeting was held. The Hall was filled to its utmost capacity. Ladies mustered strong, and composed at least half of the audience.

The proceedings commenced with 'sankirtans' sung by Dr. Sundari Mohan Das and Sjt. Manik Lal De. SIR P. C. RAY, the President-elect of the evening, asked Babu Satis Chandra Chakravarti to read the Universal Prayer which had been specially composed for the occasion by Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan. Printed copies of the prayer in Bengali and English had been distributed among the audience. The Bengali version was read out.

This is the text of the prayer read out :—

হে পরমাত্মন্, তুমি সমুদয় জগতের স্রষ্টা, পাতা, আশ্রয়, অবলম্বন। তুমি আমাদের অন্তরে বর্ত্তমান। তুমি সমুদয় দেশে, সমুদয় কালে ব্যাপ্ত হইয়া আছ, অথচ তুমি এক, অখণ্ড, অনন্ত। তুমি আমাদের অন্তরদর্শী, অন্তর্য্যামী। তুমি সর্ব্বজ্ঞ, সর্ব্ব-নিয়ন্তা; তুমি প্রেমময়, মঙ্গলবিধাতা। তুমি আমাদের প্রতি অসীম কৃপাপূর্ব্বক আমাদের জ্যেষ্ঠ ভ্রাতা রামমোহন রায়কে আমাদের পরম মঙ্গল সাধন করিতে প্রেরণ করিয়াছিলে। তিনি হিন্দু, খ্রীষ্টিয়ান, মুসলমান প্রভৃতি সকল সম্প্রদায়কে তোমার আধ্যাত্মিক উপাসনায় মিলিত করিয়া তাহাদিগকে শ্রদ্ধা ও প্রীতিতে এক করিতে চেষ্টা করিয়াছিলেন।

এদেশের সর্ব্বপ্রকার কুপ্রথা ও ভ্রান্ত সংস্কার দূর করিয়া, বিশুদ্ধ জ্ঞান, সার্ব্বভৌমিক প্রেম ও নিষ্কলঙ্ক পবিত্রতার উপর জাতীয় জীবন প্রতিষ্ঠিত করিতে অশেষ যত্ন করিয়াছিলেন। স্ত্রীজাতিকে নানা অত্যাচারে নিপীড়িত দেখিয়া তাহাদের ন্যায্য অধিকার স্থাপন ও সর্ব্বপ্রকার কল্যাণ সাধনের জন্য বিবিধ উপায় অবলম্বন করিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার উদার হৃদয় কোনও বিশেষ দেশে আবদ্ধ ছিল না; সকল দেশের দুঃখে তিনি দুঃখিত হইতেন, এবং সকল দেশের কল্যাণে উৎফুল্ল হইতেন। তোমার মঙ্গলবিধানে তিনি যুগে যুগে প্রকাশিত সকল ধর্ম্মবিধানের ঐক্য অনুভব ও প্রদর্শন করিয়া, এবং তুলনামূলক ধর্ম্মবিজ্ঞানের ভিত্তি স্থাপন করিয়া, জগতের প্রভূত উপকার সাধন করিয়া গিয়াছেন। মঙ্গলময়, তুমি তোমার এই সুসন্তানের দ্বারা আমাদের যে সর্ব্বাঙ্গীণ পরম কল্যাণ সাধন করিয়াছ, তজ্জন্য আমরা সকলে এক-হৃদয় হইয়া ভক্তিপূর্ব্বক তোমাকে বার বার প্রণাম করি। আমরা প্রার্থনা করি, স্বর্গলোকে সেই মহাপুরুষের সকল উচ্চ কামনা পূর্ণ হউক। তিনি সকল সাধু আত্মার সহিত মিলিত হইয়া অনন্ত কাল তোমার পূজায় ও সেবায় নিযুক্ত থাকুন। তাঁহার পবিত্র স্মৃতি ও উচ্চ জীবনাদর্শ আমাদের মধ্যে সর্ব্বদা জাগরূক থাকিয়া আমাদিগকে ব্যক্তিগত ও জাতীয় সর্ব্বাঙ্গীণ উন্নতির পথে পরিচালিত করুক। আমাদের এই সমবেত প্রার্থনা আমাদের জাতীয় একতা সাধনের সহায় হইবে, এই আশা হৃদয়ে ধারণ করিয়া, আমরা মিলিত হৃদয়ে তোমাকে বার বার প্রণাম করি।

This is the text of the prayer in English :—

Supreme Spirit, Creator, Preserver, and Support of the universe! Thou dwellest in our souls. Though Thou pervadest all space and all time, yet Thou art one, indivisible and infinite. Thou knowest all that passes in our inmost hearts, and Thou controllest them. Thou knowest all, and art the ruler of all. Thou art our loving and benevolent Father. Thou didst send down amongst us, in Thine infinite mercy, Rammohun Roy, our elder brother, to help us on the path of our supreme good. It was his endeavour to bring Hindus, Christians, Muslims, and all religious communities before Thy presence, and to unite them all in spiritual worship of Thee, and to bind them all in the ties of mutual love and respect. Unmeasured were his labours for eradicating all evil customs and superstitions, and establishing our national life on the foundations of sound knowledge, all-embracing love and unblemished character. Unsparing were his efforts to deliver Thy daughters in India from the manifold oppressions to which they were subject, and to restore to them all rights bestowed on them by Thee. Unbounded was the sympathy of his heart, which knew no geographical limits, and which grieved at the woes and rejoiced at the welfare of people

of all climes and nationalities. He it was who, under Thy providence, first realised and enunciated the fundamental unity of all the diverse religious dispensations through which the hearts of Thy children have sought Thee throughout the ages ; and thus laid the foundation of the science of Comparative Religion which is making that fundamental unity more and more manifest as years roll on. For the manifold blessings that Thou hast vouchsafed unto us through Thy noble son, our hearts are filled with gratitude, and we humbly bow down to Thee in thankfulness and reverence. May the noble aspirations of that great soul receive their fulfilment in heaven, and may he remain devoted, through all eternity, to thy worship and service, in the company of blessed souls. And may his sacred memory and the lofty ideals to which he consecrated his energies, live among us and inspire us in our endeavours after perfection, national and individual. In the hope that by thus assembling together at Thy feet and pouring our hearts together to Thee in prayer, we shall learn better to realise our national unity, we, Thy children thus united, bow down to Thee again and again.

SIR P. C. RAY in his opening speech mentioned the fact that the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy's death would be celebrated in a more fitting manner during Christmas ; but it was very correctly decided by the organisers of this meeting that the present occasion should also not be passed over. He referred to the multifarious activities of the Raja, laying stress on his thirst for knowledge and for truth, his zeal for the propagation of truth among his fellowmen, and his unceasing efforts for the uplift of his countrymen in every sphere of their lives. He related how Rammohun, not being satisfied with the Bible in translation, determined to study the book in original, to do which he had to learn two alien tongues, Hebrew and Greek ; how after reaching the prime of life without any considerable knowledge of English he took to its study, and what a vast amount of success he attained. He referred to several stages in the life of the Raja, accounting for various traits in his character.

Sjt. Hemendra Prasad Ghosh, who was the first speaker called by the chair, said that it was in the fitness of things that the Centenary of the death of Rammohun should fall on the Virashtami day, a day consecrated to the memory of warriors, for the Raja was essentially a great warrior, whose spirit must be infused into future generations, if Bengal is to maintain her front position among the provinces of India. The Raja has been called the 'Father of Modern India,' and there is not a single progressive movement of the present times, the sources of which

do not go back to the efforts put forth by the Raja in his own time.

Principal J. R. Banerjea of the Vidyasagar College said that the fundamental and central fact of the Raja's life was seeking and following the truth. It was the spirit of a seeker after truth which led him to study the scriptures of so many religions in the original, and not to be satisfied with mere translations. Monier-Williams has called the Raja the 'Father of Comparative Religion,' and without entering into the controversy that has arisen round his statement, the speaker whole-heartedly admired the ardent love of Truth that led the Raja to a thorough and critical study of the historical religions of the world. One other aspect of the Raja that the speaker emphasised was the purity and nobility of his life. There is no charm in any human possession, nay, in any mundane object whatever, that may bear comparison to the beauty and the charm of a pure noble life : and such was the life of Rammohun.

At this stage Sir P. C. Ray vacated the chair, apologising to the meeting that his physical infirmities should compel him to do so in order that he might take his constitutional. He asked Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra to take the chair for the remaining part of the meeting, humorously remarking that though Sjt. Mitra was ten years older than himself, so far as the calculation of age went, he was really ten years younger in health and vigour.

After the chair had been taken by Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra, Sjt. Kshitimohan Sen addressed the meeting.

He said that the opposition offered by the world to a really Living Man, when he appears on its stage, is nothing strange. A saintly poet in Hindi has compared this opposition to the simultaneous barking of the watch-dogs of a village, whenever a Man enters the village during the dark hours of night. In fact it is this clamour, this opposition, which draws the attention of the world to the fact that a Man has appeared. Perhaps most people of the world, at least our people, are slow to recognise history when it is actually being enacted before them. This action of men has been compared to that of the crocodile, which does not begin to feed upon its prey until it has been reduced to a rotting carcass. It is deplorable that this is often the mentality of a people towards its national heroes. A century has elapsed after the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, and it can truly be said that it is only now that we have *begun* to know him. Continuing, the speaker remarked that there is nothing sudden in history. It is a mistake to suppose that Rammohun came into the

arena of Indian history all of a sudden. He really comes as the last link of a long chain of religious teachers,—a chain unbroken from the days of Kabir and Nanak to Rammohun's own. The speaker referred to Dedh Raj, a contemporary of the Raja, who lived and preached in the United Provinces. His message was almost identical with that of the Raja's, viz. non-idolatrous worship of one God, obliteration of caste distinctions, etc. Kshitimohan Babu mentioned further that Rammohun Roy was the Father, not only of Bengali Prose, but of Hindi Prose as well. He himself had seen in his younger days a copy of Rammohun Roy's Hindi version of one of the Upanishads, but that book is not to be found in his Works now extant. Rammohun Roy's Hindi Prose was a marvel of lucid and dignified style, as his friend Pandit Karuna Shankar Kuverji Bhatta, the next speaker, would explain more clearly to the audience.

Kshitimohan Babu was followed by Pandit Karuna Shankar Kuverji Bhatta of Gujerat, who spoke in Hindi, saying that coming to the Centenary of Raja Rammohun's death was to him like coming to a Tirtha : and he had started for Calcutta in the spirit of a pilgrim. The homage paid to the Raja by his Bengali admirers was like a libation of Ganges water, to which he was eager to mingle his homage, which was as a libation of the water of the Narmada, sacred to his province. The Pandit then spoke eulogistically of the many-sided greatness of the Raja, referring also to the beautiful Hindi he wrote.

Babu Jay Kali Datta, M.A., B.L., of Ranchi was the next speaker. He wished that the country had with earnestness and sincerity followed in the footsteps of the Raja. He deplored that a spurious type of idol-worship, without that deep 'Bhakti' which filled the hearts of our forefathers, was apparently becoming more and more prevalent in the land. The movement for the uplift of the Harijans is not gaining ground in spite of the fact that a new Mahatma of a new century, with his tremendous sincerity and earnestness, is at the back of it. The real advancement of India would come only when Indians would be imbued with the spirit of truth and earnestness which characterised both Rammohun Roy and Gandhi.

Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra in his concluding speech emphasised the political and social activities of the Raja. His love of freedom and his earnest endeavours for his country's advancement have inspired the Indian patriots and philanthropists of one century; may they inspire us all in the duties before us in the next century !

(2) CELEBRATIONS IN DECEMBER 1933 BY THE STUDENTS OF CALCUTTA

[*The small numericals used as 'superior figures' indicate the serial numbers of the addresses etc. as printed in Section C of Part II.*]

As mentioned in the Introduction, a **Students' Rammohun Centenary Committee** was formed, after a few preliminary meetings, on behalf of the students of Calcutta, with Prof. Satish Chandra Ghosh, M.A., Secretary, Post-graduate teaching in Arts, Calcutta University, as President, and Sjt. Gangapada Bose as General Secretary. The Central Celebration Committee, being requested by the committee of students, gladly offered them the use of the Senate House on certain days of the Christmas week, and the Wellington Square for the latter half of December, these having been previously secured by the Central Committee for the purposes of the celebrations.

The MAIN CELEBRATION by the students, their CENTENARY DAY as they termed it, came off on Wednesday, the 20th December, at the Senate House under the presidency of Sir P. C. Ray. The principal speakers, besides the President, were Dr. W. S. Urquhart, Principal B. M. Sen, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Dr. Kalidas Nag, etc. Messages from Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Sir J. C. Bose, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Mrs. Kamala Nehru, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, C. Y. Chintamani, Sir Syed Ross Masood, and many other prominent personalities of India, were read by the General Secretary. There was a large gathering of over three thousand students, representing different educational institutions.

The proceedings commenced with an opening song composed by Ghulam Mustafa, set to tune by Qazi Nazrul Islam, and sung by a choir of students led by Mr. Abbasuddin.

In proposing Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray to the chair, Prof. Satish Chandra Ghosh said that Raja Rammohun was verily a giant among men, and it was quite meet and proper that another giant of the modern age, Acharya Prafulla Chandra, should preside over a function like the present. He congratulated the Calcutta students on their enthusiasm and enterprise in so successfully organising the centenary celebrations, in a hall sanctified by the memory of many a literary giant of Bengal, such as the Raja himself had been a hundred years back.

In course of his Presidential Address, (delivered in Bengali), Sir P. C. Ray said that he stood simply amazed as he contemplated even in the smallest measure the greatness of Raja Rammohun. To appreciate him properly, one must think of the age he represented, which was an age of darkness, ignorance and superstition. Rammohun had to meet with stiff orthodox opposition when he was proposing to establish the Hindu College in Calcutta, and he ultimately had to sever his formal connection with that institution. But he was not the man to be daunted by opposition, but went on with his work of educational, social and religious reform with an apostolic fervour and prophetic insight. Such was his intense love of culture, that he learnt Hebrew when he was 45; and the speaker had it on the authority of Dr. B. N. Seal that the Raja had also mastered Latin sufficiently well to be able to read Newton's "Principia" in original. He could rightly be called the Father of the modern Bengali prose. But by far the most outstanding of his services was his advocacy of English education.

Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjea characterised the Raja as the Maker of Modern India, an educationist, and a reviver of ancient learning. Although the Raja had to keep himself aloof from the Hindu College, he it was who was the real founder of the institution. Although in favour of English learning, he was also a great advocate of indigenous culture and of the popularisation of Sanskrit and Bengali languages. Referring to the Raja's religion, Dr. Banerjea said that its object was to sweep away the accumulated dirt and filth from the Hindu religion. In politics the Raja was a great lover of freedom, which he would have for his own country and also value in all other countries.

Dr. W. S. Urquhart then delivered an address on *The abiding Influence of Rammohun Roy*[96], in which he referred to the Raja's many-sided personality, and traced the points of similarity between his and Dr. Duff's educational activities. Though a rebel, the Raja did not simply stand for opposition, but contributed something positive to everything he opposed.

At this stage Sir P. C. Ray left the meeting owing to ill-health, requesting Dr. Urquhart to take the chair.

After Principal B. M. Sen of the Presidency College had spoken, Prof. Benoykumar Sarkar concluded by describing the Raja as a world-hero, whose heroism was broad-based on the heroism, glory and achievements of all Indians,—Hindus, Muslims and others,—and specially of the Bengalis.

DRAMA AND MUSICAL SOIREE.—A story by Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen was dramatised for the occasion, and staged at the University Institute on 22nd December, and a Musical Soiree was held at the Ashutosh Hall on the 23rd. An INDUSTRIAL AND ART EXHIBITION was opened at Wellington Square on 25th December amidst scenes of great enthusiasm, by Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Mayor of Calcutta. The Exhibition had a successful run of one month. The life-story of the Raja was illustrated with the help of charts and models. The stalls, and the Health and Sanitation, Education, and Fine Arts sections were beautiful as well as instructive. Many prominent citizens of the country visited the Exhibition, and were impressed with the organising capacity of students.

A LITERARY CONFERENCE held at the Senate House on 26th December under the presidency of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu was a great success. Calcutta had seldom witnessed such a large gathering of students during the last quarter of a century. All distinguished citizens of Calcutta, and a galaxy of professors of the University were present.

The Students' Centenary Committee also published a **Students' Rammohun Centenary Volume,** with several illustrations and an artistic cover designed by Nanda Lal Bose. Besides contributions from Dr. W. S, Urquhart[96], Dr. P. G. Bridge[97], Dr. S. K. Chatterji, Rai Bahadur Khagendra Nath Mitra, Prof. Benoykumar Sarkar, Prof. Kshitimohan Sen, Prof. D. P. Ghosh, Mr. Pramatha Chaudhuri, Mr. Hazari Prasad Dvivedi[99], Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Sja. Anurupa Devi, Madame L. Morin, etc., in English and Bengali, it contained messages and tributes from Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath, John Masefield, Sir J. C. Bose, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Dr. C. Riaudo[98] of Italy, Mr. F. C. Bancroft (Jr.) of U. S. A.. etc.

The Raja on the new and old systems of Education.

If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen, which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction.—*Letter to Lord Amherst, 1823.*

(3) Celebrations in December 1933 by the

CENTENARY COMMITTEE

Proceedings of

THE CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS AND THE CONFERENCES

[*The small numericals used as 'superior figures' indicate the serial numbers of the addresses etc. as printed in Section C of Part II.*]

The Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee celebrated the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy on the 29th, 30th and 31st December, 1933 at the Senate House of the Calcutta University in a manner befitting the great occasion.

The dais with a specially constructed platform, (to serve as a Vedi for Rabindranath, who prefers to sit in the Indian fashion), was beautifully but soberly decorated with flowers, evergreens and festoons. The Raja's full-size portrait in oils, kindly lent by the authorities of the City College, was placed on a table at the end of the Hall, facing the audience. Several Loud-speakers were installed in various parts of the Hall and its vestibules.

On the dais were seated, in concentric semicircles facing the President's platform, the Vice-Presidents and Office-bearers of the Centenary Committee, and those who were to address the meeting. The choir were accommodated near the dais. Numerous volunteers, wearing badges with the words "Rammohun Roy Centenary" and pictures of Rammohun printed on them, were in attendance in all parts of the Hall.

Throughout the three days' proceedings the great Hall was almost always filled to its utmost capacity. Some of the most distinguished sons and daughters of India, and a few admirers of the great Raja from abroad, attended and took part in the functions, among them being Rabindranath Tagore, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Madame L. Morin, Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi, Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mourbhanj, Miss A. Margaret Barr, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mrs. Cousins, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Mr. G. A. Natesan, Dr. S. K. Datta, Rao Sahib Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao, Mr. B. B. Keskar, Prof. Sardar Uttam Singh, Swami Adyananda, Pandit Rishi Ram, Mr. Govind Ram, Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan, Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, Sir J. C. Bose, Lady Abala Bose,

Sir Nil Ratan Sircar, Lady Nil Ratan Sircar, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, The Hon'ble Sir C. C. Ghose, Sir Bipin Bihari Ghosh, Mr. Krishna Kumar Mitra, Mr. J. N. Basu, Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan, Dr. Pran Krishna Acharya, Mrs. Pran Krishna Acharya, Maulavi Abdul Karim, M.L.C., Dr. Heramba Chandra Maitra, Principal J. R. Banerjea, Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjea, Dr. P. K. Sen, Prof. Bijay Chandra Mazumdar, Mr. Pramatha Chaudhuri, Prof. Rajani Kanta Guha, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Dr. B. C. Ghosh, Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen-Gupta, Mr. Annada Charan Sen, Mr. Prafulla Chandra Chaudhuri, Prof. Kshitimohan Sen, Prof. Dhirendra Nath Chowdhury Vedantavagis, Maulavi Wahed Husain, Dr. Beni Madhava Barua, Dr. D. N. Maitra, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Raja Kshitindra Deb Rai Mahashai, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Mr. Hemendra Prasad Ghosh, Mr. Amal Home, Prof. Bimanbehari Majumdar, Dr. Saroj Kumar Das, Prof. Humayun Kabir, Dr. Batakrishna Ghosh, Rai Bahadur Jaladhar Sen, Prof. R. K. Sinha, Prof. Hari Charan Ghosh, Mr. Girindra Nath Choudhury, Mr. Jitendra Mohan Sen, Prof. Naresh Chandra Ray, Mr. E. A. Arakie, Sja. Hemlata Devi, Sja. Hemalata Sarkar, Sja. Indira Devi, Sja. Sarala Devi Chaudhurani, Mrs. S. R. Das, Mrs. N. C. Sen, Sja. Sarojini Datta, Sja. Nirupama Devi, Sja. Sarala Bala Sarkar, Mrs. Kumudini Basu, Mrs. Basanti Chakravarti, Mrs. Shams-un-Nahar Mahmud, Sja. Sobhana Nandi, Miss Jyotirmayi Ganguli, Sja. Sita Devi, Sja. Santa Devi, Mrs. Purnima Basak, Mrs. Tatini Das, Mrs. Sadhan Chandra Roy, Sja. Sudha Chakravarti, Dr. Sachi Kumar Chatterji, Sja. Bani Devi, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Ray, Mrs. Santwana Ray, Dr. Premankur De, Mrs. Premankur De, Mr. Rathindra Nath Tagore, Prof. Prasanta C. Mahalanobis, Prof. Charu Chandra Bhattacharyya, Prof. Amiya Kumar Sen, Dr. J. N. Ghosh, Mr. S. C. Roy, Dr. Dickinson, Mr. Gonendra Nath Banerjee, Mr. Prabhat Chandra Ganguli, Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, etc.

1st Session, Friday, 29th December, 1933, 12 (noon) to 4-30 P. M.

The First Session, which commenced at 12 (noon) on Friday, the 29th December, 1933, comprised the **Presidential Address** of RABINDRANATH TAGORE and the **Convention of Religions.**

Long before the appointed hour, distinguished ladies and gentlemen representing different communities and cultures of India gathered at the House to pay their homage to the Maker of Modern India. Before the President had arrived, the great Hall was filled with an

eager, expectant assembly. Tense emotion filled the hearts of many, who realised that a momentous occasion like the present was not likely to recur in their lifetime.

On the arrival of the Poet RABINDRANATH TAGORE, the vast audience spontaneously rose to their feet to greet him. He was escorted to the platform by a batch of volunteers. With his flowing grey beard and grey locks, when seated on the Vedi in a meditative posture, he recalled the Vedic saints of old.

The proceedings opened with the singing of the solemn Vedic hymn यो देवो ऽग्नौ[87] (with a versified Bengali rendering of the same by Mr. Kshitindranath Tagore) to the accompaniment of several musical instruments by a large choir composed of both ladies and gentlemen. The hymn over, Rabindranath, seated on the platform, read in solemn and measured cadence his well-known prayer beginning with the words "*Where the mind is without fear, and the head is held high.*[1]" He then delivered his Presidential Address in Bengali on "ভারতপথিক রামমোহন[2]" *(Rammohun,—a Traveller on India's Path*)*, which was listened to with rapt attention by the vast audience.

Though on the wrong side of 70, the Poet's voice had not grown feeble with his growing years. He read out the whole address in his inimitable style which was the envy alike of the young and the old. Sonorous yet impressive, sweet yet emphatic, the Poet's voice was heard without the help of the Loud-speaker from the remotest corner of the great Hall.

He first tried the Loud-speaker, but science seemed to play a trick, and somehow his voice did not reach all ears. When he put aside the transmitter, and produced a clearer natural voice to convey his all-embracing message to every heart, it was a case of science yielding the palm to nature.

The theme of Dr. Tagore's address was India's Message to the World. Raja Rammohun Roy was the Ambassador who communicated that message abroad. India's eternal message is Unity,—universal brotherhood.

Next, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered an oration[4] in her own inimitable manner, embodying the substance of Rabindranath's Address, and at the same time eloquently paying her own homage to the great Raja.

Her poetic, flowery language charmed the audience, who listened to her with breathless silence. Her English

* Besides Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's speech[4] embodying the substance of Tagore's Presidential Address, an abridged English translation[3] of the Address (based on one made the same evening by Prof. Humayun Kabir,) will be found in Section C of Part II.

rendering of the Poet's message did not suffer in the least by comparison with the original. She went on like a flowing river murmuring with the music of the great Poet.

After Mrs. Naidu's speech, Dr. Tagore rose and expressed his inability, owing to physical weakness, to conduct the proceedings throughout the session.

He invited Mahamahopadhyaya Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan "to adorn the chair". When the Mahamahopadhyaya had taken the chair, the Poet accompanied by Mrs. Naidu left the Hall.

The Convention of Religions then commenced with an Address in Bengali from the President, Mahamahopadhyaya Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan, on রাজা রামমোহনের প্রভাব ও বর্ত্তমান হিন্দু সমাজ[5] (*Rammohun from a Hindu view-point*).*

The President (Pandit Tarkabhushan) then requested the Mayor of Calcutta to present before the meeting the **Messages** that had been received from admirers of Rammohun Roy and from organisers of similar centenary celebrations in various cities of the world. Thereupon Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Mayor of Calcutta, said :—

> It has fallen to my lot to be able to say a few words on this momentous occasion. The organisers of this function, the Rammohun Roy Centenary, have been the recipients of a large number of greetings and messages of international importance. These messages and greetings will be placed before this august assembly by my esteemed friend Dr. Kalidas Nag. You will realise that this occasion, which has signalised this session in Calcutta in a prominent degree, and has for some days given a new tone and temper to the city, and infused into it a religious and spiritual atmosphere in a way that nothing else could have done,—this occasion has been seized upon by various institutions and bodies in various parts of the world to communicate to this country their feelings by messages which are of peculiar value and importance. These messages and greetings will now be placed before you. As these messages are of international importance, it was considered fit and proper by the organisers that on behalf of our city I should say a few words by way of introducing these messages. I am glad to find that such a splendid response has been made by the citizens of Calcutta. I have every hope that this function will meet with the success that it so pre-eminently deserves.

* Mahamahopadhyaya Tarkabhushan's own English version[6] of his Address will be found in Section C of Part II.

At the request of the Mayor, Dr. Kalidas Nag read out, first, a list of these messages, and then a few words from some of them. Messages were received from MAHATMA GANDHI[53], Ellore; SIR P. C. RAY[54]; C. F. ANDREWS[55], London; Prof. SYLVAIN LEVI[56], Paris; DEVAPRIYA VALISINHA[57], General Secretary, Mahabodhi Society, Sarnath, Benares; ALL-INDIA BUDDHIST CONFERENCE[58], Darjeeling; PURAN CHAND NAHAR[59], (on behalf of the Jain community); PANDIT DEVA SHARMA[60], Principal, Gurukula University, Kangri; the Hon. SARDAR SIR JOGENDRA SINGH[61], Minister for Agriculture, Punjab; S. PARTAP SINGH[62], M.A., LL. B., Advocate, of Lahore; SIR SYED Ross MASOOD[63], Vice-Chancellor, Muslim University, Aligarh; Right Rev. BISHOP H. PAKENHAM-WALSH[64] and A. J. APPASAMY[65] of the Bishops' College, Calcutta; FATHER VERRIER ELWIN[66], Karanjia, Mandla Dist.; REV. W. H. DRUMMOND[67], Oxford; Bishop GEORGE BOROS[68] of the Unitarian Episcopacy of Cluj-Kolozsvar, Rumania; REV. J. T. SUNDERLAND[69], Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.; REV. F. C. SOUTHWORTH and MRS. ALICE B. SOUTHWORTH[70], Melrose, Mass., U. S. A.; ALMA L. LISSBERGER[71], New York; ROBERT C. DEXTER[72], American Unitarian Association, Boston, U.S.A.; DANA MCLEAN GREELEY[73], Young People's Religious Union, Boston, U.S.A.; REV. HENRY WILDER FOOTE[74], Belmont, U.S.A.; L. D. WALD[75], Henry Street Settlement, New York; the EAST BENGAL BRAHMO SAMAJ, Dacca[76]; GIRISH CHANDRA NAG[77] of Dacca; the ANDHRA THEISTIC CONFERENCE[78], Rajahmundry; Dewan Bahadur HARBILAS SARDA[79], Ajmere; the ACTING CONSUL GENERAL for Germany[80]; the CONSUL GENERAL for Czecho-Slovakia[81]; Lt.-Col. BONNAUD[82], French Trade Commissioner for India, Burma & Ceylon; SIR ATUL C. CHATTERJEE[83], Weybridge, Surrey, England; the LONDON CELEBRATION COMMITTEE[84]; the AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION[85]; NICHOLAS ROERICH, and S. CHARLETY, Recteur, University of Paris[86], etc.

Madame L. Morin, a great admirer of Rammohun, who is collecting materials for writing a biography of the Raja in French, delivered a message on behalf of the French public.

Madame Morin said that she was proud of the fact that her country (France) had done honour and was paying homage to the great sage and prophet Rammohun Roy. He was the first person in India to perceive by prophetic vision what cultural relation there would grow in future between Europe and India. He had realised how much this fellowship could broaden the field of research, help human experience and understanding, and foster universal brotherhood.

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Dr. Batakrishna Ghosh, who had just returned from Paris, gave an account of the celebrations in France organised by Prof. Sylvain Levi, whose original message in French was read at the meeting and explained by him.

Maulavi Abdul Karim, M.L.C., then read his paper on *Rammohun as a Religious Reformer.*[7] A second hymn in chorus (ভুবনবাসী সবে গাও[88]) having been sung, Mahamahopadhyaya Pramatha Nath requested Principal J. R. Banerjea of the Vidyasagar College to take the chair. Mr. E. A. Arakie, Honorary Secretary, Elias Meyer Free School and Talmud Torah of Bowbazar, then read his paper on *Rammohun from the view-point of Judaism*[8]. He was followed by Dr. Benimadhava Barua, whose subject was *Rammohun from the Buddhist stand-point.*[9] Next, Miss A. Margaret Barr, who represented the "Order of the Great Companions" of Dublin, read her paper on *Rammohun, the Universalist.*[10] She was followed by Swami Adyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission with his paper on *Rammohun and the Re-awakening of Modern India*[11], and Pandit Rishi Ram, B.A., of the Arya Samaj, who read a paper on *Rammohun from the stand-point of the Arya Samaj.*[12] After this Prof. Uttam Singh Gheba, M.A., of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, spoke on *Rammohun and Sikhism.*[13]

Dr. Kalidas Nag then read the substance of Rev. W. S. Urquhart's paper on *A Pilgrimage in Memory from a Christian stand-point*[14], Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee's paper on *Rammohun's Monotheism as an aid to Nation-building*[15], and Mr. D. J. Irani's paper on *Rammohun and the Teachings of Zoroaster*[16], the writers themselves being unavoidably absent.

The proceedings of the CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS came to a close at about 4-30 P.M. with a short Presidential Address from Principal J. R. Banerjea.

Second Session, Friday, 29th December, 1933, 6-30 to 8-30 P.M.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

The **Women's Conference** was held the same evening at the Senate House. The **All-India Women's Conference** which was in session in Calcutta, had resolved at its Standing Committee meeting of the 27th December to join this CONFERENCE in celebrating the Centenary of the Raja. In accordance with this Resolution, a large number of Delegates and Members of the All-India Women's Conference also attended the Rammohun Centenary meeting of ladies at the Senate House, which was filled to overflowing.

Mrs. Kumudini Basu, B.A., Sarasvati, proposed the Dowager Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mourbhanj as President. Mrs. Basanti Chakravarti seconded the proposal.

This is the substance of Mrs. Basu's speech :—One hundred years have gone by since the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, and it is in the fitness of things that we, his descendants, who have been enjoying so largely the fruits of his life-long labours, should gratefully celebrate his centenary all over the country. Particularly the women of Bengal can never forget the everlasting debt they owe to the great Raja for what he has done for them. For, it was in Bengal, more than in any other province of India, that women were burnt alive on the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands; it was in this hapless province, again, where new-born babies were torn from their mothers' breasts, and thrown into the waves of the Bay of Bengal to be devoured by sharks and crocodiles in the name of religion; it was here, where the custom of *kulinism* permitted one man to marry as many as 200 young girls, and abandon them to lifelong widowhood, possibly to lifelong shame, after the mock marriage. In that age men doubted if women had souls. Literacy, learning and religion were denied to women in the name of *sastric* injunctions. A hundred years is a long period, and public memory is proverbially short. But we can never forget that Rammohun rescued us from innumerable social wrongs, tyranny, iniquities and oppression.

It is true that Rammohun created the modern Bengali prose literature, that he started the first newspaper in India, that he rescued the Vedas and Upanishads from oblivion, that he was the first man to preach the idea of a universal religion, and to pave the way for unity among the people of different castes, creeds, and races inhabiting this great continent. But we as women hail him on this memorable occasion of his centenary as the Saviour of Women.

You, Maharani, are the worthy daughter of a worthy father, another great leader of our country, of whom Bengal is justly proud, and who is verily the maker of modern Bengal. For, after Maharshi Debendranath, the mantle of Rammohun fell on Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen, who carried his banner from corner to corner of this great continent, and even beyond the seas to England. You have greatly inherited the virtues of your great father. Intensely religious like him, deeply attached and devoted to your husband in life and in death, sympathetic and affable in manners, easily approachable to one and all, you have so endeared yourself to all of us that we look upon you as a national asset. I propose and call upon you, Maharani, to take the chair at this centenary meeting.

After Maharani Sucharu Devi had taken the chair, the proceedings of the Women's Conference commenced with a hymn of Rammohun Roy (ভাষ সেই একে[89]) sung in chorus by ladies.

Maharani Sucharu Devi first offered a prayer in Bengali, and then delivered her presidential address in English.

> She said that she had no better claim to the honour shown to her than that she was her father's daughter. "What do we not owe to Raja Rammohun Roy, the great son of our Almighty Father," she asked, "who did so much for the women of India, oppressed and coerced, dependent, soulless and spiritless ? After all," she continued, "we have not *lost* our great men like Rammohun ; their spirits are present with us. Raja Rammohun Roy was a great man, and I, a humble follower of his, contemplate with reverence what a legacy he has left behind. Don't you think that it is time that we told the world what we have actually experienced in our lives, and what has strengthened us in our worldly tribulations ? In my own life I have got ample material for bearing grateful testimony to the benefits I have received from that great soul. Every good endeavour of ours is blessed by the illustrious persons who have left the world, but left it in body only. Let us take a vow that as long as we live, we shall be inspired by the teachings of Rammohun Roy, and let us in our daily life show that we have not been unworthy followers of the great son of God whom God sent down to us to redeem us. I join with you with my whole heart, and pray to God to bless our meeting."

Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi then moved this Resolution :—"**This Conference of Women pays its respectful homage to Raja Rammohun Roy during his centenary celebration for his inestimable and magnificent services to humanity, to his country, and to the cause of Indian womanhood.**" In course of her speech she said,—

> The Raja has rightly been called the Father of Modern India. No reformer in any country ever defended and championed woman's cause so successfully. He had raised the banner of freedom for women. Women from all over India, of all creeds and communities are to-day paying homage to that great friend of womankind. His crusade against the *Suttee* is a historical fact. He personally went to the burning ghats with his friends, and argued with the people against the cruel practice. He fought against child-marriage and polygamy. In the field of religion he was

the first to study Comparative Religion and to spread the spirit of universalism and internationalism. In him we find the true representative of the great Brahmo Samaj, which always stands for unity and freedom.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in seconding the Resolution, expressed the gratitude of the **All-India Women's Conference** in having been accorded the privilege of taking part in the function of that evening, because she felt that all women's organisations that were working today for the cause of social and educational reform, as well as those men and women whom they ranked in the vanguard of their social life, were the offsprings of the seed that was sown a century ago by the great man to honour whose memory they had met. Raja Rammohun had laid the foundation-stone of an edifice which had slowly but surely risen as a monument of his gigantic endeavour. It was their privilege,—nay, their duty, to see that they did not contribute any loose stones to a structure of such solid foundations. The great Raja was an earnest student of all religions. He found that all religions are one in essence. He was able, even in his own lifetime, to rise above narrow social chains that bind us down. As women we honour him specially because he devoted his life to giving women their rightful place in society.

After Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu rose, amidst cheers, to speak in support of the Resolution. She said she would not deliver a long speech; but she held the vast audience spell-bound for the few minutes she spoke in her own inimitable way.

Mrs. Naidu said that the highest aim of women in the life of a nation was to represent the three goddesses Lakshmi, Sarasvati and Parvati.

Her mind travelled round the provinces of India through the ages, and she recalled the messages of religious reformers of different faiths who taught the gospel of unity. Nand in the South, Tukaram and Tulsidas in the West, and Kabir and Dadu in the North, all preached the indivisibility of all men and women. Centuries ago, that prince of dreamers, Jalaluddin Akbar of Fatehpur Sikri, tried to find a common basis for all creeds and cultures.

Mrs. Naidu considered women an integral part of common humanity, and it was wrong to treat them merely as a sex. Equally with men, they stood as a symbol of humanity, and Rammohun by working for women had worked for humanity, and particularly for the creators of that humanity.

Mrs. Naidu also objected to the oft-repeated phrase "daughters of Bengal", which tended to develop a provincial spirit of limitation. They were not daughters of any particular race or province; they were all children of Mother India. She deprecated narrow nationalism of all types.

Mrs. Cousins, an English lady, and Madame L. Morin, a French lady, who were present at the Conference, were then invited by the President to speak in support of the Resolution.

Mrs. Cousins paid her homage to the memory of the Raja in a most feeling manner. Rammohun was one of those masters who have lighted mankind to truth and noble life, and from that point of view she claimed Rammohun as one of the "wise men from the East", whose guidance the West also must follow in her march towards universal brotherhood. Though Rammohun was an all-round benefactor of humanity, they were that day assembled to advance the cause of women's progress, and so they would remember with special gratitude his services for the amelioration of the condition of women. It would be no detraction to the fame of Rammohun if they thought of him that evening as one of the greatest champions for the cause of womankind that have ever appeared on this earth. She hoped that the work started a century ago by Rammohun for the emancipation of the women of India would be carried forward till the goal was reached.

Madame L. Morin (a French lady from the Paris University) paid her homage to the Raja on behalf of French womanhood. The women, she said, were in a special sense the shapers of the soul. She had come out to India only three weeks ago, but she had been to many Indian homes, and she was struck most agreeably with the hospitality of Indian women. But she was struck unhappily, she must own, with the Purdah system in the country which not only kept the men and the women apart, but also created barriers on the path of friendly union between the different communities. In conclusion, she advised the women of India to rise above narrow nationalism, and help the growth of the spirit of universal love.

The Resolution was supported further by two papers read by Mrs. Hemalata Sarkar of Darjeeling on যুগ-সারথি রামমোহন[17] (*Rammohun, the Pioneer of the Modern Age*), and by Mrs. Shams-un-Nahar Mahmud, who represented the Muslim ladies of Bengal, on মুসলিম নারীর অর্ঘ্য[18] (*The Homage of Muslim Womanhood*), and also by a speech by

Sjā. Hemlata Devi, a great-great-granddaughter of Rammohun Roy, on উৎকৃষ্ট নমুনার মানুষ[19] (*A Man of a Noble Type.*)

For want of time, speeches and papers by Sjas. Sita Devi, Santa Devi and Nirupama Devi, and by Mrs. Saralabala Sarkar on নব্য বঙ্গ গঠনে রামমোহনের প্রভাব[20] (*Rammohun and the Emergence of a new Bengal*), Mrs. Sarojini Datta on রামমোহনের মহাতপস্যা[21] (*The Wonderful Self-consecration of Rammohun*), Mrs. Sobhana Nandi on *Rammohun, the Apostle of Humanity*[22], and Mrs. Sudha Chakravarti on *Rammohun Roy as Champion of Women's Rights*[23] had to be held over.

The session came to a close at about 8-30 P.M. with a hymn (ভারত-ভাগ্য-আকাশে উদিছে মেঘ-মুক্ত তরুণ তপন[90]) specially composed for the occasion by Sja. Hemlata Devi, and sung by a choir of lady students from the Sarojnalini Institution.

Third Session, Saturday, 30th December, 1933, 3 to 6-15 P. M.

GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The General Conference commenced with the third session. The proceedings began with a hymn (শুভ দিন ক্ষণে শুভ এই মাসে[91]) sung by the choir, and a prayer offered by Dr. Heramba Chandra Maitra. Sir Nil Ratan Sircar then rose to propose to the chair Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, who was greeted with cheers as soon as he was seen on the dais. The solemnity of the great occasion, and the emotions that surged in Sir Nil Ratan's heart at the remembrance of the services rendered to the country and to humanity by Rammohun Roy, and by Sir Jagadish, who was yet present with him in the flesh, so overpowered Sir Nil Ratan that his voice was almost choked. He said :—

> It is needless to say, Sir, how enthusiastic we feel to find you, the grandson of Raja Rammohun in spirit, and a world-scientist, in our midst to-day. You, Sir, have devoted not only the best part of your life to the acquisition of Truth from the book of Nature, but, what is more difficult and more important, you have devoted every moment of your life without any distraction or division of your intellect to the worship of science. Is it not in the fitness of things, Sir, that you should adorn the chair on this occasion ?

Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjea seconded the motion of Sir Nil Ratan Sircar.

Sir J. C. Bose then delivered his presidential address on *Rammohun and the Unity of all Truths.*[24] Two messages received since the last day's sitting having been read by Dr. Kalidas Nag, Prof. Rajani Kanta Guha read his paper on *Rammohun and Politics.*[25]

At this stage Sir J. C. Bose requested Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan to take the chair. Sir S. Radhakrishnan first called upon Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen-Gupta to read his paper on *Rammohun and Law.*[30] At the conclusion of Dr. Sen-Gupta's paper, Sir S. Radhakrishnan delivered his presidential address, the subject of which was *Rammohun, a Philosophic Modernist.*[34] He then requested Mr. G. A. Natesan to take the chair.

A second hymn (কি স্বদেশে কি বিদেশে যথায় তথায় থাকি[92] composed by Raja Rammohun Roy), having been sung by the choir, Mr. G. A. Natesan delivered his presidential address on *Rammohun, an all-round Reformer.*[35] Mr. Hemendra Prasad Ghosh and Prof. Naresh Chandra Ray were then called upon to read their papers on *Rammohun and the Liberty of the Press*[28], and *Early Indian Press and Rammohun Roy*[29] respectively. After this, Mr. G. A. Natesan requested Dr. S. K. Datta, Principal, Forman Christian College of Lahore, to take the chair.

Dr. S. K. Datta in his presidential address on *Some Personal Traits of Rammohun*[38] referred to Rammohun's thirst for knowledge, polished manners, and personal magnetism. Prof. Humayun Kabir was then asked to read his paper on *Rammohun and the Fundamental Unity of all Faiths*[47], and Mr. Jitendra Mohan Sen to read his paper on *Rammohun as a Pioneer of Education.*[31] Next, Maulavi Wahed Husain read his paper on *Monotheism and Universalism in Rammohun and in Islam.*[43]

In the unavoidable absence of Dr. Subimal Sarkar, the substance of his paper on *Rammohun as Herald of the New Age*[37] was read by Dr. Kalidas Nag. Dr. S. K. Datta then thanked the speakers over whose speeches he had presided. The meeting came to a close at about 6-15 P.M.

Fourth Session, Sunday, 31st December, 1933, 12 noon to 4 P. M.

GENERAL CONFERENCE (*contd.*)

This was the last session of the Centenary. In a serene atmosphere, illumined by the mellowing glow cast by the midday sun reflected through the blue and green sky-windows of the great Hall, hallowed by the memory of the great man who was born in the East and buried in the West a hundred years ago, and sweetened by the

melodious music of hymns and prayers, the Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebrations came to a successful termination on Sunday, the 31st December, 1933 with an inspiring concluding address from Rabindranath Tagore. It was a glorious sight to see three great Indians of whom India is justly proud, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, a poetess of international fame, representing the womanhood of this vast continent, Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, one of the world's first-rank thinkers and philosophers, and Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, world-poet and Nobel laureate, who has shed lustre on his Motherland by securing garlands of honour from all the world, assembled together with other ladies and gentlemen of culture and eminence to pay homage to another great Indian, Raja Rammohun Roy, who had diffused the message of India throughout the civilised world a century ago. The galaxy of ladies present, with their multi-coloured dress shining in reflected effulgence, added charm to the august occasion.

Following the song অয়ি ভুবনমনোমোহিনি[93] sung by a choir of ladies and gentlemen, and a heart-enthralling prayer offered by Prof. Bijay Chandra Mazumdar in the strain of "Lead, Kindly Light", Mrs. Sarojini Naidu took the chair on the proposal of Maulavi Abdul Karim, M.L.C., seconded by Dr. B. C. Ghosh.

Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi, who was to have been the first speaker of the day, was unavoidably detained by her duties in connection with the All-India Women's Conference. Madame L. Morin therefore addressed the meeting first. She spoke on *Rammohun Roy and France*[40], referring to the Raja's short stay at Paris, and describing his character as an all-round reformer. She was followed by Maulavi Abdul Karim, M.L.C., who read his second paper on the Raja, viz. *Rammohun, the Type and Pioneer of Modern India*.[36] After this, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered her presidential address, in which she described *Rammohun as the Reconciler of Irreconcilables*.[46]

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu then requested Sir Brajendra Nath Seal to take the chair. The venerable figure of Sir Brajendra Nath inspired the audience to a spontaneous outburst of cheers. As he was extremely feeble in health, he requested Dr. Kalidas Nag to read his presidential address on *Rammohun's Universal Humanism*[41] for him. Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan then read his paper on *Rammohun's Idea of Worship*[42], and Pandit Dhirendra Nath Chowdhury, Vedantavagis his paper on *Rammohun's Conception of God and the World*.[44]

Sir Brajendra Nath then requested Maulavi Abdul Karim to take the chair. After the second hymn of the day (দেশ দেশ নন্দিত করি[94]) had been sung, Rao Sahib Dr.

V. Ramakrishna Rao addressed the meeting on *Rammohun and the Larger Unities of Life.*[39] Dr. Saroj Kumar Das was the next speaker, his subject being *Rammohun, the true Vedantist.*[45]

Rabindranath Tagore arrived at the Senate House when this paper was being read. At the conclusion of the paper, Mr. Pramatha Chaudhuri, who had been requested by Maulavi Abdul Karim to preside over the remaining part of the day, observed that as the Poet, who would, at the end of that session, deliver his concluding message, had already arrived, and as it would be difficult for him in the present state of his health to stay on for a long time, the remaining papers and addresses,—viz. Prof. Biman Bihari Majumdar's paper on *Rammohun, the Father of Modern Political Movements in India*[26], Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni's paper on *Rammohun's Passion for Liberty*[27], Prof. Sukumar Sen's paper on *The Bengali Prose of Rammohun*[32], his (Mr. Chaudhuri's) own paper on রামমোহন রায় ও বাঙ্গলা গদ্য[33] (*Rammohun Roy and Bengali Prose*), and Pandit Kshitimohan Sen's address on যোগক্ষেত্র ভারতের পূর্ণ সাধক রামমোহন[48] (*Harmony, the Message of India through the Ages, and its fulfilment in Rammohun*),—should all be held over. He then requested the Poet to resume his office of presidentship.

Rabindranath ascended the pulpit that was kept prepared for him. Mr. J. N. Basu, General Secretary of the Centenary Committee, then rose to present his Report[52] of the year's work to the Conference. At his request Dr. D. N. Maitra read it out for him. After the reading of the Report, Rabindranath delivered *extempore* his concluding address and benediction in Bengali[49], exhorting the vast audience and all his countrymen to be true to Rammohun Roy and his ideals, reciting at the end in an impassioned voice his own poem হে মোর চিত্ত, পুণ্যতীর্থে জাগো রে ধীরে.

This is the substance of Rabindranath Tagore's concluding address :—Though there was no limit to his (the Poet's) devotion to Rammohun, yet there was a limit to his physical powers, for he, too, was nearing his centenary on earth. He was not in favour of long-drawn conferences, holding, as he did, that excessive discussion blunted the keenness of realisation of truth. —Rebellion is the law of life. The vitality of the body manifests itself through a constant struggle with the weight of dead flesh. Similar is the case with the mind. A living mind like Rammohun's cannot accept anything, however authoritatively placed before it, without critical examination. Our bodies fall into a state of torpor in sleep only when their vitality is overcome by fatigue. Similarly, our minds become inert and

unprogressive only when their vitality and vigour are gone. Such mental torpor is, as it were, a sign of death. Rammohun was ever-progressive. He was a constant traveller—a life-long wayfarer on India's path—in his search for truth and universal brotherhood. He had abundant vitality, so he was able to extend an invitation to his motherland to all foreign cultures and civilisations, and also to synthetise them with the cultural spirit of India.

The Centenary meetings then came to a close with the singing of the solemn Bengali National Anthem জনগণমন-অধিনায়ক জয় হে[95] by the choir, during which the whole audience reverently remained standing.

As soon as the meeting began to break up, there was a tremendous rush of autograph-hunters towards the Poet, who in his courtesy tried to please as many as possible. Eventually he was with some difficulty extricated from the crowd surrounding him, and put in his car.

Thus ended the ever-memorable Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebrations at Calcutta. The Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri, who was to have presided over the General Conference, was, to the great disappointment of the organisers as well as of the public, prevented by illness from coming to Calcutta. Dr. P. K. Sen, who had just arrived from England, and was expected to give on the 31st December interesting personal impressions of the celebrations held in London and Bristol in September, was also prevented that day by a sudden illness from coming to the meeting. Dr. Surendranath Das Gupta, who was to have addressed the Conference on *Rammohun and the various Systems of Philosophy*, and Dr. B. C. Roy, who was to have taken part in the proceedings of 31st December, were prevented from doing so by other unavoidable engagements. Letters regretting inability to attend were received from Dewan Bahadur Sir R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu Garu of Cocanada and the Maharaja Bahadur of Pithapuram.

THE EXHIBITION

An **Exhibition** of Rammohun's portraits, busts, various editions of his works, other relics, and objects related to him was held in Room No. 17 of the Asutosh Buildings of the Calcutta University from December 24th to December 31st. It was formally opened by Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary on Wednesday, the 27th December, at 4-30 P.M. After Raja Kshitindradeb Rai Mahashai of the Bansberia Raj family had read a paper on *Rammohun's Life and Relics*[50], Sir Deva Prasad delivered his

presidential address on *The Centenary Exhibits of Raja Rammohun Roy*[51], mentioning the all-round greatness of the Raja, and the contacts, traceable through three generations, between his own family and that of Rammohun.

There was a distinguished gathering of ladies and gentlemen, who inspected the Exhibits with great interest after the formal Opening Ceremony was over. Mr. Gonendra Nath Banerjee, Secretary in charge, to whom the Exhibition owes its success, courteously pointed out to the visitors all objects of special interest collected there.

PROGRAMME BOOKLET

A Booklet, on the cover of which was a symbolic picture of Rammohun with his raised hand pointing to the dawn, and which had for its frontispiece the tri-colour portrait of the Raja given in the present volume, was distributed free to the audience. It contained a detailed Programme of the addresses to be delivered at the Convention and the Conferences, the full text of Tagore's Opening Prayer and Presidential Address, the Hymns, (with an English translation by Indira Devi of the National Anthem), and a Catalogue of Exhibits displayed at the Exhibition.

All Mankind are One Family

It is now generally admitted that not religion only but unbiassed common sense as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research lead to the conclusion that all mankind are one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches. Hence enlightened men in all countries feel a wish to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner by removing as far as possible all impediments to it in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race. —*Rammohun Roy, in a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, Paris.*

(4) CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITS AT THE

EXHIBITION OF RELICS ETC. OF RAMMOHUN ROY

in Room No 17, Asutosh Buildings of the Calcutta University, 24th to 31st December, 1933.

CLASSIFICATION OF EXHIBITS

A. Personal Relics of Rammohun Roy. B. Letters in Rammohun Roy's handwriting (in original or facsimile.) C. Documents containing Rammohun Roy's signature. D. Other Documents or Certified Copies of documents connected with Rammohun Roy or his family. E. Pictures, paintings, etc. representing Rammohun Roy. F. Pictures etc. of objects and places connected with Rammohun Roy. G. Pictures etc. of Rammohun Roy's Friends and Contemporaries. H. Rammohun Roy's writings newly discovered. I. Rammohun Roy's Publications : First Editions. J. Rammohun Roy's Publications : Later Editions. K. Photographic Copies of Title-pages of Rammohun Roy's Publications. L. Contemporary Literature published under Rammohun Roy's auspices, or arising out of his activities. M. Publications of Rammohun Roy's Opponents. N. Publications of others containing references to Rammohun Roy or his family. O. Abstracts or Collections, made by others, of Rammohun Roy's writings. P. Collected whole works of Rammohun Roy. Q. Biographical works on Rammohun Roy. R. Plans etc. connected with the Memorial at Radhanagar.

EXHIBITORS

NAMES	ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE CATALOGUE
Amulya Charan Vidyabhushan Vidyasagar College, Calcutta.	ACV
Amal Home Central Municipal Office, Calcutta.	AH
Albert Institute 15, College Street, Calcutta.	AI
Abanindra Nath Tagore 5, Dwarkanath Tagore Lane, Calcutta.	ANT
Brajendra Nath Banerji Office of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, 243|1, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.	BNB
Bangiya Sahitya Parishad 243|1, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.	BSP
City College 102|1, Amherst Street, Calcutta.	CC
Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary 20, Suri Lane, Calcutta.	DPS
Gonendra Nath Banerjee 32|1, Beadon Street, Calcutta.	GNB
Hemendra Nath Chatterji Abhay Kutir, Behala, 24 Parganas.	HNC
Imperial Library 5 & 6, Esplanade Row East, Calcutta.	IL
K. C. Paul & Co. 258, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.	KCP
Raja Kshitindradeb Rai Mahashai Rajbati, Bansberia, Dist. Hooghly.	KRM
Rammohun Library 267, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.	RL
Rathindra Nath Tagore 6, Dwarkanath Tagore Lane, Calcutta.	RNT
Satis Chandra Chakravarti Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. 211, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.	SCC
Serampore College Library	SCL
Sudhir Kumar Sen 32, Palm Avenue, Ballygunje, Calcutta.	SKS
Upendra Nath Ball Dyal Singh College, Lahore.	UNB

N. B. In the Catalogue,

(a) Words actually occurring in the Titles of Books or in Documents are printed thus : Translation of

Bengali words actually occurring in the Titles of Books or in Documents are either put within inverted commas, or are underlined ; thus : "কি স্বদেশে কি বিদেশে" ; সহমরণ বিষয়ে

(b) Descriptions and explanatory notes by the Editor are printed thus : Stone Platform said to be

(c) Names of Exhibitors are indicated by their initials, thus : ACV, AH, AI

(d) In the case of books exhibited by Libraries, the Library Catalogue number, if supplied by the Exhibitor, is printed thus : P.L.O. 15

CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITS

A. Personal Relics of Rammohun Roy

1. Rammohun Roy's Sacred Thread, Hair and Handwriting. *(In a glass case).* (RL)

2. Rammohun Roy's Lock of hair. (BSP)

3. Rammohun Roy's Turban. (BSP)

4. Rammohun Roy's Bust. *(In a show case).* (RL)

5. Rammohun Roy's Death-mask. (BSP)

6. Stone Platform, said to be used by Rammohun Roy for bathing. (KCP)

7. Leaves of the Elm tree under which Rammohun Roy was first buried on 18th October 1833 at Stapleton Grove in Bristol. (BSP)

B. Letters in Rammohun Roy's handwriting, in original or facsimile

8. ORIGINAL letter written by Rammohun Roy to Rev. Thos. Belsham of Essex Street Chapel, London, (sent through Mr. Roberts), thanking Rev. Belsham for sending his "excellent commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul", and also informing him about the controversy that was being raised by the Baptist Missionaries of Serampore about Rammohun Roy's book, "The Precepts of Jesus." (SKS)

9. ORIGINAL autograph inscription of Rammohun Roy on a fly-leaf of a presentation copy of the "Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant" (which forms Exhibit No. 36). The inscription runs thus :

Rammohun Roy presents his best compliments to Mr. McFarlane, and regrets that the state of his health should have prevented him from answering Mr. M's note as soon as he wished.

R. R. is happy to find it in his power to furnish Mr. McFarlane with the accompanying copies of some of his publications, which he begs Mr. McFarlane will accept as a token of the respect that R. R. entertains for Mr. M's public character.

R. R. is sorry that the copies of some publications having already been exhausted, he has failed to procure them for Mr. McFarlane at present. December 29th 1826.

10. PHOTOGRAPH of a Bengali letter written by Rammohun Roy, dated London, 22nd September 1832, to his eldest son Radhaprusad Roy, containing his famous hymn,

"কি স্বদেশে কি বিদেশে যথায় তথায় থাকি,
তোমার রচনা মধ্যে তোমাকে দেখিয়া ডাকি।
দেশভেদে কালভেদে রচনা অসীমা,
প্রতিক্ষণে সাক্ষ্য দেয় তোমার মহিমা ;
তোমার প্রভাব দেখি না থাকি একাকী।"

which he sends to Radhaprusad, saying, "এই অবকাশে ব্রাহ্মসমাজের কাজের নিমিত্ত এক গীত পাঠাইতেছি, যদ্যপি তোমরা ও বিদ্যাবাগীশ উচিত জান, গাথকদিগকে দিবে।"

[*This letter is printed in facsimile in the "Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy" by Mary Carpenter, published by the Rammohun Library, Calcutta, 1915, a copy of which forms Exhibit No. 88.*] (AH)

11. PHOTOGRAPHIC COPY of inscription in Rammohun Roy's handwriting on two fly-leaves of a copy of the tract entitled "Some Remarks in vindication of the Resolution passed by the Government of Bengal in 1829 abolishing the Practice of Female Sacrifices in India", presenting the tract to Lady Johnstone. The inscription runs thus :

Rajah Rammohun Roy presents his compliments to Lady Johnstone, and begs permission to present to her, virtually on behalf of the females of India, the accompanying small tract and appendix, as an appeal to the female community of England, and he will only add that although the former have not had an equal opportunity of mental improvement, they are nevertheless happily acknowledged to be partakers of the nature and capacity of that blessed sex.

48, BEDFORD SQUARE.
April 13, 1832.

[*The above tract is a newly discovered publication of Rammohun Roy, and a photograph of its Title-page forms Exhibit No. 34.*] (UNB)

C. Documents containing Rammohun Roy's signature

12. DRAFT signed by Rammohun Roy. (BSP)

[*The text of the Draft is given below. The words in Antique type correspond to the* printed *words of the Draft. "Sa. Rs."=Sicca Rupees.*]

No. 111. **London the** 23rd August 1833. **For** Sa. Rs. 5714-4-7.

At sixty days after sight **Pay this third of exchange, first and second not paid to the order of** Sir Charles Forbes, Bart., Sicca Rupees Five thousand Seven hundred and Fourteen, Four annas and seven pice. For **Value** received of him, **which place to account.**

To Baboo Dwarkanauth Tagore and Baboo Radhaprusad Roy, Calcutta.

3rd No. 332. (*Sd.*) Rammohun Roy

[*Endorsements on back*]

Pay Messrs. Inglis Forbes & Co. or order.
(*Sd.*) Charles Forbes.

Pay to Messrs Macintyre or order.
(*Sd.*) Inglis Forbes & Co.

Pay to Bank of Bengal or order.
(*Sd.*) Macintyre & Co.

নং ৩১৪. No. 314, for Rs. 5714-4-7. Dated 30th March, 1834.

এই ড্রাপের[?] লিঃ ৫৭১৪।৭ পাঁচ হাজার সাত শত চৌদ্দ টাকা চার আনা সাত পাই পাইলাম। ইতি ৩১ মার্চ্চ [?] ১৮৩৪।

(স্বাক্ষর) শ্রীরাধাপ্রসাদ রায়

13. ORIGINAL Trust Deed of the Brahmo Samaj land dated 7th January 1830. (RNT)

14. ORIGINAL Trust Deed of the Brahmo Samaj house dated 8th January 1830. (RNT)

D. Other Documents or Certified copies of Documents connected with Rammohun Roy or his Family

15. ORIGINAL Document in Bengali dated 11th Paush, 1095 Bengali Era (=24th December 1688, approximately), addressed by Maharaja Himmat Singh of Burdwan to Braja Binod Roy (grandfather of Rammohun Roy), being a gift of Brahmottara land. (HNC)

16. ORIGINAL Letter in Bengali dated 17th Baisakh, 1118 Bengali Era (=28th April 1711, approximately), written by Braja Binod Roy (grandfather of Rammohun Roy) to Ram Kisor Roy (uncle of Rammohun Roy.) (HNC)

17. ORIGINAL Document in Bengali signed by Ram Kanta Ray (father of Rammohun Roy) dated 27th Kartik (?) 1168 (?), Bengali Era. [*The name of the month and the year could not be clearly deciphered. The above date would correspond to 11th November 1761, approximately.*] (HNC)

18. CERTIFIED COPY of Rammohun Roy's Answer (filed on 4th October 1817) to the Plaint filed by his nephew Govinda Prasad Roy on 23rd June 1817, in connection with the suit, instituted in the Equity Division of the Supreme Court, Calcutta, between *Govinda Prasad Roy, Complainant*, vs. *Rammohun Roy, Defendant.* (BNB)

E. Pictures, Paintings, etc. representing Rammohun Roy

19. Oil Painting of Raja Rammohun Roy. Painted by Basanta Gangooly *(after Briggs.)* (CC)

20. Oil Painting of Raja Rammohun Roy. (AI)

21. Photo of a Statue of Rammohun Roy, made by order of Prince Dwarkanauth Tagore in England by an English sculptor. Now in possession of Ritendra Nath Tagore, a great-grandson of Prince Dwarkanauth. (GNB)

22. A coloured steel-engraving print of the Raja's portrait, being the frontispiece to "Researches into the Physical History of Mankind" by James Cowles Prichard, M.D., F.R.S. Third Edition. Vol. III. Published by Sherwood, Gilbert and Piper, London. 1841. (AH)

23. A Pencil-sketch of the Raja from the above steel-engraving. (AH)

F. Pictures, etc., of Objects and Places connected with Rammohun Roy

24. Sketch of the first burial place of Raja Rammohun Roy at Stapleton Grove, drawn by Mary Carpenter. (BSP)

25. General view of Stapleton Grove, Bristol, where Raja Rammohun Roy died. (RL)

26. Picture of the tomb of Raja Rammohun Roy at the Arno's Vale Cemetery in Bristol. (RL)

27. Photograph of a gathering assembled before the Raja's Tomb at Bristol. (RL)

G. Pictures, etc., of Rammohun Roy's friends and contemporaries

28. Portrait of Prince Dwarkanauth Tagore. (ANT)

29. Portrait (steel-engraving) of Carey and Pandit Mrityunjaya Vidyalankara. (SCL)

H. Rammohun Roy's Writings newly discovered

30. Rammohun Roy's Edition of *Kathopanishad* with Sankara's Commentary. No Title-page. No date mentioned anywhere. Paper and printing very old; evidently printed in 1815 or earlier. Pp. 78. Interleaved, and the following Title-page added in a very carefully written hand :—

"যজুঃ এবং অথর্ব্ববেদীয় শ্রুতি। কঠোপনিষৎ। ষষ্ঠ বল্লী সমাপ্ত॥ শ্রীমদ্‌গোবিন্দভগবৎপূজ্যপাদশিষ্যস্য পরমহংসপরিব্রাজকাচার্য্যস্য শ্রীমচ্ছঙ্কর-ভগবতঃ কৃতৌ ভাষ্য। মহাত্মা রাজা রামমোহন রায় কর্ত্তৃক প্রকাশিত।" (BSP)

31. Rammohun Roy's Edition of *Kenopanishad* with Sankara's Commentary. No Title-page. No date mentioned anywhere. Paper and printing very old; evidently printed in 1815 or earlier. Pp. 22+4+38. Interleaved, and the following Title-page added in a very carefully written hand :—

"সামবেদীয় শ্রুতি 'কেন' অর্থাৎ তলবকার উপনিষৎ সম্পূর্ণ। প্রথমতঃ সংস্কৃত মূল ও সংস্কৃত টীকা। দ্বিতীয়তঃ কেবল সংস্কৃত মূল। ও তৃতীয়তঃ শ্রীমদ্‌গোবিন্দভগবৎপূজ্যপাদশিষ্যস্য পরমহংসপরিব্রাজকাচার্য্যস্য শ্রীশঙ্করভগবতঃ কৃতৌ পদভাষ্যং সম্পূর্ণং। মহাত্মা রাজা রামমোহন রায় কর্ত্তৃক প্রকাশিত।" (BSP)

32. Rammohun Roy's Edition of *Mundakopanishad* with Sankara's Commentary. No Title-page. No date mentioned anywhere. Paper and printing very old; evidently printed in 1815 or earlier. Pp. 49. Interleaved, and the following Title-page added in a very carefully written hand :—

"অথর্ব্ববেদীয় শ্রুতি মুণ্ডকোপনিষৎ মূল ও শ্রীগোবিন্দভগবৎপূজ্যপাদশিষ্যস্য পরমহংসপরিব্রাজকস্য শ্রীমচ্ছঙ্করভগবতঃ কৃতৌ তদ্ভাষ্যং। মহাত্মা রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের প্রকাশিত।" (BSP)

[*The above three Exhibits, of which Nos. 30 and 31 are bound together in one volume, were originally the property of the late Chandra Sekhar Basu. This is the first time that Rammohun Roy's edition of the Upanishads* with Sankara's Commentaries (NOT Rammohun Roy's translations) *are brought to the notice of the public.*]

30A, 31A, 32A. A second set of the above three books, but very incomplete, and without MS. Title-pages. (HNC)

33. TRANSCRIBED COPY of Rammohun Roy's Controversy with Utsavananda Sarma, 26th May to 3rd December 1816, conducted in the Sanskrit language, but printed in Bengali character. [*Discovered by the late Dr. V. Rai of Giridih in the Serampore College Library in 1918. Not published so far in any edition of Rammohun Roy's Works.*] (AH)

34. PHOTOGRAPHIC COPY of Title-page of a hitherto unknown tract on *Suttee* by Rammohun Roy, entitled "Some Remarks in vindication of the Resolution passed by the Government of Bengal in 1829 abolishing the Practice of Female Sacrifices in India." Published in England in 1832. [*See also Exhibit No. 11.*] (UNB)

I. Rammohun Roy's Publications: First Editions

35. বেদান্তগ্রন্থ, ১৭৩৭ শক। [The Vedanta, or Resolution of all the Vedas, with a Bengali Commentary.] Calcutta, 1815. Printed at the Press of Ferris & Co. (ACV)

35 A. Another copy the above. (HNC)

36. Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant, or Resolution of all the Veds, the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical Theology; establishing the unity of the Supreme Being: and that He alone is the Object of Propitiation and Worship. By Rammohun Roy Calcutta. 1816. (BSP)

[*The autograph inscription on a fly-leaf of this book forms Exhibit No. 9.*]

37. ঈশোপনিষৎ, বাঙ্গালা অর্থ সহিত। ৩১ আষাঢ় ১৭৩৮ শক; ১৩ জুলাই ১৮১৬ ইংরাজী। [*Isopanishad* with Bengali Translation. 1816] (BSP)

38. কঠোপনিষৎ, বাঙ্গালা অর্থসহিত। সন ১২২৪ সাল, তারিখ ১৬ ভাদ্র, বাঙ্গালি প্রেস। [*Kathopanishad* with Bengali Translation. 31st August, 1817.] (BSP)

39. A Defence of Hindoo Theism in reply to the Attack of an Advocate for Idolatry at Madras. 1817. (IL)

40 গোস্বামীর সহিত বিচার। ১২২৫। ২রা আষাঢ়।

[Reply to a Goswami. 15th June, 1818. See Note to No 71.] (BSP)

41. সহমরণ বিষয়ে প্রবর্ত্তক ও নিবর্ত্তকের দ্বিতীয় সম্বাদ। গ্রন্থশেষে তারিখ ঃ—১৬ অগ্রহায়ণ, ১৭৪১ শক। (See Note to No 71.)

A Second Conference between an Advocate for and an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows Alive. Printed at the Mission Press. Calcutta. 30 Nov. 1819. (BSP)

42. An Apology for the Pursuit of Final Beatitude independently of Brahmunical observances. Printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta. 1820. (SCL—N. 80.30.090.)

43. কবিতাকারের সহিত বিচার। শকাব্দা ১৭৪২। ইং ১৮২০। [Reply to 'Kavitakara'. 1820. See Note to No 71.] (BSP)

44. Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encpachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindoo Law of Inheritance Printed at the Unitarian Press, Calcutta. 1822. (IL)

45. পথ্যপ্রদান। সম্যগনুষ্ঠানাক্ষম তজ্জন্যমনস্তাপবিশিষ্ট কর্ত্তৃক। কলিকাতা। সংস্কৃত যন্ত্রে মুদ্রিত হইল। শকাব্দা ১৭৪৫। (BSP)

Medicine for the sick offered by One who laments his Inability to Perform all Righteousness. Calcutta. Printed at the Sungscrit Press. 1823. (See Note to No 71.)

46. Bengalee Grammar in the English Language. Calcutta. Printed at the Unitarian Press. 1826. (IL)

47. অনুষ্ঠান। শকাব্দাঃ ১৭৫১। [*Anushthan.* 1829. See Note to No 71.] (BSP)

48. Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India; etc.—London. Smith, Elder and Co., Cornhill. 1832. Printed by Littlewood & Co. (IL)

49. গৌড়ীয় ব্যাকরণ। তদ্ভাষা বিরচিত। শ্রীযুত রাজা রামমোহন রায় দ্বারা পাণ্ডুলিপি ও কলিকাতা স্কুল বুক সোসাইটি দ্বারা এবং তন্মুদ্রাযন্ত্রে মুদ্রিত হয়। ১৮৩৩।

Grammar of the Bengali Language. Calcutta. Printed at the School Book Society's Press; and sold at its Depository, Circular Road. 1833.

[1st Ed. April 1833. 1000 copies]. (BSP)

J. Rammohun Roy's Publications : Later Editions

50. "The Brahmunical Magazine," *or* The Missionary and the Brahmun, being a Vindication of the Hindoo Religion against the Attacks of Christian Missionaries. By Shivu-Prusad Surma. Second Edition. Calcutta. August 1823. (BSP)

51. Essay on the Rights of Hindoos over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal.

Second Edition. Smith, Elder & Co. London. 1832. (IL)

52. The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness, ··· to which are added the First, Second and Final Appeals to the Christian Public in reply to the Observations of Dr. Marshman of Serampore. With a Portrait and Memoir of the Author.

Second London Edition. 1834. Published by John Mardon, 19 St. Martin's Le Grand. (BNB)

53. পথ্যপ্রদান। Second Edition. The Title-page repeats the whole of the Title-page of the 1st Edition, (Exhibit No. 45), with হইয়াছিল for হইল, and adds these words:—"বিতরণার্থ। শ্রীযুক্ত বাবু অন্নদাপ্রসাদ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় কর্তৃক দ্বিতীয় বার প্রকাশিত হইল। কলিকাতা। ভাস্কর প্রেস। শকাব্দা ১৭৭০।" The following *written* words occur at the bottom of the Title-page :—"তেলিনিপাড়াস্থ ব্রাহ্মসমাজ"। [A.D. 1848.] (BSP)

54. TRANSCRIBED COPY of *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* or "A Gift to Monotheists." [Rammohun Roy's Persian Tract, with an Arabic Preface. Written about 1804.] Transcribed from a printed copy of the book published at Calcutta in 1859 by his son, Rama Prasad Roy. Pp. 40.

[*This transcribed copy belonged to the Raja's English biographer, Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, whose autograph signature in pencil is seen on the inside cover. Miss Collet gave this copy to the late Dr. P. K. Ray. Another transcribed copy of the same edition is in the British Museum, London.*] (SCC)

55. *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin.* Lithographed copy. Pp. 38. Published from Azimabad, (*i.e.* Patna,) in 1898 by Bhai Baladeva Narayan. (SCC)

56. *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin.* Printed at Calcutta by Dr. V. Rai of Giridih, July 1918, but not published. (AH)

K. Photographic copies of Title-pages of Rammohun Roy's Publications

57. PHOTOGRAPHIC COPIES of Title-pages and First Pages of some of the FIRST EDITIONS of Rammohun Roy's Works. (AH)

58. PHOTOGRAPHIC COPIES of the Title-pages of the LONDON EDITION of Rammohun Roy's *Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant* and *Cena Upanishad, 1817.* (AH)

L. Contemporary Literature published under Rammohun Roy's auspices, or arising out of his activities

59. The Principles and Objects of the Calcutta Unitarian Committee. By William Adam, Secretary to the Calcutta Unitarian Committee. Printed at the Unitarian Press, Calcutta. 1827. (BNB)

60. The Sermon delivered by Ram Chandra Vidyavagis at the first Upasana of the Brahmo Samaj, Wednesday, 6th Bhadra, (20th August, 1828). Pp. 7. The *Title-page* has the following lines :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে প্রথম ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। বুধবার ৬ ভাদ্র। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

[*For a Photographic copy of this Title-page, see List of Illustrations.*]

61. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Second Sermon, 27 August, 1828. Pp. 10. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে দ্বিতীয় ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। বুধবার ১৩ ভাদ্র। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

62. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Third Sermon, 3 September, 1828. Pp. 8. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে তৃতীয় ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। বুধবার ২০ ভাদ্র। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

63. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Fourth Sermon, 13 September, 1828. Pp. 9. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে চতুর্থ ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। শনিবার ৩০ ভাদ্র। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

64. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Fifth Sermon, 20 September, 1828. Pp. 6. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে পঞ্চম ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। ৭ [৬] আশ্বিন, শনিবার। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

65. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Sixth Sermon, 27 September, 1828. Pp. 6. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে ষষ্ঠ ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। শনিবার ১৩ আশ্বিন। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

66. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Seventh Sermon, 4 October, 1828. Pp. 7. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে সপ্তম ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। শনিবার ২০ আশ্বিন। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

67. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Eighth Sermon, 11 October, 1828. Pp. 7. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে অষ্টম ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। শনিবার ২৭ আশ্বিন। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

68. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Ninth Sermon, 25 October, 1828. Pp. 6. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে নবম ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। শনিবার ১০ কার্ত্তিক। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

69. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Tenth Sermon, 1 November, 1828. Pp. 7. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে দশম ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। শনিবার ১৭ কার্ত্তিক। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

70. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Twelfth Sermon, 15 November, 1828. Pp. 7. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে দ্বাদশ ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। শনিবার ১ অগ্রহায়ণ। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫০." (BSP)

71. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis's Sixty-ninth Sermon, delivered on the day of the opening of the new Mandir, 11th Magh, 23rd January 1830. Pp. 6. *Title-page* :—"পরমেশ্বরের। উপাসনা বিষয়ে উনসপ্ততি ব্যাখ্যান। শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্ম কর্তৃক। ব্রাহ্মসমাজ। কলিকাতা। ১১ মাঘ শনিবার। শকাব্দা। ১৭৫১." (BSP)

[Note.—BSP Exhibits No. 41, 40, 43, 45, 60—71, and 47 follow one another in this order in one bound volume.]

M. Publications of Rammohun Roy's Opponents

72. "Friend of India". Vol. III. 1820. Printed at the Mission Press. (SCL—P.L.O. 15).

73. "পাষণ্ডপীড়ন"। ["Pashanda-Piran" or "The Chastisement of the Heretic", a Bengali pamphlet of 225 pages. No title-page, but the date "শকাব্দা ১৭৪৪। বাঙ্গালা সন ১২২৯। ২০ মাঘ" (corresponding to 1 February, 1823) is given at the end.]

In 1822 appeared a pamphlet containing "Four Questions", written by "Dharma-sansthapan-akankshi" (or "a Supporter of Religion") and directed against Rammohun Roy's doctrines and practices. Rammohun Roy's reply was a pamphlet of 20 pages named চারি প্রশ্নের উত্তর or "Reply to Four Questions". The "Chastisement of the Heretic" is the counter-reply of Rammohun's Opponent. (BSP)

[*Rammohun's Reply to this "Chastisement" is* পথ্যপ্রদান *or "Medicine for the Sick" which forms Exhibit No. 45.*]

74. Reply to Rammohun Roy's "FINAL APPEAL against the Atonement and the Deity of Christ." Published from Serampore, 1824, being a reprint of an article published in the *Friend of India*. (SCL)

N. Publications of Others containing References to Rammohun Roy or his family

75. Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society. Vol. VI. 1815—17. (SCL.—B.R. 36, with Supplement to No. 33 of P.A.)

76. DAY TO DAY JOURNAL in Bengali of JADUNATH SARVADHIKARY, grandson of Ram Narayan Sarvadhikary (who was Rammohun's next-door neighbour at Radhanagar, and is reputed to have been his Persian tutor), and grandfather of Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary.

The JOURNAL contains three references to one of the wives of Rammohun Roy, (step-mother of his sons), who accompanied JADUNATH on foot on a pilgrimage to Badarikasram in 1857—58. (DPS)

O. Abstracts or Collections, made by others, of Rammohun Roy's Writings

77. Abstract of Rammohun Roy's Introduction to the Bengali Translation of the *Isopanishad*. Published by the Tattvabodhini Sabha. 21 October, 1843. Pp. 14. *Title-page* :—"একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ং। মহাত্মা শ্রীযুক্ত রাজা রামমোহন রায় কৃত বাজসনেয়সংহিতোপনিষদের ভাষাবিবরণের ভূমিকার চূর্ণক। ৫ কার্ত্তিক ১৭৬৫ শক। কলিকাতা। তত্ত্ববোধিনী সভার যন্ত্রালয়ে মুদ্রিত হইল।" (BSP)

78. Abstract of Rammohun Roy's Introduction to the Bengali Translation of the *Mandukyopanishad*. Published by the Tattvabodhini Sabha. 4 January, 1844. Pp. 17. *Title-page* :—"একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ং। মহাত্মা শ্রীযুক্ত রাজা রামমোহন রায় কৃত মাণ্ডুক্যোপনিষদের ভাষাবিবরণের ভূমিকার চূর্ণক। ২১ পৌষ ১৭৬৫ শক। কলিকাতা। তত্ত্ববোধিনী সভার যন্ত্রালয়ে মুদ্রিত হইল।" (BSP)

79. Abstract of Rammohun Roy's Controversy with a 'Bhattacharya'. Published by the Tattvabodhini Sabha. 20 April, 1844. Pp. 37. *Title-page* :—"একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ম্। মহাত্মা শ্রীযুক্ত রাজা রামমোহন রায় কৃত গ্রন্থের চূর্ণক। ৯ বৈশাখ ১৭৬৬ শক। কলিকাতা। তত্ত্ববোধিনী সভার যন্ত্রালয়ে মুদ্রিত হইল।" (BSP)

80. Abstract of Rammohun Roy's Controversy with a 'Goswami'. Published by the Tattvabodhini Sabha. 28 July, 1844. Pp. 28. *Title-page* :—As in No. 79, with date '১৪ শ্রাবণ ১৭৬৬ শক', and with the words 'দ্বিতীয় সংখ্যা' added. (BSP)

81. Sanskrit Texts referred to in the above four Abstracts. Published by the Tattvabodhini Sabha. No date mentioned. Pp. 22. *Title-pages* :—"ওঁ তৎসৎ। শ্রীযুক্ত রাজা রামমোহন রায় কৃত বাজসনেয়সংহিতোপনিষদের ভাষাবিবরণের ভূমিকার চূর্ণকে ধৃত প্রমাণ সকলের বিবরণ ;" etc. (BSP)

82. A Collection of Five Upanishads with their translations into Bengali by Rammohun Roy. Printed at the Timirari Press, Pathuriaghata, Calcutta. 1848. *Title-page* :—"শ্রীশ্রীশো জয়তাং॥ অথর্ব্ববেদীয় কঠোপনিষৎ, যজুর্ব্বেদীয় বাজসনেয়সংহিতোপনিষৎ, সামবেদীয় তলবকারোপনিষৎ, অথর্ব্ববেদীয় মুণ্ডকোপনিষৎ ও মাণ্ডুক্যোপনিষৎ, এই পঞ্চ উপনিষৎ, এবং শ্রীমচ্ছঙ্করাচার্য্যের ভাষ্যসম্মত গৌড়ীয় ভাষার্থ যাহা পূর্ব্বে মৃত রাজা রামমোহন রায় কর্ত্তৃক অনুবাদিত হইয়া প্রকাশ হয়। অধুনা কলিকাতা পাতুরিয়াঘাটা তিমিরারি যন্ত্রে পুন মুদ্রাঙ্কিত হইল॥ ১২৫৫". (BSP)

P. Collected Works of Rammohun Roy

83. রাজা রামমোহন রায় প্রণীত গ্রন্থাবলী। শ্রীযুক্ত রাজনারায়ণ বসু ও শ্রীযুক্ত আনন্দচন্দ্র বেদান্তবাগীশ কর্ত্তৃক সংগৃহীত ও পুনঃ প্রকাশিত। কলিকাতা আদি ব্রাহ্মসমাজ যন্ত্রে মুদ্রিত। মুদ্রাঙ্কন ১৭৯৫ শকের বৈশাখ মাসে আরব্ধ, ১৮০২ শকের জ্যৈষ্ঠ মাসে সমাপ্ত। [Bengali and Sanskrit Works of Raja Rammohun Roy, collected and published by Raj Narain Bose and Ananda Chandra Vedantavagis. Printed at the Adi Brahmo Samaj Press, Calcutta. Sakabda 1795 to 1802. A.D. 1873 to 1880.] (BNB)

84. The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy, Compiled by Eshan Chunder Bose and edited by Jogendra Chunder Ghose. Calcutta. 1885. (BSP)

85. The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy. Edited by Jogendra Chunder Ghose, M.A., B.L. Published by Srikanta Roy. Calcutta. 1901. (AH)

86. The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy. With an English translation of the *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin.* Panini Office, Allahabad. 1906. (AH)

Q. Biographical Works on Rammohun Roy

87. The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy. By Mary Carpenter. 2nd Edition, London, 1875. Published by E. T. Whitfield, 178, Strand, W. C. [*The First Edition was published in 1866.*] (BNB)

88. The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohu ı Roy. By Mary Carpenter. Calcutta. Published by the Rammohun Library. 1915. (RL)

89 মহাত্মা রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের জীবনচরিত। শ্রীনগেন্দ্রনাথ চট্টোপাধ্যায়। ১ম সংস্করণ। ১২৮৭ সাল। [Life of Mahatma Raja Rammohun Roy. By Nagendranath Chattopadhyaya. 1st. Edition. 1287 Bengali Era = 1880 A.D.] (AH)

90. মহাত্মা রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের জীবনচরিত। শ্রীনগেন্দ্রনাথ চট্টোপাধ্যায়। তৃতীয় সংস্করণ। ১৮৯৭। [Do., 3rd. Edition, 1897 A.D.] (AH)

91. Report of the BANSBERIA STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION for 1882-1892. Containing a life-sketch of Rammohun Roy by Nagendranath Chattopadhyaya. (KRM)

92. Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy. By S. D. Collet London, 1900. Printed at the Mercury Press, Bedford. (AH)

93. Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England. Based on unpublished records. By Brajendra Nath Banerji. Published by N. M. Roy Chowdhury & Co. Calcutta. 1926. (BNB)

R. Plans, etc., connected with the Memorial at Radhanagar

94. Plan of the Rammohun Memorial at Radhanagar. (AH)

95. Route-map to Radhanagar. (AH)

(B) CELEBRATIONS IN THE PROVINCES AND STATES

OF INDIA, BURMA and CEYLON.

[*The small numericals used as 'superior figures' indicate the serial numbers of the addresses etc. as printed in Section C of Part II.*]

BENGAL,

EXCLUSIVE OF THE CITY OF CALCUTTA.

Ballygunje Government High School (in the suburbs of Calcutta.)—The "Rammohun House" of the Ballygunge Government High School celebrated the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy on Saturday, the 28th October, 1933 in the Assembly Hall of the school under the presidency of the Head Master, Mr. J. C Datta, who, among other things, said that in the spheres of religion, social reform and education, the Raja thought in terms of an ideology which would rank as liberal and intensely modern even to-day, and in which must lie the solution of many of our current problems.

Mr. J. Lahiri, House Master of the "Rammohun House" of the school, (who, by the way, had occasion to join in the annual pilgrimage from London to Bristol in 1930, when he was in England,) read a paper on the life and work of the Raja, in course of which he said that at no time in the history of the country was the need for the lead of a man like him so great as in the India of the present day, distracted as she is by her communal troubles, her warring creeds and divided loyalties. The House Master then announced that two prizes would be awarded to the writers of the best essays on the Raja's life and work in the field of education. He was then followed by a host of speakers from the students. The meeting began with an opening song suited to the occasion, and ended with a silent prayer for two minutes, the whole house standing.

Ultadanga (in the suburbs of Calcutta.)—The Ultadanga Brahmo Samaj celebrated the Centenary on December 24th and 25th, 1933. In the early morning of the 24th, a Sankirtan party proceeded through the principal streets of Ultadanga. At 9-30 A.M. Sjt. Kamakhya Nath Banerji conducted divine service. Pandit Girija Kanta Goswami then expounded texts from the Upanishads. In the evening, Prof.

Dhirendra Nath Chowdhury, M.A. delivered an impressive lecture on *Raja Rammohun, the Maker of Modern India,* laying special stress on the practical application of Vedanta in our domestic life. On the 25th, Pandit Sures Chandra Sankhya-Vedanta-Tirtha conducted the morning service. In the evening Pandit Sarada Prasanna Veda-sastri delivered a lantern lecture on Rammohun Roy.

Behala (near Calcutta.)—The Centenary was celebrated at Behala on Sunday the 24th December, 1933, in the compound of the Behala Brahmo Samaj, which was beautifully decorated with leaves and flowers. Numerous eminent men from Calcutta and Bhawanipur joined the celebration. Pandit Sures Chandra Sankhya-Vedanta-Tirtha conducted divine service, in which hymns composed by Rammohun Roy were sung. A Memorial Meeting was then held, presided over by Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary. Among those who participated were Dr. Binay Chandra Sen, M.A., B.L., P.R.S., PH.D., Sjts. Devesvar Mukherjee, Vidyavinod, Ranjan Bilas Rai Chaudhury of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* Kshetra Nath Bandyopadhyaya, Kavya-Purana-Tirtha, Prof. Narendra Nath Chakravarti, M.A., etc. Dr. Binay Chandra Sen said that Rammohun was the maker of an age, and one of the greatest heroes of the world. When we think of his immense learning, his deeply religious spirit, his ardent love of country, and his almost superhuman labours, we are struck speechless with admiration. He had inaugurated a new age not only for Bengal, but for the whole of India. He appeared on the horizon of India at a time when India needed the services of just such a hero. But it is doubtful whether even after the lapse of a century the time has come for us to be able to form an adequate estimate of his worth.

Sjt. Devesvar Mukherjee explained the religious ideas of Rammohun Roy by a neat speech in popular language. Pandit Sures Chandra Sankhya-Vedanta-Tirtha spoke eloquently on Rammohun's great-heartedness, patriotism, and multi-sided activities, and lastly on his attempt to re-instate the Brahmajnana of the Upanishads in the lives of householders.

Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary in his presidential address noted with great pleasure the fact that the Raja's hymns were sung, and divine service was conducted on Upanishadic lines that day, for his hymns were in great danger of being forgotten altogether by the Bengal public. The more the present generation studied Rammohun, the better it would be for the country; for Rammohun's light was exactly what was needed to enlighten India amidst the darkness and difficulties which beset her path at the present moment. He would therefore like to suggest to the Ram-

mohun Roy Centenary Committee that the proposed statue of the Raja should have its right arm raised and its fore-finger pointing forward. Rammohun has shown, and will continue to show for long ages to come, the path along which India is to march towards progress.

Howrah.—On the initiative of some prominent citizens of Howrah, a Conference was held early in December 1933 in the Duke Public Library Hall for taking steps for the celebration of the Centenary, and a Committee was appointed for the purpose, with Professor Akshaykumar Sarkar, M.A., and Sj. Kalobaran Ghosh, as *Chairman* and *Secretary* respectively. The Committee decided to hold the celebration on Sunday the 17th December, 1933. Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary kindly consented to preside.

On the appointed day people representing all sections of society poured in their thousands to the Howrah Town Hall, and it is noteworthy that among them were a number of Muslim ladies. Howrah had not for a long time witnessed such a cosmopolitan as well as representative gathering composed of Hindu, Muslim, Christian and other communities. A tastefully decorated portrait of the Raja was placed on the dais. The proceedings opened with a song sung in chorus by the students of the Howrah Girls' High School under the guidance of Sja. Sobhana Mukerjee. Bhai Priyanath Mallik conducted a solemn divine service. Dr. Bhagavat Sastri, PH. D., in course of an illuminating address referred to the revolutionary change that the great Rammohun Roy had brought to the vision of the nation, which had been bleared with age-long prejudices. Mr. Rafiq Ahmed, Advocate, and Sjt. Jivan Das Banerjee spoke about the Raja's many-sided activities. Miss Sunila Sen, B.A., Mr. R. Palit, and Mr. Pulin Bihari Banerjee read interesting papers.

Sir Deva Prasad in summing up the deliberations delivered a neat little speech, in course of which he characterised Rammohun as a Prophet, a Philosopher, a Social Reformer, and the Indian Messiah of Peace, and narrated some historic events that occurred in his life. The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to the Chair proposed by Sjt. Ajit K. Mallik, followed by Rabindranath's song "Desh desh nandita kari" sung in chorus by the students of the H. E. School.

Bally.—A very largely attended meeting was held at the "Saraswati Pathagar" of Bally on the 27th September 1933 to celebrate the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy. Sjt. Girija Prasanna Roy, B.L., Honorary Magistrate, and Advocate, Calcutta High Court, presided. The meeting was attended by almost all the influential gentlemen of the place. The proceedings commenced with

the unveiling and garlanding by the chairman of a portrait of Rammohun Roy, which was placed in the Hall. Sjt. Narendra Nath Mukherji, M. A., B. L., Secretary of the "Pathagar" delivered an interesting address. Sjt. Pulin Bihari Banerji, Treasurer of the "Pathagar", read a poem written by himself for the occasion. After this, several citizens of Bally, among whom were Sjts. Shyama Pada Chatterji, Jiban Krishna Mukherji, Manindra Nath Sinha, Narendra Nath Ray Bhishagacharya, Durga Pada Chatterji, B.SC., and the chairman, spoke on the life and work of the Raja. A *stotra* was recited, all standing, and a hymn was sung by Sm. Ashalata Ghosh.

Uluberia (Dist. Howrah.)—At the instance of the Baniban Brahmo Samaj a Public Meeting for the celebration of the Rammohun Roy Centenary was held at the Uluberia High School on 14th January 1934. It was a numerously attended meeting, the S. D. O., the Munsif, the Sub-Deputy Collector, pleaders, mukhtars, teachers and other important persons, besides students and ladies being present. The Hall and the verandahs were filled with the audience. Sjts. Krishna Kumar Mitra and Nagendra Nath Biswas, and Prof. Dhirendra Nath Chowdhury, Vedantavagis, M.A., and his wife, came from Calcutta for the occasion. Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra presided. Two hymns were sung; Mrs. Chowdhury sang the Raja's own hymn "Bhabo shei eke," and another hymn was sung by Sjt. Biswas. A prayer was offered from the chair. Sm. Sushama Das, B.A. read an essay, after which Prof. Dhirendra Nath delivered a learned address on the *Sadhana and Siddhi of the Raja.* Next, Sjt. Haripada Ghoshal, Head Master of the High School, read a well-written address, after which Sjts. Jogindra Charan Sen, B.L., Nani Gopal Adhikari and Aswini Kumar Das paid tributes to the memory of the Raja. The President then spoke on the Raja's personality and activities, and particularly on his great sympathy for womankind. The S. D. O., Rai Bahadur Nepal Chandra Sen, proposed a vote of thanks to the president and the speakers.

Hughli.—A PRELIMINARY MEETING of the citizens of the Hughli District was held on Sunday, the 9th July 1933, in the Hughli College Hall to consider what steps should be taken to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy, who was born at Radhanagar in this District. Among those present, the names of Mr. T. B. Jameson, I. C. S., District and Sessions Judge, Mr. S. N. Roy, I. C. S., Mr. R. L. Sadhu, Chairman, Hughly-Chinsurah Municipality, Sjt. Dhirendra Nath Mukherjee, Additional District Judge, Sja. Labanyakana Basu, Sjt. D. N. Mandal and Prof. P. K. Das may be mentioned. Dr. Kalidas Nag, M. A., D. LITT. presided. An Executive Committee was formed with the

following office-bearers :—*President* : Sjt. Taraknath Mukherjee (Uttarpara). *Vice-Presidents* : Sjts. R. L. Sadhu, Kanai Banerjee, Principal K. B. Achariah, Kumar Munindradeb Rai Mahashai, and Mr. T. B. Jameson. *Treasurer* : Sjt. Amulya Chandra Dutt, M. L. C. *Secretary* : Sjt. Subodh Roy. *Joint-Secretary* : Sjt. Jiten Paul.

Mr. T. B. Jameson, Mr. S. N. Roy, Sjt. Harihar Sett, Sjt. Debendranath Mandal, and Sjt. Subodh Roy spoke at the meeting, throwing several valuable suggestions in connection with the Centenary. The President dwelt on the manifold activities of the Raja and his superhuman and successful attempt to synthetise the opposing social and religious customs of the country. He it is who first sang the 'mantra' of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in the sacred soil of India. He is the first official ambassador of India in the Parliamentary Court of London. He laid special emphasis on holding a separate Ladies' Conference in connection with the Centenary, inasmuch as the Raja was an out and out upholder of women's rights, including the abolition of the *Suttee*. The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chair proposed by Mr. S. N. Roy.—*(Advance.)*

The CENTENARY was celebrated by a meeting held in the Hughli Town Hall on 16th December 1933, in which citizens of Chinsurah and Hughli, both official and non-official, mustered strong. There was a fair attendance of ladies, for whom special seating arrangements had been made. From 3 to 7 P.M., the Town Hall was packed to the full, and many had to remain standing for want of accommodation. Among those present were Messrs. K. C. Basak, I.C.S., S. N. Roy, I. C. S., L. R. Chambers, I. C. S., Dhirendra Nath Mukherjee, Hiralal Sen, Mriganka Ray, Taraknath Mukherjee, the Poet Jatindra Mohan Bagchi, Kumar Munindradeb Rai Mahashai, M.L.C., Raja Kshitindradeb Rai Mahashai, Sjt. Harihar Sett, Prof. Pramathanath Sircar, Prof. P. K. Das, Messrs. Kanailal Goswami, Rajendra Lal Sadhu, Amulya Chandra Datta, Sudhir Roy, etc.

The meeting consisted of two sections, general and literary. Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Suri-ratna, presided over the general section, while the literary section was presided over by Rai Rama Prasad Chanda Bahadur. Addresses were delivered and poems read at both the meetings, among which the address of Prof. Khalil-ur-Rahman at the general meeting, and those of Prof. Pramathanath Sircar and Mr. S. N. Roy, as well as poems of Sjs. Jatindra Mohan Bagchi and Subodh Ray in the literary section, deserve special mention. The songs of Srimati Shila Sarkar and Sriman Arun Mukerji were much appreciated by the audience.

Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary's presidential address was as instructive as it was interesting. In his short lucid speech he enumerated the contributions of the Raja towards the social, educational and religious reform of our country, and brought out vividly his colossal greatness. He decried the efforts of those, who at this juncture were attempting to minimise the Raja's services to his mother-land by supposed conclusions and unwarranted inferences based on case-records.

Rai Ramaprasad Chanda Bahadur's address dealt thoroughly with the controversy that had recently been raised by certain articles on Rammohun in Calcutta periodicals. With cogent reasoning he refuted both the unhistorical method and the conclusions arrived at in these articles. His address was highly appreciated by the audience. —*(Advance.)*

Serampore.—A meeting of the Serampore College Union Society was held on Friday, September 1st, 1933, with Prof. D. N. Ghosal in the chair, to observe the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy. Prof. K. K. Mukerji and Prof. R. Ganguly of the College Staff, and Dr. Benimadhava Barua of Calcutta University dealt with different aspects of the life and work of Rammohun Roy, and the President brought the meeting to a close with a stirring appeal.

Konnagar.—The death Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy was celebrated at 2 p. m. on Sunday the 5th February, 1933, in the Konnagar Brahmo Samaj Hall, under the auspices of the Konnagar Patha-Chakra. Kumar Munindradeb Rai Mahashai read a paper on "Liquidation of Illiteracy". Sj. Upendra Nath Ganguly M. A., B. L. presided.— *(A. B. Patrika.)*

Khanakul-Krishnanagar (Dist. Hughli).—The Centenary was celebrated here on 2nd March 1934 in a befitting manner. Dr. Hazari Lal Dhar was in the chair. Mr. Jamini Mohan Mukherjee, the Naib of Zemindar Dharani Mohan Roy's estate, Mr. Shib Krishna Basu, Dr. Abani Mohan Mukherjee, and many other distinguished personages of the locality were present. Jamini Babu in course of his speech said that Rammohun was an intellectual giant of the new age that had dawned upon India. Sriman Kamalesh Mukherjee pointed out that Rammohun was a century ahead of his times. He was truly a seer, and he paved the way for India's salvation and civilization. Mr. Narendra Nath Ghosh, B.A. emphasised that the Raja was the pioneer of all public movements of Modern India. The President in his fine address said that the prophecy which the immortal Raja made in 1816, viz. that "a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice, perhaps acknowledged with gratitude",

—has been most completely fulfilled. He is to-day adored and worshipped all over the world as one of the greatest and most perfect men that the world has ever seen.

Radhanagar (in District Hughli, the birth-place of Rammohun Roy.)—Under the auspices of the Radhanagar Palli Samiti, the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy was celebrated in the Samiti premises during the Easter holidays of 1934. The annual general meetings of the Radhanagar Palli Samiti, the Co-operative Anti-malaria Society, and the Prasanna Kumar Sarvadhikari Library were also held there the same day. Mr. Surendranath Mallik, M.A., B.L., C.I.E., presided over the deliberations of all the meetings.

Mr. J. N. Basu, M. L. C., Kumar Munindradeb Rai Mahashai, M.L.C., Mr. Taraknath Mukherjee, Chairman, District Board, Hughli, Kaviraj Kishorimohan Gupta M.A., Vyakarana-tirtha, and many other eminent men were present. The meeting was largely attended by all sections of local people. The proceedings opened with a song of the Raja. The President delivered a nice speech dwelling on the life and activities of Rammohun. He pointed out with his charming eloquence that it was the Raja's eclecticism, his study of comparative religion, his sincere faith in God, his religion founded on truth and knowledge, and, above all, his social reforms and political activities, that made him the Maker of Modern India. He was the very giant of his age in personality, and in fact he was the pioneer in the uplifting of the 'Harijans', and in all modern Indian thought and activities.

A Resolution was adopted requesting the Radhanagar Rammohun Memorial Committee to find out ways and means to have the Memorial Building soon completed at Radhanagar, where the boy Rammohun lived, moved, and had his existence, and to make it the centre of all activities for local people.—(*The Amrita Bazar Patrika.*)

Burdwan.—The Centenary was celebrated at Burdwan on 4th November, 1933. A party of four consisting of Sjts. Baradakanta Basu, B. A. and Surendranath Das, M.A. and Professors Dhirendranath Chowdhury, Vedantavagis, M.A. and Rajanikanta Guha, M.A. went from Calcutta to take part in it, and was hospitably entertained by Babu Bhaminiranjan Sen, B.L., pleader. A public meeting was held in the Bangsa Gopal Town Hall, which was presided over by Babu Amarnath Dutt, M.A., B. L., M.L.A. The proceedings commenced with a hymn sung by Babu Surendranath Das, after which Barada Babu offered a prayer. Then Mr. Dutt delivered his presidential speech. Prof. Guha followed him with an address on *Rammohun Roy's Influence on Nation-building.* Prof. Vedantavagis next spoke on *Rammohun Roy's Religion and Sadhana.* Babu Kamalkrishna

Basu M.A., B.L., pleader, and two other local gentlemen added their tributes to the Raja. The concluding song also was sung by Surendra Babu.

Kalna (Dist. Burdwan.)—On 16th November, 1933, a public meeting for celebrating the Centenary was held in the Town Hall under the presidency of Sjt. Purna Chandra Roy, B.L. The proceedings commenced with a hymn and a short prayer. Sjt. Nirmal Chandra Chatterji, B.L., and Swami Nityagaurananda Avadhuta of the local *Nirvan Math* addressed the meeting on several aspects of the Raja's greatness and the many reforms introduced by him. Mr. Mathuramohan Ganguli dealt with the principal events of the Raja's life, and showed that he was the pioneer of all reforms in India, the founder of Comparative Religion, the father of Bengali prose literature, a great linguist, a great theologian, and a great jurist. He was a nationalist of nationalists, a Hindu of Hindus, but at the same time he was a universalist and a cosmopolitan, for his heart never remained confined to his own country, but went out in sympathy to the whole of humanity. Service of humanity was to him the worship of God. The message of his life was faith in God, peace on earth, and good will among men. Rammohun is not dead, but he lives in the works he initiated for the uplift of his country, and it will take several more centuries to form a right estimate of his worth and works.

The president concluded the meeting with an instructive, impressive and inspiring speech, noting briefly how the Raja infused a new life into his countrymen, and removed the many evil practices then eating into the vitals of national life. The meeting dissolved with a vote of thanks to the president and the speakers, and a hymn by Sjt. S. M. Ganguli.

Katwa (Dist. Burdwan.)—On the 20th December 1933 a public meeting was held in the Ramaprasad Town Hall under the presidency of Sjt. Ashutosh Mukherji, B.L., Secretary to the local bar. Mr. Mathuramohan Ganguli sang a song composed by the Raja, and after a short prayer addressed the meeting for about a hour dealing with the many qualities of head and heart of the great man, and the various works of public utility he started for the good of his countrymen. The speaker said that Rammohun was not only a religious and a social reformer, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, and the remover of the *Sati* and other evil practices, but he devoted the best energies of the best part of his life to furthering the educational, industrial, judicial, financial and various other interests of his country. It was he who first fought for the liberty of the Press. Though he himself

was a hereditary landlord, he never desisted from advocating the cause of the indigent cultivators of the land, and pressed that their rights over the land should be made as strong as those of the zemindars. He supported the separation of the judicial and the executive functions of Government, and their subordination to the legislature, which, he said, should include representatives of the people; and he was strongly in favour of the colonial system of government as obtained in Canada and Australia. He was an epoch-making man. We should honour him and follow in his footsteps.

Suri (Dist. Birbhum.)—On 6th November, 1933, Divine service was held in the local Brahmo Samaj in the evening. Babu Surendrasasi Gupta conducted the service and Babu Bhabasindhu Datta gave a discourse on the Raja's *Sadhana*. On 7th November, Divine service was held in the morning at the house of Dr. Kalidas Sarkar, conducted by Babu Amritakumar Datta. In the evening a public meeting was held in the Town Hall, presided over by Mr. Sukumar Sen, District Judge. Babu Bhabasindhu Datta sang a hymn and offerd a prayer, and Babus Surendrasasi Gupta, Bhabasindhu Datta, Bidhubhusan Das and Hemendranath Mukherji spoke on the life and work of the Raja.

Rampurhat (Dist. Birbhum.)—The Centenary was observed here on 4th November, 1933, by a public meeting in which many enlightened people were present. Mr. Sridhar Majumdar, retired Sub-Deputy Collector, presided. Babu Bhabasindhu Datta opened the proceedings with a hymn of the Raja and a prayer. Bhabasindhu Babu and Babu Surendrasasi Gupta spoke on the various aspects of the Raja's life. On 5th November Divine service was held in the local Brahmo Samaj. Surendrasasi Babu conducted the service, and Bhabasindhu Babu and Sjt. Amritakumar Datta sang hymns.

Contai (Dist. Midnapur.)—The Centenary was celebrated here with great enthusiasm from 10th to 13th November, 1933. Divine Services were held in the evening on the 10th, and in the mornings on the 11th, 12th and 13th, in the local Brahmo Samaj. Public meetings were held in the evenings on the 11th and the 12th. On the first day Sjts. Bhabasindhu Datta and Surendrasasi Gupta spoke. On the second day Bhabasindhu Babu presided, and Sja. Subodhbala Biswas and Sjt. Jogeshchandra Basu read papers, and Sjt. Jibankrishna Maiti and Sjt. Surendrasasi Gupta delivered speeches. On the 13th after the morning service, which was conducted by Sjt. Amritakumar Datta, Sjt. Bhabasindhu Datta delivered a sermon on the excellence of Brahmopasana.

Santipur (Dist. Nadia).—The Centenary was celebrated here on 27th September, 1933. In the morning there was a divine service at the local Girls' School, with readings from scriptures, followed by a feast. In the afternoon a public meeting was held in the Brahma Mandir under the presidency of Rai Sahib Haridas Goswami B.A., B.T. The proceedings began with a hymn. Sjt. Sudhirkumar Vidyanta read a paper on Rammohun Roy, and the following gentlemen spoke : Sjt. Bholanath Paramanik Banikantha, Sjt. Kshetramohan Roy, Sjt. Jnanananda Mukherji, M.A., Rai Sahib Damodar Pramanik, Sjt. Jogananda Pramanik, and the president. The meeting terminated with a hymn.

Kushtia (Dist. Nadia.)—The Centenary was celebrated by the "Sahitya-Basar" of Kushtia on 31st January 1934. Essays written on the life and activities of the Raja were read and speeches delivered at a special sitting of the Basar held on that date.

Khulna.—The Centenary was celebrated with great enthusiasm on 16th and 17th December, 1933. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra of Calcutta and Babu Manomohan Chakravarti of Barisal came for the occasion. Divine services were held at the house of Babu Nirmalchandra De, Postal Superintendent, Manomohan Babu and Krishna Kumar Babu conducting the services on the 16th and 17th respectively.

On the 17th, which was a Sunday, a public meeting attended by more than a thousand people (including ladies) was held at the Coronation Hall from 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. The Chairman of the Municipality, the Chairman of the District Board, the Government Pleader, and numerous high officials, zemindars, medical men, professors, teachers, lawyers, students and people of all other sections of the community were present. Mr. Kamal Chandra Chandra, I.C.S., District Judge, was in the chair. A hymn in chorus was sung by girls, after which Babu Jnanendranath Ray Chaudhuri recited some verses of the Upanishads. Babu Charuchandra Nag and a few other lawyers, Sja. Snehasila Ray Chaudhuri, and another lady read papers. A poem composed by the renowned poetess Mankumari Basu was then read. Babu Manomohan Chakravarti sang the Raja's hymn भाषी सेइ एके, and a Muhammadan pleader delivered an interesting lecture. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra then spoke with great enthusiasm and eloquence for about an hour on the various activites of the Raja. Babu Manomohan Chakravarti spoke eloquently on "The Ideals of the Age." The President wound up with a beautifully worded speech in Bengali on the necessity of our following in the Raja's footsteps. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the chair and the singing of the hymn जय युग आलोकमय by Babu Sudhirkumar Basu of Calcutta.

Senhati (Dist. Khulna.)—On the 18th December, 1933 the Centenary was observed with great enthusiasm at Senhati. Babu Manomohan Chakravarti of Barisal came for the occasion, and a largely attended meeting was held in the open field in front of the house of the late Babu Gopal Chandra Sen. About 600 people, including about two hundred ladies, attended the meeting, and patiently followed the proceedings till a late hour of the evening. Babu Yogananda Das, Secretary of the Women's Protection League, was voted to the chair, and in an eloquent speech he explained the object of the meeting, and dwelt on the duty the country owed to the Raja as the Maker of Modern India. After a song and a short prayer by Babu Manomohan Chakravarti, Babu Surendra Kumar Sen, B. L. read a paper in Bengali on the special features of the Raja's life. Next, Babu Manomohan Chakravarti delivered a long lecture, dilating on the numerous aspects of the life and teachings of the Raja, the vast audience listening to him with rapt attention. His speech, full of emotional flashes, left an indelible impression upon the minds of all. The meeting dispersed after a vote of thanks to the Chair and to the speakers.

Bagerhat (Dist. Khulna.)—The admirers of Raja Rammohun Roy met on the 20th December, 1933 at the house of Babu Girishchandra Das Gupta of Bagerhat to observe his Centenary. Babu Manomohan Chakravarti of Barisal, who had come to the town for the occasion, conducted a *kirtan* and a divine service, and preached an impressive sermon on *The Worship of One True God, the principal life-work of Rammohun Roy.*

Dacca.—The East Bengal Brahmo Samaj celebrated the Centenary with great solemnity from 5th August to 29th September, 1933.

PREPARATORY SERVICE AND LECTURES.—The celebrations commenced with a divine service on the morning of 5th August, Sjt. Amritalal Gupta acting as minister. In the evening there was an INAUGURAL MEMORIAL MEETING which was largely attended by the *elite* of the town, including a few European ladies and gentlemen. Mr. G. H. Langley, M.A., Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University, presided. Sjt. Girishchandra Nag, B. A., Professor Atulchandra Sen, M. A., Rev. H. D. Northfield, M. A., and Rai Bahadur Satyendranath Das, Chairman, Dacca Municipality, addressed the meeting, and paid glowing tributes to the hallowed memory of the Raja. Professor Sen in an impressive speech laid special stress on the fact that the Raja was essentially a universal man in the widest sense of the term, not only in religion, but in every sphere of human activity.

After this date there was a series of LECTURES by learned Professors of the Dacca and Calcutta Universities and other notable persons on different aspects of the Raja's life.

The *first lecture* of the series was delivered on 11th August by Dr. Hiralal Haldar, M.A., PH.D. of Calcutta, who after narrating the principal events of the Raja's life, explained the *Conception of Universal Religion.*

The *second lecture* was delivered on 12th August by Dr. Muhammad Shahidulla, M.A., B.L., D.LITT. of the Dacca University, who after paying a high tribute to the Raja's profound knowledge of Arabic and Persian, read and explained some passages from the Raja's Persian work, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin.*

The *third lecture* was delivered on 19th August in the Jagannath Hall of the Dacca University by Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., PH.D., P.R.S. on *Rammohun Roy, the Father of the Renaissance of Modern India.* The learned lecturer gave an illuminating and comprehensive survey of the entire field of the Raja's activities.

The *fourth lecture* was delivered on 26th August by Professor Haridas Bhattacharyya, M.A., of the Dacca University on *Rammohun Roy, the Religious Reformer.* It was a very interesting discourse on the Raja's activities in the field of religion.

The *fifth lecture* was delivered on 2nd September in the Hall of the Jagannath Intermediate College by Dr. J. C. Ghosh, D.SC. of the Dacca University on *Rammohun Roy, the Pioneer of Education in Modern India.* The learned speaker in a highly interesting speech clearly showed that it was the Raja who had given shape to the destiny of the nation in the field of education.

The *sixth address* was delivered in the Samaj on 9th September by Principal Binaykumar Sen, M.A. on *Rammohun Roy, the First modern Universal Man.* The learned lecturer in an eloquent and impassioned speech showed that the Raja, who was pre-eminently a world-man and was an embodiment of the noblest form of human culture and civilization, was undoubtedly the world's greatest man of the modern times.

The *seventh address* was delivered on 16th September in the Samaj, by Professor Kazi Abdul Odud, M.A. on *Rammohun's Sadhana.* It was a learned discourse on the cultural aspect of the Raja's life.

The *eighth lecture* was delivered in the Samaj on 19th September by Sir P. C. Ray, who said among other things that in the history of the world he could not find

another person with such versatility of genius as Rammohun Roy.

MEETINGS IN SCHOOLS.—With a view to encourage the study of the Raja's life among young students, arrangement was made for holding meetings in some of the local High English schools.

The *first meeting* was held in the Jubilee School on 19th August. The Head Master and other teachers took a lively interest. Sjt. Amritalal Gupta presided. Two beautiful essays on the life of the Raja were read by students. Sjt. Girish Chandra Nag also addressed the meeting.

The *second meeting* was held in the East Bengal Institution on 2nd September under the presidency of Sjt. Amarchandra Bhattacharya. A Muhammadan student read a poem composed by himself on the Raja. Four essays were read by students. Sjt. Amritalal Gupta in a sweet little speech narrated some events of the Raja's life.

The *third meeting* was held in the Nabakumar Institution on 9th September under the presidency of Babu Ganesh Chandra Sen, M.A., Head Master. Essays were read and addresses delivered on the life of the Raja. There was much enthusiasm among students.

THE UTSAVA IN THE BRAHMO SAMAJ MANDIR.—From 21st to 29th September the Samaj held a special Utsava. On 21st September morning, divine service was conducted by Sjt. Amritalal Gupta. On the 22nd divine service was conducted in the morning by Professor Debkumar Datta, M.A. In the evening Sjt. Mathuranath Guha read and expounded texts from Rammohun's *Vedantasara*. On the morning of the 23rd divine service was conducted by Sjt. Bankabihari Kar. In the evening there was a meeting of Brahmo young men under the presidency of Sjt. Amalchandra Bose, M.A., B.L. Sjt. Jnanendra Narayan Das Gupta, M.A., Miss Niharkana Das, and Sjt. Jogajiban Pal, B.T. gave addresses on the life of the Raja.

On the morning of the 24th (Sunday) divine service was conducted by Dr. Guruprasad Mitra, M.A. Vedantaratna. The evening service was conducted by Sjt. Amritalal Gupta. On the morning of the 26th divine service was conducted by Sjt. Amalchandra Bose, M.A., B.L. At 3 P.M. there was a Children's Gathering in which a beautiful essay was read by a boy of 9. Sjts. Amritalal Gupta and Jogajiban Pal explained to the children the meaning of the life of Raja Rammohun Roy. About 300 children were then treated to light refreshments. In the evening Professor Atulchandra Sen, M.A. delivered a highly interesting lecture on *Rammohun Roy, the Superman*.

On the 26th, Sjt. Rajanikanta Sarkar conducted divine service in the morning. In the evening there was a meeting presided over by Dr. Guruprasad Mitra. Sjts. Manomohan Chakravarti, Amritalal Gupta, Satyendra Narayan Das Gupta and others took part.

On the morning of the 27th September, the central day of the Utsava, Sjt. Manomohan Chakravarti conducted divine service and preached an inspiring sermon on the *Depth of Raja Rammohun Roy's piety.* At 3 P.M. divine service was conducted by Sjt. Mathuranath Guha, and a paper read by Sjt. Umacharan Sen, B.L. of Munshiganj. In the evening there was a MEMORIAL MEETING presided over by Sjt. Manomohan Chakravarti. Sjt. Amritalal Gupta, Professor Atulchandra Sen, Sjts. Jogajiban Pal, Birendranath Bose and Dhirendra Nath Chatterji paid their homage to the memory of the Raja.

Of the morning of the 28th divine service was conducted by Sjt. Amarchandra Bhattacharya. In the evening Sjt. Manomohan Chakravarti delivered a lecture on যুগাদর্শ ও সাধনা. On the morning of the 29th divine service was conducted by Amrita Babu. The concluding service was held in the evening when Prof. Rajanikanta Guha, M.A. of Calcutta officiated as minister, giving in his sermon a lucid explanation of the *Form of worship prescribed by Rammohun.*

PRIZE ESSAY.—In order to awaken in our young men an interest in the life of the Raja, the East Bengal Brahmo Samaj announced a prize of Rs. 50 to be awarded to the writer of the best essay on the life of the Raja, the competition being open to College students of both Dacca and Calcutta Universities. The Prize was notified in the papers. Several essays were received. It is gratifying to note that the Prize announced was the gift of Rai Sahib Akshaykumar Roy, a member of the Samaj. A beautiful tricolour portrait of the Raja was freely distributed.

THE EAST BENGAL BRAHMO CONFERENCE.—Following closely upon the above Centenary celebrations came the 43rd session of the East Bengal Brahmo Conference, in connection with which Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra conducted a divine service and preached a sermon on the Raja on 1st October. On 2nd October Professor Rajani Kanta Guha, M.A. delivered a highly interesting address on *Raja Rammohun Roy, the Pioneer of Indian Nationalism.*

Narayanganj.—The Centenary was celebrated in the local Brahmo Samaj in September, 1933. On 25th evening and 26th morning, Sjt. Amritalal Gupta conducted divine service. On 26th in the evening a lecture was delivered by Prof. Atulchandra Sen, M.A. On 27th morning, there was a service by Babu Dinabandhu Mitra. In the afternoon,

a Memorial Meeting was held in the Municipal Library Hall, under the presidency of Dr. Manishchandra Sen, B.Sc., M.B. Several persons addressed the meeting and read papers. Sjt. Manomohan Mitra, Secretary to the Centenary Committee, read a paper in English. Three prizes of Rs. 5, 3 and 2 were announced for the three best essays on *The life and activities of the Raja* to be written by school boys and girls of the Narayanganj Sub-division.

The following extracts are from Babu Manomohan Mitra's paper :—

> The Raja's sacrifice can be truly appreciated only when we remember that he himself came of an ancient and illustrious Brahmin family with all the ardour and prejudices in favour of the rites which he so vehemently attacked.
>
> Shocking and deplorable practices have invariably followed the decay of spiritual ideals in all ages and in all countries. The burning of the so-called heretics at the stake by the predominant powers in Europe is an illustration in point. When reason gives place to rank prejudice and superstition, they, in the name of religion, lead a whole people to ignore the barest dictates of conscience and humanity. We thus find that half-burnt Hindu widows who escaped from burning pyres were forcibly brought back and re-burnt to a most horrible death. Even now, almost in the middle of the 20th century, are we Hindus altogether free from superstition ? We still practise worship by proxy or representative, which is unthinkable to a man who believes in the direct relation between God and His worshipper.
>
> The Raja founded the first Vernacular Press, a Veda Vidyalaya, an English School ; he started and edited journals and newspapers, and brought out various kinds of books and tracts for distribution to the people free of cost. He was the father of Bengali prose. His respect for women and his life-long struggle for the advancement of their condition, his stern attitude against polygamy, his fight for the rights of widows, and for the abolition of "*Suttee*", his struggles for the liberty of the Press, for the separation of the Judicial and the Executive, and for the introduction of the Jury system of trial at that distant age,—all indicate the superhuman character of his mind and genius. Even the modern questions of retrenchment of public expenditure, and of labour and capital did not escape his attention.
>
> He took a very great interest in the welfare of all the nations of the world. In France he was received

by the Emperor Louis Philippe, and was elected a member of the Societie Asiatique. In England he was compared to Plato, Newton, Socrates and Peter the Great. A man who could conceive so many reforms, and had the mental equipment to inaugurate and carry out so many of them in the teeth of violent opposition, is verily the Maker of a New Age.

Sonailbari (Dist. Faridpur.)—The village Sonailbari is an important centre of one of the so-called 'depressed' classes of Bengal for the diffusion of culture and advanced ideas among themselves. The local Sevak-Sangha celebrated the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy on 27th September 1933 with great enthusiasm. From 5 to 7 A.M. there was an Ushakirtan in which all the young men of the village joined. From 8 to 11 A.M. a special divine service was held in the local Girls' School. Sjt. Narayan Chandra Biswas, a teacher of the Girls' School, conducted the service. In the afternoon a public meeting was held. Maulavi Fazlul Haq Chaudhuri, President, Union Board, and Member, District Board, (who is a retired Police officer and Zemindar,) was in the chair. The meeting was attended by all the important local people. Sriman Krishnakanta Biswas, a student, read a beautiful poem on the Raja composed by himself. Sjts. Narayan Chandra Biswas and Amarendra Nath Das read two well-written papers. Sjts. Kartik Chandra Biswas and Manohar Ray delivered lectures, the former dealing with Rammohun's greatness as a man, and the latter with his religious work and the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj. In the evening divine service was held again from 6 to 9 P.M. Sjt. Pratap Chandra Haldar conducted the service, which touched the hearts of the congregation, moving many to tears.

Mymensingh.—The Centenary was celebrated here with great enthusiasm from 18th to 21st November, 1933. A very largely attended public meeting was held in the Town Hall on Saturday the 18th, Mr. Akshaykumar Majumdar, M.A., B.L. presiding. The meeting opened with a hymn of Rabindranath followed by a prayer. Mr. Hiranmay Banerjee, M.A., I.C.S., Joint Magistrate, delivered a thought-provoking speech. Swami Samvidananda of the local Ramakrishna Mission referred to Swami Vivekananda's appraisement of the Raja. Maulavi Abul Mansur, B.L. acknowledged Rammohun to be the progenitor of the Indian Renaissance. Mr. Manoranjan Banerjea laid special stress on the moral greatness of the Raja. Professor Akshaykumar Banerji, M.A. emphasised the ideals of the Raja in the solution of the pressing problems of the present day. The learned chairman paid a glowing tribute to the Raja as the foremost man in many a field of human thought and activity.

On Sunday afternoon, before a gathering of ladies, Mr. Krishna Kumar Mitra spoke of the Raja's many claims on the admiration and gratitude of his countrymen, pointing out in particular his services for Indian womanhood. In the evening, in the Brahmo Samaj, Mr. Mitra conducted service, and delivered an illuminating sermon on *The Religious Life of the Raja.* On Monday evening, Mr. Mitra delivered a most interesting and edifying speech lasting for over 2 hours, enumerating many forgotten but never-to-be-forgotten facts relating to the extraordinary life of the Raja.

On Tuesday, the 21st November, a social gathering was organised by young men. Mr. Mitra exhorted them to be worthy of the noble ideals of the Brahmo Samaj and of Rammohun Roy. In the evening he delivered a lecture on *The Drifting of Bengalis towards Moral Ruin,* sounding a timely note of warning against the vicious influences of corrupt literature, and vulgar cinema shows and theatrical performances.

Barisal.—The Centenary was celebrated in the Brahma Mandir. On 15th September, 1933, there was a meeting for awarding prizes for the best essays on Rammohun Roy. Sjt. Manomohan Chakravarti presided. After a hymn and a prayer, Miss Sucharita Das (3rd year class) and Master Amiyakumar Das Gupta (2nd year class), recipients of prizes, read their essays. On 16th September, at 7 P.M., there was a public meeting presided over by Sjt. Satyananda Das, B.A. Maulavi Hashem Ali Khan, B.L. spoke on *Islam and Raja Rammohun Roy,* and Sjt. Nibaran Chandra Das Gupta, M.A., B.L. on *Rammohun's Contribution to the World's Domain of Thought.* On the 17th September, Sunday, both in the morning and in the evening, there were Divine services, readings, kirtans and discourses, conducted by Sjt. Satyananda Das and Sjt. Manomohan Chakravarti. On 18th September, at 7 P.M. another public meeting was held under the presidency of Principal Satishchandra Chatterjee. Sjts. Gopal Chandra Biswas, B.L., and Satyananda Das, B.A., spoke on *Rammohun Roy and social Reform* and *Rammohun Roy and Religion* respectively. The Barisal Brahmo Samaj published a short biography of the Raja, priced at 2 annas for the general public, and 1 anna for students.

Banaripara (Dist. Barisal.)—The village of Banaripara was full of life and joy on the 1st October, 1933, to celebrate the Centenary of Rammohun Roy, the Maker of Modern India. On prominent places on both sides of the main streets hung posters in big red letters telling the villagers the programme of the ceremony. The two libraries and the Rajnath Amritalal Hall, where the

celebrations took place, were beautifully decorated with plantain trees, leaves, flowers, etc. On the main gate of the Public Library were seen the words *Jayatu Rammohun.* Here at 9 A.M. Prof. Nripeshchandra Guha Thakurta read texts from the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and Rammohun's religious writings. The learned professor proved from the Sastras that there was nothing non-Hindu in the teachings of the Raja. In the afternoon Prof. Devaprasad Ghosh unveiled the portrait of the Raja in the Rajnath Amritalal Hall. In the evening under his presidency a huge meeting was held in the Hall. Sjt. Karuna Mukherjee read letters of good wishes from the Poet Rabindranath, Principal S. C. Chatterjee, Sjt. Saratchandra Guha, Chairman, Barisal Municipality, and many others. Sjts. Kesabchandra Banerjee, Ananta Sikdar, Ashutosh Das, Karuna Mukherjee, etc., addressed the meeting, dealing with the life and activities of Rammohun. The President delivered a learned speech, in course of which he said that Rammohun was not only the greatest man of India, but he was the greatest man of the world.

Patuakhali (Dist. Barisal.)—For celebrating the Centenary Babu Manomohan Chakravarti of Barisal came here on the 9th December, 1933, and held divine services on that day and the next day in the local Brahma Mandir. He was also the main speaker in a public meeting held for the purpose in the Local Bar Library Hall, which was presided over by Rai Shamacharan Simlai Bahadur, Govt. pleader, and in which Babus Niranjan Banerji, Deputy Magistrate, and Mati Lal Das, Munsif, also spoke. The meeting was attended by the leading people of the place, including Govt. officials, pleaders, mukhtars, etc. Another divine service was held in the local Brahma Mandir on the 16th December.

Comilla (Dist. Tippera.)—On the requisition of Prof. Dwija Das Datta, M. A., A. R. A. C., Rai Bahadur Radha Kanta Aich, B.L., Mr. Rajani Nath Nandy, B.L, M.R.A.S., Rai Bahadur Bhudhar Das, B. L., Rai Bahadur Suresh Chandra Sinha, M. A., Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta, B. L., Mr. Radha Govinda Nath, M. A., etc., a largely attended public meeting was held on 19th November, 1933, at the Tripura Brahmo Samaj Hall to pay homage to the memory of the Raja. Representatives of all sections of the Hindu and Muhammadan communities, including a large number of ladies, assembled at the meeting. The venerable Mr. Prakash Chandra Sinha, retired Dy. Magistrate, was voted to the chair. Prof. Ajit Nath Nandy, M.A., Rai Bahadur Suresh Chandra Sinha, M.A., Babus Dhirendra Nath Datta, B.L., Basanta K. Majumdar, Nibaran Chandra Ghose, B.L., Maulavi Subed Ali, B.A., Prof. Nirmal Chandra Chaudhury,

M.A., and a young Muhammadan student of the College addressed the meeting. All the speeches were very impressive, and with one voice acknowledged the Raja as the pioneer of all movements, religious, social, moral, educational, and political, for the advancement of India. The salvation of India lies in following in the footsteps of the Raja. He has been rightly described as the Father of Modern India. A European missionary of great eminence has said, "There can be little doubt that as events unfold themselves in this land, and as the direction of its spiritual development is discerned, it will be increasingly apparent that Raja Rammohun Roy was the herald of a new age for his people, and that he kindled a fire in India that shall never be quenched."

Chunta (Dist. Tippera.)—The Centenary was celebrated on 6th October, 1933, in a pandal constructed for the purpose, at the Chunta Ananda Bazar. The opening song was sung by Miss Renu Sen. Proposed by Dr. A. C. Bhattacharya, and seconded by Sjt. Jyotindra Nath Sen, Advocate, Dr. S. K. Datta Gupta, M.A. (Cantab.), LL.M. (Cantab.), LL.D., Barrister-at-law, took the chair, and delivered his address, which was highly appreciated by the audience. Mrs. Sushama Sen then sang another song, and Dr. Kamini Deb read an article on the life and activities of the Raja. Sjt. Apurba Chandra Bhattacharya, Editor, *Chunta Prakash*, Dr. A. C. Bhattacharya, PH.D., Sjt. Jyotindra Nath Sen, and Sjt. Udaya Chandra Bhattacharya also spoke briefly on the various aspects of the activities of the Raja. The meeting terminated late at night with a song sung in chorus by Mr. P. K. Sen, Barrister-at-law, Mrs. P. K. Sen, Mrs. A. K. Sen, and other ladies and gentlemen.—*(Advance.)*

Feni (Dist. Noakhali.)—At the instance of Babu Krishnakishore Datta, B.L., and Khan Saheb Maulavi Abdul Khaleque, B.L., members of the local Bar, and Babu Tarit Mohan Gupta, Asst. Manager, Tippera Raj, a public meeting was held on Thursday, the 14th September, 1933 in the Feni College Hall to celebrate the Centenary. Khan Bahadur Maulavi S. M. Hossain, S. D. O., presided. There was a large audience. The College students, under the guidance of Prof. P. N. Sarkar, M.A., joined in the celebration enthusiastically. The spacious hall was decorated with green leaves and flowers. A portrait of the Raja was garlanded, and placed on the dais. The proceedings commenced with a hymn sung by a college student. Then another college student read a poem in Bengali composed by him eulogizing the greatness of the Raja. It created a deep impression in the minds of the audience. Mr. A. C. Rakshit, M.A., Principal of the College, delivered an interesting speech in English. He said that Rammohun Roy was

the pioneer of all reforms in modern India, and described the present age as the 'Rammohun Roy Age.' Prof. Maulavi Abdus Salam, M.A. then read a paper in Bengali. It was very interesting, and from it the audience could understand how the religious reform of the Raja is looked upon by an educated Moslem youth. Prof. Salam said that the number of Brahmos could not be ascertained from the Census figures, and that there were more Brahmos outside the Brahmo Samaj than in it. According to his view the Moslems also could be included among the Brahmos. Last of all, Mr. Amalendu Gupta, B.SC. read a paper in Bengali, in which he said that the religion preached and practised by the Raja was a universal religion, and that it was founded on faith in the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man.

Chittagong.—The Centenary was celebrated by a Memorial Meeting held in the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj Hall on the 27th September, 1933, at 7 P.M. presided over by Mr. Ramaprasad Roy. Babu Baradaprasanna Ray offered a prayer, and the followiug ladies and and gentlemen addressed the meeting:—Prof. A. Y. M. Abdul Haq on *The Affinities of Islam and Brahmoism*; Rev. Dr. R. L. Biswas on *The Raja's Religious Reform;* Srijukta Hemalata Bhattacharya on *The Raja's Labours for Women;* Babu Subrata Chaudhuri on *The Versatile Genius of the Raja;* Babu Barada Prasanna Ray and Babu Annadacharan Das on *The Raja's deeply devotional spirit;* and the President on *The Raja as the Leading Light of the Modern Age.*

Pabna.—The Centenary was celebrated with great enthusiasm on the 25th, 26th and 27th November, 1933. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra of Calcutta came to the town specially for the occasion. Divine service was conducted in the local Brahmo Samaj by Krishna Babu on the 25th in the evening, and on the 26th in the morning. On the 26th evening, a sankirtan party went in procession from the Brahmo Samaj to the Banamali Institute, where above one thousand people were assembled at a public meeting. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra was elected President. Brilliant speeches were delivered on the various aspects of Rammohun's life and activities. Sjt. Kalidas Bagchi, M.A., Deputy Magistrate, spoke on *Rammohun as a Man*, Sjt. Sasadhar Ray, M.A., B.L., on *Rammohun as the expounder of the Sastras*, Miss Amiya Datta Gupta, Lady Principal, Girls' School, on *Rammohun as a benefactor of women*, Sjt. Jnanada Govinda Chakravarti on *Rammohun as a Social Reformer*, Sjt. Nibaran Chandra Sen, M.A., Head Master, on *Rammohun as a Pioneer of English Education*, Prof. Tarini Charan Chaudhuri, M.A., PH.D., on *Rammohun as Pioneer of Bengali Prose and scientific education*, and the President, Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, on *Rammohun Roy's Religion.*

Bogra.—The Centenary was celebrated on the 23rd and 24th November, 1933, when Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra of Calcutta visited the place. Public meetings were held, on the 23rd at the Brahma Mandir, and on the 24th at the Park Hall. On the first day Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra spoke, and on the second day, besides him, Sjts. Baidyanath Sanyal and Sarada Nath Khan also delivered speeches on the greatness of Raja Rammohun Roy.

Dinajpur.—Under the auspices of the Dinajpur Zila Sahitya Sabha, the Centenary was celebrated on 2nd December, 1933. The meeting, which was presided over by Sjt. Surendra Nath Vedanta-Sastri, Head Pandit, Zila School, was attended by members of all local communities. Sjt. Prabhat Nath Sen Gupta, General Secretary of the Sahitya Sabha, read a paper on the life of Raja Rammohun, and many of the gentlemen present spoke on the various aspects of the life of the great man.—*(Forward.)*

Rangpur.—NOVEMBER, 1933. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra visited this place in connection with the Centenary on 7th and 8th November, 1933. On the 7th there was divine service in the morning in the Brahmo Samaj. In the evening a PUBLIC MEETING was held in a *shamiana* in the Rammohun Roy Club premises. Babu Jogesh Chandra Majumdar, the veteran pleader of the place, was voted to the chair. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra was the principal speaker. On the 8th at 3 P.M. another meeting was held at the Carmichael College Hall at the instance of the College Union. Numerous students, including lady students, attended. Krishna Kumar Babu spoke on the condition of Bengal a hundred years ago, and on certain trends of thought in modern times. In the evening there was a divine service at the house of Dr. Jnanadananda Das Gupta.

CELEBRATIONS BY THE RAMMOHUN CLUB IN DECEMBER 1933.—As the town of Rangpur is connected with a very active stage in the life of Rammohun Roy before his coming to Calcutta, his admirers belonging to the place naturally instituted a *Club* in his name, with a view both to perpetuating his memory and to serving the public.

The RAMMOHUN CLUB was therefore established in 1926 by the joint efforts of Babu Jatindra Nath Chakravarty, Sarishtadar, Rangpur Collectorate, and his colleagues, prominent among whom were Babus Ramesh Chandra Ghosh, Priya Nath Sen, Keshab Lal Bose, and (the late) Tara Prasanna Sanyal.

The AIMS and OBJECTS of the CLUB as set forth in its Memorandum are :—the establishment and maintenance of a Reading Room ; the encouragement of thrift, self-help and co-operation among the members ; promotion and culti-

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vation of fine arts and diffusion of useful knowledge; indoor and outdoor games; assistance of members and families of deceased members when in distress, and providing accommodation for such members as are unable to find suitable lodgings; etc. The CLUB is committed to a policy of abstention from all political and communal controversies.

The OPENING CEREMONY of the CLUB in 1926 was signalised by the unveiling of a portrait of the Raja. Jatin-Babu also prepared posters on which were printed some of the teachings and mottos of the Raja, and had them hung up in the premises of the CLUB along with the portrait. He also organised Essay Competitions on the Raja's teachings, some of the subjects selected being: (1) Benevolence is the truest homage to God; (2) The object of all the commandments of God is to teach us our duty towards our fellow creatures; (3) Morality is indispensable to the proper worship of God; etc. The best writers of essays were awarded prizes. Many distinguished speakers of the town took part in these meetings.

The LIBRARY of the CLUB possesses a good collection of books, and subscribes several good magazines, such as the *Modern Review*, the *Prabasi*, the *Saogat*, etc.

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES OF THE RAJA have been regularly observed by the CLUB since its foundation. Among those who have graced these functions are Sir P. C. Ray, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Dr. M. Shahidullah, Dr. Mohini Mohan Bhattacharya, Mr. Krishna Kumar Mitra, Mr. Atul Chandra Gupta, Mr. J. N. Gupta, etc., besides such prominent citizens of Rangpur as the Raja Bahadur of Tajhat, Dr. D. N. Mallik, Mr. Surendra Chandra Roy Choudhury, Mr. Chandi Charan Roy Choudhury, etc. Since 1930 silver medals are being awarded during these anniversaries to the best writers of essays on the Raja's life from amongst these four groups:—(1) school boys, (2) school girls, (3) college students, and (4) the general public.

THE CENTENARY, 1933.—The CLUB convened a meeting on 16th July, 1933 to concert measures for the celebration of the Centenary, with Dr. D. N. Mallik, SC.D., I.E.S. (retd.) in the chair. The following Committee was formed:—*President*, Rai Sarat Chandra Chatterjee Bahadur, B.L. *Vice-Presidents*, Rai Jogendra Nath Chatterjee Bahadur, B.L., Rai Radha Raman Majumdar Bahadur, Dr. D. N. Mallik, SC.D., I.E.S. (retd.), and Mr. Surendra Chandra Roy Choudhury. *Honorary Secretaries*, Mr. Suniti Ranjan Sen, M.A., B.L. and Mr. Jatindra Nath Chakravarty. *Honorary Assistant Secretaries*, Mr. Tarini Prasanna Sanyal, B.A. and Mr. Jyotsnamay Das Gupta. *Members*.—Miss Suniti Bala Gupta, M.ED. (Leeds), Raja Gopallal Roy Bahadur of Tajhat, Rai

Mrityunjay Roy Choudhury Bahadur, Dr. N. Gupta, PH.D. (Vienna), Rai Sahib Panchanan Barman, M.A., B.L., M.B.E., M.L.C., Khan Sahib Mobarak Ali, B. A., Dr. Jnanadananda Das Gupta, etc. A programme of work was prepared, and contributions were raised throughout the district. The District Board, the Rangpur Municipality, and the Gaibandha Municipality contributed Rs. 100/-, Rs. 25/-, and Rs. 25/-, respectively, The Club sancioned Rs. 50 from its funds, and also raised some more money.

THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS were opened on 1st December, 1933, at 8-30 A.M. by Mr. P. C. De, I.C.S., District and Sessions Judge. The Club Hall was tastefully decorated with portraits of the Raja and of his tomb at Bristol, and with suitable texts from his writings. All distinguished citizens attended the function. Mr. De in a neat little speech described lucidly the manifold activities of the Raja, and his claim to universal homage. There were a few other speeches also, after which the AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION was formally opened by Mr. N. M. Ayyar, M.A., I.C.S., District Magistrate, before a large gathering. The Exhibition lasted for 7 days. Stalls were opened by the local Jail, the Jute Weaving Institution of Nilphamari, the Salvation Army's Saidpur Nat Settlement, the Government Veterinary and Agricultural Departments, and the Public Health Departments of the District Board and the Municipality. Arrangements were made for demonstrating the weaving of the famous Nisbetganj Sataranchi of this district, and of an automatic handloom invented by Rajani Kanta Barman, a rural inhabitant of the district. Among other interesting exhibits were sauce and water-colour paintings and fine knitting and needlework by ladies. Plenty of amusements such as Magic, Cinema shows, Lantern Lectures, a Musical Soiree, a Dramatic performance, etc. were provided. Five silver medals, and 20 first class and 15 second class certificates were awarded to the best exhibits.

A LITERARY CONFERENCE was held on 3rd December. Dr. D. N. Mallik, SC.D., I.E.S. (retd.), Principal of the local College, presided. Vedic hymns were sung by pupils of the Girls' H. E. School. Two poems on the Raja composed by Sjts. Manish Chandra Majumdar and Nripendra Chandra Sen were read. Mr. Jatindra Nath Chakravarty, one of the Honorary Secretaries, then opened the deliberations with a short speech. Mr. Bidhu Ranjan Lahiri, M.A., B.L. explained the social and religious ideals of the Raja and his interpretation of religions supported by the Upanishads and the Gita. Mr. Hari Pada Banerjee, M.A., B.L. read a learned paper in English ; Mr. Jatindra Kumar Dutt, M.A., B.L. and Maulavi Bashiruddin Ahmed also read

papers in Bengali and English. Dr. Mallik, in his presidential address, after touching upon some of the main features of the life and teachings of the Raja, summed up the deliberations of the Conference. Medals for the Essay Competition were then awarded. After some more Vedic hymns and a vote of thanks by Mr. Keshab Lal Bose, the Conference came to a close.

Kakina (Dist. Rangpur.)—SEPTEMBER 1933. On the 27th September there was a divine service in the Brahma Mandir, the pulpit being occupied by Sjt. Kali Prasanna Das Gupta. In the evening there was a Memorial Meeting. It commenced with a prayer by Sjt. Lalit Mohan Sen Banibhushan. Babu Sukhamay Das Gupta, M. A. read a paper on 'Sarvabhaum Rammohun'.

DECEMBER 1933.—The second meeting of the Centenary was held on 23rd December. It began with a short prayer by Sjt. Lalitmohan Sen. Babu Kali Kanta Biswas, an old antiquarian from Dinajpore, and Rev. Mahesh Chandra Chakrabarti addressed the meeting, which was fairly attended by ladies and gentlemen. The meeting separated with a vote of thanks by Babu Sukhamay Das Gupta.

Prayer meetings were held every morning in the Brahma Mandir during the Christmas holidays, and all associated themselves with the homage that was being paid to the great Raja by the Central Centenary Committee at Calcutta.

Jalpaiguri.—The Centenary was celebrated by a public meeting held in the Brahmo Samaj on Saturday the 17th January, 1934, at 6 P. M. with the S. D. O., Mr. Jogesh Chandra Chaudhuri, M.A., in the chair. The hymn हे मोर चित्त, पुण्यतीर्थे जागो रे धीरे was sung by a choir of girls, after which Sja. Sarada Manjari Datta offered a short prayer. Mr. Chaudhuri then read his well-written presidential address, which was full of beautiful thoughts. Addresses on various aspects of the Raja's life and activities were given by Sjt. Prahlad Chandra Chakrabarti, Sja. Suniti Bala Chanda, M. A., Sarasvati, Dr. Bibhu Prasad De, Sjt. Jogendra Chandra Majumdar, Sjt. Jagajjyoti Pal, B. A. and Sja. Sarada Manjari Datta. The last speaker, who spoke *extempore*, showed how Indian women owed an unforgettable debt to the Raja, and how the religion inculcated by him had kept the men and women of India, (referring to herself in particular), from falling under the influence of foreign missionaries. The speaker described how keenly the Raja felt for the sufferings of all classes of people, and how his sympathetic heart would have bled for the earthquake-stricken people of Bihar, had he been living now. She wound up with an appeal

for help for the distressed Biharis. The chairman in his concluding remarks mentioned the fact that when Rammohun Roy was at Rangpur, Jalpaiguri was part of that District, and so the citizens of Jalpaiguri should feel that it is their right as well as their privilege to be associated with the honour that is being done to the Raja's memory. One notable fact about this meeting is that every speaker spoke enthusiastically about the Raja's religious and social reforms, and whole-heartedly admitted that the worship of one true God was the mainspring of his multi-sided activities. The proceedings terminated with another hymn.

Darjeeling.—The Darjeeling Brahmo Samaj celebrated the Centenary with due solemnity on the 27th September, 1933. A meeting was held in the evening at the Samaj Mandir, and there was a respectable gathering of ladies and gentlemen. The function began with a hymn sung by Miss Mira Sarkar followed by a prayer offered by Rai Bahadur S. C. Das of the Darjeeling Municipality. The meeting was presided over by Justice J. R. Das of Rangoon.

Mrs. Hemalata Sarkar addressed the meeting in Bengali on the activities of the Raja at various stages of his eventful life as a social, political and religious reformer. Mr. B. Bhattacharjee, Head Master of the local Zilla School, spoke next, and was followed by Dr. Saroj Kumar Das, who described the Raja as a Representative Man in Emerson's sense. When truth hardens into tradition, such are the people sent out on the mission of resurrecting life, giving a message of truth from the grave of the past. Proceeding, Dr. Das said that in attempting a complete assessment of Rammohun's greatness, one was simply baffled in the endeavour of a compartmental analysis of his myriad-minded interests. The key-note of his greatness seems to lie in his irrepressible passion for freedom, not freedom of action merely, but freedom of the mind, which is far more comprehensive and radical. That was the acknowledged fountain-head of his inspiration for all reforms, juristic, political, social or religious. Dr. Das observed that the Centenary provided an occasion for heart-searching and self-criticism. It was up to the Brahmo Samaj, of which Rammohun was the reputed founder, to see that all its measures of reform and progress were attuned to the key of the famous Trust Deed of the Samaj drafted by the Raja.

Mr. A. Nandy, Assistant Head Master, who spoke next, said that Rammohun was a standard-bearer of that truth in reference to which the gospel of St. John had with a prophetic touch laid down,—"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free."

Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis spoke on the Raja's conception of the medium of instruction for the children of the soil. Referring to a letter written by the Raja to Prince Dwarakanauth Tagore, the speaker said that Rammohun had a predilection, no doubt, for the scientific method and the wide outlook of the West, but insisted nevertheless on the adoption of the vernacular as the medium of instruction. With a prophetic insight Rammohun saw into the utter futility of the misdirected enthusiasm for western culture, and with unerring precision laid the foundation of the ideal of New Learning, a cultural renaissance in the Orient, which was to develop by mutual contact, and not by importation.—(*United Press.*)

ASSAM

Gauhati.—The Centenary was celebrated at Gauhati in September and November, 1933. On 6th and 13th September there were readings from the Works of Rammohun Roy at the houses of Mr. S. C. Roy and Mr. J. Borooah. On 14th September a well-attended public meeting was held in the Curzon Hall, presided over by Mr. A. H. W. Bentinck, I.C.S. After a hymn and a short prayer, the presidential address followed. The following also made speeches :—Miss Datta, B.A., Mr. B. E. Bardalai, M.A., B.L., Mr. M. Khurshed, I.C.S., Mr. Lalitchandra Nayak, Mr. K. K. Bhattacharya, Mr. B. M. Sen, M.A., and Rai Bahadur S. N. Datta, B.A. A very successful Ladies' Meting was also held in the Curzon Hall on 16th September, in which several ladies, including Mrs. J. C. Das, took part. The third meeting of the celebration was held on Thursday, the 21st September, in the Curzon Hall with Mr. S. C. Roy in the chair. The subject for discussion was *Unity of Religions as conceived by the Raja.* The deliberations began with a choral hymn sung by the ladies, followed by a short prayer by Mr. L. M. Das. The following were the chief speakers :—Rev. R. B. Longwell, Mr. A. T. Chatterjee, M.A., Mr. Wajid Ali, B.L., Mr. B. B. Kakati, M.A., Mr. F. Ahmed, Bar-at-Law, and Sjt. Padmadhar Chaliha. Mr. K. S. Guha read a poem on the Raja. On 27th September, a special divine service was conducted in the morning by Principal S. C. Roy, who also gave some readings from the Raja's writings. Hymns were sung by Mrs. S. C. Roy. In the afternoon, an address was given by Mr. K. K. Bhattacharya, an Assamese Brahmo, on *Rammohun's ideal of*

Universalism realised in an all-round culture. He also made references to the Raja's all-comprehensiveness and genius. The function was solemn and impressive. An entertainment in the shape of a demonstration of physical feats by a local club followed. In the evening a prayer and discourse on Rammohun Roy was conducted by Rai Bahadur S. N. Datta, Assistant Director of Land Records.

The 'Bangiya Sahitya Parishad' and 'Prabasi Chhatra Sammilani' of Gauhati also celebrated the Centenary in the Arya Natya Samaj Hall on the 19th September under the presidency of Babu Bamada Charan Banerjee, M.A., Head Master, Collegiate School. A song specially composed for the occasion was sung by Miss Sen. Poems were read by Babus Kamakhya Sankar Guha and Birendra Chowdhury. Babus Satya Bhushan Sen and Gourmohan Das read interesting papers.

The meetings in November were held when Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra of Calcutta came to Gauhati. He gave several addresses on the life and work of the Raja. His first lecture in the College Hall on 16th November on *The Ideal of Moral and Religious Life* upheld the Raja's ideal of universalism. The same evening he conducted Divine service in the Brahmo Samaj, dealing in his sermon with the spiritual resourcefulness of the religion of the Brahmo Samaj. On 17th November he delivered a lecture in the Curzon Hall on the life and activities of the Raja. Brahmos and other members of the Gauhati public were immensely benefited by the elevating and inspiring presence of this revered octogenarian leader of the Brahmo Samaj.

Sylhet.—The Centenary was celebrated here with great enthusiasm from 15th to 21st December 1933. A spacious pandal was erected in a central part of the town for the purpose. Every evening from 700 to a thousand men and women, belonging to all sections of the community, assembled to listen to the speeches. The proceedings commenced on the 15th with the singing of one of the Raja's hymns, and the stotra "*Namaste Sate*", followed by a Universal Prayer read from the chair. Recitations by children and hymns both at the beginning and at the end were special features of all the meetings. The chair was occupied on the 15th by Prof. Nalini Mohan Sastri, on the 16th by S. M. Masih Esq., Dist. Judge, on the 17th, which was the Ladies' Day, by Mrs. Kaishor Manjari Shyam, on the 18th by Sjt. Nagendra Nath Datta, and on the 19th by Rev. J. W. Roberts of the Welsh Mission. There were 15 addresses in all, including 4 on the Ladies' Day.

Prof. Probodh Kumar Sanyal spoke on *Rammohun and Vedanta*, Mr. Susil Kumar Deb on *Rammohun's all-round*

greatness, and Sjt. Rajendra Mohan Chaudhuri on *Rammohun and Law and Politics*. Prof. Abdul Munim, M.A. spoke on *Rammohun's Universalism*, Mr. Upendra Kumar Kar, retired Sub-judge, on *Rammohun as the Inaugurator of a New Age*, and Maulavi Maqbul Husain on *Rammohun the Preserver of all Religions*. The speaker last named showed that Rammohun was a true friend of Islam, and that his followers have done more than Muslims to disseminate the truths of Islam in Bengal. Sjt. Jatindra Mohan Chaudhuri spoke on *Love of Truth as the fountain-head of Rammohun's activities* ; Prof. Suresh Chandra Sen Gupta read a paper in English on *Raja Rammohun, the Maker of Modern India* ; Prof. Narendra Nath Bhattacharya spoke on *Rammohun and the spread of education*, and Mrs. Nalini Bala Chaudhuri on *Rammohun and Indian Womanhood*. Sjt. Asok Bijay Raha read a poem composed by himself.

On the Ladies' Day, besides the President (Mrs. Shyam), Sja. Pranada Sundari Das, Sja. Mrinal Nandi, B.A., Sja. Sushila Devi, B.A., Sja. Uma Datta, B.A., Sja. Amiya Datta, B.A., and other ladies spoke on the life of the Raja. Mrs. Nalini Bala Chaudhuri, Secretary, Sylhet Mahila Samiti, announced that the Samiti would award a "Rammohun Medal" to the lady belonging to the district who would distinguish herself most in the year 1934 by literary activity, social service, or act of courage.

On the 20th December a Musical Festival, and on the 21st a Tableau exhibiting incidents of the Raja's life, were organised. Thirty-five papers on the Raja were received from the student community. Medals and prizes were awarded to the best papers.

Karimganj (Dist. Sylhet.)—The Centenary was celebrated here on 12th December 1933, under the joint auspices of the Karimgunj Club and the Sahitya Mandir with Sjt. Bipin Chandra Dey, M.A., Principal, Habiganj College, in the chair. The programme was an attractive one, comprising recitations, songs, and a few selected scenes from Rabindranath's dramas. Various speakers dwelt on the life of the great Raja from various standpoints, and a few elaborate essays were read. The article of Mr. Anil Roy and the *extempore* speech of Mr. Kumud Laha were appreciated highly by the audience.

Silchar.—Glowing tributes were paid to the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy at a public meeting held at Silchar on 13th November 1933. Rai Bahadur P. C. Chatterjee, Deputy Commissioner, presided. The meeting began with an impressive song by Mr. K. C. Chatterjee, the well-known musician of the town. Papers were read by Sjts. Manoranjan Sen, Samarendra Bhattacharjee, M.A., Manomohan Ranja Dey, Sudhir Ranjan Sen, Srimat Swami Jogeswara-

nanda of the local Ramakrishna Mission, and Sriman Fanindranath Datta, a student. Sjt. Gopendra Arjun of Sylhet in course of his stirring speech, laid great stress upon the fact that Rammohun Roy first aroused our dormant spirits to independent thought in social and political matters. Sjt. Nirode Chandra Goswami, M.A., Head Master, Cachar High School, addressing the big gathering, said that the Raja's life even after a century is a grand thing to discuss and admire. The President in a nice speech summarised the noble life of the Raja, and referred to the present question of the removal of untouchability which was first launched forth by the Raja, and is now accepted by Mahatmaji. He hoped that the demon of 'touch-me-not' would go away in no time.—(The *Navavidhan*, Calcutta).

Shillong.—The Brahmo Samajes at Shillong celebrated the Centenary in September and November 1933. On 24th September, divine service was conducted in the morning in the Laban Brahma Mandir by Mr. Atulananda Das, and in the evening in the Police Bazar Brahma Mandir by Rai Sahib S. N. Das. On 27th September a Memorial Meeting was held in the Police Bazar Brahma Mandir. President,—Mr. P. C. Roy, M.A. Speakers,—Mrs. Lila Ray, Miss Kamala Das, Mr. Hemantakumar Gupta, and Rai Sahib S. N. Datta.

The November meetings were held when Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra of Calcutta visited the town. On 10th November morning, divine service was conducted by Krishna Kumar Babu at the house of Rai Bahadur Mahendranath Gupta. On the 14th at 2 P.M. he spoke in the Mahila Samiti of the Laban Brahmo Samaj on the life of the Raja. In the evening a public meeting was held in the Police Bazar Brahmo Samaj. Krishna Kumar Babu presided, and delivered an interesting address. Other speakers were, Rai Bahadur Mahendranath Gupta, Maulavi Ata-ur-Rahman, Mr. Kong Fahikan, Rai Sahib Sivanath Datta, Mrs. Lila Ray, and Sir Muhammad Saadulla. On the 15th Krishna Kumar Babu conducted service at the Laban Brahmo Samaj.

Cherrapoonji (Khasi Hills Dist.).—The Centenary was celebrated here on 10th, 11th and 12th November 1933. On 10th November, there was a sankirtan in the evening, after which Mrs. Philemon offered a prayer. On the 11th there was a prayer meeting in the morning, when U Dori Roy offered a prayer. In the evening, divine service was conducted by Babu Aswatthama Roy who came from Nongjiri. On Sunday the 12th November, which was the principal day of the celebrations, U Johon of Sasarat conducted divine service in the morning. At 11 A.M. there was the Women's Meeting when Mrs. Philemon conducted

service and preached a sermon. At 2 P.M. the principal meeting began with a prayer offered by Rev. Nilmani Chakrabarti. Then Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, the venerable President of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta, who had specially come here for the occasion, called different persons, one after another, to address the meeting. Babu Rohinikanta Roy read a paper in Khasi. He was followed by Mrs. Mahendrakumar Gupta, Mrs. Philemon, and by Rai Bahadur Mahendrakumar Gupta. Babu Anath Bandhu Sen and Babu Atul Bhushan Sarkar of Shillong. The President spoke last. The Bengali addresses were explained in Khasi by Babu Rohinikanta Roy. Rev. Chakrabarti exhibited the portrait of the Raja to the audience. At the conclusion of the meeting a sankirtan party with *mridanga* and *kartal* went from the Samaj Mandir along the main Station Road to Cherrapoonji village, a distance of about 2 miles, singing all the way. At the Brahma Mandir at Pamalang, U Ilis Mohan Roy of Sohbar offered a prayer, and addressed the people assembled there. The party then returned to the Cherrapoonji Mandir by a different route, singing sankirtan all the way. The sankirtan party consisted of both men and women, and there was great enthusiasm. A prayer was offered by Babu Rohinikanta Roy and a concluding address and prayer by Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra. His address was interpreted.

Local Bengali gentlemen attended the Centenary meetings, and the large hall was full. Owing to quarantine restrictions consequent on an outbreak of cholera, many Brahmos and others from different villages could not come. Still the big hall was filled. The celebrations were a great success, and created enthusiasm among the people.

Dhubri.—The Centenary celebrations were held at Dhubri in September and October 1933. Divine service was held in the Brahmo Samaj on 27th September both in the morning and in the evening. Babu Romesh Chandra Mukherji conducted the service in the morning, and Babu Kamini Kumar Chakravarti in the evening.

A largely attended public meeting was held in the High School Hall on 27th October. Mr. K. W. P. Marar. I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner of the district, presided. The function began with a hymn in chorus led by Mrs. Sudevi Mukherji, followed by a short prayer by Sjt. Pratapchandra Nag. Mrs. Bijanbasini Datta and Mrs. Kripakana Haldar read papers; and Mr. R. N. De, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Mr. Bishnu Prasad Duara, Extra-Assistant Commissioner, Maulavi Darajuddin Ahmad, Extra-Assistant Commissioner, Babu Sasadhar Majumdar, Head

Master, Babus Ramanikanta Bose, B. L., Girishchandra Datta and Romesh Chandra Mukherji, and the President, spoke on the life of the Raja. Two prizes were awarded, one to Miss Nalini Bose, student of the Girls' High School, and the other to Karim Bakhsh of the Boys' High School, for their essays on the life of the Raja. A concluding hymn in chorus was followed by a vote of thanks. The meeting was a great success. On 28th October, a Ladies' Meeting was held in the Brahmo Samaj. Mrs. Basantakumari Mukherji presided. A hymn sung by Mrs. Snehaprabha Neogi was followed by a prayer offered by the President. Mrs. Bijanbasini Datta spoke, and Mrs. Charubala Datta, Mrs. Kripakana Haldar, Miss Mihika Nag, Miss Kamala Das Gupta and Miss Nalini Bose read papers. The meeting was well attended.

Bilasipara (Dist. Goalpara.)—The Centenary was celebrated here with great *eclat* on 19th December 1933. A public meeting was held in the Indranarayan Academy Hall. Pandit Durgakinkar Sastri presided. Babus Himansu Mohan Roy, M.A., Sudhir Kumar Chakravarti, M.SC., Matilal Sarkar, Prafulla Krishna Bagchi, and Maulavi Abdul Jabbar delivered speeches. Sjts. Nirmalya Bagchi and Bimala Kanta Chakravarti read papers.

Dibrugarh.—At Dibrugarh the Centenary meetings were held in September and October 1933. Divine service was conducted in the Brahmo Samaj on 23rd and 24th September by Mr. J. N. Das. A number of ladies and gentlemen, besides the members of the local Brahmo Samaj, attended the services. Mr. Das specially dealt with the significance of the Brahmo Samaj and of its founder. His sermons were greatly appreciated.

In the evening of 24th September a Memorial Meeting was held in the Brahmo Samaj, presided over by Lt.-Col. J. L. Sen. Representatives of various communities gathered at the meeting. Pandit Sivanath Bhattacharya, an Assamese Brahmin, described Rammohun as nothing short of an Avatar. He said that the great Raja was a Saviour of Modern India, and a true exponent of liberal Hindu religious scriptures. He quoted verse after verse from the Gita, and said that Rammohun's ideals were all there. Next he said that his own presence that day to share the Centenary celebration might be taken as due to the great service done by the Raja, in conjunction with Lord William Bentinck, in penalising the burning of the *Sati* a century back. His grandmother was sacrificed on her husband's pyre. His mother also would have been destined to the same lot on the death of his father, who left him in the widow's womb, but for Rammohun Roy's *Sati* agitation.

Babu Chidananda Das put great stress upon the two characteristic features of Rammohun, viz., Love of Freedom and Moral Courage. He said that the Raja fought single-handed against scores of irrational dogmas and vices, and every time came out victorious.

A very learned speech was delivered by Mr. S. C. Ganguli, M.A., who dealt with all aspects of the Raja's life, and especially with his political ideals and outlook. He said that the first-rate politicians of the present day could not suggest anything new in their political aspirations and expressions,—nothing more than what Rammohun had expressed over a hundred years back. Miss P. Das, B.A. read a paper in Assamese, followed by Master Sangram Kumar Roy, both of whom paid glowing tributes to the memory of the Raja.

The last speaker, Babu Jogendrakumar Chakravarti, said that the cult of the Brahmo Samaj was unsectarian, and its founder's gospel based on truth, embracing all the great religions of the world. The greatest man of the present times, Mahatma Gandhi, is one of the truest followers of the Raja.

The October meeting was convened, after the Puja holidays by the public of Dibrugarh in the Indian Club Hall on Thursday, the 11th October. Babu Basambad Mitra, M.A., B.L., an influential member of the local Bar, presided. The meeting was of a representative character, and attended by a large number of gentlemen from various communities. Two ladies graced the assembly. A song composed for the occasion was sung by Babu Gopal Chandra Banerjee. It was followed by a recitation of Vedic verses and *Svastivachana* by Pandit Parbati Charan Vidya-bhushan.

Maulavi Maniruddin Ahmed read a paper. Babu Joges Chandra Ghose recited, amidst applause, a beautiful poem composed by himself. Maulavi Sayidur Rahman, M.A., B.L., M.L.C., delivered a fine speech on the monotheistic ideals of the Raja. Mr. S. C. Ganguli, M.A., in an eloquent speech on the unique character of the Raja, said that he had done a great service in bringing English education to India. Master of 10 languages, the Raja wrote the English language a century back so well that even now masters of style marvel at his diction. Next, he spoke of the Raja's activities in reforming the Hindu Law of Inheritance, his attempts to introduce the Jury system, his publication of books, pamphlets, magazines, and his fight with the Pandits, all of which showed that Rammohun was the greatest man of India in his time. Pandit Abinash Chandra Sinha defined the character of the Raja as a Saviour of the Hindu society, and a liberal thinker, though he was in the

strictest sense a Hindu, having lived and died a Hindu. The meeting terminated after a fine speech by the president, followed by a closing song composed for the occasion and sung by Mr. B. C. Mukherjee.

BURMA

Rangoon.—Under the lead of the Rangoon Brahmo Samaj, a representative Committee composed of the following members was formed for taking steps for the celebration of the Centenary in a befitting manner :—The Hon. Mr. Justice S. N. Sen (*President*), U Ba Dun, U Khin Maung, Dr. J. H. Gray (*Y. M. C. A., Central*), Messrs. P. S. Moses (*Y. M. C. A., Town Branch*), D. A. Anklesaria (*Theosophical Society*), S. A. S. Tayabji (*Muslim*), Dr. Anup Singh (*Sikh*), Dr. Gurudutt Sarin (*Arya Samaj*), Swami Punyananda (*Ramakrishna Mission*), Mrs. J. Mukerjea, Mrs. P. Basak, Mrs. S. Mazumdar, Messrs P. C. Chakravarti, K. C. Niyogi, M. Mukerjea, K. K. Roy, D. Chakravarti, S. Rudra, C. Chakravarti, B. K. Basak, (*Secretary*), H. Talukdar, (*Jt. Secretary*). It was decided to have a Public Meeting on 27th September, as well as more elaborate celebrations in January 1934.

The public meeting on 27th September was held in the Prayer Hall of the Rangoon Brahmo Samaj. The Hall was filled to its extreme capacity. The Hon. Mr. Justice Mya Bu occupied the chair, and Mr. D. A. Anklesaria, B.A., LL.B., Dr. M. Rauf, B.A., LL.D., Bar-at-law, and Mrs. S. Mazumdar, B.A., addressed the meeting. Mr. Anklesaria dealt with the formative influences which helped the evolution of the Raja's theistic doctrines. Dr. Rauf laid special stress on the great impetus given by Rammohun to the cause of Indian Renaissance. Mrs. Mazumdar described the British period in India as the Age of Rammohun, and laid special emphasis on the religious aspect of his life. She also dealt with the social reforms of the great Raja, especially those directed to the cause of female emancipation and improvement of the status of women in Indian society. The Chairman in a few well-chosen words described the Raja as the most prominent figure in the sphere of international culture at that time.

With a view to encourage the study of the Raja's life among the student population of Burma, the Celebration Committee announced an Essay Competition under these 3 groups,—(1) College students : Subject of the Essay, *Rammohun's contribution to humanity.* (2) School students :

Subject, *Rammohun's life and work.* (3) Bengali students : Subject, *Rammohun's social and educational activities* (to be written in Bengali.)

The celebration in January 1934 came immediately after the Maghotsava. A Public Meeting was held in the Sashi Bhushan Neogi Hall, Bengal Academy, on Friday, the 26th January 1934. The spacious hall was filled with a representative and cosmopolitan gathering, including a fair number of ladies. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. N. Sen was in the chair. The proceedings opened with a song in chorus and a Sanskrit hymn sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments. After the Chairman's opening remarks, Mr. Leo C. Robertson, Bar-at-Law spoke, dwelling at some length on the philosophical aspect of the Raja's teachings, and the bearing of the Upanishads on his ideals. The next speaker, Mr. Bloech, German Consul, gave a brief sketch of the Raja's life and an interesting account of how his ideals had reacted on modern European culture. U Kyaw Myint, M.L.A., the next speaker, brought out certain points of contact between the Raja's teachings and Buddhistic principles.

Mr. C. A. Soorma, Bar-at-Law, discussed the Raja's life from the view-point of a Mussalman, and laid stress on his social reforms. Mr. D. Chakravarti, Aerodrome Officer, in a well-written paper treated the audience to an analytical study of the Raja's life and teachings, the most outstanding characteristics of which were, his love of freedom and his doctrine of universalism. He showed how Rammohun in all details of his life and activities, lived and acted true to his ideal. Mr. Mahit Kumar Mukherjee, M.A., B.T., B.L., Head Master, Bengal Academy, in another paper expounded the Raja's theological teachings, and discussed the different degrees of co-relation between them and the doctrines of other religious movements in India.

After the speeches, prizes were awarded to the winners of the Essay Competition. A Sub-committee of three appointed to adjudge the essays had recommended the award of *two* medals each in the 1st and 2nd groups. The recipients were, in the 1st Group, Inamullah Khan of Judson College, and Ma Khin Myint of the Teachers' Training College, Rangoon ; and in the 2nd Group, Chitra Basak of the Sarada Sadan School, and M. A. Beg of the Bengal Academy, Rangoon.

The Chairman after summing up neatly the remarks of the speakers gave an interesting concluding address.

Bassein.—The Centenary was celebrated by a public meeting held at the Cronkhite Hall (Pwo-Karen High School), on Saturday, the 16th December 1933, with Rev. C. L. Conrad, B.A., B.D., Superintendent, A. B. M. Pwo-Karen

Mission, in the chair. As the Bassein public was not expected to know much about Rammohun Roy, an interesting Manifesto[133] enumerating the Raja's great services to his country and to humanity had been issued by the Convenors along with the Notice inviting the public to the meeting. There was a fairly large attendance. The meeting began with a song of Tagore, followed by the presidential address of Rev. C. L. Conrad[117]. (The Manifesto and the Presidential Address will be found in Section C of Part II of this volume.)

After the President, seven other speakers, representing various communities resident in Bassein, addressed the meeting, dwelling exhaustively on the various aspects of the Raja's activities.

Mr. N. C. Sen and Miss S. Singha gave a general outline of the life and activities of the Raja, with special reference to his noble efforts in the cause of social reform, including the abolition of the *Suttee*, while Mr. H. Subrahmanyam and U Ohn Thwin dwelt on the activities of the Raja as a journalist and as an educationalist respectively. Mr. Md. Yusuf traced the monotheistic doctrine of the Raja to his close reading of the *Koran* and other Muhammadan religious books, while Mr. N. S. Dawson emphasised his intense love of freedom and his active sympathy with liberty movements throughout the world.

The last speaker, Mr. K. L. Mukherjee, referring to "the volume of mighty greatness" of the Raja, observed that he was not only one of the greatest social and political reformers of the age, but a great religious force with a genuine love for humanity.

Rev. C. L. Conrad, in his concluding remarks, observed that the best way of paying homage to the memory of the great man would be to live up to the ideals set up by him before them. The meeting concluded with another choral song, and a vote of thanks to the President and the speakers by Mr. B. N. Das, M.L.C.

Toungoo.—The Centenary was observed at Toungoo, in Burma by a meeting at the Jubilee Library on Thursday, the 28th September, 1933, when Rev. C. K. Hughes, Chaplain of Toungoo, and Principal of St. Luke's A. V. High School, took the chair. Mr. S. Banerjee, son of the late Dr. Nakur Chandra Banerjee of Bhagalpur, gave a most interesting account of the life of the founder, and another speech was delivered by U Aung Thein B.A. Dr. R. D. Pal, son of late Dr. Ballaram Pal, brought the meeting to a close by moving an expression of sorrow for the death of Mrs. Annie Besant, which had recently occurred.—(The *Navavidhan*, Calcutta.)

BIHAR AND CHOTA NAGPUR

Patna.—PRELIMINARY MEETING. A Public Meeting for taking measures for the celebration of the Centenary was held in the Rammohun Roy Seminary Hall, Khazanchi Road, Patna, on Tuesday, the 18th April 1933, at 5-30 P.M. Mr. S. M. Hafeez, M.L.C. was voted to the chair.

The following Resolution was moved and passed unanimously :—"Resolved that this meeting of the citizens of Patna, convened for the purpose of making necessary arrangements for the celebration of the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, offers its homage to the memory of the Raja, who heralded a new epoch in this country, and was the first among the nation-builders of Modern India, and calls upon all sections of the people of this province to co-operate in making the celebration a success."

The provisional programme included the following recommendations :—That the celebration be held during the University week in November ; that a Literary Conference, a Women's Conference, and a Convention of Religions be held, and papers relating to the Raja's life and activities be read and discussed ; that a book containing papers read at the Conference be published, and given free to all members of the Organising Committee ; that a portrait of the Raja be prepared, and presented to the Bihar Young Men's Institute as the offering of the Celebration Committee.

The following Office-bearers were appointed :—*General Secretary*, Mr. S. M. Hafeez, M. L. C. ; *Joint Secretaries*, Mr. Kuar Nandan Sahai, Mrs. Sris Chandra Chakravarti, Prof. Dhirendra Nath Sen and Prof. Bimanbehari Majumdar.

THE CELEBRATION.—Under the auspices of the "Bihar Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee" organised as above, the citizens of Patna with representatives from different parts of Bihar and Orissa celebrated the Centenary on 21st and 22nd November 1933 in the B. N. College Hall before a large and distinguished gathering presided over by Dr. Sir Syed Sultan Ahmed, KT., D.L.

The First Day's proceedings opened with the hymns शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्राः and भावी सेइ एके sung in chorus, followed by a prayer led by Sjt. Sris Chandra Chakravarti, Head Master, Rammohun Roy Seminary.

Paying his tribute to the memory of the Raja, the President read his address dwelling on the all-round greatness of the great Prophet of the Age. He said, "Truly Ram-

mohun was the first great nation-builder of Modern India, and was the foremost to have swum across the perplexed currents of her modern problems. With unfailing insight he realised that India grievously needed to be brought in touch with the world-forces of culture and civilisation."

Sir Courtney Terrel, KT., Chief Justice, Patna High Court, spoke at length on *Rammohun and Modern Education*. Dr. S. C. Sarkar, M.A., D.PHIL. read a most interesting paper on *Rammohun, the Herald of the New Age*, in which he said that a century ago the Raja thought out and worked on ideas and principles that have not yet been fully realised in India and in the world at large. If not for anything else, at least for hitting so early upon the two great truths of (*a*) synthesis of culture and (*b*) multiple personal experience, Rammohun deserved to be called the "Path-finder of our ages."

Prof. Khargasinha Ghosh of Hazaribagh, Mr. S. M. Hafeez, M.L.C., and Rev. R. Lund next spoke on *Rammohun and Vedanta*, *Rammohun and Islam*, and *Rammohun and Jesus* respectively. The first day's proceedings closed with the hymn नमस्ते सते,—the Raja's favourite hymn from the Mahanirvana Tantra.

The Second Day's proceedings commenced with the song हे मोर चित्त, पुण्यतीर्थे जागो रे धीरे sung in chorus.

Mrs. A. T. Sen, reading a paper on *Rammohun and abolition of the Suttee*, said among other things that the Raja felt that "it was his sacred duty to enlighten the mothers; for a mother's face was the first lesson of a child." She also said that all other reformers had but followed in his footsteps. Srijukta Sudhakana Chakravarti, speaking on *Rammohun as Champion of Women's Rights*, said that the Raja was not only the saviour of the Indian widows, but was the pioneer in the field of battle for the cause of Indian women in all those aspects which are now being fought for. The most dominating idea of the Raja in all his diverse activities and reforms lay, she said, in his realisation and his teaching that only a true ब्रह्मनिष्ठ गृहस्थ could attain the highest spiritual perfection and avoid social disruption, though giving women freedom and equal rights with man.

Prof. B. B. Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S., speaking on *The Political ideas of the Raja*, said that he was indirectly the founder of the Indian National Congress. It was he who was the first to discover the line of demarkation between Law and Morality, and he was the first to make a compromise between historical and analytical jurisprudence. Mr. Nageswar Prasad M.A., B.L. said that the Raja realised that nothing but social progress could improve the political and social condition of a country. He was practically the

originator of all reforms. Dr. Gyan Chand said that two ideas in economics, viz. taxation of luxury and reduction of land revenue, were first conceived by Rammohun. Prof. Niranjan Niyogi of Cuttack, speaking on *The Raja as an Educationist*, depicted Rammohun in a most charming manner as a torch-bearer in whose wake came the great reformers Maharshi Debendranath, Brahmananda Keshub Chunder, and Pandit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar. Principal K. P. Mitra of Monghyr, speaking on *The Raja's Contributions to Bengali literature*, showed that he was the first to compile a Bengali grammar on a scientific basis. Other speakers also paid homage to the memory of the great prophet.

The latter part of the meeting was presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Khwaja Muhammad Noor, Vice-Chancellor, Patna University, who in his concluding speech said enthusiastically that it was the sacred duty of Muslims to revere the memory of the Raja, for his teachings were influenced by, and had much in common with, Islamic culture. The function came to a close with the hymn भुवनवाणी सबे गाओ sung in chorus.

A booklet on *The Life and Work of Raja Rammohun Roy* with a tri-colour portrait, specially published on this occasion by the "Bihar Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee" was freely distributed to those present on both the days.

Gaya.—A public meeting was held at Gaya on 7th January 1934, to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy, under the presidentship of Principal D. N. Sen of the B. N. College, Patna. The Hallet Town Hall, where the meeting was held, was packed to its utmost capacity with persons of all sects and creeds. The meeting commenced with an opening song by ladies. Babu Sailendra Chandra Roy, a teacher of the Haridas Seminary, gave a vivid description of the lofty ideals of the Raja. Professor Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S. of the B. N. College, Patna, traced the various influences of Roy's activities on the lives of Indians, which he considered to be typical of the modern age. He brought home to the minds of the audience the fact that the Raja was the Father and Pioneer of the Reform Movement of the modern age in all its aspects. Babu Sachindra Nath Biswas, pleader, read a paper in Hindi on the life and character of the Raja, which was appreciated by all. After another speaker had spoken, the President, Mr. D. N. Sen, addressed the meeting. He began with the ancient history of Gaya, and dwelt on the ancient purity, serenity and sanctity of the town. It was in this town that in the 6th century B. C. Buddha got his illumination, and it was here that he delivered his first sermon. Then he paid his tribute to Raja Rammohun Roy,

who was one of the greatest and bravest reformers that India had ever produced. "India wants to attain political freedom, but she cannot go forward until and unless she goes back to her ancient days of spiritual culture and civilization." People of India had forgotten their past glory and tradition, and unless and until they took a bold stand for spiritual progress and reformation, as Rammohun Roy did, they had no chance of political emancipation.

An eight year old daughter of Babu Rames Chandra Mitra, Assistant Sessions Judge, entertained the audience by her sweet songs both at the beginning and at the end. Babu Ambika Prasad, a Zamindar of Hissua, announced a medal to be awarded by him to the student of Gaya, (male or female,) who would write the best essay on the life and teachings of Rammohun Roy.

Monghyr.—The people of Monghyr celebrated the Centenary of the death of Rammohun Roy and the Jubilee of the death of Keshub Chunder Sen by holding two public meetings on the 7th and 8th January 1934. Babu Srikrishna Prasad, M.L.C., one of the ablest speakers of the province, took the chair on the first day. His address was followed by other instructive discourses on the life and achievements of the great Raja by Babu Hem Chandra Basu, Advocate, and Sjt. Kalipada Mitra, Principal, Monghyr College. ... The attendance was respectable, with a fair number of ladies, and the intelligentsia of the town, including many Government officials and businessmen. The sweet songs with which Srimati Basanti Mitra treated the audience were edifying, and were very much appreciated. Both the functions took place under a pandal erected in the grounds of the Brahma Mandir, which is proud to possess the ashes of Sri Keshub Chunder sen, Sadhu Aghorenath and Bhakta Dinanath, and a few other believers, and since held in great reverence, not only by the members of the Samaj, but also by the religiously minded people in Monghyr, who find in the gardens around, interspersed with Samadhis of Sadhus, a real haven of peace and serenity.—(The *Navavidhan*, Calcutta.)

Muzaffarpur observed the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy at the Town Hall on Sunday the 10th December 1933 with Principal D. N. Sen of the B. N. College, Patna, in the chair. The Hall was very tastefully decorated for the occasion. An arch was erected at the gate, and special electric lighting arrangements were made, which lent grandeur to the celebration. A large-size portrait of the Raja was placed near the Presidential chair, and was bedecked with the finest roses supplied by Babu Ashutosh Chakravarty of Naroli. The hall was packed to overflowing with an audience fully representative in

character, and the gathering of educated and cultured people of the town, including a large number of ladies, was a remarkable feature of the meeting. Excepting the Rabindra Jayanti celebrated in 1931 at the premises of the Orient Club, which was a rare intellectual treat, the town of Muzaffarpur had not witnessed a similar public function so rich in gathering, so successful in the conduct of business, and so full of enthusiasm roused by the interesting and instructive speeches that were delivered.

The success of the celebrations was mainly due to the efforts of the organisers, among whom special mention may be made of Mr. Sriranga Vihari Lal, M.A. of Sitamarhi (late Head Master, Rammohun Roy Seminary, Patna,) Mr. Pradyot Kumar Sen Gupta, Assistant Commissioner of Income Tax, and Messrs. Upendra Nath Sen and Surendra Nath Sen, Pleaders, Dr. Upendra Nath Bhaya, Mr. H. C. Biswas, Power House Engineer, and Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath.

Punctually at 4 P.M. the function commenced with the Raja's favourite hymn from the Mahanirvana Tantra, *Namaste Sate*, sung by Messrs. Surendra Nath Sen and Haridas Mukherji, followed by the famous hymn composed by the Raja himself, *Bhabo shei eke*, sung by Mr. J. C. Gupta and his two daughters.

On behalf of the Organising Committee, Mr. Upendra Nath Sen accorded to the gathering a most cordial welcome, and explained to them the importance and usefulness of the day's celebration. He also pointed out that the true greatness of Rammohun lay not only in bringing the Modern Age in India, but also in discovering for her people the peculiar cultural genius of their country which lay buried in the Upanishads, and preaching to the world the universal truth of One God, One people, and One Religion, and also the socio-political doctrine of a world-wide Co-operation of Humanity.

Then followed speeches by two ladies. Srimati Aunrupa Devi, the renowned authoress, in her inimitable style in chaste Bengali dwelt on the service done by the Raja to Hinduism by placing the religion of the Vedanta for their acceptance in preference to other prevailing forms of worship to which Hindus were in danger of being converted. She was followed by Miss Maya Bhaya, B.A., who read an excellent paper in English dwelling on the Raja's special activities in the cause of the womanhood of India. Her observation that but for the Raja it would have been impossible for her to appear in a public platfrom on that occasion, and the manner in which she delivered her nice little speech, extorted admiration from the entire audience.

Professor Bimanbehari Majumdar of Patna, who followed, dwelt on the Raja's activities in the realm of politics, giving facts and instances gathered from close study of certain historical records not yet brought to light. Professor S. Roy of Patna observed that the Raja placed humanity above all things, and believed in the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. In his opinion the Raja was a true Indian, and remained so all his life, and at the same time he was inspired by the ideal of internationalism.

Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath, in the course of a feeling speech, stated that Raja Rammohun Roy led a crusade against the time-worn Hinduism which had degenerated into mere rituals and symbolism, and that he revealed to the people the pure religion of the Upanishads, wherein only lay true happiness for mankind. The Raja was one of those prophets who were ushered into existence, time and again, whenever there came dark periods in the history of India, and he had been preceded by Nanak and Kabir, the mystics who preached similar messages of Universalism.

An eloquent speech in Hindi was then delivered by Babu Lachhmi Narain Gupta, Pleader, who surveyed the life and work of the Raja, and paid a tribute to his services for Indian womanhood. He exhorted his countrymen to study the life of the great man.

Among those who read papers at the meeting, Mr. Basanti Charan Sinha referred to the Renaissance in India inaugurated by the Raja. Mr. Surendra Nath Sen in a learned discourse explained that Rammohun was a staunch follower of Sankaracharya, and adopted Advaitavada as the correct religious creed ; but in order to make it possible for the ordinary people of the world to approach God, the methods laid down in Mahanirvana Tantra were adapted by him for the ordinary worship of the Grihasthas.

Prof. Goshtha Hari Sinha, Professor of English, G. B. B. College, in beautiful and eloquent language gave a summary of the noble activities of the Raja, who devoted his life to the cause of human emancipation, and was a hero in the truest sense of the word. He said that it would be a mistake to think that the Raja was a mere iconoclast or the founder of a new faith. The Raja simply re-discovered Hinduism, and went back to the simple monotheistic faith of the Upanishads.

Principal Sen then rose amidst enthusiastic cheers, and delivered his presidential address, which was listened to with rapt attention. He expressed his delight at the befitting manner in which Muzaffarpur was celebrating the Centenary, and was pleased to see signs of intellectual awakening everywhere in Bihar, which was his beloved

province. Principal Sen observed that although the Raja had made a comparative study of all religions, he was a Hindu of Hindus, and his standpoint was that of the Upanishads. His God was the great God of our forefathers, the Brahma, the Infinite Being who inspired the race. This great message of the Rishis was an age-long cry, which was reverberating in the subconscious mind of the race, and again found full expression through the Raja, who in a clarion voice called Indians to go back to the simple creed of their forefathers after casting aside all superstitions. He preached that no one had the right to tamper with the spiritual relationship between man and God.

In an inimitable style garnished with exquisite poetic imagery, the President then went on to deal with the Raja's activities and greatness. He pointed out that while the mighty civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Rome have perished, the Aryan culture still survives. He struck a refreshing note of optimism by declaring that India cannot perish so long as her people followed her peculiar cultural outlook and spiritual ideal. India by her ideals of Co-operation of Humanity and Universalism offered a solution of all the present-day scrambles for wealth, power and communalistic gains. That ideal was preached by the Raja, and the President appealed to the younger generation to rally round the banner held aloft by the Raja. The President's speech lasted for three-quarters of an hour, and made a deep impression on the minds of the audience.

Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath then proposed a vote of thanks to the chair, in which he referred to the devoted service which Principal Sen had rendered to the cause of education in Bihar. It was through his life-long efforts that the Bihar National College of Patna had grown from an insignificant institution to an important seat of learning with magnificent edifices.

The function terminated with Rabindranath's well-known anthem *Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka* sung by Mr. Haridas Mukherji and others. Then followed an exhibition of lantern slides illustrating India's saints, and the incidents of the life of Raja Rammohun Roy, after which the meeting dispersed.

Chapra.—The Centenary was celebrated at Chapra with a two days' unique and imposing programme, on 2nd and 3rd December 1933, with Principal D. N. Sen of the B. N. College, Patna, in the chair. Principal Sen was given a magnificent reception at the railway station, where the notabilities of the town, including Mr. S. K. Das, I.C.S., District and Sessions Judge, Saran, who was the host of the President-elect, were present to receive him when the train steamed in.

The first day's programme consisted of a Ladies' Meeting at the house of Mr. S. K. Das, where papers were read by several ladies on the importance of the great Raja's contributions to the cause of women in this country. A poem by Miss Annapurna Devi, the talented daughter of Dr. Haradhone Dutt, which was set in tune and sung by her, was much appreciated. The meeting was attended by ladies of all creeds and communities ; and thanks to the cordiality and supreme interest evinced by Mrs. S. K. Das, and also to the perfect arrangements made and the individual care taken personally by Mr. Das, it was a complete success. At the end of the meeting, Babu Sriranga Vihari Lal, retired Head Master of the Rammohun Roy Seminary, Patna, and a local Christian Missionary gentleman described the life-work of Raja Rammohun Roy and the life of Christ respectively with the help of lantern slides.

The second day's programme opened with noble music, picturesque *arati*, and impressive prayer, followed by a liberal distribution of alms to the poor and a Swadeshi Ananda Bazar Mela. The Ananda Bazar presented the appearance of a tropical sunset in the beautifully variegated trailing colours of the ladies' saries as they moved to and fro in the Mela. Business was then commenced in the Men's section with a highly felicitous address of welcome delivered by Mr. Hem Chandra Mitra, President, Centenary Committee, Chapra. Principal Sen was then voted to the chair amidst general applause. After a solemn prayer by Principal D. N. Sen, speeches were delivered in Hindi, Urdu and English by notable gentlemen of Chapra and outside, among the latter being Munshi Ishwar Saran, the well-known leader of the United Provinces, Prof. Sambhunath Roy of the B. N. College, Patna, and among the former, Maulavi Muhammad Majid, Pandit Jivananda Sharma, Mr. Avadhesh Kumar Varma.

Munshi Ishwar Saran characterised Raja Rammohun Roy as one of the greatest makers of Modern India, whose life would provide an inexhaustible source of inspiration for us for long generations to come. He was the man who brought home to us again after the lapse of centuries that life and its blessings were not for the timids and cowards, and that freedom did not consist in mere freedom of action. Freedom dwelt alone in the free spirit of the lion-hearted ones,—a message on which India of to-day, said Ishwar Saran, should do well to deeply ponder again.

Maulavi Majid claimed Raja Rammohun Roy as a follower of Islam in the higher spiritual sense, and made clear his point with quotations from holy texts and the Raja's writings.

The President, who then delivered his address, was deeply impressed with the spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm on the part of almost all sections of the citizens of Chapra and of all ages. He likened it in his speech to the quickening of a new life,—a reflection of that quickening of a new birth brought about by the great Raja Rammohun Roy in moribund India well over a century ago. There was an undying fire, said he, somewhere in the profound depths of India's civilization, which burst forth at intervals and brought new life to the people when they needed it most. The Raja was one such Prometheus who lighted up the dying embers of Indian life once again, and opened the portals of the future for them. He rescued the great religion of India from the rut into which it had fallen, and lifted it like a mighty lever to its own universal plane : and in doing so, he restored the people of India to their long-lost high estate. "In this universal plane of the Indian religion and in this high estate of India's manhood and womanhood", concluded Principal Sen, "there was no distinction made of the outer garment of creeds and tenets, but it was all made up of harmony, of world-symphony."

The meeting was dissolved with a vote of thanks to the chair proposed by Mr. S. K. Das.

The success of the celebrations was entirely due to Babu Mahendra Prasad and Babu Madan Mohan Sahay. The two days' impressive celebrations terminated with a very pleasant function at the residence of Mr. Gajadhar Prasad of the Subordinate Judicial service, where Principal Sen and Prof. Roy were given a cordial reception.—(The *Advance*, Calcutta.)

Ranchi.—PRELIMINARY MEETING. A public meeting was held in the Collins' Co-operative Buildings on 28th August 1933 to form a Working Committee for celebrating the Rammohun Roy Centenary at Ranchi in a befitting manner. Twenty-six leading gentlemen of the town were elected members, with Mr. Jaykali Dutt, M.A., B.L. as *President*, Babu Satish Chandra Ray, B.L. as *Vice-President*, Babu Subodh Chandra Roy as *Secretary*, and Dr. Susanta Kumar Bose, B.SC., M.B. (Homeo) as *Assistant Secretary*. It was decided to hold meetings throughout the month of September, finishing with a Memorial Meeting on the 27th.

THE CELEBRATIONS. The *first meeting* was held on Sunday, the 3rd September, under the presidentship of Sjt. Satish Chandra Ray. An address of homage to the Raja was delivered by Sjt. Sasibhushan Ghose, M.A. of the Ranchi Brahmacharya Vidyalaya, who pointed out the relation of the efforts made by the Raja with the modern life of Bengal. Several songs were sung by Sjt. Subhransu Chakra-

varti, B.A., one of which was composed by a gentleman of Doranda for this occasion. Babu Satis Chandra Chakravarti, M.A., Joint Secretary, All-India Centenary Committee, was present.

The *second meeting* was held at the Hinoo Friends' Union Club on 9th September, exclusively for ladies, under the presidentship of Mrs. P. N. Bose. Papers were read and speeches delivered by Mrs. Sucharita Sen, Mrs. Basanti Gupta, Sjas. Sushama Chakravarti, B.A., Amala Devi, Priya Bala Sen Gupta, Hemlata Gupta, Mrs. N. K. Ghosh, and Sumati Bala Devi. Most of the papers and speeches were very interesting.

The *third meeting* was held on Sunday the 10th September, in the Collins' Co-operative Buildings under the presidentship of Mr. P. N. Bose. A paper on *The Rationalism of the Raja* was read by Mr. S. Haldar. Mr. N. K. Ghosh, M.A., B.L., M.L.C. delivered a speech in which he made special mention of Rammohun's benevolent services for the women of Bengal. A paper was read by Mr. Bhupendra Narain Maitra, M.A. on *The Work of the Raja for the Political Uplift of India.* After giving many instances of the Raja's freedom-loving spirit, he conlcuded by declaring the Raja to be the Father of the political world of India. Mr. J. K. Dutt's lecture was on *Rammohun Roy, the Man and his Work.* He gave a full history of the Raja's life, and the relation of his work with the modern life of Bengal and her religion. Sjts. Lalit Mohan Roy, Nalini Kanta Chowdhury, and Ganesh Ghose also delivered speeches and read papers.

The *fourth meeting* was a Religious Convention. It was held at the Hinoo Friends' Union Club on Saturday, the 16th September, and the following day. On the 16th, the meeting was opened under the presidentship of Mr. J. K. Dutt. In his introduction he explained the special interest of the Religious Convention as a meeting ground for people of all castes and creeds. Swami Visuddhandanda Saraswati, M.A. read a learned paper explaining the underlying principles of Vedanta. Mr. A. Muzaffar explained the basis of Islam. Mr. S. M. Ahmad's speech on *Attainment of God* was much appreciated. Sjt. Sasibhushan Ghose, M.A. related *The Karma Yoga of the Gita.* On the 17th the meeting was opened by a lecture on *The Christian View of God* by Rev. L. G. Mukherji. Sjt. Sasibhushan Ghose explained *Bhakti Yoga. The Principles of Jaina Dharma* were explained by Sriman Pandit Shivji Ramji. Mr. S. K. Sahay, Bar-at-Law, delivered a speech on *Arya Dharma and the life of the Raja.* The meeting closed with a lecture on *Brahmoism and the life of the Raja* by the president, Mr. J. K. Dutt.

The fifth meeting was a Students' Day, held on 19th September in the Zilla School Hall under the presidentship

of Prof. S. C. Ghoshal, M.A. It was opened by the president with an introduction on the life of the Raja. Sjt. Bhupendra Narain Maitra, M.A. read a paper on *The Raja's relation with politics and sociology.* Pandit Rajaram Pandeya, Babu Sasibhushan Ghose, M.A., Babu Jaduvir Prasad, M.A., Mr. Syed Altaf Karim, M.A., Mr. R. D. Dutt, B.A. also delivered speeches.

Prizes and medals were then awarded for the best essays on Rammohun Roy written by students. Tara Kumar Ghose (I. A. Class, Ranchi Zilla School,) and Miss Sadhana Mukherji (Class X, St. Margaret's High School), recipients of medals, read their essays. The next four recipients of medals were Miss Basanti Purti (St. Margaret's), Miss Renuka Banerjee (Bengali Girls' M. E. School), Sasibhushan Sarang (Ranchi Zilla School,) and Mansid Purti (Radha Gobindo Academy). Five medals were awarded by Dr. Susanta Bose, and one by Messrs. G. Bonerjee and Brothers.

The sixth meeting. On 24th September a special meeting was organised by the members of the 'Madhu-Chakra' at Hinoo under the presidentship of Sjt. Nalini Kumar Chowdhury. Papers were read by Sjts. Bireswar Sen, Hrishikesh Banerjee and Bijay Krishna Datta of the Brahmacharya Vidyalaya. There was an address from the chair.

The Memorial Meeting. On 27th September, a Memorial Meeting under the presidentship of Sjt. Satish Chandra Chatterji, M.A., Principal, B. M. College, Barisal, was held in the local Brahmo Samaj Hall. Mr. N. K. Ghosh related how the status of the women of Bengal had come up to its present level, and the credit that is due to the Raja for it. Mr. Abdul Karim read a well-informed paper on the Raja's life and work. Sjt. Kshitish Chandra Bose, M.A. of Ranchi Brahmacharya Vidyalaya in his speech explained the underlying principles of Brahma Dharma and its effect on the life of modern Indians. The President offered a prayer. The meeting closed with a choral song by the students of the Brahmacharya Vidyalaya.

Hazaribagh.—In connection with the Rammohun Roy Centenary a series of public lectures was arranged in the Hazaribagh Brahmo Samaj Hall. *The first lecture* was delivered on 16th September 1933 under the presidentship of Mr. Shambhu Dayal B.A., by Prof. Muhammad Muslim M.A. on *The Cosmopolitanism of Islam.*

Prof. Humayun Kabir of Calcutta delivered *the second lecture* on 28th October, 1933 before a large gathering of ladies and gentlemen, consisting of Christians, Muhammadans and Hindus, the Hall and the adjoining verandas being literally packed.

The speaker emphasised how search after truth, fearless independence, spirit of adventure, and catholicity of outlook were equally manifested in every sphere of Rammohun's work, whether as a social or a religious reformer, as a political worker, or as an educationist. Born in an age marked by political chaos and dominated by formality and superstition in matters social, religious and educational, Rammohun was gifted with the genius to apprehend the spirit within, and to chalk out a definite concrete programme to unite the dismembered limbs of national life. The best way of honouring the great national hero, according to the speaker, is not to imitate him in the details of his activities, but to follow the great ideals for which he stood.

The President, Rai Bahadur Prof. Gopal Chandra Ganguli, congratulated the young speaker for his appreciation of the character of Rammohun Roy, and pointed out from personal experience how Rammohun Roy is being appreciated more and more, as he should be, as the Maker of Modern India. The President lastly appealed to the different communities of India to study the scriptures and admire the lives of the saints and great men of other communities, so that they might all love and respect one another, and thereby become united as a nation.

The third lecture was delivered in the Samaj Hall on Saturday, the 4th November 1933, by Prof. P. Sinha, his subject being *Religious Reformers of Northern India in mediaeval and modern times.*

Starting with Ramananda, Kabir and Nanak, Prof. Sinha went on explaining the philosophy and teachings of Ballabhacharya, Chaitanya, Surdas, Tulsidas, Dadu Dayal, Raja Rammohun Roy, Swami Dayananda, and others. The speaker gave a scholarly account of the distinctive characteristics of the doctrines formulated and preached by each reformer. He laid special stress on how Kabir stood for unity amongst warring communities, by preaching one God and denouncing idolatry and caste distinctions; how Chaitanya initiated, and was in fact the living embodiment of, the cult of love,—such love for the Creator as could defy 'moksha' itself, and such love for creatures as could defy social inequities; how Tulsidas by his immortal poetry permeated the moral and religious fabric of the whole nation; how Rammohun Roy with his comprehensive genius founded the Universal Religion, and moulded the destiny of modern India; and how Swami Dayananda brought about the renaissance of Vedic religion.

The president, Rai Bahadur Prof. Gopal Chandra Ganguli congratulated the speaker for his kaleidoscopic picture of religious movements extending over centuries, and compared the course to the "Bhaktamal Grantha". It is not mere intellectual appreciation of the several doctrines, but the realisation of their spirit, said he, that would do us good in these days of materialism. He pointed out how behind the apparent differences amongst followers of Bhakti, Jnana, and Karma, there is something common to all great men, viz. the longing for union with God, the Satyam Sivam Sundaram, or in Plato's language, the True, the Good and the Beautiful. Religion, he concluded, is a pursuit which is possible only through deep and silent meditation, and lives of religious men serve as luminous guides in the dark regions an adventurer has to pass through.

The fourth lecture by Rai Bahadur G. C. Ganguli, M.A. on *The Message of Kabir* was delivered on 11th November under the presidency of Mr. A Majid, M.A.

The fifth meeting, the main day.—Lastly, on Sunday the 19th November, a crowded meeting of all sections of people was held in the Town Hall, and was presided over by Babu Ramananda Chatterjee, who had come from Calcutta for the occasion.

Sir C. C. Ghosh described from his personal experience how Raja Rammohun Roy has raised India and the Indians in the estimation of English men and English women. Mrs. A. N. Chakravarti read a paper in Bengali, showing how the Raja was a staunch advocate of women.

Rai Bahadur Gopal Chandra Ganguli showed how the Raja was the pioneer of Western education in India, and how with his extraordinary foresight he had chalked out a system of education which stood the test of time, and which produced so many great men. The seed sown by the Raja in the field of education in Bengal had grown into a goodly tree in the capable hands of veteran educationists like the late revered Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and the late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, who could compare favourably with any educationist of the world. Prof. P. P. Sinha and Mr. Sambhu Dayal next spoke in Hindi, and carried the audience with them. Mr. Majid spoke a few significant words in English, and Prof. K. S. Ghosh dwelt on the religious side of the Raja.

The President spoke in Bengali for a little over three-quarters of an hour, and was listened to with rapt attention. He regretted that religion was at a discount in these days, and stated that whatever the Raja did, he did from a sense of religion which flowed in his veins, was in every fibre of

his being, and was in the marrow of his bones. Raja Rammohun Roy apart from his religion was like Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out.—*(Abridged from the Amrita Bazar Patrika.)*

Giridih (Dist. Hazaribagh.)—The Centenary was celebrated at the Giridih Brahma Mandir on the 27th of September 1933. In the morning, divine service was conducted by Babu Surendra Mohan Guha, who drew special attention to the Raja's life-long endeavours to establish the worship of one God in spirit and in truth. It was he who first introduced in India the congregational worship of God, and who, as a reward, suffered calumny and persecution at the hands of his fellow-citizens, for whose edification he gave up his all, and worked so hard and unceasingly till the last days of his life. In the evening a Public Meeting was held in the Mandir under the presidency of Babu Kunja Bihari Biswas, M.A., B.L. There was a gathering of about 300 gentlemen and ladies. Miss Kalyani Guha, Miss Arati Chatterjee and Babu Jatindra Nath Mukherjee, B.ED. read papers dealing with different aspects of the Raja's character and work. Miss Guha laid empahsis on what the Raja had done for the amelioration of the condition of women, Miss Chatterjee on the Raja's strength of character, while Babu Jatindra Nath Mukherjee laid special stress on the Raja's contribution to the Bengali literature. Mr. J. K. Biswas, M.A. and Prof. Narendra Nath Chakravarti, M.A. then addressed the meeting. Mr. Biswas, a representative of the Christian community, in his characteristic sweet style, dealt with the Raja's foresight in matters social and political. In no field of present-day activities have the Raja's ideas been outdone. He was the pioneer of all progressive movements in India. Prof. Chakravarti, in an eloquent and persuasive speech, drew pointed attention to the Raja's firm faith in God, which was the source of all his activities in life. Whatever he did or said emanated from that faith. The president then concluded with an exhortation to the audience to follow in the Raja's footsteps, particularly in the worship of God in spirit, which was the real and perennial source of his strength.

Dhanbad.—More than a thousand people assembled at the "E. I. Ry. Indian Institute" on October 27th to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy. Mr. G. N. Roy in proposing to the chair Sjt. Krishna Kumar Mitra, who had specially come from Calcutta for the occasion, eloquently spoke of the services the Raja had rendered to this country, especially to Bengal, for more than half a century, and moved a Resolution of homage to his memory. Khan Bahadur M. Z. Hashmi seconded, and Rao Bahadur

D. D. Thacker supported the proposal on behalf of the coalfield public.

The meeting began with one of Rabindranath's hymns sung by a choir of girls. The chairman then read a prayer specially composed for the occasion. This was followed by a welcome address from Rai Bahadur B. M. Chatterjee, who made eloquent references to the Raja, whom he described as the Maker of Modern India. Mrs. Kumudini Basu next paid a tribute to the memory of the great Raja. She referred to the inhuman tortures to which the womanhood of India was subject in those days, and narrated the interesting history of the Brahmo Samaj. Mrs. Kamala Sen, who followed, eulogised the services which the Raja had rendered to the womanhood of India. The famous novelist Srimati Santa Devi was the next speaker, and spoke about the influence of the Raja upon the social and cultural development and the legal status of Indian womanhood. Mr. A. Majid of Hazaribagh in course of his speech said that the Raja was the creator of Bengali prose.

Dr. Kalidas Nag of international fame paid a glowing tribute to the sacred memory of the Raja, holding the audience spell-bound by his masterly delivery. In his reference to the Raja he dealt with the question of Nationalism and Internationalism. His was a superb speech which will long be remembered at Dhanbad.

Rev. Mr. Dewey of the American Mission came forward with another forceful speech. He made special reference to the Raja's work in connection with illiteracy and uplift of womanhood. He said that the Raja was not simply a social reformer; he was an out and out revolutionist, but not in the sense in which the word is used nowadays. Mr. S. P. Tayal and Dr. B. B. Banerji were the next speakers, both of whom created good impression upon the house.

Sets of books relating to the Raja were presented to the E. I. R. European and Indian Institutes of Dhanbad, and also to the Jharia Evening Club and to the Lindsay Club, Dhanbad. Mrs. Kumudini Basu distributed the prizes and medals for the Essay competition. The Sudhindra Memorial Gold Medal donated by Mr. R. N. Sen Gupta was awarded to Dwijapada Biswas of Jharia Raj School, who proved to be the best essayist.

After the Chairman's speech which dealt with the character, indomitable courage and versatility of the Raja, Rev. Mr. Dewey offered a prayer.

Mr. Mohini Mohan Mitra, Joint Secretary of the Centenary Committee, thanked the donors and others, and apologised for failings, if any, in organising the function.

The meeting terminated late at night with a vote of thanks offered by Mr. K. N. Sen Gupta.—(*The Sketch*, Dhanbad).

Jamshedpur.—The Centenary was celebrated at Jamshedpur on Sunday the 17th December 1933 in a befitting manner. A Public Meeting convened in the "Dr. Santiram Chakravarti Memorial Hall" was crowded to its utmost capacity. Mrs. Keenan, wife of the General Manager of the Tata Iron & Steel Co. Ltd., presided over the meeting, which began with a choral song by girls under the direction of Mrs. Sujata Bose and Mrs. Sobha Majumdar. Prizes were given away by Mrs. Keenan to the best writers of essays on the Raja's life. Mrs. Chandrabati Sethi and Mr. S. Gupta gave short discourses on the Raja's life.

Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, who had specially come from Calcutta for the occasion, then gave a learned discourse on the life and teachings of Rammohun Roy. He dealt with every aspect of this great man's life, as a great educationist, as a social reformer, as a political uplifter, and as a spiritual leader. By the introduction of English education in India he united 'isolated' India with the whole world by enabling it to be in touch with world-thought. The speaker gave instances to show how great was the Raja's fervour for internationalism, when internationalism was not even clearly understood. The speaker said that the basic principle on which the League of Nations is run to-day was suggested by the Raja over a century back. The Raja had suggested to the then Foreign Minister of France an organisation which would by discussion or arbitration, settle all disputes among countries, and thus make war impossible. The speaker, after referring to the Raja's revival of the worship of God in spirit and in truth, wondered why intellectual unfitness is held up as a plea against worshipping God in spirit and in truth, when the same intellectual capacity has produced great philosophers, literateurs, scientists, publicists, administrators and politicians among the Indians of to-day.

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chair, and to the speaker of the evening. Portraits of Raja Rammohun Roy were distributed at the meeting.

Mr. Chatterjee also addressed a Ladies' Meeting, in which he explained to them the ideals of the Raja's life.

The same evening Mr. Chatterjee addressed another public meeting held at the Indian Association, and delivered a lecture on *Journalism*, mentioning Rammohun as a pioneer in the field, and thrashing out every point

that crops up in this connection, *e. g.* the journalist's knowledge, the necessity for his being scrupulously impartial, knack of organising his office for proper distribution of work to the editorial staff, and so forth. He also dealt with the difficulties of a journalist in the running of his paper due to the illiteracy and proverty of the people of the country, and with other difficulties arising out of political and economic situations.

ORISSA

Cuttack.—The Centenary celebrations at Cuttack were held mainly at the instance of the local Brahmo Samaj. The 27th of September was reverently observed, while more elaborate celebrations were held on 30th November, 1st December, and 2nd December 1933.

SEPTEMBER.—On the 27th of September a public meeting was held in the Brahmo Samaj Hall. About four hundred distinguished gentlemen of Cuttack were present. The function opened with a prayer recited by Sjt. Visvanath Kar, Minister of the Samaj.

Rev. C. F. Andrews, who was present at Cuttack on that day, delivered a very inspiring lecture, in course of which he said that he had decided, wherever he might be, to be present at the Centenary celebration in order to pay his tribute to the memory of the "greatest religious genius of the 19th century", Raja Rammohun Roy. Had the speaker been in England, he would have joined in the pilgrimage to Arno's Vale, Clifton, Bristol, where a Memorial stands upon the mortal remains of the noble Bengali reformer, who had done so much to bring East and West together. At the back of Raja Rammohun's life-long endeavour was this one thought of re-creating human brotherhood and unity on a religious basis, by discovering the harmony and unity of the religious strivings of all mankind. During the 100 years that have elapsed since he thus stood out as a pioneer, the tide of human progress has swayed backwards and forwards. In the year 1833 in which Raja Rammohun Roy died, slavery had been abolished and political equality had been promised under the Reform Acts. Though Rammohun Roy passed his last days in England under conditions of very great physical suffering, he was cheered by the prospect of a new dawn of human freedom. No greater intellectual forces were present in the world in the early part of the 19th century

than Goethe in the West and Raja Rammohun Roy in the East. He was the greatest Indian genius of religious unification in the 19th century. He was the pioneer of the whole world-movement towards a mutual understanding between the East and the West, dedicating his life in the cause of humanity in order to lay the foundation stone of human brotherhood on a true religious basis. His greatness would not be fully recognised till many centuries had passed away, and the unity for which he devoted himself,—body, soul and spirit,—had been achieved.—(*The Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta and *The Leader* of Allahabad.)

NOVEMBER.—The second celebration of the Centenary was held on 30th November 1933 and the two following days amidst great pomp and *eclat*. A beautifully decorated pavilion covered with a canopy was erected in front of the Samaj Hall. On 30th November, about a thousand gentlemen and 200 ladies, representing Samajists and visitors, attended the meeting. After a preliminary opening song by ladies, Sjt. Visvanath Kar offered a prayer, and introduced the speaker of the day, Dr. Dwijendra Nath Maitra of the Bengal Social Service League, who described the important events of the life of Raja Rammohun with the help of a Magic Lantern. The eloquence of Dr. Maitra was so splendid that the audience heard his lecture with rapt attention for about two hours.

On 1st December the number present was still larger. After an opening song, Sjt. Visvanath Kar read out a Universal Prayer, and then proposed Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, who had specially come for the occasion, to the chair. Mr. Chatterjee first gave an opening address, after which a number of local gentlemen spoke on the Raja's activities in different spheres of life. The most notable among the day's speakers was Dr. Sheshagiri Rao, M.A., PH.D. of the Andhra University, who gave a lucid delineation of the spiritual aspects of the Raja's life. All the speeches were learned as well as highly interesting to the audience. Perfect pin-drop silence prevailed throughout the meeting. After another concluding address by the President, the function closed for the day.

On 2nd December the attendance was so large that many people stood outside the canopy in the pinching cold. After the usual opening song and an introductory prayer by Sjt. Visvanath Kar, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, who presided, distributed prizes to boy and girl essayists on Raja Rammohun's life and work. It is a notable fact that among the competitors the number of girls was greater. Altogether 4 prizes, two of Rs. 15 and two of Rs. 10 each, were awarded. Next, Srimati Suprabha Devi, B.A. read

an essay, specially emphasising the Raja's incomparable services for women. Then followed a lucid and sweet speech from Professor Niranjan Niyogi of the Ravenshaw College. Following him, the President rose, amidst the cheers and acclamation of the vast audience, to deliver his address, which lasted for about an hour and a half, and was exhaustive, thoughtful, and interesting. The address showed the deep love and reverence which the speaker bore towards the Raja, the gifted seer and prophet of Modern India. Mr. Chatterjee carried the whole audience with him for the entire span of his lecture.

Sjt. Visvanath Kar then thanked the President for honouring the Utkal public by coming down so far, and also thanked those ladies and gentlemen but for whose help, sympathy and co-operation the celebration could not have been such a wonderful success. The meeting terminated with a closing song by ladies.

On Sunday, the 3rd December, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee conducted Divine Service in the Brahmo Samaj, and preached an impressive sermon on the spiritual aspect of the Raja's life. Besides the Brahmos, about 300 other ladies and gentlemen attended the service.

Puri.—In commemoration of the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy, a special Divine Service was held at the Nava Parna Kutir of the Universal Church of the New Dispensation, Puri, on 27th September 1933. The service was conducted by Rev. Bhai P. N. Mallik, who having read the appreciation of the Raja by Minister Keshub Chunder Sen, offered prayers to render homage to the Great Apostle of God. ...

A Memorial Meeting was also held on 7th October at the Clarke Hall, Puri, when Mr. N. P. Thadani, the worthy Collector, took the chair. The proceedings commenced with the chanting of Vedic hymns by Sjt. B. N. Roy and *mangalacharan* by little girls. Rev. Bhai P. N. Mallik offered a prayer, which was followed by a hymn by Miss Renuka. The introductory address dilating on the life and teachings of the great Rajarshi having been delivered in Bengali by Rev. Mallik, there were recitations of poems composed especially for the occasion, readings from the writings of the Raja, and of an address to the Raja's spirit by Brahmananda Keshub Chunder. These were interspersed with hymns by Master Gupta. Mr. R. K. Sen then addressed the meeting in English on *The Appreciation of the Raja by the West.* The President concluded the proceedings with a neat little speech on the all-round greatness of the Raja.—(The *Navavidhan,* Calcutta.)

THE UNITED PROVINCES

OF AGRA AND OUDH

Allahabad.—Eloquent tributes of respect were paid to the memory of Rammohun Roy at a meeting held in the Prayag Mahila Vidyapitha Hall on 15th October 1933. Representatives of all communities attended the meeting, among those present being Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Mr. Hari Mohan Roy, Mr. Abdul Majid Khwaja, Dr. Manry, Dr. N. R. Dhar, Prof. A. C. Banerji, and Babu Sangam Lal. Rai Bahadur Gyanendra Chandra Banerjea, retired District and Sessions Judge, presided. The proceedings opened with a song by the students of the Jagat Taran Girls' School and a prayer by the president.

Principal B. N. Kar of the Anglo-Bengali Intermediate College, addressing the meeting, referred mainly to the educational activities of the Raja. He said that apart from his mastery of a large number of languages, Rammohun was thoroughly educated in the wider sense of the term. He mastered the religious books of three important faiths, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. His legal acumen is a wonder to many lawyers and jurists of the present day. He raised the level of Indian life. He wanted that the ancient Indian culture should be rescued from the inroads that were being made on it. The times were against him, and conditions most unfavorable. Dissensions, strifes, political factions, and other evils filled the country. He had to sacrifice himself in many ways. But he was not deflected from what he thought to be the right path, and tried his level best to reach up to his ideals. He helped others to found schools, and himself founded schools. His efforts for the furtherance of Bengali prose were of a very high order. In the words of Miss Collet, "Rammohun Roy stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future."

Mr. Abdul Majid Khwaja said that Rammohun Roy was the first individual in India to make efforts to bring about unity. His first work was to write a book, in which he dwelt on the oneness of God. He was not only first in modern India to advocate the oneness of God, but he also emphasized in other ways that principle, and if the Hindus and Muslims had acted on that principle, the disputes that had cropped up in the modern age between Hindus and Muslims would not have seen the light of day. The differences would have disappeared

through unity of culture, the lesson of which was first given by Rammohun Roy. He noticed that unity of culture existed in old days, but it was destroyed by modern culture. The speaker would feel that Rammohun Roy had taken another birth, if people in this age would begin to pay attention to the principle of unity of culture, which could bring about complete unity in the country.

Dr. Manry of Ewing Christian College remarked that if they really respected Rammohun Roy, they ought to lend their support to every effort that he made for the uplift of the nation. Mr. G. C. Mukerji, speaking in Bengali, dwelt on the Raja's religious tolerance, and Mr. J. K. Batabyal recounted his early adventures as a boy. Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Editor of the *Modern Review*, who happened to be in Allahabad, surveyed at some length, despite his indisposition, the life of the Raja in an instructive speech[106] (which has been reported in Section C of Part II.)

The president, Rai Bahadur Gyanendra Chandra Banerjea, then addressed the meeting in Bengali. An interesting programme of music was also arranged by ladies.—(*The Leader*, Allahabad).

Lucknow.—An extremely distinguished gathering of the *elite* of Lucknow met at the Centenary meeting held on 11th October 1933 in the Ganga Prasad Verma Memorial Hall, which was packed to its utmost capacity. The gathering was fully representative of all communities, European and Indian. Amongst those present were Raja Jagannath Bux Singh and Kunwar Rajinder Singh, Ex-Ministers of the U. P. Government, Hon. Mr. Justice B. N. Srivastava, R. B. Pt. Shyam Behari Misra, Diwan of Orcha State, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Vice-Chancellor of the Lucknow University, Dr. R. D. Wellons, Principal, Reid Christian College, Mr. Atul Prasad Sen, Prof. Nirmal Kumar Siddhanta, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Lucknow University, Mrs. Siddhanta, Dr. Miss Manchester, Professor of the Isabella Thoburn College, Principal Srish Chandra Sen of the Shia College, Messrs. Shambhu Dayal and A. C. Bose, retired District and Sessions Judges, Mrs. Minon, Advocate, Dr. Qutbuddin Ahmed, LL.D., Barrister-at-law, etc. On the motion of Hon. Mr. Justice B. N. Srivastava, seconded by Mrs. Mukand, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani took the chair. The proceedings commenced with a hymn of the Raja sung by Mrs. Siddhanta.

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye was the first speaker. In his speech[108] (which is given in Section C of Part II), he stressed the catholicity of outlook of the Raja.

Professor N. K. Siddhanta said that the present generation was in a position to appraise correctly the greatness of Raja Rammohun Roy, as a hundred years after his death it could now judge and decide dispassionately, while his contemporaries were prejudiced and overborne with sentiments and traditions which he challenged. What struck one most about Raja Rammohun Roy's work was its colossal magnitude, which was achieved in a short space of time. Professor Siddhanta said that Raja Rammohun Roy was, in addition to being the pioneer of reform, the Father of modern Indian journalism, and it was he that first protested against the Press Act of 1823.

Dr. R. D. Wellons remarked that Raja Rammohun Roy was thorough in all he did, and the most outstanding thing that he had done was to secure the recognition of the rights of women. Dr. Miss Manchester said that when people glibly called Raja Rammohun Roy the pioneer of reform, they had to recollect that it meant his having encountered enormous opposition and obstruction. To take a stand against an established order of things was no easy job, and this Raja Rammohun Roy did at a time when general opinion was even more unaccommodating than at present.

Pandit Rash Behari Tewari said that the greatest service of Raja Rammohun Roy to the community was to resist the oppression carried on in the name of religion. Mr. S. P. Andrews Dube felt that inspite of his multifarious activities Raja Rammohun Roy never forgot the primary importance of religion in human life, and gave religion his foremost consideration. His extraordinary insight and success had a lesson of their own for modern Indian youth. Mr. Dube considered that the question of Hindu-Muslim unity would probably have been very high on the list of the public activities of Raja Rammohnn Roy if he had lived today. He reminded the audience that the bane of present-day India was communalism, and urged that people should cultivate the catholic outlook of Raja Rammohun Roy.

Mr. A. P. Sen read out passages from Raja Rammohun Roy's Trust Deed to illustrate his breadth of vision and the generosity of his tolerance, in founding the Monotheistic Church in Calcutta.

The Chairman, Mr. Chintamani, wound up the proceedings with an eloquent speech[107] (printed in Section C of Part II). A vote of thanks was then proposed by R. B. Pandit Shyam Behari Misra.

Gorakhpur.—The Centenary was observed at Gorakhpur on the 28th and 31st December 1933. On the first day, the

meeting was held at the St. Andrew's College Hall in connection with the Eleventh Session of the Bangiya Sahitya Sammelan, where delegates from different parts of India participated. On the second day the Gorakhpur public celebrated the Centenary at the local Town Hall. On both the occasions Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee presided.

The following is a summary of the speech of Mr. Kali Prasanna Biswas at the Town Hall meeting, as given in the *Message* of Gorakhpur, of which he is the editor :—Raja Rammohun Roy, whose Centenary we are celebrating, was a born universalist. He conceived the idea of oneness of the Godhead at a very early stage of his life. He made a careful study of all the principal religious scriptures, including those of his own, and, to his great surprise, found that the fundamental principles of all religions were the same. Being forearmed with invincible and conclusive proofs of this, he launched his propaganda with all the vehemence he could command, culminating in the establishment of the first Theistic Church of India.

How broad and universal his outlook was will be evident from a perusal of the Trust Deed of his Church. His primary object was to bring together all worshippers of God, and knit them together in a bond of brotherhood and fellowship. His intention was not to demolish any of the existing religions, but to reform and remodel them on a universal basis, and thus to build a common temple for all children of God. He is therefore called the Father of the new spirit of Universalism. He was a great social reformer. But social service was only a part of his religion. He was the pioneer of English education in India ; and this education gave birth to Indian Nationalism. Therefore he may fitly be called the inspirer and forerunner of Indian Nationalism.

Dehra Dun.—The Centenary celebrations at Dehra Dun were inaugurated with a LADIES' MEETING on 4th December 1933, in which ladies of all communities joined. Mrs. Hemantakumari Chaudhuri spoke about the Raja's services for Indian womanhood. Indian women should always remain grateful to the Raja for his efforts for the prohibition of the cruel custom of the *Suttee*, by which the Raja has saved thousands of lives from cruel death.—Fortnightly meetings of ladies were arranged by Mrs. Chaudhuri for uniting Hindu, Brahmo, Muslim and Christian ladies for the noble cause of the country's service.

A PUBLIC MEETING was held on 16th December in the Hall of the A. P. Mission High School, where a cosmopolitan gathering of Christians, Muslims and Hindus assembled.

Mrs. Hemantakumari Chaudhuri, Principal Hotchand Jagtyani, Miss Chitra Jagtyani, Prof. Mohendra Pratap Sastri, Mr. Mudaliar, Lieut. Banerji, Mr. J. C. Bhattacharya and others paid rich tributes to the great Raja. Miss Jagtyani and Mr. Bhattacharya read papers, while the others spoke *extempore*. The chair was taken first by Babu Chandi Prasad Sinha, and subsequently by Thakur Manjeet Sinha Rathore.

Thakur Manjeet Sinha Rathore said that Raja Rammohun Roy's services were multifarious, not only as a founder of a religion, and as a social reformer, but as the first nationalist leader of India. He fitly deserved to be described as the Father of Modern India. His written evidence presented to the Select Committee of both the Houses of Parliament in 1832 on the question of reform in Indian administration prior to the passing of the 1833 Charter of the East India Company, was a most valuable document of historical character, and would do credit even to the greatest nationalists of India today.

Miss Chitra Jagtyani, daughter of Principal and Mrs. Pramila Jagtyani, read an interesting paper, in which she first dwelt on the love of truth and moral courage which characterised Rammohun's early life, and the troubles he underwent for the sake of truth. She then remarked, "After returning home from his wanderings, Rammohun began those reforms which have changed the face of his country. He was not a man of words, but a man of action. His love for the country was simply marvellous. What other man worked as hard as he at that time for the rights and privileges of his countrymen ? All his labours in connection with the introduction of English education, the development of Bengali literature, the suppression of the *Suttee*, and the introduction of other social reforms, were the outcome of his great love for his countrymen. His self-sacrifice was proportionate to the earnestness of his faith. He was a devoted believer in God, and his faith did not fail him even for a single moment, and his heroic endeavours inspired India to achieve in a few years what she had failed to achieve during several previous centuries. He arose like a great lighthouse amidst the darkness of his age to assure the world that brighter and happier days were in store for India. Verily he is a world-hero, our spiritual Father, and the Maker of Modern India. He has gone indeed, but what a legacy he has left behind ! We pray to God that the wisdom, courage, and enthusiasm which characterised him, may also characterise our nation."

THE CENTRAL INDIA AGENCY, CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR

Indore.—The Central India Brahmo Samaj, Indore, celebrated the Centenary in September 1933 in a befitting manner. The Mandir was beautifully decorated on 24th September. Mr. B. Y. Ranghekar, District Judge of Indore, and a member of the Samaj, conducted Divine service in the evening. He said that the Raja was one of those men who had lifted their fellow-brethren. He was the Father of New India, and a devoted servant of God. On 25th September there was a Ladies' Gathering, with Princess Savitra Rai Saheba in the chair. She addressed the meeting on *The duties of women.* Mrs. Waingankar and the two Misses Bhandarkar also delivered speeches. The 26th of September was reserved for young men. Dr. V. A. Sukhtankar, PH.D., former Director of School Education, Indore, spoke on *The message of Raja Rammohun Roy to young men.*

On 27th September, (the main day,) there was Divine service at 9 A.M. by Dr. Siddhanath Singh. Among other things he explained to the congregation that religion is the fountain-head of all reforms. For this reason Rammohun Roy attached the greatest importance to religion. He studied different religions, assimilated their essence, and evolved a Universal Religion. He thus laid down the foundations of Brahma Dharma, which he meant to be the religion of *all* humanity. He preached toleration of all religions. In the evening, a Public Meeting was held. Representative speakers dwelt on the various aspects of Rammohun's life. Principal Dr. Basu and Professor Saighar Ali of the Holkar College, Rao Bahadur Dr. Sarju Prasad, former Inspector-General of Hospitals and Jails, and Dr. V. A. Sukhtankar spoke.

The Indore Brahmo Samaj associated itself with the Centenary Celebrations at Calcutta in December by sending them its greetings, and raising subscriptions for the Central Celebration Fund.

Nagpur.—The Centenary was celebrated at Nagpur by a Public Meeting held in the Morris College Hall on the 27th September 1933. Mr. Bhawani Sankar Niyogi, M.A., LL.M., Vice-Chancelior of the Nagpur University, and Additional Judicial Commissioner, presided. Mr. C. B. Parekh, Mr. Nisar Ali, Miss Avi Jehangir Cama, pleader, and Miss Vimala Mohini spoke on the qualities of head and heart and the great work of Raja Rammohun Roy.

Mr. S. Ramarathnam, Organiser of the Centenary celebrations at Nagpur, distributed a pamphlet on the Raja's life and mission.—(The *Advance*, Calcutta).

A meeting was also held in Congress-Nagar, Nagpur, where Prof. N. K. Behere, M.A., B.SC., L.T. presided. Several poems were recited and speeches delivered by young enthusiasts about the multi-sided activities of the great Raja.

Prof. Behere said in his concluding presidential address that the history of Modern India begins with Rammohun Roy. The Raja can well be compared to a gigantic light-house tower illuminating both Ancient India and the India of to-day, and serving as a beacon-light to all ships and their noble captains. The Raja was not only an intellectual giant, but he was a far-sighted politician and a lover of liberty. He was a great social and religious reformer, and yet a staunch Hindu; a versatile Pandit and yet the prophet of Universal Brotherhood. He ardently loved India, was proud of her glorious past traditions, and wished her to be rejuvenated. He was both a practical worker and a saint.

Jubbulpore.—At the instance of Beohar Rajendra Singh, Mr. Narendra Nath Dutt, Dr. Sureschandra Sen, M.D., and Rai Bahadur Gaurikanta Roy, a Public Meeting in connection with the Centenary was convened in the old Town Hall on 31st December 1933 at 6. P.M. Khan Bahadur Zahir Ali, I.S.O. retired Deputy Commissioner, presided. Though the date (which the conveners desired to be as close as possible to that of the Calcutta celebrations) and the hour (6 P.M.) which was the time for Muhammadans to break their Ramzan fast, were inconvenient, and there were other pre-occupations for the public mind, yet the Town Hall was full, and the audience represented several communities. The meeting commenced with an appropriate song sweetly sung by Miss Arati Roy, daughter of the worthy townsman Mr. N. L. Roy, B.A., LL.B.

Among the speakers the first was a young lawyer named Mr. Bimal Chandra Roy, B.A., B.L., who in a neat speech traced the events of the Raja's life, how he laboured for the religious, social, educational and political regeneration of the country, and having regard to the condition of the people, and the ingnorance and superstition in which they were steeped, was most successful in ameliorating the condition of his countrymen. The speaker laid special emphasis on the removal of the *Suttee* and other evil rites and practices.

The next speaker was Rev. Mr. Griffiths of the Theological College, who in a sympathetic and interesting speech enumerated the various reforms which were inaugurated by the Raja, notwithstanding strong opposition on the part of the orthodox community. Mr. Griffiths laid special stress on the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj.

He was followed by Dr. Jwalapershad, PH.D., a Professor of the Robertson College, Jubbulpore. He spoke in Hindi, and after expressing admiration for the Raja and his work, compared the results of his work with those of Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and said that the latter was more successful than the former. Evidently, Dr. Jwalapershad did not know the extent of the sacrifice and persecution to which members of the Brahmo Samaj were subjected.

The fourth speaker was Rai Bahadur Dr. Lakshmi Narayan Choudhuri, an old Brahmo. He also spoke in Hindi, and expressed his appreciation of the Raja's labours for ameliorating the condition of the country. But his concluding remark was that it was not the Raja's object to establish the Brahmo Samaj, which, in the speaker's opinion, was a sect.

The observations of the last two speakers provoked a rejoinder from Rai Bahadur Gaurikanta Roy, though his name was not on the list of speakers. He pointed out that Dr. Jwalapershad had introduced an out-of-place comparison between the results of two great men, both of whom deserved the respect of Indians. The worthy Doctor was not aware that notwithstanding the small number of registered Brahmos, the religious and social ideas of the Brahmo Samaj have permeated among the members of the Hindu society, and also those of other more modern religious societies in India which have hesitated to secede from their parent communities. As regards Dr. Choudhuri's statement, the speaker reminded him that so far from not wishing the existence of the Brahmo Samaj, the Raja himself had established the Samaj, as any biography of the Raja would testify. Dr. Choudhuri was also wrong in asserting that the Brahmo Samaj was a sectarian movement, as it was well known that the Brahmo religion was a Universal Religion, open to all irrespective of distinctions of caste, nationality, country or colour.

The last speaker was Beohar Rajendra Singh, who also spoke in Hindi. He is a promising young land-holder in these provinces, who has passed about a year in Tagore's Santiniketan. In a neat speech he eulogised the services rendered to the country by Raja Rammohun Roy.

The President Khan Bahadur Zakir 'Ali wound up the proceedings with a fine little speech dwelling on the many-sided activities of the Raja, specially his endeavours and achievements in the political field.

Wardha.—A Public Meeting for the celebration of the Centenary was held on 21st December 1933 under the

presidentship of Rai Bahadur K. S. Nayudu in the District Council Hall. Rev. Mr. Vithal Ramji Shinde, Brahmo missionary, delivered a speech on the Centenary of the Raja. The President introduced Mr. Shinde as one of the greatest social reformers that the Maharashtra ever produced. For 30 years he had been doing the work of removing untouchability from Hinduism, and it was he who, after Mahatma Phule, realised that political freedom without social equality would be fruitless.

Mr. Shinde during the course of his much appreciated, balanced, and learned speech, said that he stood before the audience that day not as a Missionary of the Brahmo Samaj, which was started by Raja Rammohun Roy in the year 1828, but to draw the picture of the Raja's great work as a whole. The Raja is acknowledged on all hands to be the Father of Modern India. Hence, the present Centenary celebrations have a particular bearing on the present times. The present awakening in India can be clearly traced to the Raja's efforts in all branches of national activities in India. In tracing the background of his biography, Mr. Shinde alluded to the situation of India at the time of the birth of the Raja, namely, 1772. The Moghul Empire had been practically dissolved, Maratha Power was declining, and the present Imperial System had not yet come into existence. The East India Company had just secured powers of the Dewan of Bengal. Thus practically the political condition in India was chaotic. There was great social degradation. It is somtimes mistakenly supposed that the Raja's work was the outcome of the *clash* of the Western civilisation with Eastern life. But, really speaking, it was the Raja who *helped* the advent of Western culture in India, but was not himself a creature of it. Before the question as to what system of education should be introduced in India arose, and was finally decided by Lord Macaulay in favour of English as the medium of education, it was the Raja who insisted on English being made the medium, rather than Sanskrit. The Raja's was a versatile genius. Social, educational, political and religious reforms were initiated by him with equal zeal and efficiency under great opposition.—(*The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta.)

Yeotmal.—A numerously attended meeting of the citizens of Yeotmal was addressed by Rev. V. R. Shinde of Poona on the life and work of Raja Rammohun Roy. His address was highly appreciated.

ANDHRA

Cocanada. The Central Celebration Committee for Andhradesa.—In order to celebrate the Centenary in a fitting manner in the Andhradesa, and to concert measures for the same, a meeting of the representatives of all Brahmo and Prarthana Samajes, and of others who are in sympathy with the celebration, was convened at Cocanada on 18th June 1933. It was resolved at that meeting that the Centenary should be celebrated on the 26th and 27th September in various places in the Andhra area, and that a Central celebration should be organised at Cocanada on 29th and 30th September and 1st October. A CENTRAL COMMITTEE, consisting of all those who are in sympathy with the celebration throughout the Andhradesa, and who would subscribe a minimum amount of Rs. 5, was formed, to which Brahmarshi Dewan Bahadur Dr. Sir R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu Garu was elected *President*, and Mr. K. Kalianaswami, retired Subordinate Judge, *Secretary*.

PUBLICITY MEASURES.—Before the actual celebrations came on, the Central Committee resolved to broadcast the message of Rammohun by publishing literature, sending workers, and organising the convening of meetings by representative men of all persuasions and communities in the various towns and villages throughout the Andhra area. The **Andhra Brahma-Dharma Pracharaka Trust**, Cocanada, came to the assistance of the Committee by making the workers of the Trust go about the country carrying the message of Rammohun and interesting the general public in the Centenary celebrations, and also by undertaking the publication of literature towards the same object. Mr. N. Jagannadha Rao, Superintendent of the Maharaja of Pithapuram's Orphanage at Cocanada, also toured throughout the Coast Districts and Nellore in furtherance of the same object.

As a part of this work, Mr. K. Kalianaswami, the Secretary of the Central Committee, contributed a series of articles in English to the Madras dailies on the life and work of Rammohun Roy, which were subsequently published in book form by the A. B. P. Trust on the eve of the celebrations, and freely distributed in several places. Among other Centenary publications are a leaflet of four pages and a booklet of 32 pages on the life and work of Rammohun Roy, with his picture as a frontispiece, and a folder explaining the principles of Brahma Dharma,—all in easy Telugu. All the publications were taken by the workers with them in their tours, and distributed as widely as possible in the towns and villages of Andhra.

REACHING STUDENTS.—The Committee further made special efforts to reach students and young people by addressing a circular letter to the Principals of Colleges and the Head Masters of High Schools in the Andhra area, requesting them to hold meetings in their various institutions, on or about the 27th September, and to bring home to the minds of the younger generation, by means of discourses, the various aspects of the Raja's life and his all-round work, and to hold up the same as a supremely comprehensive ideal worthy of their following.

THE RE-NAMING OF ROADS, ETC.—The Committee also organised the submission to the Cocanada Municipality of an influentially signed public memorial to re-name the Cutcherry Road, on which or in close proximity to which are situated a large number of public offices and institutions associated with the religious, civic and social life of the city, as RAMMOHUN ROY ROAD, and the Municipal Council granted the request of the memorialists by passing a unanimous resolution to that effect. In order to carry out the same idea in other places, the Committee sent round a suggestion to the Chairmen of all the Municipalities and the Presidents of most of the Panchayat Boards in the Andhra area, requesting them to re-name a prominent street or road in their respective places after the Raja in commemoration of the Centenary: and this request also met everywhere with encouraging response.

THE RAJA'S PORTRAITS.—Colour-printed photographs of the Raja with a letterpress, giving briefly the important events of the Raja's life and career, were presented to the general public by the Committee as keepsakes of the Centenary, and arrangements were made to send these photographs to every important town and village in the Andhra area, not only to keep alive the memory of the Raja's life and work, but also to ensure the celebration of the Raja's anniversary every year by all classes of persons.

Prominent among all those who contributed in various ways to the success of the Centenary celebrations in the Andhradesa, stands out the name of **the Maharaja Sahib of Pithapuram**, but for whose timely, reverent, and munificent help, the Celebration could not have achieved the success it did.

Cocanada.—The Centenary Celebrations at Cocanada were carried on from 26th September to 1st October 1933, the most important public meeting being held on the last day under the presidency of Sir R. Venkata Ratnam, (whose birthday, which fell on 28th September, was also duly celebrated.)

The celebrations at Cocanada were carried on with splendour, in a manner befitting the memorable life of the Raja.

The local Brahmopasana Mandir, which is the most magnificent construction in these parts, became, as it were, a place of pilgrimage to the population of Cocanada, and also to the countless numbers of persons that flocked to that town to witness the Dasahara festivities. The Mandir and the Pithapur Raja's College were electrically illuminated in a very artistic style. The whole Road, which has been aptly re-named RAMMMHUN ROY ROAD was literally flooded with light. Throughout the Utsava season, streams of men and women, old and young, from far and near, were seen flowing in and out of this idol-less temple of God, which had flung its doors wide open to all without distinction, in an attitude of wonder and respect. Nobody passed by the Road without folding his or her hands in reverence for that personality whose all-round greatness was responsible for the happy occasion.

On **26th September** the celebrations began with an opening Divine Service in the morning by Mr. N. Jagannadha Rao, B.A., B.L. In the evening there was *Sankirtan* in the Pithapur Maharaja's Orphanage. On **27th September** in the morning there was Divine Service in the Mandir by Sir R. Venkata Ratnam. At 11 A.M. the Opening Ceremony of the RAMMOHUN STUDENTS' HOME FOR ADI-ANDHRAS took place. In the afternoon there was reading of scriptures by Mr. B. B. Rakshit, M.A. and Mr. K. Satyanarayana, M.A. At 5-30 P.M. Mr. Bh. Venkatapatiraju, B.A., B.L., C.I.E. of Vizagapatam unveiled the PORTRAIT OF RAMMOHUN ROY in the Pithapur Raja's College Hall, and Mr. P. Ramaswamy, M.A., the Principal, thankfully accepted the same on behalf of the College. In the evening the *first public meeting* was held, in which Principal Ramaswamy delivered an address which he illustrated by anecdotes from the Raja's life.

On **28th September**, Sir Venkata Ratnam Naidu Garu's 71st birthday, which was celebrated by his old students, friends and admirers in the morning, enhanced materially the joy and the enthusiasm of the Centenary celebrations. In the short but sweet speech in which Sir Venkata Ratnam thanked his friends, he made pointed reference to the anti-nautch campaign led by him some years ago in the spirit of the first Indian reformer, the Raja. He expressed his disappointment when he found that dancing girls were introduced into the local Ganasabhas (music parties), and said that in this fashion the evil which lay under the institution of nautch-parties was again coming up in another form.

In the afternoon, the Rammohun Centenary celebrations commenced again at 5 P.M. with *Nagarasankirtan* in a portion of the town.

On **29th September**, Mr. Gudapati Satyanarayana, the local resident minister, conducted Divine Service in the morning. There was again *sankirtan* from 4 P.M. to 6 P.M. in the remaining portion of the town. After this the *second public meeting* of the celebrations was held in the Samaj Mandir with Mr. Ch. Lakshminarasimham, the blind poet of Andhradesa, in the chair. Speeches were made by Messrs. N. Narayanamurti of Berhampur and P. Ramaswamy. Verses sent by absent friends were read by Mr. D. V. Krishnasastri.

On **30th September** Mr. P. L. Narayana, Brahmo Missionary of Narsapur, conducted Divine Service in the Mandir in the morning. There was FEEDING OF THE POOR in the Annadana Samaj by the Centenary Committee. The Local Satyalingam Naicker's Charities also fed about 400 poor, in connection with the Centenary celebrations. Guests came from all the districts from Ganjam to Nellore, numbering about 200, besides those of the town.

In the afternoon there was a MEETING OF HARIJAN CHILDREN in the Mandir compound, and a LADIES' GATHERING in the P. R. College Hall. In the former meeting, Rammohun's life and services to the country, specially his efforts to abolish caste distinctions, were recounted by speakers, and sweets and fruits were distributed among all the children, who numbered over 400. The Ladies' Meeting was presided over by Srimati Gnanamba Garu, the Brahmo Lady Mission-worker of Bezwada. There were prayers, music and speeches by ladies present on the occasion, describing the special services rendered by Rammohun for the cause of women. In the end, *pan*, fruit, flowers and sweets were freely distributed among the audience, which numbered about 600.

The day closed with the *third public meeting* of the celebrations in the Brahma Mandir, presided over by Dewan Bahadur C. Ranganaikulu Naidu Garu, B.A., B.L., retired District and Sessions Judge. Mr. M. Venkata Rangayya, M.A., L.T., Reader in History in the Andhra University College, Vizagapatam, Mr. N. Satyanarayana, Provincial Secretary of Land Mortgage Banks of Alamur, and Mr. C. Lakshmi Narasimham of Rajahmundry, addressed a very crowded audience on the various aspects of Rammohun's work. Several gentlemen had to deny themselves the pleasure of attending the meeting for want of accommodation.

The **1st October** was the last day of the celebrations. The day opened with a Divine Service conducted by Mr. K. Kalianaswami, retired Subordinate Judge, and Secretary of the Central Celebration Committee.

The same day, at a later hour, there was a Brahmo marriage ceremony in the Mandir, the contracting parties being Mr. Brahmananda, son of Mr. J. V. Narayana, Brahmo Missionary of Berhampur, and Srimati Santa Bai, the daughter of Mr. N. Venugopala Rao Naidu of this place. Though both the parties were anushthanik Brahmos, it was felt by the large concourse of ladies and gentlemen present that the wedding was a demonstration of the fulfilment of Rammohun's mission, as the bridegroom was of Brahmin origin and the bride a Naidu girl. The marriage service was conducted by Mr. P. Ramaswamy, and there were special prayers by the fathers of the bridegroom and the bride, and by Sir R. Venkata Ratnam.

The fourth and principal Public Meeting in connection with the Centenary was held in the evening. It was addressed by as many as eight speakers, representing various religious positions, viz. Christianity, Islam, Liberal Hinduism, Atheism, Sanatanist Hinduism, and Brahmoism, on such aspects of the Raja's life as appealed to them most. The chair was taken by Sir R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu Garu. The speeches made at the meeting are thus summarised by the Madras *Hindu* :—

The President in his opening remarks expressed his satisfaction at the successful celebration of the Centenary of one whose life had left its unique and progressive impress upon the destinies of a whole nation in all its aspects of existence, and hoped that the speakers of the day, professing different faiths, would, in making speeches on the Raja's life, emphasise points of agreement and concord.

Mr. Gnana Prakasam (Indian Christian) said that the Raja was a humble servant of the people, seeking real pleasure in service, as well as a man of mighty courage capable of braving the wrath of the nearest and dearest for the sake of his convictions.

Mr. Abdul Hyder Saheb of Narsapur (representing Islam) spoke in Urdu, and said that if the whole of the Hindu community gathered into one fold under the banner of the Brahmo Samaj, it would be easy for the Hindus to achieve unity with the Muslims, who were proud that the Raja was influenced largely by Arabic and Persian lore in his younger days.

After this speaker had finished, Sir Venkata Ratnam remarked that real Hindu-Muslim unity could be obtained not by distribution of seats or emoluments, but by a clear and genuine understanding of each other's cultures and civilizations, and by an honest spirit of selflessness in public affairs.

Mr. P. Bhadriah, M.A., District Educational Officer, speaking next, said that Brahmoism is a religion that never recognised prophets, priests, or rituals. It sought to establish direct contact between the human soul and God, doing away with the cobwebs of unnecessary religiosities and rituals that grew round religion. Raja Rammohun Roy's real strength and enduring work lay in this.

Mr. M. V. V. K. Rangachari, Vakil, and a member of the Rationalistic Society, interpreted Raja Rammohun Roy as an 'atheist', for he was an iconoclast pulling down idolatry, and a ruthless opponent of all the murky superstitions of the day that passed for religion. The speaker drew attention to the celebration of the Centenaries of Charles Bradlaugh in England and of Ingersoll in America, who were the pioneers both of free thought and of political freedom movements, and classified Rammohun Roy with them.

The President observed that the difference between the words 'theist' and 'atheist' was apparently only in the letter 'a', but that letter was all important, as indicating two fundamentally opposed attitudes of the human mind. If fighting superstition was to be honoured with a name, and if the last speaker meant by 'atheism' nothing more nor less than that reforming zeal, then no doubt, Raja Rammohun Roy was an 'atheist'.

Mr. Jatavallabha Purushottama, B. A. of Kovvur, representing Sanatana Dharma, said that at a time when Christian missionaries were about to convert educated India into Christianity, Raja Rammohun Roy established the Brahmo Samaj and saved Hinduism. He said further that the Upanishads were read and properly understood only among Brahmos, besides a few learned Pandits. The present generation was fortunate because Rammohun Roy stood for English education.

Mr. Peddibhoka Subbarayudu spoke from the Theosophical point of view, and said that great men came into this world with a mission and fulfilled it.

Mr. Chillariga Narasimha Rao Pantulu, retired Registrar, spoke from the viewpoint of the Bhagavata, and said that Rammohun Roy correctly understood and practised the philosophy of life propounded in the Gita and the Bhagavata. Mr. D. Krishna Sastri then read some Telugu verses written by him.

This meeting (and the whole celebration) came to a close after the giving of thanks by the President to all those that had participated in it, and made it the tremendous success that it was, to the Chairman and members of the Municipality who had unanimously resolved to rename the Cutchery Road as RAMMOHUN ROY ROAD, and to

the Satyalingam Naicker's Charities for specially feeding the poor in memory of the occasion.

Although this meeting came to a close at a very late hour, the vast audience sat still to the very end. Literature in Telugu and English on the various phases of Rammohun's life and work was freely distributed on all the days of the celebrations.

The celebrations made a profound impression throughout the Andhradesa. After the last meeting, there was an informal gathering of all the visitors and local men, and it was resolved to keep up the continuity of the work which had been so well started under the auspices of the Centenary Committee.

Pithapuram.—THE CELEBRATION COMMITTEE. About a month before the Centenary Day a public meeting of the citizens of Pithapuram was convened for taking measures for the celebration of the Centenary in a befitting manner. A Celebration Committee of influential citizens of the place was formed with Brahmarshi Dewan Bahadur Dr. Sir. R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu, KT., M.A., L.T., D.LITT., LL.D., as *President*, and Mr. P. Rangabrahma Rao Naidu, President, Local Taluk Board, as *Secretary*. To perpetuate the memory of the Raja, the meeting requested the local Panchayat Board to re-name an important road of the Town as RAMMOHUN ROAD, and a new park which is to be shortly laid out as RAMMOHUN ROY PARK. It is a matter for gratification that the Board in a special meeting convened for the purpose has passed resolutions to do so.

The local Brahmo Samaj, some of whose members were on the Celebration Committee, organised and carried out an intensive propaganda in the neighbourhood, visiting as many as eighteen villages in all, viz. Uppada, Kothapalli, Kondevaram, Yendapalli, Gollaprolu, Bhogapuram, Komaragiri, Gorsa, Mallam, Jalluru, Kandarada, Fakiruddinpalem, Kumarapuram, Viravada, Chebrolu, Timmapuram, Chitrada and Prattipadu. By means of bhajans and sankirtans, by organising public meetings for speeches and lantern lectures, and by the distribution on a large scale of pamphlets and leaflets, the life-work and message of the Raja were brought to the homes of the village folk. All these places celebrated the Centenary Day in a worthy manner. The poor and the needy were fed in all the above villages, rice was distributed in most of them, and public meetings were held in all of them on the 27th September, 1933.

At **Pithapuram** the Centenary was celebrated on the 26th and 27th of September. On the 26th there was Ushakirtan and Divine service by Mr. R. Balakrishna Rao

in the Brahmo Samaj Hall. At 2 P.M. there were readings from the 'Life of Rammohun Roy' by Mr. D. Ramamurthy. In the evening there was Nagar-sankirtan in one part of the town.

On the 27th there were Ushakirtan and Divine service in the morning conducted by Mr. A. Chalamayya. At 10 A.M. all the disabled poor of the place were fed. At 4 P.M. there was Nagar-sankirtan in another part of the town. At 5 P.M. there was a public meeting presided over by Mr. C. Bhimasena Rao, B.A., L.T. Messrs. Charla Narayan Sastry, Pendyala Venkata Subrahmanya Sastry, Panuganti Lakshminarasimham Pantulu, A. Sambasiva Iyer, B.A., B.L. and D. V. Krishna Sastry, B. A. addressed the meeting on various aspects of the Raja's life and mission. The President in course of his concluding speech announced the names of two boys and one girl (pupils of the local High School) who won the first three prizes (amounting to Rs. 25/-) for the best essays written in a Competitive Examination held in this connection. The local Brahmo Samaj also resolved to re-name the Adi Andhra Elementary School under its management after Rammohun Roy.

Ladies' Section.—The Ladies' Prarthana Samaj of the town also had its share of the celebrations, carried on in a very fitting and enthusiastic manner. Their Celebration Committee consisted of many cultured and prominent ladies of the town. In the afternoon of the 27th of September, there was poor-feeding, and at 4 o'clock commenced their public meeting in the local Town Hall. Srimati Vinjamuri Venkata Ratnama presided on the occasion. A portrait of the Raja was unveiled; and then Srimatis Kotikalapudi Garu, Juluri Tulisamma Garu, and M. Seshamma Garu spoke on various aspects of the Raja's life; and the whole proceedings were brought to a happy close with a sweet Hari-katha by Srimati Kotamma Garu on the life of the great Rajarshi.

Amalapuram.—A public meeting was held on 27th September 1933 in the Taluk Board Public Reading Room, under the presidency of Rao Bahadur M. Narasimham Pantulu, M.A., B.L., Deputy Collector, to celebrate the Centenary. Mr. S. Suryanarayana dwelt at length on the varied activities of Rammohun Roy, and pointed out that he was a pioneer, not only in the field of religion and social reform, but also in other fields, viz. politics, literature, etc. Rammohun studied with a critical eye all great religions of the world, and culled out a new religion,—the Religion of Truth, taking the best from each religion. He then formed the Atmiya Sabha, which developed later into the Brahmo Samaj with its numerous followers.

The President pointed out that great *avatars* like Raja Rammohun Roy were born once in an age for the establishment of Dharma in the land ; and that the chief characteristics of such incarnations in the past, as in the present, were purposefulness, fearlessness and love of truth. Great souls having once deliberately chosen their path of Truth and Love could never be shaken by any kind of hardship, repression, or even the fear of death. The President exhorted the audience to strive to follow in the footsteps of of great men.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Vizagapatam.—PRELIMINARY MEETING. A public meeting was held in the Hindu Reading Room on Thursday the 31st August 1933 under the presidentship of Bhupatiraju Venkatapati Raju, B.A., B.L., C.I.E. After the narration of a brief sketch of the life of the Raja by Srimati Gnanamba of Bezwada and Mr. R. Balakrishna Rao of Pithapur, (who came specially for the purpose), a Committee with the following office-bearers was appointed for the celebration of the Centenary in a fitting manner :—*President*, Mr. Bhupatiraju Venkatapati Raju; *Vice-Presidents*, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Messrs M. Venkatarangayya, A. V. Bhanoji Rao, V. Srinivasa Rao, Srimati T. V. Ramanamma; *Secretaries*, Messrs. C. K. Prasada Rao, V. Suryanarayanamurti, I. Sriramulu.

At a meeting held on 9th September, the Committee resolved that a Bromide photograph of the Raja should be purchased and placed in the Town Hall, and that a Road should be named after him.

The CELEBRATIONS came off on 15th October. The programme included a number of meetings at different centres.

(1) There was a meeting in the Hindu Reading Room at 8 A.M., presided over by Mr. B. Venkatapati Raju, where Mr. P. Satyanarayana, Mr. Prata Narasimham and Mr. V. Suryanarayanamurti gave addresses. (2) At the same time a second public meeting was held in the Kurupam Market, with Professor M. Venkatarangaiyya in the chair, and addresses were given by Messrs. K. S. Gupta and K. Suryanarayanamurti. (3) The third meeting was held in the Fort Mahomedan School, under the chairmanship of Mr. A. K. Bhanoji Rao, Municipal Chairman, when Messrs. K. Namassiva Rao, V. Ramabrahman, and Karri Souranna spoke on the ideals of the great son of India. (4) A fourth meeting was held in the Allipuram Municipal School under the presidentship of Mr. V. Sambamurti Somarajulu, when Dr. M. V. Krishna Rao, Mr. V. Buchi Sundara Rao and others spoke on the influence of the teachings of Rammohun Roy on the present times. (5) At 4 P.M. a special meeting for ladies was held in the Hindu

Reading Room with Srimati Ankitam Rama Devi in the chair, and several ladies addressed the gathering.

(6) In the evening a monster Meeting of the Public was held in the Victoria Diamond Jubilee Town Hall, which commenced with a fervent prayer by Mr. P. Ramaswamy, M.A., Principal of the P. R. College, Cocanada.

Mr. B. Venkatapati Raju, while proposing Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan to the chair, announced to the meeting that the Vizagapatam Municipality had granted the request of the public to name the public road leading from the town into the Harbour as RAMMOHUN ROY ROAD, and to permit a Bromide photograph of Raja Rammohun Roy to be placed in the Hall where they had assembled.

(A summary[105] of Sir S. Radhakrishnan's opening and concluding addresses at this meeting will be found in Section C of Part II.)

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, after his Opening Address, unveiled the beautiful portrait of Raja Rammohun Roy, a gift by Mr. B. Venkatapati Raju, and in doing so, said that if the memory of that great son of India served to kindle in us a desire to follow his example, the celebration of the Centenary would have helped up along the road to a solution of our present difficulties.

Mr. V. Srinivasa Rao then read a paper giving a critical biographical sketch of the life of Raja Rammohun Roy.

Miss Kameswarmma dealt with the incalculable services rendered by Rammohun Roy to the women of India in securing the abolition of *Suttee*, the recognition of more equitable inheritance rights for widows, and the improvement of their condition in general.

Mr. Abdul Huck, speaking in Urdu, said that it was not right to say that Rammohun was merely a Hindu. He transcended every form of religion, but comprehended all religions, and more than anything else, he carried the Islamic monism into every sphere of his activity, and established cosmopolitanism.

Dr. P. Kutumbayya, Bâbu Chakravarti, Dr. T. A. Purushottam, Dr. R. Krishna Rao, Dr. T. R. Seshadri, and Principal P. Ramaswamy also addressed the gathering.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Yellamanchili.—The Centenary was celebrated here on 27th September, 1933. In the morning, after prayer, sweets were distributed to school children. About 150 poor were fed in the afternoon. An elocution contest was arranged amongst the High School boys, the subject being the life of the Raja. The last function was a public meeting in which representatives of all religions spoke on the various aspects of the life and work of the great man.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Bimlipatam.—The Centenary was celebrated here on 27th September, 1933. In the morning there was a Nagarsankirtan, and the portrait of Raja Rammohun Roy was taken in a procession along the streets of the town. A few Harijans had come from Vizianagram to take part in the bhajana, and songs composed for the occasion were sung by boys and girls. In the evening there was a public meeting at the Clock Tower, over which Mr. P. C. Yellayya Pantulu, Municipal Councillor, presided. Mr. M. K. R. Diskhitulu, B.A., L.T., Head Master of the local Municipal High School, spoke on the life and message of Rammohun, and gave a detailed account of the work done by the Raja in the cause of India, socially, politically and educationally. Messrs. A. Durgayya Pantulu, B. Narasingarao, and D. Y. Sadanandarao (a Harijan worker) also addressed the gathering. After the meeting about 120 poor people consisting of men, women and children were given clothing.

The Committee resolved to request the Municipal Council to re-name one of the streets of the town after Raja Rammohun Roy, and to permit the Head Master of the local High School to put up a portrait of the Raja in the School Hall.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Rajam.—Under the auspices of the local Centenary Celebration Committee, a Nagarsankirtan was arranged from 4 P.M. on the 27th September, 1933. Mr. B. Appa Rao Naidu, M.A., B.L., District Munsif, distributed cloths to 40 poor people, and *pan* and sweets to Harijan boys. There was a public meeting in the Board Middle School with Mr. B. Appa Rao in the chair. Mr. Y. Ramanamurti Pantulu spoke on the religious, social and educational activities of Rammohun Roy. Mr. P. Ananda Rao read an account of the life of Rammohun Roy in Telugu. Centenary booklets sent by the A. B. P. Trust of Pithapuram were distributed among the audience. The President in his closing remarks dilated on the reasons for the founding of the Brahmo Samaj by Rammohun Roy.—(*The Dharma Sadhani*, Guntur).

Berhampur (Ganjam).—The Rammohun Roy Centenary was celebrated here by the Utkal Sadhanasram on 13th September 1933. A public celebration was held from 22nd to 29th October.

The Utkal Sadhanasram held a special Divine service on 13th September, which was conducted by Mr. Jayamangal Rath, who preached a sermon on the Raja's life and teachings. An inter-caste dinner was then held at the Asram.

The Public Celebration of the Centenary commenced on Sunday the 22nd October with an *Ushakirtan* in which

Brahmos and Prarthana Samajists took prominent part. There was a Divine service at the Andhra Hall situated in the heart of the town. Mr. J. V. Narayana conducted the service and preached a sermon on *The Mandali of Rammohun.*

This is the substance of Mr. J. V. Narayana's sermon :—Men of heart and vision, human emancipators and world-figures, rose time and again in different climes to redress the wrongs under which people groaned. It may be love of country, or it may be love of community, that supplied the preliminary urge. But a state of utter helplessness drove these great men to God. They became deeply religious, and drew strength and inspiration from the fountain of the Infinite. Their followers had not their broad outlook, and so became static. This gave rise to national hostilities and credal warfares. Nations and creeds proved a curse to humanity. A man like Rammohun, a seer among men, rises to heal and to bind. He realises all communities as one Divine family, and sees that all religions have a common origin. He turns his gaze inwards and calls people to communion. He is a master-builder. Such was Rammohun. He laid his foundations deep in the souls of men, and built the City of God. Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God were realities to Rammohun. He loved all nations and all religions. He found the panacea for all human ills in seeking and serving God everywhere.

A tea-party at Pudipeddi Hospital was given by Mr. Y. Sanniah. Both the *elite* of the town and visitors from different parts of the district were treated to light refreshments and music.

In the evening there was a public meeting in the Town Hall presided over by Dr. P. Govindarajulu. It was attended by prominent people of the town and ladies of leading families. Speeches were delivered by Srimati Mallimagula Lalitamba in Telugu, Mr. T. Pattabhi Ramaiah Pantulu in Telugu, and Prof. G. Dharmarao, M.A. and Mr. Lingaraj Panigrahi, B.A., B.L. in English.

The president in his opening address said that the main cause of Rammohun's success lay in the fact that he relied on the inspiration derived from a living spiritual faith. The best way of commemorating the services of this great hero was not by paying lip-homage, but by resolving to lead a life of benevolence and humility, making social service the key-note of life, always remembering the great man's words, "The truest way to serve God is to love man."

On 23rd October there was a meeting in the Andhra-bhashabhivardhani Hall in connection with the Patita

Pavana Mission, presided over by Mr. J. V. Narayana. Speeches were delivered by Srimati K. Kaveribai, B.A., L.T., Srimati Pakala Soubhagyavatamma and Mr. R. V. Ramanamurty, M.A., B.L. in English, and Mr. Pullela Syamasundara Rao in Telugu. The first speaker spoke of Rammohun as a great fighter; the second, as a nation-builder; the third, as a caste-breaker; and the last, as the embodiment of opposition to all tyranny.

The president in his address said that whatever criticism might be levelled against the Brahmo Samaj, no one can deny that the religion of the Rishis was preserved and developed by it, and that it alone can bring about national unification. Caste must go. Speaker after speaker in these two days' public meetings had to confess the futility of the caste system. The Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man must prevail, if India is to rise again and find its place in the comity of nations. The proceedings terminated with music by ladies.

Tuesday the 24th was the Ladies' Day. The meeting at the Mahila Mandir was presided over by Srimati Kaveribai, B.A., L.T. The speakers were Srimati M. Lalitamba, Srimati N. Ranganayakamma, Srimati V. V. Subbamma, and Brahmachari Prayaga Satyanarayana. All speakers paid tributes to the services of Rammohun for the advancement of womanhood.

The 25th was the Harijan Day. An open air meeting was held in the Panchama quarter at Rampa Street. The proceedings began with a Divine service and sermon by Mr. Y. Sanniah. Speeches were delivered by Messrs. Trilochana Patro, Pudipeddi Subbarao and J. V. Narayana in Oriya, and Srimati Jayanti Suramma (wife of Mr. J. V. Narayana) in Telugu. The president in his concluding remarks exhorted the Harijans to take to clean living and spiritual worsihp. Srimati Jayanti Suramma spoke against idolatry. She attributed the evils of the present-day customs to idolatry. The temple priest and caste purohit are tyrants who hold undisputed sway over the Hindu society. The Vaisya and Kshatriya, by building temples and endowing them, are supporting this tyranny. The Sudra and the Panchama, who are groaning under this tyranny for ages, have now learned to rebel. Let Dwijas make common cause with them.

On the 26th an Open Air Meeting was held in Mangalavarampeta, the stronghold of orthodoxy. Mr. J. V. Narayana presided. The speakers were Mr. Y. Sanniah, Mr. Pudipeddi, and Srimati Jayanti Suramma.

On the 27th another Open Air Meeting was held in Big Bazar near Gopinadhaswamy temple. The speakers

were Mr. Jayamangal Rath and Mr. J. V. Narayana. At the meeting emphasis was laid on spiritual worship. This roused the ire of the temple priests who repeatedly interrupted the speakers with questions. They were finally silenced by the speakers quoting chapter and verse from Hindu scriptures showing that Brahmajnana was held as the ideal, and idolatry, which was a subsequent innovation, was only prescribed for illiterate masses. Nowhere is it laid down that the Brahmin should take to idolatry and revel in it.

On the 28th there was a Nagar-sankirtan. On the 29th the closing Divine service was conducted in the Brahma Mandir by Mr. Jayamangal Rath.

Aska (Dist. Ganjam.)—In connection with the Centenary, a public meeting was held in the local Town Hall on 27th September 1933 under the presidency of Sriman Narasinha Padhy Mahasaya, M.A., L.T., when a portrait of the Raja was presented to the Town Hall by the local Celebration Committee.

A paper was read by Mr. Koparagam Ramamurti Pantulu, who in the course of his address observed:

> The Raja's exalted genius, his varied learning, his indomitable courage, independence and love of liberty, his all-embracing catholicity, his far-sighted patriotism, his religious fervour, his exquisite chivalry towards the weaker sex and oppressed nations, his intense zeal for the social, educational and political elevation and the happiness of his people, his indefatigable labours in the cause of humanity,—all these may well be the theme of poets, philosophers and historians. But we, who have gathered here for a short while to pay homage to the great departed soul, cannot afford to dwell at length on each of the qualities separately. We must seek and get at the supreme key-note to his life's harmony, the one virtue which must have been the source of all other virtues of that great man. To my humble thinking, the mother-virtue which gave birth to the all-round greatness of Rammohun Roy was undoubtedly his cultivation of what may be called a *conscientious conscience*. This highly developed, extraordinarily sensitive, and powerful conscience reacted on Rammohun Roy in two ways. It drove him, first, to an unwearied search after truth at all costs. It drove him, next, to live up to that truth at all costs.

After more speeches by some of those present, the President closed the meeting with a few observations on the greatness of Rammohun Roy and on the times during which he lived.

Surla (Dist. Ganjam.)—The Brahmo Samaj celebrated the Centenary on 27th September 1933. In the morning there was *Ushakirtan* and a Divine service. At 2 P.M. a public meeting was held in the Brahma Vidyalaya Hall with Sjt. Jayamangal Rath in the chair. He spoke of the Raja as one of the greatest men of the world, who laboured for the welfare of mankind as a whole. The Raja's message was one that would appeal to every community and every province, and to men and women alike. The speaker appealed to the Panchayatdars of Surla to devise means for perpetuating the Raja's memory.

It is gratifying to note that the Panchayatdars have, at a meeting of the Panchaayat Board, resolved to name the newly constructed street in front of the Brahma Vidyalaya as RAMMOHUN STREET, and a road running from the said Street to the abandoned Salt Factory as RAMMOHUN ROY ROAD. A portrait of the Raja was also placed in the Office of the Panchayat Board. The celebration concluded with *Nagara-sankirtan* and a Divine service in the evening.

Ichhapur.—The Centenary was celebrated with great *eclat* in the local Telugu Girls' School under the presidentship of Rao Bahadur Tadepalli Pattabhi Ramayya Pantulu, ex-Public Prosecutor and Advocate, Berhampur, on 27th September 1933. The success of the function was due to Mr. P. Syamasundara Rao, local Panchayat Board President, and Member, District Board. The Girls' School was decorated with festoons and arches, bearing the words 'Long live Rammohun'. Sweets were distributed to 460 pupils (belonging to all local Elementary Schools and the Secondary School), including Harijan boys who were seated along with others. The Hall was filled with the gentry and others, including Harijan members of the local Panchayat.

The Telugu girls opened the meeting with a prayer, and the President, after he was garlanded, delivered a short and instructive introductory speech, dwelling on all aspects of the Raja's life, and pointed out that the Raja sowed the seeds of all modern movements in India. Next, Messrs. K. Krishnamurti, B.A., P. Syamasundara Rao (Chairman), Damodara Kaviratna, P. Behara and Kandregula Narayanamurti (student representative) spoke on various aspects of the Raja's life.

The local President of the Panchayat Board intends to re-name the Hospital Road after the Raja.—(*The New Orissa*, Berhampur.)

Baruva.—The members of the Baruva Panchayat Board celebrated the Centenary on the 27th September, 1933. Sriman Jagannathapadhi Khadanga opened a new road named RAMMOHUN ROY ROAD connecting the Main Street to Gandhi-

peta. The site was gifted by the Managing Trustees of Jaganathaswami temple. The Board sanctioned 50 Rupees for the construction of the Road. A procession with Rammohun Roy's photo and Bhajana marched along the principal streets. A public meeting was held, Sriman Jagannathapadhi Khadanga presiding, when lectures were delivered by Messrs. Titty Balaramiah, Madan Mohan Pandu, B.A. and Satyanarayana Saradhi.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Parlakimedi.—Under the auspices of the local Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebration Committee, a largely attended public meeting was held to celebrate the Centenary on the 27th September 1933 in the Antarvedi Memorial Hall, the Rev. S. C. Freeman, M.A., B.D. presiding.

After prayer, Mr. B. Ramalingaswami sang some Telugu verses which he had composed in praise of Rammohun's work and teachings. Dr. P. Vaikuntham, L.M.P. delivered in Telugu an address on *The life-history of Raja Rammohun Roy*. Mr. G. V. Sitapati, B.A., L.T., next spoke on *Rammohun as a religious reformer*, and showed how he first investigated the science of Comparative Theology, and how by promulgating his Universal Theism he was really the spiritual *guru* of Modern India. Mr. G. Satyanarayanamurti, M.A. spoke of *Rammohun Roy as a politician and economist*, referring to his cosmopolitan sympathies with political movements for popular freedom, and to his memorable views on Indian economic questions as expressed before the Select Committee in England at the time of the Renewal of the Charter in 1833. Mr. K. Srinivasa Rao spoke of *Rammohun as a social reformer*, describing in detail his great work in bringing about the abolition of *Sati* and his advanced views on Indian social reform. Rao Saheb G. V. Ramamurti, B.A. addresssed the audience on *Rammohun as an educationist*, laying stress on the importance of Rammohun's letter on English education to Lord Amherst. Mr. K. Satyanarayana, B.A., L.T., who spoke of *Rammohun as a journalist*, said that he was practically the founder of native journalism, and commented on select extracts from his renowned "Petition against the Press regulation." Mr. C. Hanumantha Rao, B.A., B.L. expatiated on the juristic importance of Rammohun's Essays on *The Rights of Females*, and *of Hindus in general, over ancestral property*.

The President in his concluding remarks spoke of Rammohun Roy as a very great man, not simply for India, but for the whole world.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Satyavaram (Parlakimedi.)—At a public meeting held on the 26th September 1933 at Satyavaram (Parlakimedi Taluk) under the presidentship of Mr. Akella Audi-

narayana, Mr. Venkatarao gave a brief sketch of the life of Raja Rammohun Roy. The members congratulated Mr. Akella Venkata Subbarao for declaring his intention to name his Library after the great reformer Raja Rammohun Roy.—(*The New Orissa*, Berhampur).

Chicacole.—In connection with the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy a public meeting was held on 27th September 1833 with Mr. H. Suryanarayana Naidu, B.A., B.L., President, Taluk Board, in the chair. Miss E. Archbold, M.A. and Messrs. Ch. Narasimhamurti and V. Suryarao Pantulu spoke on the occasion. The Harischandra Veethi (Street) of Chicacole was re-named RAMMOHUN VEETHI. There was feeding of the poor.

Bobbili.—In connection with the Centenary, a public meeting of the citizens of Bobbili was held on 27th September 1933 in the Victoria Memorial Town Hall under the presidentship of Rao Bahadur G. Subbareddi, Dewan of Bobbili. After the reading of some Telugu verses by Mr. B. Balakrishnamurti, the Pandit of the High School, Mr. R. S. Ramachandra Rao Pantulu, M.A., L.T. gave an address on the life and ideals of the Raja. The speaker said that the Raja brought about the harmonious blending of the Eastern and Western cultures with which he wanted to stem the tide of the growing evils in the social life of the Hindus in the name of religion. He was the pioneer of all modern Indian movements, political and social, namely, the spread of education, the uplift of the masses, and the freedom of the country. His ultimate aim was to bring about a universal brotherhood and a unified faith of all the religions in the world. Appealing to the orthodox section of the audience, the speaker said that Rammohun was a strict follower of the Upanishads, and got from them his inspiration, upon which his faith of Brahmoism is based.

The President in his concluding speech said that Rammohun tried to remove the evils of the caste-system, and to bring about unity in the land.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Ramachandrapuram.—The local Centenary Celebration Committee organised a public meeting in the National High School on 27th September, 1933, with Mr. P. Muthukrishna Naidu, District Munsif, in the chair. After the singing of *bhajanas*, Mr. P. Somanna, M.A., L.T. said that Rammohun Roy tried to reform the Hindu religion and restore it to its old glory. Brahmoism, he said, was not therefore a new creed. Mr. B. Lakshmipati Sastri and Mr. S. Lakshmipati Sastri spoke next, the latter saying that Rammohun Roy was a great patriot, who served his country in several directions and at all times.

Mr. C. V. Hanumanta Rao declared that the Raja's activities were all-comprehensive and that he was a pioneer in several respects, and as was the case with all pioneers, he had to face tremendous opposition, which he did undaunted. A Harijan student spoke next, referring to Rammohun's efforts to remove social and caste barriers.

Pamphlets in Telugu and English dealing with Rammohun Roy were distributed free.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Rajahmundry.—The Centenary was celebrated here with *eclat* for 3 days. The proceedings began on the morning of 24th September, 1933, with a Divine service in the Prarthana Samaj by Sir R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu.

On the 25th, about 250 poor people were fed in the Ananda Gardens. In the evening there was a Ladies' Gathering in the "Stree Samaj", when Miss H. Kaveribai, B.A., L.T. presided, and Mr. K. Saguna and Miss Kamala Ratnam spoke on the various activities of the Raja.

On the 26th a cosmopolitan dinner was arranged, in which the *elite* of the city participated. The pleasant function of naming the road on which the Town Hall stands after Rammohun Roy was performed by Mr. S. K. Chettur, I.C.S., Sub-collector, who presided over the public gathering of the evening in the Veeresalingam Town Hall. The Street, which till recently was called the Hospital Road, was re-named RAMMOHUN ROY ROAD. Mr. Chettur said that there was great need for a reformer of that kind at the present time, as there were still persons in India who favoured *Sati*. Mr. T. V. Seshagiri Row Naidu spoke on *The Spirit of Rammohun Roy*, and Mr. J. Ganganna, Head Master of the Veeresalingam High School on *The Kingdom of God*.

Divine service was conducted by Mr. Nabhi Jagannadha Rao of Cocanada on the morning of 27th September. In the afternoon, a procession started from the Godavari Station, passed through the important streets, and terminated at the Veeresalingam Town Hall, where a public meeting was held under the presidency of Rao Saheb Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao.

> Dr. Ramakrishna Rao said that it was perhaps nature's will that they were to celebrate Gandhiji's birthday, and mourn the demise of Dr. Annie Besant, and again to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy, the towering personalities of India and the world, during this Puja week and the 'Mahalaya' month. He eulogised the various activities of Raja Rammohun Roy, narrating how he fought for the emancipation of humanity in the social, political and religious fields.

Then the President called upon the poet, Ch. Lakshminarasimham to present to the Town Hall the portrait of Raja Rammohun Roy on behalf of the Centenary Committee. Mr. Lakshminarasimham, in his own eloquent and fluent manner, read some verses from his newly published book 'Kripambunidhi' (Ocean of Mercy), and felt glad that he was spared to witness the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy, whose footsteps he faithfully trod throughout his life, and thanked the Committee for the opportunity he was given. Mrs. Naziruddin, B.A., in unveiling the portrait, said that it was an esteemed privilege for her to unveil the portrait of one who fought every inch of his life for the emancipation of her sex. Mr. Subba Rao Pantulu, as a Trustee of the Town Hall, accepted and offered thanks for the portrait. Two gold medals were awarded to two students of the sixth form for standing uppermost in the Elocution Contest conducted by the Committee. After inspiring speeches by Messrs. B. Narayanan Deo, D. Venkata Rao, and P. Sundarasiva Rao, and verses by Messrs. T. Achuta Rao, K. Dharmanna, a Harijan poet, and K. Kasipathi, the function came to a close.—(*Selected from the "Swarajya" and the "Justice" of Madras*).

Vungutur.—A public meeting was held for celebrating the Centenary of Rammohun Roy with Mr. P. Krishnamurti as president. Messrs. T. Prakasarayudu, M.A., P. V. Subbayya, S. Subbarayudu, T. Bheemeswara Rao, D. Subbayya, and Ch. Bhimanna Sastry spoke on the occasion, dealing with the many-sided activities of the Raja.

Kovvur.—A meeting was held to celebrate the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy with Mr. Ch. Veerabhadra Rao, the well-known author of the *History of the Andhras*, in the chair.

Nidadavole.—A public meeting was held for the purpose of celebrating the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy on 27th September, 1933. It was presided over by Mr. Mangipudi Venkata Sarma, and Messrs. N. Venkata Rao and S. Satyanarayana addressed the meeting.

Madhavaram.—The Centenary was celebrated here on the 26th and 27th of September, 1933. The celebrations commenced with Ushakirtan on the 26th. There was a Divine service in the Board Higher Elementary School, Mr. T. Prakasarayudu, M.A. officiating as minister. At 3 P.M. there was a public meeting with Mr. Prakasarayudu in the chair. The President spoke very feelingly about the life and message of Rammohun Roy. Mr. V. Satyanarayana who was the principal speaker, dwelt on the beneficent activities of the Raja. On the 27th September, Mr. V. P. Raj, B. A. of Cocanada conducted Divine service in the

morning. At 3 P.M. a public meeting was held with Mr. Raj in the chair, when Messrs. K. Bapaiya, B. A., T. Kutumba Sastry and M. Narasimha Rao delivered interesting addresses dealing with the life and work of Rammohun Roy. The President dwelt in his concluding address on the importance of Spiritual Worship.

A separate meeting for ladies was held under the presidency of Mr. T. Parasarayudu in the Yuvathijana Prarthana Samaj at noon on the 26th September, when about 40 ladies were present. Copies of "Brahma Gitavali" and "Brahma Dharma, Part II" were distributed among the ladies present.

Kumudavilli.—In connection with the Centenary there was a Nagarsankirtan in the morning, followed by Divine service, on the 27th September 1933 in the local Mandir. Poor people were fed at noon. There was a public meeting at 4 P.M., with Mr. V. Satyanarayana, B.A. in the chair. Messrs. S. V. Narasimha Raju and P. Sagaram spoke on the life and work of Rammohun Roy.—(*The Dharma Sadhani*, Guntur).

Tanuku.—In connection with the Centenary there was a public meeting in the Hardinge Town Hall on 27th September, 1933. Mr. S. Sreeramulu, B.A., B.L. presided. The President observed that Rammohun Roy was the Maker of Modern India. Mr. P. Rajagopalan, B.A. gave an interesting account of the Raja's life. Pamphlets giving an account of the life of the Raja were distributed among the audience.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Narsapur.—The Centenary celebration took place here on 27th September 1933 in the T. H. School Hall under the presidency of Mr. Hasan Ali Saheb, B.A., B.L., Sub-Judge. In this connection an Elocution Competition was held, in which some boys took part, and books on the life of Raja Rammohun Roy were awarded as prizes to the best of them. Messrs. K. Yegganna, Rayasam Venkataramaiya, Srimati D. Ramalakshmamma and others spoke on the life of the renowned reformer.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Ellore.—Enthusiasm characterised the Centenary celebrations at this place. On 27th September, 1933, Mr. K. Kaliana Swami presided over a public meeting in the local Town Hall. Messrs. M. Rangaiah S. Purnachandrarao, A. Rama Rao and others spoke on the life of the Raja.

Another public meeting was held in the local Sir Rama Bhakta Samaj Hall under the presidency of Srimati Chunduri Rattamma, when Srimatis Ramasundaramma, Sattiraju Syamalamba and others spoke on the life and work of the great Indian social and religious reformer, and

paid glowing tributes to his strenuous work in the realm of Indian renaissance and for the cause of Hindu womanhood in abolishing the cruel custom of *Suttee*.—(*The "Hindu" and "Justice"*, Madras).

Nuzvid.—Under the auspices of the Young Men's Social Club, a public meeting to celebrate the Centenary was held on 27th September 1933 in the local High School, with Mr. Varanasi Srivasa Rao, M.A., L.T. in the chair. Mr. Ch. Sitarama Sastri, M.A., L.T., Lecturer, Andhra University, spoke on the life of Rammohun Roy. Messrs. K. Umamaheswara Rao, M.A., L.T., D. Suryaprakasa Rao, C. Rajagopala Rao and V. Narayana Rao spoke on the greatness of the Raja.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Bezwada.—The Centenary was celebrated here on 27th September 1933. At 3 P.M. there was a Ladies' gathering convened under the auspices of the Ladies' section of the Prarthana Samaj in the Rammohun Library Hall with Srimati T. Rajarajeswaramma in the chair, when Srimati Gnanamba delivered an address on the life and mission of Rammohun Roy. At 6 P.M. a public meeting was held in the same hall with Mr. N. S. Narasimhachariar, Subordinate Judge, in the chair. Mr. M. V. Subba Rao briefly narrated the achievements and reforms of Rammohun Roy. He explained how Rammohun tried to keep up his self-respect and that of the Indian nation at any cost, and mentioned a few incidents of his life in this connection. Mr. V. Sivarama Sastry dealt with the religious aspect of Rammohun's life, and asserted that Rammohun was as good an orthodox Sanatanist as anybody else. Mr. Ch. Venkatappiah and Srimati Gnanamba also addressed the gathering.

The President observed that Rammohun Roy's greatness lay in three things. First, his life was full and complete. Secondly, he practised what he preached. Lastly, he preached courageously and unhesitatingly whatever he considered right and just. The President appealed to all to cultivate those qualities.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Another meeting was held at the Bharat Mahila Mandali, Bezwada, under the presidentship of Srimati Yellamrazu Maha Lakshmamma, when speeches were made eulogising the services rendered by Raja Rammohun Roy.—(*The Justice*, Madras.)

Gudivada.—Under the auspices of the Gudivada Club a public meeting was held on the 27th September 1933 in the Club Hall. Mr. Karedla Ramiah, B.A. presided. After prayer by Mr. M. Gangadhara Sastri the report of the Centenary Celebration Committee was read by Mr. U. Adinarayanamurti Pantulu. Mr. B. T. Raghavachari gave a comprehensive account of the life and achievements of

the great reformer, and said that Rammohun was the father of Indian Nationalism and of Indian Renaissance. The speaker pointed out how Rammohun put up a strenuous fight against social and religious evils, how he championed the cause of the Indian Press, and how he laboured hard for the political advancement of the country. The President said that Rammohun laid the foundation stone of universal brotherhood.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Masulipatam.—PRELIMINARY MEETING. A Celebration Committee consisting of Messrs. V. V. S. Avadhani, B.A., B.L., (retired Sub-Judge), Rao Bahadur S. Hanumantha Rao, B.A., B.L., P. Pardhasaradhi, Md. Ali Raza, B.A., B.L., District Munsif, Rev. P. Ratnayya, M.A., L.T., (C. M. S. Noble College), Mrs. S. N. Akhila Rai, L.M.S., T. Perayya Naidu (retired Engineer), K. Sivarama Krishna Rao, M.A., L.T., Principal, Hindu College, A. B. Johnston, M.A. (Cantab.), Principal, Noble College, Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao, M.A., L.T., PH.D., U. Gopalaratnam, G. Subbiah, Secretary, Brahmo Samaj, *Convener*, was formed. It was resolved (1) to celebrate the Centenary for 3 days, viz. 25th. 26th and 27th September, 1933, (2) to present a Bromide photograph of Raja Rammohun Roy to the local Town Hall, and (3) to request the Municipal Council to name the Road is front of the Brahma Mandir after the Raja.

THE CELEBRATIONS. The Divine services in this connection were held in the morning in the Mandir, which, with the quadrangle in front, was gaily decorated with flags and festoons, and a grand arch was put up at the gate announcing the Centenary celebrations. The Town Hall, where the public meetings were held in the evenings, was also similarly decorated.

On the morning of the first day, the opening Divine service in the Mandir was conducted by Dr. Ramakrishna Rao. In his sermon on *Rammohun, the Devotee*, he pointed out how divine love gradually developed in Rammohun even in his early years, and ultimately deepened and formed the bed-rock of all public activities in his later life. On the second day Mr. P. Anjaneyulu conducted the morning service, and gave a discourse on *Rammohun, the Nation-builder*. He showed how Rammohun laid the foundation of an all-round development of the country, and how he strove hard for the consolidation of the disintegrating elements in the body politic and the reconciliation of conflicting cultures and civilizations. The same day a Ladies' Gathering was held in the Mandir at 4 P.M., at which Mrs. P. S. Anjaneyulu read a paper on *Rammohun Roy, and the uplift of women*, and Sister Gnanamba of Bezwada conducted the prayer and gave a talk on *Rammohun's life and work*. On the last day (27th September)

Mr. G. Subbiah conducted the morning service, and delivered a sermon on *Rammohun, the Man*. In a lucid speech he brought out all the outstanding features of Rammohun's character. In the afternoon poor people numbering about six hundred were sumptuously fed in the Mandir precincts.

The PUBLIC MEETINGS in the evening were held in the Town Hall. The Madras *Hindu* thus describes the meetings :—

On the **first day** Dr. P. Venkatarama Aiyar, M.B. and C.M., District Medical Officer, was in the chair. Mr. Ch. Srinivasa Row, B.A., spoke at length on the life and mission of Rammohn Roy with special emphasis on the social and religious side of his activities, and said that he marked the beginning of a new epoch in the religious evolution of India. Rammohun Roy stood at the confluence of two mighty streams, viz. the oriental and occidental cultures, and he breathed a new spirit and life into things old and time-worn. Mr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, M.A., next addressed the gathering on the progress of religious thought and evolution from epoch to epoch, and observed that Rammohun Roy deserved an eminent place in the hierarchy of religious and social reformers of the land. The speaker felt that Rammohun Roy culled into his system all the essentials of Sanatana Dharma, leaving out of account the ritualistic and minor aspects of Hindu theology. He did yeoman's service to the cause of Hinduism by making it sufficiently rational and adding to it a touch of modernity, which the conditions prevalent at the time rendered indispensable. The Chairman exhorted the hearers to imbibe the spirit of Puritanism breathed into India's ancient religion by Rammohun Roy, and to lead a life of benevolence and humility, making social service the keynote of their lives.

On the **second day** Mr. V. N. Kudva, I.C.S., Collector of Kistna District, presided over the meeting held in the Town Hall. Mr. G. V. Subbiah, expatiated at some length on the basic principles of Brahmo theism and practice. Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao then delivered an illuminating discourse on the work of Rammohun Roy as a religious prophet and saint. The Chairman observed in his concluding remarks that the Raja was universally recognised as the forerunner of the modern age, and that his versatile genius and penetrating intellect had led him to be the founder of the Brahmo Samaj.

Mr. C. Govindan Nair, B.A., B.L., Bar-at-Law, District Judge, presided over the **third day's** meeting in the Town Hall, which opened with a prayer by Mr. P. Anjaneyulu. Mr. Ch. Balakrishna Sastri, M.A., L.T. paid a glowing tribute to the great founder of the Brahmo

Samaj, and said that in spite of honest differences of opinion in evaluating the work of Rammohun Roy as a religious reformer and teacher of mankind, it had to be conceded that he was the Maker of Modern India. Dr. Akhilabai made a short and impressive speech, surveying Rammohun Roy's work in the cause of the uplift and emancipation of women. He was the champion of the rights of womanhood in India, who could never be too grateful to him for the soft corner he ever had in his heart for them. Mr. K. Ratnayya, M.A. of the Noble College then addressed the gathering on the devotional side of the Raja's activities. He had come to pay his tribute to the memory of Rammohun Roy as a Christian, and said that what characterised the Raja's work from the beginning to the end was philanthropy or love of humanity. His life was centred in love, and was lived for the service of man. Love of God was, with him, love and service of man. His contact with English literature and Christian missionaries of the time sowed in him a passion for diving into the depths of Christian theology, which he did in no time with his penetrating intellect and versatile knowledge. With all that he was essentially a Hindu and died a Hindu. He showed that Hinduism had in it all the essentials of a true and great religion, and that shorn of its ritualistic side, Hinduism, as could be made out from the Vedic theology, was as great a religion as it could be. The speaker appealed to the hearers to live the life of purity and devotion which Rammohun Roy had exhorted them to live, and to embody in their lives the great truths preached by him. Mr. Govindan Nair, who presided, paid a glowing tribute to the memory of Rammohun Roy, whose grave he had the honour of visiting at Bristol some time ago.

Guntur.—The celebration of the Centenary commenced here with a Divine service in the Prarthana Samaj on the morning of 27th September 1933. Mr. T. S. Prakasam, B.A., L.T. officiated as Minister. There was feeding of the poor at noon at the Annadana Samaj. In the evening the portrait of Rammohun Roy was taken in procession with Bhajan from the Mandir to the Municipal Public Library, where a public meeting was held under the presidentship of Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao, B.A., B.L. of Bezwada, who is much respected in the Andhra country as a selfless patriot, a social reformer, and a national leader. The proceedings commenced with a hymn. (The Presidential Address of Mr. Kaleswara Rao[109] will be found in Section C of Part II.)

Mr. V. Bhavanachary, the President of the Celebration Committee, then requested the Chairman of the Municipal Council to accept and unveil the photograph of Rammohun

Roy in the Municipal Library. Mr. N. V. L. Narasimha Rao thanked Mr. Bhavanachary and the Celebration Committee for the presentation of the picture to the Municipality, and said that it was in the fitness of things that the photo of a great and modern sage like Rammohun Roy should adorn the walls of the Municipal Library. Speaking next, Srimati V. Padmasanamma, B.A., member of the Senate, Andhra University, said that to correctly assess the value of the service rendered by Rammohun Roy to this country, one should peep inio his times and realise the great obstacles that were thrown in his way by society. She referred to the facts of Rammohun Roy going to Tibet at the age of fifteen to discuss with Buddhist monks, and his being saved from persecution by the women of that country. That was the reason, perhaps, for his championing the cause of Indian women, and for his ceaseless efforts at abolishing the cruel custom of *Sati*. The speaker also referred to his campaign against polygamy, and his efforts to secure for women legal rights to property. The women of India, the speaker concluded, would always cherish his memory with gratitude.

Mr. K. Satyanarayana Chowdhary said that he differed from those who thought that Rammohun Roy had founded a new religious school. In the speaker's opinion it was not so. Rammohun was a universalist, who strove for establishing a common platform for all religions. Rammohun was truly the Father of Modern India, and his memory would be ever green in the minds of his countrymen. Mr. Perupettan, B.A., L.T. said that what struck him most in Raja Rammohun's life was his great tolerance for other religions and his inoffensiveness, his great love for truth, and his courage of conviction. It behoved them all to contemplate on his life; for admiration would beget imitation, and imitation would beget regeneration. Janab Ahmed Abdulla Sheriff Sahib, B.A., L.T., speaking next, said that he fancied that 'Ram' (the alluring and captivating) was equivalent to 'Rahim' in Arabic, which meant the compassionate, the merciful. Rammohun worked all his life for preaching the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man. He saw that religion was universal, and there was no place in it for castes and creeds. The speaker appealed to the Hindu community to show to his community the same love and tolerance as Raja Rammohun Roy showed, and assured them that the Muslims would grasp the hands of the Hindus, and endeavour along with them to realise their common goal whatever the obstacles might be.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Ipurupalem.—The Centenary celebrations were conducted here on 26th and 27th September, 1933. On the 26th in the

morning an *ushakirtan* and a Divine service were held, the latter being conducted by Sri U. Subbiah Garu in the Brahmopasana Mandir. At 5 P.M. a public meeting was held with Mr. S. Srinivasa Rao Garu, B.A., L.T., Head Master, Municipal High School, Chirala, in the chair. Mr. Karyampudi Nagendrudu, B.A. and Mr. Pendem Venkataramulu spoke on the life and teachings of Rammohun Roy. The President gave a complete critical sketch of the Raja's life. On the 27th at 8 A.M. a *nagarsankirtan* and at 3 P.M. a gathering of boys and girls took place. At 5 P.M. clothes and food were distributed among the poor of the village.

Tenali.—The local V. V. S. Sabha celebrated the Centenary of Rammohun Roy on 27 September 1933. Mr. R. V. Sivudu, M.A., L.T. presided over a huge public meeting held in the Municipal Park. Messrs. K. Krishnavataram, K. Rajeswara Rao, C. H. Rama Rao and N. V. L. Narasimha Rao spoke on the life and achievements of the Raja, pointing out how far he was a creator of events, and the manner in which and the extent to which Modern India owed a deep debt of gratitude to him. He stressed on communal unity and social reform rather than hasty political experiments. Mr. R. V. Sivudu then unveiled a portrait of Rammohun Roy in the premises of the V. V. S. Sabha.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Bapatla.—A public meeting was held in the Town Hall to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy on the 27th September 1933. Mr. M. Kalidas, B.A., B.L., a leading Vakil of the place, presided. Messrs. A. V. Panchapakesa Anjer, B.A., L.T., retired Head Master, Kona Venkata Rao, Pleader, and M. Venkateswaralu, Asst. Teacher of the Mission Training School, delivered addresses on the life and work of Rammohun Roy. The meeting was well attended.

Chirala.—On 27th September, 1933, the Rammohun Roy Centenary was celebrated at Chirala. At 4-30 A.M. *ushakirtan*, and at 8 A. M. Divine service was conducted by Mr. Akkala Kotaiah Garu in the Brahmopasana Mandir. In the evening at 5-30 P.M. a public meeting was held in the Municipal Girls' School under the presidency of Sri M. Ramaiah Sresty Garu, Chairman, Municipal Council. Mr. K. Dasarathi Kavi Garu read some verses written by him. Mr. T. Rajagopala Iyengar, B.A., B.L., B. ED. and Mr. G. R. Premaiah Garu, M.L.C. spoke on the life of the Raja. Eminent men of the town took part in the meeting.

At the request of the Centenary Celebration Committee, the Municipal Council, Chirala, has resolved to name a street in the Municipality as RAMMOHUN VEETHI.

Nellore.—The Centenary was celebrated here on 4th October 1933. In the morning, some Harijan children and the inmates of the Cyclone Orphanage were fed. The evening programme included a prayer and a public meeting in the V. R. College Hall with Rao Bahadur T. Bhujanga Rao, District Judge, in the chair. Rev. S. C. Banerji of Madras was also a speaker of the evening.

Speaking of the varied activities of the late Raja, Mr. Bhujanga Rao referred to his invaluable services in the cause of political and social reform. Rammohun was a great national hero, and the dream of his life was that India should take an honoured place in the comity of nations. His passionate desire for the freedom of the Press was evident from the manner in which he entered into a protest against the Press Ordinance issued in his time, in the form of a Memorial to the British Government, which might well be called the Indian edition of Milton's *Areopagitica*. Mr. G. Narayana Rao spoke of the ideals which the great leader preached to the Indian youth. The unity of all faiths in their ultimate analysis and the necessity of religious toleration should be borne in mind by all who had the nation's interest at heart. Mr. Voruganti Venkatakrishnayya referred to the contribution of Raja Rammohun to the religious thought of the country. Rev. S. C. Banerji, who was then requested to address the gathering, said that Raja Rammohun was the Maker of Modern India. The seeds of freedom that he had sown had now borne fruit, and the nation was at present throbbing with a passion for political freedom. His religion was a pure synthetic concept of the great religions of the world, and in it lay the solution of the question of fostering unity among the several communities in the country. —(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Gudur.—The Pellati Ramireddy Club, Gudur, celebrated the Centenary on 27th September, 1933. A thousand poor people were fed during the day. A public meeting was held in the evening in the Club premises, Mr. P. Venkatasubba Reddi, the President of the Club, presiding. He impressed on the audience the importance of the Centenary celebrations, and eulogised the services of the great reformer. Mr. V. Satyanarayanamoorthy of the local High School spoke on the life and work of the Raja.

It was resolved at the Union Board meeting held the previous day to name their newly sanctioned road as RAMMOHUN ROAD.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Bellary.—The A. V. Young Men's Association celebrated the Centenary on the 27th September 1933 by a public meeting held under the presidency of Dewan Bahadur M.

Gopalaswami Mudaliar, M.L.C. Several ladies were among the audience. After distribution of booklets dealing with Raja Rammohun, Dr. Lakhmidevamma was the first to address the meeting. She briefly narrated the life history of Raja Rammohun Roy, and emphasised the services rendered by him to society by waging war against idolatry and putting an end to *Sati*.

Mr. C. Balaji Rao, Advocate and Chairman, Municipal Council, said that the Raja was a necessary product of his times. The then social customs, idolatry, human sacrifice, *Sati*, polygamy, and child widowhood, made him sacrifice himself for India. He took account of the attempts for political freedom and democratic rule all over Europe, and wanted to reform the Government in India. In fact he was the pioneer of all present day ideas, whether political, social, religious, moral, or intellectual.

Mr. Narasimha Sastri, Vakil, remarked that Rammohun was from birth a protestant, and he lived all his days true to his ideal. He was the first Indian who laid emphasis on the scientific aspect of religion, and advocated individual thought and action for the uplift of the country.

Mr. N. Mrutyunjaya Sastri, Official Receiver, described Rammohun as a national hero, and a warrior above all. When the country's fortunes were at a low ebb, and a period of darkness hung over it as a result of dissensions between castes, sects and sub-sects, who believed in and worshipped innummerable deities, Rammohun Roy emphasised the Vedic truth of the oneness of God and condemned all idolatry. His heroism must be judged by the standards of his times. What marked him out as a hero more than the part played by him in politics was his strength in opposing social conventions. That required much more courage and heroism than resisting even the Government, for there was at least the admiration of the millions for political suffering in the latter case ; but for one acting contrary to social opinion, there was nothing but denunciation all round. He suffered all this and much more. He was truly an epoch-making figure, and his example was necessary for putting down many social evils that exist even to-day.

The Chairman appealed to the audience to practise the virtues of Raja Rammohun Roy.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Madanapalle.—In connection with the Centenary there was a very largely attended public meeting on 27th September 1933 in the Krishna Vidyalaya, under the presidency of Dr. James H. Cousins. Messrs. P. Narasimhachary, M.A.,

L.T., P. N. Vasudeva Rao, M.A., Srimatis Subbama and R. Krishna Bai, B.A., L.T., spoke on the life and work of Rammohun Roy. There was also a procession in the streets of Madanapalle next day with the portrait of the Raja, and poor feeding in the Forest Ranger's Quarters.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

MADRAS

Madras.—The Centenary was celebrated at Madras with great enthusiasm on 27th September 1933 and subsequent days. The SOUTHERN INDIA BRAHMO SAMAJ took the lead, but the celebrations were conducted by a representative Committee composed of people of all communities and groups. The birthday of Sir R. Venkata Ratnam and the death anniversary of Pandit Sivanath Sastri, which fell on closely following dates, were all included in an *utsava* which lasted for 8 days, on each of which the Samaj Mandir was beautifully illuminated.

27th September.—There was an *ushakirtan*, followed by DIVINE SERVICE in the Samaj Mandir at 8-30 A.M., conducted by Rao Bahadur M. Venkatappa.

At 11 A. M., THE UNVEILING OF PORTRAITS of Raja Rammohun Roy, Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, and Brahmarshi Sir R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu was performed amidst great *eclat* by Mrs. Sarada Manjari Datta.

> In requesting Mrs. Datta to unveil the portraits, Rao Bahadur M. Venkatappa said that they could better understand the great truths preached by their leaders if they had an ocular view of their earthly figures. Hence these portraits were being presented to the Mandir. Raja Rammohun Roy first preached the universal religion. Debendra Nath Tagore settled the constitution of the Brahmo Samaj ; and Sir R. Venkata Ratnam was the greatest leader of the Samaj in this Presidency.

Mrs. Datta paid glowing tributes to Raja Rammohun Roy and Debendra Nath Tagore, who, she said, came into the world at a time when people were forgetting God, and they infused new life and light into those who were grovelling in darkness. The main cry of Debendra Nath was knowledge of God, contemplation of God, and happiness in God,—Brahma-jnana, Brahma-dhyana and Brahma-ananda. Sir R. Venkata Ratnam, Mrs. Datta continued, was full of gentleness, humility and love, and he was

a great leader of the Brahmo Samaj in this Presidency. Mrs. Datta then unveiled the portraits, and the function terminated with hymns.

At noon there was a PRITI-BHOJAN. At 4-30 P.M. there was a NAGAR-SANKIRTAN.

In the evening there was a largely attended PUBLIC MEETING in the Gokhale Hall, presided over by Sir P. Sivaswami Iyer. (His Presidential Address[104] is given in Section C of part II.) He was followed by Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar.

> Sir Alladi said that Raja Rammohun Roy was one of India's greatest sons. His life illustrated one great truth in the history of Hindu thought and sociology, viz. that there was a unity of thought in Hindu religion and sentiment, and that all the great seers of India had derived inspiration for their good work from Vedic thought, whether that work took the form of revolt against particular kinds of ceremonials, or of an attempt to differentiate the true genius and the essence from the excrescences of Hinduism. The life of Rammohun Roy, he said, illustrated the falsity of the contention frequently put forth that Vedantic Hinduism was not a dynamic solution for all the ills a society might suffer from, but merely a matter of doctrines and dogmas intended for disputants. That was a lesson every Hindu must remember and treasure up. It was well to remember the teachings and ideals of Rammohun Roy at the present time, because recent European and Indian history showed that religion was on trial, and whether it survived in the struggle or not would depend very largely on whether it would dominate or be subordinated to individual and national selfishness. Perhaps in the solution of this problem, India might have a unique contribution to make. The very differences existing in this land might help to remedy the evil. The future of religion would be assured if only they would think in the true spirit of religion, for religion was the most powerful lever in bringing out the Divine that was in every man.
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> Sir K. V. Reddi, speaking next, observed that Raja Rammohun Roy served India not merely as a social reformer, but as a politician and diplomat. His evidence before the Select Committee of the British House of Commons would show that he was a great statesman. Many of the reforms he urged in the administration of India were yet to be carried out. But as a social reformer, he was the greatest that India had so far produced. It was unfortunate that even to-day there

could be found in India men who admired *Sati*, and expressed their admiration not before gatherings of Indians in India, but before the Joint Parliamentary Committee and a foreign nation. India had perhaps more enemies than friends of her progress in England, and the gentleman who admired *Sati* there had given, perhaps unwittingly, a great handle to the former.

Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi said that Raja Rammohun Roy was more alive to-day than when he lived a hundred years ago. His ideals were governing all modern movements in India, whether for the spread of education, the removal of caste evils and untouchability, or the emancipation of women. The true measure of the strength of the Brahmo Samaj was to be found, not in the numbers professing allegiance to its church, but in the fact that it was the ideals of the Brahmo Samaj and of Rammohun Roy that to-day inspired every Hindu and Indian in his national work. If Gandhiji, Tagore and Sarojini Devi were working for the freedom of this land, and demanding equal rights for all Indians, irrespective of religion, caste or sex, the spirit working in them was that of Rammohun Roy. She announced that an effort was being made to collect funds to erect at Madras a statue or some other suitable memorial to the great Raja, and appealed to every one to contribute his or her mite.

Mr. Yakub Hassan said that Raja Rammohun Roy was the noblest product of Hindustani culture, which was born of the coming into contact of the Persian and Hindu cultures. Rammohun realised that God was one, whatever the name He was known by. Of the Brahmo Samaj he had founded, any one could be a member, without giving up his own religious faith. It was a pity that the teachings of Rammohun Roy, which would enable all the communities of India to come on a common platform and work together, had not been broadcast as fully as they should be. If they had been so broadcast, India, the speaker said, would long ago have been a freer and happier nation, occupying a much higher place among nations than she now did.

Mr. P. Chenchiah said that Raja Rammohun Roy laid the foundations of Indian nationalism. He had seen that there could be no unity in India unless there was a reconciliation and fusion of the Hindu, Islamic and Christian cultures, and that such a fusion must be broad-based on the teachings of the three religions, —the philosophy of the Upanishads, the teachings of the Quran, and the Sermon on the Mount. To-day they realised that the Raja's diagnosis of the disease in India, and the cure he prescribed, were both accurate. For,

were not all great Indians who approached Indian problems with a view to solve them, doing so on the Raja's lines ?

Srimati Alamelumangathayarammal said that Raja Rammohun Roy was the greatest friend of the Indian masses and Indian womanhood.

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the speakers.

29th September.—A PUBLIC MEETING under the auspices of the Young Theists' Union was held in the Brahma Mandir with Sir A. P. Patro in the chair. The proceedings commenced with a prayer.

Sir A. P. Patro said that Raja Rammohun was a messenger of God, and worked incessantly in various directions to improve the condition of society on a true religious basis. When he began his work, the condition of society in Bengal and elsewhere was very backward in many respects. He was a great religious reformer, and strove hard to establish the monotheistic form of worship and prayer. He studied all the great religions of the world, and taught his contemporaries to have an abiding faith in prayer and personal worship. He was not only a man of religion but also a man of his times. His activities extended to the social and political fields. The seeds that he tried to plant in his days in those fields were now growing steadily and gradually. He foresaw the improvements necessary for the uplift of his brethren. He pointed out that education should be the basis for all sorts of improvement of the people, and strove hard to bring to the notice of the Government that education should be their first and foremost concern in the administration of the country. He contended that a Government could not last long if it was not worked with the consent of the people. He understood the actual needs of the people, and impressed on the Government and the people what steps were necessary to fulfil those needs. He never feared nor faltered in his measures of reform. His advocacy of the cause of the uplift of women and of responsible self-government was now finding an echo in the Women's Movement and in the political struggle for freedom. If the Women's Movement was to succeed, women of India would have to follow in the footsteps of this great reformer.

Miss V. Parvati said that the Raja inaugurated the modern age in India. He belonged to the lineage of the great seers of India, and he exerted a great influence on every department of national activity.

Mr. Syed Abdul Wahab Bukhari laid stress on the Raja's ideal of religion. No true Mussalman would ever have cause to find fault with the teachings of this great prophet. He was against ritualism in all religions, and his religious message was universal, and embraced the essence of all religions. Besides being a great religious reformer, he was the pioneer of educational reform and of scientific studies in India. He stood up for the principles of freedom of the Press, and of free thought, and brought home to the Government that it ought to trust the people in carrying on the administration of the country. Many of the things which they were now working for, the great reformer foresaw in his day. In fact, what Sir Syed Ahmad was to Mussalmans, Raja Rammohun was to Hindus. If Hindus and Mussalmans understood the life and work of these great reformers, and acted up to their ideals, India would be happier and far more prosperous than it could otherwise be.

Mr. G. Solomon emphasised the point that Rammohun Roy conceived religion as an essential quest for truth, and preached to the people that one's religious beliefs would be of no value if one did not see that religion was related to life. The great reformer stood today as a perpetual reminder of this ideal.

Mr. C. Alavandar Chetti pointed out that the Raja stood as a link between the past and the present in India, and paved the way for the attainment of India's ideal. Mr. S. S. Rajagopalan said that Rammohun was a signpost to the future of India in many ways. He was a prophet of the new age, and if his message be interpreted in terms of present values, Indians would find a solution to many of the problems with which they were confronted, and would be able to develop the country's progress on right and national lines, and not in a spirit of imitation of the West. Mr. Kamalanadhan spoke and pleaded for the removal of caste and religious superstitions.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Madras Women's Conference.—At a meeting of the Madras Women's Conference, Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi moved the following Resolution :—"This Conference pays its respectful and grateful homage to Raja Rammohun Roy during his Centenary Celebration, for his inestimable services to humanity, to his country, and to the cause of Indian womanhood in particular, and appeals to the public to subscribe liberally towards his memory."

Mrs. Reddi said that as a courageous champion of the women's cause, Raja Rammohun Roy had surpassed

any reformer, ancient or modern. At his time when not a single woman in the East or in the West could raise her voice against the oppressive customs to which women were subjected, he had dared to challenge his own sex to prove that women were in any way inferior to men, and to declare that women deserved a better treatment at their hands. Equally strong and convincing was his stand against polygamy and child marriage. In his will he had stated that if any one of his heirs married more than one wife, he should be disinherited of his property. His Essay on the "Ancient Rights of Females" showed that if he had lived long enough he would have reformed the Hindu Law of inheritance so as to give a share to the wives, to the widows, and to the daughters from their ancestral property. As Indian women were now in a position to demand equal opportunities and equal citizen rights and adequate representation in the future constitution of their country, it was incumbent on them, nay, it was their sacred duty, to express their love, gratitude and reverence to that great personality who was the first to raise the banner of revolt on their behalf against all oppressive customs that hamper women's progress.

The Resolution, after being seconded, was carried amidst cheers.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Walajapet.—The Centenary was celebrated here in the Government Girls' School on 1st October 1933 when Mr. W. V. Veeraraghava Mudaliar, Chairman of the Municipality, presided. The band of the Junior Certified School was in attendance. After prayers and a devotional song, several speakers from Arcot, Ranipet and Walajah spoke on the various aspects of Rammohun Roy's activities for the betterment of India. The meeting was largely attended.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Karur.—A public meeting was held on 27th September 1933 at 5 P.M. in the local High School Hall, under the presidency of Mr. V. V. Sundararaja Mudaliar, when Messrs. A. V. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, B.A., B.L., B. K. Vembu Aiyar, B.A., K. V. Venkatakrishna Rao, B.A., B.L., A. L. Ramachandra Aiyar, B.A., local Vakils, and Mr. K. V. Anantharama Aiyar, M.A., L.T. spoke on the life and work of Raja Rammohun Roy.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Trichinopoly.—Under the auspices of the South Indian College of Commerce, Trichinpoly, Mr. L. N. Gubil Sundaresan delivered an interesting address on *The Life and work of Raja Rammohun Roy* in connection with the Centenary celebration on 27th September 1933 before a large gathering.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Madura.—A public meeting was held on the 27th September 1933 under the auspices of the local Young Men's Christian Association, Mr. M. P. Pai, I.C.S., presiding. There was a large and representative gathering. The Chairman said that though it was a hundred years after Rammohun Roy died, his memory was still fresh, and one's feelings of reverence for that great reformer were mixed with a feeling of astonishment that such a person had lived when the last of the Moghuls held sway in India, and when the unity of India was a mere dream. It was to the bold stand that he took in the controversy at the time between the Orientalists and the Anglicists that they owed the present system of education. They could not forget his crusade against *Suttee*.

Mr. T. C. Srinivasa Iyengar gave a sketch of the life of Rammohun Roy, and pointed out how the learning of Persian and Arabic and later of Sanskrit and English gave the necessary grounding to Rammohun Roy for playing the great role of social reformer and educationist in his later years. Messrs. K. E. Nainan, Lecturer, American College, and Ghulam Hussain addressed the gathering. After the Chairman's concluding remarks, the function came to a close with a vote of thanks.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Tinnevelly.—The Brahmo Samaj, Tinnevelly, celebrated the Centenary by holding a Divine service on the morning of the 27th September 1933. A public meeting was held in the evening at Palamcottah, under the presidentship of Mr. E. E. Mack, I.C.S., District Judge, Tinnevelly. After a prayer by the President of the Brahmo Samaj, Mr. Daniel Thomas, M.L.C., Advocate, delivered an address on the life and work of Raja Rammohun Roy. He surveyed the life of this great Indian, and dealt with his contribution to reform, religious, social, educational and economic, in India at one of her darkest periods of history.

Mr. T. V. Nilakantam Pillai, B.A., B.L., speaking next, referred to Rammohun Roy's fight for the freedom of the Press, the emancipation of Indian women, and political liberty of the people all over the world.

Winding up the proceedings, Mr. Mack paid a glowing tribute to the genius and vision of Rammohun Roy, who had a great claim to be considered among the greatest men of the world. It was extraordinary that he should have conceived a future for India on the right lines, and the only lines of true development, at a time when India was enveloped in darkness and chaos. Rammohun Roy's idea that India should, while remaining true to her own ideals and culture, be stripped of their dross, and acquire a dynamic contact with the West, was

a noble one, which held true and good even to this day. He worked towards the realisation of this ideal with all the fervour he was capable of. The position of a reformer in India a hundred years ago working against orthodoxy could be better imagined than said. Another claim of Rammohun Roy, said Mr. Mack, to the gratitude of posterity was his vision about the unity of mankind on the basis of the worship of the one God.

With a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. S. J. Sachchidananda, the meeting terminated.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Thingalur.—On 27th September 1933 the Centenary was celebrated at Thingalur by the local "Youth League". Mr. M. A. Deivasikamani Gowndar, B.A. B.L. of Erode presided and spoke on the need for harmony of religions in India. Mr. N. Lakshmana Mudaliar of the Perundurai Rural Centre spoke on Raja Rammohun Roy's invaluable contribution towards the improvement of the economic condition of the villagers.—(*The Hindu*, Madras).

Coimbatore.—The Centenary was celebrated at Coimbatore on 27th September 1933 at the Y. M. C. A. Hall under the presidency of the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri. There was a crowded gathering. The proceedings began with a prayer. (The principal speech, the Presidential Address[100] of Mr. Sastri, is given in Section C of Part II.)

After Mr. Sastri had spoken, Rao Sahib C. M. Ramachandran Chettiar, Messrs. T. S. Krishnamurthi Aiyar, M.A., L.T., Abdur Rahim, G. Venkatarama Aiyar, and others addressed the meeting. With a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. T. V. Rajagopal, M.A., B.L., the function came to a close.

Calicut.—PRELIMINARY MEETING. Leading people of the town representing all castes and creeds, convened a public meeting on 11th September 1933 under the presidency of Mr. Pattathil Narayana Menon, M.A., B.L., retired Chief Judge of the Cochin Chief Court, to concert measures for celebrating the Centenary in a fitting manner. Mr. Manjeri Ramaier, B.A., B.L., Swami Dharmanand, Brahmo worker, and Syed Mohammed made short speeches on different aspects of the iife of the Raja, and impressed on the audience the desirability and necessity of celebrating the Centenary. It was unanimously resolved to celebrate the Centenary on the 27th September, and a Centenary Celebration Committee with Mr. Pattathil Narayana Menon as *President*, Messrs. V. R. Nayanar, B.A., Member, Servants of India Society, and K. Achuthan, Secretary, Brahmo Samaj, Calicut, as *Joint Secretaries*, and 12 ordinary members was constituted.

THE CELEBRATIONS. Under the joint auspices of the Calicut Brahmo Samaj and the Centenary Celebration Committee, a varied programme was gone through from 24th to 27th September 1933.

On the 24th evening, Rao Sahib Dr. A. Gopalan conducted Divine service in the Brahma Mandir, and Mr. Syed Mohammed delivered a lecture on Rammohun's various activities. On the 25th evening, sacred readings were conducted by Swami Dharmanand, and Mr. V. R. Nayanar, B.A. spoke on the greatness of the Raja in different fields of activity. On the 26th noon about 700 poor people, including many Harijans, were fed at the premises of the Brahmo Samaj by the Centenary Celebration Committee, the necessary funds having been collected by public subscription. Mention should be made here of the able and efficient manner in which the work in connection with the feeding was done by Mr. B. G. Ayathan, one of the Committee members. This was followed by a special Divine service in the Samaj Mandir by Dr. A. B. Das, and a lecture by Swami Pranavanand Saraswati of the Punjab, an Arya Samajist. He spoke at length on the life and teachings of the Raja.

On the 27th morning a memorial Divine service was conducted by Mr. B. S. T. Mudaliar, President of the Samaj. At 3 P.M. a procession started from the Shanti Gardens at Chevayoor with placards and music, and led by Rao Sahib Dr. A. Gopalan, reached the Samaj Mandir, where a special prayer was offered by Swami Dharmanand. A large procession was then formed from the Samaj Mandir and proceeded to the Town Hall with placards, music and band, and a life-size portrait of Rammohun Roy. The procession was led by Dr. Gopalan, Mr. B. S. T. Mudaliar and others. It passed through some of the important streets of Calicut, making a deep impression on the minds of the people, and reached the Town Hall at 4-30 P.M., where a public meeting was held under the presidency of Swami Suvicharanand.

The Hall, which was gaily decorated, was occupied to its full capacity by people of all castes and creeds, and many people had to stand in the verandah for want of accommodation. Booklets on the life of Rammohun Roy in Malayalam were distributed among the audience by the Centenary Celebration Committee. Copies of the booklet were also sent to the interior parts of the district for free distribution.

The function in the Hall began with hymns on the Raja specially composed for the occasion, and sung melodiously by three Harijan boys. Mr. Pattathil Narayana

Menon, President of the Centenary Celebration Committee, in his opening speech, referred to the religious ideals of Rammohun Roy, and to the Brahmo Samaj in which those ideals are embodied. He said that Rammohun was one of the greatest men ever born in India. A Brahmin by birth, he became the pioneer of all spiritual, social, educational and political movements in India.

After the President's introductory speech, Mr. V. R. Nayanar, Joint Secretary of the Committee, read a brief report of the work done by the Committee. This was followed by a speech in English by Mrs. T. P. Kurien, B.A., L.T. She referred to the disabilities under which women suffered at the time of the Raja, and to his earnest and successful endeavours to ameliorate their condition. Sreemati Parvati Nenminimangalam, a Nambudri lady, who spoke next, also referred to the services rendered by the Raja to the unfortunate women-folk of the country. She narrated in a few well-chosen words the career of Raja Rammohun Roy, and emphasised the importance of his work in connection with the abolition of *Suttee* and polygamy. She stressed his greatness as the centre of religious, political and economic activities, a century back. Sreemati Parvati Antharjanam declared that Rammohun was very far in advance of his times, and even today many of the so-called liberals seemed to be mere conservatives by his side.

Next, Rev. H. A. Popley, B.A. delivered a very impressive and instructive lecture on the universality of the Raja's religion. In the course of his speech, he dwelt on the Raja as a pioneer in all fields of public activity in Modern India. He was "the builder of the bridge", linking the very souls of different nationalities. He was a citizen of the world. Rev. Mr. Popley added that it was a pity that our children were now taught in schools more of the Black Hole of Calcutta and Lord Clive's adventures than of the life and work of men like Raja Rammohun Roy.

Mr. M. V. Alikoya spoke on other aspects of the Raja's life, and Swami Dharmanand spoke on *Rammohun Roy and the Brahmo Samaj*.

The President then presented a medal awarded by Dr. C. M. Ayathan for the best essay on *Rammohun Roy, the Father of Modern India*, in memory of his deceased son. The competition was open only to students of High Schools in Malabar. The Medal was won by George T. Joshua, a student of Tellicherry.

Swami Dharmanand next moved and Mr. V. R. Nayanar seconded a Resolution in the Committee for opening a Poor

HOUSE in Calicut in remembrance of the Centenary celebrations. Another Resolution requesting the Calicut Municipal Council to re-name the Chintavalappe Road near the Brahma Mandir as RAMMOHUN ROAD was moved from the chair. Both the Resolutions were unanimously adopted.

At the instance of the Centenary Celebration Committee, all local newspapers published special articles on the life and teachings of the Raja. In this connection mention should be made of the *West Coast Spectator* edited by Mr. Kallat Raghavan, a prominent member of the Calicut Brahmo Samaj. Its issue of the 24th September was largely devoted to articles on various aspects of the Raja's life.

The Centenary Celebration Committee had the wholehearted co-operation of many of the leading men of the town in making the celebration the great success it was.

Tellicherry.—Under the auspices of Sree Narayana Dharma Samajam and Vidyarthi Samajam, and the presidency of Janab K. M. Seethi, B.A., B.L., M.L.C., a largely attended public meeting was held on 28th September 1933 at the Town Hall to celebrate the Centenary. There were speeches by Messrs. Kottayi Kumaran, T. Narayanan Nambiar, B.A., B.L., K. P. Raghavan Nair, B.A., B.L., T. Keshavan Nair, and Swamiji Ananda Teerthan, M.A. —(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

Cannanore.—The Cannanore Brahmo Samaj celebrated the Centenary on 27th September 1933 with due solemnity and enthusiasm. In the morning, in the newly constructed bungalow of Mr. M. K. Rammuni, a Memorial Service was held. Miss Leela Gopalan, (the Secretary's daughter,) Music Teacher of the local Government Girls' High School, sang the well-known hymn *Sarvam Brahmamayam*. The service was conducted by Sadhu Siva Prasad, who explained how the great Raja consecrated his life for the social, religious, political, educational and literary advancement of India. The sermon created a deep impression on the orthodox people.

In the evening a public meeting was held in the Town Middle School, which was decorated with festoons and flowers. People gathered in large numbers before the appointed hour. Mr. M. Ramachander, District Munsif, proposed Khan Bahadur Khalimulla Chida Sahib Bahadur, M.B.E., Deputy Superintendent of Police, to the chair. The address of the president touched on several aspects of the life of the great Raja, with quotations from Arabic and Persian scriptures. The Khan Bahadur stated that Rammohun was sent by God to India as His soldier to

battle against ignorance, superstition, caste and idolatry, and to fight for the emancipation and uplift of women. The Raja's message of Universal Religion with no barriers of creed, scripture or prophet, with common worship for all, made a powerful appeal upon the audience.

Mr. T. Krishnan, Vakil, President of the Cannanore Samaj, read in Malayalam a short sketch of Rammohun's life (written for the occasion by Sadhu Siva Prasad and printed by the Cannanore Samaj for free distribution.) Glowing tributes to the memory of the Raja were also paid by Messrs. V. Kunhikannan Nambiar, B.A., L.T., Maulavi Abdulla, B.A., and Muhammad Kunhi, a student. The proceedings concluded with a speech by the president. The entire celebration was an unqualified success.

Chovva.—A public meeting was arranged on 27th September 1933 at the Dharma Samaj. Mr. P. Kannan, a leading vakil of Cannanore, presided, and several young men gave addresses on the various aspects of the Raja's life. Sadhu Siva Prasad drew the attention of the audience to the spiritual side of his life. Mr. M. Ramachander, the local District Munsif, and several others from Cannanore participated in the function.

Mangalore.—In connection with the Centenary a public meeting was held on 27th September 1933 at the Brahmo Samaj Mandir with Mr. G. K. Chettur, M.A. (Oxon) in the chair. A large number of ladies were also present. After prayer the Chairman referred to the life and work of Rammohun Roy in social and educational fields. Mr. K. R. Karanth, B.A., LL.B. touched upon the salient points in the life of the Raja, and stressed the need for social reform and the need for abolition of untouchability. Messrs. B. Achuta Baliga and Karnad Sadasiva Rao addressed the gathering on the significance of the celebration, and with the Chairman's concluding remarks, the meeting terminated.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

CEYLON

Colombo.—Eloquent tributes to the memory of the Raja were paid at the Centenary meeting held under the auspices of the Central Y. M. C. A., Fort, on 27th September 1933 at the Gymnasium Hall of the Association. The meeting was very largely attended, the gathering including a number of ladies. The Rev. J. G. W. Hendrie, Minister of St. Andrew's Scots Kirk, presided. The proceedings

opened with a Tamil invocation hymn sung by Mrs. N. P. Pillai. The principal speeches were by the Rev. J. G. W. Hendrie[116] and Mr. K. P. S. Menon[112]. (These will be found in Section C of Part II.) Two Bengali solos were charmingly rendered by Mrs. Das Gupta.

Dr. Ram, speaking after the President, dwelt on Rammohun Roy's work on behalf of Indian women. His courage and determination were the chief weapons he used in his work for women. Rammohun Roy in his time felt that the women of India were not occupying the place which they had occupied in ancient times, and that there were many disabilities from which they suffered, the greatest of which was the custom of *Sati*, i.e. the burning of widows alive on the funeral pyres of their husbands. He was first roused to the horrors of that awful custom by the burning of his own sister-in-law with her husband's remains, and from that time he worked incessantly for 15 years to bring about a reform. In the course of further remarks, Dr. Ram described Rammohun Roy's work against polygamy, and said that in his will he had disinherited such sons or relatives as would have more than one wife at any one time. He never placed any convention or custom higher than what he considered to be right.

The meeting terminated with some concluding remarks from Rev. Hendrie, and a vote of thanks, proposed by Rev. F. Kingsbury, to the speakers and to the ladies who provided the musical items.

TRAVANCORE

Alleppey.—The Centenary was celebrated at Alleppey from 27th September to 4th October 1933. On all these days there were divine services conducted by Messrs. E. Subbukrishnaiya, P. Kunhi Raman and K. K. Madhavan. On 27th and 28th September, PUBLIC MEETINGS were held under a *shamiana* erected for the purpose near the Mandir, and at the Mullakkal Christian Institute, under the presidentship of Mr. S. Bahadur P. S. Mohamed and Rev. C. C. Thommen, respectively. Mr. M. C. Narayanan and Mr. S. K. George, M.A., B.D. spoke on the 27th, and Mr. Balakrishnan Thampi, B.A., B.L., M.L.C. and Mr. E. Subbukrishnaiya spoke on the 28th. On both the occasions Mr. Kunhi Raman welcomed the people and made suitable speeches explaining to the audience the object of the Celebrations.

On the 29th there was a CHILDREN'S GATHERING in the Mandir, when about 80 children gathered. They were addressed by both Mr. E. Subbukrishnaiya and Mr. Kunhi Raman, after which refreshments were served to them.

On 30th September and 1st October a RELIGIOUS CONVENTION was held, where representatives of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam spoke on the first day, and those of Narayana Dharma, Ananda-Matam, Atma-Vidya Sangha and Brahmoism spoke on the second day. These meetings were largely attended, and they were ably presided over by Mr. K. Sankara Subba Iyer, B.A., B.L., District and Sessions Judge, and Mr. Velu Menon, B.A., B.L. respectively.

On 2nd October a LADIES' GATHERING was held under the presidentship of Miss Vedakanun, M.A., L.T., and speeches were made on the life of Rammohun Roy by the following lady speakers :—Miss Bhargavi, Mrs. Aiyappan and Mrs. Rohini Kunhi Raman.

On 3rd October was held a MEETING of the DEPRESSED CLASSES who gathered in the pandal in large numbers in spite of a down-pour of rain. Speeches were made by Mr. Valoon, M.L.C. of Ernakulam, a representative of the Depressed Classes in the Cochin State Legislative Council, Mr. Velu Kutti Menon of the Nair Service Society, and Mr. E. Subbukrishnaiya. Mr. Balakrishnan Thampi, B.A., B.L., M.L.C. of Travancore presided on the occasion.

On 4th October, the last day of the celebrations, a SOCIAL GATHERING was held, in which representatives of all classes were present, and the whole celebrations came to a happy termination with the singing of Mangalam.

The following summary of the speeches made at the CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS held under the presidentship of Mr. K. S. S. Iyer on 30th September is given by the *Hindu* of Madras :

The Chairman, in opening the Session, said that it was quite appropriate and in the fitness of things that such a Convention should be held in connection with the Centenary celebrations of Raja Rammohun Roy, inasmuch as Rammohun made the first efforts in India to create a common platform for all religions to come together.

Mr. A. Krishna Aiyar, B.A., B.D. addressed the gathering on Hinduism. He said that whereas every religion could be traced to its origin, Hinduism alone stood out ancient and untraceable in its origin. So it was claimed to be the Sanatana Dharma. It was not to be mistaken with any particular system of practice by castes within it. Caste system or Varnasrama-dharma was according to *guna* and *karma*.

Mr. Manjeri Ramakrishna Aiyar, B.A., L.T., Head Master, Sanatana Dharma Vidyasala, spoke on Buddhism. He compared Rammohun Roy to Buddha, whom he characterised as the "rebellious child of Hinduism" in the words of Swami Vivekananda. He said that Buddha was the greatest missionary the world ever produced.

Rev. A. G. Verghese, speaking on Christianity, maintained that man could not attain salvation by following the spirit of the law alone, remaining sinful at heart.

Mr. A. M. Kunju Mahomed, speaking on Islam, emphasised the ideal of brotherhood preached by Mahomed the Prophet, which alone could secure to man peace and happiness.

The Chairman, in winding up the proceedings, said that whatever might be the path along which people had to tread, the goal being the same, it was useless to argue about the relative importance of various religions. People must be true to their faith, and act according to their convictions, so that people of all faiths might march together, hand in hand, towards the common goal.

MYSORE

Bangalore.—On 27th September 1933, in the morning, a procession started from Yelahanka Gate and terminated at the City Brahmo Samaj Buildings, Cottonpet. In the evening, glowing tributes were paid to "the first and the greatest of Indians of Modern India" at a Public Meeting held at the Intermediate College Hall, under the presidency of Dr. Sir C. V. Raman. The meeting, which was organised by the Bangalore Brahmo Samaj, was very largely attended, and several ladies were present. (Sir C. V. Raman's Presidential address[103] is given in Section C of Part II.)

After Sir C. V. Raman, Miss V. T. Lakshmi, Head Mistress of the Kamala Bai Girls' High School, addressed the gathering. She said that Rammohun Roy was the inaugurator of the modern age in India. Ever since his birth, he worked, suffered and died for India. He was a pioneer in education, in social reform and in political reform. He hated tyranny of every kind and worked for the rights and liberties of women. He was essentially a 'woman's man'.

Mr. N. Mahadevan, who spoke next, dwelt on the many-sided greatness of the Raja, and appealed to the people to cast off age-long customs and beliefs which did not fit in with the present day conditions.

Mr. K. T. Bashyam said that Rammohun Roy's ideas of the essential unity of the Godhead amidst the apparent diversity of religions, and of the establishment of a common mode and place of worship for every Indian, be he a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi, or Jew, of any caste, colour, or creed, thereby bringing the votaries of every religion together in a spirit of brotherhood, were indicative of that far-seeing vision which a hundred years ago envisaged the making today of a League of Nations, of a Parliament of Man. Love of liberty was the essence of Rammohun Roy's life as a reformer. His love was not confined to India only. Wherever, in whatever part of the world, humanity progressed, the heart of Rammohun responded in delight, —so universal was his love of hnmanity. Proceeding, Mr. Bashyam said that there were a number of wrongs, great and small, at the present moment, *e.g.* the curse of untouchability, the economic slavery of women, the grinding poverty of the masses, the helpless sufferings of the labouring classes, etc., which required to be redressed, and the country was in dire need of persons like Rammohun Roy. The speaker believed that the spirit of Rammohun was abroad, and that the day would not be far before they commemorated his day by accomplishing what he attempted in the cause of humanity,— viz. the brotherhood of man.

Next, Messrs. W. H. Hanumanthappa and N. Ramamurthi addressed the meeting, which was brought to a close by Sir C. V. Raman thanking the organisers for giving him the opportunity to pay his tribute to Rammohun Roy. Rammohun Roy was one of the galaxy of thinkers who had given all their best to the service of the country. The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. B. V. Narayana Reddi.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

THE NIZAM'S DOMINIONS

Hyderabad (Deccan).—The Rammohun Roy Centenary was celebrated on the 27th September 1933 in the Hyderabad Brahmo Samaj (Hanuman Takadi, Sultan Bazar.) Rev. L. Simpson, B.A. and Mr. G. A. Chandavarkar, M.A. spoke on the life and work of the Raja. Nawab Sir Amin Jung Bahadur, KT. presided. A proposal for a permanent memorial in the shape of a Library, to be named after the Raja, was also brought forward. In the morning at 8-30 A.M. there was a Divine Service.

BOMBAY

Bombay.—The Rammohun Roy Centenary was celebrated in the Bombay Prarthana Samaj Mandir from 26th September to 1st October, 1933. On 26th September at 6-30 P.M. the OPENING DIVINE SERVICE was conducted by Dr. Kashibai Nowrange, B.A., L.M. & S.

On the 27th at 4-30 P.M. a MEETING FOR LADIES was held under the auspices of the Arya Mahila Samaj, presided over by Mrs. Shantabai Patkar, and addressed by Mrs. Sharadabai Naravne, B.A. and Miss Krishnabai Javere. At 6-30 P.M. at a PUBLIC MEETING presided over by Mr. V. N. Chandavarkar, B. A., Vice-Chancellor of the University, an address in English was delivered by Prof. V. N. Naik M.A. On the 28th at 3-30 P.M., there was a SOCIAL GATHERING, and at 6 P.M. a PUBLIC MEETING was held under the presidency of Principal R. Kar. Principal James Kellock, M.A. and Mr. S. G. Warty, M.A. spoke on the Raja's life in English. On the 29th at 6-30 P.M. there was another PUBLIC MEETING presided over by Mr. D. G. Vaidya, and addressed by Mr. N. R. Phatak, B.A. in Marathi on *Rammohun and National Uplift*. On the 30th at 8-30 P.M. there was HARIKIRTAN led by Mr. D. G. Vaidya. On the 1st October at 8-15 A.M. there was a gathering of the SUNDAY SCHOOL children ; Mr. B. B. Korgaonkar presided, and Miss Sumati Naik, B.A. and Mr. G. L. Chandavarkar, M.A. addressed the children. At 5-30 P.M. the CONCLUDING DIVINE SERVICE was conducted by Mr. V. S. Sohoni.

(The substance of the addresses by Prof. V. J. Naik[113] and Principal James Kellock[114] are given in Section C of Part II.)

Poona City.—The Centenary was celebrated at the Ahalya Ashram, Poona City, from 24th September to 1st October, 1933. On 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th September Divine services were held in the mornings with readings from the Raja's Life, conducted by Mr. K. Madhale and Mr. V. R. Shinde. On the 28th at 10 A.M. there was a Children's Gathering, and at 4-30 P.M. a Public Meeting presided over by Mr. V. R. Shinde. The following gentlemen spoke on the life and work of the Raja :—Mr. B. G. Jagtap, B.A., Mr. G. B. Shinde, Subehdar R. S. Ghatge, Mr. K. Madhale, and Mr. D. V. Gaikwad. On 29th and 30th September and on 1st October, Divine services were conducted by Mr. V. R. Shinde and Mr. B. G. Jagtap, B.A.

Under the auspices of the Poona Prarthana Samaj a Public Meeting was held on 27th September at 6 P.M. in the Gokhale Hall, where Mr. Kodand Rao of the Servants of India Society spoke on the life of the Raja.

Ahmedabad.—The Centenary was observed by the Ahmedabad Prarthana Samaj, which organised a Public Meeting in its Mandir on 27th September 1933. Mr. Satya Vrata Mukerjee, Sar-suba of Baroda State, gave a very instructive and illuminating address on the life and activities of the great reformer.

Dharwar.—Under the auspices of the Debating Union of the Karnatak College, Dharwar, a meeting to celebrate the Centenary was held on 26th September, 1933 under the presidentship of Principal A. C. Farran. The meeting was addressed by Prof. N. S. Takakhav, Dr. V. G. Bhat, and Mr. T. Reuben.

Meetings held in November and December 1933 by Messrs. V. R. Shinde and B. B. Keskar.—Meetings were held by Messrs. Shinde and Keskar in the Satara District at **Satara, Wai, Karad,** and **Islampur**; in the Kolhapur State at **Kolhapur** and **Valivade**; in the Belgaon District at **Nipani**; in the Sangli State at **Terdal**: in the **Jamkhandi** State at **Jamkhandi** and **Jamagi**; at **Bijapur, Sholapur** and **Nasik**; at **Jalgaon** in Khandesh; at **Lonavla**; in the C. P. and Berar at **Amraoti, Nagpur, Wardha,** and **Yeotmal.** The most numerously attended meetings were those at Nagpur, Wardha, Yeotmal, Kolhapur and Wai.

SINDH

Karachi.—A Public Meeting of the citizens of Karachi was held on 27th September 1933 at the Khalikdina Hall to observe the Centenary. Mr. Jamshed Nusserwanji, President, Karachi Municipality, presided.

Mr. Jamshed at the outset referred briefly to the pioneer work in the field of social and religious reform done during very difficult times by Raja Rammohun Roy. He then called upon various speakers to address the gathering.

Principal Ram Sahai felt that after the lapse of one hundred years after the passing away of the great reformer, the same spark of awakening which guided his course of life should guide them to carry out the social and religious reforms in the country, the need for which was as great today as it was in Raja Rammohun's days.

Mr. Kumar could not help thinking of another great personality, Dr. Annie Besant, that had just passed away. Like her, Rammohun Roy also was associated with reformist movements in every walk of life, and was great

in all departments of life. Rammohun revolted against the established religion, and even when he was a mere lad, he had the courage to stand firm by his convictions and to suffer the displeasure of his parents. The pains he took to master the scriptures of all religions ought to prove a lesson for those who are too prone to comment on the religions of others ; and all of them should express a sense of gratitude for one who opened up the pathway of reforms in the country.

Mr. P. G. Thomas said that he was glad that the *Sind Observer* had taken out a Centenary number dealing with the various aspects of the eventful life of Raja Rammohun Roy. He stated that the Raja had churned the Hindu Sastras and taken out their essence, which he incorporated in the religious institution he gave to the country. Mr. Gurdayal Malik read a letter from Mr. Revachand Ratanchand expressing his inability to attend the meeting on account of illness ; and paying his own homage to the memory of the great reformer, he made a few observations on his life. Mr. A. B. Talkar then offered a few observations on the teachings and life of Rammohun. The meeting closed with the recitation by Brahmo girls of a song specially composed for the occasion.—(*The Sind Observer*, Karachi.)

Hyderabad (Sindh.)—The Centenary of the death of the Raja was celebrated by the Hyderabad (Sindh) NAVA-VIDHAN BRAHMO SAMAJ on 27th September 1933 by a special *upasana* in the Mandir in the morning. Rai Bahadur Diwan Pribhdas, Manager, Nava Vidyalaya High School, conducted the service, and spoke on the life and work of the Raja. The meeting was attended by about 150 men and women.

At noon about 400 persons of all creeds and castes participated in a *Pritibhojan*.

A PUBLIC MEETING was held in the Mandir in the evening. Rai Bahadur Diwan Tagahsingh Ailmal, an enthusiastic sympathiser of the Samaj, and retired Collector, presided. Dr. Choithram, the local Congress leader, wondered how the Raja could be in advance of his times by nearly a century. Mr. Santdas Mangharam, a leading lawyer, and President of the local Theosophical Society, said that the Raja was a pioneer of all religious, social, educational and political reform. Mr. Fatehchand Menghraj, a leading member of the Gur Sangat, spoke of his monotheism, and Diwan Pribhdas traced the history of the Brahmo Samaj. Miss Thakuri Lakhani, M.A. spoke of his work for women.

Never in the history of this Samaj were such glowing tributes paid to the memory of the Founder of the Brahmo

Samaj. The meeting was attended by about 500 men and women, and terminated with a beautiful hymn by the girls of the Nava Kanya Vidyalaya led by Miss Hardevi Gurbaxani.

Under the auspices of the Rammohun Centenary Committee a YOUTH'S SOCIAL CONFERENCE was held in the Brahma Mandir from 16th to 19th October. About 650 young persons enrolled themselves as Delegates of the Conference. The number included more than 200 lady members. Mr. Hiranand Karamchand, B.A., Editor of the *Unnati*, and a leading social and political worker, presided. A varied and interesting programme was gone through. Speeches and Resolutions advocating social reform in all its phases were made. The following was one of the Resolutions:—

"This Conference sends its greetings to the Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebration Committee formed under the presidentship of Dr. Tagore, and hopes that their efforts in connection with social reform will be crowned with success."

THE NAVA KANYA VIDYALAYA is a High School for girls, managed by the Brahmo Samaj. The students are given religious and moral instruction daily after prayer for 15 minutes. During the months of August and September, the biography of Raja Rammohun Roy written by Prof. N. D. Gurbaxani, M.A. was taught to the students of all classes. All classes were examined, and the first two girls were selected from each class, and a joint competitive examination was held for these selected girls. Prizes were given to winners. The students also organized sports in connection with the Centenary, and prizes were given to many girls. There were about 15 items, and the finals were very interesting. Girls of all classes took very keen interest in the sports. The students joined and participated in all the Centenary functions organized by the local Brahmo Samaj and the Youth's Conference, and led the singing in all functions.

On 9th December, the students of the Nava Kanya Vidyalaya staged a new play named "Raja Rammohun Roy" written in Sindhi by Prof. N. D. Gurbaxani. It was a fine piece consisting of four scenes, and made a great impression on the spectators. About 500 ladies attended the show.

Prof. Gurbaxani, who was the main organizer of all the activities in connection with the Centenary celebrations at Hyderabad (Sindh), also wrote a short biographical sketch of the Raja (32 pp.) for the occasion. It was printed and distributed free all over Sindh. The *Sind Observer*, the leading daily of Sindh, published a very interesting and

instructive special issue of the paper on the 27th of September. Copies of this paper were distributed free all over Sindh, and its regular subscribers also were sent the special issue.

Prizes of Rs. 15, 7 and 5 were offered for the best essays on *Raja Rammohun Roy, his Life and Work.* More than 30 persons competed. Never in the last 60 years of the Brahmo Samaj in Sindh, was the life and work of Raja Rammohun Roy made known so widely to men, women and children as in this year of grace.—(*The Navavidhan*, Calcutta.)

THE SAKHI MIRA SCHOOL at Hyderabad (Sindh) observed the Centenary on 27th September. In his address in Sindhi Mr. T. L. Vaswani said:—"I bow to this God's great one in humility and reverence. A century ago this great man of history left his physical form. In his lifetime he had his opponents, not in tens and hundreds, but in thousands and ten thousands. He was exposed to cruel criticism and persecution. A century has now elapsed. What a radical change in the hearts of men! Today in many towns in India is being celebrated with wonderful enthusiasm the Centenary of Rammohun Roy.

Rammohun fought under God's flag. His was a life of sacrifice and service. In his lifetime the social condition of India was much worse than it is today. Hindu womanhood was wofully humiliated and persecuted. The cruel custom of *Suttee* was taking the lives of lacs of Hindu widows. Pandits and Brahmins quoted false *sastric* ordinances in support of *Suttee.* Raja Rammohun Roy stood heroically against this cruel custom. The opposition grew all the more vehement. "All left me", says Rammohun, "all but four." But whom the Lord blesses, who can harm ?

Rammohun had the courage to tread a thorny path. Rammohun faced criticism, vituperation, want of printing facilities, and all embarrassing situations with faith in the triumph of truth. Rammohun worked with heart within and God overhead. He worked ; he achieved. Today the storms have passed away, and today the memory of the Great Forerunner is treasured by millions of his grateful countrymen.

Rammohun went to England, and there in Bristol he succumbed to fever. He died with the word 'Om' on his lips.

Homage to the great saviour of Hindu womanhood !"

DELHI

Preliminary Meeting.—The Centenary celebrations at New Delhi and Delhi were organised by a small group of the Raja's admirers, who issued an interesting invitation to the public. Among the signatories to the invitation were Mrs. Basant Lal, Mrs. J. K. Sen, Sir B. L. Mitter, Messrs. Raghubir Singh, Asaf Ali, Bar-at-Law, S. C. Mitra, M.L.A., Principal S. K. Sen of the Hindu College, Messrs. P. C. Chaudhuri, J. N. Mazumdar, D. M. Das, S. K. Sarkar, Rai Bahadur A. L. Banerjee, Rai Bahadur P. B. Chakrabarty, Rai Bahadur D. Dutt, etc.

New Delhi. The first meeting was held at NEW DELHI at the Raisina Bengali High School, Ridge Road, on Saturday the 16th December 1933. Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, K.C.I.E., O.B.E., M.L.A. presided. The meeting opened with a song by Swami Visvanathananda of the Ramakrishna Mission. (The first two speeches, the Presidential Address of Sir Cowasjee[102] and the address by Mr. F. E. James[115], M. L. A., have been given in section C of Part II.)

Dr. Zia-ud-din, M. L. A. spoke from the educational view-point, and said that Rammohun Roy was the pioneer of modern education in India. It was his influence that had changed the whole trend of education. He fought his own countrymen who did not want to have modern education, and was greatly instrumental in deciding that the medium of instruction should be English. Had it not been for Rammohun Roy, the Doctor concluded, the history of the country would have been entirely different by now.

Sir K. V. Reddy emphasised the versatile genius of Rammohun Roy, and remarked that there was no field in which he did not take interest. He was master of eight languages, and was the first Indian who brought anything like a rationalistic outlook among the religiously minded people of this country. He was a great scholar in a language which was foreign to our country. He tried to discover truth in all religions. He served man not only in his own country, but throughout the world.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav, M. L. A., (ex-Minister, Bombay,) said that whenever superstition reigned supreme in the country, political freedom was sure to be lost by its people. Rammohun Roy's acute brain saw that unless religion was freed from the shackles of superstition, nothing could be achieved towards the advancement of the country. His social work was based upon this conception of religion, viz. brotherhood of man. He worked for freedom of thought,

and though he came from a priestly community, Rammohun could realise that the dominance of that community was bringing ruin to the people, and he gave a great shock to it by preaching the equality of mankind. Mr. Jadhav thought that India would not rise in the scale of civilisation unless she followed the teachings of Rammohun Roy.

Rao Sahib Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao, M.A., PH.D. of Cocanada said that Rammohun Roy was both a rationalist and a mystic. Chronologically viewed, he was first a prophet and then a philosopher. Quite a worthy descendant as he was of Indian sages, mysticism did not supersede his rationalism. He was a great master of synthetic unity.

Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, M.L.A. said that Rammohun Roy, great as he was, did not confine himself to any one sphere in life. It was a pity that after a hundred years of vast enlightenment, there was still a small die-hard group of reactionaries who opposed every social legislation. If Rammohun Roy was anything, he was a deeply religious and mystic soul, and looked at life particularly from that angle of vision. It was he who in spite of mighty opposition unearthed the light hidden in the midst of Vedic literature, and rehabilitated the Upanishadic religion in the country.

Other speakers, including Swami Sarvananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, dealt with Rammohun Roy's simplicity of life and high thinking, and exhorted the audience to follow his high ideals.

The Chairman, in winding up the meeting, pointed out that Raja Rammohun Roy's high ideals of life and their translation into practice were matters not to the pride of Bengal only, but of India as a whole.

Delhi.—The Centenary meeting at DELHI was held at the Saraswati Bhavan, Daryaganj, on Monday the 18th December 1933. Sir Shanmukham Chetty, K.C.I.E., President, Legislative Assembly, was in the chair. The proceedings opened with the singing of a song in chorus by Dr. S. K. Sen and some ladies.

"A noble patriot, a great reformer, a learned scholar, and a spiritual Napoleon",—this was the note struck by the tributes paid to the memory of the Raja at the meeting, which was thoroughly representative of all sections of the people.

(The substances of the first two speeches, the Presidential Address of Sir Shanmukham Chetty[101], and the address by Dr. T. G. P. Spears[118], Professor of History, St. Stephen's College, have been given in Section C of Part II.)

The next speaker, Mr. Asaf Ali, Barrister-at-law, speaking in Urdu, said that had Raja Rammohun Roy been amongst us now, he would certainly have spoken in his mother tongue. He wanted every Indian to be a "true Indian". "We are commemorating Raja Rammohun's Centenary", he said, "not only because he was the greatest and ablest man in Bengal or India, but also because he was the greatest and ablest of living beings." He added: "I consider Rammohun to be a spiritual Napoleon."

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer, M.L.A., paying his quota of tribute to Raja Rammohun, said: "The Raja did not die. He is still amongst us to guide us, only if we were prepared to walk along his footsteps." "India", he continued, "had produced great men like Ramanuja, Sankara and several others. Raja Rammohun Roy was one of the brilliant galaxy of such stars." He joined Mr. Asaf Ali in his opinion that Rammohun was an intellectual Napoleon.

Other speakers, including Dr. M. J. Dave, PH.D., paid glowing tributes to the memory of the great reformer.

THE PUNJAB

LAHORE

The RAMMOHUN ROY CENTENARY CELEBRATION COMMITTEE OF THE PUNJAB wisely utilised three special occasions, viz. the Birthday Anniversary of the Raja in May 1933, the Anniversary of his death in September 1933, and the Maghotsava of the Brahmo Samaj in January 1934, for intensive study of the Raja and for holding Centenary celebrations, the enthusiasm and public interest created thereby reaching their climax during the splendid meetings organised on the last of the three occasions.

Lahore.—Birthday Meetings, May 1933.

A special Divine Service was conducted by Rai Sahib Lala Raghunath Sahai in the Punjab Brahmo Samaj Mandir, Anarkali, on 21st May 1933. In the evening a Ladies' Meeting was held under the presidency of Mrs. Brij Lal Nehru. Speeches were delivered by Mrs. Sitaram Kohli, Mrs. Raghunath Sahai, Mrs. Bhatnagar, Dr. Damayanti Bali and others.

A well-attended Public Meeting was held on 23rd May. Justice Sir Abdul Qadir was in the chair. Speeches were made by Lala Kashiram Vaid, Swami Krishnanand, Mahashaya Kashinath, Dr. Gian Chand, Dr. S. K. Datta, Maulavi Ghulam Mohiuddin, Dr. Nand Lal and Rai Sahib Lala Raghunath Sahai.

Lahore.—Meetings in September 1933.

A largely attended Public Meeting was held in the Punjab Brahmo Samaj Mandir, Anarkali, on 27th September. Raja Narendranath, M.L.C. was in the chair.

Raja Narendranath paid a glowing tribute to the memory of the Raja. During the Muslim rule in India, a number of religious reformers and revivalists had appeared. The first of these was Guru Nanak. Then came Chaitanya in Bengal. Guru Govind Singh followed. But after the advent of British rule, the foremost religious reformer who took birth in India was Rammohun Roy. The Raja was a great religious reformer, who read the *Upanishads* with great care, and in them he found a wealth of spiritual knowledge, which he tried to re-impart to the people of India by means of his translations of the Vedanta. The great achievement of Rammohun was that he was able to secure social and political reform side by side with religious reform. Now-a-days a feeling was prevalent amongst a considerable section of the people that religion had been the great bane of India, and that it had been the cause of India's political subjugation, Rammohun Roy conclusively demonstrated that social and religious reform was the very foundation of political advancement. The Raja used to tell the people that at least for the sake of freedom for India they should cultivate the spirit of true brotherhood and do away with caste prejudices, which divide the orthodox Hindus into so many water-tight compartments. Raja Narendranath thought that in order to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy in a befitting manner, the people should emulate the example of the great Raja and live up to his ideals, and lead India forward on the path chalked out by the great patriot and saint.

Dr. Nand Lal said that Rammohun Roy was a great social, political and religious reformer, and a true friend of Indian women. He was also a statesman of the first order. He laid the foundation of a Universal Religion in order to bring about social unity amongst the people. The Raja was not only a reformer, but his love for learning was also great, and he was one of the outstanding scholars of his day. He showed great courage by establishing the Brahmo Samaj in India.

Dr. Nand Lal was followed by Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni who paid an eloquent tribute to the character and the spirit of freedom of the Raja.*

Pandit Narsingh Lal said that Raja Rammohun Roy had to suffer persecution for propagating his religious teachings and his social reform principles. That showed that the Raja had a great heart and a strong will. He was the "Father of Modern India" in the best sense of the term.

Pandit Pearay Mohan Dattatreya said that Prof. Ruchi Ram had referred to a great national edifice of which Raja Rammohun Roy had laid the foundation. He, the speaker, would only deal with one wing of that edifice,—its political wing. Rammohun was a pioneer of journalism in India, and a staunch fighter for the freedom of the Press. The East India Company fully realised that autocracy and a free Press could not go together. It was therefore ordained by Mr. Adam, the Acting Governor-General, in 1826, that no one could conduct a newspaper without obtaining a licence from the Government. Rammohun Roy carried on a strong agitation against the Ordinance, and failed to get its repeal even though he appealed to the Supreme Court, to the Court of Directors, and eventually to the King in Council. At last, the great Rammohun closed down his own paper, the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*, because he considered it a humiliation to apply for a licence. Indian newspapers are now being conducted under conditions similar to those to which Rammohun refused to submit. He also put up a strong fight against Mr. Wynn's Jury Bill, which laid down that Britishers alone would try Britishers, and Indians were to be excluded from a jury empanelled for the trial of a European. The Raja opposed that national discrimination, and again failed. The matter, in one form or another, continued to agitate the minds of Indian leaders, and it was only a few years ago that, after a century's agitation, the Criminal Procedure Code was suitably amended. Concluding, the speaker referred to Rammohun Roy's political work in England in the years 1831 and 1832. The Raja, he said, was the first representative of the people of India who went to Britain to demand justice for them. Among other things, he demanded that the Press should be free, Indians should be employed in the higher services, more money should be spent on education, the judicial and executive services should be separated, and the tenantry should be protected from the oppression of

* All the speeches delivered by Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni[110] in connection with the Lahore Centenary meetings are given in Section C of Part II.

Zamindars. The speaker thought that the demands made by Raja Rammohun Roy a century ago still remained unfulfilled. The political wing of the edifice was still incomplete.

Pandit Chanan Ram said that Rammohun Roy was a great religious teacher, who had raised the name of India in the estimation of the world. He made a comparative study of the different religions of the world, and thereafter founded a Universal Religion for the unity of mankind. The speaker held the Raja in the highest regard, and had taken a vow to learn ten languages, as the great Raja had done. Up to the present day the speaker had learnt seven languages, and he hoped to learn the remaining three in order to be able to make a comparative study of the religions of the world. He hoped that the Indian peoples would become cosmopolitan in their mental and spiritual outlook like Rammohun Roy, and try to understand the cultures of one another.

Dr. K. C. Chaudhari, in the course of a brief speech, said that Rammohun Roy was the real founder of Comparative Religion. The speaker always found a thrill in the works of the Raja. He considered the Raja to be the foremost religious and social leader of his day, and his life was worthy of emulation by all.

Rai Sahib Lala Raghunath Sahai, the General Secretary of the Centenary Celebration Committee, thanked the speakers on behalf of the Brahmo Samaj for their illuminating addresses. He hoped that people would derive the fullest benefit from the life-story of such a great religious teacher. He said that a more elaborate celebration of the Centenary would be held in Lahore in winter, the present meeting being only a preliminary to it. He appealed to the people of the Punjab to make the Celebrations a success worthy of the Province.- (*The Tribune.*)

Lahore.—Meetings in January 1934.

The Centenary was celebrated with great enthusiasm and success from 24th to 29th January 1934. It was a joint celebration of the Maghotsava and the Rammohun Roy Centenary, the Divine services being held in the Punjab Brahmo Samaj Mandir at Anarkali. The reports below are mostly taken from *The Tribune.*

24th January.—This day the celebrations commenced with a NAGAR SANKIRTAN. The procession, which was about a quarter mile long, started from Nila Gumbad at 5 P.M., and passed through Anarkali Street, Lohari Gate, Chowk Chakla, Paper Mandi, Shahalmi Gate, Machhi Hatta, Rang Mahal, Bazaz Hatta, and terminated at the Water Works

at 7 P.M. Throughout the route the processionists sang devotional hymns, and raised shouts of "Raja Rammohun Roy Ki Jai". Besides a number of Bhajanmandalis, there were about four to five hundred boys of the Dyal Singh High School, who carried banners and flags, and sang songs.

At the Anarkali Chowk and the other chowks of the city through which the procession passed, short addresses on *The Unity of God and Brotherhood of Man* and on *The Life and Work of Raja Rammohun Roy* were delivered by Swami Krishnanand, Lala Dharam Das Suri and L. Amar Nath. The Rang Mahal School and the Dyal Singh School bands also joined in the procession, and played selections of music throughout. Several ladies also joined the procession, and sang devotional songs.

25th January (11th Magh.)—This was the principal day of the MAGHOTSAVA, and all the functions took place in the Mandir. In the morning Bhai Sitaram conducted the service. Pandit Nirmal Chandra then delivered an illuminating address on *Rammohun Roy's Philosophy*[120] before a large gathering of ladies and gentlemen. (The address is printed in Section C of Part II.) This was followed by a PRITIBHOJAN.

In the evening Prof. U. N. Ball conducted a DIVINE SERVICE in Bengali, and Bishop Bannerjee of Amritsar delivered an address in English on *The Life and Work of Raja Rammohun Roy.*

26th January.—A CHILDREN'S GATHERING was held in the Mandir at 4 P.M., when about 100 children were assembled. Bhai Ram Krishan presided. Prizes were awarded to the children, and they were treated to sweets.

At 6 P.M. a MUSHAIRA (Grand Poetical Symposium) took place in the S. P. S. K. Hall, under the presidentship of Pandit Brij Mohan Dattatreya, 'Kaifi'. The hall was crowded from end to end, and well-known poets of Lahore recited their verses on Raja Rammohun Roy. Some of the poems were of a high order, and were applauded by the audience. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan made a speech. Medals and prizes were awarded to the composers of poems.

27th January.—At 1 P.M. a DECLAMATION CONTEST took place in the Town Hall in which about twenty students of different colleges took part. Prizes were awarded to the best speakers.

At 5-30 P.M. a largely attended **Memorial Meeting** was held at the Town Hall with the Hon'ble Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, M.A. PH.D., Minister for Local Self-Government, Punjab, in the chair. The audience included a large

number of ladies. The meeting opened with a hymn sung by ladies and a prayer by Bhai Sita Ram. Tributes were then paid to Raja Rammohun Roy by speakers belonging to different communities and different schools of thought.

Mahatma Hans Raj said that the Raja was one of the most luminous stars in the spiritual firmament of India. The service that he had rendered to India would always be remembered. He was not only a great linguist and scholar of his time, but was the foremost social and religious reformer of the nineteenth century. The Raja had to undergo much persecution for the sake of his belief in the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. But his name has become immortal also for his championing the cause of the womanhood of India by securing the abolition of the cruel custom of *Suttee*. He could also be fittingly called the Father of Bengali Prose. The speaker thought that it was their sacred duty to do honour to the memory of the great man, who did so much service to India one hundred years ago.

Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni, who, despite his indisposition thought it his duty to come to the meeting, spoke on Rammohun as a Barrier-breaker and as the Father of Comparative Religion. (His speech[110] is given in Section C of Part II.)

Prof. Ruchi Ram was followed by Dr. Satyapal, who said that Rammohun was the first Indian who took the message of the Upanishads to the people of the West, and thereby made the name of India great in the world. He loved India deeply, and he could be counted as one of the first who preached the message of freedom and liberty to his poople. But if he was a great social reformer and a great scholar, he was also a deeply religious man, and had burning faith in God.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi Muharram Ali Chishti said, Raja Rammohun's services would be remembered for centuries. He devoted his whole life to promoting unity of mankind and preaching the love of God to all. By studying the different religions of the world he came to be the friend of all religious faiths. The speaker considered the Raja as a true Muslim, for he had fully understood the tenets of Islam.

Prof. S. N. Das Gupta said that Rammohun was one of the Makers of Modern India. He developed a great spirit of enquiry in order to discover the truths hidden in the different scriptures of the world. By founding the Brahmo Samaj he established a church for the propagation of the message of pure monotheism. His political activities

were actuated by intense love of liberty. He had an intensity of feeling for any cause that he took up.

Mr. A. S. Satyarthi said, the Raja gave the message of pure Indian Nationalism, and at the same time made earnest efforts for the promotion of cultural understanding amongst different communities. He was the first in the nineteenth century to act as the interpreter of the message of *Aryavarta* to the people of the West. Today they were paying homage to him, not as the founder of the Brahmo Samaj alone,but as a national hero of India.

Prof. U. N. Ball said that Rammohun Roy had uplifted mankind. India could well be proud of such a great man. His faith in God was not governed by race or culture. He had true faith in God. Therefore he did not quarrel with any religion. He delighted in identifying himself with the high precepts and the truth contained in other religions. He was popularly known as an 'epoch-maker' for his manifold services to India. He was the harbinger of a new age for India. He worked for freedom in all spheres of life. The chief mission of his life was to make his countrymen think for themselves.

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Amir Ali said that Raja Rammohun Roy believed in the principle of accepting truths from whatever quarter they came. Thus he was able to found a Universal Religion. He felt greatly honoured in paying his tribute to such a great man, who was the Maker of Modern India.

The Chairman, Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, said that Raja Rammohun Roy was a pioneer of social and religious reform. He was a rebel against many of the established traditions of the day. The speaker thought that the Raja had a great sense of self-respect, and was also an upholder of the respect of his country. God had endowed the Raja with wonderful qualities which made him a great man. He also fought for the rights and privileges of India.

28th January being a Sunday, DIVINE SERVICE was held in the Mandir at 9 A.M., which Swami Krishnanand conducted.

At 1 P.M. a **Convention of Religions** was held in the Town Hall, where addresses were delivered by speakers representing different religious faiths on the subject of "Unity of Religions." Dr. S. K. Datta, Principal of the Forman Christian College, was in the chair. The Convention was largely attended.

Rev. Dr. E. D. Lucas said that Unity of Religions was possible only if people ceased to offend each other's faiths. The speaker thought that the Brahmo Samaj had not made that amount of sacrifice for great causes, which Raja

Rammohun Roy did, and which Mahatma Gandhi was doing today.

Prof. Pritam Singh said that a new Rammohun Roy had taken birth in Persia in the person of Hazrat Baha-ullah, who had been trying his utmost to bring all votaries of different religions on a common platform.

Pandit Nirmal Chandra said, Raja Rammohun Roy had realised the true meaning of Brahma, and the existence of only one God, and that is why he preached the Unity of all Religions of the world.

Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma Vaidya said, the differences among the peoples of the world over religions would disappear when they would love all human beings and consider everybody as a brother.

Mr. A. S. Satyarthi said that Law or Government would never be able to solve religious differences. The only solution lay in the promotion of the ideas of mother-country, mother-tongue and mother-culture.

Mr. B. L. Rallia Ram said, if they wanted to unify religions, they must avoid all forms of wrong propaganda. They must discover ways and means in order to better understand one another and achieve common ends.

Swami Krishnanand said that one way of bringing about Unity of Religions was to study one another's religious books in a liberal and friendly spirit.

Prof. U. N. Ball said, Unity of Religions was not a dream. It was possible of achievement if all people lived together by respecting one another as brothers.

The Chairman Dr. S. K. Datta said, they must have the desire to know others' religions in a spirit of wide toleration. Dignity, sympathy, understanding, and charity should be the qualities by means of which they should study and criticise the different religions. These qualities Raja Rammohun Roy possessed to a great degree. He hoped that they would carry with them the spirit of the great Raja.

At 4-30 P.M. a **Women's Conference** was held in the Town Hall with Mrs. Brij Lal Nehru in the chair. Speeches were made on the services rendered by the Raja to womankind by Miss K. Ferozedin M.A., M.O.L., Mrs. Hem Raj, B.A., Dr. Mrs. Damayanti Bali, Mrs. Kaushalya Khosla, Shrimati Shanno Devi.

On **29th January**, which was the last day of the celebrations, the concluding function was a **Social Conference** held in the Town Hall before a large gathering, under the presidentship of Justice Sir Abdul Qadir. The audience included a good number of ladies. Speeches

were made by about a dozen speakers on the social evils of India, and the part played by Raja Rammohun Roy in introducing social reforms and removing those social evils, including the cruel custom of *Suttee*.

Pandit Viswa Bandhu said that mutual fellow-feeling and religious toleration were the foundations of every society. And a true society was formed only when people considered themselves as of one family, and as children of One Common Father, namely God. Rammohun Roy, by bringing in the spirit of toleration through the Brahmo Samaj, tried to form society on a new basis. If they respected one another's feelings then they could go on together, even if they agreed to differ on some points. They should welcome light and knowledge from every corner of the world.

Swami Krishnanand said that social reforms must precede even political reform. Mahatma Gandhi has realised this fact. Therefore he has given up politics for one year, and has engaged himself in the work of removal of untouchability from the Hindu society. Although many social evils had been removed from India since the days of Raja Rammohun Roy, the majority of people in the villages were still tied to traditions and customs, and there was yet a great need for social reform in the country.

Lala Shiv Dayal said, fifty years ago not one woman in his family was literate; but today every woman and every girl in his family was literate. This result they had achieved by their efforts to bring about social reform in the country. He, however, regretted that some literate women of today had been developing a tendency amongst themselves of discarding their national dress and incurring useless expenditure. Social Conferences had helped them in removing prejudices that existed about interdining and sea-voyage.

Prof. U. N. Ball said that the social reforms introduced by Rammohun Roy had done enormous good to India; but still there were millions who believed in caste and untouchability, and in keeping women illiterate and veiled. The country, he thought, still needed a vigorous programme of uplift. The speaker was convinced that national government could not be maintained in India so long as caste divisions remained.

Dr. Damayanti Bali said that what social reformers of the present wanted was the bold spirit and sympathetic heart of Raja Rammohun Roy. The women of India were greatly indebted to Raja Rammohun Roy for his strong advocacy of their cause and his strenuous efforts for the abolition of the cruel custom of *Suttee*.

Pandit Nanak Chand said that Raja Rammohun Roy saved India from disintegration and ruin by reviving the philosophy of the Upanishads, and proclaiming the message of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. He not only tried to unite the different peoples and different cultures of India, but he spread India's culture among the people of the West also.

Kaviraj Kashi Ram Vaid deplored that no social training was given in our schools and colleges. All social differences would disappear if each community respected the feelings of the others. Social disharmony among the communities was greater now than in the last generation, despite advancement in education. Today, on the occasion of the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy, they should all realise their social weaknesses, and try to remedy them in future.

Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni, in an eloquent speech [110] (reported in Section C of Part II) dealt with the Raja's principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and on behalf of the Centenary Committee, thanked the lady speaker Dr. Damayanti Bali for what she had said, and more than that, for what she had been doing in her life for the social uplift of the untouchables, and for the cause of women.

Lala Govind Ram Khanna said that the greatest social evil today was narrow communalism. If they wanted to have any good from Social Conferences, then they must remove this curse from their country. The speaker longed for the day when there would be one common culture in India, to which all communities would owe allegiance.

Mr. D. N. Bali said that although he was a non-believer in God, he held Raja Rammohun Roy in great respect, and paid his homage to him on the occasion of his Centenary.

Shrimati Shanno Devi said that the Centenary Committee should publish pamphlets about the life and work of Raja Rammohun Roy, and distribute them to the women of India in all provinces, in order to let them know how much indebted they were to that great man for his fight for the cause of women of this country.

The Chairman, Sir Abdul Qadir, said that they were all believers in God, and were celebrating the death centenary of a great soul, who also believed in God. He thought that Mr. Bali, who was a non-believer in God, had also received his inspiration about toleration and social reform from the life of Raja Rammohun, a strong believer in divine dispensation.

With a vote of thanks to the Chair the celebrations terminated.

Amritsar.—Mainly through the efforts of Rai Sahib L. Raghunath Sahai, Head Master of the Dyal Singh High School, who had come from Lahore, and L. Nand Lal, the indefatigable Secretary of the Amritsar Temperance Society, a very large and distinguished gathering was drawn to the Temperance Hall on 15th October 1933 at 5 P.M. for celebrating the Centenary. Those present included Rai Sahib L. Izzat Rai, Additional District Magistrate, L. Balmokand Bhatia, L. Duni Chand, M.A., and Mr. G. R. Sethi, Municipal Commissioners, Mr. P. C. Bhandari, Shaikh Sadiq Hassan, M.L.A., Prof. Jodh Singh, M.A., and many others.

Shaikh Sadiq Hassan, M.L.A. was voted to the chair. The proceedings commenced with instrumental music by the Temperance party, and L. Nand Lal sang a beautiful song. Swami Krishnanand, Pracharak of the Brahmo Samaj, offered a prayer. Raja Rammohun Roy, he said, had not come to this world to preach any special religious doctrine, but to preach unity and brotherhood of man and to remove social evils. He had fought against odds and had cleared the way ; and now it was up to the people to follow in his footsteps.

Chaudhuri Ganga Ram, Head Master of the Balmokand Kshatri High School, said that until lately he did not know much about the teachings of Rammohun ; recently, however, he had been a keen student of his philosophy, and he had become keenly interested in what he said and did. Rammohun Roy, like Swami Dayanand, had to bid good-bye to his home, for his belief that God was one. At a time when the Muslim power was tottering, he raised his voice for the solidarity of the country.

Principal K. L. Bhatia of the Hindu Sabha College, said that his interest in the teachings of Rammohun Roy commenced while he was a pupil of Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni, who, along with Rai Sahib L. Raghunath Sahai, had done so much for the Brahmo Samaj. Keeping in view the achievements of this great man and great teacher, Raja Rammohun Roy, it was the duty of every Indian to help in perpetuating his memory. When India was in danger, when her cultural unity was threatened with disruption, God sent Rammohun, and he proved himself equal to the task. He believed in one God, and his knowledge of many religions was perfect. Wherever he found an error, he exposed it. In the political field no man was equal to him. He was the pioneer of all political struggles in India. He was a great social reformer, and was truly speaking the Father of Indian Nationalism. He opened the field for Western education in his country. It is a happy augury

that the Brahmo Samaj has consistently carried out his teachings.

Malik Uttam Chand said that at the time Rammohun came to this world, India was in a pitiable plight. But, as stated in the Bhagavad Gita, "God sends his chosen ones at times when there is decay of Dharma." At the age of 5 he commenced learning Persian and Arabic, as Persian was the court language at the time. He acquired a good knowledge of Arabic, and for this reason, he was called Maulavi Rammohun Roy. Later, he learnt Sanskrit, and began to be called a Pandit. From a study of the Quran, he arrived at the belief in one God, and he at once started his fight against idolatry. He was dauntless, and he preached his views undauntedly. His father became angry, but he had no fear. So he left his home. The Emperor of Delhi, who was impressed by his teachings, gave him the title of Raja. It was the duty of all to follow in his footsteps, to do which alone would be to honour his memory.

Mr. Padam Chand Bhandari said that though he had long been ignorant of the teachings of Raja Rammohun Roy, yet he was enlightened a good deal by the literature that he had to study in preparation for this meeting. Raja Rammohun Roy was essentially a warrior. Though he was a pacifist of a high order, yet a no less important feature of his life was his character as a warrior. Throughout his life he had to wage war on three different fronts, viz. social, religious, and political. In the social field his outstanding achievement was his fight against *Suttee*. In the religious and intellectual fields his teachings chalked out a new programme and broke fresh ground. He believed in the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. There were very few leaders in this country who could stand comparison with Raja Rammohun Roy. He was a great force and an outstanding personality. When the British had just come to his country and the Moghul Empire was tottering, he undertook to offer a united front to preserve the solidarity of the nation. Pioneer in the field of politics as he was, he laid the foundations of national life in modern India.

Lala Balmokand Bhatia, Municipal Commissioner, pointed out that at the time Rammohun Roy was born, the Muslim power was decaying. At the age of 16, he saw a ray of light, and he lifted his countrymen from darkness. He had no vanity about him ; so, wherever he went, he attempted to learn something. He mastered several languages including Persian, Arabic, English, Sanskrit, Greek and Hebrew, and he laid the foundations of a true divine spirit. When he had succeeded in his work of social

reform in this country, he went to England in order to plead the cause of India. One of his greatest fights was against the Jurors' Bill, by which Indians were barred from becoming Jurors.

Prof. Jodh Singh, M.A. of the Khalsa College said that Raja Rammohun Roy had done the greatest good to his people, and it was their duty to follow the path of truth, like him.

Rev. Jawahir Masih, Christian Missionary of Amritsar, said that God did not do anything directly, but He sent His men to do His will. Raja Rammohun Roy did not merely lay down certain principles, but he practised them, and did the greatest service to his country. He was not a mere popular leader or a devotee, but a social reformer too. He laid the foundations of modern education through schools and colleges. The speaker said that life stories of such great men were necessary to inspire the people.

Lala Nand Lal, Honorary Secretary, Temperance Society, said that these were common sayings,—"All for each, and each for all," and "The human blood has one colour." It was in the spirit of these sayings that Raja Rammohun Roy did his work for the good of all humanity. Breaking the shackles of caste and sect distinctions, he tried to unite the whole world. The speaker then regretted that many gentlemen, whose fathers never touched liquor, were taking to drink today. Drink was causing havoc among people.

Rammohun has passed away, but his spirit has become immortal. The speaker asked all people to follow in his footsteps, and to refrain from all evil habits, including drink.

Swami Krishnanand said that Raja Rammohun Roy favoured the English language as the medium of instruction, as the Mullahs and Pandits were misleading the people. He thought that India could not progress without Western education.

Rai Sahib L. Raghunath Sahai, who spoke amidst cheers, thanked the audience, and said that besides his work in the social, political and educational fields, Raja Rammohun Roy's mission was to proclaim the brotherhood of all mankind, and it was for this reason that he also worked for the rights of women. He believed that God was the Father of mankind. The essence of religion was truth. Just as cows had different colours, but their milk was of one colour, so were the various religions different in methods, but were the same in essence. Religion should not teach men to quarrel. He thanked the President and asked the audience to read more about Raja Rammohun Roy.

Shaikh Sadiq Hassan, President, in his concluding remarks, said that Raja Rammohun Roy was a dynamic personality, who did superhuman work, and rendered inestimable services in the field of education. He saved many lives by fighting against *Suttee*. The President stressed the need of communal unity.

The meeting concluded after 2½ hours.—(*The Tribune*, Lahore.)

Sialkot City.—The Centenary was observed by the Sialkot Brahmo Samaj on 22nd April, 1934. It was a representative gathering of all communities. Professor D. N. Sharma of the Murray College was in the chair. The proceedings began with hymns. The President remarked that the Raja's activities were mainly responsible for the regeneration and rejuvenation of India, and that his reforms inaugurated the first chapter of Greater India. His life has served and will continue to serve as a beacon light for us common people on the way to fame and glory.

He was followed by Bhai Sita Ram, who briefly outlined the main events of the life of the Raja. Maulavi Dil Muhammad of Qadian emphasised the undaunted courage of the Raja, which enabled him to undertake the arduous journey to Tibet, and to oppose all the forces that stood in his way. He also dwelt upon the main principles of the Brahmo Samaj, especially the doctrine of Monotheism, and also upon the Raja's eagerness for giving to women equal status with men. L. Charan Das, Advocate, was the next speaker. He said that Rammohun Roy was a great personality, imbued with deep religious instincts.

Swami Krishnanand next addressed the house. He related in pathetic and touching words the miserable condition of Hindu women during the times of Rammohun Roy. He extolled the Raja's high talents, indomitable will and patriotism, all of which were instrumental in overhauling the entire state of Indian society, and his far-sightedness which enabled him to pierce the gloom of centuries and give the right lead to his generation.

Professor Tressler, M.A., in a brilliant speech, laid stress on the social reforms and the constructive social work initiated by the Raja. He was a man of international fame, who glorified the name of India abroad. He was a hundred years ahead of his times. Professor Abdul Hamid impressed upon the audience the necessity and importance of leading truthful lives. The President in his closing speech remarked that it was a happy sign of the times that people had learnt to celebrate the anniversaries of great men like Raja Rammohun Roy, who alone were competent to lead and guide common people who ordinarily bestow

no thoughts on the deep secrets of human life. The Raja demonstrated to people his love for Truth, which is one, and which cannot be self-contradictory. In the midst of diversity, we can discern clearly the principle of Unity, of the One who gives rise to, sustains, and absorbs into Himself the "manyness" we perceive. Harmony is the law of life. The aim of the Raja's life was to break down all social barriers, and put an end to all racio-credal and sectarian differences in order to usher an era of peace and prosperity.

This brought the meeting to a close. A Booklet on the Raja's life was distributed amongst the audience.

On 21st April a meeting was arranged at the Murray College for History students specially. Professor D. N. Sharma, M.A., Bhai Sita Ram and Swami Krishnanand spoke on the life of the Raja.

Jhelum.—The Centenary was celebrated here by a largely attended public meeting representing all communities, held at the Jubilee Ghat on 2nd May 1934. Pandit Sant Ram, retired Divisional Forest Officer, was in the chair. After hymns and a prayer by Bhai Sita Ram, the President explained the object of the meeting. Bhai Sita Ram gave a short life sketch of the Raja, and explained his message of human brotherhood. He was followed by Swami Krishnanand, who spoke about the Raja's courage of conviction and his services to the cause of female emancipation. Bhai Sher Singh spoke about the Raja's love for mankind and the services rendered by him to the cause of the abolition of the *Suttee*. Rev. Jamal-ud-Din spoke about his love of God and love of man. Maulana Abdul Majid spoke about his sufferings for the truth and his love for humanity. L. Autar Narain, Advocate, spoke about Rammohun's services to the cause of English education in India. He characterised Rammohun as a messsenger of liberty. Concluding the meeting, the President referred to the Raja's all-round reforms and the manifold services rendered by him for the uplift of the country.

At the close of the meeting, about 200 copies of a short biography of the Raja were distributed amongst the audience.

Rawalpindi.—The Centenary was celebrated here on Sunday the 29th April 1934, when Bhai Sita Ram conducted Divine service in the Brahmo Samaj Mandir in the morning, dwelling in his sermon on the Raja's life and his qualities of head and heart. In the evening, a public meeting was held. Bakhshi Bhagat Ram Segan, retired Deputy Controller of Military Accounts, was in the chair. The proceedings

commenced with hymns and a prayer offered by Bhai Sita Ram. Speeches on the life and work of the Raja in various spheres were delivered by Dr. R. R. Stewart, Vice-Principal, and Mr. Sunder Das, M.A., Professor, of the Gordon College, Mr. Daweshwar Varma, L. Kishan Chand Varman, Qazi Nazir Ahmed, Advocate, Bhai Sita Ram, Swami Krishnanand, L. Wazir Chand, Advocate, L. Gurcharan Lal Sethi, Head Master, H. D. High School, Maulavi Abdur Rahman, and the President.

Hoshiarpur.—A public meeting to celebrate the Centenary was held on Saturday, the 12th May 1934, in the Government College Hall, under the presidency of Mr. I. M. Lal, I.C.S.

Prof. U. N. Ball of Lahore gave a short account of the many-sided activities of Rammohun Roy and his chief contributions to Modern India. There was some controversy regarding the date of his birth, and only recently has it been ascertained on reliable authority that he was born on the 19th May, 1772. The information has been gathered from the old records of the family astrologer. From his childhood Rammohun showed uncommon boldness, and undertook great risks in maintaining the freedom of his opinion. All along his life he was respected for his noble endeavours for promoting the welfare of his countrymen. He made strenuous efforts, in abolishing the cruel custom of *Sati*, in pressing for the civic rights of his people, in removing the restrictions upon the liberty of the Press, and in extending the bounds of human knowledge. He was the first Indian to advocate the study of Western science and Western philosophy which had emancipated the minds of the people of Europe. But he was also an ardent admirer of Oriental culture, and devoted a considerable amount of his money and energy in bringing to the notice of the Indians the inestimable treasures of their ancient learning. He translated the Vedanta, the Upanishads and other books, and in order to draw the attention of his countrymen to the value of Christian culture, he compiled the 'Precepts of Jesus'. In this work of interpreting the scriptures of the world he met with opposition from unexpected quarters. But he never deviated from his path, and his countrymen have now begun to appreciate his services. He may be called the Pioneer of Indian Nationalism. He loved India with all his heart, and it was for this reason that he worked hard to remove the practices which stood in the way of the nation's growth. The ideal of the Brahmo Samaj, by inviting all to meet together in the name of God, could bring about true unity, but mere superficial

compacts could never do so. The modern world required co-operation in culture and fellowship in faith; and as the pioneer in the comparative method of study, Rammohun had made such co-operation possible.

Prof. Ralla Ram, M.A., of the D. A. V. College paid his tribute in an eloquent address in Hindi. He was impressed with the great catholicity of Rammohun in his appreciation of all the great religions without showing partiality for any one. Rammohun proved that one could remain true to his own faith, and at the same time might show his appreciation of the faiths of others. He was a man of deep faith, and never lost heart in the midst of adverse circumstances.

The Rev. F. B. McCusky acknowledged the debt of Hoshiarpur to Rammohun, inasmuch as the first Christian Missionary who came to work in that city, the late Mr. Kali Charan Chatterjee, was a student of Alexander Duff, who had been helped by Rammohun in his educational work. Rammohun Roy, as has been said by Dr. Farquhar, was the pioneer of all advances in modern India, religious, social, political and educational.

Mr. M. S. Qureshi, M. A., B. T. dwelt on the relations between the Vedanta and the Sufistic philosophy. He referred to the efforts of Rammohun in interpreting both to the modern generations. Principal B. L. Bhatia, D.SC. said that Rammohun interpreted the East to the West and the West to the East. The speaker dwelt at length on the services of the Raja in introducing modern education.

The President in his concluding remarks said that all men were the creatures of circumstances, and the career of Rammohun also showed the influence of contemporary events. But at the same time each great man came with a special mission, and Rammohun had his special mission, which he fulfilled with great ability.

Ludhiana.—Under the auspices of the Students' Union, Government College, Ludhiana, a meeting was held on Saturday, the 25th November 1933, in the College Hall to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy's death.

Principal Hervey was in the chair. He called Rammohun one of the greatest men of the world, who laboured for the welfare of mankind as a whole. His work was not yet finished, and in fact Modern India was carrying out the plan which he drew up. It might take a hundred years, or even five hundred years, to work out his programme. He dreamt of India as one nation, and there are signs that people are striving in that direction,

and when India would become united, she would be one of the greatest nations of the world. The greatness of the Raja could not be measured by the number of his followers. It would take many more years to form an accurate estimate of the contributions of Rammohun Roy to the building up of Indian Nationalism.

The principal address of the evening was delivered by Prof. U. N. Ball of Lahore, who came down to Ludhiana at the special invitation of the Union. (His address[111] is printed in Section C of Part II.)

Ferozepore City.—A public meeting was convened on Saturday the 3rd march 1934 in the Arya Samaj Mandir to celebrate the Centenary. Bhai Sita Ram and Swami Krishnanand of Lahore came to take part in the meeting, which was presided over by Lala Mukand Lal, Advocate. The proceedings commenced with a hymn and a prayer by Bhai Sita Ram. The President, while opening the proceedings, dwelt at length on the many qualities of head and heart of the Raja, who tried to ameliorate the deplorable condition of his countrymen in every possible way. His social reforms, his eagerness for the freedom of his country, the great work he had done by establishing the Brahmo Samaj, and his memorable Trust Deed, will ever remain fresh in the memory of his countrymen. His dream of a Universal Brotherhood was not fulfilled in his lifetime, but it is now admitted to be the true solution for all communal strifes and troubles.

Pandit Vaishno Datt, Advocate, traced in the Raja a man of wide knowledge and a messenger of love and service. Khwaja Wali Muhammad, M.A., LL.B., Vakil, dwelt on the Raja's passion for acquiring a knowledge of the scriptures of other religions, and the great revolution he had wrought in the prevailing customs of his society. Pandit Arya Muni paid a fitting tribute to the Raja as a great social reformer and religious leader of his time. Pir Akbar Ali, M.L.C., Advocate, referred to his high ideal of morality and his staunch advocacy of the cause of the uplift and emancipation of women. Principal P. V. Kanal, M.A. admired the Raja's fearlessness and the staunch fight he put up for the cause of establishing again the position of women in society.

Swami Krishnanand dwelt on different aspects of Raja's manifold activities, and Mr. Udai Ram, Head Clerk, Imperial Bank of India, traced in him a great religious reformer who had placed before his followers a new ideal of love and service. Bhai Sita Ram spoke on the Raja's ideals of Unity of Godhead and Brotherhood of Man.

Ferozepore Cantonment.—A public meeting in connection with the Centenary was held in the Arya Putri Pathshala, Ferozepore Cantonment, on 4th March 1934, and was presided over by Lala Jagan Nath Syal, M.A., Banker.

After a short prayer, Bhai Sita Ram drew a short life-sketch of the Raja, and dwelt at length on the various aspects of his life, and the great social and religious reforms he inaugurated during his life. Swami Krishnanand drew a pathetic picture of the shattered condition of Indian social and moral structure, and of the Raja's efforts in rebuilding the same, and specially in raising the standard of women in India.

Mr. Udai Ram, Head Clerk, Imperial Bank of India, traced in the Raja a seeker after Truth, and a great scholar of his time, whose achievements were great and astonishing. He tried to remove the causes of India's degradation, and whole-heartedly devoted himself for the country's cause. The present movements for removing untouchability and for other social reforms are the fruits of the seed sown by him. In fact he was not only a great social reformer and eminent scholar, but also a great Mahatma of his time.

Babu Fateh Chand, President, Arya Samaj, paid a fitting tribute to the great work Rammohun had done for his country and for society at large. Lala Jagan Nath Syal, in concluding the meeting, requested the audience to take moral lessons from the Raja's life, and to study literature about him closely, and to follow his lead in living for Truth and dying for noble causes.

Fazilka.—A representative gathering of citizens took place in the Arya Samaj Mandir on 12th April 1934 to celebrate the Centenary. L. Sunam Rai, M. A. presided. L. Munshi Ram, Pleader, Rev. V. Daniel, Pandit Raj Narain Arman, and L. Gokal Chand, Pleader, paid glowing tributes to the Raja, and dwelt at length on his versatile genius and cosmopolitan outlook. Swami Krishnanand of Lahore, the chief speaker of the evening, drew a vivid picture of the deplorable condition of Indian society during the Raja's times, and then dilated upon the Herculean efforts made by him to revive and resuscitate it from its moribund state. The chairman, L. Sunam Rai, in winding up the proceedings, lavished encomiums upon the Raja, who, by unanimous verdict, is esteemed to be the foremost reformer and builder of modern India. He said that Rammohun Roy, visualising the truth contained in the well-known dictum of the French philosopher Comte, viz. "At bottom there is but one religion, at once universal and final", had not only preached but practised the idea of Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man. Realizing the essential unity underly-

ing all religions, he had tried his best to rationalize religion by ridding it of all superstitions and foolish and meaningless rituals. Who can deny that he has succeeded well in presenting religion to the world in its pristine glory and effulgence ?

Lyallpur.—A public meeting to celebrate the Centenary was held on 18th March 1934 at the Coronation Library Hall, with Malik Lakshmi Das, M.A., Advocate, Chairman of the local Municipal Board, in the chair. The Hall was full, and some people had to stand outside for want of accommodation. The proceedings commenced with a hymn sung by Mrs. Hem Raj and her daughters, and a prayer offered by Bhai Sita Ram. The President referred to the great personality of the Raja and his immense influence. Prof. Ishwar Chandra Nanda, M.A. spoke of the great educational work of Rammohun Roy. The system of education he advocated has created a new life in India. Prof. Vidya Dhar, M.A. dwelt on the Raja's religious reforms, viz. the introduction of the worship of one God, and of spiritual worship. Swami Krishnanand referred to his services for the cause of women, and the way in which he practised religion in the midst of distracting duties. Sardar Madan Mohan Singh, Pleader, read a very thoughtful and learned paper on the Raja.

Mrs. Hem Raj, B.A., Principal, Government Girls' High School, urged that the worship of one God would remove all differences. Rammohun Roy, she said, had shown the way to real national unity. Bhai Sita Ram explained how Rammohun Roy, inspired by the love of God, wanted to establish the brotherhood of man. The Brahmo Samaj, following in his footsteps, has adopted the principle of equality in social matters, which alone can lead to lasting peace.

Multan.—A public meeting was organised on 14th March 1934 in the Arya Samaj Hall for the celebration of the Centenary. Mehta Tek Chand, Advocate, presided at the meeting, which commenced with a hymn and a prayer offered by Bhai Sita Ram. The President in his opening speech said that as in a city the gardeners adorned and beautified it, so did Rammohun Roy adorn and beautify India. Lala Kewal Krishna gave a short sketch of the Raja's life, and laid special emphasis on his political and social activities. Swami Krishnanand said that Rammohun Roy drew the attention of the people to the spiritual worship of God, and by his comparative method of approaching the different religions he tried to establish the harmony of all faiths. Principal Gopalji of the Indraprastha College, Delhi, said that the God Rammohun Roy worshipped was a personal God.

Bhai Sita Ram dwelt on the breadth of the Raja's heart. He used to call his friends *biradar*, and in the Trust Deed of the Brahmo Samaj he placed all communities on the same footing before the footstool of God. Lala Lal Chand, Head Master, D.A.V. High School, paid an eloquent tribute to the services rendered by the Raja. Lala Sewa Ram, Chaudhuri Radha Kishen, and Chaudhuri Sham Lal spoke on different aspects of his life and character.

Muzaffargarh.—A public meeting was held on 20th March 1934 in the Arya Samaj Hall. Pandit Rajindra Prashad, Advocate, presided. The proceedings commenced with a prayer offered by Swami Krishnanand. The president referred to the services of Rammohun Roy in abolishing *Sati* and in preaching the doctrine of the unity of God. He popularised the study of the Vedas, and introduced the modern system of education. Bengali literature owed a great debt to the Raja. Dr. Kanhya Lal dwelt upon his courage in breaking age-long prejudices. He showed extraordinary courage in undertaking a voyage to England. Maulavi Ghulam Muhammad, Pleader, said that Rammohun proved that truth was not confined to one religion. Lala Nau Nihal Kishen spoke of his national activities, specially his endeavours in the interests of the freedom of the Press. Swami Krishnanand said that the Raja proved by his life that religion could be practised without leaving home.

Whose Advice should be followed ?

I may conclude this subject with an appeal to the good sense of my countrymen, by asking them : Whose advice appears the most disinterested and most rational,—that of those who, concealing your scriptures from you, continually teach you thus, "Believe whatever we may say. Don't examine or even touch your scriptures. Neglect entirely your reasoning faculties. Do not only consider us, whatever may be our principles, as gods on earth, but humbly adore and propitiate us by sacrificing to us the greater part (if not the whole) of your property." Or, that of the man who lays your scriptures and their comments as well as their translations before you, and solicits you to examine their purport, without neglecting the proper and moderate use of reason, and to attend strictly to their directions, by the rational performance of your duty to your sole Creator and to your fellow-creatures, and also to pay true respect to those who think and act righteously ?

I hope no one can be so prejudiced as to be unable to discern which advice is most calculated to lead him to the best road to both temporal and eternal happiness.—*Rammohun Roy's Preface to his English Translation of the Isopanishad. 1816.*

(C) CELEBRATIONS HELD ABROAD

[The small numericals used as 'superior figures' indicate the serial numbers of the addresses etc. as printed in Section C of Part II.]

ENGLAND

Report of the London Celebration Committee

Forwarded by P. K. Dutt, Esq. Honorary Secretary of the Committee.
Dated India House, Aldwych, London, W. C. 2, 21st November 1933.

Formation of the Committee.—In view of the approaching Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, who died in Bristol on the 27th September 1833, a representative meeting was held in India House, London, on the 30th June 1933 in order to consider the steps to be taken for organising the celebrations in his memory. The COMMITTEE formed as a result of this meeting consisted of Lady Abbas Ali Baig, Mr. J. S. Aiman, Sir Albion Banerji, the Rev. W. Paton, the Rev. G. J. Sparham, and Mr. P. K. Dutt, the last-named acting as *Honorary Secretary*.

Meeting and Soiree, 22nd September.—The programme of celebrations organised by the Committee in due course comprised three items, and opened with a Meeting and Soiree on Friday, the 22nd September 1933, at Essex Hall, Strand, London. Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., C.B.E., High Commissioner for India, who presided, in his opening remarks gave a brief account of the Raja's contribution as a social, educational and religious reformer, which marked him as one of the greatest men in modern Indian History. The subsequent speakers, who dealt with one or more of the various aspects of the Raja's life and work in detail, included Mr. Abdulla Yusuf Ali, C.B.E., the Rev. Alfred Hall, President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, Mr. J. G. Gadre of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj, and Mr. Shoran Singh of the Y. M. C. A.

Before the conclusion of the meeting the following Resolution was moved from the Chair and carried unanimously :

"That this Meeting, convened as the first of three Celebrations to commemorate, in England, the Centenary of the death of Rajâ Rammohun Roy, sends its cordial greetings to the Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee in Calcutta, and congratulates it on the enthusiasm with which it has promoted its commemoration throughout India, of a man, who by his natural endowments and his devotion to the ideal of one God, who is in all and over all and through all, became the inaugurator of a new epoch for his own land, and one of the outstanding spiritual leaders of the world."

A vote of thanks to the Chairman and the speakers was subsequently proposed by the Rev. G. J. Sparham, and to the Trustees of Essex Hall and the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches for the free use of the Hall by Mr. P. K. Dutt, and carried unanimously.

Memorial Service and Social, 24th September.—On Sunday, the 24th September, a special Memorial Service was held at the Unitarian Christian Church, Highgate Hill, London, when the Minister, the Rev. G. J. Sparham officiated, and Sir Albion Banerji preached the sermon. The Service was attended by a large congregation of representatives of various communities, and was followed by a Social which was kindly arranged by the authorities of the Church.

Pilgrimage to Bristol, 27th September.—The last item in the programme was the Pilgrimage to Bristol on the special Anniversary Day, 27th September, when the party travelling from London was welcomed by the Lord Mayor at a Civic Luncheon. Short services were held at the Mausoleum at Arno's Vale Cemetery and at the Lewin's Mead Chapel, and visits were also paid to the Museum at Red Lodge, and to the house at Stapleton outside the City boundaries where the Raja lived and died.

In conclusion, the Committee desires to place on record its appreciation and gratitude for the generous assistance given to the Committee by the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches and the Trustees of Essex Hall, and to the various organs of the Press, notably the *Times* and the *Inquirer* and some of the papers at Bristol for giving due publicity to the work of the Committee. The Committee also desires to thank the various speakers who have helped individually by taking such an active part in the Celebrations.

(*Sd.*) P. K. DUTT
Honorary Secretary
of the Raja Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebrations in London.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CELEBRATIONS IN LONDON AND BRISTOL.

From the *Inquirer*, the *Indian Magazine and Review*, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, the *Subodha Patrika*, and letters of witnesses.

Essex Street, London, and its neighbourhood.—There is a small, ancient restaurant, run by an aged Italian, in a small alley which shoots from the Strand in the direction of the Embankment. You step it in the presence of a collection of dilapidated furniture, antiquated crockery, and photographs that show the accumulated dust of ages. At the counter sits an old figure whose face shows marks of many summers and many more winters. He talks to you gently and shows to you a photograph which he almost worships every morning. That is the picture of a man who "inspired his father to live righteously", and who "saved him from moral and spiritual degradation." On a careful scrutiny you will notice that the picture is of a foreigner, with a huge turban and long flowing robes, a forehead that is prominent by its broadness, with eyes that look calm yet penetrating. That is the picture of Raja Rammohun Roy.

It was in this small cafe, owned by an Italian, which has passed on to the family members from generation to generation, that Raja Rammohun Roy used to have his small cup of coffee before proceeding by way of the Thames Embankment to the Houses of Parliament in those stormy days of the Reform Bill. How an Indian's memory is refreshed and his soul inspired in the presence of the antiquated picture of that great reformer, who broke the traditions of centuries and paved the way for our country's rebirth !

Only a hundred yards away in the Eastern direction, just at the point where the famous Fleet Street begins, there winds a small road towards the river face. It is called Essex Street. Essex Street is famous for the 'Essex Hall', the centre of the activities of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, (now re-christened as the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.)

The Meeting and Soiree in Essex Hall on 22nd September 1933.—It was in this small but cosy hall that the celebrations of the Centenary in England commenced on 22nd September with a Meeting and Soiree. Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, along with Mr. A. Yusuf Ali, Lady Abbas Ali Baig, Rev. Alfred Hall, *President*, and Rev. Mortimer Rowe, *Secretary*, General Assembly of U. & F. C. Churches, Rev. G. J. Sparham, Unitarian minister, Messrs. Shoran Singh, J. G. Gadre and P. K. Dutt, Sir Hassan Suhra-

wardy and Sir Gyanen Roy were seated on the dais. Behind them hung the portraits of Dr. James Martineau, the famous Unitarian author and minister, Dr. James Drummond, and Dr. Estlin Carpenter, all of whom were successive principals of the Manchester College, Oxford. There was a large gathering of Europeans and Indians of both sexes. That showed the deep reverence which peoples of all countries have for that great Indian personality.

SIR BHUPENDRA NATH MITRA, who presided, gave an able and illuminating review of the life and work of Rammohun Roy,—his career in the public services in India, his social and educational work, his efforts for reform as regards *Sati*, polygamy, and the social slavery of women. The meeting, he said, would be memorable to him, for people of many schools of religion and thought were assembled there to do honour to the memory of Rammohun Roy, who was one of the greatest Indians of modern times. He lived and died during a period of transition in Indian history, when the greatness and grandeur of the Moghul Empire were departed, and India had not yet begun to feel the effects of the Pax Britannica. He was born towards the end of the 18th century, and after a period of about ten years in the service of the East India Company, settled down in Calcutta. His genius soon made itself manifest in a number of publications in which he fearlessly advocated the doctrines which he considered right. This led to persecution by his own people, and also brought him into conflict with the Christian Missionaries. He established a Sabha for monotheistic worship, and latterly a Unitarian Mission, which again led to his founding of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828.

Sturdy independence of thought was one of his chief characteristics. He was the pioneer of every advance made by the Hindu community in the nineteenth century.

In education he upheld the English system, and to him and to David Hare India owes her first English College in India, founded by them in 1817. He came to England as the political ambassador of the Moghul Emperor of Delhi. He stands out as one of the greatest men of modern Indian history.

His greatness lay in pulling us out of the padding of bigotedness and the superficial aspect of religion which had taken a strong hold of our minds. He taught Indians to look around and pursue the path of progress with a view to reach a level of equality with the West in civilisation, the greatest heritage of mankind. India needed men who were imbued with the same spirit that

inspired Raja Rammohun Roy, because the urgent need of our country at present is the march towards progress. The best that Indians could do today, Sir Bhupen concluded, was to see that the memory of that truly great man was kept fresh in the minds, not only of Indians, but of all peoples throughout the world.

MR. ABDULLA YUSUF ALI followed. He said that the Centenary celebration was welcome to all Indians. It breathed the spirit of harmony, conciliation and peace. The celebrations of India's eminent sons and daughters, such as Asoka, Akbar, Chand Bibi, Kalidas, Raja Rammohun and others, assisted to bring about unity and co-operation.

It was not only because the Raja lived and died in England, said Mr. Yusuf Ali, that it was appropriate for Indians and Englishmen together to celebrate the Centenary of his death in England. Rammohun's generation saw the first efforts in cultural co-operation between Britain and India. The names of Rammohun Roy and David Hare were inseparably associated with the beginning of English education in Bengal. The liberalised outlook of Hinduism could be traced to their joint efforts. The constitutional position of India was being examined anew by the British Parliament a century ago, and Raja Rammohun Roy was heard as a witness by a Select Committee of the House of Commons. Today Indians were not only being heard by a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament, but were being consulted as colleagues in evolving a new constitution for India. In Rammohun Roy's day it was an innovation that Indians should be Magistrates of the Peace. Today Indians were beginning to exercise authority as Governors of Provinces in the name of King George of all the Britains and Emperor of India. The co-operation of the British and the Indians was never more necessary than it was today. Disastrous results would accrue from non-co-operation, not only to India, but also to Britain and the British Empire.

In one notable respect India in Rammohun Roy's day differed greatly from India of today. The communal question in the form in which it is now known was then non-existent. The relations between Muslim and Hindu were not embittered. In fact, the Moghul Emperor conferred the title of Raja on Rammohun Roy at Delhi, and sent him to England as his trusted envoy to place his case before the authorities.

Rammohun Roy's teaching and thought sought to bring Hinduism, Muhammadanism and Christianity closer together. He carried with him an atmosphere

of peace and reconciliation. If that atmosphere could be revived today in India, half our difficulties would be solved. There was no trace of communal feeling in Rammohun's utterances, and he made and fostered personal contacts between the various communities in India. In the Brahmo Samaj, the Society which he founded, Hinduism was brought nearer to Islam and Christianity. He himself studied the Vedas in Sanskrit and the Muslim scriptures in Persian and Arabic. Would that we could revive his spirit in India now!

THE REV. ALFRED HALL said that Raja Rammohun Roy, when he came to England, had impressed all liberal thinkers of the Unitarian Church and of other churches as well. He was of commanding personality and handsome presence, and was gifted with a great intellect; he was master of ten languages; he had great practical ability, and his was the first important embassy from India to England. His death was deeply regretted and mourned in England by Unitarians. Many of the Unitarian ministers preached on his death. They were impressed by the man and the message he had to deliver. The Raja brought to the Unitarians a certain amount of confidence in themselves. They were delighted to find that a man of alert mind, with a different history from their own, by using his own powers independently on the New Testament, had arrived at practically the same conclusions as themselves. A study of his life impressed on one the belief that the way of progress was to be found in devotion to one supreme spiritual principle, and that supreme spiritual principle was a belief in, and devotion to, one supreme God. From the Brahmo Samaj which Rammohun Roy founded had come some of India's greatest intellects. There is perhaps little difference intellectually and spiritually between the East and the West. Rammohun Roy should serve to inspire people to develop not a narrow but a wide outlook, not a national but international vision, not a racial but a humanitarian perspective.

SIR HASSAN SUHRAWARDY, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, who had just arrived in England and was to leave the next day, expressed as a Muslim his homage to Rammohun Roy. One of the Persian books written by Raja Rammohun Roy was translated by his (the speaker's) father. And his father was amazed at the way a Hindu could write such fluent Arabic. The University of Calcutta was the child of Roy's unceasing activities in the field of education; and it was an honour for Sir Hassan to be elected the Vice-Chancellor of that University. His

Centenary is being celebrated in the Senate House of the University of Calcutta, because he was a great reformer in education. Rammohun Roy asked for the introduction of scientific education in India even before its value was realised in England. He had a prophetic gift. His spirit and influence united Hindu and Muslim and Christian.

MR. J. G. GADRE of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj then read a discourse, mainly biographical, on Rammohun Roy's life and his social and religious aims, and referred to his long and close association with Mr. John Digby in the Bengal Civil Service and in literary work. He called Rammohun the "Prophet of Modern India." Many social and religious reforms which he inaugurated a century ago were being only half-heartedly taken up by present-day Indians ; but as time advanced, the value of his life and work would be better appreciated. He was a beacon light for coming generations.

MR. SHORAN SINGH (Quaker) of the Young Men's Christian Association, said that in considering the life of Rammohun Roy, we must ask ourselves if in our hearts there burned his reforming fire. Raja Rammohun Roy was India's first unofficial ambassador to England. He came with a dual purpose : first, to bring home to British minds that the day would come when India would demand her rightful place in the British Commonwealth of Nations ; and secondly, to interpret by his words and actions the highest and best that the India of his ideals stood for. It is true that he came to England as a political and religious ambassador, but he desired to be an ambassador of India's culture too. "On all Indians is laid the duty of being individually ambassadors of India ; for our country is judged mainly from the life of Indians in England and America."

"We must look forward to social reform", continued the speaker. "The freedom of Indian women was won by Rammohun Roy. Indian women can now teach the men the idea of national unity. Nationalism and patriotism in the narrow form are a curse. What is dividing us Indians today, is not the essentials for which every religion stands, but the non-essentials which have grown up as the result of traditions, historical circumstances and priestcraft. Rammohun laid the foundation of the national unity of India on spiritual lines. We must inherit his great spiritual force." Mr. Singh then quoted some sayings of Rammohun Roy, ending with the sentence "The truest way to serve God is to do good to man."

Memorial Services on Sunday the 24th September.—Morning, at the Theistic Church.—On Sunday the 24th September, there was a Memorial Service in the morning

in the Theistic Church by Rev. M. C. Ratter, who spoke on the Raja's achievements in religion, in social reform, and in furthering the spread of Bengali literature.

In the afternoon there was a tea-party given by Mr. Gadre.

Evening, at the Highgate Unitarian Church.—In the evening, a special Memorial Service under the auspices of the Centenary Committee was held at the Unitarian Christian Church, Highgate Hill, London, when the Minister, Rev. G. J. Sparham, officiated, and Sir Albion Banerji delivered the sermon. Among the large congregation assembled were representatives of the Hindu, Muslim, Bahai, and Christian communities, and also members of the Brahmo Samaj and of the Council of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.

Sir Albion Banerji said in his sermon that Raja Rammohun Roy was born at a time when the majority of Indian people were steeped in ignorance and superstition. The teaching of the Hindu scriptures had almost been forgotten, and the religion of ancient India had degenerated into various forms of idolatry, some of which were crude and vulgar. It was Raja Rammohun Roy's anxious aim not only to restore the monotheism and the spirituality of the ancient sages, but to spread true religion among all classes of men without distinction of caste or sex. His life and work served to show the paramount need for consolidating the national life of the people of India, irrespective of caste, creed or religion, for an uncompromising spirit with which to fight corruption, falsehood and social and moral degeneration, and above all, for a strong and abiding faith in one Universal God.

(The full text of the Sermon [122] is given in Section C, Part II.)

The Pilgrimage to Bristol, 27th September.—The journey to and the functions at Bristol are best described in the words of the letters received from pilgrims.

We had a motor journey from London to Bristol. On our special tickets were inscribed the words "Raja Rammohun Roy Centenary Pilgrimage party." The party consisted of about 20 persons, and was organised by the Honorary Secretary of the Centenary Committee, Mr. P. K. Dutt, Educational Secretary with the High Commissioner for India. Though a small party, it reflected the spirit of the Raja, and foreshadowed what future India will be. Besides the organiser, the following were prominent :— (1) Rev. G. J. Sparham, (2) Mr. Yusuf Ali, (3) Mr. Gadre, (4) Mr. Ram, a representative of the Arya Samaj, (5) Lady

Abbas Ali Baig, (the only lady in the party), (6) Dr. Prasanta Kumar Ghosh, (7) & (8) Messrs. Subimal Roy and Sukumar Roy (grandsons of Prakash Chandra Roy of revered memory), (9) Mr. Nayan Barua (grandson of the late Gunabhiram Barua), (10) Mr. Karunaketan Sen (grandson of Dr. V. Rai), (11) Mr. Bijay Krishna Acharya (grandson of the late revered Kalinarayan Gupta), etc. So the Brahmo Samaj was well represented in the party by its third generation.

On arrival at Bristol, Rev. Tudor Jones, Minister of the Bristol Unitarian Church, with the Chief Constable of Bristol, received us at the station and we drove in a charabanc direct to Arno's Vale Cemetery. We were photographed there before the Mausoleum of the Raja. Rev. Mr. Jones conducted a short service. Wreaths were then laid on the tomb. Next, we went to the Lord Mayor's place, where he, his wife, and his two sisters received us. We were then invited by the Lord Mayor to lunch as his guests at the Grand Hotel. At the Luncheon, the Lord Mayor paid a warm tribute to the Raja's memory. He dwelt on his work to bring East and West into closer understanding and sympathy, and expressed the hope that his example would inspire people today to strive for unity and co-operation.

Mr. A. Yusuf Ali, replying on behalf of the Indians present, said that a bridge to join the peoples of Great Britain and India must and would be built. "We see signs all round", he said, "that such a bridge is desired."

The Bishop of Malmesbury said that he felt that every great nation could give a gift to civilisation, and India's gift was to remind them that life should be placed in its proper relation to eternity.

After lunch we were asked to subscribe our names in a register of the Cemetery. Among previous visitors we noticed the names of Keshub Chunder Sen, Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, Satyendra Nath Tagore, Brajendra Nath Seal, Sivanath Sastri, Bipin Chandra Pal, and many more distinguished Indians.

After this we were taken to visit places of interest in Bristol connected with Raja Rammohun Roy. We first visited the house where Mary Carpenter and her father lived, (and where, by the bye, Sir Albion Banerji was born.) The next house we saw was the 'Red Lodge', Mary Carpenter's Industrial School, which was closed only recently (in 1918) after more than a century's useful work, and which has now become the nation's property,

being preserved as a Museum in charge of antiquarians. There we saw the full-sized original oil painting of the Raja by H. P. Briggs, R.A., from which all portraits of the Raja which now we see, have been taken.

Next we were driven to Lewin's Mead Chapel, where Dr. Lant Carpenter preached, and where the Raja also had preached. After a short service, Mr. Yusuf Ali, Mr. Gadre, and Rev. Sparham spoke on the Raja's life, on his religious ideals, and on the impetus he gave to the Unitarians during his stay in England.

Thence we went to Stapleton, outside the boundaries of Bristol, where the Raja had lived as the guest of Miss Castle, a ward of Dr. Lant Carpenter, in a house then called 'Stapleton Grove', but now named 'Beach House'. Here the Raja died and was buried. A brass tablet has been attached to this building, which is now a big Mental Institution, accommodating nearly 200 mentally backward and defective children. Their class was actually in progress when we reached the place. We visited the room where the Raja lived and died, and the site in the grounds of the house where the Raja was first buried under elm trees on 18th October 1833. A stone tablet has recently been erected at this place to mark the site of the interment. His remains were removed to the Arno's Vale Cemetery by Dwarakanauth Tagore on 29th May 1843 during his visit to England.

We then returned from Stapleton to the town. After a hearty tea, and a hearty vote of thanks to Rev. Jones and Mrs. Jones, and to the Secretary of the Centenary Committee, we left Bristol and returned to London at night.

The same evening, the evening papers of Bristol printed pictures of the photographs taken at Arno's Vale Cemetery earlier in the day.

When repairing the tomb last time, the workmen had handed over to the Mayor of Bristol broken bits of masonry, thinking that they might be valued as souvenirs by those who visit the tomb annually. A few of these bits were eagerly secured by some of us.

Oxford

The Manchester College at Oxford, where Unitarian Ministers receive their training in pastoral duties, observed the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy by a Memorial Service held in its Chapel on 29th October 1933. Rev.

W. H. Drummond, D. D., who has several times been in India, the last such occasion being the Centenary of the foundation by Raja Rammohun Roy of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828, when he came as a Delegate of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, conducted the Service, and delivered an impressive sermon on *An Indian who belonged to the World*, taking as his text Psalm 86, verses 9 and 10 : "All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name. For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things : Thou art God alone."

(The Sermon[121] is printed in full in Section C of Part II.)

PARIS

All admirers of Indian civilization and culture in every part of the world have paid homage to the memory of the great man who ushered in the New Age in India. The small but influential group of Indianists in Paris, who never let the real India and her joys and sorrows fade out of their vision through the glamour of her noble antiquities, naturally responded to the call of the organisers of the Centenary Celebrations with their usual warm sympathy and enthusiasm.

On the 9th December, 1933, at 3 o'clock, there was a distinguished and representative gathering in the Institute of Indian Civilisation in Sorbonne to celebrate the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy. As a fitting prelude to the ceremony, Prof. A. C. Mukherji of Indore, now studying in Paris, played a classical Indian melody on the *surbahar* with the nimble fingers of an accomplished master, and kept the whole gathering entranced for more than a quarter of an hour. Then rose the veteran Indianist, Prof. Sylvain Levi, and in an impressive and instructive speech, extending nearly over an hour, explained to the French audience the importance and significance of Raja Rammohun Roy for Modern India.

The central hall of the Institute was packed, and even the flank reading rooms were crowded. The chairs provided proved to be too few, and a large part of the audience had to remain standing. Yet not a soul stirred during the address of Prof. Sylvain Levi. After this speech, which was the main item of the evening, all present were entertained with tea and light refreshments, and asked to give

their signatures on the sheet of parchment which bore the fraternal greetings of the French public to India.—(*India and the World,* Calcutta, *February 1934.*)

It is interesting to note that the greetings on the sheet of parchment noted above were written by Prof. Sylvain Levi himself. Prof. Levi also conveyed to the Central Celebration Committee in Calcutta a personal message in which he summarised his own brilliant address. (Prof. Levi's Message[56], and the Greetings from the Paris University[86] are printed in Part II, Section C. Facsimile copies of the greetings and the signatures will also be found in that Section.)

As the names of the signatories will show, people of various nationalities assembled at Paris to do honour to the memory of the Raja. The Message and the Greetings were read out, and the signed parchment was exhibited, before the great Centenary gathering at the Senate House of the Calcutta University on 29th December 1933 by Dr. Bata Krishna Ghosh, D.PHIL., D.LITT. (Paris).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

At the instance of Dr. T. C. Khandwala and Mr. Manilal Parekh, who were at Chicago during the session of the World's Fellowship of Faiths in August 1933, Mr. Parekh, who is the author of a short biography of Rammohun Roy, gave a talk on his life and influence to the "Channing Club", which is an Association of young men, mostly of the Unitarian faith.

The date of the Rammohun Roy Centenary, 27th September 1933, fell within the usual vacation period of the United States of America. Unfortunately, Dr. Franklin C. Southworth, Chairman of the American Committee, suffered from illness in the middle of the summer of that year, as a result of which the public meetings, which were originally intended to be held in September, could not be organised.

However, our American friends representing various institutions of the Unitarian Church, as well as several influential journals, among which special mention may be made of the *Christian Register* of Boston, and the *Unity* and the *Open Court* of Chicago, actively co-operated with those who were engaged in celebrating the Centenary in London

and in Calcutta. The Indian Committee was particularly encouraged by the numerous greetings and messages—some of which were remarkable utterances—received from America.

The following composed the American Committee for co-operating with the Centenary celebrations in India :—Dr. Francis A. Christie, Dr. John Howland Lathrop, Dr. Henry Wilder Foote, Dr. Christopher Eliot, Dr. Sydney B. Snow (President, Meadville Theological School, Chicago), and Dr. Franklin C. Southworth, *Chairman.*

The first Message received from America was that of the above Committee[85], which, at their meeting held in Boston on 23rd May 1933, adopted a Resolution conveying their greetings to their Indian brethren. The next message was that of Robert C. Dexter[72], Secretary, Department of Social Relations, American Unitarian Association (7 June 1933). After this came those from Rev. Henry Wilder Foote[74], Minister of the First Church in Belmont, Mass., and L. D. Wald[75] of the Henry Street Settlement, New York (20 June 1933). Then came a remarkable tribute from the famous nonagenarian minister, Rev. Jabez T. Sunderland[69], whose name is a household word in India (24 June 1933). Dana McLean Greeley[73] of the Young People's Religious Union, Boston, followed with a cheering message "to the Brahmo Samaj and its young people" (21 July 1933). Greetings from Dr. Franklin C. Southworth and Mrs. Alice B. Southworth[70] (20 September 1933), and a tribute in verse from Alma L. Lissberger[71] of New York were received later, and were printed in the December 1933 issue of the *India and the World*, Calcutta.

In its issue of 28th September 1933, the *Christian Register* of Boston reproduced the Presidential Address of Rabindranath Tagore at the Preliminary Meeting of the Calcutta Celebrations held on 18th February 1933. The same issue contained a leading article by Dr. Franklin C. Southworth on Rammohun Roy. An article contributed by Rev. Jabez T. Sunderland (mainly embodying his message to India) was printed in the *Inquirer* of London in its issue of 30th September 1933. The *Unity* of Chicago (16th October 1933) had an article by Charles R. Joy on *The Father of Modern India ;* and its issue of 27th November reproduced the article of Rev. Jabez T. Sunderland from the *Inquirer* of 30th September and also the Presidential Address delivered by Rabindranath Tagore at the Preliminary Meeting at Calcutta. (For the articles by Dr. Southworth and C. R. Joy, *vide* Section C of Part II.)

All are equal in the Creator's eye.

It may be seen that the followers of every religion believe that the Creator has made mankind for the performance of the duties of the present and the future life by observing the precepts of that particular religion ; and that the followers of other religions, who differ from them, are liable to punishment and torment in future life. But as the members of each particular sect defer the good results of their own acts and the bad results of their rivals' acts to life after death, none of them can refute the dogmas of others in this life. Consequently, they simply sow the seeds of prejudice and disunion in the hearts of one another, and condemn one another to the deprivation of eternal blessings : whereas it is quite evident that all of them are living in the equal enjoyment of the eternal blessings of Heaven, such as, the light of the stars, the pleasures of the season of spring, the fall of rain, the health of the body, external and internal good, etc. ; and that all are equally liable to suffer from inconveniences and pains, such as, darkness, the severity of cold, mental disease, narrowness of circumstances, and other outward and inward evils, without any distinction, although following different religions.—*Rammohun Roy in the Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin.*

Follow Truth. Do not look to numbers.

The fact of God's endowing each individual with intellectual faculties and senses implies that he should not, like other animals, follow the examples of his fellows, but should exercise his own intellectual powers, with the help of acquired knowledge, to discern good from bad, so that this valuable divine gift should not be left useless. The followers of various religions, seeing the paucity of the number of monotheists in the world, sometimes boast that they are on the side of the majority. But it may be seen that the truth of a saying does not depend upon the multitude of sayers, and the non-reliability of a narration cannot result from the small number of its narrators. For, it is admitted by the seekers of truth, that truth is to be followed, although it is against the majority of the people. Moreover, to accept the proposition that the small number of sayers leads to the invalidity of a saying, would be a dangerous blow to all forms of religion ; for in the beginning of every religion it had very few supporters, viz. its founder and a few sincere followers.—*Ibid.*

PART II

CONTENTS OF PART II

(A) RAMMOHUN ROY, THE MAN AND HIS WORK

(Publicity Booklet No. 1 issued by the Centenary Committee in July 1933)

EDITED BY MR. AMAL HOME

(B) REMINISCENCES, TRIBUTES, ESTIMATES

(Originally selected for Publicity Booklet No. 2)

(C) ADDRESSES, PAPERS, MESSAGES, ETC.

(Delivered or read at the Centenary Celebrations.)

ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

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CENTENARY PUBLICITY BOOKLET—No. 1

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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FOREWORD

By THE EDITOR

WHEN I undertook, at the request of the Rammohun Centenary Committee, the task of preparing a *Publicity Booklet*, which would contain—besides everything that is contemplated to be done to commemorate the hundredth death-anniversary of the great Raja—an account of his life and activities as well as other interesting items of information regarding his multi-sided career, I had no idea of the difficulties I would have to encounter.

In the first place, mine was to be a work mainly of compilation. And any one who has any acquaintance with the literature on the subject of the Raja's life knows well how very scattered are the materials which must be gathered and pieced together for an undertaking of this kind. Hardly any of the available accounts of the Raja's career served my exact purpose, that of presenting, within a short compass, a connected and coherent story of Rammohun's life. Some are fragmentary, some controversial, some hopelessly out of date. The only account which, in a very large measure, appeared to fulfil my requirements was the sketch of the Raja's career by Pandit Sivanath Sastri in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, which had not only the saving grace of brevity but also all the merits of a story extremely well-told. But the 'Story' had been written as early as the eighties of the last century, though the book containing it was first published in 1911. It, therefore, materially suffered from those defects—mostly certain inaccuracies of facts—which only recent researches have brought to light. I have, therefore, found it necessary to supplement Pandit Sastri's 'Story' by 'Notes', which will be found immediately following it. In these 'Notes'—besides drawing freely upon the Raja's biography by Miss Sophia Dobson Collet and the account of his last days in England by Miss Mary Carpenter—I have tried to collate some of the very valuable and extremely painstaking researches of my friend, Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji of the *Modern Review*, whose work, based mainly on State Records, has not only brought out many hitherto unknown facts of Rammohun's life but has also thrown a flood of light on many an obscure corner of his

wonderful career. Unfortunately for me, as well as for all other students of the Raja's life, Mr. Banerji's contributions are all scattered over the pages of periodicals, principally of the paper with which he is connected; and I am very grateful to Mr. Banerji for placing at my disposal 'reprints' of all these articles, without which I could have done very little in supplementing the 'Story' told by Pandit Sivanath. I have also made use of some precious materials that Mr. Banerji has gathered in his two volumes of compilations from old Bengali newspapers—*Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*—dating back to Rammohun Roy's time and published very recently by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad. I only wish I had more time and space at my disposal to make fuller and better use of them. Perhaps, in a later issue of the booklet, I may yet have an opportunity of doing adequate justice to a publication of unquestionable value.

The sketch of the career of Rammohun in the *History of the Brahmo Samaj* naturally laid emphasis on the Raja's career as a Religious Reformer and partially as a Social Reformer too. His political views and activities had only been touched upon in Pandit Sastri's account. They, therefore, required to be dwelt upon at some length to be understood in their proper perspective and significance. Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee's monograph supplies this desideratum. He has shown, as he alone can show, in his paper on *Rammohun Roy and Modern India*—which he has very kindly allowed to be published in this booklet—that it was the Raja who "laid the foundation of all the principal modern movements for the elevation of our people".

But the Raja was not only a Religious, Social and Political Reformer. His was a mind and personality into the making of which had entered as much of the cultures of Islam, Brahmanism, Jaina Scriptures and Buddhist Traditions as of Judaism and Christianity and the "New Learning from the West." And whom can we approach for a synthetic estimate of Rammohun—the greatest synthetist of his age—than Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, whose illuminating interpretation, based upon lifelong and profound study of Rammohun, has furnished a key to the writings of the Raja to all earnest students. His paper—*Rammohun Roy: The Universal Man*—published in this booklet, forms a landmark in the appreciative understanding of the Raja.

I have touched upon the principal contents of this booklet and my reasons for including them therein. As regards

the other contents, they will speak for themselves. It only now remains for me to thank all those who have helped me in compiling this publication. I must first acknowledge the assistance I have received from my esteemed friend Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, the indefatigable Joint Secretary of the Centenary Committee. He has not only procured for me various publications—some of them very rare and extremely difficult to obtain—but also helped me with his valuable suggestions and advice. I have also received considerable help from my friend Mr. Manmatha Nath Ghosh, the well-known biographer of some of the foremost personalities of Bengal in the last century. Mr. Ghosh has very generously furnished me with an account of the friends and followers of Rammohun Roy, which I have included in the Appendices. I have had also before me the manuscript of an unpublished thesis on the "History of Political Thought from Rammohun to Dayananda" by Prof. Biman Behari Majumdar of B. N. College, Patna, which has very deservedly won him the Premchand Roychand Scholarship of the University of Calcutta. Lastly, I must thank my young friend Sriman Birendra Nath Chakravarti, who has helped me in the preparation of the manuscript of this booklet. But for his assistance I would not have been able to find time, amidst my many pressing duties, to see the publication through the press in time,—much as it has been delayed.

AMAL HOME

CENTRAL MUNICIPAL OFFICE,
Calcutta, June 15, 1933.

Rammohun Roy Centenary

[1833-1933]

AN APPEAL

The Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy falls in the year 1933. It is an occasion which, we feel, should be celebrated in a befitting manner by all sections of people in every part of India, and by his numerous admirers throughout the world.

Not only did the Raja inaugurate the Modern Age in India, but he was one of the very few persons in his time in the world of Man who realized that the ideal of human civilization lies not in segregated individualism, but in a comprehensive co-ordination of cultures in all spheres of thought and activity, of individuals as well as of nations. Revealing to India and to the world at large the multi-sided and perfectly balanced personality of such a man is the great task before the organisers of the Centenary.

A **comprehensive Scheme** for the Centenary has been developed in a series of meetings held in Calcutta, commencing with a largely attended Preliminary Public Meeting at the Senate House on 18th February; and a strong Working Committee and several sub-committees have been formed to work it out. The **Scheme** is detailed on the next page of this Appeal.

The Membership of the General Committee, carrying important privileges mentioned on the last page, is open to all who have sympathy with the Centenary and who will pay a membership fee of Rs. 5/-.

It has been roughly estimated that item 1 of the **Scheme** (PUBLICATIONS, with Publicity measures, &c.), would cost Rs. 15,000; items 2 and 3 (CELEBRATIONS and PILGRIMAGE) would cost Rs. 5,000: out of item 4, the bronze STATUE would cost Rs. 20,000, the PORTRAIT and the PILLAR Rs. 7,000, and the RADHANAGORE MEMORIAL BUILDINGS Rs. 28,000. **The total comes to Rs. 75,000.**

Of item 6, the Rammohun Roy CHAIR and FELLOWSHIPS would require an Endowment Fund of Rupees three lakhs, and the BUILDING with a HALL in LONDON another lakh.

We appeal to people of all sections and communities to enlist themselves as Members, and also to contribute liberally towards the funds of the Centenary, so as to enable the organisers to give effect to all the proposals contained in the Scheme.

Donations ear-marked for any specific purpose mentioned in the Scheme would be applied to such purpose alone.

We confidently hope that the reverence in which we hold the memory of Rammohun Roy will rise, in its practical expression, to the level of the greatness of the maker of Modern India.

All contributions are to be sent either to the Honorary Treasurer at Temple Chambers, 6, Old Post Office Street, or to the Central Bank of India, Ltd., 100, Clive Street, Calcutta, A/c "Rammohun Roy Centenary".

RABINDRANATH TAGORE
President, General Committee.

J. N. BASU
Hony. Secretary, General Committee.

CALCUTTA,
April 30, 1933.

HIRENDRA NATH DATTA
Hony. Treasurer.

SCHEME OF CELEBRATION

1. PUBLICATION of (*a*) the Raja's *Works,* (*b*) a popular *Selection* from his Works, (*c*) *Studies* on his life and work, and (*d*) a *Commemoration Volume,* including tributes to his memory and brief accounts of the Centenary celebrations.

2. (*i*) CELEBRATIONS in Calcutta, during the Christmas holidays, comprising (*a*) a *Convention of Religions,* (*b*) a *General Conference* for papers and speeches on the Raja, (*c*) a *Bengali Literary Conference,* (*d*) a *Women's Conference,* (*e*) an *Exhibition* of various articles connected with the Raja's life and activities, etc. (*ii*) CELEBRATIONS in the different districts of Bengal and all the provinces of India.

3. A PILGRIMAGE to Radhanagore, the birthplace of the Raja.

4. PERMANENT MEMORIALS to the Raja's memory, *viz.,* at CALCUTTA,—(*a*) a bronze *Statue* in some central place, (*b*) a *Portrait in Oils* for the Town Hall, and (*c*) re-naming the northern half of the Upper Circular Road as *"Rammohun Roy Avenue" ;* at RADHANAGORE,—(*d*) a stone *Pillar,* and (*e*) completion of the *Memorial Buildings.*

5. OUTSIDE INDIA, *Celebrations* in London, Bristol, and seats of learning and centres of liberal religious movements in Europe.

6. And, *on sufficient funds being raised,*—(*a*) the FOUNDATION of a Rammohun Roy CHAIR and FELLOWSHIPS on *Comparative Religion ;* (*b*) a BUILDING with a HALL in LONDON for holding meetings, accommodating Indian cultural societies, etc. It is also proposed, in the near future, (*c*) to construct a motor-

able ROAD to RADHANAGORE, and (*d*) to acquire Rammohun Roy's MANIKTALA RESIDENCE IN CALCUTTA.

[The detailed Scheme will be found in Appendix G.]

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

A Member will be entitled to:—

(1) Free receipt of the Publicity Pamphlet and of all other Publicity literature.

(2) Concession rates, to be fixed hereafter, for (*a*) the *Works* of Rammohun Roy, (*b*) *Studies* on Rammohun Roy, (*c*) Rammohun *Anthology*, and (*d*) the *Commemoration Volume*, as and when published.

(3) Reserved seats at all Conventions and Conferences held in connection with the Celebrations in Calcutta during the Christmas holidays.

Membership Forms may be had of:—

(1) Centenary Office, 210/6, Cornwallis Street; (2) Sadharan Brahmo Samaj Office, 211, Cornwallis Street; (3) Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Office, 243-1, Upper Circular Road; (4) Rammohun Roy Library, 267, Upper Circular Road; (5) "The Mohammadi" Office, 91, Upper Circular Road; (6) Adi Brahmo Samaj, 55, Upper Chitpore Road; (7) Navavidhan Library, 89, Machuabazar Street; (8) Y. M. C. A., College Street Branch, 86, College Street; (9) Albert Institute Reading Room, 15, College Square; (10) The Calcutta University Institute, 7, College Square; (11) The Bengal Immunity Ltd. Office, 153, Dhurramtala Street; (12) *The Calcutta Municipal Gazette* Office, Corporation Buildings; (13) Mr. Sisir Kumar Dutt, 270, New Park Street; (14) Brahmo Sammilan Samaj Library, 1, Doctor Rajendra Road, Bhawanipur; (15) Y. M. C. A., Bhawanipur Branch, Paddapukur Road.

Membership Form duly filled in may be sent along with the Membership Fee of Rs. 5/- either directly to the Hony. Treasurer, Mr. Hirendranath Datta, Temple Chambers, 6, Old Post Office Street, Calcutta, or to Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, Joint Secretary, at the OFFICE of the Centenary, which has been located for the present at 210/6, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Office hours,—5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The Form and Fee may also be given to any person duly authorized by the Secretaries.

"INAUGURATOR OF THE MODERN AGE IN INDIA"

By

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The address printed opposite was delivered by the Poet Rabindranath Tagore as President of the Preliminary Meeting of the Rammohun Roy Centenary, held at the Senate House, Calcutta, on the 18th February, 1933.

RAMMOHUN ROY inaugurated the Modern Age in India. He was born at a time when our country having lost its link with the inmost truths of its being, struggled under a crushing load of unreason, in abject slavery to circumstance. In social usage, in politics, in the realm of religion and art, we had entered the zone of uncreative habit, of decadent tradition, and ceased to exercise our humanity. In this dark gloom of India's degeneration Rammohun rose up, a luminous star in the firmament of India's history, with prophetic purity of vision, and unconquerable heroism of soul. He shed radiance all over the land; he rescued us from the penury of self-oblivion. Through the dynamic power of his personality, his uncompromising freedom of the spirit, he vitalized our national being with the urgency of creative endeavour, and launched it into the arduous adventure of realization. He is the great path-maker of this century who has removed ponderous obstacles that impeded our progress at every step, and initiated us into the present Era of world-wide co-operation of humanity.

Rammohun belongs to the lineage of India's great seers, who age after age have appeared in the arena of our history with the message of Eternal Man. India's special genius has been to acknowledge the divine in human affairs, to offer hospitality to all that is imperishable in human civilization, regardless of racial and national divergence. From the early dawn of our history it has been India's privilege and also its problem, as a host, to harmonise the diverse elements of humanity which have inevitably been brought to our midst, to synthetize contrasting cultures in the light

of a comprehensive ideal. The stupendous structure of our social system with its intricate arrangement of caste testifies to the vigorous attempt made at an early stage of human civilization to deal with the complexity of our problem, to relegate to every class of our peoples, however wide the cleavage between their levels of culture, a place in a cosmopolitan scheme of society. Rammohun's predecessors, Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, and innumerable saints and seers of medieval India, carried on much farther India's great attempt to evolve a human adjustment of peoples and races; they broke through barriers of social and religious exclusiveness and brought together India's different communities on the genuine basis of spiritual reality. Now that our outworn social usages are yielding rapidly to the stress of an urgent call of unity, when rigid enclosures of caste and creed can no more obstruct the freedom of our fellowship, when India's spiritual need of faith and concord between her different peoples has become imperative and seems to have aroused a new stir of consciousness throughout the land, we must not forget that this emancipation of our manhood has been made possible by the indomitable personality of the great Unifier, Rammohun Roy. He paved the path for this reassertion of India's inmost truth of being, her belief in the equality of man in the love of the Supreme Person, who ever dwells in the hearts of all men and unites us in the bond of welfare.

Rammohun was the only person in his time, in the whole world of man, to realize completely the significance of the Modern Age. He knew that the ideal of human civilization does not lie in the isolation of independence, but in the brotherhood of inter-dependence of individuals as well as of nations in all spheres of thought and activity. He applied this principle of humanity with his extraordi-

nary depth of scholarship and natural gift of intuition, to social, literary and religious affairs, never acknowledging limitations of circumstance, never deviating from his purpose lured by distractions of temporal excitement. His attempt was to establish our peoples on the full consciousness of their own cultural personality, to make them comprehend the reality of all that was unique and indestructible in their civilization, and simultaneously, to make them approach other civilizations in the spirit of sympathetic co-operation. With this view in his mind he tackled an amazingly wide range of social, cultural, and religious problems of our country, and through a long life spent in unflagging service to the cause of India's cultural reassertion, brought back the pure stream of India's philosophy to the futility of our immobile and unproductive national existence. In social ethics he was an uncompromising interpreter of the truths of human relationship, tireless in his crusade against social wrongs and superstition, generous in his co-operation with any reformer, both of this country and of outside, who came to our aid in a genuine spirit of comradeship. Unsparingly he devoted himself to the task of rescuing from the debris of India's decadence the true products of its civilization, and to make our people build on them, as the basis, the superstructure of an international culture. Deeply versed in Sanscrit, he revived classical studies, and while he imbued the Bengali literature and language with the rich atmosphere of our classical period, he opened its doors wide to the Spirit of the Age, offering access to new words from other languages, and to new ideas. To every sphere of our national existence he brought the sagacity of a comprehensive vision, the spirit of self-manifestation of the unique in the light of the universal.

Let me hope that in celebrating his Centenary we shall take upon ourselves the task of revealing to our own and contemporaneous civilizations the multisided and perfectly balanced personality of this great man. We in this country, however, owe a special responsibility, not only of bringing to light his varied contributions to the Modern Age, but of proving our right of kinship with him by justifying his life, by maintaining in every realm of our national existence the high standard of truth which he set before us. Great men have been claimed by humanity by its persecution of them and wilful neglect. We evade our responsibility for those who are immeasurably superior to us by repudiating them. Rammohun suffered martyrdom in his time, and paid the price of his greatness. But out of his sufferings, his power of transmuting them to carry on further beneficent activities for the good of humanity, the Modern Age has gained an undying urge of life. If we fail him again in this day of our nation-building, if we do not observe perfect equity of human relationship offering uncompromising fight to all forms and conventions, however ancient they may be in usage, which separate man and man, we shall be pitiful in our failure, and shamed for ever in the history of man. Our futility will be in the measure of the greatness of Rammohun Roy.

RAMMOHUN ROY: THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By

PANDIT SIVANATH SASTRI

The text of the 'Story' of Rammohun Roy's life printed opposite, has been abridged from the late Pandit Sivanath Sastri's *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, (Vol. I), published by R. Chatterjee from Calcutta in 1911. "Supplementary Notes" have been added by the Editor at the end of the 'Story'.

RAJA Rammohun Roy was born on the 22nd of May, 1772(1)* at the village of Radhanagar, in the district of Burdwan(2), in the province of Bengal. His immediate ancestors, though they had deserted the hereditary profession of Brahmins of their class, and successively held positions of trust and responsibility under the Mahomedan government of Murshidabad, were all renowned for their great piety and orthodoxy. His father Ram Kanta Roy(3) was specially noted for his quiet and retiring disposition and his great devotion to the religion of his ancestors. The mother of Rammohun was as remarkable for her piety as her husband. The closing year of her life was passed in the performance of a characteristic vow. Though brought up in affluence and ease, she attached herself during that year to the temple of Jagannath in Orissa as a menial servant.

Birth and Parentage.

Early Life

Besides Tarini or "Phulthakurani," the mother of Rammohun, Ram Kanta Roy had another wife, by whom he had a son called Ramlochan, of whom little is known. Phulthakurani had two sons, Jugmohun and Rammohun, and a daughter. From infancy Rammohun was marked out as a specially talented lad, and his father bestowed special care on his education. According to the prevalent custom of the times, he got the boy Rammohun married very early in life(4). And the first wife dying soon, Rammohun was married to two other little girls; and all this before his education had properly commenced. He received the first rudiments of instruction in a *pathshala*, or village school, with additional tuition in Persian under a Moulavi under due supervision of his father.

Education at home.

After a few years of preparatory tuition at home, the parents of Rammohun sent him to the city of Patna, at that time famous seat of Mahomedan learning, to learn the Persian and Arabic languages, the passports to fame and position at the time. Here, whilst studying the *Koran* in the original Arabic, his eyes seem to have been for the first time opened to the errors of Hindu idolatry. He is said to have been especially enchanted with the writings of the Sufi school of Mahomedan philosophers, whose views tallied to a large extent with those of the Vedantic school of the Hindus. Throughout his subsequent life, Rammohun Roy never entirely shook off the early Mahomedan influences. In private life, through a long course of years, his habits and tastes were those of a

At Patna.

The numerical within round brackets in the body of the text corresponds to the number of the "Supplementary Notes" immediately following this paper.—*Editor.*

Mahomedan, and in private conversation he always delighted to quote freely from his favourite Sufi authors(5).

Return from Patna.

At the early age of sixteen or seventeen, so the story runs, shortly after his return from Patna, he was observed day after day to be deeply engaged in writing something which his father secretly read and found to be a treatise against the superstitions and idolatry of their ancestral faith. This occasioned a hot discussion between father and son, and the latter was peremptorily ordered by the former to leave his house; whereupon the daring youth conceived the astounding plan of leaving home and undertaking a journey of several thousand miles on foot and also of crossing the Himalayas to visit Tibet for the study of Buddhism(6).

Differences with father.

Such travels on the part of young enthusiasts were not altogether unknown in those days. Companies of Hindu mendicants were then constantly moving about all over the country, visiting places of pilgrimage, or other important gathering places, collecting new disciples and leading them away from their homes. Many of these disciples were quite young, not older than Rammohun. It is quite likely that he fell into the company of some such travelling band, and undertook his famous journey to Tibet. During his residence in Tibet he is said to have incurred the displeasure of the Lama-worshippers by his protest against their idolatry, and had to escape with difficulty from imminent death through the help of some Tibetan ladies, an act of kindness for which he was ever grateful to the female sex.

Visit to Tibet.

After his return from his travels, which seem to have occupied three or four years, he settled down in Benares for a number of years, devoting his time, it is supposed, to the study of the Sanskrit language and of the sacred literature of the Hindus(7).

Stay at Benares.

Service under the East India Company

Soon after the death of his father(8), which occurred in 1803, Rammohun Roy seems to have moved down to Murshidabad, whence he published a Persian treatise with an Arabic preface, entitled *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, or "A Gift to Monotheists," a work protesting against the idolatries and superstitions of all creeds and trying to lay a common foundation of Universal Religion in the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead. We also find the mention of another work in Persian called *Manazarat-ul-Adiyan*, *i.e.*, "Discussions on various Religions," published about this time.

Father's Death and First Publication.

It seems that at this time he secured an appointment under the East India Company(9) in the Revenue Department. After serving in several capacities at Ramgarh, Bhagalpur and other places under Mr. Digby(10), the revenue officer, he finally accompanied the officer to Rangpur in 1809 as the *Sheristadar*, or native assistant to the Collector of Revenue.

The period of his residence at Rangpur [1809—1814] was a fruitful one. On the one hand, during his residence there, he improved his own mind by acquiring varied knowledge, and, on the other, by holding discussion-meetings with representative men of various sects, such as Hindus, Mahomedans and Jainas, he tried to disseminate his principles among all classes of people. In addition to a knowledge of the old Vedantic literature of the country, he is said to have made a careful study of modern Tantric works with the aid of Harihara nanda Tirthaswami, a Bengali Tantric mendicant whose acquaintance he made there, and also to have mastered the contents of the *Kalpa Sutra* and other works of the Jaina religion. Something like an informal club used to meet every evening at his residence, which attracted all classes of people and gave rise to earnest discussions on various religious topics. These discussion-meetings raised up agitation among the people of Rangpur, and a hostile party was created under the leadership of Gourikanta Bhattacharyya, a learned Brahmin, versed in Persian and Sanskrit, who also got up counter-meetings and upheld orthodox Hinduism(11). At Rangpur.

In the midst of his arduous duties and his frequent discussion-meetings, Rammohun Roy found time to improve his knowledge of English(12) by private study commenced in his twenty-second year. It is also stated by Mr. Digby that, with the progress of his knowledge of the English language, Rammohun Roy began to take, while at Rangpur, a keen interest in European politics, specially in the course of the French Revolution. At first he became a great admirer of Napoleon, and followed his career of conquest with great enthusiasm, which, however, suffered partial decline after his abdication. But Rammohun's sympathy with the cause of freedom ever remained warm, and week by week he devoured the contents of Mr. Digby's mail papers. Thus it will be seen that though employed in some of the most engrossing secular duties during these years, Rammohun Roy never lost sight of the grand mission of his life, the religious reformation of his country, and was in fact preparing himself all the time for his great life-work. Preparation for his life-work.

After the death of Rammohun's father, the paternal estates came down to Jugmohun Roy, the elder brother of Rammohun Roy, who managed them till the year 1811, when he himself died, apparently leaving Rammohun Roy as the principal heir(13).

Foundation of the "Atmiya Sabha"

In the year 1814, Mr. Digby left for England on leave and the same year Rammohun Roy retired from service to commence his life-work. He settled down in Calcutta in 1814. [1815—*Ed.*] The next year saw the publication of his translation of the Vedanta and the foundation of the *Atmiya*

Sabha, an association for the dissemination of religious truth and the promotion of free discussions of theological subjects.

Settles in Calcutta and translates the Vedanta.

But who were those that constituted the *Atmiya Sabha*? By the time Rammohun Roy settled down in Calcutta his reformatory doctrines were pretty well known to the educated portion of his countrymen in the metropolis. Many reports of the meetings held at Rangpur and of his sayings and doings there must have reached them, and he was already an interesting personality to many. As fame travelled from north to south, he found many sympathisers. This sympathy with his principles, though confined to a limited circle, was nowhere so strong as in Calcutta, for here, in addition to a common Persian education, men's minds were considerably unhinged by the new contact with European civilization. Consequently, when Rammohun Roy arrived on the scene of his future labours, a coterie of sympathetic souls naturally gathered round him. Several of them belonged to some of the richest and most influential families of Bengal.

Friends and Followers.

Amongst the rich and influential men who gathered around him at that time may be mentioned Babu Dwarkanath Tagore of Jorasanko, Babu Prasanna Kumar Tagore of Pathuriaghata, Babus Kali Nath and Baikuntha Nath Munshi of Taki, Babu Brindaban Mitra, grandfather of Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, Babu Kasi Nath Mullick of Calcutta, Raja Kali Sankar Ghosal of Bhukailash, Babu Annada Prosad Banerji of Telinipara, and Babu Baidya Nath Mukerji, the grandfather of Justice Anukul Mukerji. Besides these, there were many others, such as Brojo Mohun Mozumdar, Haladhar Bose, Nanda Kishore Bose, the father of Raj Narain Bose (subsequently President of the Adi Brahmo Samaj), who sought the Raja's company and frequented the meetings of the *Atmiya Sabha*(15).

All of these men, however, had not the same motives in approaching Rammohun Roy. Some sought his company from a sense of the great honour done to themselves by association with one so distinguished; others frequented his house for the wise counsel and ready help that he always rendered in all their temporal embarrassments; whilst a few were actuated by a genuine sympathy with his principles. With these last he chiefly established the *Atmiya Sabha*. The majority of them were middle-aged men, men experienced in the ways of the world, whom he regarded as his friends and equals in life, and delighted to call "brothers."* But there were also others, not very many, who were younger in age and who approached him as disciples approach their master, amongst whom were the last mentioned.

Amongst the learned associates of Rammohun Roy at this time, who materially helped him in quoting and expounding ancient scriptures, were two well-known Sanskrit scholars. The

*Rammohun used to address his friends in Persian as *"beraders,"* meaning the same thing as "brothers" in English.—*Editor.*

first was Pandit Sivaprasad Misra, who signed some of the Raja's controversial books, and the second, Hariharananda Tirthaswami, already mentioned in connection with Rammohun's work at Rangpur. This mendicant-friend of Rammohun Roy, during his frequent travels, often visited Calcutta and spent several months at a time, in the company of Rammohun Roy. During one of these peregrinations he brought his younger brother Ram Chandra from his village-home and placed him under the care of Rammohun Roy, who subsequently appointed him to the post of the Minister of the Brahmo Samaj. He was the first Minister of the Brahmo Samaj, and afterwards became well-known as Pandit Ram Chandra Vidyavagish.

Hariharananda Tirthaswami.

But the meetings of the *Atmiya Sabha* were not the only means of propagating his doctrines. For the first two years the *Atmiya Sabha* held its weekly meetings in the garden-house of Rammohun Roy at Maniktala, where Sivaprasad Misra used to recite and expound texts from the Hindu scriptures, and a well-known musician of the town, called Govinda Malla [? Golam Abbas—*Ed.*] used to sing hymns composed by Rammohun Roy and his friends. After two years the Society was removed first to Rammohun's Simla house, now situated on the Amherst Street, and subsequently to other places, finally finding shelter at the house of Behari Lal Chaubay at Barabazar, where in 1819 there took place a celebrated debate between Rammohun Roy and Subrahmanya Sastri, a Madras Brahmin, on the subject of idol-worship, in the presence of the leading citizens of Calcutta, including Radhakanta Deb, a leader of the orthodox Hindus at that time. In this debate, by a rare display of erudition and forensic skill, Rammohun Roy is said to have vanquished his adversary. After 1819, the meetings of the *Atmiya Sabha* seem to have been discontinued.

A Polemical Combat.

The Campaign Begins

After having laid his battery well in Calcutta, Rammohun Roy began to publish in quick succession his celebrated tracts*. During the course of his researches into the domain of Sanskrit literature, Rammohun Roy was struck by the purity of the monotheistic doctrines of the *Upanishads*, and at once decided to publish some of them with his preface and translations. This he considered to be the most effective means of rousing his countrymen to a sense of the superiority of the monotheistic creed. Nor were his expectations disappointed. Their publication soon produced an intense and wide-spread agitation in Indian society, the like of which had seldom been witnessed in Bengal. Its effects extended to

Translates the Upanishads.

*For a complete list of these tracts and other works of the Raja, see Appendix E. The fact that many of these publications were issued in more than one language at the same time will give some idea to readers of Rammohun's literary and propagandist activities.—*Editor.*

the southernmost Presidency of Madras, and even reached the shores of England(16). All the engines of social persecution were set in motion against him. Many of his first followers deserted him, and he was left single-handed to fight his battle. The spirit in which he bore all this persecution will be best illustrated by the following extract from the preface to his English edition of the *Abridgment of the Vedanta* :

Social Persecution.

> "By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct, I, born a Brahmin, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches, even of some of my relations, whose prejudices are strong and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear, trusting that a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice, perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation: my motives are acceptable to that Being who beholds in secret and compensates openly."

"The Precepts of Jesus".

In the year 1820, Rammohun Roy startled his friends as well as his enemies by a departure from the old line of his publications. Up to that time he had chiefly confined himself to the old Hindu scriptures as his authority in appealing to his countrymen. But this year he published a novel book with a novel title,—*The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*. It was a collection of all the moral and spiritual precepts of Jesus, as recorded in the four Gospels, without the narratives of the miracles. This step, as I have said above, took his friends as well as his enemies by surprise. The prejudice against Christianity was very strong at the time. Rammohun Roy published *The Precepts of Jesus* in the face of this strong national prejudice, and what induced him to do so is best narrated by himself in the following lines :—

> "This simple code of religion and morality is so admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of one God, who has equally subjected all living creatures, without distinction of caste, rank or wealth, to change, disappointment, pain and death, and has equally admitted all to be partakers of the bountiful mercies which he has lavished over nature,—and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves, and to society, that I cannot but hope the best effects from its promulgation in the present form."

Controversies and Conversion

The Serampore Controversy.

The Precepts of Jesus called forth hostile criticism from an unexpected quarter. The Baptist missionaries of Serampore, Messrs. Carey and Marshman, vigorously assailed it in their weekly paper, *The Friend of India*, as a tampering with what they believed to be God's word, contemptuously stigmatizing the compiler as a "heathen." The moral and spiritual portions of the Gospels alone, divested of the miraculous portions, were in their estimation insufficient for the purpose of human

salvation. This gave rise to a controversy which finally turned upon the doctrine of Trinity, and Rammohun Roy successively published three *Appeals to the Christian public*, the last appearing in 1823, in which, by a rare display of polemical skill, as well as of profound Biblical learning, he tried to uphold his favourite doctrine of the unity of the Godhead(17). It is evident that during the course of his researches into the Christian Scriptures he had not confined himself to the English rendering of the Bible alone, but had acquired Hebrew and Greek in order to be able to refer to the originals.

The conversion of Mr. Adam.

In the meantime an important event had happened which attracted considerable public notice. Mr. William Adam, a young Baptist missionary, who had come out from England a few years earlier to join the Serampore Mission, openly professed, in 1821, his conversion to Unitarian doctrines through the influence of Rammohun Roy. This great change in the life of Mr. Adam took place in the following manner.—Along with Rammohun Roy and Mr. Yates, another Christian missionary, Mr. Adam had undertaken to translate the four Gospels into Bengali. As the translation went on, many discussions incidentally arose on several points of doctrine relating to the divinity of Jesus Christ. Rammohun Roy naturally defended the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, and brought his vast scholarship and logical acumen to bear upon the points of contention. As these discussions grew in point of intensity and concentration, Mr. Yates found his position in the translating committee uncomfortable, and early withdrew from it, leaving Rammohun Roy and Mr. Adam to carry on the work. The latter in his turn also found his position untenable, and ultimately gave up his faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, and made a public avowal of his conversion.

The conversion of Mr. Adam, who was henceforward called by his Christian critics "the second fallen Adam," naturally gave rise to great scandal among the orthodox Christian community of the country(18); and we can thus easily account for the great violence with which the Serampore missionaries attacked the Hindu reformer. From the columns of *The Friend of India* they descended into those of the *Samachar Durpan*, their Bengali organ, and indulged in very severe criticisms. Rammohun Roy, a valiant controversialist as he was, promptly replied to them. But the common courtesy of publishing his replies in the *Durpan* having been denied him, he was driven to the necessity of starting a magazine, called the *Brahmunical Magazine*, in which he vigorously assailed Trinitarian Christianity, and tried to prove that it was no better than Hindu polytheism. He further challenged Christian theologians to defend their Trinitarian and Calvinistic doctrines, and offered to print and circulate them at his own expense, of course with his rejoinders.

The Tytler Controversy.

This challenge drew into the field a new and unexpected combatant. There was at that time an erratic and eccentric Englishman in Calcutta, Dr. Tytler by name,* a Professor of the Hindu College and Superintendent of the Medical School. He took up the challenge and sent in a paper defending orthodox Christianity, which Rammohun Roy refused to publish unless countersigned by a professed and accredited theologian. This incensed Dr. Tytler highly, and he rushed to the pages of the *Bengal Hurkaru* with his defence of orthodox Christianity. Under the name of Ram Doss, Rammohun assumed the 'rôle' of a sincere Hindu, and wrote satirical letters in reply to Dr. Tytler, proposing to join him in exposing the hateful reformer, who was a common enemy to their common polytheistical faith. This incensed Dr. Tytler still more, and he gave vent to furious abuse, which Rammohun Roy took very coolly.†

UNITARIAN PROPAGANDA

Rammohun's support to Unitarian Cause.

New responsibilities now devolved upon Rammohun Roy. The connection of Mr. Adam with the Baptist Mission soon ceased, and Rammohun had to help him in organising a Unitarian Mission in Calcutta soon afterwards(19). By 1823 the feelings of the Serampore missionaries were so far embittered against Rammohun Roy that they refused to print his *Final Appeal to the Christian Public* in the Baptist Mission Press, where the first two *Appeals* had been printed. Consequently he had to go through the trouble and expense of starting a new printing establishment, called the "Unitarian Press,"‡ to enable him to publish his Appeal. From this time to August 8, 1828, when the Brahma Sabha was started, Rammohun Roy delighted to call himself a Hindu Unitarian, and his followers also imitated him in this. After the cessation of his connection with the Baptist Mission, Mr. Adam was provided with a hall in the buildings then occupied by the *Bengal Hurkaru* Office, where he used to hold Unitarian service every Sunday morning, which Rammohun Roy regularly attended with some members of his family and a number of disciples. The fact of his attending a Unitarian place of worship gave rise to public criticism, and his enemies, who were on the alert, used it as a weapon against

*Dr. R. Tytler, M.D.—Surgeon in the Hon. East India Company's Service, Author of 'An enquiry into the Origin and Principles of Budaic Sabism" and of "The Substance of a Discourse in Vindication of the Divinity of our Lord"; Member of the Asiatic Society. This is how Rammohun describes his adversary in the title page of the pamphlet containing the correspondence published in 1823.—*Editor.*

†Dr. Tytler was so incensed that in one of his letters in reply to Ram Doss, he described his opponent as the "wretched tool" of the damnable heresy of Unitarianism, and subscribed himself as "your inveterate and determined foe in the Lord."—*Editor.*

‡This Press was located at Dhurramtolla Street, and at it were printed many of Rammohun's works.—*Editor.*

him. In reply to these Rammohun Roy published in 1827, in the name of Chandra Sekhar Deb, one of his disciples, a tract called "The answer of a Hindu to the question : Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship instead of the numerously attended Established Churches?," in which, amongst other reasons, he advanced the following :—

Attendance at Unitarian Service.

> "Because ... Unitarians believe, profess, and inculcate the doctrine of the divine unity, a doctrine which I find firmly maintained both by the Christian Scriptures, and by our most ancient writings commonly called the Vedas."

Partly by his own contributions and partly by collections amongst his friends, Rammohun Roy raised a large sum to start and maintain the William Adam Establishment Fund and was himself steadfast in his adherence to the cause(20). But somehow or other the Unitarian Mission of Mr. Adam did not prosper. It failed to evoke on the one hand the sympathy of the European residents of the town and on the other hand the co-operation of many among the educated Indians. Mr. Adam's congregation slowly melted away, leaving him almost alone in the field of labour(21).

Before finally giving up the Unitarian propaganda Rammohun Roy tried to utilize Mr. Adam in other way. A course of lectures by Mr. Adam on the principles of liberal religion was organised, which failed to attract audiences and had to be finally given up. Renewed efforts were made to resuscitate the Unitarian Mission; and Mr. Adam went on holding his Unitarian services, but it again dwindled away by the time the Brahmo Samaj was established in August 1828(22).

Establishment of the Brahmo Samaj

There are two accounts current about the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj. One is, that seeing the failure of his Unitarian Mission, Mr. Adam himself suggested it as a substitute; the other is that one day while Rammohun Roy was returning home in his carriage from the service of Mr. Adam, his young disciples, Tarachand Chakravarti and Chandra Sekhar Deb, who were with him, complained of the necessity of attending a Unitarian place of worship, in the absence of one entirely suited to their views and principles. Rammohun Roy took this complaint to heart, and forthwith proceeded to call a meeting of his friends, at which it was decided to open a place for the unsectarian worship of the One True God. Many of his rich friends came forward to meet the expenses, and a house was rented(23) to accommodate the first theistic congregation. Here on the 6th of *Bhadra*, Sakabda Era 1750, corresponding to the 20th of August, 1828, the first Samaj was opened with Tarachand Chakravarti as its Secretary. Meetings of the Samaj were held every Saturday evening and the following order of service was observed :—Two Telugu Brahmins used to recite the Vedas

First Meeting of the Brahmo Samaj.

in a sideroom, screened from the view of the congregation, where non-Brahmins would not be admitted; Utsavananda Vidyabagish would read texts of the Upanishads, which were afterwards explained in Bengali by Pandit Ram Chandra Vidyabagish; thirdly, a sermon would be preached or read by Ram Chandra Vidyabagish, followed by the singing of Govinda Malla [? Golam Abbas—*Ed.*] Some of these sermons were written by Rammohun Roy(24).

Hindu orthodoxy roused.

The opening of the new theistic service, which the common people of the time called the "Brahma Sabha," or the "One-God Society," once more roused the enmity of the orthodox Hindu community of Calcutta. Their feelings of hostility were further aggravated by the rumour that now became current, and which soon proved to be too well-founded, that Lord William Bentinck contemplated the abolition of the custom of burning Hindu widows alive on the funeral pyres of their husbands. The decree of abolition of the *Suttee* was promulgated on 4th December, 1829. As they justly attributed the anti-*Suttee* agitation to Rammohun Roy, their resentment against him knew no bounds.

"Dharma Sabha" organized.

Since the inauguration of the "Brahma Sabha" on the 20th August, 1828, its services began to attract increasing numbers, and it secured new sympathisers. Within two years Rammohun Roy was enabled to raise sufficient funds for the purchase of a house on the Chitpur Road, to be a permanent place of worship for the members of the Society. The purchase was effected before January, 1830. In the middle of that month, only six days before the public consecration of Rammohun Roy's church, Rammohun Roy's adversaries called a meeting of all the leading men of Calcutta, and organized a rival association called "Dharma Sabha," with Bhowanicharan Banerji, a learned Brahmin, as its President, and Radhakanta Deb as its Secretary(25). Thus two influential factions arose in the Hindu society of Calcutta, the one led by Rammohun Roy, followed by a number of rich families, whose position and influence were unquestioned, and the other led by Radhakanta Deb, the recognized leader of orthodox Hinduism, followed by an imposing array of big names.

The two rival parties.

The "Dharma Sabha" began to use as its organ the *Samachar Chandrika*, which daily poured abuse on the reforming party, to which the latter retorted in the *Sambad Kaumudi* with equal energy. The common people became participators in this great conflict; for the tracts of the reformers, mostly written in the simplest Bengali, appealed to them as much as to the enlightened classes. In the bathing ghats at the riverside, in market places, in public squares, in the drawing-rooms of influential citizens, everywhere the rivalry between the two associations became the subject of talk. Lines of comical poetry, caricaturing the principles of the great reformer, were composed by the wags of the time and passed from mouth to

mouth, till the streets rang with laughter and ridicule. The agitation spread from Calcutta to the interior, and everywhere the question was discussed between the two parties.

Trust-deed of the Brahmo Samaj.

It was in the midst of these furious party contests that Rammohun Roy opened his church on the 11th of Magh, the 23rd of January 1830, and placed it in the hands of a few Trustees(26). But previous to the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj, there was another step taken by Rammohun Roy for the propagation of Hindu Theism which is worthy of notice. In the year 1825 he had established a college called the Vedanta College, for the teaching of the monotheistic doctrines of the Vedanta. Rammohun Roy founded this institution because, to use the language of one of his biographers, "he saw in the Vedanta, rightly handled and rightly explained, a means for leading his countrymen into pure and elevated theism."' This Vedanta College ceased to exist by the time the Brahmo Samaj was opened(27).

The period between 1820 and 1830 was also eventful from a literary point of view, as will be manifest from the list of his publications during that period.* It is indeed a matter for wonder how in the midst of so much active work and such furious contests Rammohun Roy could make time to write such masterly treatises on such a variety of subjects!

But we must not close this period of his career without briefly noticing his labours in other directions. Though occupying the foremost place in his endeavours to uplift his people, religious reformation did not absorb his whole attention. His exertions in other departments of reform were no less incessant and arduous. Very few of the Indian people now know how much of their present political and social advancement they owe to the impulse communicated by Rammohun Roy. With the far-seeing eye of genius, he beheld the dawning future of India and went forward with intrepid steps to open the door for the new light. The greatness of his work will be fully revealed in ages to come.

Social Reformer : The Cause of Hindu Women

Social slavery of women.

The women of Bengal at the time were living under the most abject form of social slavery. As many as 309 widows were burnt alive with their husbands within the jurisdiction of Calcutta in the year 1828, the year in which the Brahma Sabha was established. It was but natural that the misery and degradation of womanhood should have strongly appealed to the sympathetic heart of Rammohun Roy. His earnest pleadings on their behalf form an important feature of his writings. The women of India have found no greater defender of their rights than the founder of the Brahmo Samaj. He defended the legal rights of

*See Appendix E.

women, advocated their right to education and enlightenment, and, above all, devoted all the energies of his noble soul to save them from a cruel death.

The practice of "Suttee".

The custom of burning widows with their husbands first roused his horror before he was much known. While he was at Rangpur in 1811, his brother Jugmohun died, when one of his widowed wives was burnt alive with him. Rammohun held this lady in high esteem, and the news of her cruel death gave such a shock to his feelings that [tradition has it] he took a secret vow never to rest till this inhuman custom was abolished, and he was faithful to his vow throughout his life. Soon after his settlement in Calcutta along with his efforts for religious reform, he kept up a parallel agitation for the abolition of the custom of *Suttee* and did not stop till it was abolished by law.

Early attempts at regulation.

On reference to the history of the abolition of *Suttee* we find that the custom attracted the attention of the English rulers as early as January, 1789, but no practical measures came out of it till the year 1813, when Lord Moira, the then Governor-General, issued a number of Regulations partially restricting the custom. These regulations were further strengthened by important additions in 1815 and were finally issued in a collected form in 1817. From the statistics that the Government collected in 1818 it was found that within the short period of three years, between 1815 and 1818, no less than 2,365 widows had been burnt alive in different parts of the country, 1,528 of whom belonged to Calcutta and its surrounding districts alone. The publication of these Regulations seems to have created some agitation in orthodox Hindu society, and a petition was sent up to the Government praying for their repeal. This petition evoked a counter-petition from Rammohun Roy and his friends, which was submitted in August 1818, and in which we find the following description of the cruel practice of *Suttee* :

Rammohun's Petition.

> "Your petitioners are fully aware from their own knowledge, and from the authority of credible eye-witnesses, that cases have frequently occurred where women have been induced by the persuasions of their next heirs, interested in their destruction, to burn themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands ; that others, who were induced by fear to retract a resolution rashly expressed in the first moments of grief, of burning with their deceased husbands, have been forced upon the pile and there bound down with ropes and pressed with green bamboos until consumed with the flames ; that some, after flying from the flame, have been carried back by their relations and burnt to death. All these instances, your petitioners humbly submit, are murders according to every *Shastra,* as well as to the common sense of all nations."

Defence of Hindu womanhood.

The agitation called forth Rammohun Roy's tracts on *Suttee*, one of which was concluded with the following passionate appeal on behalf of the fair sex :—

> "Women are in general inferior to men in bodily strength and energy ; consequently, the male part of the community, taking advantage of their corporeal weakness, have denied to them those excellent merits that they are entitled to by nature, and afterwards they are apt to say that women are naturally incapable

of acquiring those merits. But if we give the subject consideration, we may easily ascertain whether or not your accusation against them is consistent with justice. *As to their inferiority in point of* understanding, when did you ever afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting their natural capacity? How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice, pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife of the prince of Karnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Shastras. Moreover, in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* of the *Yajur Veda* it is clearly stated that Yajnavalkya imparted divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyi, who was able to follow and completely attain it.

Secondly. You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised; for we constantly perceive, in a country where the name of death makes the male shudder, that the female, from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband; and yet you accuse those women of deficiency in point of resolution.

Thirdly. With regard to their trustworthiness, let us look minutely into the conduct of both sexes, and we may be equally enabled to ascertain which of them is the most frequently guilty of betraying friends. If we enumerate such women in each village or town as have been deceived by men, and such men as have been betrayed by women, I presume that the number of the deceived women would be found ten times greater than that of the betrayed men. Men are, in general, able to read and write, and manage public affairs, by which means they easily promulgate such faults as women occasionally commit, but never consider as criminal the misconduct of men towards women. One fault they have, it must be acknowledged, which is, by considering others equally void of duplicity as themselves, to give their confidence too readily, from which they suffer much misery, even so far that some of them are misled to suffer themselves to be burnt to death.

In the *fourth* place, with respect to their subjection to the passions, this may be judged of by the custom of marriage as to the respective sexes; for one man may marry two or three, sometimes even ten wives and upwards; while a woman who marries but one husband, desires at his death to follow him, forsaking all worldly enjoyments, or to remain leading the austere life of an ascetic...."

Anti-"Suttee" vigilance.

Rammohun Roy, however, did not confine himself to mere literary controversy on the subject. He forthwith organized his friends into something like a Vigilange Committee, whose members never failed to be present whenever there was a case of *Suttee* in or near Calcutta, to see that no force was employed, and that the other requirements of the law, as laid down in the regulations, were fulfilled(28). Thus the fight was carried on in an acute and concentrated form till Lord William Bentinck appeared on the scene, and earnestly took up the question for its final decision in December 1829, as already noticed.

The anti-"Suttee" Decree.

The service that Rammohun Roy rendered to the cause of the suppression of *Suttee* lay in strengthening the hands of the Government, by proving from ancient Hindu Scriptures that the self-immolation of a widow is nowhere enjoined as a duty;

and that a life of piety and self-abnegation was considered more virtuous, points on which the Governor-General based the preamble of the anti-*Suttee* decree.

Petitions and counter-petitions.

But his labours in that connection did not terminate with the passing of Lord William Bentinck's decree. His adversaries roused themselves up once more, and, on the 14th January, 1830, presented to Lord William Bentinck a petition signed by 800 inhabitants of Calcutta and backed by the opinions of 120 Pandits in which they tried to show that the position taken up by the Governor-General was an untenable one. Another petition with a similar import, signed by 340 persons from the mofussil, was also submitted at the same time. Rammohun Roy was on the alert. Two days after, *i.e.*, on the 16th January, a congratulatory petition signed by 300 native inhabitants of Calcutta and another signed by 800 Christians, thanking the Governor-General for his humane measure, were sent in(29). The very next day, *i.e.*, the 17th of January, the opponents of the measure held a public meeting and resolved to appeal to the authorities in England. At this meeting they also established the Dharma Sabha, already referred to, with an initial fund of Rs. 11,260 subscribed on the spot, for counteracting the influence of Rammohun Roy's movement.

Rammohun Roy was not to be dismayed by the opposition thus set up. He soon published a tract called "The Abstract of the Arguments regarding the Burning of Widows considered as a religious Rite," in which he tried to meet the arguments of the 120 pandits. And one of the reasons which influenced him to undertake a voyage to England was to be able to thwart the efforts of his adversaries for the repeal of Lord William Bentinck's abolition-decree. Thus to the last, he fought for his Hindu countrywomen.

Fight to the last.

It is worthy of mention that Rammohun Roy published in 1832 a tract on "The Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance," in which he decried polygamy and showed the abject misery in which widows live, indirectly proving thereby that their self-immolation in many cases was an escape from greater misery. On the subject of polygamy his contention was that every man desirous of taking a second wife during the life-time of the first should be obliged by law to prove before a Court of Justice, or some other suitable legal authority, that one of the causes for polygamy, authorised by the Hindu Shastras, existed in his case(30).

Views on Polygamy.

Pioneer and Promoter of Education

Rammohun Roy's contribution to the cause of English education was no less remarkable. He was first trained as a Persian scholar, to which he subsequently added an intimate knowledge of Sanskrit. Very few men of his time could claim a more intimate acquaintance with the ancient learning of his

Advocate of English education.

people than he; yet by his genius and foresight he could see that the future regeneration of his country lay in a due cultivation of the Western sciences. Accordingly, from the very first, be became a strong advocate of English education. In 1816, in consultation with Mr. David Hare, his friend and fellow-worker, he formed the plan of opening an educational institution for the instruction of the youth of his country in the science and literature of Europe.

Promoter of the Hindu College.

Sir Hyde East, the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, earnestly took up the proposal, and a meeting of the leading members of the Hindu community was convened at the house of the Chief Justice. The connection of Rammohun Roy with the scheme was not discovered in the beginning, but when it came to be generally known that he was one of the promoters of the scheme and was likely to be associated with the Committee, his Hindu adversaries held back urgently demanding the removal of his name from the list(31). Rammohun Roy, appraised by David Hare of the difficulty, at once wrote to Sir Hyde East resigning his connection with the Committee, thus removing an obstacle from the way of the immediate working out of the scheme, [which subsequently led to the foundation of the Hindu College.] He also started and maintained with his own funds, an English School in another part of the town, where Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, the second great leader of the Brahmo movement, received his first education (32).

Letter to Lord Amherst.

In 1823, the first Council of Education was appointed, and the lakh of rupees that had been set apart from 1813 for the encouragement of learning among the 'native races' was placed in the hands of the Council for the furtherance of education. But the English gentlemen who formed that Council were, many of them, oriental scholars, and several of them held very high posts under Government. The policy of Lord Amherst, the Governor-General of that time, took its colouring from these orientalists, and it was decided to open a college in Calcutta for the teaching of the Sanskrit language. Rammohun Roy took this decision as a move in the wrong direction, and at once addressed a letter of protest to the Governor-General, from which the following extracts are made :—

Emphasis on Scientific Education.

> "If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian Philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the Schoolmen, which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences, which may be accomplished with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning, educated in Europe, and providing a college furnished with necessary books, implements and other apparatus."

When we reflect that these lines were penned by a native of Bengal at a time when the current ideas of education were low and old-fashioned, our wonder knows no bounds, and we feel them to be characteristic of the great man whom Providence had designed to be the maker of New India(33A).

Rammohun Roy's help towards the promotion of the cause of English education was ever ready. Shortly before his departure for England in 1830, when the Rev. Alexander Duff, the Scotch Missionary, arrived [in Calcutta] and wanted to open an English School, Rammohun secured the first house for him and also the first batch of half-a-dozen students(33B).

His exertions for the introduction of English education were not, however, crowned with success till two years after his death, when, in March 1835, Lord William Bentinck, backed by Lord Macaulay, issued his famous Education Decree, which formally inaugurated the policy of English education, which has borne such signal fruits.

Author and Journalist

Impetus to Bengali Literature.

His exertions in another direction were equally vigorous. He found that there was no literature of the people. All that existed of that kind were a few poetical works of the preceding two or three centuries. There were no prose works, at least not any popularly known, and people knew not how to read or write prose. The Serampore Missionaries and the Fort William College Pandits had been trying for some years past to remove that want, but the glory of having firmly laid the foundations of modern Bengali prose literature belongs to Rammohun Roy. For the first time in the history of the country, Rammohun Roy departed from the old method of carrying on learned discussions in a learned language, and he wrote his tracts in the common language of the people. Thus an impetus was given to national literature, which has produced in later times such marvellous results. He wrote a grammar and a geography* in the Bengali language, at the instance of the School Book Society, for the education of the common people.

Activities as a Journalist.

Rammohun Roy always made it a point to communicate useful knowledge to his countrymen through the columns of his Bengali newspaper, the *Sambad Kaumudi*(34), started in 1821, and his Persian journal, the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* (35), started in 1822. The examples of the *Kaumudi* and the *Mirat* were soon followed by his adversaries in starting the *Samachar Chandrika*(36) and the *Jam-i-Jahan-Numa*(37), to carry on the agitation against the abolition of *Suttee* and other controversies with the reforming party. But the good days for native journalism inaugurated by Lord Hastings, the Governor-General,

*Though reference is made to this Geography by Rajnarain Bose in his edition of the Bengali works of Raja Rammohun Roy, it is, we are told by the same authority, nowhere available.—*Editor.*

by relaxing the severe press restrictions of former times, were soon clouded by the temporary accession to the post of Governor-General in 1823 of Mr. John Adam, a member of the Civil Service. Under the influence of his bureaucratic advisers, Mr. Adam took stringent measures for the suppression of the liberty of the press(38). For the fault of criticising an administrative measure of the Government, Mr. James Silk Buckingham, the editor of the *Calcutta Journal*, was deported from India at two months' notice(39); and Mr. Sandford Arnot, his assistant, was arrested in his office for a similar offence and was put on board an England-going vessel. And to put a finish to such arbitrary proceedings, a Press Ordinance was passed by the Governor-General's Council, which imposed the severest restriction upon the entire Press, both Anglo-Indian and Indian, and made it obligatory on the part of intending proprietors and publishers of newspapers or other periodicals to obtain a license from the Governor-General.

This Ordinance was passed without notice on the 14th of March, 1823, and was pushed through the Supreme Court, according to the law then existing, after only twenty days' publication in that Court. Rammohun Roy tried to rouse his countrymen to a sense of the seriousness of the Government measures, got up a memorial for the repeal of the Ordinance, engaged the services of two lawyers and fought an earnest battle in the Supreme Court before that Ordinance could receive the sanction of that Court, and thereby assume the authority of a duly enacted law. He was defeated in his object, but did not stop there, and got up a public petition to the King of England, in which he tried to prove, by a rare display of sound judgment and logical reasoning, that, in a country situated like India, the liberty of the Press was an essential condition for good government. Unfortunately his appeal to the King of England also was fruitless, though it must be admitted that the steps he took on this occasion and the discussions he started paved the way for the liberal measure of Sir Charles Metcalfe which liberated the Indian Press in 1835.†

Fight for a Free Press.

But it was not only political or polemical discussions for which Rammohun Roy used his papers. He looked upon them as means of popular education, and through them he always tried to convey useful knowledge to his countrymen; and it was for this reason that he fought so hard to save his papers from the threatened extinction. The *Mirat* had to be given up after a short career in consequence of the new Ordinance, but the *Kaumudi* was kept up till some years after the death of its founder.

†For an excellent account of Rammohun's services to the cause of the Freedom of the Press in India, as also his activities as a journalist, readers are referred to three illuminating articles on "Rammohun Roy as a Journalist" by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Modern Review* for the months of April, May and August, 1931.—*Editor.*

It should also be mentioned in passing that there were other spheres of his activity. He wrote tracts for the vindication of the legal rights of the people, and got up an agitation for the protection of their political interests. So great was his love of liberty that he followed with intense interest the course of the French Revolution, and is said to have given a public dinner in the Town Hall of Calcutta as a mark of his joy at the establishment of constitutional government in Spain.*

Love of Liberty.

Visit to Europe

Rammohun Roy closed his remarkable career of almost superhuman activity with a visit to Europe, which also was pregnant with important results. After the opening of the Brahmo Samaj, he proceeded to make provision for the management of its affairs, published his second English tract on *Suttee*, and began to make preparations for his voyage to Europe. The immediate object of his visit to that country was to plead before the authorities of the East India Company the case of the ex-Emperor of Delhi, with which he was entrusted as his ambassador(40). But his real object was two-fold : first, to baffle the efforts of his adversaries to get Bentinck's *Suttee*-enactment repealed; and, secondly, to be present in England during the the East India Company's Charter(41).

Objects of his visit.

The project of visiting Europe was an old one in the mind of Rammohun Roy, at least as old as his settlement in Calcutta in 1815; for we find it mentioned in a letter of Rev. Mr. Yates of the Baptist Mission in Calcutta, written in 1815, that Rammohun Roy had expressed to him in that year his intention of visiting England to study at one of the Universities. He carried out his project of a European visit after so many years. He started for Europe on the 15th November, 1830, and arrived at Liverpool on the 8th of April, 1831, voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, as was the custom with sailing vessels in those days.

After his arrival in England(42) he met, amongst others, William Roscoe(43), the historian of the Medicis, and Jeremy Bentham, the Utilitarian philosopher(44). During his stay in London he was publicly received at the Annual Meeting of the Unitarians of England(45); he was honoured with a public dinner by the East India Company(46); and, as part of his public activities, he submitted three papers on the Revenue System

Reception and activities in England

*Some further idea of his love of liberty may be formed from the fact that on his way to England, when his boat touched the Cape of Good Hope, though seriously injured and made lame for several months by an accident, he insisted upon being carried to a French vessel where he saw the flag of liberty flying, so that he might be able to do homage to it. The sight of the glorious tri-colour kindled his enthusiasm and made him for the time being insensible to pain. The French received him warmly and he was conducted over the vessel beneath the revolutionary flag. When returning he shouted, unmindful of his pain, "Glory, glory, glory to France!"

of India, the Judicial System of India, and the Material Condition of India, before a Committee of the House of Commons. At the Coronation of William IV, he was honoured with a place amongst Foreign Ambassadors, and was personally presented to the King(47).

In 1832 when the Reform Bill came up for discussion, he threw himself entirely into the spirit of that Bill, and went so far as to make a public declaration that, in case the objects of that Bill were defeated, he would give up his residence in the dominions of England, and would settle down in America(48). During this year also he republished some of his Indian tracts for the information of his English friends, and visited France towards the end of the year, where he had the honour of dining with the French King more than once (49). In the beginning of 1833 he returned to England, was present at the first sitting of the reformed Parliament, and had the satisfaction of seeing the appeal of his adversaries against the abolition of the *Suttee* rejected(50). It was in this year also that the East India Company's charter was renewed, conferring solid privileges on the Indian people, a result towards which the Raja had earnestly worked(51).

Visit to France.

Last Days

In the beginning of September of that year he visited Bristol at the urgent invitation of his Unitarian friends, with a view to give his fatigued constitution a much-needed rest previous to his return to his native land. But alas! Providence had ruled otherwise. Within a few days of his arrival he was attacked with a fatal malady(52) which terminated his noble career on the 27th of September. Miss Hare, the niece [? sister—*Ed.*] of his friend Mr. David Hare of Calcutta, who attended during his last moments, says that he finally closed his lips with the word, *AUM*, the well-known Vedic syllable meaning the Supreme Being(53). His remains were followed to the grave by his Indian attendants and a few Unitarian friends(54). His mortal remains now rest in the Arno's Vale Cemetery at Bristol, over which his friend and disciple, Dwarkanath Tagore, during his visit to England, built a beautiful mausoleum(55).

Illness and Death.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES*

By

THE EDITOR

(1) Rammohun's Birth-year:

Some uncertainty exists as to the actual year of Rammohun Roy's birth. The year most frequently used is that given on his tomb at Arno's Vale Cemetery at Bristol, erected by his friend Dwarkanath Tagore, *viz.*, 1774; but Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, in her *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy* (First Edition, London, 1900; Indian Edition by Dr. Hem Chandra Sarkar, Calcutta, 1913), gives the year as 1772 on the following authorities :—"The Rev. C. H. A. Dall, in a letter to the *Sunday Mirror* of January 18, 1880, reported that Rammohun's younger son, Rama Prasad Roy, said in 1858, before a circle of friends and clients in Calcutta,—'My father was born at Radhanagore, in the month of May, 1772; or, according to the Bengali Era, in the month of *Jaistha*, 1179.' Mr. Dall asked for the day of birth; but Rama Prasad was unable to give this. The fact has since, however, been supplied by another lineal descendant of Rammohun, Babu Lalit Mohun Chatterji, who has stated that Rammohun was born in the year 1772 on the 22nd day of May."

(2) Rammohun's Birthplace:

Radhanagore or Raghunathpur, the birthplace of Rammohun, is a village situated in the Arambagh Sub-division of the District of Hooghly, immediately north of a big village named Khanakul-Krishnanagore on the right bank of the river Kana-Darakeshawar. Radhanagore during Rammohun's time was within the district of Burdwan.

(3) Rammohun's Grandfather and Father:

Rammohun Roy describes his grandfather, Braja Benode Roy, as having been, "at various times, chief of different districts during the administration of His Highness the Nawab Mohabut Jung" of Murshidabad, and his father, Ram Kanto Roy, as "a man of property," who "rented a farm from Government, the revenue of which was lakhs of rupees." [See Rammohun's Petition to Lord Minto, Governor-General, dated Bhagalpur, 12th April, 1809 : *The Modern Review*, June, 1929, pp. 682-685]. Besides holding landed property himself, Ramkanta, towards the latter part of his life, managed and controlled the Zemindary of Rani Bishan Kumari, mother of Tejchand of Burdwan. Shortly before his death, however, he was heavily involved in debt with the Burdwan

**These "Notes" have been written with a view to supplementing the Story of Rammohun Roy's life by Pandit Sivanath Sastri in the preceding pages.*—Editor.

Raj under which he held in farm a large portion of a Zemindary. [For an interesting account of some of the law-suits in which the Roy family had been involved, readers are referred to an article in the *Calcutta Review* for August 1931, entitled "A Chapter in the Personal History of Raja Rammohun Roy" (mainly based on State Records), from the pen of Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji.]

(4) Rammohun's Marriages:

Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, in her *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy,* says: "While yet a mere child, his father married him three times. The first bride died at 'a very early age' (not specified), and after her death, as we learn from William Adam's letters, his father, when he was only about nine years of age, married him within an interval of less than a twelve-month to two different wives."

Rammohun's second wife died in 1824, and his third wife, who survived him, died in 1858.

(5) Education at Patna: Mahomedan influences.

At Patna, Miss Collet writes, Rammohun's masters set him to study Arabic translations from Euclid and Aristotle, and there also he made acquaintance with the Koran. "All these influences", she adds, "especially the last, tended inevitably towards the disintegration of his earliest religious beliefs, which had been very fervent." In a contemporary French pamphlet (1817?) giving an account of Rammohun's activities, the Abbe Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, wrote that Rammohun "prepared himself for his polemical career from the logic of the Arabians, which he regards as superior to every other." Rammohun's study of the Koran also appears to have had a great influence upon him. William Adam is quoted by Miss Collet to say "that Rammohun seemed always pleased to have an opportunity of defending the character of Mahomet" of whom, Miss Collet adds, "he began to write a biography which was unhappily never finished."

That in private life the Raja adopted a good deal of Mahomedan habits is recorded by more than one of his contemporaries. He adopted the costume of a Mussalman grandee—a closely twisted shawl turban, *chupkan, choga* and *pyjama.* Even at home he was always dressed in the Mahomedan fashion, never sitting bareheaded but using a skull-cap. His evening meal, we are told, was in the English fashion but the dishes were all Mahomedan—*pillau, copta, korma,* etc. At night, before retiring, he would eat his favourite Mahomedan sweet—*Harira.*

(6) Differences with father: Visit to Tibet:

Rammohun Roy says in his *Autobiographical Sketch,* (Appendix B):—"When about the age of sixteen, I composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of the idolatrous system of Hindus. This, together with my known sentiments of the subject having produced a coolness between me and my immediate kindred, I proceeded on my travels and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond the bounds of Hindusthan".

Miss Sophia Dobson Collet quotes in her *Life and Letters of Rammohun Roy* the following passage from Dr. Lant Carpenter's *Review of the Labours, Opinions and Character of Rammohun Roy* (1833) :— "Without disputing the authority of his father, he often sought from him information as to the reasons of his faith; he obtained no satisfaction; and he at last determined, at the early age of 15, to leave the paternal home and sojourn for a time in the Thibet, that he might see another form of religious faith." This statement, Dr. Carpenter adds, *he heard from the Raja himself* in London. In his Arabic introduction to *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* (1804 ?), it is interesting to note, Rammohun mentions that he had travelled in the remotest parts of the world, in plains as well as in mountainous regions.

In a memoir of Rammohun Roy by Rev. K. S. Macdonald, published in Calcutta in 1879, it is stated :—"While at Patna he must have heard *a good deal of Buddhism, if not also of the religious practices of the* aboriginal tribes inhabiting the hills of Central and Southern India and the slopes of the Himalayas. By going to Thibet he would come into closer contact with Buddhism, and on his way thither might also learn something of the devil-worship of the aborigines. In Thibet he spent two or three years disputing daily with the worshippers of the living Lama, who frequently passed from quiet ratiocination to angry abuse of the stranger. He, however, met with much kindness, as many a stranger has before and since in kindred circumstances, from the female sex, a kindness, which, forty years after, he said had made him always feel respect and gratitude towards the gentle sex."

(7) Stay at Benares:

"All accounts agree," writes Miss Collet, "that he did not remain long under the family roof, the incompatibility being too great. Our only actual knowledge as to his next step is derived from his own evidence in the Burdwan law suit [instituted by Raja *Tejchand* against Rammohun and his nephew Govinda Prasad Roy in June, 1823, for the recovery of a debt incurred by their father and grandfather respectively] in which he states that '. . . . he had, during his lifetime, separated from him (deceased father) and the rest of his family, in consequence of his altered habits of life and change of opinions, which did not permit their living together.' "

It is not very clear, however, how long Rammohun lived at Benares. William Adam, the Unitarian friend and colleague of Rammohun, wrote in 1826 (quoted by Miss Collet) that Rammohun, "was obliged to reside for ten to twelve years in Benares." This brings the date of his stay there to about 1802. On the other hand Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji records in a Chronology of Rammohun's early life (from 1774 to 1815), which he has compiled mainly from State Records and has very kindly placed at our disposal, that Rammohun was looking after the Zemindary affairs of his father from 1796 to 1799. In support of this statement he mentions the three Bengali letters (dated 22nd March 1796, 21st February, 1798 and 28th February 1799), printed in the appendix to Nagendra Nath Chatterjee's Bengali Biography of the Raja,

(3rd edition, pp. 571-73). All these letters refer to the Bhursotti and other *mahals* held in farm by Rammohun's father in Burdwan district. In the mixed Persian and Bengali records of the Bengal Government Mr. Banerji has also discovered a *Kistbandi* Bond for Rs. 17,989-6-0 executed by Rammohun Roy of Nangoodpada (Langoolpara [?], near Radhanagore), dated 1206 B.S. (1799 ?) relating to Rameshwarpur and Govindapur. Mr. Banerji has also found a list of *Patni taluks* held at this time (1796-99) by Rammohun Roy in his own name under the Burdwan Raj, the total *jamas* of which ran up to several thousands of rupees. All these facts, besides proving that Rammohun had his own independent sources of income before the death of his father (1803), go to show that his stay at Benares could not have been in any case a long one, as is generally supposed.

(8) Father and Son:

Miss Collet in her *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy* quotes William Adam as follows :—"Rammohun Roy in conversation mentioned to me with much feeling that he had stood by the death-bed of his father, who with his expiring breath continued to invoke his God—'Ram! Ram!' with a strength of faith and a fervour of pious devotion which it was impossible not to respect although the son had then ceased to cherish any religious veneration for the family deity."

(9) Service under the East India Company:

Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in his Chronology of Rammohun's early life, previously referred to, maintains that during the period of 1800-1802, Rammohun was "in some way connected" with the Sadar Dewani Adalat (Supreme Court : established in 1773) and the College of Fort William (founded in 1800) in Calcutta. Mr. Banerji has, by his researches, definitely established that Rammohun first took service under the East India Company on the 7th March, 1803, in the capacity of Dewan (Revenue Officer) to Mr. Thomas Woodforde, Acting Collector of Dacca Jelalpur, the district now known as Faridpur. On Mr. Woodforde taking leave on grounds of ill health, Rammohun too resigned the office held by him on the 14th May, 1803. Shortly after this Rammohun returned to Radhanagore to find his father Ramkanta Roy in death-bed. Mr. Woodforde, after having regained his health and taken up his new appointment as Registrar of the Murshidabad Court of Appeal and Circuit sometime after February 1804, Rammohun joined him there.

(10) Rammohun and Mr. Digby:

Rammohun first made the acquaintance of Mr. John Digby in 1805 at Ramgarh (near Ranchi) where the latter was Registrar of the Zila Court and Assistant to the Magistrate. When Mr. Digby was appointed Acting Magistrate at Ramgarh, Rammohun acted under him in the capacity of Sheristadar of the local Fauzdari Court—from August to October, 1806. From January to June, 1808, Rammohun held the post of *private* Munshi to Mr. Digby while the latter was in charge of the Jessore Collectorate. On the 1st January, 1809, Rammohun moved to Bhagalpur

where Mr. Digby was posted as Registrar of the Zila Court. Here also Rammohun Roy was in the *private* employ of Mr. Digby. He next followed Mr. Digby to Rangpur where the latter was appointed substantive Collector. The Dewanship of the Collector's office falling vacant in December, 1809, Mr. Digby filled the post by appointing Rammohun ("a man of very respectable family and excellent education, fully competent to discharge the duties of such an office"), pending confirmation by the Board of Revenue. The Board having declined, after much correspondence between them and Mr. Digby, to approve Rammohun's appointment as Dewan, he held the office for a period of about 5 months only—from December, 1809 to April, 1810. [The correspondence between the Board and Mr. Digby was, for the first time, reproduced *in extenso* in the Presidential Address of Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari at the eleventh session of the North-Bengal Bengalee Literary Conference held at Rangpur in 1928.] Rammohun, however, did not leave Rangpur, because, in the month of August in the same year (1810), Mr. Digby appointed him as Guardian of the minor proprietors of the estate of the late Rajkishore Chowdhury of Udashi Pargana, Rangpur. This post he held till March, 1815, when the minors having attained their age of majority, Rammohun came and took up his residence in Calcutta.

For a fuller account of the career of Rammohun Roy in the service of the East India Company reference may be made to Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji's illuminating article on the subject in the *Modern Review* for May, 1930.

(11) Rammohun Roy at Rangpur:

Mr. Jyotirmoy Das-Gupta in an article entitled "Raja Rammohun Roy at Rangpur" in the *Modern Review* (September, 1928), says: "At Rangpur he built a house near Mahiganje at Tamphat about 4 miles off from the Court; . . . . At Rangpur Rammohun Roy spent money for public good also. A tradition is still current that the big tank near the local Court was dug at his cost. It is a well-known fact that he was a great Persian scholar, and at Rangpur he became known as a great Moulvi."

Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, in her *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy,* writes: "It was in Rangpur that Rammohun first began to assemble his friends together for evening discussions on religious subjects, especially on the untenableness and absurdities of idolatry. Rangpur was then a place of considerable resort, and among its inhabitants were a good many merchants from Marwar in Rajputana, Jainas by faith. Some of these Marwaris used to attend Rammohun's meetings. Mr. Leonard [in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj*] says that he had to learn on their account the *Kalpa Sutra* and other books appertaining to the Jaina Religion, and adds—'He met, however, with much opposition from a counter party headed by Gaurikanta Bhattacharjya, a learned Persian and Sanskrit Scholar.'" "Gaurikanta," says Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, writing in the *Modern Review* (May, 1930), "challenged Rammohun in the *Jnananjana,* a Bengali book

published in 1743 (Saka, 1821). On page 4 of his book he says that Rammohun had been disseminating his religious views in a Bengali edition of the Vedanta and in another treatise composed in mixed Persian and Arabic." A copy of the second edition of *Jnananjana,* as revised by Madhusudan Tarkalankar and published from Calcutta in 1245 B. S. (1838), Mr. Banerji has found in the rich library of Raja Radhakanta Deb Bahadur of Sobha Bazar, Calcutta.

It only remains to be added that Gaurikanta Bhattacharyya was Dewan of the Judge's Court at Rangpur.

(12) Rammohun's Knowledge of English:

Miss Collet in her biography of Rammohun says, that he only began to learn English at the age of 22 (1796). In his introduction to the English edition of Rammohun Roy's translation of the *Kena Upanishad* and *Abridgment of the Vedant* (London, 1817), Mr. John Digby says that when he first became acquainted with Rammohun (1805), he "could merely speak it well enough to be understood upon the most common topics of discourse, but could not write it with any degree of correctness." Mr. Digby adds, that during the five years he was Collector in the East India Company's Civil Service, Rammohun, "by perusing all my public correspondence with diligence and attention as well as by corresponding and conversing with European gentlemen, acquired so correct a knowledge of the English language as to be enabled to write and speak it with considerable accuracy. He was also in the constant habit of reading the English newspapers, of which the Continental politics chiefly interested him."

In a letter addressed to the Editor of *The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature,* London, Mr. James Silk Buckingham, Editor of the *Calcutta Journal,* wrote on August 4, 1823 :—"In June, 1818, the month of my first arrival in Calcutta, I was introduced to Rammohun Roy, at the house of Mr. Eneas Mackintosh (now in London) and was surprised at the unparalleled accuracy of his language, never having before heard any foreigner of Asiatic birth speak so well, and esteeming his fine choice of words as worthy the imitation even of Englishmen. My first hour's conversation with him was in Arabic, that being the Oriental language most familiar to me, and not knowing at first that he spoke English with ease and fluency; but accident changing our discourse to English, I was delighted and surprised at his perfection in this tongue. . . . . In English, he is competent to converse freely on the most abstruse subjects and to argue more closely and coherently than most men that I know."

In a letter to Rammohun, Jeremy Bentham, the celebrated English Philosopher, wrote : "Your works are made known to me by a book, in which I read a style, which, but for the name of a Hindu, I should certainly have ascribed to the pen of a superiorly educated and instructed Englishman." In the same letter, while praising the great work of James Mill on the History of India, he observed : "though as to style I wish I could with truth and sincerity pronounce it equal to yours."

(13) Rammohun's Paternal Property: Question of Inheritance: Litigation:

The question whether Rammohun ever came into possession of any portion of his father's property is still enveloped in obscurity. In the absence of sufficient materials, the subject has not received at the hands of his biographers the treatment it calls for. Rammohun's own statement on this point is to be found in his defence in the suit brought against him and his nephew Govindaprasad by Raja Tejchand of Burdwan in the Provincial Court of Calcutta on the 16th of June, 1823. [Quoted by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in his article on "A Chapter in the Personal History of Raja Rammohun Roy" in the *Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, pp. 156—179]. This suit was for the realization of Rupees fifteen thousand and odd, being principal and interest on an instalment bond executed by Rammohun's father Ram Kanto Roy for arrears of land-revenue. In his defence Rammohun stated *inter alia* (1) that he had separated from his father during the latter's life-time; (2) that by his own exertion he had acquired property separate from that of his father; (3) that he had not inherited any portion of his father's property and so was not responsible for his father's debts; and (4) that the suit was barred by limitation. The Provincial Court of Calcutta accepted the plea of limitation and dismissed the suit whereupon the Raja of Burdwan preferred an appeal to the Sadar Diwani Adalat which, by its judgment, dated the 10th of November, 1831, confirmed the decision of the trial Court.

It is thus seen that Rammohun himself says that he had not inherited any portion of his father's property, and so we must suppose that when Ram Kanto Roy died in 1803, he was succeeded by Rammohun's elder brother Jugmohan. This Jugmohan died in 1811, and on his death his property should, in ordinary circumstances, have passed to his son and heir Govindaprasad, who, in that case, would have been in possession of the estate left by Ram Kanto. Most probably this is what actually happened. But, a few years after Jugmohan's death, we find there is a litigation between Rammohun and his nephew Govindaprasad, for in a letter written by him to his uncle, dated the 14th of *Kartic*, 1228 B. S., corresponding to the 29th of October, 1819, he acknowledges that, at the instigation of other people, he had lodged a false suit against his uncle in the Equity Division of the Supreme Court claiming from him an account of the property. [Rammohun Roy's Bengalee Biography by Nagendra Nath Chatterjee—3rd ed., p. 243]. The property which he speaks of seems to be the property left by his father Jugmohan, for, on the 27th of January, 1818, we find, in the instructions issued by the Board of Revenue to the Collector of Midnapur, the fact mentioned that the "property left by Jugmohan is at present contested in the Courts of Justice." [Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, p. 158.]

We may reasonably infer from the facts given above that sometime after Jugmohan's death Rammohun came to be in possession of the property left by him, though in what capacity it is impossible for us to determine with the scanty materials before us, and, that some time before

1818, Govindaprasad brought a suit for accounts concerning this property against Rammohun in the Equity Division of the Supreme Court. There was a contest, as appears from the abovementioned letter of Govindaprasad to Rammohun, and it is reasonable to assume that this suit and no other is indicated by the instructions of the Board of Revenue already referred to. Another supposition might be made, and this is what has been advanced by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji (*Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, p. 157),—that Govindaprasad was in possession of the property and that it was Rammohun who started the litigation. There is no material before us to countenance such a hypothesis, which, further, seems to be irreconcilable with the aforesaid suit for accounts of the property against Rammohun, for how could Rammohun be sued for accounts unless he was in possession of the property? Mr. Digby, in a letter to the Board of Revenue, dated the 22nd of September, 1824, referred to by Mr. Banerji in his article, speaks of the impoverishment of Govindaprasad through litigation with his uncle and mentions only of his unsuccessful suit in this connection; it is not likely that he should have forgotten to mention Rammohun's suit against his nephew, if such a suit had really been instituted. However, this is all speculation, and we only land on solid ground when we affirm that this litigation between uncle and nephew was not fought to the bitter end, but that Govindaprasad at last withdrew his suit for accounts against his uncle and asked the latter's forgiveness.

The current biographies of Rammohun speak of suits instituted by his mother against him, and a statement of William Adam to this effect in his *Lecture on the Life and Labours of Rammohun Roy* (Calcutta, 1879, pp. 6-7) is quoted in this connection. Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji has investigated this matter, but *so far* he has not been able to find in the State Records any paper which go to show that a suit against Rammohun was instituted by his mother. He thinks that Mr. Adam's statement was a wrong description, due to faded recollection of the litigation between Rammohun and his nephew Govindaprasad (*Calcutta Review*, August, 1931, p. 157).

As regards the motives which led Govindaprasad to institute his suit for accounts against Rammohun, it is to be noticed that he himself acknowledges that he did so *at the instigation of other people* [Nagendra Nath Chatterjee's Bengalee Biography of the Raja, 3rd ed., p. 143]. The contemporaries of Rammohun who have written about him generally speak of his being subjected to vexatious litigations on account of the unorthodoxy of his religious views. They might or might not have been right; their respect and friendship might have led them to overstate the case for him ; but we must always remember that the real motives behind any litigation are very seldom, if at all, disclosed in plaints and written statements, and Mr. Banerji's article referred to above are based *only* on such documents.

In this connection, we must also notice a statement of Dr. Lant Carpenter to the effect that Rammohun Roy had stated of a series of unsuccessful legal proceedings against him to deprive him of caste, and thereby of his patrimonial inheritance. [Mary Carpenter's *The Last*

Days in England of the Raja Rammohun Roy, 2nd ed., p. 9]. This is entirely at variance with the defence taken up by Rammohun Roy in the suit brought against him by the Raja of Burdwan in 1823, and the materials at present available of the litigation between Rammohun and Govindaprasad do not throw any light on this point. It seems that there was a very confused notion in the minds of Rammohun's biographers of the litigation in which Rammohun was involved, and we can only hope further researches might throw some light on this point.

(14) Rammohun Roy's Calcutta Houses:

It was early in 1815 (and not in 1814 as is generally supposed) that Rammohun Roy came from Rangpur and settled in Calcutta to begin his life-work. Before he, however, came here, a house had been built for him, according to his instructions, by his half-brother, Ramtanu Roy, and "furnished in the English style." This was the house known as his "Maniktala Garden-house," and is now No. 113, Upper Circular Road, occupied by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, North District, Calcutta. It stood on extensive grounds covering 15 bighas, or roughly 5 acres of land, its the then southern boundary extending up to Sukea Street. It appears from a public sale notification of 9th January, 1830, published in a contemporary vernacular paper of Calcutta, that the house was put to auction shortly before Rammohun's departure for Europe. [*Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha,* Part I, 1818-1830 : Compiled and Edited by Brajendra Nath Banerji : Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad : p. 132]. It was at this house that Rammohun received his many distinguished friends, both Indian and European, among whom Fanny Parkes and Mrs. Heber, the wife of the famous Bishop, have each recorded their interesting visit to the Raja. Rammohun owned another house in Calcutta, which was known as his "Simla house." It now stands on Amherst Street, No. 85. This was the house occupied by Rammohun's sons, Radha Prasad (a Vakeel of the Supreme Court) and Rama Prasad (the first Indian to be appointed a Judge of the Calcutta High Court), during and after his life-time. [See the article—"Rammohun Roy as a Citizen of Calcutta"—by Nalin C. Ganguli and Alin C. Ganguli in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette,* 15th Sept., 1928].

(15) Friends and Followers of Rammohun:

[See Appendix D].

(16) Rammohun's Early Publications: Notice in Europe.

Shortly after Rammohun's first English work, *"An Abridgment of the Vedant,* appeared in 1816, the *Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature* of England noticed it in a lengthy review. It said *inter alia* :—"Two literary phenomena of a singular nature have very recently been exhibited in India. The first is—a Hindu Deist, Rammohun Roy, a Brahmin, has published a small work, in the present year, at Calcutta, entitled *An Abridgment of the Vedant, &c.* It contains a collection of very remarkable texts from the Vedas, in which the principles

of natural religion are delivered, not without dignity; and which treat all worship to inferior beings, together with the observance of rites and seasons, and the distinctions of food, as the aids of an imperfect religion, which may be altogether disregarded by those who have attained to the knowledge and love of God."

That the interest in Rammohun's work and personality was not confined to England only, will be illustrated by the following quotation from a contemporary French pamphlet written by the Abbe Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, which presented several interesting features of the life of Rammohun, as viewed by a foreigner. "Every six months," the pamphlet ran, "he publishes a little tract in Bengali and in English developing his system of Theism: and he is always ready to answer the pamphlets published at Calcutta or Madras in opposition to him. . . . He takes pleasure in controversy; but although far from deficient in philosophy, or in knowledge, he distinguishes himself more by his logical mode of reasoning than by his general views. He appears to feel the advantage which it gives him with the Methodists, some of whom are endeavouring to convert him. . . . . He asserts likewise that he has found nothing in European books equal to the scholastic philosophy of the Hindoos. . . . . Rammohun Roy is not yet forty years old; he is tall and robust; his regular features and habitually grave countenance assume a most pleasing appearance when he is animated. He appears to have a slight disposition to melancholy." "The moderation," adds Abbe Gregorie, "with which he repels the attacks on his writings, the force of his arguments, and his profound knowledge of the sacred books of the Hindoos, are proofs of his fitness for the work he has undertaken; and the pecuniary sacrifices he has made, show a disinterestedness which cannot be encouraged or admired too warmly."

(17) The Serampore Controversy:

Rammohun conducted the controversy with the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore with a dignity which admirably contrasted with the tone of his opponents. When Dr. Marshman declared that Hinduism evidently owed its origin to the "Father of Lies" alone, he answered: "We must recollect that we have engaged in solemn religious controversy and not in retorting abuse against each other." The Editor of the *India Gazette,* a contemporary Calcutta journal, adverting to the controversy wrote in his paper: "It still further exhibited the acuteness of his mind, the logical power of his intellect and *the unrivalled good temper with which he could argue.*" (The italics are ours.—*Ed.*).

(18) Conversion of Rev. William Adam:

The conversion by Rammohun of the Rev. William Adam, one of the Baptist Missionaries of Serampore, from orthodox Trinitarian Christianity to Unitarianism greatly scandalised the preachers of the Christian faith. So great was the annoyance caused, that the then Bishop of Calcutta actually asked for the opinion of the Attorney-General in England if Mr. Adam could not, for his act of heresy, be deported

from India under some antiquated provision in the statute book. The Attorney-General assured the Bishop that "those days were passed," and, consequently, Mr. Adam remained in Calcutta. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article on "English Impressions of Rammohun Roy before his Visit to England," *The Modern Review*, March, 1932, p. 280].

(19—21) Rammohun's Support to the Unitarian Cause:

The Calcutta Unitarian Committee was formed in 1821. Mr. William Adam, in a letter, under the date June 26, 1827, writes to Mr. R. Dutton :—"Its present members are Theodore Dickens, a Barrister of the Supreme Court; George James Gordon, a merchant of the firm of Mackintosh & Co., William Tate, an Attorney; B. W. Macleod, a Surgeon in the Company's service; Norman Kerr, an uncovenanted servant of the Company, Rammohun Roy, Dwarkanath Thakoor, Prusunna Coomar Thakoor, Radhaprasud Roy [Rammohun's eldest son] and myself." The objects of the Unitarian Committee were "the promotion of education, rational discussion, and the publication of books both in English and in the native languages." Rammohun was the life and soul of the Association. The Anglo-Hindu School started under it, was almost exclusively supported by him. The "Unitarian Press" was entirely his property. Mr. Adam, after his secession with the Trinitarian Missionaries of Serampore, in his new rôle of Unitarian Minister, seems to have depended for his financial support chiefly on Rammohun. And what all this meant for Rammohun has been told by James Silk Buckingham, who wrote to a friend :—"He has done all this to the great detriment of his private interests, being rewarded by the coldness and jealousy of all the great functionaries of Church and State in India, and supporting the Unitarian Chapel, the Unitarian Press, and the expense of his own publications. . . . . out of a private fortune of which he devotes more than one-third to acts of the purest philanthropy and benevolence." The cause of Unitarianism in Calcutta did not, however, prosper much in spite of all the help and support that Rammohun gave it. On July, 1823, we find Rammohun writing to a friend :—"From the disappointment which we have met in our endeavour to promote the cause of Unitarianism, I scarcely entertain any hope of success." [See the *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, by Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, Chapter IV.]

(22) Mr. William Adam's Subsequent Career:

Mr. William Adam subsequently came to be appointed as the Commissioner of Vernacular Education in Bengal, Behar and Orissa, during the administration of Lord William Bentinck. He was also the author of the then Educational Reports published by Government. In 1845 he delivered a lecture in Boston, U.S.A., on the "Life and Labours of Rammohun Roy," which the late Rakhaldas Halder published in Calcutta in 1879. Mr. Adam's executrix supplied Miss Collet with "much interesting matter from his private letters relating to the Raja" when she was engaged in writing his biography.

(23) The First Location of the Brahmo Samaj:

No. 48, Chitpore Road, Jorasanko, was the historic building in which the Samaj was first located. It was owned by Ram Kamal Basu (not Kamal Lochan Basu as popularly known), who was well-known in Calcutta as "Firingi Kamal Basu," a resident of Chandernagore. The house, which is still standing, was, previous to its use as Brahmo Samaj, occupied for some time by the Hindu College (Estd. 1816), and it was this house, again, that Rammohun Roy secured, in 1830, for Alexandar Duff, the celebrated Scotch Missionary, for opening his English School, —of which more later.

(24) The First Sermon of the Brahmo Samaj:

Though popularly described as *Brohmo Sabha,* the real name of the new church was *Brahmo Samaj,* which is given in the title page of the first sermon preached, on the date of its opening, by the Minister, Pandit Ram Chandra Bidyabagis (Sarma),—a copy of the original edition of which is in the possession of Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji. The sermon was on the spiritual worship of God. The text, which was taken from various parts of the Hindu scriptures, read, "God is One only without an equal, in whom abide all worlds and their inhabitants. Thus he who mentally perceives the Supreme Spirit in all creatures, acquires perfect equanimity, and shall be absorbed into the highest essence, even into the Almighty." It was translated into English by Tarachand Chakravarti, the first Secretary of the Samaj, and published. In sending copies to a European friend, Rammohun spoke of it "as exhibiting the simplicity, comprehensiveness and tolerance which distinguish the religious belief and worship formerly adopted by one of the most ancient nations on earth and still adhered to by the more enlightened portion of their posterity." [Reference may be made for further details to an article entitled "Foundation of the Brahmo Samaj" by Mr. N. C. Ganguly in the *Modern Review* for September, 1928.]

(25) The Dharma Sabha:

The principal promoter of the "Dharma Sabha," the rival organization of the Brahmo Samaj, or "Brohmo Sabha" (as it was popularly called), was Radha Kanto Deb (subsequently knighted and decorated with the title of Raja), scion of the well-known family of the Debs of Sobhabazar, Calcutta, and compiler of the monumental Sanskrit Encyclopædia —*Sabda Kalpadrum.* With him were associated many of the then notable Hindu citizens of Calcutta, among them being Maharaja Kali Kissen Bahadur, Dewan Ramkamal Sen (grand-father of Keshub Chunder Sen), Jaynarain Mitter, Babu Baishnabdas Mallik, Babu Nilmoni Dey, Babu Gopi Mohan Deb, and Babu Harimohan Tagore. But the right-hand man of Radha Kanto Deb was one Bhawani Charan Banerjee, who, for a time, assisted Rammohun Roy in editing his Bengali Weekly, *Sambad-Kaumudi,* but left the paper, as a protest, when it commenced the agitation against *Suttee.* It was with him as Editor that the *Samachar Chandrika* was started as a rival paper to the *Sambad-Kaumadi.* The

Chandrika became the organ of the Dharma Sabha when it came to be established shortly after. The object of the association was to enable "the excellent and the noble"—so ran the explanation of the *Samachar Chandrika*—to "unite and continually devise means for protecting our religion and our excellent customs and usages." At its first meeting, held on the 17th January, 1830, at the Sanskrit College, one of the members of the Committee significantly remarked, with "the concurrence of all present," that "those Hindus who do not follow the rites of Hindu religion should be excluded from the Hindu Society." . . . "No names, however, were mentioned," a reticence which the *Chandrika* hoped would ere long be laid aside. [For a report of the proceedings of the meeting referred to above, readers may see pp. 149—152 of Brajendra Nath Banerji's *Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. I: Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad.]

(26) The Trust-Deed of the Brahmo Samaj:

This most remarkable document, dated January 8th, 1830, sets forth the transfer of the property as *from* Dwarkanath Tagore, Kaleenauth Roy, Prusunno Coomar Tagore, Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy *to* the three Trustees, Boykontonauth Roy, Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore. [The names are spelt as they are actually in the deed.]

The terms of the Trust are that the Trustees—

"shall at all times permit the said building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises, with their appurtenances, to be used occupied, enjoyed, applied and appropriated, as and for a place of Public Meeting, of all sorts of descriptions of people, without distinction, as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner;

"For the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable, and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe but not under, or by any other name, designation, or title peculiarly used for, and applied to, any particular Being, or Beings, by any man, or set of men, whatsoever;

"And that no graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of any thing, shall be admitted within the messuage, building, land, tenements, hereditaments, and premises; and that no sacrifice, offering, or oblation of any kind or thing, shall ever be permitted therein; and that no animal or living creature shall, within or on the said messuage, building, land, tenements hereditaments and premises, be deprived of life, either for religious purposes or for food;

"And that no eating and drinking (except such as shall be necessary, by any accident, for the preservation of life), feasting or rioting be permitted therein or thereon;

"And that, in conducting the said worship or adoration, no object, animate or inanimate, that has been, or is or shall hereafter become, or be recognized, as an object of worship, by any man or set of men shall be reviled, or slightingly or contemptuously spoken of or alluded to either in preaching, praying, or in the hymns, or other mode of worship that may be delivered or used in the said messuage or building;

"And that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer or hymn be delivered, made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the Promotion of charity, morality, piety, bene-

volence, virtue, and the strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds;

"And also, that a person of good repute, and well-known for his knowledge, piety, and morality, be employed by the said trustees . . . . . as a resident superintendent, and for the purpose of superintending the worship so to be performed as is hereinbefore stated and expressed; and that such worship be performed daily, or at least as often as once in seven days. . . . . ."

Mr. Montgomery Martin, in his *History of the British Colonies,* in giving an account of the opening ceremony of the new Samaj buildings (at present 55, Upper Chitpore Road—the house occupied by the Adi Brahmo Samaj) says: "The institution was opened by the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, accompanied by the writer (the only European present) in 1830. There were about five hundred Hindus present and among them many Brahmins, who, after the prayers and singing of hymns had been concluded, received gifts in money to a considerable extent."—[See Sophia Dobson Collet's *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy,* Chapter VII.]

(27) The Vedanta College:

Of the Vedanta College established [1816 ?] by Rammohun, William Adam writes in a letter, under the date July 27, 1826 (quoted by Miss Collet):—"Rammohun Roy has lately built a small but very neat and handsome college, which he calls the Vedant College in which a few youths are at present instructed by a very eminent pandit in Sanskrit literature with a view to the propagation and defence of Hindu Unitarianism. With this institution he is also willing to connect instructions in European Science and learning, and in Christian Unitarianism, provided the instructions are conveyed in the Bengali or Sanskrit language."

(28) Anti-Suttee Vigilance:

Miss Collet says that it was in the year 1818, that Rammohun's influence in the abolition of *Suttee* began to be definitely felt. He used to go down to the Calcutta burning-grounds and try to avert the *Suttee* sacrifices by earnest persuasion. Two of such cases have been recorded, one being in the *Asiatic Journal* for March, 1818. In these efforts he had, no wonder, often to incur the displeasure and insult of the relatives of the *Suttee.*

(29) Aversion to Polygamy:

Miss Collet writes:—"It is interesting to learn from Mr. William Adam's letter of 1826, Rammohun's personal antipathy to polygamy. He was, as we have previously related, married by his father at nine years of age to two child-wives. To both he felt himself bound to remain faithful, but on the death of one (in 1824), he became in practice as in theory a monogamist. It is sad to find that even so his married life was not too happy. The *Asiatic Journal,* for November, 1833, states in its obituary notice that 'Rammohun Roy has left in India a wife from whom he has been separated (on what account we know not) for

some years.' Babu N. N. Chatterjee states that Rammohun 'lived apart from his wives simply because they were Hindus, and he was considered an outcast by them. His wives did not like to live with him.' "

So strongly was Rammohun opposed to polygamy that (Mr. Adam tells us) he inserted clauses in his will disinheriting any son or more remote descendant who had more than one wife at the same time.

(30) Congratulatory Address to Lord Bentinck:

The address congratulating Lord William Bentinck, Governer-General of India, on his promulgating the decree abolishing *Suttee*, was presented on the 16th January, 1830, at Government House, Calcutta. It appears from a contemporary account that Rammohun himself led the deputation and Munshi Kalinath Roy of Taki, a friend and collaborator of Rammohun, read the address, which, it is most interesting to note, was *in Bengali*, an English translation being read *afterwards*. Both the original and the translation were subsequently published in the *Government Gazette*. [See *Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha*—B. N. Banerji, Vol. I, p. 154.]

(31) Establishment of the Hindu College:

Rammohun not only "saw the future" as it would inevitably be as a result of India's contacts and conflicts with modern European thought through British rule, but applied himself to lay the foundation upon which Modern India must be built to meet the requirements of the new conditions towards which the country was consciously or unconsciously moving. Few people of his generation, if indeed any, could claim a more appreciative estimate of the cultural value of Sanskrit or Arabic education. But notwithstanding the invaluable treasures of those two literatures, the Raja felt that they were not inspired by the modern ideal, nor suited to the requirements of the modern age. The Raja saw that what was absolutely needed in India then, was a knowledge of the objective sciences that had attained the highest degree of perfection among the nations of Europe. He wanted a Renaissance in India, which would do for the Indian people and Indian culture what the Revival of Learning had done in Europe. This was the motive underlying his letter to Lord Amherst; and it was with this object that the Raja joined hands with David Hare and others in founding the Hindu College (Estd., 20th January, 1817).

The true history of the origin of the Hindu College (also known under the name of the *"Vidyalaya"*, "Anglo-Indian College", *"Maha-Patshala"* and "Native Hindu College"—later transformed into the Presidency College) is given in a letter which Sir Hyde East, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, addressed, on the 18th May, 1816, to his friend Mr. J. Harrington, a brother-judge, then in England. The credit for unearthing this valuable document belongs to Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, and to him we are indebted for the extracts from the letter of Sir Edward Hyde East given below, extracts which will speak for themselves.

Wrote Sir Edward :—"An interesting and curious scene has lately been exhibited here, which shows that all things pass under change in due season. About the beginning of May, a Brahmin of Calcutta, [Rammohun Roy], whom I knew, and who is well known for his intelligence and active interference among the principal Native inhabitants, and also intimate with many of our own gentlemen of distinction, called upon me and informed me, that many of the leading Hindus were desirous of forming an establishment for the education of their children in a liberal manner as practised by Europeans of condition; and desired that I would lend them my aid towards it, by having a meeting held under my sanction. . . After his departure I communicated to the Governor-General what had passed, who laid my communication before the Supreme Council, all the members of which approved of the course I had taken, and signified, through his Lordship, that they saw no objection to my permitting the parties to meet at my house. . . The meeting was accordingly held at my house on the 14th of May, 1816, at which 50 and upwards of the most respectable Hindu inhabitants of rank or wealth attended, including also the principal Pandits; when a sum of nearly half a lac of rupees was subscribed, and many more subscriptions were promised. . .

"Talking afterwards with several of the company, before I proceeded to open the business of the day, I found that one of them in particular, a Brahmin of good caste, and a man of wealth and influence, was mostly set against Rammohun Roy . . . . (who has lately written against the Hindu idolatry, and upbraids his countrymen pretty sharply). He expressed a hope that no subscription would be received from Rammohun Roy. I asked, why not? 'Because he has chosen to separate himself from us, and to attack our religion'. 'I do not know', I observed, 'what Rammohun's religion is'—(I have heard it is a kind of Unitarianism)—'not being acquainted or having had any communication with him; but I hope that my being a Christian, and a sincere one, to the best of my ability, will be no reason for your refusing my subscription to your undertaking'. This I said in a tone of gaiety; and he answered readily in the same style, 'No, not at all; we shall be glad of your money; but it is a different thing with Rammohun Roy, who is a Hindu, and yet has publicly reviled us, and written against us and our religion'. . .

"Upon another occasion I had asked a very sensible Brahmin what it was that made some of his people so violent against Rammohun. He said, in truth, they did not like a man of his consequence to take open part against them; that he himself had advised Rammohun against it; he had told him that, if he found anything wrong among his countrymen, he should have endeavoured, by private advice and persuasion to amend it; but that the course he had taken set everybody against him, and would do no good in the end. They particularly disliked (and this I believe is at the bottom of the resentment) his associating himself so much as he does with Mussulmans, not with this or that Mussulman as a personal friend, but being continually surrounded by them, and

suspected to partake of means with them. . . They would rather be reformed by anybody else than by him."

In quoting the full text of the letter in his article on "Rammohun Roy as an Educational Pioneer" in the pages of the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (June, 1930), Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji very rightly observes: "The above document makes it clear that *Rammohun Roy was the prime mover in founding the Hindu College.* The leading Hindus of Calcutta disliked his association with it, as he was regarded by them as a heretic and more of a Mussulman than a Hindu. Rammohun, therefore, very wisely, withdrew from the movement, lest the objects of the institution should be frustrated in consequence of his name appearing on the Committee of Management".

(32) Rammohun's English School:

Sometime in 1816-17 Rammohun established an English School of his own in Calcutta (at Suripara) for the free instruction of Hindu boys. It was the first private seminary in this town and numbered about 200 pupils. Rammohun paid the entire expenses of the School. Afterwards he opened an English class at his own garden-house in Upper Circular Road in connection with the school, the most distinguished students of which were transferred to it. It was in charge of one Mr. Morecroft whom he paid Rs. 100 per mensem. Sometime after, he bought a plot of land at Simla near Cornwallis Square, which was then being laid out, and built a school-house on it in 1822. This school, according to Miss Collet, went by the name of "The Anglo-Hindu School." It was a free institution and was supported entirely by Rammohun, assisted to a small extent by subscriptions from a few of his friends. The Unitarian Missionary, Rev. William Adam was, for some time, one of its 'Visitors', and Sandford Arnot, who was Assistant Editor of James Silk Buckingham's *Calcutta Journal* and acted as Secretary to Rammohun while he was in England, belonged to the teaching staff of this school. Maharshi Debendranath Tagore writing of this school in his autobiography says: "I was a student in Rammohun Roy's school at *Hedua* (Cornwallis Square). His son Ramaprasad was a class-mate of mine". When Rammohun sailed for England in November, 1830, the charge of the school devolved on its head master, Purna Chandra Mittra, and it came to be popularly known as "Purna Mittra's School". From January, 1834, the name of the school was changed to "The Indian Academy." The celebrated Bhudeb Mukherjee was a pupil at the Indian Academy.

An extremely interesting account of the Anglo-Hindu School has been unearthed by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji from the old files of the *Bengal Hurkaru* (January 10, 1828). We reproduce it felow:—

> "A public examination of Rammohun Roy's Anglo-Hindoo school took place, January 7, at the *Hurkaru* public rooms, when we had a proof of the strong interest felt in native improvement, afforded by the presence and continued attention to the proceedings of several of the principal merchants and gentlemen of Calcutta, besides natives. The number of boys examined appeared to be

about fifty, but the number whose names are in the school register is between seventy and eighty. This institution is principally supported at the expense of Rammohun Roy, with the aid of a few philanthropic individuals, both among his own countrymen and Europeans, who are friendly to the communication of liberal education to the natives of this country; and it must have afforded a very high degree of pleasure to that distinguished individual, as well as to those who have aided him in his benevolent exertions, to observe the progress which several of the pupils have made in their studies. To the intelligent observer it must also have been an additional source of gratification, to notice among the scholars several of the children of the native gentlemen who contribute to the support of the school, in no respect distinguished from those who receive their education gratuitously.

"Besides three classes that were examined in reading, spelling, grammar, and translation, the first, or most advanced class, was also examined in Joyce's Scientific Dialogues on Mechanics and Astronomy, in the first sixteen propositions of the first book of Euclid, and in translating into Bengalee a passage of Voltaire's History of Charles XII of Sweden, in all of which they acquitted themselves apparently very much to the satisfaction of the auditors. Although this class appears to have made very little progress in mathematics, yet they were perfect masters of all that they professed to know: and one boy in particular, Bissonauth Mitter, was distinguished for the great facility with which he demonstrated the propositions assigned to him, and the clear apprehension he had formed of their import, and of the corollaries deducible from them."

(33a) Letter to Lord Amherst on English Education:

The famous Bishop Heber, the Metropolitan of India, who put this letter [Dec. 11, 1823] into Lord Amherst's hands, wrote of it that "for its good English, good sense and forcible arguments, is a real curiosity, as coming from an Asiatic".

But how this remarkable letter, which, it can be claimed without exaggeration, stands up to this day as the embodiment of a truly national policy of modern education in India, was treated by the then Government will appear from the observations of the President of the General Committee of Public Instruction quoted by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji in his article on "Rammohun Roy as an Educational Pioneer" in the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (June, 1930). The President (Mr. J. H. Harington) wrote that ". . . . it was entitled to no reply, as it has disingenuously assumed a character to which it has no pretensions. The application to Government against the cultivation of Hindu literature, and in favour of the substitution of European tuition, is made professedly on the part, and in the name of the natives of India. But it bears the signature of one individual alone, whose opinions are well known to be hostile to those entertained by almost all his countrymen. The letter of Rammohun Roy does not, therefore, express the opinion of any portion of the natives of India, and its assertion to that effect, is a dereliction of truth, which cancels the claim of its author to respectful consideration".

How completely, however, was Rammohun vindicated in his advocacy of Western education, along modern lines, will be borne out by the very deserved tribute that was paid to him in the Report of the Education Commission, appointed by Lord Ripon in 1882, which said:—

"It took twelve years of controversy, the advocacy of Macaulay, and the decisive action of a new Governor-General, before the Committee could, as a body, acquiesce in the policy urged by him [Rammohun"].

(33b) Rammohun and Alexander Duff:

Rammohun Roy played a great part in drawing the Christian missions into the field of Indian education. Encouraged by his approbation, Rev. James Bryce, the first Chaplain of the Church of Scotland in Calcutta, presented a petition to the General Assembly in Scotland directing "the attention of the Church of Scotland to British India as a field for missionary exertions." Rammohun Roy, who used to regularly attend the services at St. Andrew's Church—the Scotch Kirk of Calcutta —supported this memorial in a separate communication. He felt happy, he wrote, to have an opportunity of expressing his opinion, "that if the prayer of the memorial is complied with, there is a fair and reasonable prospect of this measure proving conducive to the diffusion of religious and moral knowledge in India." It was in response to this appeal that the Rev. Alexander Duff, the pioneer of Christian Educational Missions to India, was sent over by the Church of Scotland in 1830. The young missionary received a most cordial welcome from Rammohun Roy on his arrival in Calcutta. And how greatly Dr. Duff was helped by Rammohun is told by Dr. George Smith in his biography of the distinguished Scotch Missionary.

"In a pleasant garden house in the leafy suburbs of Calcutta," writes Dr. Smith, "the Raja Rammohun Roy, then 56 years of age, was spending his declining days in meditation on divine truth, broken only by works of practical benevolence among his countrymen, and soon by preparations for a visit to England . . . 'You must at once visit the Raja,' said General Beatson, when Mr. Duff presented his letter of introduction, 'and I will drive you out on an early evening. . . .' Having listened to the young Scotman's statement of his objects and plans, Rammohun Roy expressed general approval. All true education, the reformer emphatically declared, ought to be religious, since the object was not merely to give information, but to develop and regulate all the powers of the mind, the emotions, and the workings of the conscience. . . .

"Greatly cheered by the emphatic concurrence of Rammohun Roy, Mr. Duff said the real difficulty now was, where, or how, to get a hall in the native city in which to commence operations ; for the natives owing to caste prejudices, were absolutely averse to letting any of their houses to a European for European purposes. Then, if a suitable place could be got, how could youths of respectable classes be induced to attend, since he was resolved to teach the Bible in every class, and he was told that this would constitute an insuperable objection. . . . Rammohun Roy at once offered the small hall of the Brumho Sobha, in the Chitpore Road, for which he had been paying to the five Brahman owners five pounds a month of rental. The few worshippers were about to use a new building which he had himself erected. . . . As to pupils, his personal friends were sufficiently free from prejudice to send

their sons at his request. Driving at once to the spot, the generous Hindoo reformer secured the hall for the Christian missionary from Scotland at four pounds a month. Pointing to a *punkha* suspended from the roof, Rammohun said with a smile, 'I leave you that as a legacy'. . .

"After a few days," proceeds the story, "five bright-eyed youths of the higher class, mostly Brahmanical, called upon Mr. Duff with a note of introduction from Rammohun Roy, stating that those five, with the full consent of their friends, were ready to attend him whenever he might open the School." On the date of the opening of the School (13th July, 1830), "Rammohun Roy was present to explain difficulties, and especially to remove the prejudice against reading the Bible. . . He told his young countrymen that they were mistaken. 'Christians, like Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson, have studied the Hindu Sastras, and you know that he has not become a Hindu. I myself have read all the Koran again and again, and has that made me a Mussalman? Nay, I have studied the whole Bible, and you know I am not a Christian. Why, then, do you fear to read it? Read it and judge for yourselves. Not compulsion, but enlightened persuasion, which you may resist if you choose, constitutes you yourselves judges of the contents of the book'. Most of the remonstrants seemed satisfied. . . . Daily for the next month did the Hindoo reformer visit the school at ten for the Bible lesson, and frequently thereafter till he left for England, when his eldest son [Radhaprasad Roy] continued to encourage the boys by his presence and their teacher by his kindly counsel. But all the Christian missionaries kept aloof. . . ."

(34—37) Some Newspapers of Rammohun and his time:

(1) *Samachar Darpan* :—The *Samachar Darpan,* or the "Mirror of News," was started by the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore on the 23rd May, 1818, under the editorship of Dr. J. C. Marshman. The *Darpan* contained news, both foreign and Indian. From the 11th July, 1829 English columns running parallel to their Bengali version were added to it, making it bi-lingual. The *Samachar Darpan* continued to run for a long time. It temporarily disappeared from the field on 25th December, 1841, on Dr. Marshman being appointed editor of the weekly *Government Gazette.* It was, however, revived (January, 1842) by one Bhagabati Charan Chatterjee, "in whose hands it soon dropped or died." The Serampore Mission again revived it in 1851 (3rd May) but discontinued it soon after (November, 1852). [For a fuller account of the *Samachar Darpan,* readers may refer to Brajendra Nath Banerji's *Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha,* Part 1, Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, which contains extracts taken entirely from the paper.]

(2) *Sambad Kaumudi* :—The *Sambad Kaumudi,* or the "Moon of Intelligence," made its first appearance on the 4th December, 1821. It was a weekly paper published every Tuesday morning. The object of the journal, as described in the first number, was "public good. The subjects to be discussed will, therefore, have that object as a *guiding star,* and any essay bearing upon the primary object will always meet

with ready attention." Rammohun was not only the principal promoter but the *de facto* editor of this periodical, and articles from his pen were frequently published in it. Bhawani Charan Banerji was on the editorial staff of the *Kaumudi* upto its 13th issue, after which he set up a rival paper, the *Samachar Chandrika,* with the object of counteracting the agitation set on foot by Rammohun Roy against the "Suttee." The *Sambad Kaumudi* was *practically* the first Bengali newspaper edited and conducted by Bengalis, though a short-lived paper, Gangadhar Bhattacharyya's *Bangla Gazette* (1816), had preceded it. The *Sambad Kaumudi* lost many subscribers when its rival, the *Samachar Chandrika,* was published, Bhawani Charan Banerji, its founder, "luring them away" by an "artifice." In fact, the *Kaumudi* had soon to close its career (September, 1822) for want of support but was again revived in April, 1823 under the editorship of Ananda Chandra Mookerji. It became a bi-weekly in 1830. [For a complete and accurate account of the papers started by Rammohun, readers are referred to the three articles by Brajendra Nath Banerji on "Rammohun Roy as a Journalist" in the *Modern Review* for April, May and August, 1931.]

(3) *Samachar Chandrika* :—The *Samachar Chandrika,* which, under the editorship of Bhawani Charan Banerji, referred to above, became the organ of the orthodox Hindu Community, as represented by Dharma Sabha, was started on the 5th March, 1822. It used to appear every Monday containing "miscellaneous information about various countries." The *Chandrika* became a bi-weekly in April, 1829 and later became finally amalgamated with the *Dainik,* published from the *Bangabasi* office. Copious extracts from the *Chandrika* have been published in the second part of Brajendra Nath Banerji's *Sangbad Patre Sekaler Katha* (published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad.)

(4) *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* :—The *Mirat-ul-Akhbar,* or the "Mirror of News," the first Persian weekly journal published in Calcutta, was founded by Rammohun Roy. It first made its appearance from Dhurramtolah on the 12th April, 1822. The Persian editorials of *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* were mostly written by Rammohun, and English translations of several of them are found in the columns of James Silk Buckingham's *Calcutta Journal.* These editorials are of inestimable value, as revealing Rammohun's deep learning and his thoughts on the current political questions of his time. Certain observations by Rammohun on the doctrine of the Trinity, published in the *Mirat* in August, 1822, were considered "exceedingly offensive" by the authorities, as would appear from the Minute recorded on the 10th October, 1822, by Mr. W. B. Bayley of the Supreme Council, regarding the tendency of 'the native Press.' Some extracts from this Minute reproduced below will give an idea as to Rammohun's "offence."

> "The contents of the other Persian paper, the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar,* have been much in the same style as the above, but the Editor's known disposition for theological controversy had led him to seize an occasion for publishing remarks on the Trinity, which, although covertly and insidiously conveyed, strike me as being exceedingly offensive. The circumstances in which the discussion originated was a notice in the above paper on the subject of the death of

Dr. Middleton, the late Bishop of Calcutta. After some laudatory remarks on his learning and dignity, the article concludes by stating that the Bishop, having been now relieved from the care and anxieties of this world, had 'tumbled on the shoulders of the mercy of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.'

"The expression coming from a known impugner of the doctrine of the Trinity, could only be considered as ironical, and was noticed in one of the other papers as objectionable and offensive It might have been sufficient for the editor of the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* on finding that he had given offence to have expressed his regret, to have disclaimed all such intention, and thus to let the subject drop. But this course was not suited to the polemic disposition of the Editor. In the paper of the 19th July he enters into a long justification of his obituary notice, and, affectedly misunderstanding the real purport of the objection taken to his introduction of the mention of (the) Trinity, he makes use of observations, which, in my mind, constitute an aggravation of the offence. He says, 'with respect to what was said of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, since the Preachers of the Christian religion, constantly, in every Church, throughout the year, read their articles of faith with a loud voice, not regarding the presence of either Hindu or Musalman, and declare their conviction that salvation is to be found only in the belief of the Three in One, what doubt can there be then, that they believe in the Three whom I have mentioned.' And, again, 'But since it seems that the mere mention in the Persian language of the essential principles of the Christian religion is an aspersion on the faith professed by the Governor-General and all its followers, I shall, therefore, avoid this fault in future.'

"In the paper of the 9th August, the discussion is revived and the objections are treated in the same style.

"It is asked 'if any one in inditing an obituary notice of a Hindu should mention the Ganges or other object of worship of that nation, would the Hindus take offence,' and, afterwards, the Editor quotes a verse, which he ascribes to some Persian poet, meaning as follows :—'Whose-ever religion is such that the mere mention of the God of it, is a cause of shame, we may readily guess what kind of a religion that is, and what sort of a people are its professors'!" [*The Modern Review*, August, 1931.]

Shortly after this, Mr. Adam, the then Governor-General (Acting), promulgated the new Press Ordinance severely restricting the liberty of the Press. Immediately following the registration of these regulations by the Supreme Court, Rammohun Roy closed down the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* as a protest. In the last number of his paper he "declared his inability to go on publishing under, what he would represent as to him degrading conditions, and he laments that he, 'one of the most humble of men,' should be no longer able to contribute towards the intellectual improvement of his countrymen." [See the articles on "An Unknown Chapter of the Calcutta Press" and the "Early History of the Vernacular Press in Calcutta" by Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, 1st September, 1928 and the Sixth Anniversary Number, 22nd November, 1930 respectively; also the third instalment of the article, "Rammohun Roy as a Journalist" in the *Modern Review*, August, 1931.]

(5) *Jam-i-Jahan-Numa* :—The *Jam-i-Jahan-Numa*, which commenced publication on 8th March, 1822, was a weekly, written in Hindustani. From its 8th number (16th May, 1822) it became a polyglot, being written

both in Hindustani and Persian. The paper was the property of and principally conducted by an English mercantile house in Calcutta. Its scope and object were declared to be "the promulgation of articles on news from the English papers etc., the procuring and making known of intelligence of all that passed in the principal cities of Hindusthan whether within the Company's territories or outside."

(6) *Banga-dut* :—Rammohun was also associated as one of the proprietors, with the *Bengal Herald* or *Weekly Messenger*, started on the 10th May, 1829. This was published in four languages (English, Bengali, Persian, and Nagri) and edited by R. Montgomery Martin. Besides Rammohun, the other proprietors of the paper were Dwarkanath Tagore, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, Nilratan Haldar of Chitpore, and Rajkissen Singh. Very soon, however, Rammohun found it necessary to sever his connection with this journal.

(38—39) The Press Ordinance of 1823:

Lord Wellesley was the first to fetter the freedom of the Indian Press by creating, on the 13th May, 1799, a censorship, which demanded the submission of the proof-sheets of all newspapers before their publication to the Chief Secretary to the Government for inspection. Lord Minto was no less vigilant over the Press, and more stringent rules were imposed by him on the editors.

Lord Minto was succeeded by the Marquis of Hastings, who, by orders dated 19th August, 1818, released the editors from the obligation hitherto imposed on them of submitting their manuscript articles—even advertisements—to an officer of Government previous to publication, and only laid down for their guidance some general rules calculated to prevent the discussion of topics, which might affect the authority of the Government or injure public interests. The real intention of Lord Hastings and the policy of his Government towards the Press have, however, been misunderstood. It was this. Under the censorship imposed by Lord Wellesley on newspapers published by Europeans, the punishment sanctioned for any breach of the regulation was the immediate deportation of the offending editor to Europe by cancelling his licence, which entitled him to reside in India. By the year 1818 Indian and Eurasian edited newspapers had come into being at Calcutta, and as Eurasians and Indians could not be deported to England, the absence of any legal method of punishing editors of these two races was now felt for the first time. The Government made itself ridiculous by punishing European editors, while it could not touch Indian and European offenders of the same class and it was, therefore that Lord Hastings' Government decided to abolish the [Wellesley] censorship.

The Press in Bengal enjoyed even this freedom for a very short time only. Mr. James Silk Buckingham, the editor of the *Calcutta Journal* (founded on 2nd October, 1818) published articles, which the Government thought to be of an offensive and mischievous character, and, therefore, a violation of the rules issued by Lord Hastings. Minutes were recorded by members of the Supreme Council suggesting the necessity of checking the excesses of the Press. On

the 10th October, 1822, Mr. W. B. Bayley delivered in the Calcutta Council a lengthy minute regarding the tendency of the native Press. This State-paper tells us about the "objectionable" nature of some of the articles published in the vernacular Press, particularly in the *Miratul-Akhbar*, the Persian Weekly of Raja Rammohun Roy.

When abolishing the censorship in August, 1818, Government had decided to point out to the Court of Directors the inadequacy of the existing Press Law, but no such official representation was actually made for four years. On the 17th October, 1822, Lord Hastings' Government wrote to the Home authorities asking for power to enable the Indian Government to exercise a more efficient and decided control over the Press than it then had the power of exerting.

Lord Hastings sailed away for England on 9th January, 1823, and was succeeded temporarily by a subordinate official, J. Adam, whose first act was to deport Mr. James Silk Buckingham, the editor of the *Calcutta Journal* for the offence of his 'disrespectful expression' in an article criticising the acceptance by Dr. Bryce, the Head Minister of new Scotch Church, the post of Clerk of the Stationery under the East India Company and observing directly as well as indirectly that it was unbecoming of the character of the minister to accept a situation like this. Mr. Buckingham was ordered, on the 12th February, 1823, that he should leave India for England within the period of two months from the date of the receipt of the order. The *Journal* was suppressed and Mr. Sandford Arnot, Mr. Buckingham's Assistant Editor,—who later became Rammohun's Private Secretary in England,—was arrested and put on board a ship bound for the British Isles. And to crown all this, the Acting Governor-General passed, on the 14th March, 1823, a rigorous Press Ordinance. Under this new measure the proprietors and editors of newspapers in the Presidency were required to take out licenses, for which they had to forward to the Chief Secretary to the Government an affidavit specifying certain particulars. For the offence of discussing any of the subjects prohibited by law, an editor was liable to lose the license under which his paper was conducted.

The law in India as it then stood required that every new legislative measure, before it was finally placed on the Statute Book, must be registered by the Supreme Court. The new Press ordinance was accordingly entered in the Court on the 15th March, 1823, and, on the 17th the Court was moved to allow parties feeling themselves aggrieved by the new regulation to be heard. Sir Francis Macnaghten, the Sole Acting Judge, in fixing the date for the hearing of objections suggested that the objectors, foremost among whom was Rammohun, should state their objections in a memorial to Government. Accordingly, five distinguished citizens of Calcutta,—Chunder Coomar Tagore, Dwarka Nath Tagore, Hurchunder Bose, Gowree Churn Banerjee and Prossunno Coomar Tagore —led by Rammohun, submitted a memorable memorial which Miss Collet describes as the *"Areopagitica* of Indian history." The Supreme Court dismissed the memorial, Sir Francis Macnaghten scandalising the memorialists by announcing that before the Ordinance was entered or

its merits argued in Court, he had pledged himself to Government to give it his sanction.

As a protest against this, the Raja, we have already seen, discontinued the publication of his Persian weekly. The reasons for this discontinuance, he gave in a most remarkable editorial in the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*. It ran thus :—

> "It was previously intimated, that a Rule and Ordinance was promulgated by His Excellency the Honourable the Governor-General in Council, enacting, that a Daily, Weekly or any Periodical Paper should not be published in this City, without an Affidavit being made by its Proprietor in the Police Office, and without a License being procured for such publication from the Chief Secretary to Government; and that after such License being obtained, it is optional with the Governor-General to recall the same, whenever His Excellency may be dissatisfied with any part of the Paper. Be it known, that on the 31st of March, the Honourable Sir Francis Macnaghten, Judge of the Supreme Court, expressed his approbation of the Rule and Ordinance so passed. Under these circumstances, I, the least of all the human race, in consideration of several difficulties, have, with much regret and reluctance, relinquished the publication of this Paper (*Mirat-ool-Akhbar*). The difficulties are these :—
>
> "*First.*—Although it is very easy for those European Gentlemen, who have the honour to be acquainted with the Chief Secretary to Government, to obtain a License according to the prescribed form; yet to a humble individual, like myself, it is very hard to make his way through the porters and attendants of a great Personage; or to enter the doors of the Police Court, crowded with people of all classes, for the purpose of obtaining what is in fact, already (unnecessary ?) in my opinion. [Here follows a Persian couplet.]
>
> "*Secondly.*—To make Affidavit voluntarily in an open Court, in presence of respectable Magistrates, is looked upon as very mean and censurable by those who watch the conduct of their neighbours. Besides, the publication of a newspaper is not incumbent upon every person, so that he must resort to the evasion of establishing fictitious Proprietors, which is contrary to Law, and repugnant to Conscience.
>
> "*Thirdly.*—After incurring the disrepute of solicitation and suffering the dishonour of making Affidavit, the constant apprehension of the License being recalled by Government which would disgrace the person in the eyes of the world, must create such anxiety as entirely to destroy his peace of mind, because a man, by nature liable to err, in telling the real truth cannot help sometimes making use of words and selecting phrases that might be unpleasant to Government. I, however, here prefer silence to speaking out. [Here follows another Persian couplet, from Hafiz.]
>
> "I now entreat those kind and liberal gentlemen of Persia and Hindoosthan, who have honoured the *Mirat-ool-Ukhbar* with their patronage, that, in consideration of the reasons above stated, they will excuse the non-fulfilment of my promise to make them acquainted with passing events, as stated in the introductory remarks in the first number; and I earnestly hope from their liberality, that wherever and however I may be situated they will always consider me, the humblest of the human race, as devoted to their service." [From the *Calcutta Journal* of James Silk Buckingham, dated April 10, 1823, cited by Brajendra Nath Banerji in the *Modern Review*, August, 1931.]

Baffled in his attempt to see the restoration of a free Press to India, Rammohun next appealed to the King in Council,—an appeal which, as Miss Collet describes, "is one of the noblest pieces of English to which

Rammohun put his hand." This petition, after six months' consideration, was rejected by the Privy Council in November, 1825.

Rammohun did not live to see the restoration of the freedom of the Indian Press by Sir Charles Metcalfe. But his fight for a liberated Press was not, however, forgotten. We read that in the "Free Press Dinner" given to Sir Charles Metcalfe at the Calcutta Town Hall on the 9th February, 1838, a toast was proposed by an Englishman, Mr. Leith, to "the memory of Rammohun Roy," which was seconded by Prasanna Kumar Tagore "as a friend of the late Rammohun Roy."

(40) The Delhi Embassy:

In 1828 Rammohun Roy was approached by the Calcutta Agent to the then titular Emperor of Delhi, Abu-nasar Muin-ud-din Akbar (Akbar II), with a view to representing his grievances, mainly regarding the inadequate stipends granted to him by the East India Company, to the King of Great Britain. Rammohun signified his consent, and he was asked by the Emperor to draw up a draft appeal both in Persian and English. This Rammohun did in a most well-reasoned document, unearthed some years ago by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, which ought to find a permanent place amongst the writings of Rammohun alike for its grace, vigour and clearness of style. The concluding paragraph of this remarkable appeal, reproduced below, will give some idea of the character and form of this memorable memorial.

> "If I had any doubt of the justice of my claims, I might still rest them on an appeal to your Majesty's known generosity. I might remind your Majesty of the time when my ancestors ruled supreme over these countries, where their wretched descendant and the sole representative of their dynasty is compelled to drag on a dependent existence in a dilapidated palace, exposed to the contempt or receiving the sympathy of the different classes of society, both Europeans and Asiatics, who resort to Delhi, with means utterly inadequate to support the dignity even of a nominal sovereignty or to afford a scanty subsistence to the numerous branches of his family who look to him as their only stay. But I will not resort to such a plea. I will not condescend to accept, and your Majesty will disdain to confer, as a favour, that which is due as a right. I rest my cause on your Majesty's high-minded sense of honour and justice. I cannot permit myself to suppose that your Majesty will lend a deaf ear to my complaints. I address by this letter not only your Majesty but the world at large, and I anticipate the plaudits which present and future ages will bestow on your Majesty's benevolent and enlightened sympathy with the unworthy representative of the once great and illustrious, though now fallen, House of Taimur.
>
> "To your Majesty what need I say more?"

Rammohun wanted to have from the East India Company copies of some official letters and documents, which should accompany the representation in question, but, in spite of repeated attempts on his part and that of the Emperor of Delhi, he failed to do so. The Government was reluctant from the very beginning to recognize Rammohun as an Agent of Delhi and enquired of the Emperor whether he acknowledged Rammohun

Roy as such and "the bearer of a letter of complaint to our Gracious Sovereign King George IV." On the Emperor definitely acknowledging Rammohun as his Agent, the Governor-General submitted to the Court of Directors a copy of his petition in the name of the Emperor of Delhi.

Meanwhile the Emperor of Delhi had invested Rammohun with the title of Raja, "in consideration of the respectability attaching to his office" as the *Elchi* (Envoy) from the Court of Delhi to the Court of Great Britain, and graciously forwarded to him a Seal of Office, engraved specially for the purpose. On the 8th January, 1830, Rammohun informed the Governor-General in Council of the title conferred upon him by the Emperor and asked his sanction to his (Rammohun's) adoption of the title. Promptly the Government replied that they could neither recognize Rammohun's appointment as Envoy on the part of the Emperor of Delhi to the Court of Great Britain nor acquiesce in His Majesty's grant of the title to him on the occasion of that appointment. On September 29, 1830, Rammohun represented to the Governor-General that, upon various considerations, he had decided to proceed to England as a "private individual," divesting himself of all public character.

Shortly after reaching England Rammohun delivered to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, and circulated before influential personages, a printed statement on the subject of the claims of the Emperor of Delhi, corresponding in substance to the letter from the Emperor to King George IV of England, already referred to. As a result of the exertions of Rammohun, the Court of Directors, on the 13th February, 1833, sanctioned, under certain conditions, an addition of 3 lakhs of rupees per annum to the annual stipend of 12 lakhs to the Emperor of Delhi. This decision of the Court of Directors being conveyed by the Governor-General to the Emperor on the 12th July, 1833, the latter declined to accept the conditions proposed until he had received information from Raja Rammohun Roy, the "Royal Agent then in England." The unfortunate death of Rammohun, however, dashed all the hopes of the Emperor to the ground, and he accepted the increase of his stipend with the conditions imposed. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's monograph, "Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England," Chapter I.]

It is interesting to note in this connection that the Raja received from the Emperor Rs. 70,000 as his Envoy to England [*Samachar Darpan*, 5th June, 1833, cited by B. N. Banerji in the *Indian Messenger*, December 13, 1931, p. 584]. The Emperor also agreed that if the Raja could, by his exertions on his behalf in England, secure for him an increase of Rupees eight lakhs to his annuity, he would be paid, as a reward, half the amount of a year's increase, *i.e.*, Rupees four lakhs, and a monthly allowance of Rs. 5,000. If, however, the annuity was less, he was to be paid a remuneration and a monthly allowance, *pro-rata* with the amount of increase. Conformably with these engagements, the Emperor wanted to settle on Rammohun's sons, Radha prasad and Rama Prasad, after their father's death, a monthly allowance of Rs. 1,875. Accordingly he wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provices informing him as to how he

intended to distribute his increased stipend, mentioning, among other items, the proposed allowance to Rammohun's sons. The Lieutenant-Governor not having approved of the proposed distribution, the Emperor, as a last measure, wrote (April, 1837) to the Governor-General, Lord Auckland. The passages from the Emperor's letter given below will speak for themselves :—

> "It cost me three lakhs of Rupees to send ambassadors to England and Calcutta for the sole purpose of removing my own embarrassments and those of my children, brothers and sisters and salateens . . . . . Rajah Rammohun Roy Bahadur, confiding in my promises and favour, undertook the distant journey to England and fell a sacrifice . . . . . The fulfilment of my promise is just and proper, and independently of my promise, and without reference to the increase, the family of a man who has sacrificed his life in the service of his master, ought to be maintained by that master—especially Rao Radha Prasad and Rao Ramaprasad, sons of the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, who are my devoted servants, and have likewise received a promise of remuneration. Moreover, for the space of two years past, Rao Radhaprasad has been in attendance at the Royal threshhold, in the hope of realizing the promised remuneration and salary on account of his father's devotion . . . . . The payment of debt by every Law is a duty, and the fulfilment of my promises of remuneration and fixed salaries to the sons of the late Rajah Rammohun Roy . . . . . is as much incumbent on me, if not more so, than the discharge of a just debt. It was solely from an anxiety to liquidate my debts and redeem my promises, that a *Razinama* for so small an increase was executed. . . . . Justice requires, that your Lordship should make a suitable arrangement for the expenses of royalty and for the satisfaction of the rights of Rajah Rammohun Roy . . . . . [Translated from Persian.]

The Emperor's representation had no effect. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article on "Rammohun Roy's Engagements with the Emperor of Delhi," the *Modern Review* for January, 1930.]

(41) Objects of Rammohun's Visit to England:

One of the three objects of Rammohun's visit to England, that of representing the grievances of the Emperor of Delhi to the King of England, has been discussed in the previous 'Note.' The other two objects were: (*i*) to be present at the approaching discussion of the House of Commons at the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, upon which the future Government of India, whether for good or for evil, so largely depended; (*ii*) to present memorials in favour of the abolition of the *Suttee* which he carried with him from India, and to counteract the agitation carried on there by the powerful orthodox leaders of the Hindu community.

(42—44) Arrival in England: Meeting with William Roscoe: Jeremy Bentham:

Raja Rammohun Roy sailed from Calcutta on the 15th November, 1830, on board the *Albion*, bound for Liverpool. His party consisted of his adopted son, Raja Ram; his cook, Ramrotun Mukerjee; and his personal attendant, Ramhurry Doss. The Raja reached England on the

8th April, 1831, after a voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. No sooner was the arrival of the Raja known in Liverpool than almost every man of distinction in the town hastened to call upon him. One of the very first visits he received was from the sons of the celebrated William Roscoe, the historian of the Medicis, who was then practically on his death-bed. He had not, owing to his paralytic condition, received any visitors for years. He had, however, sent his sons with an earnest request to Rammohun to see him. Roscoe received Rammohun in his sick chamber, and after a most affecting interview—at which except the two great men one of Roscoe's sons was present, and he had left an impression of the memorable meeting—the Raja came out of the room "with agitated countenance and moistened eyes." Roscoe's son writes : "The interview will never be forgotton . . . After the usual gesture of Eastern salutation, Rammohun said : 'Happy and proud am I, proud and happy, to behold a man whose fame has extended not only over Europe but over every part of the world.' 'I bless God,' replied Mr. Roscoe, 'that I have been permitted to live to see this day.' Their conversation chiefly turned upon the objects which had led Rammohun Roy to this country, and in the course of it he displayed an intimate acquaintance with the political and commercial state of England." Roscoe died shortly after.

From Liverpool the Raja hastened to London to be present in the House of Commons on the Second Reading of the Reform Bill. Roscoe had armed him with a letter of introduction to Lord Brougham, a Minister of the Crown, requesting him that he should "obtain for our distinguished visitor the benefit of a seat under the Gallery of the House of Commons, on the debate on the third reading of the Reform Bill. On his way from Liverpool to London Rammohun broke his journey at Manchester. James Sutherland, who accompanied Rammohun to England, in a very interesting account of the Raja's voyage to and subsequent travels in England, published in the *India Gazette* of 1834, writes that, when the Raja visited the great factories all the workmen struck work, "and men, women and children rushed in crowds to see *'the King of Ingee*!' Many of the great unwashed insisted upon shaking hands with him; some of the ladies, who had not stayed to make their toilets very carefully, wished to embrace him, and he with difficulty escaped . . . The aid of the police was required to make way for him to the manufactories, and when he entered, it was necessary to close and bolt the gate to keep out the mob."

The Raja reached London late in the evening and being dissatisfied with the rooms assigned to him in "a filthy inn" in the Newgate Street, ordered a coach and set off to the Adelphi Hotel, which he reached about 10 o'clock. Long after he had retired to bed, the venerable British Philosopher, Jeremy Bentham, who had not for many years called on any one or left his house, came to the Hotel to see Rammohun, and left a characteristic note for him—"Jeremy Bentham to his friend Rammohun Roy." They afterwards met each other and Bentham came to be so attached to him that he addressed him as his "intensely-admired and dearly-beloved collaborator in the service of mankind"

and advocated his return to Parliament. From the Adelphi Hotel Rammohun shifted to a big mansion at 125 Regent Street, where "for some months he held court as real, if informal, ambassador for the people of India." James Sutherland, to whom we have referred before, and who later became Principal of the Hooghly College, writes: "As soon as it was known in London that the great Brahman Philosopher had arrived, the most distinguished men in the country crowded to pay their respects to him; and he had scarcely got into his lodgings in Regent Street, when his door was besieged with carriages from eleven in the morning till four in the afternoon; until this constant state of excitement (for he caught the tone of the day and vehemently discussed politics with every one) actually made him ill... when his physicians gave positive orders to his footman not to admit visitors." Rammohun was introduced into the House of Lords by the King's brother, the Duke of Cumberland, and, we are told by Miss Collet, that it was the Raja's urgent solicitations which prevented the Tory Peers voting against the Indian Jury Bill. Though many of the proud Lords wanted only to lionize him, yet there were not a few who sought his company with a view to acquiring information regarding India. With Lord Brougham, the great advocate of popular education and of the abolition of slavery, Rammohun lived on terms of the closest intimacy. He spent a day with the Duke of Sussex, the King's brother, who was much attached to him, and was often a guest of the Duke of Devonshire with whom he was frequently seen in London theatres. The Earl of Munster, whom Rammohun had previously met in India, was another devoted friend of the Raja, who also made friends with Sir Henry Strachey and Sir Charles Forbes.

But how was the Raja received in London by the man in the street? The answer is furnished by a passage we find in a Parliamentary blue-book. There we are told that "when Rammohun Roy made his first appearance in the streets of London, he was greeted with the cry of 'Tippoo,' the mob apparently thinking that all who wore 'the shadowed livery of the burnished sun' were equally entitled to that name!"

(45—47) Reception and Honours in England:

The fame of Raja Rammohun Roy had, as we have already seen, preceded him in England, and his arrival there, as has been recorded in the previous 'Note,' caused no little stir. The eminent position he occupied in his own country and the esteem in which he was held as a reformer and scholar, brought upon him honours from all quarters. Several receptions were held in his honour in London, the first of which was at the British Unitarian Association. A full record of this most interesting occasion is happily preserved in the *Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature* of June, 1831 (Vol. V; N.S., pp. 417-420), and we quote from it. Dr. Bowring (afterwards Sir John Bowring), the biographer of Jeremy Bentham and editor of his works, in welcoming the Raja, said:—

> "I am sure that it is impossible to give expression to those sentiments of interest and anticipation with which his advent here is associated in all our minds. I recollect some writers have indul-

ged themselves with enquiring what they should feel if any of those time-honoured men whose names have lived through the vicissitudes of ages, should appear among them. They have endeavoured to imagine what would be their sensations if a Plato or a Socrates, a Milton or a Newton, were unexpectedly to honour them with their presence. I recollect that a Poet, who has well been called divine, has drawn a beautiful picture of the feelings of those who first visited the southern hemisphere, and saw, for the first time, that beautiful constellation, the Golden Cross. It was with feeling such as they underwent, that I was overwhelmed when I stretched out in your name the hand of welcome to the Raja Rammohun Roy. In my mind the effect of distance is very like the effect of time; and he who comes among us from a country thousands of miles off, must be looked upon with same interest as those illustrious men who lived thousands of years ago."

Dr. Kircland, ex-President of the Harvard University, U. S. A., who followed Dr. Bowring, said: "The Raja was an object of lively interest in America", and he was "expected there with the greatest anxiety." The Rev. W. G. Fox, friend and patron of Robert Browning, whose youthful Muse he was at this very time sedulously encouraging, joined in the tribute, and the proceedings were brought to a close by the Raja making a short but beautiful speech, concluding with the following observations: "There is a battle going on between Reason, scriptures and common sense and wealth, power and prejudice. These three have been struggling with the other three; but I am convinced that your success, sooner or later, is certain . . . The honour that you have from time to time conferred upon me . . ., I shall never forget to the last moment of my existence."

The Directors of the East India Company, though they refused to recognize Rammohun as the Envoy of the Emperor of Delhi and the title conferred upon him by the Padishah, entertained the Raja, on the 6th July, 1831, at a dinner at the City of London Tavern. Eighty covers were laid, and it was "quite a State affair." The Chairman of the Company presided and proposed the health of Rammohun in a felicitous speech, complimenting him on "the vast services he had rendered to the Indian Community." "Like the bee, which suck the choicest sweets from the flowers of the garden," he said, "the Brahman collected from the boundless stores of knowledge, to which from travel and study he had access, the richest intellectual treasures." The Raja in his reply, referred to the "security for property or for life" enjoyed by India under the administration of the East India Company, and paid a tribute to "Lord William Bentinck, who had laid aside everything like show or ostentation, and exhibited no symptom of arbitrary authority, but, on the contrary, had done all in his power to gain the good opinions of the Natives of India, and so raised them in the scale of Nations." An account of this dinner published in the *Asiatic Journal* (August, 1831, pp. 236-37) from which we have quoted, says: "It was rather curious to see the Brahman surrounded by hearty feeders upon turtle and venison and champagne, and touching nothing himself but rice and cold water." [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's "Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England," Chapter II].

The Government in England recognized both the embassy and the title of the Raja, for we find recorded in the *Court Circular* that "at the levee held at the Palace, St. James's, on the 7th September [1931], the Rajah Rammohun Roy was introduced to an audience of the King [William IV] by the Right Hon. Charles Grant, the President of the Board of Control, and was most graciously received. The Rajah wore the costume of a Brahman, *viz.*, the turban and kabah. The latter was composed of purple velvet, embroidered in gold."

At the Coronation of William IV, the distinguished visitor from India had a seat assigned to him among the ambassodors of the Crowned Heads of Europe. On the occasion of the opening of the London Bridge, he was invited by His Majesty to the banquet given in celebration of the event. Invited by the Royal Asiatic Society of London, Rammohun took part at its annual meeting, moving a vote of thanks to Heury Thomas Colebrooke, the great Orientalist.

Rammohun was by this time, "a fully fledged member of the highest circles of English Society." He had shifted from his house at Regent Street to "a most magnificent abode" in Cumberland Terrace, Regent's Park. Miss Collet writes: "His gracious manners and his especial deference to women greatly ingratiated him with the fair sex, several of whom have left on record warmly appreciative reminisciences." One of them writes: "I often met him (the Raja) in London . . . at large parties and even Balls, where he would converse on subjects that seemed rather unsuitable to the place,—the Trinity and other sacred things which were occupying his own thoughts." In the diary of the celebrated actress, Fanny Kemble, we find the following entry under date December 22, 1831: "In the evening the play was *Isebella;* the house very bad; I played very well. The Rajah Rammohun Roy was in the Duke of Devonshire's box, and went into fits of crying, poor man!" Rightly Miss Collet adds, that "this is a fact in a many-sided character which we are glad to have preserved. It is pleasant to know that the great Reformer was not above tears, even over a well-acted play."

Among other celebrities whom Rammohun met in England was Robert Owen, the father of British Socialism. Owen, we are told, did his best to convert Rammohun to his own views, but without success.

(48) The Raja and the Reform Bill:

When Rammohun Roy reached England the country was in the vortex of the agitation over the Reform Bill. The Raja, as we have already seen in the letter of introduction that William Roscoe gave him to Lord Brougham, was vitally interested in the measure. The first Bill introduced by Lord John Russel (March 1, 1831) was defeated in Committee when Rammohun was nearing England. The defeat was followed by an immediate dissolution of Parliament. The second Bill was passed by the new House of Commons on the 22nd September but was rejected by the Lords on the 8th October. England was convulsed in an agitation the like of which she had not seen for many years. It appeared as if there would be civil war. A fresh measure, the Third Reform Bill, was put before the House of Commons again, and, once

again, the Lower House, after having passed it (March, 1832) sent to the Lords. The nation awaited the decision of the Upper House "in a wild fever of excitement." Miss Collet writes: "Rammohun shared in the general agony of suspense. He felt that it was no mere British business, but that it vitally affected the fortunes of mankind." He postponed his visit to Bristol, "impatiently waiting in London to know the result of the Bill," as he himself wrote in a letter to a friend (Miss Kiddell of Bristol). The Peers at last yielded, and the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords was carried in April by nine votes. The Raja was elated. In a characteristic letter to another friend (Mrs. Woodford) he wrote: "The struggles are not merely between the Reformers and anti-Reformers, but between liberty and oppression throughout the world; between justice and injustice; and between right and wrong. But . . . we clearly perceive that liberal principles in politics and religion have been long gradually but steadily gaining ground, notwithstanding the opposition and obstinacy of despots and bigots."

The Lords finally passed the Reform Bill in June, which was followed by similar measures for Ireland and Scotland. The Raja's delight knew no bounds. "I am now happy" . . ., he wrote to his friend Mr. William Rathbone, "on the complete success of the Reform Bills, notwithstanding the violent opposition and want of political principle on the part of the aristocrats. The nation can no longer be a prey of the few who used to fill their purses at the expense, nay, to the ruin of the people, for a period of upwards of fifty years." The Raja concluded this remarkable letter with the following observations: "As I publicly avowed that in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated, I would renounce my connection with this country, I refrained from writing to you or any other friend in Liverpool until I knew the result. Thank Heaven, I can now feel proud of being one of your fellow subjects, and heartily rejoice that I have the infinite happiness of witnessing the salvation of the nation, nay, of the whole world."

Does not the letter remind us of the determination of Oliver Cromwell to set sail for America in case of defeat of the Grand Remonstrance in the Long Parliament?

(49) Visit to France

The name of the Raja had been known to the cultured circles of France as early as 1818. D'Acosta, the editor of the *Calcutta Times*, had transmitted to the Abbe Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, some of the publications of Rammohun with an account of his life; and through the Bishop, Rammohun, we are told by Miss Mary Carpenter, became extensively known and highly appreciated in France. In a pamphlet that the Abbe Gregoire wrote on Rammohun, he paid a singular tribute to his activities. "The moderation," wrote the Bishop, "with which he (Rammohun) repels the attacks on his writings, the force of his arguments, and his profound knowledge of the sacred books of the Hindoos, are proofs of his fitness for the work he has undertaken; and the pecuniary sacrifices he has made, show a disinterestedness which cannot be

encouraged or admired too warmly." The celebrated Sismondi, in an article in the *Revue Encyclopédique* (Paris) for 1824, after some observations respecting the Hindu institution of castes and the practice of *Suttee*, wrote thus: "A glorious reform has, however, begun to spread among the Hindoos. A Brahmin, whom those who know India agree in representing as one of the most virtuous and enlightened of men, Rammohun Roy, is exerting himself to restore his countrymen to the worship of the true God, and to the union of morality and religion. His flock is small, but increases continually. He communicates to the Hindoos all the progress that thought has made among the Europeans." Shortly after this, the Societe Asiatique of Paris forwarded to Rammohun a Diploma of Honorary Membership of that learned and scientific body, "long before such honorable notice had begun to be taken of him either in India or in England."

Rammohun had long cherished hopes of visiting France,—"a country so favoured by nature and so richly adorned by the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and above all, blessed by the possession of a free constitution," as he himself described it. Towards the end of 1831 he made his final preparations for the visit to France. But to his chagrin, writes Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, he was informed that for a foreign visitor it was necessary first to obtain a passport from the French Ambassador in London, who, before granting it, must be furnished with an account of the applicant. Rammohun was not prepared to be confronted with such restrictions. He protested. "Such restrictions against foreigners," he pointed out, "are not observed even among the nations of Asia," and he was, therefore, "quite at a loss to conceive how it should exist among a people so famed as the French are for courtesy and liberality in all other matters." The Raja wrote a most remarkable letter in this connection to the Foreign Minister of France in which he pleaded for the removal of all impediments to human intercourse among the nations of the world "in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race," and maintained "that not religion only but unbiased common sense as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research lead to the conclusion that all mankind are one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches." In the same letter he advocated the establishment of a 'Congress' to which "all matters of difference, whether political or commercial, affecting the Natives of any two civilised countries with constitutional governments" might be submitted and "settled amicably and justly to the satisfaction of both and profound peace and friendly feelings between them from generation to generation,"—thus, with the vision of a prophet, as it were, clearly foreshadowing the principle underlying the League of Nations, and, like a practical statesman, laying down a scheme for an International Court of Justice. [The correspondence which in this connection passed between him and the Board of Control and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France is reproduced in Appendix A].

Difficulties in his way of visiting France having been removed, Rammohun came to Paris in the autumn of 1832. He was received there

"with the highest consideration. Literary as well as political men, strove to testify their respect for their extraordinary guest. He was introduced to Louis Philippe, with whom he had the honour of dining more than once, and our Brahmin spoke in warm terms of the King's condescension and kindness." [*Asiatic Journal,* Sept.-Dec., 1833.] Rammohun returned to England in January, 1833, and put up with John and Joseph Hare, brothers of his friend David Hare of Calcutta, in their hospitable mansion at 48, Bedford Square. [See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article, "The Last Days of Raja Rammohun Roy," in the *Modern Review,* October, 1929].

(50) The "Suttee" Memoria's and Counter-Memorials:

The orthodox Hindu leaders of Calcutta, at the instance of the Dharma Sabha, made an appeal to the King in Council against Lord William Bentinck's decree abolishing the practice of *Suttee.* Against this Rammohun drafted and took with him from India a counter-petition and presented it to the House of Commons [*Asiatic Journal,* May, 1831, pp. 20-21]. The Raja had the satisfaction of being present when the appeal against the abolition of the inhuman rite was rejected by the Privy Council and the decision announced on the 11th July, 1832.

The Privy Councillors who heard the appeal, at the Council Chamber, Whitehall, were the Lord President of the Council, the Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, the first Lord of the Admiralty, the Paymaster of the Forces, the Marquis of Wellesley, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Amherst, Lord John Russell, Sir James Graham, Sir L. Shadwell, and Sir W. [E ?] H. East. "The Raja," we read in a contemporary account, "sat near their Lordships."

(51) Renewal of the East India Company's Charter:

The question of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter came up before the House of Commons for consideration early in 1831. The House appointed a Select Committee to consider the renewal, and Rammohun was invited to appear and give evidence before it regarding conditions in India. Miss Collet in her biography of the Raja says that Rammohun declined this invitation, but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications" to the Board of Control. Miss Mary Carpenter, however, thinks that the Raja had actually been examined by the Committee. She writes in her *Last Days of the Rajah Rammohun Roy in England* (1866), that . . . "his time and thoughts were continually occupied with the proceedings of the Government, and affording information and advice whenever they were required. Everything else was made subservient to this great object. *Frequently was the noble form of the illustrious stranger seen within the precincts of our Houses of Parliament, as those still remember who were there 35 years ago.*" (The italics are ours.—*Ed.*).

Of the "Communications" themselves Dr. Lant Carpenter wrote in his memoir of the Raja, that they show "with what closeness of observation, soundness of judgment and comprehensiveness of views he had

considered the various circumstances which interfered with its (India's) improvement, or which, on the other hand, tended to promote it. They show him to be at once the Philosopher and Patriot. They are full of practical wisdom; and there is reason to believe that they were highly valued by the Government, and that they aided in the formation of the new system, by which the well-being of our vast dependencies in India must be so greatly affected for good or for ill."

It is very interesting to note that when various schemes of future government of India were being suggested and discussed in England in connection with the renewal of the Charter, a humorous writer published a play, entitled "Plans for the Government of India—A Drama," in which he put these words in the mouth of one of his characters, a candidate for Parliament :—"I propose, therefore, in the first place that Raja Rammohun Roy be appointed Governor-General of India; that all the judicial posts be filled by Mahomedans [the Raja held in his written evidence before the Select Committee that the Mahomedans had better legal training and were more fitted for the judicial posts than the Hindus—*Editor*]; all the revenue offices be filled by Hindus; and the Police be executed by East Indians or Indo-Britons. The beauty of this plan, ladies and gentlemen, consists in this : The Raja is neither a Hindoo, a Mohomedan nor a Christian, so that he can have no bias towards any part of the population in India; and the rest being antagonistical, that is opposed to each other, they would keep, by their very opposition, the whole machine of Government in steady operation, just as an arch is retained firmly together by contrary pressure on all sides of it" [*Asiatic Journal,* Jan.-April, 1832, pp. 281-288].

To go on with our account however. The Report of the Select Committee on the Company's Charter was completed and presented to Parliament in August, 1832. It was before the Court of Directors in the months of March and April, 1833, and its recommendations agreed to. They were then drafted as a Bill and presented in the House of Commons in June. It was duly passed and received the Royal assent on August 20, 1833. The Raja was, however, not satisfied with it. Miss Collet says : "Possibly the terms of the new Charter were not to Rammohun's mind." And no wonder, for even the very modest proposal of the Raja, that, in enacting any new measure, the Government should consult "a few of the most distinguished individuals in the European and Native community for their suggestions," was not embodied in the East India Bill. We, however, find the Editor of the *Bengal Spectator,* in referring to Rammohun in July, 1842, observing, that "it is to him that we are in great measure indebted for the concessions in regard to the privileges of Natives contained in the late Charter (1833)."

The various improvements suggested by Rammohun in the adminstration of India included trial by Jury, appointment of Indian Judicial Assessors, Joint Judges, Regular Public Registers and the Codification of Civil and Criminal Law, besides improvements of the Revenue System, Tenure of Land, Rate of Rent, Title to Land, and of the condition of the Peasants and "inhabitants at large."

The "Communications" from the Raja to the Board of Control were later embodied in a volume, which was published in London by Smith Elder & Co. under the title of "Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems in India, and of the General Character and Condition of its Native Inhabitants, as submitted in Evidence to the Authorities in England." We have, however, been told by one of the Judges of the Calcutta High Court, that this volume does not contain *all* that the Raja communicated to the Board. His *entire* evidence is to be found, we are told by the same authority, in the Appendix to the *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company,* published in 1831-33. We, therefore, indicate below the places in the above Report where the "Communications" and the Evidence of the Raja are to be found.

(1) 1831 : Vol. V. : pp. 716-723.—Copy of communication between Rammohun Roy and the Board of Control relative to the Revenue and Judicial System of India. 54 questions proposed to Rammohun Roy, and his answers, dated 19th August, 1831. Subjects : Revenue System of India, Tenure of Land, Rate of Rent, Title to Land, Improvement of the State of the cultivators and inhabitants at large.

(2) Pp. 723-726.—Paper on the Revenue System of India, by Rammohun Roy, dated London, August 19th, 1831.

(3) Pp. 726-739.—78 questions and answers, dated, London, September 19th, 1831.

(4) Pp. 739-741.—13 queries and answers, dated, London, September 28th, 1831.

(5) 1831-32 : Vol. VIII : Section V, pp. 341-343.—Remarks by Rammohun Roy are given on the Settlement of Europeans in India, dated 14th July, 1832.

(6) 1833 : pp. 366.—The Evidence of Rammohun Roy, respecting the condition of the ryots in India.

A side note for reference, p. 366, opposite to this mention of Rammohun Roy, has these words : "Evidence before Committee of 1831. Evidence before this Committee. A to G, 35, p. 5, min.," which seems to show that the Raja had been examined before a Committee of the House of Commons. [See Mary Carpenter's *Last Days of the Rajah Rammohun Roy in England,* Chapter II]

(52—53) The Fatal Malady: The Last Hours:

Overwork and inhospitable climate had considerably affected the health of the Raja in England. His liver, we are told, was affected; "he had grown very stout and looked full and flushed." Bad health coupled with mental anxiety, caused by pecuniary embarrassment, darkened his last days in a strange land. The failure of the Banking House of Messrs. Mackintosh & Co., his agents in Calcutta, and of the House of Messrs. Rickards Mackintosh & Co., his agents in London, put him in a position of great difficulty (1833). He was obliged to request the Court of Directors of the East India Company to assist him with a loan of £2,000 on his personal security, to enable him to proceed to India. The Court of Directors (in their letter of 30th July, 1833) declined to make the advance upon his personal security, thus adding to his mental anxiety, which contributed to aggravate his ill health.

[See Brajendra Nath Banerji's article "The Last Days of Raja Rammohun Roy" *in the Modern Review*, October, 1929.]

Weary in body and mind, the Raja came to Bristol early in September, accompanied by Miss Hare, the sister of his friend, David Hare of Calcutta, to have some rest and change under the hospitable roof of Miss Castle, a ward of his friend, Dr. Lant Carpenter, the Pastor of Lewin's Mead Chapel of the city. Stapleton Grove, the beautiful and commodious mansion of the Castles, offered a quiet country life to the jaded nerves of the Raja. His adopted son Raja Ram, who had accompanied him to England, was being educated here. With Rammohun came also his two Hindu servants, Ramhurry Doss and Ramrotun Mukerjee. The charming hospitality of Miss Castle and her aunt, Miss Kiddell, the congenial company of Dr. Carpenter and other admiring friends proved "something like a haven of rest" for the Raja.

On the 19th September the Raja suddenly fell ill. He had fever attended with severe headache. Next day he was very restless, "changing from the bed to the sofa on the ground." At about midnight his extremities suddenly became very cold, his pulse weak, "with the appearance of collapse." Medicines, internal and external, restored him. He slept with his eyes open. The attending physician found him in the need of a nurse and begged him to allow his friend's sister, Miss Hare, to attend him constantly. The Raja objected on the grounds of propriety and was assured that customs in England rendered it quite proper. He relented and Miss Hare was admitted and nursed the Raja with the devotion of a daughter. On the 22nd the Raja's condition remaining much the same as before, another doctor (Dr. Prichard, the author of "The Physical History of Man") was called in in the morning. In the evening the Raja was a little better. He observed that he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had the best advice in Bristol and thanked his friends for their kindness and attendance upon him. He took a turn for the worse the next day, having passed a restless night with interrupted sleep and eyes open. Yet another Doctor (Dr. Carrick) was called in, and the head appearing to be the organ most affected, leeches were applied. But the illness moved on towards its fatal issue with great rapidity. The Raja was in a comatose condition, followed by an attack of spasm, with convulsive twitchings of the mouth; the left arm and leg appeared paralysed.

At last came the fatal day—the 27th September, 1833. And let us quote here *in full* from the journal of the attending physician, Dr. Estlin.

> "He became worse every few minutes, his breathing more rattling and impeded, his pulse imperceptible. He moved about his right arm constantly and his left arm a little a few hours before his death. It was a beautiful moonlight night; on one side of the window, as Mr. Hare, Miss Kiddell and I looked out of it, was the calm rural midnight scene; on the other, this extraordinary man *dying*. I shall never forget the moment. Miss Hare, now hopeless and overcome, could not summon courage to hang over

the dying Rajah as she did while soothing or feeding him ere hope had left her, and remained sobbing in the chair near; the young Rajah was generally holding his hand. . . At half-past two Mr. Hare came into my room and told me it was all over. His last breath was drawn at 2-25."

The Raja talked very little during his illness except to thank his physicians and friends. He was often observed to be engaged in prayer. Miss Collet writes: "His utterance of the sacred AUM—one of the last words he was heard to utter—suggested that at the solitary gate of death as well as in the crowded thoroughfare of life the contemplation of the Supreme Being was the chief preoccupation of his soul."

The morning after the death a cast of the Raja's head and face was taken, and an examination of the body, which had a "beautiful majestic look," took place. The "brain was found to be inflamed containing some fluid and covered with a kind of purulent effusion: its membrane also adhered to the skull. . . . The case appeared to be one of fever producing great prostration of the vital powers. . . " [See *The Last Days of the Rajah Rammohun Roy in England* by Mary Carpenter: Chapter III].

(54) The Interment:

The question arose after the Raja's death as to *how* and *where* his mortals remains were to be laid at rest. "The Rajah's illness", writes Mary Carpenter, "had been so sudden, ... that he had given no directions as to his last wishes. It was known, however, that he adhered to all Brahminical customs, which, in his opinion, did not savour of idolatry; this was not from any value which he attached to them, so much as to avoid all unnecessary cause of offence to his countrymen, which might lessen with them the influence of his writings. Two [*sic*] Brahmin servants continually attended on him, and after his death they found upon him the thread indicating his caste. The attached friends whose advice and assistance he had often sought in London, gave it as their opinion that with these known feelings of his, it would not be right to inter him in an ordinary burying ground." "Besides this," says Dr. Carpenter, "the Rajah had repeatedly expressed the wish that, in case of his dying in England, a small piece of freehold ground might be purchased for his burying place, and a cottage be built on it for the gratuitous residence of some respectable poor person, to take charge of it. Every difficulty, however, was removed by the offer of Miss Castle, in which she had the warm accordance of all her intimate friends, to appropriate to the object a beautifully adapted spot, in a shrubbery near her lawn, and under some fine elms. There this revered and beloved person was interred, on the 18th of October, about two p.m."

Let us conclude by giving the account of this solemn function in the beautiful and touching words of Mary Carpenter: "At length," she writes, "all the preparations were made. The Messrs. Hare had come from London, and those only were invited to assemble at Stapleton Grove who had been personally connected with the Rajah

Miss Castle's guardian and immediate connections, the Messrs. Hare and their niece [sister], who had attended on him in his last illness like a daughter, and young Raja Ram, his adopted son, with the Brahmin servants; the medical attendants, including Mr. Estlin with his venerable mother and young daughter; Dr. Jerrard; the celebrated John Foster; my father and myself. Soon after noon was the shrine containing the mortal remains of that glorious spirit, slowly and solemnly, in the deepest silence, borne down the broad gravel walk, followed by us his mourning friends, who had but lately known him in earth, but who hoped to meet him in the Father's Mansions above. The bearers wound along a shady walk, which his foot had doubtless often trodden, and there deposited their sacred burden in the appointed resting place! No voice ventured to express the deep thoughts which must have filled every breast! 'Who could have spoken over such a grave?' afterwards said John Foster."

As there could be no regular entry of the interment in any official registers, those who witnessed it signed a document specially drawn up for the purpose, in case such a document should be needed for any legal purposes. [A facsimile of the Funeral Document is reproduced in this booklet.]

(55) Where His Earthly Remains Rest:

Stapleton Grove was not to be the final resting place of Rammohun. A few years after the Raja's death, it passed out of the Castle family. And the public could not have the same access to the grave as it had under the former owners. It was also felt that a befitting monument should be erected over the Raja's grave. When Rammohun's beloved friend and collaborator, the "Prince" Dwarkanath Tagore came to England in 1842, he came commissioned by the admirers of the Raja in Calcutta "to rescue the grave of that illustrious man from the neglect to which it had been consigned, and to erect over it some memorial which shall at least serve to direct the steps of future pilgrims from India to England to the place where his remains rest." Accordingly Dwarkanath, on his arrival in England, had the case containing the Raja's coffin removed from Stapleton Grove to the beautiful cemetery of Arno's Vale on the outskirts of Bristol. On the 29th of May, 1843, the mortal remains of Rammohun were once more interred here, and in the spring of the year following, on the sacred spot was erected a beautiful tomb of stone, resembling a Hindu temple. In 1872 the tomb was thoroughly repaired and an inscription carved on it. [The inscription will be found elsewhere in this booklet.]

[See the article by Mr. Manmatha Nath Ghosh on "The First Memorial Meeting in Calcutta to do honour to the memory of a great Indian Citizen" in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, December 20, 1930.]

THE RAJA : A LOVER OF FREEDOM

" He would be free, or not be at all. He must breathe an atmosphere of freedom, and not finding one ready-made to his hand, he made one for himself. He felt with the old English poet, ' My mind to me a Kingdom is ', and from this free domain, he unweariedly directed his attacks against those systems of spiritual, social, and political oppression of which, by the necessity of circumstances, he was part and parcel, either as actor or sufferer, as priest or victim : and most earnestly—to his high honour be it spoken—against that system of spiritual and social tyranny which conferred on himself peculiar and invidious and pernicious distinctions and privileges. Love of freedom was, perhaps, the strongest passion of his soul—freedom not of the body merely, but of the mind—freedom not of action merely, but of thought. Almost instinctively he tore away and trampled under the foot the fetters which the religion of his own people, the usages of his own country, his family, descent, and his personal position, had imposed. If obstacles arose in his path, he fearlessly overturned them. If an attack was made even by implication merely, on his mental freedom, he resisted it with an irrepressible sense of deep injury and insult. . . . This tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the slightest approach to an encroachment on his mental freedom was accompanied with a very nice perception of equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him in religion and politics, and still more remarkably even of those whom the laws of nature and of society subjected to his undisputed control. . . . This love of freedom, so strikingly characteristic of the man, . . was a rational conviction springing from his belief in the noble purposes which a well-regulated and self-restrained liberty is capable of conferring on the individual and on society. He did not seek to limit the enjoyment of it to any class, or colour, or race, or nation, or religion. His sympathies embraced all mankind".

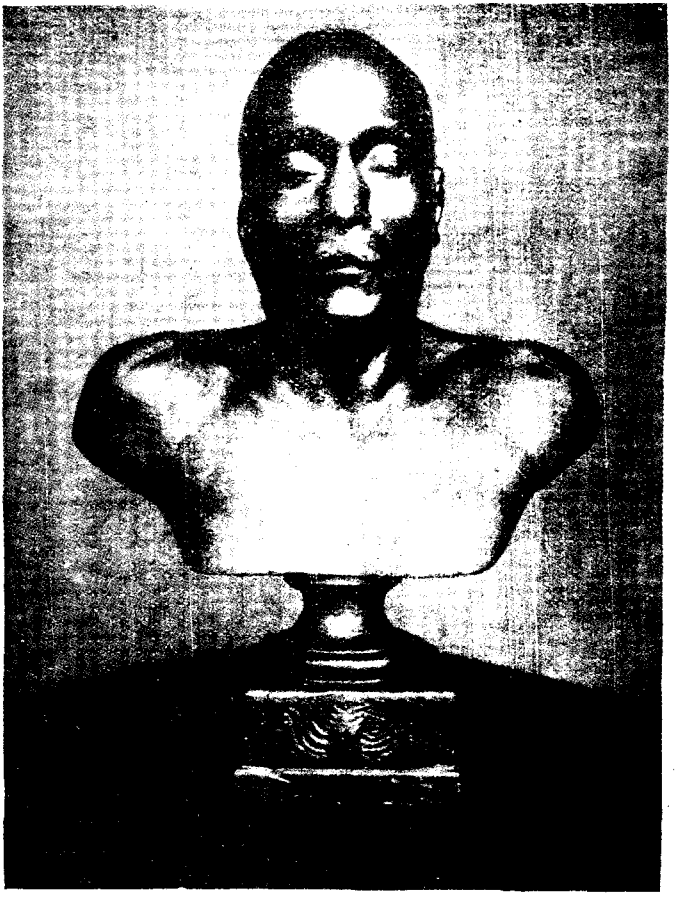
—WILLIAM ADAM.

We the undersigned were present at the interment of the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, on Friday the 18th day of October, 1833; in a spot under several Elms, adjoining the Lawn at Stapleton Grove, the residence of Miss Castle and of her Maternal Aunt and Guardian Miss Kiddell. The interment took place in silence and without any ceremony.

Ann Kiddell Stapleton Grove
Catherine Castle Stapleton Grove
John Hare 48 Bedford Square London
Joseph Hare 48 Bedford Square London
Jazeb Hare 48 Bedford Square
Rajah Ram Roy 48 Bedford Square London
John Bishop Estlin, Surgeon, Bristol.
Geo. E. Sanders. - Clifton - One of the Guardians of Miss Castle
Lant Carpenter LL.D. Protestant Dissenting Minister, Bristol - One of the Guardians of Miss Castle
Susanna Estlin Bristol.
Joseph Henry Jerrard B.C.L. Principal of the Bristol College & Fellow of Caius College Cambridge
Mary Carpenter 2 Great George St. Bristol
Elizabeth Dawson Stapleton Grove
Mary Anne Estlin 44 Park Street, Bristol.
Ramrotun Mukerjea রামরতন মুখর্জ্জ
Ramchurry Dey
রামচরণ

Mr Harris. Mr H Castle, Revd J Foster, Miss Foster, Mrs B Smith, & Mr Kiddell were also present but their Signatures were not affixed.

FUNERAL DOCUMENT CERTIFYING TO
THE INTERMENT OF RAMMOHUN ROY



DEATH MASK OF RAMMOHUN ROY

RAMMOHUN ROY AND MODERN INDIA

By

RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

Editor of "The Modern Review" and "Prabasi,"

Calcutta

The Editor of *The Modern Review* and *Prabasi* wrote this monograph as an Introduction to the second edition of *The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy,* published by the Panini office, Allahabad, in 1906. Subsequently, in 1918, he published it as a booklet, which, however, is now out of print. The text here has been taken from that booklet, partially revised by the Author, and somewhat abridged by the Editor.

ALL earnest attempts at reform, whether religious, social, political, or of any other description, are based on faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and justice and humanity, which is synonymous with a belief in the moral government of the Universe. This is an essential element in religious belief. One would, therefore, expect to find Raja Rammohun Roy, the first all-round reformer in modern India, "above all and beneath all a religious personality. The many and far-reaching ramifications of his prolific energy were forth-puttings of one purpose. The root of his life was religion. He would never have been able to go so far or to remove his countrymen so mightily as he did but for the driving power of an intense theistic passion.*"

Raja's religion—at once universal and national.

As in his life so in his writings, religion occupies the foremost place. His writings on religious subjects are the most important and most voluminous. But their very extent and variety are apt to puzzle those who may strive to find out the exact nature of his religious faith. The late Babu Rajnarain Bose had it from his father, a disciple of the Raja, that the latter, before his departure for England, had foretold that after his death various sects would claim him as belonging to their own particular ranks, but he declared that he did not belong to any particular sect. What the Raja foresaw has actually taken place. "It has been said that Rammohun Roy delighted to pass for a believer in the Vedanta with the Hindus, for a Christian among the adherents of that creed, and for a disciple of the Koran with the champions of Islamism. The truth is that his eclecticism equalled his sincerity."† It would be out of place here to enter into a discussion of the question of his religious belief. Suffice it to say that he believed in pure theism, as his *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin* on the one hand and the Trust-deed of the Brahmo Samaj on the other, in addition to many of his other works, prove conclusively. He did not reject any truth to be found in any scriptures or in the teachings of any prophet or saint; he revered and accepted truth from all quarters : but at the same time he did not accept any book or teacher as infallible. It should not, however, be forgotten that, though he was thus cosmopolitan in his acceptance of truth, there are reasons to think that he believed in what may be called national or racial manifestations or developments of universal theism.

*Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, the Raja's English biographer, writes : "Rammohun made no secret of the theistic passion which ruled his life. A favourite disciple remarked that, whenever he spoke of the Universal Theism, to the advocacy of which he had devoted himself, he was moved even to tears."—*Editor.*

†*The Contemporary Evolution of Religious Thought,* by Count Goblet d'Alviella, p. 233.

At the time when he established the Brahmo Samaj he meant it to be simply a meeting-ground for people of all sects who wished to unite for divine-worship, "a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the author and preserver of the Universe but not under or by any other name, designation or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever."*

It seems to us, that the Raja may have thought that Theism, though at bottom one all over the world, has yet found various expressions among different races; and though abstract truth is thinkable, yet as it finds actual manifestation in some concrete shape, it is the part of wisdom to allow the abstract universal Theism in all countries and among all races to keep its native shape and colour, in which it is embodied, freed, of course, from all that is base and impure, with a broad spirit of toleration for other shapes and colours; and that the future unity of the human race in religion is not to be realised by all mankind following the creed of this or that sect, but by each nation or race giving up all such erroneous and superstitious beliefs and pernicious customs and lifeless rituals as clash with pure Theism, but in every thing else keeping all that is racy of the soil, all that distinctively belongs to the religious genius of that nation or race, in a spirit of discriminating reverence for its own past and of respect and toleration for others.

Professor Monier Williams speaks of him as the first really earnest investigator in the science of comparative theology, which the world has produced.

As a Social Reformer

Position of women.

Social customs and practices have been and are in all countries more or less connected with the religious beliefs of the people. It is, therefore, only natural that Rammohun Roy's programme of religious reform should lead on to and embrace social reform. In all countries, and specially in India, social reform consists chiefly in doing away with the disabilities or sufferings incident to difference of sex or the accident of birth. Or, in other words, social reformers have chiefly to fight with the spirit of caste and its evils and the subjection of women to the

*The passage quoted above is from the Trust-deed of the Brahmo Samaj, of which the late Mahadeva Govind Ranade said :—"The spirituality, the deep piety and universal toleration of this document represent an ideal of beauty and perfection which it may yet take many centuries before its full significance is understood by our people."—*Editor.*

selfish interests and pleasures or supposed interests of the male sex.

Abolition of the "Suttee."

Rammohun Roy's chief claim to the gratitude of Hindu womanhood is the courageous and devoted part that he played in the movement for the abolition of the *Suttee*. He may or may not have been the central figure in that movement, but it must be admitted by all that but for his exertions that inhuman custom would not have been put down by law so soon as it was.

Women's Right to Property.

But to prevent the murder of widows was only to create another problem, namely, the amelioration of their condition. It is even now a question as to how we can best better their lot. Many solutions of the problem have been proposed and attempted: their re-marriage; giving them such training as to enable them to lead honourable, useful and independent lives; so changing the Hindu law of inheritance as to make the means of living of Hindu widows less precarious, &c. His *Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females, according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance* was intended to attain the last object. That the condition of helpless widows deeply touched his heart appears also from No. VI of the *Sambad Kaumudi*, which contained "an appeal to the rich Hindus of Calcutta to constitute a society for the relief of destitute widows, upon the principles of the Civil and Military Widows' Fund established by order of Government."

His estimate of women.

That he was earnestly in favour of the education of women is quite clear from many passages in his writings, such, for instance, as the following, taken from his *Second Conference on the Practice of Burning Widows Alive* :—

> . . . . How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If *after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot* comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife of the Prince of Karnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Shastras; moreover, in the *Brihadaranyak-Opanishad* of the *Yajur Veda*, it is clearly stated that Yajnavalkya imported divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyi, who was able to follow and completely attain it!
>
> Secondly. You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised: for we constantly perceive, in a country where the name of death makes the male shudder, that the female, from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband; and yet you accuse those women of deficiency in point of resolution.
>
> Thirdly. With regard to their trustworthiness, let us look minutely into the conduct of both sexes, and we may be enabled to ascertain which of them is the most frequently guilty of betraying friends. If we enumerate such women in each village or town as have been deceived by men, and such men as have been betrayed by women, I presume that the number of deceived women would be found ten times greater than that of the betrayed men. Men are, in general, able to read and write, and manage public affairs, by

which means they easily promulgate such faults as women occasionally commit, but never consider as criminal the misconduct of men towards women. One fault they have, it must be acknowledged ; which is, by considering others equally void of duplicity as themselves, to give their confidence too readily, from which they suffer such misery, even so far that some of them are misled to suffer themselves to be burnt to death.

In the fourth place, with respect to their subjection to the passions, this may be judged of by the custom of marriage as to the respective sexes ; for one man may marry two or three, sometimes even ten wives and upwards ; while a woman, who marries but one husband, desires at his death to follow him, forsaking all worldly enjoyments, or to remain leading the austere life of an ascetic.

Views on Child-Marriage, Polygamy, etc.

It may be safely said that had he lived to return home from England and work here for a few years more, his contact with the comparatively enlightened womanhood of the West would certainly have borne fruit in the establishment of educational institutions for Indian girls and women. That Miss Mary Carpenter came out to India to labour for the good of Indian women is due mainly to her contact with the Raja. Regarding the re-marriage of child-widows, his [Bengali] biographer, Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee says :—"We have heard that Rammohun Roy used to express a desire to his friends that the re-marriage of child-widows should become prevalent. When he went to England a rumour spread everywhere that on coming back home he would introduce the custom of the re-marriage of widows."

It will appear from a study of his *Brief Remarks regarding the Ancient Rights of Females* that he was opposed to polygamy, *kulinism* and the practical selling of girls in marriage. He showed from the Shastras that second marriages were authorised only under certain circumstances, and observed :—

"Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorised by the rulers of the empire to receive applications for his sanction to a second marriage during the life of a first wife, and to grant his consent only on such accusations as the foregoing being substantiated, the above law might have been rendered effectual, and the distress of the female sex in Bengal and the number of suicides, would have been necessarily very much reduced."

We have no indication in his works of his views on child-marriage. Perhaps in his days in Bengal, though such marriages must have been customary, their consummation was postponed to a maturer age, thus minimizing the evil to some extent, as is still the case in some parts of India. But one can only speculate as to what he would have done had he lived to come back from England. For, a man who had such innate chivalry in his nature that he would never take his seat if any woman of what rank so ever remained standing in his presence, could not have failed to observe the evil effects on women of such a custom.

It is related that he gave his grand-daughter in marriage when she was 15 or 16.

Views on Caste system.

That Rammohun Roy had not failed to observe the evil effects of caste will appear from the extract from one of his letters printed below :—

> "I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise. . . . . It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort."

No. VIII of his *Sambad Kaumudi*, too, prints the plea of a philanthropist (probably himself), who, observing the misery caused by prejudices of caste, urges the Hindus not to debar themselves thereby from mechanical pursuits, but to cultivate "such arts as would tend to their comfort, happiness and independence." By crossing the ocean, dining with Europeans, and in other ways, the Raja, to a great extent, broke through the unreasonable and injurious restrictions imposed by caste. He published with a Bengali translation the first chapter of a Sanskrit work against caste, named *Vajrasuchi*, by Mrityunjayacharyya.

Among the causes of the political subjection of India, he mentions caste in the following passage taken from the *Brahmunical Magazine* :—

> "We have been subjected to such insults for about nine centuries, and the cause of such degradation has been our excess in civilization and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals ; *as well as our division into castes,* which has been the source of want of unity among us."

While civilization produces culture, refinement and sociability, its excess enervates and makes men too mild.

In recent years various means have been suggested for bringing about the fusion of castes and sub-castes and sects by facilitating inter-marriage among them. The means proposed by Rammohun Roy was the adoption of the *Saiva* form of marriage prescribed in the following *sloka* of the "Mahanirvana Tantra" :

> *"There is no discrimination of age and caste or race in the Saiva marriage. As enjoined by Siva, one should marry a woman who has no husband and who is not 'sapinda', that is, who is not within the prohibited degrees of marriage."*

Rammohun contended that orthodox Hindus ought to consider *Saiva* marriages as valid as *Vaidik* marriages. Had his views prevailed, widow-marriage, inter-caste and inter-racial marriage, and post-puberty marriage would all have been considered valid according to Hindu usage.

As an Educationist

Pioneer and Promoter of Education.

It is well-known that Rammohun Roy himself founded and helped others in founding schools. He took a prominent part in the great educational controversy between the "Orientalists" and the "Anglicists," and sided with the latter. But for his opposition the clamour of the former for the exclusive pursuit of Oriental studies would most probably have prevailed. His *Letter on English Education* to Lord Amherst is a remarkably convincing production. For the direct and indirect beneficial results of Western education, we are indebted to Raja Rammohun Roy as much as to Lord Macaulay, Lord William Bentinck, David Hare and others.*

Father of Modern Bengali Prose.

Rammohun Roy wrote text-books in Bengali on Grammar, Geography, Astronomy and Geometry. He may be considered as practically the father of modern Bengali *literary* prose. He taught his people the use of marks of punctuation. There was in his nature a deep vein of genuine poetry, too; as his Bengali hymns show. He was the first to write theistic hymns in Bengali. Pandit Ramagati Nyayaratna, a well-known Hindu historian of the Bengali language and literature, truly observes that "they appear to possess the power of melting even stony hearts, of making the most irreligious devoted to God and of making hearts sunk in worldliness detached from the world."

The Raja as a Journalist.

His Bengali journal, the *Sambad Kaumudi*, first appeared in 1821. He is practically the founder of native journalism in India. The *Sambad Kaumudi*† was not exclusively or chiefly a political publication. It, as well as his Persian newspapers, *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* or "Mirror of Intelligence," had an educational

*The part played by Rammohun in the introduction and promotion of Western education, in drawing the Christian missions into the field of Indian education and in the founding of the Hindu College in Calcutta has been described in the "Notes" in supplement to the *Story of His Life* given in the preceding pages. Rammohun's advocacy of modern learning in his letter to Lord Ahmerst (1823) for "an enlightened system of education embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences," was written 12 years before Macaulay wrote his famous minute (1835). But whereas Rammohun laid emphasis on the teaching of Western sciences, Macaulay pleaded for the establishment of schools "in which the English language might be well and thoroughly taught."—*Editor*.

†Some of the contents of the earlier numbers of the *Sambad Kaumudi* may be given here :—

No. I.—An appeal to the Government for the establishment of a school for the gratuitous instruction of the poor but respectable Hindus.

No. II.—Humble address to the Government soliciting the extension of trial by jury to Mofussil Zilla and Provincial Courts of Judicature.

No. III.—An appeal to the Government to relieve the Hindu community from the inconvenience consequent upon there being only one Ghaut for the burning of dead bodies whereas an immense space of ground has been granted for the burial of Christians.

(*Footnote continued on next page*).

purpose, too. Besides politics, subjects of a historical, literary and scientific character were treated of therein.*

Lawyers of eminence have declared that the legal writings of the Raja, such as his *Brief Remarks on Ancient Female Rights, The Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal,* would do credit to jurists of the highest standing.† His legal writings.

Appeal to Government for the prevention of the exportation of the greatest part of the produce of rice from Bengal to foreign ports.

Appeal to Government to enable the middle class of native subjects to avail themselves of the treatment of European physicians.

Appeal to the Calcutta Magistrates to resort to rigorous measures for relieving the Hindu inhabitants of Calcutta from the serious grievances of Christian gentlemen driving their buggies amongst them and cutting and lashing them with whips, without distinction of sex or age, while they quietly assembled in immense numbers to see the images of their deities pass in the Chitpore Road, when many of them, through terror and consternation caused by the lashing inflicted on the spectators, fell down into drains, while others were trampled under foot by the crowd.

*The contents of the first issue of the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* will prove of interest :—

1. The Editor informs the public that although so many Newspapers have been published in this city to gratify their readers, yet there is none in Persian for the information of those who are well versed in that language, and do not understand English, particularly the people of Upper Hindusthan. He has therefore undertaken to publish a Persian Newspaper every week.
2. Government Regulation respecting the period Company's Servants can be absent from their duty on account of their health.
3. Difference with China.
4. Trial of John Hayes, Esq., Judge of Tipperah.
5. Release of Prisoners on the 23rd of April : King's Birthday.
6. Shipping Intelligence.
7. Cause of Enmity between Russia and the Sublime Porte.
8. Exploits of Rungeet Singh.
9. Plentiful crop of corn this year in Hindoostan.
10. Pair of Elephants for sale.
11. Price of Indigo and Opium.
12. Proposal sent to the inhabitants of Shajuhanabad, by an officer of the Honourable Company, pointing out the advantages of having an English School instituted in that city, to which however the Natives paid no attention."

Welcoming editorially the advent of this Persian Weekly started by Rammohun, the *Calcutta Journal* (20th April, 1822, p. 561) of Mr. James Silk Buckingham wrote :—

"The Editor is a Brahmin of high rank, a man of liberal sentiments, and by no means deficient in loyalty, well versed in the Persian language, and possessing a competent knowledge of English : intelligent, with a considerable share of general information and an insatiable thirst after knowledge."—*Editor*

†The late Sir Gooroodas Banerjee, a Judge of the Calcutta High Court and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, in a speech that he delivered as Chairman at Rammohun Roy's Death Anniversary Meeting in 1889, said :—"His (Rammohun's) two essays—one on the rights of

As A Political Reformer

To the public Rammohun Roy is best known as a religious and social reformer. To many he is also known as a litterateur and educationist. But he is not so well-known as a political reformer and agitator. A brief account of his politics may not therefore be out of place here.

Raja's Love of Freedom.

Mr. William Adam, a Baptist Missionary, whose association with Raja Rammohun Roy led him to adopt Unitarian opinions, bears the following testimony to his love of liberty :—

> "He would be free or not be at all. . . . Love of freedom was perhaps the strongest passion of his soul, ... freedom not of action merely, but of thought. . . . This tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the slightest approach to an encroachment on his mental freedom was accompanied with a very nice perception of the equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him."

It was this love of liberty that was the source of all his political opinions and the mainspring of all his political activity. It made him take interest in and deeply sympathise with all political movements all over the world that had for their object the advancement of popular freedom. Some instances may here be given of Rammohun's cosmopolitan sympathies in the region of politics.

> "When the intelligence reached India that the people of Naples after extorting a constitution from their despotic king were crushed back into servitude by the Austrian troops, in obedience to the joint mandate of the crowned heads of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sardinia, and Naples, Rammohun felt it [so] keenly,"

that in a letter to Mr. Buckingham, dated August 11, 1821, he wrote :—

> "I am afraid I must be under the necessity of denying myself the pleasure of your society this evening: more especially as my mind is depressed by the late news from Europe. . . . From the late unhappy news I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, especially those that are European colonies, possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy.
>
> "Under these circumstances I consider the cause of the Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies as ours. *Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been and never will be ultimately successful.*"

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the Hindoo females and the other on the rights of a Hindoo over ancestral property—show at once his deep erudition as a lawyer and his broad views as a jurist; and it is to the latter of these two essays that is due in no small measure the advanced state of the law relating to the free alienability of property in Bengal. The concluding paragraph of that essay is well worthy of Rammohun Roy, and will do honour to any lawyer or any jurist in the country. Every one who belongs to the profession to which I have the honour to belong, will perceive here the rudiments of that discussion, which in the writings of Sir Henry Maine, have shed such lustre over his name. And Rammohun Roy was no pro-professional Lawyer." [*Reminiscences, Speeches and Writings of Sir Gooroodas Banerjee, Calcutta, 1927.* p. 360].—*Editor.*

"These noble words," says Miss Collett, "reveal how profoundly Rammohun felt with the late James Russell Lowell that "In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim" : and that

"Wherever wrong is done
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding Sun,
That wrong is also done to us."

Rammohun's Persian weekly, *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*, contained an article on "Ireland, the causes of its distress and discontent." In this he dwelt on the evils of absenteeism and the injustice of maintaining Protestant clergymen out of revenues wrung from the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Ireland.* He said :—

How admirable is the observation of Saadi (on whom be mercy!):
"Do not say that these rapacious ministers are the well-wishers of his Majesty ;
For in proportion as they augment the revenue of the State, they diminish his popularity ;
O statesmen, apply the revenue of the King towards the comfort of the people;
Then during their lives they will be loyal to him."

When the news of the establishment of constitutional Government in Spain reached India, he gave a public dinner at the Town Hall.† Some months before his departure for England, news reached Calcutta of the latest French Revolution, and, "so great was his enthusiasm that," we are told, "he could think and talk of nothing else." He viewed it as a triumph of liberty and rejoiced accordingly. On his voyage to England he landed at the Cape for only an hour or two. "Returning on board he met with a nasty accident. The gangway ladder had not been properly secured, and he got a serious fall, from which he was lame for eighteen months afterwards and indeed never finally recovered. But no bodily suffering could repress his mental ardour. Two French frigates, under the revolutionary flag, the glorious tri-colour, were lying in Table Bay, and lame as he was, he would insist on visiting them. The sight of these

*In his analysis of the Irish situation and the remedies he suggested, Rammohun can be said to have definitely anticipated Gladstone's Irish reform measures.—*Editor.*

†The dinner referred to above was given by the Raja, it appears, on receipt of the news of the successful rising of the Spanish colonies in South America against the authority of Spain. In a letter written apparently by an English friend of the Raja then living in Calcutta, and appearing in the issue of the *Edinburgh Magazine* (Constable), for September, 1823, we read :—

"But the lively interest he (Rammohun) took in the progress of South American emancipation, eminently marks the greatness and benevolence of his mind, and was created, he said, by the perusal of the detestable barbarities inflicted by Spain to subjugate, and afterwards continued by the Inquisition, to retain in bondage that unhappy country. (*Footnote continued on next page*).

colours seemed to kindle his enthusiasm, and to render him insensible to pain."

During the days of the Reform Bill agitation in England, he considered the struggle between the reformers and anti-reformers as a "struggle between liberty and tyranny throughout the world; between justice and injustice, and between right and wrong." He publicly avowed that in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated, he would renounce his connection with England. There are other indications, in his works, of what in our day is known as the spirit of non-cooperation. It is not difficult to believe that, had he lived now, this spirit would have found expression in some movement of national self-assertion.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS MUHAMMADANS

The attitude of Rammohun Roy towards Mussalman rule, society, character and culture was entirely unprejudiced and fraternal. He wore in public the dress worn in Muhammadan courts. In his "Judicial system of India," to the question—

Q. *What is your opinion of the judicial character and conduct of the Hindu and Muhammadan lawyers attached to the courts?*

He replied:

A. *Among the Muhammadan lawyers I have met with some honest men. The Hindu lawyers are in general not well spoken of and they do not enjoy much of the confidence of the public.*

In the "Condition of India," he writes:

I have observed with respect to distant cousins, sprung from the same family, and living in the same district, when one branch of the family had been converted to Mussulmanism, that those of the Muhammadan branch living in a freer manner, were distinguished by greater bodily activity and capacity for exertion, than those of the other branch which had adhered to the Hindoo simple mode of life.

Again:—

Q. *What is the state of industry among them?*
A. The Mohammedans are more active and capable of exertion than the Hindus, but the latter are also generally patient of labour, and diligent in their employments, and those of the Upper Province not inferior to the Mohammedans themselves in industry.
Q. *What capability of improvement do they possess?*

'What!' replied he (upon being asked why he had celebrated by illuminations, by *an elegant dinner to about sixty Europeans, and by a speech composed and delivered in English by himself at his house in Calcutta,* on the arrival of important news of the success of the Spanish patriots), 'ought I to be insensible to the sufferings of my fellow-creatures wherever they are, or however unconnected by interests, religion or language?' "

This letter was reproduced in "The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature," Vol. XVIII, pp. 575-788, and has been unearthed by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, who published it in *The Modern Review* for March, 1932.—*Editor.*

A. They have the same capability of improvement as any other civilized people.

Q. *What degree of intelligence exists among the native inhabitants?*

A. The Mussulmans, as well as the more respectable classes of Hindus, chiefly cultivated Persian literature, a great number of the former and a few of the latter also extending their studies likewise to Arabic. This practice has partially continued to the present time, and among those who enjoy this species of learning, as well as among those who cultivate Sanskrit literature, many well-informed and enlightened persons may be found, though from their ignorance of European literature, they are not naturally much esteemed by such Europeans as are not well versed in Arabic or Sanskrit.

Opinion of Muhammadan Rule.

His opinion of Muhammadan rule is found thus expressed in his "Appeal to the King in Council against the Press Regulation" :—

"Your Majesty is aware, that under their former Muhammadan Rulers, the natives of this country enjoyed every political privilege in common with Mussulmans, being eligible to the highest offices in the state, entrusted with the command of armies and to the government of provinces and often chosen as advisers to their Prince, without disqualification or degrading distinction on account of their religion or the place of their birth. They used to receive free grants of land exempted from any payments of revenue, and besides the highest salaries allowed under the Government, they enjoyed free of charge, large tracts of country attached to certain offices of trust and dignity, while natives of learning and talent were rewarded with numerous situations of honour and emolument. Although under the British Rule, the natives of India have entirely lost this political consequence, your Majesty's faithful subjects were consoled by the more secure enjoyment of those civil and religious rights which had been so often violated by the rapacity and intolerance of the Mussulmans ; and notwithstanding the loss of political rank and power, they considered themselves much happier in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty than were their ancestors ; but if these rights that remain are allowed to be unceremoniously invaded, the most valuable of them being placed at the mercy of one or two individuals, the basis on which they have founded their hopes of comfort and happiness under the British Power, will be destroyed."

Again :—

"Notwithstanding the despotic power of the Mogul Princes who formerly ruled over this country, and that their conduct was often cruel and arbitrary, yet the wise and virtuous among them, always employed two intelligencers at the residence of their Nawabs or Lord Lieutenants, *Akhbar-novees*, or news-writer who published an account of whatever happened, and a *Khoofea-navees*, or confidential correspondent, who sent a private and particular account of every occurrence worthy of notice ; and although these Lord Lieutenants were often particular friends or near relations to the Prince, he did not trust entirely to themselves for a faithful and impartial report of their administration, and degraded them when they appeared to deserve it, either for their own faults or for their negligence is not checking the delinquencies of their subordinate officers ; which shews that even the Mogul Princes, although their form of Government admitted of nothing better, were convinced, that in a country so rich and so replete with temptations,

a restraint of some kind was absolutely necessary, to prevent the abuses that are so liable to flow from the possession of power."

INDIAN POLITICAL OPINIONS

We now pass on to the Raja's Indian political opinions. Our politics are sure to be tinged by our attitude towards British rule in India. It is, therefore, necessary to know what the Raja thought of British rule in India in his day. In his autobiography* he writes :—

". . . . . I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British Power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me, and restored me to his favour ; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants: . . . ."

Raja's Fight for a free Press in India

Raja Rammohun Roy believed that a free Press is one of the best safeguards of liberty. This conviction found expression in his *Petitions against the Press Regulation* (1) to the Supreme Court and (2) to the King in Council. The Press Ordinance prescribed that thenceforth no one should publish a newspaper or other periodical without having obtained a license from the Governor-General in Council, signed by the Chief Secretary. The memorial submitted to the Supreme Court "may be regarded as the Areopagitica of Indian History. Alike in diction and in argument, it forms a noble landmark in the progress of Indian culture in the East."

This Memorial proving fruitless, Rammohun and his co-adjutors appealed to the King in council.† Says Miss Collett :—

*The autobiographical sketch referred to above is reproduced in Appendix B.—*Editor.*

†A few passages from this memorable document are reproduced below.—*Editor.*

31. Men in power hostile to the Liberty of the Press, which is a disagreeable check upon their conduct, when unable to discover any real evil arising from its existence, have attempted to make the world imagine, that it might, in some possible contingency, afford the means of combination against the Government, but not to mention that extraordinary emergencies would warrant measures which in ordinary times are totally unjustifiable, your Majesty is well aware, that a Free Press has never yet caused a revolution in any part of the world, because, while men can easily represent the grievances arising from the conduct of the local authorities to the supreme Government, and thus get them redressed, the grounds of discontent that excite revolution are removed; whereas, where no freedom of the Press existed, and grievances consequently remained unrepresented and unredressed, innumerable revolutions have taken place in all parts of the globe, or if prevented by the armed force of the Government, the people continued ready for insurrection.

* * * * * *

"The appeal is one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand. Its stately periods and not less stately thought recall the eloquence of the great orators of a century ago. In language and style for ever associated with the glorious vindication of liberty, it invokes against the arbitrary exercise of British power the principles and traditions which are distinctive of British History."

This Memorial, too, proved unavailing. The Privy Council declined to comply with the petition.

Raja's Demand for Political Rights.

A new Jury Act came into operation in the beginning of 1827. On August 17th, 1829, Rammohun wrote to Mr. J. Crawford and entrusted to him petitions against the Act for presentation to both Houses of Parliament, signed by Hindus and Muslims. He thus concisely stated the grounds of grievance :—

The Jury Act of 1827.

"In his famous Jury Bill, Mr. Wynn, the late President of the Board of Control, has, by introducing religious distinctions into the judicial system of this country, not only afforded just grounds for dissatisfaction among the Natives in general, but has excited much alarm in the breast of every one conversant with political principles. Any Natives, either Hindu or Mohamedan, are rendered by this Bill subject to judicial trial by Christians either European or Native, while Christians, including Native converts, are exempted from the degradation of being tried either by a Hindu or Mussulman juror, however high he may stand in the estimation of society. This Bill also denies both to Hindus and Mohamedans the honour of a seat in the Grand Jury even in the trial of fellow-Hindus or Mussulmans. This is the sum total of Mr. Wynn's late Jury Bill, of which we bitterly complain."

Rammohun went on to suggest a possibility, "which is by no means so remote now as when he wrote" :—

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36. It is well known that despotic Governments naturally desire the suppression of any freedom of expression which might tend to expose their acts to the obloquy which ever attends the exercise of tyranny or oppression and the argument they constantly resort to is, that the spread of knowledge is dangerous to the existence of all legitimate authority, since, as a people become enlightened, they will discover that by a unity of effort, the many may easily shake off the yoke of the few, and thus become emancipated from the restraints of power altogether, forgetting the lesson derived from history, that in countries which have made the smallest advances in civilization, anarchy and revolution are most prevalent—while on the other hand, in nations the most enlightened, any revolt against governments, which have guarded inviolate the rights of the governed, is most rare, and that the resistance of a people advanced in knowledge, has ever been—not against the existence,—but against the abuses of the Governing power. Canada, during the late war with America, afforded a memorable instance of the truth of this argument. The enlightened inhabitants of that colony, finding that their rights and privileges had been secured to them, their complaints listened to, and their grievances redressed by the British government, resisted every attempt of the United States to seduce them from their allegiance to it. In fact, it may be fearlessly averred, that the more enlightened a people become, the less likely are they to revolt against the governing power, as long as it is exercised with justice tempered with mercy, and the rights and privileges of the governed are held sacred from any invasion.

> "Supposing that 100 years hence the Native character becomes elevated from constant intercourse with Europeans and the acquirement of general and political knowledge as well as of modern arts and sciences, is it possible that they will not have the spirit as well as the inclination to resist effectually any unjust and oppressive measures serving to degrade them in the scale of society? It should not be lost sight of that the position of India is very different from that of Ireland, to any quarter of which an English fleet may suddenly convey a body of troops that may force its way in the requisite direction and succeed in suppressing every effort of a refractory spirit. Were India to share one-fourth of the knowledge and energy of that country, she would prove from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population, either useful and profitable as a willing province, an ally of the British empire, or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy."

The letter quoted above is remarkable for the far-sighted glance into the future which it reveals. Here in germ is to be found the national aspiration which is now breaking forth into demands for self-rule.* Rammohun's English biographer (Miss Sophia Dobson Collet) observes that

> "The prospect of an educated India, of an India approximating to European standards of culture, seems to have never been long absent from Rammohun's mind; and he did, however vaguely, claim in advance for his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilization inevitably involves. Here, again, Rammohun stands forth as the tribune and prophet of New India."

The Champion of the Peasant.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which was appointed in February, 1831, and reappointed in June to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter invited him to appear before it. Rammohun declined this request but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications to the Board of Control." The first of these dealt with Revenue. The Raja appears here as the champion of the rack-rented *ryot* (peasant). While the Zamindars or land-holders had been greatly benefited by the Permanent Settlement of 1793, while their wealth and the wealth of the community had generally increased, the poor cultivator was no better off. The remedy he asked for was, in the first place, the prohibition of any further rise in rent, and secondly—rents being now so exorbitantly high as to leave the *ryot* in a state of extreme misery,—a reduction in the revenue demanded from the Zamindar so as to ensure a reduction in the *ryot's* rent. The decrease in revenue he would meet by increasing taxes upon luxuries or by employing as Collectors low-salaried Indians instead of high-salaried Europeans. It may here be incidentally observed that a century

*That Rammohun looked upon the British domination of India as a period of political tutelage, will be amply borne out by what he said (29th June, 1828) to M. Victor Jacquement, the Frenchman who has left his impressions of India, in his *VOYAGE DANS L'INDE* (Paris, 1841) :—"India requires many more years of English domination so that she might not have many things to lose *while she is reclaiming her political independence.*" [See Mr. N. C. Chaudhuri's translation of the interview in the *Modern Review* for June, 1926].—*Editor.*

ago, when education was in a backward condition, Raja Rammohun Roy considered Indians fit for the duties of Collectors. He also considered them well qualified to discharge *all* judicial duties.

He approved of the settlement in India of a few model landlords from England, but was careful to stipulate that they should not be drawn from the lower classes. [But of this more later.]

Views on Permanent Settlement.

It admits of no doubt that the condition of the proprietors of land has improved under the system of permanent assessment. But the Government seems at present to believe that that system has resulted in loss of revenue to the State. It is, therefore, important to quote the Raja's opinion on this subject.

"The amount of assessment fixed on the lands of these provinces at the time of the Permanent Settlement (1793), was as high as had ever been assessed, and in many instances higher than had ever before been realized by the exertions of any government, Mohamedan or British. Therefore, the Government sacrificed nothing in concluding that settlement. If it had not been formed the landholders (*Zemindars*) would always have taken care to prevent the revenue from increasing by not bringing the waste lands into cultivation, and by collusive arrangements to elude further demands ; while the state of the cultivators would not have been at all better than it is now. However, if the Government had taken the whole estates of the country into its own hands, as in the ceded and conquered provinces and the Madras Presidency, then, by allowing the landholders only ten per cent. on the rents (*Malikanah*), and securing all the rest to the Government, it might no doubt have increased the revenue for a short time. But the whole of the landlords in the country would then have been reduced to the same condition as they are at present in the ceded and conquered Provinces of the Bengal Presidency or rather annihilated, as in many parts of the Madras territory ; and the whole population reduced to the same level of poverty. At the same time, the temporary increase of revenue to Government under its own immediate management would also have soon fallen off, through the misconduct and negligence of the revenue officers, as shown by innumerable instances in which the estates were kept '*khas*,' *i.e.*, under the immediate management of Government."

"Besides, Government appropriates to itself an enormous duty on the transit and exportation of the produce of the soil, which has, since the period of the Perpetual Settlement, increased to a great amount from the exertions of the proprietors in extending and improving cultivation, under the assurance that no demand of an increase of revenue would be made upon them on account of the progressive productiveness of their estates."

The Raja contrasts the effects of the permanent and periodical systems of assessment in two statements :

"By a comparative view of the revenue of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, from the period of the Perpetual Settlement, it appears that, in the thirty-five years, from 1792-93 to 1827-28, there was a total increase on the whole amount of the revenue of above 100 per cent. (101·71), and that this increase has been steady and progressive up to the present time ; . . . ."

"By a comparative view of the revenue of the old British territory in Madras, it appears that during the same period of thirty-five years (*i.e.*, from 1793 to 1828) there was an increase of only about

40 per cent. (40·15) on the total amount of the whole revenue. That the increase during the first 17 years was 43 $\frac{23}{100}$ per cent.; that in the next 8 years the increase was only about 3$\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; and that in the last 18 years there has been a decrease of 2·15 per cent."

In an appendix he urged the Imperial utility of the policy of fixing a maximum rent to be paid by each cultivator, "that their rents, already raised to a ruinous extent, might not be subject to further increase." His advocacy of this policy is so statesmanlike that no apology is needed for quoting his views on the subject. To recognise the indefeasible rights of the *ryots* in the soil would make them loyal to the power that secured them and

"ready to rise in defence of it, as a militia or in any other shape that might be required; so as to secure the British rule in a foreign and remote empire, alike from internal intrigue and from external aggression without the necessity of keeping on foot an immense standing army at an enormous cost. This consideration is of great importance in respect to the natives of the upper and western provinces, who are distinguished by their superior bravery, and form the greater part of the British Indian Army. If this race of men, who are by no means deficient in feelings of personal honour and regard for family respectability, were assured that their rights in the soil were indefeasible so long as the British power should endure, they would, from gratitude and self-interest, at all times be ready to devote their lives and property in its defence.

"The saving that might be effected by this liberal and generous policy through the substituting of a militia force for a great part of the present standing army, would be much greater than any gain that could be realized by any system of increasing land revenue that human ingenuity could devise. How applicable to this case is the following line of the Persian sage (Saadi):—

Ba rayat sulh kun wa'z jang i khasm aiman nishin

Z'anki shahinshah i adil ra rayat lashkar ast.

"Be on friendly terms with thy subjects, and rest easy about the warfare of thine enemies; for to an upright prince his people is an army."

While on the subject of Land Settlement we may say that in 1828, by Regulation III of that year, the Revenue Collector in each district was authorised to dispossess the holders of tax-free lands by his own authority, without reference to any judicial courts, if the collector should be of opinion after such enquiry as might satisfy himself that the title of the proprietor was not valid. It was therein enacted that "such decision of the Collector shall have the force and effect of a decree;" also, that "it shall not be necessary for him to transmit his proceedings to the Board of Revenue," but "the party dispossessed might appeal," and by Art. 3, whether an appeal be filed or not, "that it shall and may be lawful for the Collector immediately to carry into effect his decision by attaching and assessing his lands." This regulation produced great alarm and distrust amongst the natives of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, many of whom petitioned against the principle of one party, who lays

claim to the land, dispossessing an actual possessor at his own discretion. This agitation was led, though unsuccessfully, by Rammohun Roy* Reg. III of 1828 is still in force.

Among the principal measures advocated in the Raja's *Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of India* were the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the courts of law: the appointment of native assessors in the civil courts; trial by jury, of which the *Panchayet* system was the indigenous parallel; separation of the offices of judge and revenue commissioners; separation of the offices of judge and magistrate; codification of the criminal law and also of the law of India; and consultation with the local magnates before enacting laws. The last reform proposed contains the germs of representative legislative bodies.

Demand for all-round reform of Government.

Views on Indian Economic Question

Students of Indian economics are familiar with the fact that every year nearly 45 crores of rupees [now more] of India's capital is drained off to foreign parts without any hope of return. This drain of wealth did not escape the eyes of Raja Rammohun Roy. In his answers to questions on the "Revenue System of India" he says that as a large sum of money is now annually drawn from India by Europeans retiring from it with the fortunes realised there, a system which would encourage Europeans of capital to become permanent settlers with their

The "Economic Drain" of India.

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> "By the evidence of Messrs. Lloyd and Melville (the former, the Accountant-General, and the latter, the Auditor-General of the East India Company), recorded in the Minutes of evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 23rd February, 1830, it appears that the proportion of the Indian revenues *expended in England* on the territorial account amounts, on an average, to £3,000,000 annually. It includes the expense at the Board of Control and India House, pay, absentee allowances and pensions of Civil and Military Officers in Europe for services in India, with interest of money realised there, &c., &c., besides £453,588 for territorial stores consigned to India.
>
> "In a letter of the Court of Directors to the Government of Bengal, dated the 20th of June, 1810, and quoted in the work "On Colonial Policy as applicable to the Government of India," by a very able servant of the Company, holding a responsible situation in Bengal, the Directors state that "it is no extravagant assertion to advance, that the annual remittances to London on account of individuals, have been at the rate of nearly £2,000,000 per annum *for a series of years past*" (p. 70). From these and other authentic documents the author calculates the amount of

*Readers interested may refer to the *Petition to the Governor-General Lord Bentinck against Regulation III of 1828* for the Resumption of "Lakheraj" Lands, reprinted from the *Asiatic Journal* (Vol. I, New Series, Jan.—April, 1830) in the Rajah's English Works.—*Editor.*

capital, or "the aggregate or tribute, public and private, so withdrawn from India from 1765 to 1820, at £100,000,000 (p. 65).

The Settlement of Europeans in India.

It has already been stated that Raja Rammohun Roy was in favour of the settlement in India of European capitalists under certain conditions. Among the advantages likely in his opinion to arise from such settlement was the improvement of the condition of the native inhabitants by European landlords showing them superior methods of cultivation. That this was not altogether a vain expectation appears from some observations in Mr. N. G. Mukerji's *Hand-book of Indian Agriculture*. Says Mr. Mukerji :

> "Indeed, Indian agriculture has been actually vastly improved by our contact with the West. European planters have been the means of introducing important innovations. In the most out-of-the-way places of India we find European planters carrying on agricultural experiments and improvements imperceptibly and noiselessly."

This naturally leads one to a consideration of the Raja's *Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans*. It is a paper of rare personal and national importance. But as it raises problems of great magnitude, we refrain from dealing with it here. Suffice it to say that this, his final literary deliverance, holds up to the people of India the prospect of India having English as its *lingua franca*, India socially and in other respects westernized to some extent, India possibly independent and India the Enlightener of Asia.

Progressive Political Views

Raja's faith in the capacity of his own people.

Progressive political views imply confidence in the capacity of a people for continuous improvement. Raja Rammohun Roy believed that the people of India "have the same capability of improvement as any other civilized people." He did not believe that Asiatics were naturally an inferior race. In the course of one of his numerous religious controversies "A Christian," having indulged in a tirade about persons being "degraded by Asiatic effeminacy," the Raja reminded him that almost all the ancient prophets and patriarchs venerated by Christians, nay, even Jesus Christ himself, were Asiatics. He wrote :

> "Before 'A Christian' indulged in a tirade about persons being 'degraded by Asiatic effeminacy' he should have recollected that almost all the ancient prophets and patriarchs venerated by Christians, nay even Jesus Christ himself, a Divine Incarnation and the founder of the Christian Faith, were ASIATICS, so that if a Christian thinks it degrading to be born or to reside in Asia, he directly reflects upon them."

Rammohun Roy also said :

> "If by the 'Ray of Intelligence' for which the *Christian* says we are indebted to the English, he means the introduction of useful mechanical arts, I am ready to express my assent and also grati-

> tude ; but with respect to Science, Literature, or Religion, I do not acknowledge that we are placed under any obligation, for by a reference to history it may be proved that the World was indebted to our ancestors for the first dawn of knowledge, which sprang up in the East, and thanks to the Goddess of Wisdom, we have still a philosophical and copious language of our own, which distinguishes us from other nations who cannot express scientific or abstract ideas without borrowing the language of foreigners."

On a perusal of the foregoing pages it will be found that, with the exception of the agitation that has been going on for sometime past for the industrial regeneration of the country, **Rammohun Roy laid the foundation of all the principal modern movements for the elevation of our people.** Probably, as India is mainly an agricultural country and as, in his days, the pressure on land had not become abnormal owing to the indigenous industries not having disappeared then, to the extent to which they have now declined, the industrial problem did not then press for solution with the same urgency as now. Nevertheless we find that the bearing of the system of caste on industrial prosperity did not escape the keen eyes of Rammohun; as No. VIII of his *Sambad Kaumudi* printed the "plea of a philanthropist, who observing the misery caused by prejudices of caste, urges the Hindus not to debar themselves thereby from mechanical pursuits, but to cultivate such arts as would tend to their comfort, happiness and independence."

An estimate of his Personality

We conclude this sketch with the following estimate of his personality by his biographer, the late Miss Sophia Dobson Collet, who, though an English woman and a Trinitarian Christian, seems, on the whole, to have understood the meaning of his life pretty accurately :—

> "Rammohun stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. He was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and a conservative progress, between. . . polytheism and . . . Theism. He was the mediator of his people, harmonizing in his own person, often, by means of his own solitary sufferings, the conflicting tendencies of immemorial tradition and an inevitable enlightenment."
>
> "He embodies the new spirit which arises from the compulsory mixture of races and faiths and civilizations,—he embodies its freedom of enquiry, its thirst for science, its large human sympathy, its pure and sifted ethics, along with its reverent but not uncritical regard for the past, and prudent . . disinclination towards revolt. But in the life of Rammohun we see, what we hope yet to have shown us in the progress of India, that the secret of the whole movement is religious. Amid all his wanderings Rammohun was saved by his faith. . . . . He was a genuine outgrowth of the old

Embodiment of the New Spirit.

Hindu stock; in a soil watered by new influences, and in an atmosphere charged with unwonted forcing power, but still a true scion of the old stock. The Rajah was no merely occidentalized oriental, no Hindu polished into the doubtful semblance of a European. Just as little was he, if we may use the term without offence, a spiritual Eurasian. If we follow the right line of his development we shall find that he leads the way from the orientalism of the past, not to, but through Western culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both. He preserves continuity throughout, by virtue of his religion, which again supplied the motive force of his progressive movement. The power that connected and restrained, as well as widened and impelled, was religion.

Pioneer of New India.

"Rammohun thus presents a most instructive and inspiring study for the New India of which he is the type and pioneer. He offers to the new democracy of the West a scarcely less valuable index of what our greatest Eastern dependency may yet become under the imperial sway of the British commonalty. There can be little doubt that, whatever future the destinies may have in store for India, that future will be largely shaped by the life and work of Rammohun Roy. And not the future of India alone. We stand on the eve of an unprecedented intermingling of East and West. The European and Asiatic streams of human development, which have often tinged each other before, are now approaching a confluence which bids fair to form the one ocean-river of the collective progress of mankind. The nearing dawn of these unmeasured possibilities only throws into clearer prominence the figure of the man whose life-story we have told. He was, if not the prophetic type, at least the precursive hint, of the change that is to come."

THOUGHTS FROM THE RAJA

"Truth and true religion do not always belong to wealth and power, high names, or lofty palaces."

—"*Brahmunical Magazine*"—*I.*

[1821]

* * * * *

"It is well-known to the whole world, that no people on earth are more tolerant than the Hindoos, who believe all men to be equally within the reach of Divine beneficence, which embraces the good of every religious sect and denomination."

—"*Brahmunical Magazine*"—*II.*

[1821]

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"...It seems to me that I cannot better employ my time than in an endeavour to illustrate and maintain Truth, and to render service to my fellow-labourers, confiding in the mercy of that Being to whom the motives of our actions and secrets of our hearts are well-known."

—*Preface to the English Translation of the "Kuth-Opunishud"*

[1819]

"...Enemies to Liberty and friends of Despotism have never been, and never will be, ultimately successful."

—*In a letter to a friend.*
[August 11, 1821].

"...I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interests. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprises. . . . It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort." —*In a letter to a friend.*
[January 18, 1818].

"...The causes of such degradation has been our excess in civilisation and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals; as well as our division into castes, which has been the source of want of unity among us."

—*In the "Brahmunical Magazine."*
[1821].

"...The struggles are not merely between the reformers and anti-reformers, but between liberty and oppression throughout the world; between justice and injustice; and between right and wrong. But from a reflection on the past events of history, we clearly perceive that liberal principles in politics and religion have been long gradually but steadily gaining ground notwithstanding the opposition and obstinacy of despots and bigots." —*In a letter to a friend.*
[April 27, 1831].

"...It should not be lost sight of that the position of India is very different from that of Ireland, to any quarter of which an English fleet may suddenly convey a body of troops that may force its way in the requisite direction and succeed in suppressing every effort of a refractory spirit. Were India to share one-fourth of the knowledge and energy of that country, she would prove from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population, either useful and profitable as a willing province, an ally of the British Empire, or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy." —*In a letter to a friend.*
[August 18, 1820].

RAMMOHUN ROY : THE UNIVERSAL MAN

By

SIR BRAJENDRA NATH SEAL, KT.

Formerly, King George V Professor of Philosophy,
University of Calcutta;
and
Lately, Vice-Chancellor, University of Mysore.

The address printed opposite was delivered by Sir Brajendra Nath Seal at the Death-Anniversary Meeting of Rammohun Roy held at Bangalore on the 27th September, 1924.

THE creative energy in Nature and History, Visvakarma, usually turns out from His workshops standardised products, but there are occasional "tours de force" that deviate from the pattern. Nature has her Himalayan heights and her Pacific depths; the day has its sunrise and its sunset; the history of civilisation her Greece, her India, her Roman and British Empires,—those unique centres of force.

But if we look closely to the advent of great personalities in human history, to the succession of the patriarchs and the lawgivers, the prophets and the master-singers, we seem to find a certain law governing that advent and succession. The earlier race of Supermen was a race of giants. They rose to superb heights, each showing the perfection of one type of excellence, heights which have never since been attained,—a Buddha and a Christ in the revelation of God-in-man, a Homer, a Valmiki and a Dante in poetic creation. But their successors in the same line, as Robert Browning tells us, are great in another way; not so much by height as by breadth, not so much by unique gifts or perfections, as by a synthesis, a harmonious blending of many excellences which had been found to be contradictory or conflicting in previous history. And these composite patterns again crystallise in a few generations into integral types, unique gifts, or perfections, which call for fresh synthesis in the unfolding experience of the race.

Synthesis —the characteristic mark of the Raja.

And this, indeed, is the meaning of progress in history. For history is a confluence of many streams, bringing together conflicting cults and cultures, conflicting national values and ideals; and those who can find peaceful solutions of these problems of conflict are the true heroes of latter-day Humanity. They are men who blend and fuse diverse lives in their own life-history, and diverse conflicting types in their own personal type. Such are the heroes of peace, heroes of synthesis and conciliation.

This greatness of synthesis is the characteristic mark of Raja Rammohun Roy, and we commemorate him best by going over in our minds, again, the conflict as it presented itself to him, and his solution or re-solution of it in his own personality and life.

The period in which the Raja was born and grew up was, perhaps, the darkest age in modern Indian history. An old society and polity had crumbled down, and a new one had not yet been built in its place. Devastation reigned in the land. All the vital limbs of society were paralysed; religious institutions and schools, village and home, agriculture, industry and trade, law and administration, were all in a chaotic condition. An all-round reconstitution and renovation were necessary for the continued existence of social life and order. But what was to

be the principle of organisation? For, there were three bodies of culture, three civilisations, which were in conflict,—the Hindu, the Moslem, and the Christian or Occidental; and the question was,—how to find a point of *rapport*, of concord, of unity, among these heterogeneous, hostile and warring forces. The origin of Modern India lay there.

A Prophet of coming Humanity.

The Raja by his finding of this point of concord and convergence became the Father and Patriarch of Modern India,—an India with a composite nationality and a synthetic civilisation; and by the lines of convergence he laid down, as well as by the type of personality he developed in and through his own experiences, he pointed the way to the solution of the larger problem of international culture and civilisation in human history, and became a precursor, an archetype, a prophet of coming Humanity. He laid the foundation of the true League of Nations in a League of National Cultures.

Formative Influences

Let us see how many such cultures, old and new, went to his making. Siva and Vishnu both watched over his cradle as his ancestral tutelary deities on the maternal and paternal sides. But it was Islamic culture, the culture of Baghdad and Bassora [Basra], filtered through an Indian Madrassa, that first woke the boy's mind. Euclidean Geometry, the categories of Porphyry's Logic through the Arabic 'Mantiq', lyrical raptures of Persian 'ghazals' felt in the blood, though but dimly apprehended at the time, first opened his mind's eye. And thus did Aflatun (Plato) and Aristu (Aristotle) of Old Greece visit the Brahmin boy in an Arabic guise.

Islamic Culture.

The foundations of his studies in Persian and Arabic were thus laid at Patna, and he grew up in later years to be a 'zabardast Maulavi', wise with the wisdom of Quran Sharif, learned in Mohammadan Law and Jurisprudence, and versed in the polemics of all the 63 schools of Mohammadan Theology.

And it must never be forgotten that the free thought and universalistic outlook of the Mohammadan rationalists (the Mutaza'lis of the 8th century), and the Mohammadan Unitarians (the Muwahhidin) were among the most powerful of the formative influences on the Raja's mental growth. And some of his early tracts on monotheistic and anti-idolatrous worship appear to have been written in Persian.

Brahmanic Culture.

Several years after his first introduction to Persian and Arabic letters came his acquaintance with Sanskrit, which gave him the key to the treasures of his inherited Brahmanic culture. It is needless to say that he lived to be a master of the whole of Brahmanical literature, with the exception of the Vedic *Samhitas*, of which he probably never made a deep study, and of which he was inclined to give a symbolical interpretation, considering the Vedic deities to be allegorical personifications

of the infinite attributes and activities of God. He was a very careful student of Hindu *Smriti*, including Law, Jurisprudence, and Social Institutions, of the *Darsanas* or systems of Philosophy including the *Mimamsa*, and of the entire body of religious literature, including the *Brahmanas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Puranas*, and the *Tantras*. But it was the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma Sutras* with Sankara's commentary, and the *Gita*,—in other words, the three canonical *Vedanta Sastras*, the *Prasthanatraya*,—that most deeply influenced him, and shaped his personal religion and his philosophy of life.

Jaina Scriptures and Buddhist Traditions.

He had also studied, with sufficient care for the purposes of personal valuation, the Jaina scriptures and the Buddhist traditions in the *Mahayana* Version; but both of these he knew more through his travels and personal contacts than through closest studies. He was also familiar with the cuts, practices and doctrines (and probably also the literatures) of the various fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century religious movements, the Kabir-panthis, the Nanak-panthis, the Dadu-panthis, and the Ramayat sects of Northern India. As a Monotheist he claimed fraternity with these brethren of the great Northern monotheistic faiths and cults.

The New Learning from the West.

It was long after this, when he was holding a subordinate post in a Collector's office in North Bengal, that he acquired the elements of English. After several years of hesitation and lukewarm interest, he now concentrated his great linguistic powers on this object. His aim was to study this New Learning from the West, and the social, political and scientific culture embodied in it. His ardent curiosity was roused by the two great contemporary movements, the American Independence and the First French Revolution, of which he had learnt from Mr. Digby, the Collector, and his studies were directed to the literature of Rationalism in Religion and Liberty in Politics. He accordingly cultivated the literature of empirical philosophy and scientific thought from Bacon to Locke and Newton, as well as the propaganda of free thinking and 'Illumination' in Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Volney, Tom Paine and others among the Coryphaei of Rationalism and Neo-theo-philanthropy. He drank eagerly from the fountain-head of modern freedom and was inspired by the spirit of the Age of Illumination. These studies only confirmed him in his rejection of miracle, dogma and ritual, to which he had already been led by his own reflections on the religions and scriptures of his country as well as by the teachings of the Mutazilas, the Sufis, and the *Uttara Mimamsa*. In fact, he became sceptically minded as to the claims of all 'Sastras' and all historical religions. But the first effects of the heady wine gradually passed away. Deeper draughts of the Vedanta brought him back to a theistic view of the world and world-history.

Christian and Semitic Culture.

It was after this that in discussions with the Christian Missionaries of Serampore his mind was directed to the claims of Christianity. Now began his close reading of the Bible, and he mastered Hebrew, Syriac and Greek, and studied not merely the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek, but also the Talmud, the Tarjums and the Syriac versions, not merely for exegetical purposes, but with a view to tracing the development of Jewish and Christian doctrines, and to lay the foundations of Comparative Religion. In the course of his theological polemics, he investigated not only the origin and development of Christian dogma and rites in the standard Church histories with special reference to the Arian, the Sabellian and the Pelagian Controversies, but also the movement of liberal thought and ethical rationalism in the Rabbinical writings of the first century before Christ, especially in reference to the Tarjums of Jonathan and Hillel. Thus the Raja's mind was enriched with the highest and best in Semitic culture in both the Hebraic and Arabic traditions, and, above all, he imbibed in an unbiased spirit the Christian culture, which he traced to a blend of a Hebraic stock with Greek, Roman and heathen grafts. But true to his first initiation, he always maintained against the missionaries that modern Western civilisation had another basis besides the composite Christian tradition. This was the scientific and economic basis which he traced to the Advancement of Science and the application of scientific knowledge to arts, industries and machinery for the expansion of man's prerogative and power over Nature,—a movement associated with the Baconian revolution in the seventeenth century. In later life he more and more directed his studies from doctrines to institutions, and his efforts from Polemics to Reform; and with the help of economic, juristic and political literature, he made a comparative study of social institutions with the same easy mastery that he had shown in the comparative study of religions.

Such were the strands of culture that went to the making of that composite web, the Raja's mind. But these were only the external landmarks in that mental history. I will now briefly trace that inner history itself. Fortunately, the materials are extant, and shed a clear light on the main stages of his mental development.

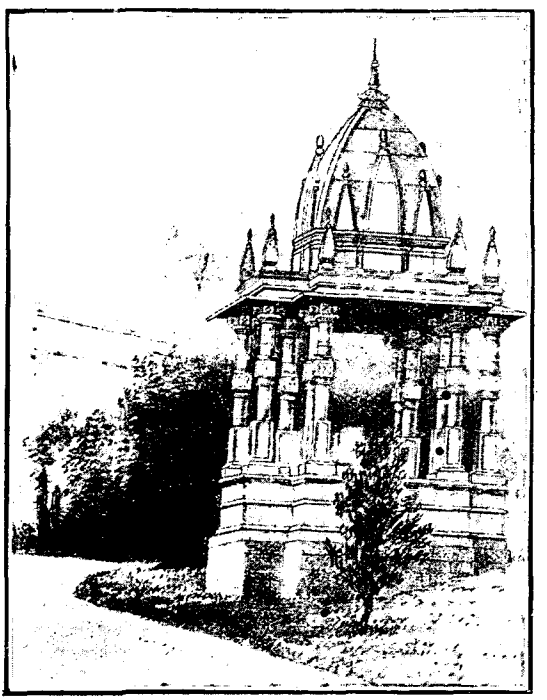
The Inner History

Revolt against Polytheism.

He began, as we have seen, with a revolt against polytheism and idolatry while he was yet in his teens. As yet it was the onslaught of truth against what he considered to be untruth, of reason against delusion and error. This puritanic iconoclastic fervour led to his exile from home and his perilous journey to the Himalayan tracts, in the course of which he even crossed



STAPLETON GROVE, BRISTOL



THE RAJA'S TOMB
AT ARNO'S VALE, BRISTOL
Courtesy: "The Modern Review"

INSCRIPTION ON THE RAJA'S TOMB, ARNO'S VALE, BRISTOL.

Beneath this stone rest the remains of

RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY BAHADUR

A conscientious and steadfast believer in the unity of the Godhead.
He consecrated his life with entire devotion to the worship of the Divine Spirit alone.
To great natural talents he united a thorough mastery of many languages,
and early distinguished himself as one of the greatest scholars of the day.

His unwearied labours to promote the social, moral and physical condition of the people of India, his earnest endeavours to suppress idolatry and the rite of Suttee, and his constant zealous advocacy of whatever tended to advance the glory of God and the welfare of man, live in the grateful remembrance of his countrymen.

This tablet
records the sorrow and pride with which
his memory is cherished by his descendants.
He was born in Radhanagar, in Bengal 1774,
and died at Bristol, September 27th, 1833.

over into Tibet. He wrote Persian tracts; he may have also employed the Vernacular, but this is not certain.

His early travels seemed to have widened his mental outlook. Several facts impressed him,—the superstitious practices into which the religious cults had degenerated, the bigotry and mutual hate of the sectaries, who were more concerned in defending those superstitions than the essentials of faith, and the priestcraft that he thought was at the bottom of all these religious schisms and corruptions. When he was about 30 years of age, he seems to have studied the writings of the Rationalists and Free-thinkers, certainly the Muwahhidins, the Sufis and the Mutazilas, and, perhaps, also the speculations of Hume, Voltaire and Volney. Like the redoubted champion of freedom that he was, he gave battle to all the so-called historical scriptures and scriptural religions of the world, and blew a long blast of definance in his Arabic-Persian pamphlet, the *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, his *Gift to the Believers in the One God*. He divides mankind, in Voltaire's (and Volney's) fashion, into four classes,—those who deceive, those who are deceived, those who both deceive and are deceived, and those who are neither deceivers nor deceived. In this work, the influence of Locke and Hume may, perhaps, be traced in his analysis of the causes of superstition and its prevalence, an analysis which gives greater importance to psychological factors than to historical ones. But as yet he believed in the central core of true religion, the existence of a Creator and Moral Governor, and the existence of a spiritual principle in the soul. Everything else in the religions of the world is non-essential, and often, indeed, a false and impure accretion to this central core of truth.

Study of the Free-thinkers.

But his free-thinking did not stop here. He seems at this time to have read deeper in the six *Darsanas* (especially the *Purva Mimamsa*) on the one hand, and in Hume and the Free-Thinkers on the other. He had doubts as to the creation of the world, and speculated on the eternity of matter, and the self-sufficiency of Nature and Nature's Laws to maintain the course of the world.

Studies in the Vedanta

But at this time he was also pursuing his studies in the Vedanta. The Philosophy of the "*Brahma Sutras*" as expounded by Sankara seems to have met his doubts and difficulties. He rested in the concept of Brahma, emphasising the *Nirguna* equally with the *Saguna*, the transcendental equally with the immanental aspect. *Saguna Brahma*, or, more precisely, the *Maya* of *Saguna Brahma*, is the origin and locus (*asraya*) of all phenomenal existence (*Prapancha*). What is *Maya* in *Saguna Brahma* is *Avidya* or Nescience in *Jiva*. The process of creation, which is a beginningless process, may, therefore, be described as *Vikshepa*, an eject of *Maya*, or, from the *Jiva's* point of view,

The nature of Brahma.

an *Avarana*, or veiling (adumbration) by *Avidya*, resulting in the *Jiva's* perception of the world as an appearance superimposed on the one absolute reality, as a snake may be superimposed on a rope by hallucination. But the *Jiva* takes this *Mayic* world to be real, an independent entity, Matter or Nature set over against *Chit* (intelligence) as a duality. This is the *Jiva's* illusion, and it lasts until there is *Brahm-atm-aikya-jnana*, the intuition of the Oneness, when *Maya* ceases for that individual *Jiva*. All this explains the relation of the *Jiva*, *Maya* and *Prapancha* (the world) to the *Saguna Brahma* (the immanental aspect of God), but God in his reality is not conditioned by *Maya*. Brahma is not touched by the limitations and imperfections of *Maya*, the suffering and sin of the world; and hence Brahma, the one Reality, is *Nirguna*. The world, on the other hand, indeed the very *Saguna* aspect of Brahma, is not an absolute reality (*Paramarthic Satta*), but has only a relative existence; in other words, an existence for and through the *Jiva*, lasting only until *Jnana*, the intuition of the Oneness, and simultaneously with it, *Moksha*, or liberation, from the illusory bondage of separateness, are realised. But for this very attainment, the individual, *Jiva*, must go through a certain process. He must accept this world as a *Vyavaharika* sphere of existence for his practice and discipline. The Laws of Nature (or the Universe) are God's own laws, and man's duty in the world consists in obeying these laws. The destiny of the soul is to become one with God and this union can be effected by *Jnana*, or the intuition of the Oneness,—an intuition that comes, not by inferential or conceptual knowledge, but only in *Samadhi*, when the heart is purified by the discipline of work and worship, and illumined by *Dhyana* (Meditation) and *Yoga* (Communion).

His Exposition of the Vedanta.

But two points stand out clearly in his exposition. He insisted on *Upasana*, the duty of meditation and worship, as well as on ethical duties (*Nishkama Karma*), as obligatory, till the realisation of *Moksha* (Liberation); and to the knower of the Brahma, he gave the option of *Karma* (*Nishkama Karma*) or *Akarma*, and equally of being an *Asrami* or an *Anasrami*. In these respects, it would be correct to say that the Raja's *Brahma-vidya* comprehended *Visishtadvaita* and *Dvaita* in his attitude towards the world and the individual soul. His emphasis on *Isvara* made his Monism synthetic, concrete and practical.

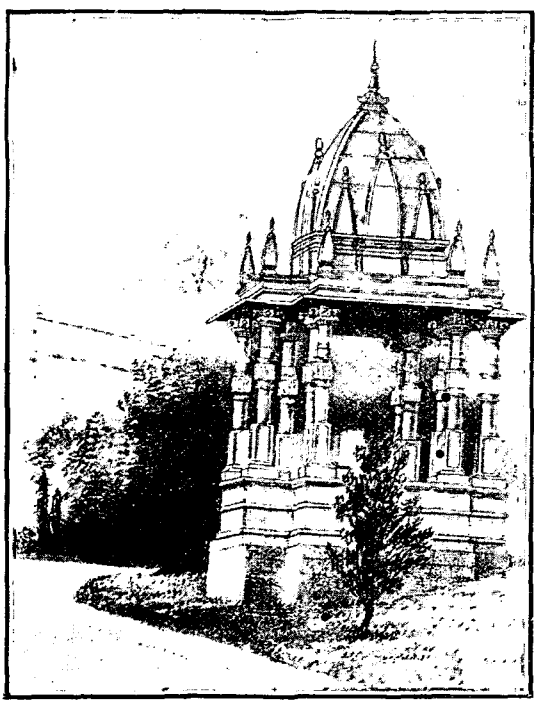
The Foundation of his Faith

Reconciliation of Reason and Scripture.

He went on developing this philosophy more and more with his studies in the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras*. But he did not stop there. Simultaneously with the restoration of his theistic faith came a new view of the meaning and purpose of scriptural authority. He declared that the light of individual reason had to be reconciled with the authority of the scripture, as repositories of the collective wisdom of the race. Neither



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reason nor authority is sufficient for the guidance of life, in the uncertainties and weaknesses of man's moral and intellectual equipment; and the reconciliation of the two can alone furnish such guidance as is available to man.

Rammohun Roy had now come to the bed-rock, the lasting foundation of his faith and practice.

His next discovery was a momentous one. He had by this time made a comprehensive study of three scriptures in the original,—the Hindu, the Moslem, and the Christian,—and he found that the core of religious truth, comprehending the Unity of God as Spirit, his worship in spirit and in truth, the immortality of the soul, and ethical discipline as the basis of spiritual life, formed the central teaching of the canonical scriptures of the historic religions. There was only one Theism, with certain historical varieties, *e.g.*, a Hindu Theism, an Islamic Theism, and a Christian Theism, each variety being centred round a particular scripture,—whether it was the Veda and Vedanta, the Qoran, or the Bible. Of these, Islam and Christianity centred round one historic Prophet or Divine Exemplar, while Hindu Theism had no fixed and single historic centre, being associated with a series of divine teachers or exemplars such as Rama, Krishna, or Siva as the Guru. Each had also its characteristic initiation and ritual, and its characteristic symbols, these being dependent on geographical, climatic and ethnic factors.

From Comparative Religion to Universalism.

Thus he had been brought by his pioneer studies in Comparative Religion to Universalism,—and, what is more, to a Universal scripture, a Universal authority as underlying all historic scriptures and all historic authorities. He had proceeded from the sweeping negation of his *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* to the universalistic position of his prefaces to the Vedanta abridgement and translations.

But he now perceived that the universal Truth was stressed in different ways, had different accents in its different historic utterances. The Vedanta, which had restored him to faith, he always considered as strongest in *Jnana*, the knowledge of the Unity of all souls and of the world in Brahma; Islam, which had given him his early iconoclastic zeal, he considered as strongest in the sense of divine government, and a militant equality of man with man; and Christianity, which gave him the divine exemplar, he considered as strongest in ethical and social guidance to peace and happiness in the path of life.

A Historic Synthesis.

Thus his Universalism in Religion passed on to a historic synthesis which was distinguished from eclecticism in two ways. First, none of these religions was only *a part of* the truth; each in its pristine purity was *the* truth, specially and ethnically expressed or embodied. Secondly, each in his view was to preserve its historic or traditional continuity, though each was to

grow by mutual contact and assimilation, and by convergence to a common ideal.

Two Difficult Questions

But here he was confronted with two difficult questions.—

Creeds and Councils.

(1) What about the vast growth of non-canonical religious literature, and creeds and councils, which had overgrown the simple original truths of scripture in every country and tradition?

The Raja had an uncompromising answer: These later growths, for the most part, are the outcome of degeneration or corruption, due partly to priest-craft or king-craft, partly to psychological working of man's mind, and partly to social causes. The Raja lived before the concept of Evolution had been applied to human history; and, with most religious reformers, he appealed to an original purity of doctrine and practice, and saw no progressive revelation in the various historic churches or ecclesiastical organisations and codes.

(2) What about the rituals, practices and symbols of the different religions?

The Raja would allow rituals, but he desired simplicity, and he insisted that they must be of social character, and not *Tamasic*, *i.e.*, not anti-social and destructive of social happiness or social purity, as was the case with many of the rituals of his own countrymen, which he condemned. Similarly, the symbols must be adequate to express the truth, and must not adumbrate, darken, or degrade it.

Rituals and Symbols.

His early prejudice against rituals and symbols as such was based on his perception that they frequently darken the truth and the mind's capacity for the truth. Moreover, they tend to enslave the mind by becoming rigid and formal. In his later Bengali writings he perceives their legitimate uses, provided that there is spontaneous, free, and varied activity in the creation of new symbols and new rituals of the right sort, so that they may serve the spirit and help to free it. But to the end he, as a Vedantist, retained his strong objection to *Pratikopasana* or the use of artifacts as images of God in the ritual of monotheistic worship.

One Theistic Fraternity

It is only necessary to add that not only did he include Hindu, Moslem and Christian Theists in one theistic fraternity as brothers in faith; he extended this fellowship and co-operation to those, who, by whatever name, would acknowledge some Principle of the Universe, the need of meditation on that Principle as good, and the love and service of Man as the guiding principle of the conduct of life. Buddhists and Jainas and believers in a Law of Nature, he would, therefore, acknowledge as not against the theistic fraternity, but with it.

When he was thus laying the theoretical foundations of his philosophy and practice of Religion, he came into conflict with the Pandits, Maulavis and Padres of the day; and this led him to a line of thought and activity that ended in that richer synthesis of Personality, which marks him out as the precursor and prophet of a coming type of Humanity.

In these religious controversies he had to defend the original Hinduism, Islam and Christianity against champions of orthodoxy in each of these churches or religious communities. He had also to defend Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, each, against the attacks of the champions of the other two. He found that this would be possible only on the following basis :—

Pristine forms of Historic Religions.

(1) First, each of the historic religions must be shown to be in the pure pristine form free from all the elements of bitter hate, fanatical jealousy, and ignorant zealotry, which had been adventitiously introduced in their later history.

The Raja found that the love of man as man was declared to be the authentic expression of the love of God,—in Hinduism, in Islam, as well as in Christianity. Respect for the soul as soul, with freedom of conscience and toleration as corollaries, is of the essence of all true religion. But he insisted that toleration is limited by the principle of respect for life; and religious practices which violate that principle, or corrupt social morality, must be put down by the State.

The Ideal of Universal Religion.

(2) Secondly, all religions, ethnic or credal, all religions by which masses of men have lived as social aggregates, must be recognised as moving along their own lines of historic tradition to a universal ideal or centre of convergence. That ideal is the ideal of Universal Religion. To put the Raja's implications in the terms of our own age, this is not a static ideal, but a developing ideal, and as the different religions in the course of their own forward march approach one another and approach the common centre more and more, the centre of convergence itself shifts or moves forwards; so that the ideal always remains an ideal, beckoning ever forward and upward to the infinitudes and beatitudes of God.

It is not, therefore, necessary to assume that the great historic religions, these national embodiments of universalism, will cease or be merged one in another, apart from the question of the historic fusions of the nations themselves. From the Raja's point of view, therefore, the evolution of Internationality, Super-nationality, or even the Universal State, does not necessarily mean that differences or variations of nationality will cease to exist, and it is not at all necessary that any of the historic religions will merge in another. But each of the great national or historic religions will grow fuller and fuller by mutual contact and assimilation, as well as by ideal convergence; they will grow, however, along their own lines of historic continuity as specific embodiments of a common Universal

Regulation, even as the different ethnic types or nationalities will go on evolving as specific embodiments of Universal Humanity in specific natural and historical environments.

Social Usages and Religion.

(3) Thirdly, wherever religious authority has stereotyped social usages and customs, *e.g.*, by regulation of food and drink, marriage, personal law, and economic or political institutions, the first step must be to secure their freedom from such religious trammels and place them on their only sound basis, the principle of utility or the happiness of the greatest number. Every sphere of human interest, all the sciences and arts, must be autonomous, and as such ruled only by the Natural laws pertaining to their respective domains. And religion will be there only to co-ordinate these various spheres and activities by its one guiding principle and goal, *Lokasreyas*, or the Universal good. The progressive convergence of the national religions is possible only on this fundamental assumption; and Hindu *Smriti*, Moslem *Shariat*, and Christian Canonical Law must, in fulfilment of their own basic religious principles, adapt themselves to the revelations of God's own truth in Science and the Laws of Nature and Society.

If these are the working assumptions on which alone the future of India, and, in fact, the future of Humanity, is possible, the Raja made them clear and concrete, made them practical, in his efforts as a triple reformer, the truine promulgator of Hindu, Moslem and Christian religious reform.

The Centre of Universal Convergence

The Brahmo Samaj.

In the interest of the solidarity of religions from the social point of view, he founded the Brahmo Samaj as a Society of the worshippers of the one God of all religions and all Humanity. By the declarations in the Trust Deed, the Brahmo Samaj was to be only a meeting house and congregation for the worship of the one Universal God. The worshippers might belong each to his own religious fold, Saivaite or Vaishnavite, Smarta or Vedantist,—in theory, he might be Christian or Moslem, Jew or Jaina,—anybody could join in the prayers, and no one was expected to depart from his own religious tradition, *Sampradaya*, or church. The ruling idea was that a man might be Hindu, Moslem, Christian, Jew, Jaina or Buddhist, and yet join in communion with brethren of other faiths in order that such common worship and prayer might strengthen their perception of the religious traditions to move, more surely and more truly, towards the centre of universal convergence. In actual practice, no doubt, the congregation in the Raja's Brahmo Samaj was a congregation of Hindu Theists, using the rituals and symbols of that particular type of Theism; for public worship must be embodied in some concrete form. But the governing idea was to strengthen the social solidarity of the religions of the day. That idea, for its fulfilment, required that

there should be a body of Christian and Islamic worshippers on the same basis as the Raja's Brahmo Samaj; and, in fact, the Raja's personal connections with the British and Foreign Unitarian Association emphasised the Christian possibilities in this direction; and it must never be forgotten that in the annals of Unitarian Christianity in the West, Raja Rammohun Roy figures as one of the illustrious Fathers of the Unitarian Movement. The Raja's efforts on behalf of a Universal Islam are well-known to students of liberal and progressive Moslem thought in modern India. His interpretations of the *Shariat* and the *Hadis* and the controversies with the Maulavis, tradition has it, were all directed to show that for Sunni and Shia alike the future path of Islam as God's peace must be a path to Universality and Freedom, towards which the first step must be taken through the secularisation of social code and custom in the light of modern Science and modern Progress. Neither the international Bahai movement, nor the recent Egyptian and Turkish nationalistic versions of Islam reconcile the two opposed movements of the National and the Universal, the Historical and the Ideal, to the same extent as the Raja's vision of Islam.

Universal Islam.

A Multiple Personality

But the Raja's social model, the Brahmo Samaj, was but a faint external replica of the Universalism he had realised in his own person. For, strange to say, the Raja's was a multiple personality. He wore so many masks, *personæ*, on the public stage in bewildering succession! Verily his name was Legion!

First, he was a Brahmin of Brahmins, always claiming to be within the Brahmin fold, and keeping his *Upavita* as an external mark of that communion, but boldly taking heterodox food and drink, adopting a Mohammadan child and calling him Rajaram, associating with the Missionaries, crossing the seas, and fighting *Suttee*, caste, and all manner of degenerate customs of the day that weighed down women and Sudras. In his controversies with the Pandits of the day, with Pandit Subrahmanya Sastri of Madras for example, he always fought with Sastric weapons to establish Universalism, just as the Acharyas, Sankaracharya for instance, would have established it. He harked back to the *Prasthanatraya*, and he gave primacy, within the Hindu fold, to the monotheistic householder without Vedic rituals or idolatrous practices (*Vedasannyasi Brahma-nishtha Grihastha*).

Secondly, if he was a Hindu of Hindus, he was also a Mohammadan with the Mohammadans, and a Christian with the Christians. He was a 'zabardast Maulavi', and an unordained Padre who converted the Rev. Mr. Adam to Unitarian Christianity. After his death, Moslems claimed him for Islam, and Christians for Christianity. But still others are puzzled.

Intact and Integral Personality.

Was he all things to all men? The explanation is simple. This was Raja Rammohun Roy, the Nationalist Reformer, bearing not one, but three standards at the same time for three different hosts who had taken the field against one another. Some of his controversial writings for this particularist propaganda were written under the names of his disciples, though the secret was an open one. Others were written in his own name. His defence of Christianity against Hinduism, and of Hinduism against Christianity, can be easily explained on this basis, though they have been stumbling blocks to some. More wonderful still, he defends Christianity as he conceived it against the Missionaries, and in so doing he accepts unreservedly the authority of the Christian Scriptures. He accepts whatever authority is claimed in and for the Christian Bible as God's own truth; he argues as a Christian, and, by collation of texts and the application of the acknowledged canons of scriptural interpretation, he finds the purest Universal Religion as the precious truth taught in these Scriptures. So with Islam; so with the Hindu Sastras; and so would he have done doubtless with Buddhism and Jainism. And yet in playing so many parts he kept his personality intact and integral. These were but satellites that revolved round a central majestic orb, and were ruled by that orb.

His Personal Religion.

Thirdly, he could combine in his personal religion the fundamental Hindu, Christian and Islamic experiences. He transvalued all these values, and he made them integral to his own valuation of life. In truth, he practised the discipline of Yoga, the discipline of the Moshayak (the lover of God), and the discipline of the Christian Saint. Thus he was multi-personal in a true sense of the term. These historic cults and cultures had been fused in one discipline of Universal Humanity in his soul. History has many centres; and he, an epitome of History, had a poly-centric personality. But the centre of centres in himself was beyond them all. That centre was his experience of communion with Brahma, the Absolute, in *Samadhi*, wherein he could unify all partial experiences. He thus showed how Universal Humanity in future may realise in individual synthesis of life (and *Sadhana*) the disciplines of the great historic religions. It is as certain as anything in man's future history can be, that the future will see a rapprochement of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Vedantism,—not a 'melange', not one concrete Universal Religion,—but world-redactions of each of these religions under mutual contact and assimilation. In this respect the Raja is a prophet and precursor of coming Humanity.

The Humanist—pure and simple.

Fourthly, there was another Rammohun Roy behind these masks, the man unmasked, the Humanist pure and simple, watching from his conning-tower the procession of Universal Humanity in Universal History. To him, all mysteries were

unveiled, and all idols broken. He was the peer of the Voltaires and the Volneys, the Diderots and the Herders across the seas; and he had seen and travelled beyond them all, a modern Ulysses, voyaging in the land of the setting sun, and descending—not once, not twice, but many times—into the dark under-world, to bring messages from the old prophets in the Night of Ages.

From Polemics to Reform

Such were the theoretical foundations of the Raja's synthesis of the three cultures that were in conflict at the origin of Modern India. But, as I have already noted, in the later stage his mind turned more and more from theory to practice, from doctrines to institutions, from polemics to reform. But here also his was a synthetic type of personality. His greatness was in the fact that he was a theoretician and practician in one, an outstanding exception to the verdict of the philosophical historian that would keep apart for ever the man of theory and the man of practice. For the Raja was at once a born theoretician and a born practician. He based his reforms, social or political, agrarian or industrial, on a criticism of social life, on ulterior postulates and concepts, in which he effected a synthesis between the East and the West. His synthesis of the historic religions was thus completed by a synthesis of Eastern and Western cultures and civilizations, which the historic situation forced upon him as a vital necessity. As in the sphere of speculation he strove to reconcile individual reason with collective wisdom and scriptural authority, so in the sphere of social construction he aimed at reconciling the good of the individual with the good of the greatest number,—in other words, at harmonising individualism and socialism.

His Reforms—Synthesis between East and West.

The East had placed the group above the individual in social organisation, and the individual above all social bonds in the quest of the *summum bonum*. The West had stressed the claims of the individual in social polity, and of the social good in the Kingdom of God. The Raja held that individual progress is the touchstone as well as the measuring rod of social progress; but the individual's progress could be secured only by organising and establishing the conditions of social progress. Accordingly in practical ethics, the golden rule, the rule of individual reciprocity, was for him the guiding principle of conduct; but at the same time he found the inner moral life in the higher discipline of the soul, the ideal of *Nishkama Karma*, work with dispassion, in the terms of the Gita. In social polity, he emphasised the natural rights of man, which would include the rights not only to life and property, but also to freedom of speech, opinion, conscience and association. And Law must secure to each individual his natural rights so far as they can be secured with-

The Touchstone of Social Progress.

out infringement of the equal rights of others. But he spoke oftener in terms of happiness than of rights, and avoided the fallacious view of a positive social contract as constitutive of society. Accordingly, he held that legislation, while aiming at the establishment of natural rights, must subordinate this criterion to the practical quest of the greatest happiness, or the happiness of the greatest number; and social reform, while pursuing the ideals of individualistic justice and equality, must be dominated by the principle of *Lokasreyas*, or the common good. And true to the spirit of the East and the genius of India, he elevated these principles to the sphere of *Dharma* or duty, and thus brought his humanitarian religion as a motive power to the organisation of social polity.

In the Sphere of State Polity

Fusion of the Modern and Mediæval.

Similarly, the history of Indian civilisation taught him many other things of fundamental importance; *e.g.*, in the sphere of State polity, an original separation between the legislative and the executive function; in the sphere of Jurisprudence, the origin of Law in Custom and *Achara* as co-ordinate with the sovereign's command, and, often, as ratified *ex post facto* by such command and sanction; and in the sphere of juridical as well as revenue administration, the pivotal character of the village and its *Panchayat*, and of the ryot's tenure and ownership of land. But he gave a modern meaning and purpose to these ancient and mediæval elements of Indian polity. He went on to link them up with Representative Government, trial by jury, and freedom of the Press, and he corrected and completed the Hindu's personal law of marriage, inheritance, religious worship, women's status, *Stri-dhana*, and *Varnasrama-dharma*, by introducing the most liberal principles of justice and equity, for which he found sanction also in the old codes, thus working out a synthesis between Eastern and Western social values and postulates, against the common background of Universal Humanity. But it was not only the jurisprudence of the New Polity, it was also the modern scientific civilization of the West, that he wanted to plant on Asiatic soil; and, accordingly, he helped to establish public education in India on the basis of real and useful knowledge, more particularly of Science, and the application of science to industry. Similarly, he avoided the fallacy of the Physiocratic economists in pitting agriculture against manufacture; he would preserve the *ryotwari* agrarian and rural basis of the Indian civilisation, while he would plant on this soil modern scientific industry to improve the standard of living, and therewith the health and physique of the Indian people. And, finally, he made a forecast of the future political history of India and her relation to Great Britain on Plantation (or Colonial) lines. Indeed, he would even welcome high-grade

Advocate of Modern Education.

European settlements in certain parts of the country as a tentative measure to hasten this consummation. And in the end there came to this prophet of Humanity on his death-bed the vision of a free, puissant and enlightened India, the civiliser and enlightener of Asiatic nationalities, a golden link between the Far East and the Far West, a vision as emblematic of the past, as it was prophetic of the future history of Humanity.

His vision of Future India.

THREE MAXIMS OF THE RAJA

—Three maxims in politics, in ethics, and in religion the Raja often repeated :

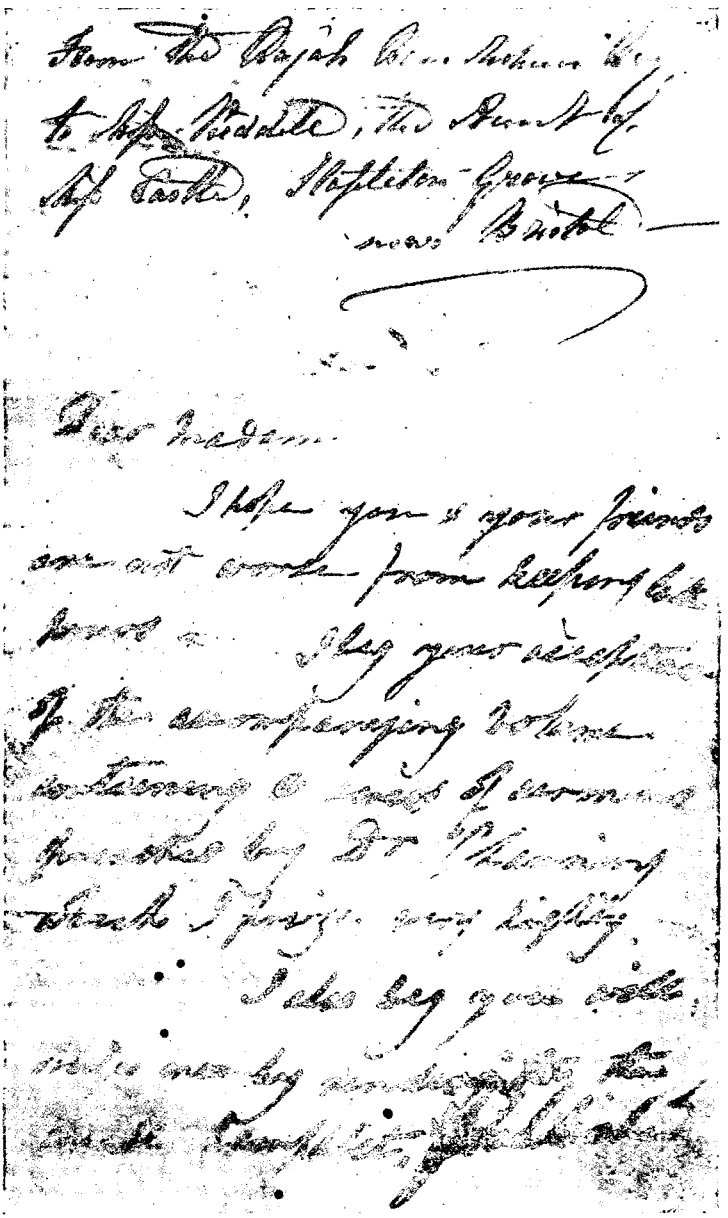
(1) The first he expressed in an Arabic sentence, *Insan abid ul ihsan* ("Man is the slave of benefits").

(2) The second, a couplet from the Anwar Suheili: "The enjoyment of two worlds (this and the next) rests on these two points—kindness to friends, civility to enemies".

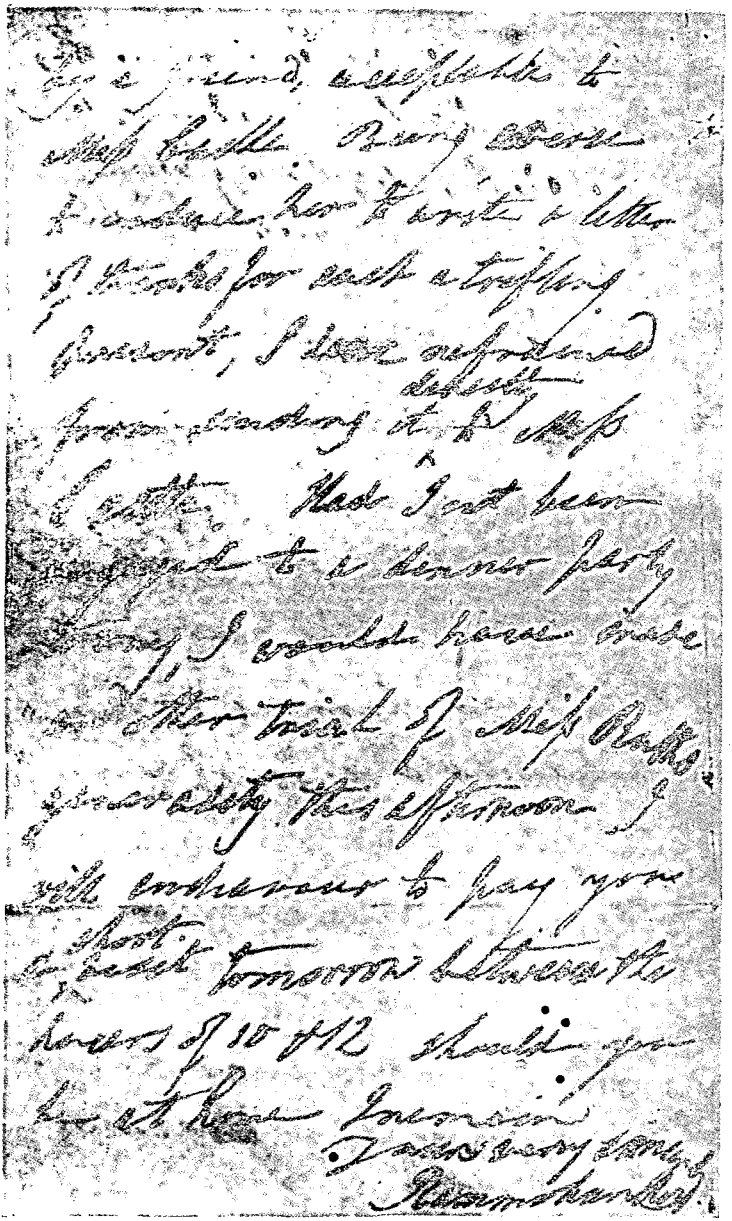
(3) The third, from the philosophic Sa'di, which he often repeated, and often expressed a wish to have inscribed on his tomb: "The true way of serving God is to do good to man".

SANDFORD ARNOT

in the "Athenæum Journal", London, 1833.



FACSIMILE OF A LETTER WRITTEN
WHILE IN LONDON



BY RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY
TO MISS KIDDELL

Courtesy: Rammohun Library, Calcutta.

Copy of a letter from the Rajah Rammohun Ray to Miss Kiddell, the aunt of Miss Castle, Stapleton Grove, near Bristol.

"Dear Madam,—I hope you and your friends are not worse from keeping late hours. I beg your acceptance of the accompanying volume, containing a series of sermons preached by Dr. Channing, which I prize very highly.

"I also beg you will oblige me by rendering the small pamphlet published by a friend, acceptable to Miss Castle. Being averse to induce her to write a letter of thanks for such a trifling present, I have refrained from sending it directly to Miss Castle. Had I not been engaged to a dinner party to-day, I would have made another trial of Miss Rutt's generosity this afternoon. I will endeavour to pay you a short visit between the hours of ten and twelve, should you be at home.

I remain,
Yours very sincerely,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX—A

RAMMOHUN ROY ON INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

The three letters printed below were unearthed by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji, who is well-known for his researches among old State Records, and published by him, for the first time, in The Modern Review *for October, 1928. In the communication to the Foreign Minister of France, the reader will find an enunciation of the principle and a clear statement of the programme for a Comity of Nations. Rammohun's belief in the unity of mankind, stressed by Rabindranath Tagore in his Presidential Address at the Preliminary Meeting of the Centenary, receives a fresh illustration in this communication. His was a mind that would give shape to an idea as soon as it was conceived.* —Editor.

I

To

T. HYDE VILLIERS, ESQ.,

Secretary to the India Board.

SIR,

India having providentially been placed under the care of the Board of Control, I feel necessarily induced to have recourse to that authority when occasion requires. I, therefore, hope you will excuse the intrusion I make with the following lines.

I am informed that for the purpose of visiting France it is necessary to be provided with a passport and that before granting it, the French Ambassador must be furnished with an account of the applicant.

Such restrictions against foreigners are not observed even among the Nations of Asia (China excepted). However, their observance by France may, perhaps, be justified on the ground that she is surrounded by Governments entirely despotic on three sides and by nations kept down merely by the bayonet or by religious delusion.

In the event of my applying to Prince Talleyrand for a passport I beg to know whether I shall be justified in referring to you in your official capacity as to my character. All that I can say for myself is, that I am a traveller and that my heart is with the French People in their endeavours to support the cause of liberal principles.

Sir Francis Burdett, at Mr. Byng's, liberally and spontaneously offered to give me a letter of introduction to General Lafayette, but this will not, I think, serve my purpose on my first landing in France.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

LONDON,
48, Bedford Sq.
Decr. 22nd, 1831.

II

To

HYDE VILLIERS, ESQ.,
Secretary to Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India.

SIR,

I have the honour to receive your letter of the 27th instant and I beg to offer my warm acknowledgements to the Board for their attention to my application of the 23rd of this month.

I beg to be permitted to add that, as I intimated to the Board my intention of eventually applying to the French Ambassador resident in London for a passport for France, I now deem it proper to submit to you, for the information of the Board, a copy of an intended communication from me to the Foreign Minister of France, the result of which I shall await before I apply to the French Ambassador.

Unless I have the honor to hear from you that such an address would be irregular and unconstitutional, I shall forward it to a friend in Paris to be presented in due form.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

LONDON,
December 28th, 1831
(Endorsed)
28th December, 1831
RAJAH RAMMOHUN ROY.

Transg. copy of an intended communication to the Foreign Minister of France.

III

To

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FRANCE,
PARIS.

SIR,

You may be surprised at receiving a letter from a Foreigner, the Native of a country situated many thousand miles from France, and I assuredly would not now have trespassed on your attention, were I

not induced by a sense of what I consider due to myself and by the respect I feel towards a country standing in the foremost rank of free and civilized nations.

2nd. For twelve years past I have entertained a wish (as noticed, I think, in several French and English Periodicals) to visit a country so favoured by nature and so richly adorned by the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and above all blessed by the possession of a free constitution. After surmounting many difficulties interposed by religious and national distinctions and other circumstances, I am at last opposite your coast, where, however, I am informed that I must not place my foot on your territorry unless I previously solicit and obtain an express permission for my entrance from the Ambassador or Minister of France in England.

3rd. Such a regulation is quite unknown even among the Nations of Asia (though extremely hostile to each other from religious prejudices and political dissensions), with the exception of China, a country noted for its extreme jealousy of foreigners and apprehensions of the introduction of new customs and ideas. I am, therefore, quite at a loss to conceive how it should exist among a people so framed as the French are for courtesy and liberality in all other matters.

4th. *It is now generally admitted that not religion only but unbiassed common sense as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research lead to the conclusion that all mankind are one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches. Hence enlightened men in all countries feel a wish to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner by removing as far as possible all impediments to it in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race.* [The italics are ours.—*Ed.*]

5th. It may perhaps be urged that during the existence of war and hostile feelings between any two nations (arising probably from their not understanding their real interests), policy requires of them to adopt these precautions against each other. This, however, only applies to a state of warfare. If France, therefore, were at war with surrounding nations or regarded their people as dangerous, the motive for such an extraordinary precaution might have been conceived.

6th. But as a general peace has existed in Europe for many years, and there is more particularly so harmonious an understanding between the people of France and England and even between their present Governments, I am utterly at a loss to discover the cause of a regulation which manifests, to say the least, a want of cordiality and confidence on the part of France.

7th. Even during peace the following excuses might perhaps be offered for the continuance of such restrictions, though in my humble opinion they cannot stand a fair examination.

First. If it be said that persons of bad character should not be allowed to enter France: still it might, I presume, be answered that the granting of passports by the French Ambassador here is not usually founded on certificates of character or investigation into the conduct

of individuals. Therefore, it does not provide a remedy for that supposed evil.

Secondly. If it be intended to prevent felons escaping from justice: this case seems well-provided for by the treaties between different nations for the surrender of all criminals.

Thirdly. If it be meant to obstruct the flight of debtors from their creditors: in this respect likewise it appears superfluous, as the bankrupt laws themselves after a short imprisonment set the debtor free even in his own country ; therefore voluntary exile from his own country would be, I conceive, a greater punishment.

Fourthly. If it be intended to apply to political matters, it is in the first place not applicable to my case. *But on general grounds I beg to observe that it appears to me, the ends of constitutional government might be better attained by submitting every matter of political difference between two countries to a Congress composed of an equal number from the Parliament of each : the decision of the majority to be acquiesced in by both nations and the Chairman to be chosen by each Nation alternately, for one year, and the place of meeting to be one year within the limits of one country and next within those of the other ; such as at Dover and Calais for England and France.*

8th. *By such a Congress all matters of difference, whether political or commercial, affecting the Natives of any two civilized countries with constitutional Governments, might be settled amicably and justly to the satisfaction of both and profound peace and friendly feelings might be preserved between them from generation to generation.* [The italics are ours.—*Ed.*]

9th. I do not dwell on the inconvenience which the system of passports imposes in urgent matters of business and in cases of domestic affliction. But I may be permitted to observe that the mere circumstance of applying for a passport seems a tacit admission that the character of the applicant stands in need of such a certificate or testimonial before he can be permitted to pass unquestioned. Therefore, any one may feel some delicacy in exposing himself to the possibility of a refusal which would lead to an inference unfavourable to his character as a peaceable citizen.

My desire, however, to visit that country is so great that I shall conform to such conditions as are imposed on me, if the French Government, after taking the subject into consideration judge it proper and expedient to continue restrictions contrived for a different state of things, but to which they may have become reconciled by long habit: as I should be sorry to set up my opinion against that of the present enlightened Government of France.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

APPENDIX—B

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In conformity with the wish, you have frequently expressed, that I should give an outline of my life, I have now the pleasure to give you the following very brief sketch.

My ancestors were Brahmins of a high order, and, from time immemorial, were devoted to the religious duties of their race, down to my fifth progenitor, who about one hundred and forty years ago gave up spiritual exercises for worldly pursuits and aggrandisement. His descendants ever since followed his example, and, according to the usual fate of courtiers, with various success, sometimes rising to honour and sometimes falling ; sometimes rich and sometimes poor ; sometimes excelling in success, sometimes miserable through disappointment. But my maternal ancestors, being of the sacerdotal order by profession as well as by birth, and of a family than which none holds a higher rank in that profession, have up to the present day uniformly adhered to a life of religious observances and devotion, preferring peace and tranquillity of mind to the excitements of ambition, and all the allurements of worldly grandeur.

In comformity with the usage of my paternal race, and the wish of my father, I studied the Persian and Arabic languages, these being

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*Miss Mary Carpenter thus introduces this Autobiographical Sketch into her book, *'The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy's'* (London, Trubner, 1866) :—

"The following letter from Rammohun Roy himself first appeared in the [London] *Athenæum,* and in the *Literary Gazette;* from one or other of which it was copied into various English newspapers. It was written just before he went to France. It was probably designed for some distinguished person who had desired him to give an outline of his history; and he adopted this form for the purpose. The letter may be considered as addressed to his friend, Mr. Gordon of Calcutta."

Miss Sophia Dobson Collet in her *"Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy,"* (London, 1900) calls it "the spurious autobiographical letter published by Sandford Arnot in the *Athenæum* of October 5, 1833," though she does not give her reasons for the statement.

Prof. Max Müller in his *Biographical Essays* (London, 1884) writes :—

"There is a letter, supposed to have been written by Rammohun Roy shortly before he left England for France, and addressed to Mr. Gordon of Calcutta. It was first published after the Rajah's death in the *Athenæum,* Oct. 5, 1833, by Mr. Sandford Arnot, who had acted as the Rajah's Secretary during his stay in England. . . . . Whether the Rajah wrote or dictated the whole of it may be doubted, but to reject the whole as a fabrication would be going much too far."

indispensable to those who attached themselves to the courts of the Mahommedan princes ; and agreeably to the usage of my maternal relations, I devoted myself to the study of the Sanskrit and the theological works written in it, which contain the body of Hindu literature, law and religion.

When about the age of sixteen, I composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of the idolatrous system of the Hindoos. This, together with my known sentiments on that subject, having produced a coolness between me and my immediate kindred, I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me and restored me to his favour ; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants ; and I enjoyed the confidence of several of them even in their public capacity. My continued controversies with the Brahmins on the subject of their idolatry and superstition, and my interference with their custom of burning widows, and other pernicious practices, revived and increased their animosity against me ; and through their influence with my family, my father was again obliged to withdraw his countenance openly, though his limited pecuniary support was still continued to me.

After my father's death I opposed the advocates of idolatry with still greater boldness. Availing myself of the art of printing, now established in India, I published various works and pamphlets against their errors, in the native and foreign languages. This raised such a feeling against me, that I was at last deserted by every person except two or three Scotch friends, to whom, and the nation to which they belong, I always feel grateful.

The ground which I took in all my controversies was, not that of opposition to Brahminism, but to a perversion of it ; and I endeavoured to show that the idolatry of the Brahmins was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and the principles of the ancient books and authorities which they profess to revere and obey. Notwithstanding the violence of the opposition and resistance to my opinions, several highly respectable persons, both among my own relations and others, began to adopt the same sentiments.

I now felt a strong wish to visit Europe, and obtain, by personal observation, a more thorough insight into its manners, customs, religion, and political institutions. I refrained, however, from carrying this intention into effect until the friends who coincided in my sentiments should be increased in number and strength. My expectations having been at length realised, in November, 1830, I embarked

for England, as the discussion of the East India Company's charter was expected to come on, by which the treatment of the natives of India, and its future government, would be determined for many years to come, and an appeal to the King in Council, against the abolition of the practice of burning widows, was to be heard before the Privy Council ; and his Majesty the Emperor of Delhi had likewise commissioned me to bring before the authorities in England certain encroachments on his rights by the East India Company. I accordingly arrived in England in April, 1831.

I hope you will excuse the brevity of this sketch, as I have no leisure at present to enter into particulars, and

I remain, etc.,

RAMMOHUN ROY.

APPENDIX—C

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

[From the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* Ninth Edition]

Raja Rammohun Roy, the founder of the Brahma Samaj or the Theistic Church of India, was born at Radhanagar, Bengal, in May, 1772, of an ancient and honourable Brahman family. His father gave him a good education ; he learnt Persian at home, Arabic at Patna (where he studied Euclid, Aristotle and the Koran), and Sanskrit at Benares. Although a devout idolater in boyhood, he early began to doubt and speculate, and at fifteen left home to study Buddhism in Tibet, where his criticisms on Lama-worship gave much offence. After some years' travel he returned, but, his anti-idolatrous sentiments obliging him to leave home, he lived at Benares until his father's death in 1803. After this, he spent about ten years in the East India Company's service, latterly as Dewan or head officer in the collection of Revenues. During the period he first began to assemble his friends together for evening discussions on the absurdities of idolatory, and he also issued his first work, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* ("A Gift to Monotheists"). This treatise was in Persian, with an Arabic preface, and was a bold protest against superstition and priestcraft. These proceedings brought on him much hostility, and even persecution, and in 1814 he retired to Calcutta for greater safety. Here he soon established a little Friendly Society (*Atmiya Sabha*) which met weekly to read the Hindu Scriptures and to chant Monotheistic hymns. In 1816 he translated the Vedanta into Bengali and Hindustani, following this by a series of translations from the Upanishads into Bengali, Hindustani and English, with introductions and comments of his own. These works he published at his own cost and disseminated widely among his countrymen. His writings excited much opposition and gave rise to numerous controversies, in which his ability, tact and learning rendered him fully a match for his antagonists. But the deadliest blow he inflicted upon Hindu superstition was his effective agitation against the rite of *Suttee,* the burning of living widows on the piles of their deceased husbands.

In 1811 he had been a horrified witness of this sacrifice in his elder brother's family, and he had vowed never to rest until he had uprooted this custom. He exposed the hollow pretences of its advocates in elaborate pamphlets both in Bengali and English, and pressed the matter in every possible way, till at last the tide of public feeling turned, and on December 4, 1829, Lord William Bentinck issued a regulation abolishing *Suttee* throughout all the territories subject to Fort William. Rammohun was an active politician and

philanthropist. He built school-houses and established schools in which useful knowledge was gratuitously taught through the medium both of the English and the native languages. He wrote a suggestive Bengali Grammar, of which he published one version in English (1826) and one in Bengali (1833). He wrote valuable pamphlets on Hindu law and made strenuous exertions for the freedom of the native Press; he also established (1822) and mainly conducted two native newspapers, the *Sambad Kaumudi* in Bengali, and the *Mirat-al-Akhbar* in Persian and made them the means of diffusing much useful political information. Becoming interested in Christianity he learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Bible in the original languages, and in 1820 he issued a selection from the four Gospels entitled—"The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness." This was attacked by the Baptist Missionaries of Serampur, and a long controversy ensued in which he published three remarkable "Appeals to the Christian Public" in defence of the "Precepts of Jesus". He also wrote other theological tracts (sometimes under assumed names) in which he attacked both Hindu and Christian orthodoxy with a strong hand. But his personal relations with orthodox Christians were never unfriendly, and he rendered valuable assistance to Dr. Duff in the latter's educational schemes. He also warmly befriended a Unitarian Christian Mission which was started in Calcutta (1824) by Mr. William Adam, formerly a Baptist Missionary, who, in attempting to convert Rammohun to trinitarianism was himself converted to the opposite view. This Unitarian Mission, though not a theological success, attracted considerable sympathy among the Hindu Monotheists, whose *Atmiya Sabha* had then become extinct. At last Rammohun felt able to re-embody his cherished ideal, and on August 20, 1828, he opened the first Brahma Association (Brahma Sabha) at a hired house. A suitable church-building was then erected and placed in the hands of trustees, with a small endowment and a remarkable trust-deed by which the building was set apart "for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being, who is the Author and Preserver of the universe." The new church was formally opened on the 11th *Magh* (January 23), 1830, from which day the Brahma Samaj dates its existence. Having now succeeded in his chief projects, Rammohun resolved to visit England, and the King of Delhi appointed him envoy thither on special business, and gave him the title of Raja. He arrived in England on April 8, 1831, and was received with universal cordiality and respect. He watched with special anxiety the Parliamentary discussions on the renewal of the East India Company's charter and gave much valuable evidence before the Board of Control on the condition of India. This he republished with additional suggestions ("Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India") and also reissued his important "Essay on the Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property." He visited France, and wished to visit America, but died unexpectedly of brain-fever at Bristol, September, 27, 1833.

APPENDIX—D

FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS OF RAMMOHUN

[*By Manmatha Nath Ghosh*]

Dwarkanath Tagore (1794—1846):

Dwarkanath Tagore, or "Prince Dwarkanath" as he was often called, was born in Calcutta in 1794, and was the nephew and adopted son of Rammoney Tagore. He received his education at Mr. Sherbourne's School. At an early age he lost his adopted father and inherited a large patrimony. He at first commenced practice as a legal and commercial agent but his abilities attracted the notice of Government, and he was soon appointed Dewan to the Salt Agent and Collector of the 24 Pergannas and Dewan to the Board of Customs, Salt and Opium. Rammohun Roy largely influenced his mind, and he co-operated with the Raja in all his religious, social, political and educational reforms. He munificently supported the Brahmo Samaj from its foundation and urged the abolition of *Suttee*. He was joint proprietor with Rammohun Roy and Nil Rutton Haldar of the *Bengal Herald* and a proprietor of the *Bengal Hurkaru* and other journals, and strenuously fought for the freedom of the Press and the repeal of the "Black Act". Dwarkanath was an active supporter of the Hindu College and the Medical College, and he arranged for the training of some Indian medical students in England, himself bearing the expenses of two of them. After leaving Government service Dwarkanath founded, in 1839, the firm of Carr Tagore & Co. and also the Union Bank and the Landholders' Society. He was famous for his lavish hospitality, and Lord Auckland was a frequent guest at his garden-house, the well-known Belgatchia Villa in the suburbs of Calcutta. A man of large public and private charities, his enlightened liberality and public spirit commanded universal admiration. Government made him a Justice of the Peace and frequently consulted him on public matters. In 1842 he visited Europe—where he was cordially welcomed. He was received in audience by Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, who presented him with a medal and also with their portraits as a token of their appreciation of his services to his native land. Dwarkanath came into intimate contact with the celebrities of the day in England, France, Prussia and Italy. Returning to India after a year, he started again for England in March, 1845 and died there, on the 1st August, 1846. His portrait by F. R. Say, which formerly hung in the vestibule of the Town Hall of Calcutta, and now adorns the Victoria Memorial Hall, was painted while he was on his first visit to England and purchased with funds raised by public subscription. A marble bust of Dwarkanath was also erected in his honour by his fellow-citizens of Calcutta in January, 1842 in the vestibule of the

Metcalfe Hall, formerly occupied by the Imperial Library. Dwarkanath's eldest son, Debendra Nath Tagore, father of the Poet Rabindranath, succeeded Rammohun as the second great leader of the Brahmo Samaj.

Ramanath Tagore (1800—1877):

Ramanath Tagore was a brother of Dwarkanath Tagore and a cousin of Prossunno Coomar Tagore and was educated like them at Mr. Sherbourne's School. After leaving school, he was placed for some time in the firm of Alexander & Co., where he was initiated into the mysteries of commercial and banking business. He was Treasurer of the Union Bank, founded by Dwarkanath and others in 1829, till its failure, when he acted as one of the liquidators. Associated from an early age with Raja Rammohun Roy he came to adopt his theistic views and took a prominent part in the reforms initiated by him and in the conduct of the affairs of the Brahmo Samaj, of which he was appointed a Trustee. Ramanath was early interested in Politics and Political Economy and joined his cousin, Prosunno Coomar Tagore, in founding and editing the *Reformer*—a weekly journal in English. He was one of the founders of the British Indian Association and was its President for about 10 years. He wrote a strong pamphlet criticising the Rent Bill of 1859. Ramanath was appointed a member of the Bengal Legislative Council in 1866, and of the Governor-General's Council in 1873. When the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII) visited Calcutta, he was elected President of the Committee for the reception of His Royal Highness at the Balgatchia Villa, and was the recipient of a handsome ring from the Prince as a souvenir. Ramanath was an active member of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation and a Fellow of the Calcutta University. He was made a Raja in 1873, C.S.I. in 1874 and Maharaja in 1877—on the occasion of the assumption of the Imperial title by Queen Victoria. His whole career was one of public usefulness and benevolence, and his countrymen fittingly commemorated his services by erecting a beautiful statue of his by Geflowski, which adorns the lower vestibule of the Town Hall of Calcutta.

Prosunno Coomar Tagore (1801—1868):

Prosunno Coomar Tagore was a son of Gopi Mohan Tagore, and grandson of Darpanarain Tagore of Pathuriaghatta. He was educated at Mr. Sherbourne's School and the Hindu College. Although a big land-holder, he joined the legal profession and amassed a large fortune by his success in the profession. He published numerous works on Hindu Law and was considered the greatest authority of his time on the subject. Lord Dalhousie appointed him in 1854 as Clerk Assistant to the Legislative Council of the Governor-General, and in this office he showed conspicuous ability. He founded in 1831, with his cousin Ramanath, a weekly journal called the *Reformer* with the object of promoting the political interests of his countrymen. He was a devoted adherent of the theistic tenets with which the name of Raja Rammohun Roy is associated, and one of the early tracts of the Raja was

published in the name of Prosunno Coomar. After the conversion of his only son Ganendra Mohun (the first Indian Barrister) to Christianity, he became somewhat conservative in religious and social matters. A Governor of the Hindu College, a member of the Council of Education, of the Legislative Council and of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, one of the founders of the British Indian Association and its President in 1867, his distinguished public services were recognised by the Government, who made him a C.S.I. in 1866. He had a fine law library, which has since been presented to the Calcutta University by the Maharaja Tagore. His legacies and bequests for religious, charitable and educational purposes amounted to nearly 7 lakhs of rupees, of which 3 lakhs of rupees were left in trust to the Calcutta University for the foundation of the Tagore Law Lectureship. He died in 1868. A marble bust in the Town Hall and a seated marble statue in the porch of the Senate House in Calcutta commemorate the memory of one of the greatest Bengalis of the last century.

Braja Mohun Majumdar (1784—1821) :

Braja Mohun and his brother Krishna Mohun Majumdar, sons of Radha Charan Majumdar, were valued coadjutors of Raja Rammohun Roy. The former was the author of *Pauttalik Mukha-Chapetika*—the second edition of which was published under the title of *Pauttalik Probodh,* and the latter was the author of some beautiful hymns, some of which were printed along with the hymns of Raja Rammohun Roy. In the introduction to an English translation of a pamphlet by Brajamohan, entitled "A tract against the prevailing system of Hindoo Idolatry by Brajamohan Debashya," published at the Baptist Mission Press, Circular Road, Calcutta, in 1821, the European translator states as follows :—

> "The Author of the treatise, of which an English translation is herewith submitted to the Public, was Brojomohan Majoomdar, a Native of Bengal, belonging to the fourth class of the Hindoos. Rammohun Roy, his intimate friend, has communicated to the translator the following particulars concerning him—
>
> "Brajamohan's father was a person of respectability and was once employed as Dewan by Mr. Middleton, one of the Residents at the Court of Lucknow. Brajamohan was a good Bengali scholar and had some knowledge of Sanscrit. He had made considerable progress in the study of the English language, and was also well versed in Astronomy ; and at the time of his death was engaged in translating Fergusson's Astronomy into Bengalee for the School Book Society. He was a follower of the Vedanta doctrine, in so far as to believe God to be a pure spirit ; but he denied that the human soul was an emanation from God ; and he admired very much the morality of the New Testament. Being suddenly taken ill of a bilious fever on the 6th of April last, he begged his friend, Rammohun Roy, to procure him the aid of a European physician, which request was immediately complied with ; but it was too late :—the medicine administered did not produce the desired effect, and he died the very same night, aged thirty-seven years."

Mr. Majumdar's work was characterized in the second number of the *Friend of India* (Quarterly Series) as "a masterly exposure of the absurdities of the present Hindoo system."

Nanda Kishore Bose (1802—1845):

Nanda Kishore Bose was a student of Raja Rammohun Roy's school. His son, Rajnarain Bose, the well-known Bengali writer on literary and religious subjects and for sometime President of the Adi Brahmo Samaj, writes in his autobiography that, when after leaving the College, he interviewed Mr. (afterwards Sir Frederick) Halliday, he asked Rajnarain if he was a son of "that Nanda Kishore who used to write English so well?". Nanda Kishore acted for some time as Secretary of Raja Rammohun Roy and was one of his most ardent disciples. When Kissory Chand Mitter wrote his monograph on Raja Rammohun Roy (published in the *Calcutta Review* in 1845) Nanda Kishore gave him some anecdotes and other materials. Nanda Kishore worked for some time in the office of the *Bengal Hurkaru*. He next worked as a clerk in the Opium Agency Office at Ghazipur, and, after returning to Bengal, as a clerk in the Treasury and the Special Commission Office for the resumption of *lakheraj* lands. He had implicit faith in the religion inculcated in the Vedanta. He died on the 7th December, 1843 at the early age of 43.

Tara Chand Chakravarty (1804— ?):

Born in 1804 Tara Chand Chakravarty was one of the earliest students of the Hindu College. He was well-versed in English, Sanscrit and Persian and was, for sometime, on the staff of the *Calcutta Journal* (edited by Mr. James Silk Buckingham). Tarachand also assisted H. H. Wilson in translating into English the Hindu *Puranas*. Tara Chand then became a school teacher and compiled an Anglo-Bengali Dictionary. Subsequently he served for some time as the Deputy Registrar of the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* and as a Munsif. He was President of the Society for the Acquisition of Knowledge, and he and his friends—Ram Gopal Ghose, Dakhina Ranjan Mukherjee, K. M. Banerjee and others—were the pioneers of political agitation in Bengal under the guidance of George Thompson, M.P., whom Dwarkanath Tagore brought to India. This group came to be known as the "Chakravarty Faction." He edited the *Quill* for sometime with conspicuous ability and incurred the displeasure of the authorities for free criticism of the police. Tara Chand was one of Rammohun's favourite adherents and was the first Secretary of the Brahmo Samaj. He was the author of several religious tracts of the Samaj and commenced publishing the *Manu Samhita* with text and commentaries. Towards the latter part of his life, he became the Chief Councillor of the Maharajah of Burdwan.

Ram Chandra Vidyabagish (1785—1844):

Ram Chandra Vidyabagish was the youngest of the four sons of Lakshmi Narayan Tarkabhusan and was born in a village named Malpara, on the bank of the river Hooghly, in 1785. His eldest brother, Nanda Kumar Vidyalankar, became a *Sunnyasin* and came to be known as Hariharananda Tirthaswami. This man "during his perigrinations as a Hindu mendicant had come to Rungpur and there

met Rammohun, who had received him with great honour in recognition of his learning and liberality of spirit, and Tirthaswami, bound to Rammohun by love, followed him like a shadow. He practised the rules of *Tantric Bamachar* and was a worshipper of One True God according to the *Mahanirvan Tantra.*"* Hariharananda died in 1832 at the age of 70.

Ram Chandra, who was educated at Benares and other places and studied *Smriti* with Rammohun Vidyabachaspati at Santipur, was introduced to Raja Rammohun Roy by his brother Hariharananda. The Raja took great interest in the young scholar. He made him study the *Vedanta* under Pundit Siva Prasad Misra and appointed him a lecturer at the Vedanta College established by him. When the *Atmiya Sabha* was established in 1815, Rammohun entrusted Ram Chandra with the duties of reading and explaining the *Upanishads* to its meetings. Vidyabagish was ultimately appointed a Professor of *Smriti* in the Sanskrit College, Calcutta.

Ram Chandra compiled a Bengali Dictionary and wrote a work on Astronomy. Some of his lectures on moral subjects delivered to the students of the Hindu College, at the instance of Prosunno Coomar Tagore, were collected and published under the title of *Nitidarshan.*

When the Brahmo Samaj was first established in 1828 Ram Chandra Vidyabagish was appointed Minister by Raja Rammohun Roy, and he ministered to the spiritual needs of those who attended his services almost till his death. The first sermon from the pulpit of the Brahmo Samaj was preached by him. In 1843 Debendra Nath Tagore formally joined the Brahmo Samaj and invested Vidyabagish with the office of Acharya with a ceremony befitting the occasion. Shortly after this Ram Chandra had a stroke of paralysis. In the following year he started for Benares but died on the way at Murshidabad on the 20th Falgoon, 1766 Saka (1844) at the age of 59 years 21 days, after making over to Maharshi Debendranath the sacred charge that his departed friend had entrusted to him.

Kalinath Munshi (1801—40) and Baikunthanath Munshi (1806—55):

The two brothers, Kalinath Munshi and Baikuntha Nath Munshi, were Zemindars of the well-known Taki family, which rose to prosperity during the time of the Mahomedan Emperors and had great influence in the community. Their father, Rai Ramkanto Goho, served for some time under the East India Company as Munshi.

Both the brothers were noted for philanthropy and public spirit. The following extract from the *Friend of India* of the obituary notice of Kalinath speaks for itself:—

> "He was among the most devoted admirers and followers of Raja Rammohun Roy and assisted him in the establishment of the Brahmo Sabha. He was foremost in the rank of those who

*From a letter signed "A devoted disciple of Rammohun Roy" in the *Tattwabodhini Patrika* for Agrahayan, 1789 Saka (1865)—quoted at pp. 34-35 of Mr. Hem Ch. Sarkar's Edition of Miss Sophia Dobson Collet's *Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy.*

came forward to congratulate Lord William Bentinck on the abolition of *Shuttee*. He subsequently established an English Seminary at his family residence at Taki in connection with the Mission of the General Assembly, which he continued in great part to maintain from his own funds. He also constructed a public road at an expense of 80,000 rupees. We have, moreover, that, following the example of his friend and associate in liberality Baboo Dwarkanath Tagore—he has bequeathed a lac of rupees of which the interest is to be applied to public objects after his death."

After the departure of Raja Rammohun Roy for England the work of the Brahmo Samaj was principally carried on by Kali Nath Munshi, Dwarkanath Tagore and Mathuranath Mullick. Kali Nath was one of the original trustees of the Samaj—the other trustees being Dwarkanath Tagore, Prosunno Coomar Tagore, Ram Chandra Vidyabagish and Rammohun Roy.

Baikunthanath was also one of the trustees of the Brahmo Samaj in 1830, the other trustees being Radhaprasad Roy (eldest son of Rammohun Roy) and Ramanath Tagore.

Chandra Sekhar Deb (1810—79?):

Born in 1810, Chandra Sekhar Deb received his education at the Hindu College at the time of the famous Anglo-Indian teacher and poet Derozio, though he did not belong to his class. He was appointed a Deputy Collector and was the author of a commentary on the Revenue Laws. It is stated that one day when Rammohun Roy was returning home in his carriage from the Unitarian service of Mr. Adam with his young disciples Tara Chand Chakravarty and Chandra Sekhar Deb, Chandra Sekhar proposed to him that they should have a separate place for the unsectarian worship of the "One True God", and this led to the establishment, on the 20th August, 1828, of the first Brahmo Samaj with Tara Chand Chakravarty as Secretary. Chandra Sekhar translated into English some of the earliest religious tracts and sermons of the Brahmo Samaj.

Joy Krishna Singh (?—1820):

Joy Krishna Singh was a scion of the well-known Singh family of Jorasanko in Calcutta—founded by Dewan Santiram Singh, who amassed a large fortune by serving as Dewan under Sir Thomas Rumbold and Mr. Middleton at Murshidabad and Patna. Joy Krishna was a man of enlightened liberality and public spirit. He donated Rs. 20,000/- towards the foundation of the Hindu College and was one of its first "Native Directors". His name appears in the memorial tablet erected in the Presidency College, Calcutta, "to commemorate the liberality and public spirit of the donors who mainly contributed to the founding of the Hindu College." He was the grandfather of Kali Prosonno Singh, the immortal author of the Bengali classic, *Hutom Penchar Naksha* ('Sketches by Hootum') and the editor of the best translation in Bengali of the great Sanskrit epic—the *Mahabharata*,—which he published and distributed free at a cost of about 3 lakhs of rupees.

Raja Kali Sankar Ghosal:

Raja Kali Sankar Ghosal was the son of Maharaja Joy Narain Ghosal Bahadur—founder of the Bhukoilash Raj family and a staunch advocate for the promotion of public education—to whom Benares owes a well-equipped College and a *thakurbaree*. Kali Sankar continued his father's philanthropic labors and established the Benares Blind Asylum, where its inmates received raiment and food free. He donated Rs. 20,000/- for the establishment of the Hindu College and was, in fact, one of the founders of the College. He received the title of Raja Bahadur from Lord Ellenborough in recognition of his valuable services, public charities and general benevolence. Two of his sons, Satya Charan and Satya Saran, and a grandson, Satyananda, were prominent members of the British Indian Association and patrons of letters and received from Government the title of Raja Bahadur.

Annada Prasad Bannerjee:

Annada Prasad Bannerjee belonged to the Bannerjee family of Telinipara (in the district of Hooghly) founded by Baidyanath Bannerjee, who, it is said, amassed a large fortune during the Bharatpur War in which he followed the Captain of a British army as Dewan. Annada Prasad's father, Abhaya Charan, was banian in the office of Messrs. Colvin & Co. of Calcutta and considerably added to the Zemindaries left by his father. He died at the early age of 35, and as his first wife became a *Suttee*, Annada Prasad was brought up by an affectionate step-mother. Annada Prasad also served as a banian in the office of Colvin & Co. and became an ardent follower of Raja Rammohun Roy. He established a Brahmo Samaj at his house and spent large sums of money for the publication of the *Upanishads* and other religious works. He also published a collected edition of Rammohun's Bengalee and Sanskrit Works in 1839[?].

Raja Badan Roy or Buddinath Roy (?—1860).

Raja Badan Roy, or Buddinath Roy Bahadur, was the third son of Maharaja Sukhmoy Roy, who deposited Rs. 1,50,000 with the Government for constructing the Cuttuck Road and received the title of Maharaja Bahadur and a medal from the British Government. Buddinath emulated his father's liberality and contributed Rs. 50,000/- to the Hindu College, Rs. 40,000/- towards the erection of the Cossipore Gun Foundry Ghat on the Ganges and the road leading from it to Dum Dum, Rs. 30,000/- to the Mayo Native Hospital, Rs. 20,000/- in aid of the funds for Native Female Education, Rs. 8,000/- towards the construction of the Karmanasha Bridge and Rs 6,000/- to the Zoological Society of London for which he was honoured with a highly complimentary note from the Marquis of Lansdowne together with a diploma of the London Zoological Society. Buddinath was one of the Directors of the Hindu College and received the title of Raja in 1825 with a gold medal.

Kasi Nath Mullick (?—1864).

Kasi Nath Mullick was a grandson of Gour Charan Mullick, a millionaire of Burrabazar in Calcutta. He was distinguished for his numerous acts of charity. He had no issues and left his whole estate (now managed by the Administrator General of Bengal) for meeting the expenses of the religious and charitable institutions founded by himself, his mother, Chitra, and wife, Ranganmoni, who were all noted for piety. A *thakurbari* and a Sanskrit *tol* at Harrison Road, near Sinduriaputtee, still bear testimony to their religious fervor and the interest taken by them in the spread of education.

Mathuranath Mullick (?—1839).

Mathuranath Mullick was Dewan to Gour Charan Mullick—grandfather of Shama Charan Mullick, the Indian Rothschild, at whose beautiful villa at "Seven Tanks", Cossipore, the reception of H. R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh was held in 1868. Towards the latter part of his life he entered the service of the Burdwan Raj. He died in 1839.

Brindaban Mitra.

Brindaban Mitra was the son of Pitambar Mitra, who served as Vakil of the Nawab Vizier of Oudh at the Court of Delhi. He received from the Emperor the title of Raja Bahadur and was invested with the rank of a Commander of 3,000 horse. He rendered, it is stated, some services to Warren Hastings during the revolt of Raja Chait Singh of Benares in 1871 and settled in Calcutta in 1787-88. On his death, in 1806, Brindaban inherited his wealth but, owing to extravagant habits, soon squandered away the bulk of his paternal property and had to take service for some time as Dewan to the Collector of Cuttack. He was the grandfather of the Raja Rajendralal Mitra, the renowned scholar and archæologist.

Baidyanath Mukherjee:

Baidyanath Mukherjee was the grandfather of Anukul Mukherjee, Vakil and for some time a Judge of the Calcutta High Court. Dewan Baidyanath was originally an inhabitant of Vangamora Gopinathpur in the district of Hooghly and subsequently settled in Calcutta. He was one of the influential Hindus who approached Sir Hyde East with the proposal to establish a Hindu College in Calcutta and became its "Native Secretary" when the College was established in 1817.

Gopee Mohun Tagore (1761—1818):

Gopee Mohun Tagore was the second son of Durponarain Tagore and grandfather of Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohun Tagore. He knew Sanskrit, Persian, Urdu, English, French and Portuguese. He composed some beautiful songs in Bengali. He held like his father an appointment under the French Government at Chandernagore and purchased big Zemindaries. A patron of arts, many illustrious Indian musicians were patronized by him—one of whom, Kali Mirza, was very

much liked by Raja Rammohun Roy. It is said that the Raja often took lessons in music from him, and some of Kali Mirza's songs strengthened him in his fight against idolatry.

Gopee Mohun was one of the founders of the Hindu College to which he contributed munificently and of which he was a Governor. His name appears next below the name of the Maharaja Bahadur of Burdwan in the commemorative marble tablet set up in the Presidency College in honour of the donors and founders of the Hindu College.

THE RAJA AS A LINGUIST

—" The Raja was acquainted more or less with ten languages: Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, English, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and French. The two first he knew critically as a scholar, the third, fourth, fifth and sixth he spoke and wrote fluently; in the eighth, perhaps, his studies did not extend much beyond the originals of the Christian Scriptures; and in the latter two his knowledge was apparently more limited."

SANDFORD ARNOT

in the "Athenæum Journal," London, 1833.

APPENDIX—E.

A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER WRITINGS OF RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY

IN PERSIAN, BENGALEE, ENGLISH, SANSKRIT AND HINDI

IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

PUBLISHED IN INDIA

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	WORKS IN BENGALEE AND OTHER LANGUAGES	WORKS IN ENGLISH
SAKA ERA. • A.D. 1803 (?1804)	I. "TUHFAT-UL-MUWAHHIDIN"* or "A Gift to Deists." (*In Persian with an Arabic introduction*).	
	II. "MANAZARAT-UL-ADYAN"† or "The Discussions on Various Religions".	

*Rammohun's first work, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin,* was published, it is stated, from Murshidabad. It was first translated into English, under the title of "A Gift to Deists", by Maulvi Obaidullah El Obaide, Superintendent of the Dacca Government Madrassa and published, with a preface by Rajnarain Bose, under the auspices of the Adi Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta, in 1884.—*Editor.*

†It has never been definitely established whether this book was ever published. Rammohun Roy writes at the end of his first publication, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin,* that he has left the further discussion of the subject to another work of his, entitled *Manazarat-ul-Adyan,* "Discussions on Various Religions." No copy of the book, however, has ever been found. It is just possible that Rammohun intended to write the book but was unable to do so for some reason or other. It only remains to be added that *Manazarat* is a form frequently adopted by theological writers in Persian in which two or more persons are introduced to discuss a given subject—*Editor.*

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era.	A.D.		
1737	1815	১। "বেদান্ত গ্রন্থ"	
1738	1816	২। "বেদান্ত সার"	(1) Translation of an ABRIDGMENT OF THE VEDANT or The Resolution of all the Veds; the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical Theology; establishing the Unity of the Supreme Being; and that He Alone is the object of Propitiation and Worship.
		৩। "তলবকার উপনিষৎ" (কেনোপনিষৎ)	
		৪। "ঈশোপনিষৎ"	(2) Translation of CENA [KENA] UPANISHAD; one of the chapters of the Sama Veda; according to the gloss of the celebrated Shancaracharya; establishing the Unity and the Sole Omnipotence of the Supreme Being; and that He Alone is the Object of Worship.
			(3) Translation of the ISHOPANISHUD, one of the chapters of the Yajoor Ved: according to the commentary of the celebrated Shankaracharya: establishing the Unity and Incomprehensibility of the Supreme Being; and that His Worship alone can lead to Eternal Beatitude.*
1739	1817	৫। "কঠোপনিষৎ"	(4) A DEFENCE OF HINDOO THEISM in reply to the Attack of an Advocate for Idolatry at Madras.†
		৬। "মুণ্ডকোপনিষৎ"	

*The Preface to this translation of the *Ishopanishud* was re-published in Calcutta in 1844 by the Tuttuobodheney Sobha established by Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore in 1839.—*Editor.*

†This tract was also republished in 1844 by the Tuttuobodheney Sobha.—*Editor.*

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era.	A.D.		
	1817	৭। "মাণ্ডুক্যোপনিষৎ"	(5) A SECOND DEFENCE of the Monotheistical System of the Vedas in reply to an apology for the present state of Hindoo Worship.*
		৮। "ভট্টাচার্য্যের সহিত বিচার"	
1740	1818	৯। সহমরণ বিষয়ে প্রবর্ত্তক ও নিবর্ত্তকের—প্রথম সংবাদ"	(6) Translation of A CONFERENCE between an advocate for, and an opponent of, THE PRACTICE OF BURNING WIDOWS ALIVE from the original Bungla.
		১০। "গায়ত্রীর অর্থ"	
		১১। "গোস্বামীর সহিত বিচার"	
1741	1819	১২। "সহমরণ বিষয়ে প্রবর্ত্তক ও নিবর্ত্তকের—দ্বিতীয় সংবাদ" (Printed at the Mission Press, Calcutta).	(7) Translation of the MOONDUK OPUNISHUD of the Uthurvu-Ved, according to the gloss of the celebrated Shunkura-Charyu.
			(8) Translation of the KUT'H-OPUNISHUD of the Ujoor-Ved, according to the gloss of the celebrated Sunkuracharyu.
1742	1820	১৩। "সুব্রহ্মণ্য শাস্ত্রীর সহিত বিচার" (In Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengalee, and Bengali transliteration of Sanskrit).	(9) An apology for the PURSUIT OF FINAL BEATITUDE, independently of Brahmunical Observances.†
		১৪। "কবিতাকারের সহিত বিচার"	(10) A SECOND CONFERENCE between an advocate for, and an opponent of, THE PRACTICE OF BURNING WIDOWS ALIVE.

*Also re-published by the Tuttuobodheney Sobha in 1844.—*Editor.*
†Re-published by the Tuttuobodheney Sobha in 1844.—*Editor.*

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era.	A.D.		
			(11) THE PRECEPTS OF JESUS, the Guide to Peace and Happiness; extracted from the Books of the New Testament ascribed to the four Evangelists. With translations into Sungscrit and Bengalee. Calcutta: Printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Circular Road.*
			(12) AN APPEAL to the Christian Public IN DEFENCE OF THE "PRECEPTS OF JESUS" by A Friend to Truth. Printed at Calcutta.
1743	1821	১৫। "ব্রাহ্মণসেবধি" ১, ২, ৩ (অথবা) "ব্রাহ্মণ ও মিসনরি সংবাদ" ১৬। "পাদরি ও শিষ্য-সংবাদ"	(13) THE BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE,† or, the Missionary and the Brahmun, being a vindication of the Hindoo religion against the attacks of Christian Missionaries, I, II, and III.
			(14) SECOND APPEAL to the Christian Public IN DEFENCE OF THE "PRECEPTS OF JESUS."
1744	1822	১৭। "চারি প্রশ্নের উত্তর"	(15) Brief Remarks regarding MODERN ENCROACHMENTS ON THE ANCIENT RIGHTS OF FEMALES according to the Hindoo Law of Inheritance.

*The collected Works of the Raja do not contain the Sanskrit and the Bengalee translations of "The Precepts of Jesus". A Bengalee translation, under the title *"Yiśupranīta Hitopadeśa,"* was published from Calcutta by Rakhaldas Haldar in 1859.—*Editor.*

†The first three numbers of the *Brahmunical Magazine* were published in 1821, and the fourth in 1823, each being a separate tract. In the second edition of the first three numbers they were put together. In the year 1827 another edition of the Magazine was published, the 2nd and 4th numbers being published with some portions of the original left out and some portions revised, under the title of "Extracts from the *Brahmunical Magazine,*" etc., and the 3rd number in full.—*Editor.*

Year of Publication	Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era. A.D. 1745 ... 1823	১৮। "পথ্যপ্রদান" —সম্যগনুষ্ঠানাক্ষম তজ্জন্যমনস্তাপবিশিষ্ট কর্ত্তৃক (Medicine for the sick offered by one who laments his inability to perform All Righteousness). Printed at the Sanskrit Press, Calcutta.	(16) THE BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE, or the Missionary and the Brahmun, No. 4.
	১৯। "প্রার্থনাপত্র"	(17) HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS to his countrymen who believe in the One True God.*
		(18) A VINDICATION of the Incarnation of the Deity as the common basis of Hindooism and Christianity against the Schismatic attacks of R. Tytler, Esq., M.D. by Ram Doss†. Printed by S. Smith & Co., Hurkaru Press, Calcutta.
		(19) PETITIONS AGAINST THE PRESS REGULATIONS (*a*) Memorial to the Supreme Court, (*b*) Appeal to the King in Council.
		(20) A LETTER ON ENGLISH EDUCATION to His Excellency the Rt. Hon. Lord Amherst, the Governor-General in Council.‡

*Appeared in the name of Prusunnu Koomar Thakoor.

†"Ram Doss" was the name assumed by Rammohun.

‡The letter was written urging Government to promote "a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful Sciences, which may be accomplished with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning educated in Europe and providing a College in Calcutta furnished with necessary books, instruments and other apparatus." —*Editor.*

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era.	A.D.		
			(21) FINAL APPEAL to the Christian Public IN DEFENCE OF THE "PRECEPTS OF JESUS." Printed at the Unitarian Press, Dhurmtollah, Calcutta.*
			(22) A DIALOGUE between a Missionary and three Chinese Converts.
1746	1824		(23) A letter to Rev. Henry Ware on THE PROSPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA.†
1747	1825		(24) Translation of a Sanscrit Tract on DIFFERENT MODES OF WORSHIP.
1748	1826	২০। "ব্রহ্মনিষ্ঠ গৃহস্থের লক্ষণ" ২১। "কায়স্থের সহিত মদ্যপান-বিষয়ক বিচার"	(25) BENGALEE GRAMMAR in the English Language. Printed at the Unitarian Press, Dhurmtollah, Calcutta.‡

*The following notice appeared as an introduction to the "Final Appeal", which was published in reply to the elaborate answer to the "Second Appeal" by Dr. Marshman of Serampore printed in the Fourth Number of the Quarterly Series of the *Friend of India*, December, 1821 :—

"All the preceding works of the author on the Subject of Christianity were printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta; but the acting proprietor of that press having, since the publication of the Second Appeal, declined, although in the politest manner possible, printing any other work that the Author might publish on the same subject, he was under the necessity of purchasing a few types for his own use, and of depending principally upon native superintendence for the completion of the greater part of this work. This might form an apology to the public for the imperfections that may appear in typographical execution."—*Editor.*

†The whole correspondence was published in the form of a pamphlet in Cambridge (U. S. A.) in 1824 and re-printed in London in 1825.—*Editor.*

‡This publication had not so far been included in any collection of the Raja's works. It was re-printed for the first time by the "Tattvabodhini Patrika" (the monthly organ of the Adi Brahmo Samaj, edited by Mr. Kshitindra Nath Tagore) in its issue of *Pous*, 1339 Bengali Era (January, 1933).—*Editor.*

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era.	A.D.		
1749	1827	২২। "বজ্রসূচী"	(26) A translation of a Sunskrit Tract, inculcating THE DIVINE WORSHIP, esteemed by those who believe in the revelation of the Veds as most appropriate to the nature of the Supreme Being.*
		২৩। "গায়ত্র্যা পরমোপাসনা বিধানং" [In Sanskrit with Bengali translation]	
1750	1828	২৪। [?] "ব্রহ্মসঙ্গীত"†	(27) ANSWER OF A HINDOO to the question, "Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship instead of the numerously attended established Churches?"
		২৫। "ব্রহ্মোপাসনা"	(28) Petition to Government against Regulation III, of 1828 for THE RESUMPTION OF LAKHERAJ LANDS.
1751	1829	২৬। "সহমরণ বিষয়" (তৃতীয় পুস্তক)	(29) THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION: Religious Instructions founded on Sacred Authorities.
		২৭। "অনুষ্ঠান"	

*This translation was republished by the Tuttuobodheney Sobha in 1844 under the title of "A Translation into English of the Gayutree inculcating the Divine Worship".—*Editor.*

†*"Brahmasangit"*, we find, was published again in Calcutta in 1846 under the title *"Gitabali"*—A Collection of Songs on Philosophical and Moral topics by Rammohun Roy and others" (pp. 28). Mention is also found of another edition published from Calcutta with the title of *"Raja Rammohun Ray-er Sangitabali"* in 1889.—*Editor.*

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era.	A.D.		
1752	1830		(30) The TRUST-DEED of the Brahmo Samaj. (31) Abstract of the arguments regarding THE BURNING OF WIDOWS, considered as a religious rite. (32) Essays on the RIGHTS OF HINDOOS over ANCESTRAL PROPERTY, according to the Law of Bengal. (33) Letters on the HINDOO LAW OF INHERITANCE.* (34) ADDRESS TO LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, Governor-General of India, upon the passing of the Act FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SUTTEE.
1753	1831		(35) Counter-Petition to the House of Commons to the Memorial of the advocates of THE SUTTEE.
1755	1833	২৮। "গৌড়ীয় ব্যাকরণ"† তদ্ভাষা বিরচিত শ্রীযুত রাজা রামমোহন রায় দ্বারা পাণ্ডুলিপি ও কলিকাতা স্কুল বুক্ সোসাইটি দ্বারা এবং তন্মুদ্রাযন্ত্রে মুদ্রিত হয়।	

*Published in the *Bengal Hurkaru* from September to November, 1830.

†The "*Gaurīya Vyākarana*" ran into five editions, the 5th and the last appearing in 1856, all published by the School Book Society of Calcutta.—*Editor*.

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era.	A.D.		
		N.B.—২৯। "কুলার্ণব তন্ত্র"। পঞ্চম খণ্ড। প্রথম উল্লাস (Reprinted from Sanskrit)	
		N.B.—৩০। ক্ষুদ্র পত্রী (বিতরণার্থ মুদ্রিত)	
		N.B.—৩১। "আত্মানাত্মবিবেক" (Reprinted from Sanskrit with Bengalee translation)	
1795-1802	1873-80	(১) "রাজা রামমোহন রায় প্রণীত গ্রন্থাবলি"† —শ্রীযুক্ত রাজনারায়ণ বসু ও শ্রীযুক্ত আনন্দচন্দ্র বেদান্তবাগীশ কর্ত্তৃক সংগৃহীত ও পুনঃ প্রকাশিত, কলিকাতা আদি ব্রাহ্মসমাজ যন্ত্রে মুদ্রিত।	

N.B.—The dates of publication of the three Bengalee books numbered 29, 30 and 31 I have not been able to trace.—*Editor.*

†The first collected edition of the Raja's Bengalee works was, it appears from a notice appearing in the *Calcutta Courier*, published in 1839. The notice ran thus :—thus :—

"It affords us great pleasure to be able to announce that Baboo Annodapersaud Bonerjee, a distinguished Patron of native education has published at his own expence (*sic*) the whole of the Bengallee writings of the late *Raja Rammohun Roy*, for the purpose of disseminating generally the enlightened views of that Indian philosopher in respect to theology and the Hindoo Shasters". [The *Calcutta Courier*, January 6, 1840, quoted by Brajendra Nath Banerji in his article "News about Rammohun Roy from Contemporary Newspapers" in the *Indian Messenger*, March 20, 1932.]—*Editor.*

Year of Publication		Works in Bengalee and other Languages	Works in English
Saka Era	A.D.		
1807	1885		(36) "The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy." Edited [with an Introduction] by Jogendra Chunder Ghose, M.A., B.L.—Compiled and published by Eshan Chunder Bose, Volume I. Oriental Press, Bhowanipore, Calcutta.
1809	1887		(37) "The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy." Edited [with an Introduction] by Jogendra Chunder Ghosh, M.A., B.L.—Compiled and Published by Eshan Chunder Bose. Volume II. Aruna Press, Bhowanipore, Calcutta. London Agents :—Messrs. Williams & Norgate.
1827	1905*	(২) রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের সংস্কৃত ও বাঙ্গালা গ্রন্থাবলী —পাণিনি-কার্য্যালয়, বাহাদুরগঞ্জ, এলাহাবাদ হইতে প্রকাশিত †; কলিকাতা কুন্তলীন প্রেসে মুদ্রিত, (১৩১২)	

*Between the years 1840 and 1848, and in 1872, the Tuttuobodheney Sobha of Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore re-published most of the works of the Raja in Bengalee and English on the Upanishads and the Vedanta. Selections from the Raja's works in Bengalee were also published in the pages of the *Tuttuobodheney Patrika,* the monthly organ of the Sobha, edited by Akshaya Kumar Datta. Besides the tracts already noted, the two re-publications mentioned below deserve special notice :

1. *Panchopanishad* (a collection of five Upanishads, *viz.,* Kaṭha, Vajasanaya (*i.q.* Īśa), Talavakāra (*i.q.* Kena), Muṇḍka, and Māṇḍukya, Sanskrit text with Bengali explanations based on Sañkara's commentary, by Raja Rammohun Roy, Calcutta, 1848.

2. Selections from Several Books of The Vedanta : Translated from the Original Sanskrit by Raja Rammohun Roy, Calcutta, 1844.

†Reprint of the First Edition edited by Rajnarain Bose.

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	NAME OF WORKS
1906	(38) "The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy." Including some additional letters and an English translation of the Raja's "Tuhfatul Muwahhidden" [with an introduction by Ramananda Chatterjee.] Published by the Panini Office, Allahabad.†
PUBLISHED IN ENGLAND	
1817	I. "Abridgment of the Vedant" and the English translation of "Kena Upanishad" published in Calcutta in 1816—Reprinted in London with a preface by John Digby with a letter addressed to him by Rammohun Roy.
1823	II. Final Appeal to the Christian Public in Defence of the "Precepts of Jesus," London: Hunter.
1824	III. The Precepts of Jesus—the Guide to Peace and Happiness, extracted from the Books of the New Testament ascribed to the Four Evangelists to which are added the First and Second Appeal to the Christian Public, in reply to the Observations of Dr. Marshman, of Serampore Published by the Unitarian Society, London. [*Reprinted in America in 1828. Second London Edition: 1834.*]

†Reprint of the First Edition edited by Jogendra Chunder Ghose.

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	NAME OF WORKS
1825	IV. Answers to queries by the Rev. H. Ware, of Cambridge, U. S., printed in "Correspondence relative to the Prospects of Christianity, and the Means of promoting its Reception in India" London : C. Fox.
1832	V. Translation of several principal Books, Passages, and Texts of the Veds, and of some Controversial Works in Brahminical Theology. London: Parbury*

**This collection contains the following Tracts, to the titles of which are affixed the dates of their publication in Calcutta :—*

(*a*) Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant, or Resolution of all the Veds; the most celebrated and revered Work of Brahminical Theology; establishing the Unity of the Supreme Being, and that He alone is the Object of Propitiation and Worship—1816.

(*b*) Translation of the *Moonduk-Oopunishud* of the *Uthurvu Ved.*—1819.

(*c*) Translation of the *Cena Upanished,* one of the Chapters of the *Sama Veda*—1824.

(*d*) Translation of the *Kut-'h-Opunishud* of the *Ujoor-Ved.*

(*e*) Translation of the *Ishopunishud,* one of the Chapters of the *Yajur Veda*—1816.

Year of Publication	Name of Works
1832—*Contd.*	(*f*) A Translation into English of a Sungskrit Tract, inculcating the Divine Worship; esteemed by those who believe in the Revelation of the *Veds*, as most appropriate to the Nature of the Supreme Being—1827.
	(*g*) A Defence of Hindoo Theism, in reply to the Attack of an Advocate for Idolatry, at Madras—1827.
	(*h*) Second Defence of the Monotheistical System of the Veds; in reply to an Apology for the present state of Hindoo Worship—1817.
	(*i*) An Apology for the Pursuit of Final Beatitude, independently of Brahminical Observances —1820.
	(*j*) Translation of a Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of the practice of burning Widows alive; from the original Bungla —1818.
	(*k*) A Second Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the practice of burning Widows alive—1820.
	(*k*) Abstract of the Arguments regarding the Burning of Widows, considered as a Religious Rite—1830.
	(*l*) Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females, according to the Hindoo Law of Inheritance—1822.

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	NAME OF WORKS
1832—*Contd.*	VI. Essay on the Rights of Hindoos over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal. With an Appendix containing Letters on the Hindoo Law of Inheritance. [Calcutta, 1830.] London: Smith, Elder & Co.
	VII. Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems in India, and of the General Character and Condition of its Native Inhabitants, as submitted in Evidence to the Authorities in England. With Notes and Illustrations. Also a brief Preliminary Sketch of the Ancient and Modern Boundaries, and of the History of that country. Elucidated by a Map. London: Smith Elder & Co.*
1833	VIII. Translation of the Creed maintained by the Ancient Brahmins, as founded on the Sacred Authorities. Second Edition, reprinted from the Calcutta Edition. London: Nichols and Son.

*The book mainly contains the Raja's answers to the questionnaire issued by the Parliamentary Select Committee appointed to consider the question of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company. It is divided into the following chapters :—

1. Preliminary Remarks.
2. Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of India. [Sept. 19, 1831.]
3. Questions and Answers on the Revenue System of India. [August 19, 1831.]
4. A Paper on the Revenue System of India. [August 19, 1831.]
5. Answers to Additional queries respecting the condition of India. [Sept. 28, 1831.]
6. Appendix to the Exposition of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India.
7. Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans [July 14, 1832.]
8. Extract from a Speech on the Settlement of Europeans in India.—*Editor.*

"TUHFAT-UL-MUWAHHIDIN"

After the list of the Raja's publications had been set up in type, we were informed by Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji that the British Museum in London has several copies of *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*. The British Museum Catalogue mentions the following :—

1. Rama-Mohana-Raya : *Tuhfat ul-muvahiddin.* A tract on the superiority of pure Deism summarised in Arabic and expanded in Persian. pp. 38 lith. Azimabad—Patna, 1898.
2. —— Translated into English. Calcutta, 1884. *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhadin.* pp. 23, Giridih, Calcutta (printed) 1918.
3. [*Javaj-i-tufhat ul Muvahhidin.*] An anonymous defence of Rammohun Roy's "Tuhfat . . ." against the attacks of the Zoroastrians. Calcutta [1820 ?]

In the Oriental Department there is a manuscript (MS. Or. 4738) with the following inscription on the first page :

"*Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* or a Gift to the Deists, in the original Persian, transcribed from the second edition published in 1859 in Calcutta by his son Ramaprasad Rai."

—*Editor.*

NOTE.—Besides some portions of a life of Mahomet (which was never completed) mention is made by Mr. Sandford Arnot, the Raja's Secretary in England, in an article he wrote shortly after his master's death in the "Athenæum" (London), of some works by Rammohun in favour of monotheism. Mr. Arnot says that "he prepared, while in England, various able papers or essays on the working of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, against the Salt Monopoly in India, etc. which have not been published." Arnot also mentions of an unpublished "Journal" which the Raja kept in England.—*Editor.*

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YEAR OF PUBLICATION		WORKS IN ENGLISH
SAKA ERA	A.D.	
1823	**1901**	"The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy." Edited by Jogendra Chunder Ghosh. Republished in 3 volumes by Srikanta Roy. Agents :—S. K. Lahiri & Co., Calcutta.

APPENDIX—F

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[*Some books, pamphlets and magazine articles relating or having reference to Raja Rammohun Roy.*]

BOOKS and PAMPHLETS—

1. "A Review of the Labours, Opinions, and Character of Raja Rammohun Roy, etc."—By Dr. Lant Carpenter: London and Bristol: 1833.

2. "A Sermon on the occasion of the lamented death of the Raja Rammohun Roy", with a Biographical Sketch—By Robert Aspland: London: 1833.

3. A Biographical Memoir prefixed to the "Precepts of Jesus"—By Rev. Dr. T. Rees: 2nd London Edition: 1834.

4. "A Biographical Memoir of the Late Raja Rammohun Roy, together with a series of extracts from his writings"—By Dr. Lant Carpenter: Calcutta: 1835.

5. "The Last Days in England of the Raja Rammohun Roy [with a Biographical Sketch by Rev. Dr. Lant Carpenter]—By Mary Carpenter: London: 1866. [Re-printed by the Rammohun Library: Calcutta: 1915.]

6. "A Lecture on the Life and Labours of Ramhohun Roy" (delivered in Boston, U.S.A., 1845)—By William Adam: Edited by Rakhal das Haldar: Calcutta: 1879.

7. "Rajah Rammohun Roy, the Bengali Religious Reformer"—By Rev. K. S. Macdonald: Calcutta: 1879.

8. *"Mahatmâ Rajâ Râmmohun Rây-er Jibancharit"* (Like of Rammohun Roy in Bengali)—By Nagendranath Chatterji: Calcutta: 1881.

9. "Raja Rammohun Roy", (Address delivered by Prof. Max Müller in the Bristol Museum, September 27, 1883, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Raja's death) published in his *Biographical Essays*: (pp. 1—48): London; 1884.

10. "Rammohun Roy": (A Monograph in Bengali)—By Rabindranath Tagore: Calcutta: 1885.

11. A biographical introduction to the English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy by the Editor, Jogendra Chunder Ghose: Vol. I: Calcutta: 1885.

12. "Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Sophia Dobson Collet: London: 1900. [Edited by Hem Chandra Sarkar with an Introduction: Calcutta 1913.]

13. "Rammohun Roy and Modern India"—By Ramananda Chatterjee: Calcutta: 1918.

14. "Raja Rammohun Roy's Mission to England", (Based on unpublished State Records)—By Brajendra Nath Banerji: Calcutta: 1926.

15. "Rammohun Roy: The Father of Modern India" (A pamphlet containing the Introduction to the Indian edition of Miss Collet's biography of the Raja)—By Hem Chandra Sarkar.

16. *"Sangbâd Patre Sekaler Kathâ"* (A history of olden times in newspapers, in Bengali)—Compiled and Edited by Brajendra Nath Banerji: Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad: 1933.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES—

1. *The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature,* Vols. XIII to XX; (1818—1825): London.

2. *The Asiatic Journal* (London), September-December, 1833—An article on the Raja (purported to have been written by "a friend of Rammohun." The January-April issue of 1835 of the same *Journal* gives the information that the article was written by Mr. Sandford Arnot, Raja's Secretary in England).

3. *The Calcutta Review,* December, 1845, (No. VIII, Vol. IV.)—An exhaustive biographical article entitled "Rammohun Roy"—By Kissory Chand Mitter.

4. The Fortnightly *Indian Mirror* (Calcutta), July 1, 1865—An article entitled "The Brahmo Samaj or Theism in India", being a discourse on the life and labours of Rammohun Roy and Debendra Nath Tagore—By Keshub Chunder Sen. [Reprinted by the Brahmo Tract Society, 2nd ed: Calcutta: 1917.]

5. *The Calcutta Review,* 1866. An article entitled "Rammohun Roy", reviewing Mary Carpenter's "The Last Days in England of the Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Kissory Chand Mitter.

6—24. *The Modern Review* (Calcutta):

(*a*) June 1926—"A Portrait of Raja Rammohun Roy" (Translated from the French)—By N. C. Chaudhuri.

(*b*) June 1927—('Notes, p. 764) "Rammohun to Dr. Bowring",—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*c*) September 1928—"Foundation of the Brahmo Samaj"—By N. C. Ganguly.

(*d*) September 1928—"Raja Rammohun Roy at Rangpur"—By Jyotirmoy Das Gupta.

(*e*) October 1928—"Rammohun Roy on International Fellowship"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*f*) December 1928—"The English in India should adopt Bengali as their Language"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*g*) January 1929—"Rammohun Roy's Political Mission to England, I"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*h*) February 1929—"Rammohun Roy's Political Mission to England, II"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*i*) May 1929—"Rammohun Roy on the Value of Modern Knowledge"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*j*) June 1929—"Rammohun Roy and an English Official"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*k*) July 1929—"Rammohun Roy on Religious Freedom and Social Equality"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*l*) October 1929—"The Last Days of Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*m*) January 1930—"Rammohun Roy's Engagements with the Emperor of Delhi"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*n*) May 1930—"Rammohun Roy in the Service of the East India Company"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*o*) April 1931—"Rammohun Roy as a Journalist", I—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*p*) May 1931—"Rammohun Roy as a Journalist", II—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*q*) August 1931—"Rammohun Roy as a Journalist", III—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*r*) March 1932—"English Impressions of Rammohun Roy before his visit to England"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*s*) June 1932—"Rammohun Roy on the disabilities of Hindu and Muhammadan Jurors"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

25. *The Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (Patna), June 1930—"Rammohun Roy as an Educational Pioneer"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

26. *The Calcutta Review,* August 1931—"A Chapter on the Personal History of Raja Rammohun Roy"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

27—31. *The Indian Messenger* (Calcutta),

(*a*) December 6, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*b*) December 13, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*c*) December 20, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*d*) December 27, 1931—"Raja Rammohun Roy in Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*e*) March 20, 1932—"News about Rammohun Roy from Contemporary Newspapers"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

32. *Nava-vidhan* (Calcutta): Articles from the *Indian Mirror* (1863—1867) reprinted in the issues of the *Navavidhan* beginning with that of May 11th, 1933.

33—37. *The Calcutta Municipal Gazette.*

(*a*) September 1, 1928—"An Unknown Chapter of the Calcutta Press: Rammohun Roy and his Persian paper"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*b*) September 29, 1928—"Rajah Rammohun Roy as a Citizen of Calcutta"—By Nalin Chandra Ganguly and Alin Chandra Ganguly.

(*c*) December 22, 1928—"Calcutta and the Cultural Evolution of Modern India"—By Bipin Chandra Pal.

APPENDIX—G

Rammohun Roy Centenary

SCHEME OF CELEBRATION*

INTRODUCTION

"Let me hope that in celebrating his (Rammohun Roy's) Centenary, we shall take upon ourselves the task of revealing to our own and contemporaneous civilizations the multi-sided and perfectly balanced personality of this great man."—These were the words of the Poet Rabindranath Tagore, in concluding his address from the chair at the Preliminary Meeting at the Senate House. And the task thus set to the organisers of the celebration by Rabindranath has largely inspired and guided them in framing the scheme of work for the Centenary, which, it is hoped, will help to bring out the different aspects of Rammohun Roy's life-work with a view to stimulating a wider and intensive study of the Raja, who, in the words of his English biographer, "stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future, ... who leads the way...not *to*, but *through* Western culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both." To reveal to our own people and to the world at large the personality of such a man is no easy task. But the Raja has revealed himself to a considerable extent in the voluminous writings left by him. Unfortunately for us, and particularly for the present generation, these writings are difficult, if not almost impossible, now to obtain. No individual or collected edition of his Works have appeared for nearly thirty years. The chief task of the organisers of this Centenary will, therefore, be the re-publication of the Raja's collected works, both in English and in Bengali. His Sanskrit and Persian works also must be included.

Rammohun Roy's writings comprise a vast range of subjects, religious, social, economic, administrative, educational and political. There is hardly any aspect of our national life with which he did not deal. Many of his utterances find echoes in the national aspirations of to-day.

In 1880 his Bengali and Sanskrit works were collected by the late Eshan Chunder Bose, and edited and published in one volume, under the auspices of the Adi Brahmo Samaj, by the late Raj Narain Bose

Adopted by the Working Committee at its 1st and 2nd meetings, held on the 4th and 24th March, 1933, respectively.

(*d*) November 22, 1930—"Early History of the Vernacular Press in Calcutta"—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*e*) December 20, 1930—"Early History of the Vernacular Press in Calcutta" (1823—1935)—By Brajendra Nath Banerji.

(*f*) December 20, 1930—"The First Memorial Meeting in Calcutta: To do honour to the memory of a great Indian citizen"—By Manmatha Nath Ghosh.

38. Presidential Address by Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikary at the North Bengal Bengalee Literary Conference 1928, giving an account of Rammohun's connection with and stay at Rangpur.

[*A fuller bibliography will be published in a later issue of the Publicity Booklet*—EDITOR.]

and Pandit Ananda Chandra Vedantavagis. In 1906 this was reprinted by the Panini Office, Allahabad.

In 1884 has Persian treatise, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* ("A Gift to Monotheists") was translated into English by Maulavi Obaidulla El Obaide, Superintendent of the Dacca Government Madrasa, and published under the auspices of the Adi Brahmo Samaj.

In 1885 his English works were for the first time collected and published in two volumes by the late Eshan Chunder Bose under the editorship of Rai Bahadur Jogendra Chunder Ghose, who contributed a valuable introduction to this edition. In 1906 the Panini Office, Allahabad, reprinted this in a one-volume edition, in which the English translation of the Persian treatise was also included.

Since the publication of the above (all of which have been out of print for nearly three decades), many of the Raja's hitherto unknown writings and letters have been unearthed, particularly through the indefatigable and painstaking researches of Mr. Brajendranath Banerji, in the State archives of India and England. Further, some of the Raja's scattered writings, which have not up to the present found a place in any of the collected editions, are now available. All these are to be incorporated in the Centenary Edition of the Raja's Works, every attempt will be made to make which a model of completeness and accuracy, and at the same time so priced as to be within the means of the rich and the poor alike.

(1) PUBLICATIONS.

(*a*) All published and hitherto unpublished *Works* of the Raja in English, Bengalee, Sanskrit and Persian to be collected and published at a popular price. As far as practicable, this edition is to conform strictly to the editions published by the Raja himself.

(*b*) *Rammohun Anthology.*—A comprehensive selection from the writings of the Raja in English, Sanskrit and Bengali, with introductory notes, etc., and a portrait of the Raja.

(*c*) *Studies and Monographs* on the Raja as are calculated to interpret him from various points of view, to be secured from writers who have made a special study of his works, and who are competent to deal with the subject, to be collected together in a volume. This volume is to include also such memoirs and monographs as have already appeared, and are considered to be of outstanding importance.

(*d*) *A Commemoration Volume* to be prepared, comprising (*i*) tributes paid to the Raja by his admirers in the East and the West on the occasion of the Centenary, (*ii*) a biographical sketch, (*iii*) a complete bibliography and comprehensive chronology, (*iv*) some portraits, and pictures of his birth-place and last resting place, (*v*) facsimile reprints of important letters or documents, etc., and also (*vi*) select proceedings of the Convention of Religions, the General Conference, the Bengalee Literary Conference, etc., and an account of the celebrations held in different parts of India and abroad.

(2) CELEBRATIONS IN INDIA.

(*a*) A *Convention of Religions,* and

(*b*) A *General Conference,* to be held in Calcutta during the Christmas holidays, in which papers on the different aspects of Rammohun Roy's life-work would be read, and speeches delivered by his admirers from all parts of India.

(*c*) A *Bengalee Literary Conference.*

(*d*) A *Women's Conference.*

(*e*) An *Exhibition* of collections relating to the Raja,—his portraits and busts, his letters, the different editions of his Works, manuscripts (if available), some of his personal belongings, etc., and, as a background to the Exhibition, a popular fair or *Mela,* where the chief events of the Raja's life may be graphically represented with the help of clay models and of pictures specially drawn for the purpose.

(*f*) Also similar celebrations in other parts of India.

(3) PILGRIMAGE

A *Pilgrimage to Radhanagore,* the birth-place of the Raja.

(4) PERMANENT MEMORIALS IN INDIA

In CALCUTTA:—

(*a*) A bronze *Statue* in some central place.

(*b*) A *Portrait in Oils* for the Town Hall.

(*c*) Moving the Calcutta Corporation to re-name the portion of Upper Circular Road from its Shambazar-end to Sukea Street as *"Rammohun Roy Avenue."*

At RADHANAGORE:—

(*d*) A *Stone Pillar* to commemorate the Centenary.

(*e*) Arrangements for completing *the Memorial Buildings.*

(5) CELEBRATIONS AND MEMORIALS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

(*a*) Arrangements for *Celebrations in London* and *Bristol,* and appeals to the principal *Seats of Learning* in Europe, and to the *Unitarians* and leaders of other *Liberal Religious Movements* in Europe and America, to celebrate the Centenary.

(*b*) A *Marble Tablet* on the house at 48 Bedford Square, London, where the Raja lived for some time.

(6) FOUNDATIONS AND FURTHER PERMANENT MEMORIALS

On sufficient funds being raised,—

(*a*) The *Foundation* of a *Rammohun Roy Chair* and *Fellowships* on *Comparative Religion.*

(*b*) Construction of a *Building with a hall in London,* to be named after the Raja, for holding meetings, accommodating Indian cultural societies, etc.

It is also proposed, in the near future,

(*c*) to construct a motorable *Road to Radhanagore,* and

(*d*) to acquire Rammohun Roy's *Maniktala Residence* (Upper Circular Road), at present occupied by the Sukea Street Police Station.

(7) PUBLICITY

For the purpose of giving adequate publicity to the Centenary, the publication of—

(*a*) *Illustrated booklets in English* containing (*i*) a short sketch of the Raja's life, (*ii*) select passages from the Raja's own writings and from appreciations of the Raja, (*iii*) a chronological account of the Raja's life and works, (*iv*) the Scheme of Celebration and Appeal for funds, etc.

(*b*) Leaflets in the principal Indian Vernaculars.

(*c*) Pamphlets, posters, etc., and arrangements to utilise the Press and other publicity organisations.

(*d*) Issuing an Appeal over the signature of the Mayor of Calcutta to the Mayors of important cities of Asia, Europe, and America, informing them of the Centenary, and asking for their co-operation.

SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS REFERRED TO APPROPRIATE SUB-COMMITTEES

Publications.—The publication, under the auspices of the Centenary Committee, if highly commended by it, of books on Rammohun Roy by competent authors, and printed at their own expense. (*ii*) Preparation of English translations of such among Rammohun Roy's writings as have so far not been translated.

Foundations.—The establishment of

(*a*) Rammohun Roy Study Circles.

(*b*) Prizes and Medals for Essays on Rammohun Roy.

(*c*) A well-equipped School for the Depressed Classes.

(*d*) A peripatetic Educational Exhibition.

Publicity.—(*a*) Issuing "Rammohun Roy Centenary" stamps, post-cards, and special stationery.

(*b*) Striking a Centenary Medallion with the head of the Raja in profile on the obverse, and a symbolic representation of the meeting of India and the West, with suitable inscriptions, on the reverse.

(*c*) Broadcasting, all over the world, a short speech on Rammohun Roy by Rabindranath Tagore through the Radio on a selected day during the celebrations.

APPENDIX—H

Rammohun Roy Centenary

*THE GENERAL COMMITTEE**

OFFICE-BEARERS

***PRESIDENT*:**

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

Vice-Presidents:

Sir J. C. Bose, Sir P. C. Ray, Sir Brajendranath Seal, Sir Nilratan Sircar, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Sir R. N. Mookerjee, Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Dr. Heramba Chandra Maitra, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Rev. P. G. Bridge, Principal J. R. Banerjea, Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, Mr. P. K. Sen, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta, H. H. the Dowager Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mourbhanj, Sja. Golapsundari Devi (Mrs. Harimohan Roy), Sja. Sarala Ray (Mrs. P. K. Ray), Sja. Kamini Ray, Maharaja Sir Prodyot Coomar Tagore, The Hon. Raja Sir Manmathanath Roy Chowdhury, Mr. Krishnakumar Mitra, Mr. Kshitindranath Tagore, The Hon. Sir C. C. Ghose, The Hon. Mr. Justice Manmathanath Mukerji, Sir N. N. Sircar, Rt. Rev. Bishop H. Pakenham-Walsh, Swami Shivananda, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Maulana Muhammad Akrum Khan, Mr. G. D. Birla, Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjea, Sir Bipin Bihari Ghose.

Treasurer:

Mr. Hirendranath Datta.

Deputy Treasurer:

Mr. Dhirendranath Mitra.

General Secretary:

Mr. Jatindranath Basu.

Joint Secretaries:

Dr. B. C. Ghosh.
Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti.
Mr. Rathindranath Tagore.
Mr. Charuchandra Bhattacharyya.

**A General Committee, consisting of 400 members, was appointed by the Preliminary Public Meeting of the Centenary on the 18th February, 1933, entrusted with the task of celebrating the occasion in Calcutta and other places in Bengal and India. The General Committee met twice and appointed a Working Committee which it authorized "to do all that may be necessary for the purposes of the celebration."*

THE WORKING COMMITTEE AND THE SUB-COMMITTEES.

The WORKING COMMITTEE was composed of 76 members, viz. four of the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer, the General Secretary, the four Joint Secretaries, the Secretaries of the 'Co-ordination Board' and the Sub-committees mentioned below, and 53 ordinary members.

The CO-ORDINATION BOARD.—The Third Resolution of the Preliminary public meeting held on 18th February 1933 (*i*) requested a number of ladies and gentlemen of the different provinces of India to form local committees for the celebration of the Centenary, and (*ii*) also appointed a Board of 20 members in Calcutta for co-ordinating the work of these provincial committees as well as that of the celebration committees in the different districts of Bengal.

The following SUB-COMMITTEES were appointed by the Working Committee for giving effect to its Scheme of Celebration as far as practicable. (The numericals in brackets after the names indicate the number of members.)—

Finance Sub-committee (35), for preparing a budget and raising funds.

Works and Studies Sub-committee (35) for the publication of the Raja's Works, an Anthology, and Studies.

Commemoration Volume Sub-committee (14), for the publication of a Commemoration Volume.

Publicity Sub-committee (22), for giving publicity to the Centenary through the Press, and for issuing pamphlets, posters, etc.

Convention and Conferences Sub-committee (32), for organising a Convention of Religions and various Conferences in Calcutta in the Christmas week, with RABINDRANATH TAGORE as General President.

Women's Conference and Celebrations Sub-committee (18), for organising a Ladies' celebration, and for securing the co-operation of the session of the All-India Women's Conference to be held in Calcutta in the Christmas week.

Exhibition Sub-committee (25), for holding an Exhibition of the Raja's relics in Calcutta in connection with the celebrations in the Christmas week.

International Celebrations and Memorials Sub-committee (17), for organising celebrations and placing memorial tablets etc. at suitable centres in Europe and America.

Radhanagore Pilgrimage Sub-committee (26), for arranging a pilgrimage to Radhanagore, the birthplace of the Raja.

Permanent Memorials Sub-committee (19), for adopting measures for the perpetuation of the Raja's memory by means of statues, memorial buildings, roads named after him, etc.

Foundations Sub-committee (19), for the foundation of a chair on Comparative Religion to be named after the Raja.

———o———

PART II

SECTION B

REMINISCENCES, TRIBUTES, ESTIMATES

(Originally selected for Publicity Booklet No. 2)

CONTENTS OF PART II, SEC. B.

Reminiscences, Tributes, Estimates

Lieut.-Col. Fitzclarence (*afterwards*, Earl of Munster)

The Abbe Gregoire

J. Silk Buckingham

Victor Jacquemont

Dr. T. Boot

Madame H. P. Blavatsky

Moncure Daniel Conway

Kissory Chand Mitter

Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore

F. Maxmuller

Keshub Chunder Sen

Sir Gooroodas Banerjee

Dr. Mohendra Lal Sircar

Surendra Nath Banerjea

Mahadev Govind Ranade

Bepin Chandra Pal

Dr. Heramba Chandra Maitra

Sir R. Venkata Ratnam

Tributes paid at the First Memorial Meeting held on 5th April 1834

(B) REMINISCENCES, TRIBUTES, ESTIMATES.

Lieut-Col. Fitzclarence

(afterwards Earl of Munster)

(Extract from a "Journal of a Route across India, through Egypt to England, in the years 1817 and 1818").

I became well acquainted with him, and admire his talents and acquirements. His eloquence in our language is very great, and I am told he is still more admirable in Arabic and Persian. It is remarkable that he has studied and thoroughly understands the politics of Europe, but more particularly those of England; and the last time I was in his company he argued forcibly against a standing army in a free country, and quoted all the arguments brought forward by the Members of the Opposition. I think that he is in many respects a most extraordinary person. In the first place, he is a religious reformer, who has, amongst a people more bigoted than those of Europe in the middle ages, dared to think for himself. His learning is most extensive, as he is not only conversant with the best books in English, Arabic, Sanscrit, Bengalee, and Hindustanee, but has even studied rhetoric in Arabic and English, and quotes Locke and Bacon on all occasions. From the view he thus takes of the religions, manners and customs of so many nations, and from his having observed the number of different modes of addressing and worshipping the Supreme Being, he naturally turned to his own faith with an unprejudiced mind, found it perverted from the religion of the Vedas to a gross idolatry, and was not afraid, though aware of the consequences, to publish to the world in Bengalee and English his feelings and opinions on the subject. Of course he was fully prepared to meet the host of interested enemies who, from sordid motives, wished to keep the lower classes in a state of the darkest ignorance. I have understood that his family have quitted him,—that he has been declared to have lost caste,—and is for the present, as all religious reformers must be for a time, a mark to be scoffed at. To a man of his sentiments and rank this loss of caste must be particularly painful; but at Calcutta he associates with the English: he is, however, cut off from all familiar and domestic intercourse; indeed, from all communication of any kind with his relations and former friends. His name is Rammohun Roy. He is particularly handsome, not of a very dark complexion, of a fine person, and most courtly manners. He professes to have no objection to eat and live as we do, but refrains from it, in order not to expose himself to the imputation of having changed his religion for the good things of this world. He will sit at table with us while the meat is on it, which no other Brahmin will do.

The Abbe Gregoire

• Bishop of Blois (France)

(From a French pamphlet by the Abbe, which was afterwards inserted in the Chronique Religieuse. *The biographical part of this pamphlet was derived from communications from the learned M. d'Acosta, then the Editor of* The Times, *at Calcutta.)*

There is, probably, throughout India no Brahmin who is less a Hindoo than he ; and thousands of dupes who have suffered the loss of their caste have been less offenders against the peculiarities of their religion than he. ... Every six months he publishes a little tract, in Bengalee and in English, developing his system of theism ; and he is always ready to answer the pamphlets published at Calcutta or Madras in opposition to him. He takes pleasure in this controversy ; but although far from deficient in philosophy or in knowledge, he distinguishes himself more by his logical mode of reasoning than by his general views. He appears to feel the advantage which it gives him with the Methodists, some of whom are endeavouring to convert him. He seems to have prepared himself for his polemical career from the logic of the Arabians, which he regards as superior to every other. He asserts, likewise, that he has found nothing in European books equal to the scholastic philosophy of the Hindus. ... Influenced, like those around him, with the spirit of order, economy, and knowledge of the value of money acquired by their mercantile education, Rammohun Roy does not view the augmentation of property as the most important object. His fortune consists of the wealth he received from his ancestors ; he does not give his mind to any kind of commercial speculation : he would consider that mode of life beneath his station and the duties of a Brahmin. He derives no pecuniary advantage from his works ; and in all probability, desirous as he may be of power and distinction, he would not accept of the Government any place that should be merely lucrative ; to *solicit* one of any description he would not condescend. ... Rammohun Roy, as has already been shewn, is not yet forty years old ; he is tall and robust ; his regular features and habitually grave countenance assume a most pleasing appearance when he is animated.

J. Silk Buckingham,

Editor of the *Calcutta Journal*, who knew Rammohun Roy intimately, wrote the following in 1823.

Rammohun Roy's self-sacrifice

Rammohun Roy might have had abundant opportunities of receiving rewards from the Indian Government, in the shape of

offices and appointments, from his mere neutrality ; but being as remarkable for his integrity as he is for his attainments, he has pursued his arduous task of endeavouring to improve his countrymen, to beat down superstition, and to hasten as much as possible those reforms in the religion and government of his native land, of which both stand in equal need. He has done all this, to the great detriment of his private interests, being rewarded by the coldness and jealousy of all the great functionaries of Church and State in India, and supporting the Unitarian Chapel, the Unitarian Press, and the expense of his own publications, besides other charitable acts, out of a private fortune of which he devotes more than one-third to acts of the purest philanthropy and benevolence.—(*Mary Carpenter's "Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy", 2nd Edition, p. 51.—Quoted in the "Modern Review" for October 1933.*)

Victor Jacquemont,

a French naturalist and traveller, and a contemporary of Rammohun, knew him intimately. Below is given a translation of some of Jacquemont's remarks about Rammohun in his *Voyage dans l'Inde*, Tome I, (Paris, 1841.)

A pen-picture of Rammohun

Before coming out to India I knew that he was an able orientalist, a subtle logician, and an irresistible dialectician ; but I had no idea that he was the best of men. ... Rammohun Roy is a man of about fifty years of age, tall, stout rather than fat, and of a middle complexion among the Bengalis. The portrait in profile which they have made here is a close likeness, but the front view is not so good ; his eyes are too small for his large face, and his nose inclines to the right side. He has a very slight moustache ; his hair, rather long behind, is thick and curly. There is vigour in his physiognomy, and calmness, dignity and goodness. His dress is of the simplest, differing from that of well-to-do Indians only in the socks and shoes of European pattern which he used instead of wearing slippers on bare feet. He wore no trinkets, not even the sacred thread, unless he had it under his dress. ... He never expresses an opinion without taking precautions on all sides. ... He has grown in a region of ideas and feelings which is higher than the world in which his countrymen live ; he lives alone ; and though, perhaps, the consciousness of the good he is accomplishing affords him a perpetual source of satisfaction, sadness and melancholy mark his grave countenance.—(*From "A Portrait of Rajah Rammohun Roy" by N. C. Chaudhuri in the "Modern Review" for June 1926, pp. 689-692.*)

Dr. T. Boot

of 24 Gower Street, Bedford Square, an eminent American physician practising in London, wrote the following in a letter to Dr. J. B. Estlin, the Raja's medical adviser at Bristol, shortly after his death. (Written 27th November 1833.)

A perfect human being

To me he stood alone in the single majesty of, I had almost said perfect humanity. No one in past history or in the present time ever came before my judgment clothed in such wisdom, grace and humility. I knew of no tendency even to error. ...

I have often talked with him on religious subjects, and have seen him among sceptics. He was never more free and unembarrassed and cheerful than when arguing with those who had a logical and acute mind. He often told me that he always introduced the subject when he met the Historian of India*, and that his object in the argument was to show the insufficiency of human reason for the production of the highest moral worth, and the highest happiness. ...

He often beautifully said, "I can never hope in my day to find mankind of one faith, and it is my duty to exercise the charities of life with all men". He did not go about with the spirit of proselytism. He argued only for the sense of religious obligation. ...

He was the humblest of human beings, and ardent as he was in the faith of his selection, he was sensibly disturbed if religion was spoken lightly of, or argued but reverentially before woman. ... I was once in his presence when a father was expressing doubts of Christianity before two of his daughters, who were near forty, and before three other ladies. He expressed himself most forcibly in defence of the immutable truth of religion, and when the conversation was resumed by the sceptic, he touched lightly ... on the diction and expressions of the other, and often in the intervals sat as if he were abstracted and unconcerned in what was said. ... I had an engagement with him the next morning, and the first subject he spoke of was the conversation of the night before, and he expressed himself highly offended that a father should, before his own daughters, confess his infidelity. ...

At every visit my admiration of him grew with my intimacy with his mind and actions. He was the most liberal, the most amiable, the most candid of men. His generosity was unbounded ; his most touching politeness was an instinct of his nature. ... While he paid just deference to rank in obedience to the conventional etiquette of society, he honoured above all men the poor gardener whom he met with in some rich establishment in India, who had, uninfluenced

* Evidently, James Mill.—EDITOR.

by the authority of his superiors, examined the scriptures, and adopted the faith of the unity of God. He went to the garden every day to talk with him; he often said to us, "I could have taken him in my arms as a brother."

I called with him on Dr. Tuckerman, Mr. Deway, and Mr. Phillips of America, and when he had shaken hands with them, he said, with his countenance lighted up with emotion, "I am so happy to be with Unitarians." ...

The object of the Raja was to mix with and know all sects. One of his greatest desires was to see Catholicism in Rome. He admired the obedience to duties in the Catholics, and always spoke of them in this light with admiration. Whatever faults were mixed with their faith, he recognised in their attention to the poor and the sick, the noblest spirit of Christianity. One of the last arguments I heard from him was his defence of them against one who urged their acting under artificial stimulus. He contended that what they did was enforced on all, by the very example of Christ; and that the stimulus was their faith in the force and truth of that example.

But I must stop. When I think that I shall see him no more; that the beauty of his countenance, the picturesqueness of his Eastern costume, the kind reception, the noble example of virtues never felt, at least so powerfully, in others, the hope I had entertained of his future usefulness, the certainty I had of his present happiness, and all his enlarged affections,—when I think that these have passed away for ever of my brief existence,—I feel a sorrow such as I never felt before, and one which can only find consolation in that pure religion of which he was so able a defender. His loss has given tenfold value in my mind to his writings, and I have studied them with a subdued feeling since his death, and risen from their perusal with a more confirmed conviction of his having been unequalled in past or present time. Peace to his sacred memory!

—(*Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy. S. D. Collet and H. C. Sarkar. Calcutta. 1913. Pp. lxiv—lxvii.*)

Madame H. P. Blavatsky,

the founder of the *Theosophical Society*, in her appreciation of Rammohun Roy, speaks of him as "one of the purest, most philanthropic and enlightened men India ever produced." The following extract from her writings has the additional interest of giving Miss Harriet Martineau's views on Rammohun.

Rammohun's sensitive moral nature

His intellectual power was confessedly very great, while his manners were most refined and charming, and his moral character

without a stain. Add to this a dauntless moral courage, perfect modesty, warm humanitarian bias, patriotism, and a fervid religious feeling, and we have before us the picture of a man of the noblest type. Such a person was the ideal of a religious reformer. Had his constitution been more rugged and his sensitiveness less acute, he might have lived to see far greater fruits of his self-sacrificing labours than he did. One searches the record of his life and work in vain for any evidence of personal conceit, or a disposition to make himself figure as a heaven-sent messenger. ... It is said by Miss Martineau that his death was hastened by the anguish he felt to see the awful living lie that practical Christianity was in its stronghold. Miss Mary Carpenter does not touch upon this point in her Memoir of his last days in England, but she prints among other sermons that were preached after his decease one by the Rev. J. Scott Porter, a Presbyterian clergyman of Belfast, Ireland, in which he says that "offences against the laws of morality, which are too often passed over as trivial transgressions in European society, excited the deepest horror in him." And this is quite enough to give the colour of truth to Miss Martineau's assertion.—(*From the "Modern Review" for October 1933.*)

Moncure Daniel Conway,

a famous American writer, in a contribution to the *Chicago Open Court* (1894) thus refers to the influence Rammohun Roy exercised in the formation of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

Rammohun and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association

Although the fact may not be of grateful remembrance to the Unitarian sect, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association was founded in South Place Chapel, and its Foreign Secretary was Mr. Fox (Rev. W. J. Fox). There had been several small Associations, and these had gathered their representatives in the Chapel on May 25th, 1825, when the more comprehensive Association was discussed and agreed to, the organisation being completed next day at London Tavern. It is to be feared that the denomination little realises the historical significance and honour of its title. Adoption of the word 'Foreign' and omission of the word 'Christian' denoted a new departure, due not to British but to Hindu influences. It was preceded by an interesting history. While Mr. Fox and others were in their agonies of revolution against English idolatry, a great Hindu, Rammohun Roy, already free, was trying to deliver his oriental countrymen from idolatry. Then he helped in the liberation of the West. It was Rammohun Roy who really caused the organisation of the British

and Foreign Unitarian Association. Some adherents of the Hindu teacher started theistic movements in various places, and those of Madras communicated with Mr. Fox. In September 1820, the Parliament Court sent five guineas to the native Unitarians of Madras, and in 1824 twenty pounds were contributed to build an Anglo-Indian Unitarian Chapel in Calcutta, still, I believe, used by the Brahmo Samaj (?). It was these facts, and the Hindu religious poetry translated by Rammohun Roy, which awakened Mr. Fox to a unity larger than Unitarianism. He had to conquer many prejudices about "heathenism" before he could found an Association large enough to include Rammohun Roy. That Hindu was, in fact, as a religious thinker, without a peer in Christendom. With him began the reaction of oriental on occidental thought, which has since been so fruitful. The Unitarians generally, though they have rejected the best fruit of that foreign seed imported in 1825, rejoiced in its flower, which visibly expanded in London six years later. On May 25th, 1831, the Association held its sixth anniversary in South Place Chapel, and Raja Rammohun Roy,—now Ambassador to the British Government,—arrived just in time to be present. That was the Pentecostal day of London Liberalism. There were present Unitarians from France and Transylvania; and Dr. Kirkland, President of Harvard University, was there. Rammohun Roy spoke briefly but impressively, and filled all present with enthusiasm by the charm of his personality.

Kissory Chand Mitter

What was the Religion Rammohun believed in?

From an article contributed by Kissory Chand Mitter to the Calcutta Review *for December 1845.*

Just before he had set out for Europe, the Rajah told his friends that on his death each sect, the Christian, the Hindu, and the Mahommedan, would respectively claim him to be of their persuasion; but he expressly declared that he belonged to none of them. His prediction has been fully realized. No sooner did he depart this life, than the subject of his religious opinions became an apple of discord. A variety of speculations was hazarded by different parties. While some represented him to be a Hindu, others affirmed that he was a Christian. The Church-of-England party said that he was attached to their Church; while the Unitarians claimed him for their own. The Vedantists represented him as literally a believer in their professed revelation; while the Mussulmans contended that he was a follower of the son of Abdullah. We confess, however, that each of these sects had reason enough for wrenching him to its

side. From his frequent attendance, while in England, at their chapels, and his known bias to their doctrines, the Unitarians had some sort of right to claim him. The especial patronage which he thought it proper to bestow on Vedantism, made it more than probable that he was a Vedantist. The profuse, though not altogether unmerited laudation he was in the habit of lavishing on the Mahommedan creed, was calculated to produce an impression that he was a believer in the Alkoran. But that Rammohun Roy was not a Mussulman in his creed, it requires no lengthened demonstration to prove. Neither was he an Unitarian. We would go further and say,—though it may startle some of our readers who have been accustomed to identify Rammohan Roy with Vedantism,—that he was *not* a Vedantist. What, then, was he? This is not merely a curious, but an interesting and important problem, of which we shall attempt to give a solution, as the religious opinions of the Hindu reformer appear to be still enveloped in mystery.

All speculations as to his belief in the abstract truth of any religion founded on his advocacy of certain doctrines connected with it, or his attendance at its place of worship, are obviously futile. For Rammohun Roy was a religious Benthamite, and estimated the different creeds existing in the world, not according to his notion of their truth or falsehood, but his notion of their utility ; according to their tendency, in his view, to promote the maximization of human happiness, and the minimization of human misery. His patronage therefore, of any system of creed cannot be construed into a profession of it. He endeavoured to refine all gross and idolatrous systems into a system of pure monotheism. His works on Hindu Theology do not prove that he was a believer in the revelation of the Vedas, but that he aimed at engrafting a kind of universal Unitarianism on it. But we have said that he was not an Unitarian. To be sure, not. At least, his Unitarianism was essentially different from that of the Channings, the Carpenters, the Priestleys and the Belshams. His was a sort of catholic Unitarianism. It was the religion of many of the ancient philosophers. His advocacy and support of the doctrines inculcated by religions which are in themselves diametrically opposed to each other, though it might apparently evidence his vacillation, was in fact the result of his religious utilitarianism ; for we can confidently assert that in reference to his religious belief not the slightest change took place in his mind for the last fifty years of his life. From his first renunciation of Hindu idolatry at the age of sixteen to the last moment of his existence, he maintained his religious sentiments, whatever they were, nearly unaltered. The real religious sentiments of the Hindu reformer are embodied in a pamphlet written in the most choice Persian, with an Arabic preface. Though printed in his lifetime and seen by some of his friends, yet it was not published until his death ; for he gave it as his last injunction, on leaving his country for Europe, that it should be published after his departure from this world. This work, which is entitled "*Tohufut-ul Mowa-*

hedeen," or a Present to Unitarians, discloses his belief in the unity of the Deity, His infinite power and infinite goodness, and in the immortality of the soul. It breathes an uncompromising and inveterate hostility to idolatry in all its forms. While due meed of applause is given to the Mahommedan creed for being based on what he considered as the great doctrine of unity, prophetical pretensions are treated with merited ridicule and contempt.

From what has been said, it is obvious that Rammohun Roy was an eclectic philosopher. He was, according to our humble opinion, essentially a theo-philanthropist. To promote love to God, and love to man, agreeably to his own view of both, constituted the practical and most important part of his creed. He had a strong sentiment of natural religion. He was deeply impressed with the necessity and importance of religion to society. He had always cherished, and the longer he lived, became the more confirmed in, the conviction that religion was an ineradicable principle of our nature, and absolutely and indispensably necessary to the welfare of mankind. He had read history, and knew that godless people could never be a great people. He know that the social fabric would quake and be shattered to atoms, were the ideas of God, of immortality, of moral responsibility altogether obliterated from every mind. He knew that were men seriously to persuade themselves for a moment that there was no God,—that their physical and mental organizations had been the work of chance—that the myriads of suns and planets with which immensity is peopled, had all fortuitously leaped into existence—that, instead of being destined to survive those suns and planets, they were the creatures of a day, and that death was the dissolution of their being,—that crimes, perpetrated by them in darkness had no witness :—they would at once plunge into the slough of scepticism, and so relapse into primeval barbarism.

He deeply felt that the idea of God—the great First Cause—the Primitive and Infinite Intelligence—is the most sublime and comprehensive of all ideas. The development of this idea he considered to be the great end of education. He was strongly of opinion that the knowledge of God is superior to every other. All other knowledge dwindles into nothingness before it. It is the source and criterion of man's elevation. It is the foundation of his happiness here and hereafter. To disseminate, therefore, such knowledge among his benighted countrymen, he considered as the object of his being here below.

Rammohun Roy, though he looked upon idolatry as a downright insult to the Supreme Being, and as necessarily and eternally a sin, cherished a stronger aversion towards scepticism. He loathed and abominated it as something worse than idolatry,—as something more unnatural, as something more incompatible with the constitution of man.

It has been observed by a writer, who is largely quoted in the Biographical Memoir* which we have placed at the head of this article that "as he was advanced in age, he became more strongly impressed with the importance of religion to the welfare of society, and the pernicious effects of scepticism. In his younger years, his mind had been deeply struck with the evils of believing too much, and against that he directed all his energies ; but in his latter days, he began to feel that there was as much, if not greater danger in the tendency to believe too little. He often deplored the existence of a party which had sprung up in Calcutta, composed principally of imprudent young men, some of them possessing talent, who had avowed themselves sceptics in the widest sense of the term. He described it as partly composed of East Indians, partly of the Hindu youth who, from education, had learnt to reject their own faith without substituting any other. These he thought more debased than the most bigoted Hindu, and their principles the bane of all morality."

This passage, evidently penned by one who knew the Rajah intimately, reads to us an awful lesson. The progress of circumstances since his death has clothed it with terrible import. The party alluded to by the Rajah is now a large and increasing party. The Hindu community is very much divided between those who worship Durga and Kali, and those who worship nothing,—between those who believe in three hundred and thirty-three millions of gods, and those who believe in none,—those who think the world under the moral government of multitudinous powers, and those who deny all moral government. It is a humiliating but nevertheless an unquestionable fact, that many of those who call themselves 'educated natives' seldom think of religion, and are known to manifest much indifference to it. We admit that they profess to believe in the existence of one God ; but their belief, in nine cases out of ten, is not a living conviction, but a passive acquiescence in a truth forced on them. They oscillate between the creed they have renounced, and that which they profess. In theoretically renouncing the superstition of their fathers, and disembarrassing their minds from the fetters of that antiquated bigotry which still cleave to the great mass around them, they have not, we deeply regret to observe, embraced a purer and nobler religion. We confess, therefore, that there is some truth in the assertion made by even the best friends of India, that several of the educated natives are practical atheists. The practical atheism, however much we may deplore it, is regarded by men whose judgment is entitled to respect in such matters, as one of the natural and inevitable results of that system of education hitherto pursued by the Government,—a system which, though pregnant with results of the last importance to this country, is

* "A Biographical Memoir of the Late Raja Rammohun Roy, together with a series of extracts from his writings",—by Dr. Lant Carpenter : Calcutta : 1835.

not sufficiently calculated to realize the great objects of education, inasmuch as it addresses itself more to the head than to the heart,—to the intellectual than to the moral man. But intellectual cultivation is not identical with moral and religious cultivation. The one does not necessarily imply the other. That the development of our moral and religious feelings and affections cannot be effected by that of the mental faculties alone, is a truth which, though frequently repeated, does not appear to be sufficiently attended to by those to whose keeping the interests of our youth are committed.

That Rammohun Roy should think the educated natives of his times, who had avowed themselves sceptics in the "widest sense of the term," as "more debased than the most bigoted Hindu", and their principle "the bane of all morality," was quite natural and proper. He thought what Socrates and Plato,—what the sages of his own country, Vyas and Manu,—what, in later times, Bacon,—had thought. "I would rather believe," says the great apostle of Inductive Philosophy, "I would rather believe all the fables in the Legend and the Talmud and the Alkoran than that this universal frame is without a mind." It was, therefore, no wonder that the idolatry of the great mass of his countrymen was looked upon by him in a softer and more amiable light than the atheism of the *so-called* educated natives. Indeed, so alarming has been the progress of that atheism since his death, that a few Hindu gentlemen, impressed with the necessity and importance of counteracting its pernicious effects, have established a society which has been noticed more than once in this *Review*. The *Hindu Theophilanthropic Society* owes its existence, as mentioned in the Preface to the 1st volume of its published discourses, "to a conviction irresistibly forcing itself upon every reflective mind, that the great work of India's regeneration cannot be achieved without due attention to her moral and religious improvement."

It is evident that Rammohun Roy had to battle with idolatry and atheism. To wage a war of extermination against the one, and to check the incipient progress of the other, was the work, to the furtherance of which he devoted himself. To say that he had many endowments which eminently fitted him for it would be redundant. He is a man whose genius and energy, under happier circumstances, might have achieved a complete moral revolution among his countrymen. He was by nature one of those who lead, not one of those who follow,—one of those who are in advance of, not one of those who are behind their age.

Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore

Reminiscences of Rammohun Roy

Report of a conversation with the Maharshi held in September or October 1896. Rendered into English and published in the *Queen* by the interviewers.

"I used to go very frequently to Raja Rammohun Roy's garden house", said the Maharshi. "It was in Maniktala. I was a student in Rammohun Roy's school at Hedua (Cornwallis Square). His son Rama Prasad was a class-mate of mine, and I used to go to see him with Rama Prasad, almost every Saturday, after school hours. The Raja had a swinging cot hanging from one of the trees in his garden. Rama Prasad and I would swing there. Sometimes the Raja would come and join us, and having helped me to swing for some time, he would himself get on the cot, and ask me to help him, saying, '*Biradar*, push me now.' "

On our enquiring after the Maharshi's age at the time, he said, "I can't exactly say how old I was then. I was a mere school boy, and you can guess my age. I must have been about 8 or 9 years."

Continuing to relate his recollections of the Raja, the Maharshi said, "The Raja liked me, and I had free access to him at all hours. Sometimes I would peep in during his breakfast. It usually consisted of bread and honey, and I remember him telling me one day, as I went in during his breakfast, '*Biradar*, here I am eating pure bread and honey, but people say I eat beef.'

Sometimes I would go in as the Raja came out for his bath. He was a curious bather. Before bath he would literally get himself steeped in mustard oil, which would run dripping from all his bare limbs. He was a stout man, broad-chested and muscular, and the sight of his bare body dipped in oil, with one small piece of cloth tied round the waist, struck awe into my boyish heart. He would, in this dress, come down with heavy steps, uttering Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic verses, and jump into a huge tub of water. He would remain in this tub for more than an hour, all the while muttering his favourite verses, and evidently absorbed in them. I could not understand anything of what he muttered so devoutly, but it appears to me now that that was the Raja's Upasana or Prayer.

Rajaram, the Raja's adopted son, was very naughty; and he used to play all sorts of tricks on the Raja, but all this could never disturb the equanimity of the Raja's temper. In fact, Rammohun Roy had the sweetest temper that I have ever seen in any man. One day I went in when the Raja was taking his mid-day nap. He was lying on a cot, on his back, in deep slumber. Rajaram called me, saying, 'Will you see a fun? Then come'. I went to him, and he quietly walked up to the Raja's

bed, and all of a sudden pounced upon him, falling flat on his breast. Nothing disturbed, the Raja awoke, saying 'Rajaram, Rajaram', and locked him in his embrace.

One day Rama Prasad and I went up to the Raja. He was in his sitting room. There was a cot in this room. As soon as we went near him, he asked Rama Prasad to sing one of his favourite Sanskrit hymns, *Ajaramasokam, jagadalokam.* Rama Prasad got exceedingly nervous. He could neither sing properly, nor from fear of his father refuse to obey him. So he quietly stepped underneath the cot, and from there began to repeat in a most plaintive tone, *Ajaramasokam, jagadalokam.*

The Raja used now and again to come to our house. My father was a great admirer of the Raja. He was in his early days a staunch believer in the popular religion of the country. But contact with the Raja gradually landed him into a general want of faith in these practices, though he never became thoroughly posted in the truths of theism as preached by Raja Rammohun Roy. In the early days of his friendship with the Raja, my father was in the habit of performing his *puja* or worship, with flowers and other materials, every morning; and he used to do all these things with really devout feelings. But his regard for the Raja was even greater than his devotion to these pious offices; and it oftentimes happened that while he was engaged in these devotions, the Raja would come to see him. As soon as the Raja would enter our lane, information would be sent to my father, who would immediately get up from his *puja* and come out to receive the Raja.* Such was the influence that the Raja exercised over his friends.

You see, I cannot talk of the Raja without talking of my father. So far as I was concerned, my recollections of the Raja are intimately bound up with those of my father. I hope you don't mind it.

Once I went to invite the Raja to the festivities of the Durga Puja at our place. I went as the representative of my grandfather, and in the usual way I said, 'Rammoni Thakur begs to invite you to his house, to take part in the festivities of the Puja'. The Raja cried out with his usual earnestness, 'Ask *me* to the Puja?' That voice is still ringing in my ears. He was not offended with me,—by no means. To me he was as sweet as usual. But he expressed his wonder that inspite of his crusade against idolatry, people should still ask him to the Puja. But he seemed at once to have felt that it was merely a social function that he was asked to perform, so he wanted me to go to Radha Prasad, his eldest son. Radha Prasad had no objection to the religious practices

*It has subsequently been pointed out by Mr. Kshitindra Nath Tagore, a grandson of the Maharshi, that what the Maharshi's father Dwarkanath would leave unfinished in order to come out and greet the Raja, was not the *puja* proper, which could not be left unfinished, but the *japa*, which could be completed in instalments.—EDITOR.

of our people, and he accepted the invitation, and treated me to some sweets and fruits.

Talking of fruits, I am just reminded of the fact that the Raja had good many fruit-trees in his garden at Maniktala. These would often tempt me there. The lichies were a great attraction to me. I would often go to eat lichies. Whenever the Raja saw me roving in the fearful sun of May and June among the lichie trees, he would call me to him, saying, '*Biradar*, come here. I shall give you as many lichies as you want. Why do you walk in the sun ?' and would ask the gardener to bring the ripest fruits for me.

Once he asked me, I remember, if I ate meat: and advised me to tell my father to give me a little meat during dinner every day. 'The plant,' he used to say. 'must be watered, or the tree will not grow to its proper stature. So it is with this body. You must feed it well, and that up from your youth.' He took great care of his health himself, looking upon the body as a precious gift of God.

Rammohun Roy had the characteristic humility of all great men in him. There was no end of visitors to his house. Many would go to hold theological disputations with him, but few indeed of these were foemen worthy of his steel. They would mostly bore him by their irregular and irrelevant talk. But he could never ask any one to leave him. He would listen to all with due courtesy. When, however, he felt that he could not bear the foolish talk any more, he would propose a stroll in his garden, saying,—'What do you say to our taking a walk in the garden ?' And once he was upon his legs, his visitor would find it hard to keep pace with him,—he was such a wonderful walker,—and would soon be forced to take leave of him.

Talking of the Raja's garden, I may just tell you that it was laid out by his Mali, Ram Das. He was very much attached to the Raja, and went with him to England. You may be interested to know that this Ram Das served me also for some time. On his return from England, he served the Maharaja of Burdwan for many years, as the Head Gardener of the Maharaja's Golap-Baug. He also laid out the garden of my Santiniketan at Bolpur.

The Raja had something in him by which he could draw all sorts of people unto him. He exercised a most mysterious influence over me. I was then a mere boy, and necessarily had little opportunity of talking to him. But his very face had an attraction for me, such as no other face ever had. The Raja had a carriage. It was a poor, rickety thing. The horse had no regular trappings, and ropes would oftentimes do duty for harness. Sometimes, as the Raja drove out, the horse would get off from the carriage, and the carriage would be divorced from its compass ; and occasionally the whole thing would go to such pieces that its famous owner and occupant would have to leave it in the presence

of large crowds of sight seers. On one occasion, I remember the Raja telling me, as he came by one of these misadventures, that his horse and carriage had made a clown of him.

I used to drive with the Raja now and again in this carriage. No words passed between us generally during these drives. I would only sit in front of him, looking on his beautiful face, which had such a deep attraction for me. In fact, for the greater portion of these drives, I would be almost absolutely absorbed in the contemplation of the Raja, being insensible to all that might be going on on the roadside. I would sit as quiet as a doll, looking only at the Raja, and my heart would overflow with a deep but indescribable emotion. There evidently was some mystic relation between the Raja and myself, I was always so powerfully drawn by him.

I have told you of the incident that occurred when I went one day to invite him to the Puja festivities. The way in which he cried out—'Ask *me* to the Puja',—and the words that he uttered, his countenance aglow with deep emotion,—these have had a wonderful influence upon me all my life. Those words became to me even as the *mantra* of a spiritual master, as my *Guru-vakya*, and led me to give up idolatry. Those words are still ringing in my ears, and they have been my guide all through this long life.

When the Brahma Samaj was established, I used now and again to go there, but always stealthily. Bishnu used to lead the choir then as now. Bishnu had an elder brother, Krishna by name, who also sang with Bishnu in Rammohun Roy's Samaj, while a Mahommedan, Golam Abbas, used to play on the *Pakhoaz*. One of the most favourite hymns of the Raja was that commencing with the words *vigata-visesham*. Bishnu used to sing it in his sweet voice. The dear old tune is still ringing in my ears.

Talking of the Brahma Samaj,—in those days there were no benches and chairs in the Brahma Samaj. People going there would squat in right national fashion on carpets covered with white cotton sheets. The Raja would sit on a small bamboo-and-cane stool,—a *mora*.

On the day of the Samaj the friends of the Raja would meet in his garden house at Maniktala; and then they would all walk in a procession to the place of worship in Jorasanko. The Raja had peculiar feelings on the subject. He used to say, 'When a man goes to a holy place, he does not, in this country, go in a carriage. Why should we, then, when going to the Holiest of the Holy, go in carriages? We must walk'. But though he would walk to the Samaj, he would not use ordinary *dhoti* and *chadar*, but put on court-dress on all such occasions. The Raja had a great regard for the externals of Moslem civilisation. His idea, again, was that God being man's King and Master, in going to His court, one must dress oneself properly, and must appear before Him as one fit to be present at the court of the Prince of Princes. He had imbibed this idea also from the Mahommedans. So

all his friends would go, duly dressed, like himself, to the Samaj. My father, however, formed an exception. He would always go to the Brahma Samaj in *dhoti* and *chadar*. The Raja would not quite like it, and would look askance at my father, sometimes even disparagingly pointing him out to his friend and disciple Babu Annada Prasad Banerjee (Zemindar of Telinipara). Babu Annada Prasad was on very familiar terms with the Raja, and would oftentimes reply to his signs and gestures, by telling him in plain language, that if he had not the courage to speak directly to my father on the subject, he had better not trouble himself about it. Babu Annada Prasad *would*, however, draw my father's attention to the subject of his dress. But my father would invariably reply,—'Having to spend the whole day in my office-dress, I cannot again put myself to the trouble and inconvenience of using it in the evenings, especially when I have to come to worship God, to whom we should always appear in the simplest and humblest garb.'"

Reverting once more to his personal relations with the Raja, the Maharshi said, "There was some mystic affinity between the Raja and myself. He did not instruct me by words ; I was much too young, in fact, to receive any such instruction from him. But still, as I have already said, he exerted a most mysterious influence upon me. I got my inspiration, to work for the cause for which he himself had lived and laboured, from him. When going to England, the Raja came to pay my father his farewell visit. All the members of our family and a large number of our neighbours had gathered in our spacious court-yard to bid goodbye to the Raja. I was however, not there. And though I was then a mere stripling, the Raja wanted to see me very particularly, telling my father that he could not leave the country without shaking hands with me. So I was sent for, and the Raja shook hands with me, and then left for England. That kindly grasp had a force and a meaning in it which I realised in my later life.

When the news of Rammohun Roy's death came, I was by my father, and he began to weep like a boy. I, too, was moved with a deep emotion. For though I had but little fellowship with him, and though I got no instruction from him in words, his face and his whole personality were deeply engraved on my heart. He was my inspiration.

He lived only for a year* in Calcutta after the establishment of the Samaj. The fire that he had kindled was, however, kept up by Pandit Ram Chandra Vidyavagis. He, too, was a most extraordinary man. He had love for God, and love for Rammohun Roy. The two loves were closely intertwined, one with the other, in the heart and character of Ram Chandra Vidyavagis, and this accounts for his unrivalled loyalty to the Brahma Samaj at a time when its very life was despaired of. In those days the Brahma

* Should be, 'two years and three months.'—EDITOR.

Samaj had hardly any congregation. If the weather was bad, Ram Chandra Vidyavagis would combine minister and congregation both in himself. The rich people that had gathered themselves round the Raja's banner in his lifetime, dispersed directly the news of his death got to Calcutta. A few middle-class men attended the Samaj, whose weekly congregation would mostly be made up of straggling wayfarers, some of whom would peep in with their bazar baskets, and others with their pet parrots. Ram Chandra Vidyavagis would sit on a broad wooden stool—a *takhtaposh*,—while his little congregation would squat on the floor, on carpets and sheets. I mean to re-establish it in the Samaj as soon as the present repairs are completed. I wish to move back to the ways of Raja Rammohun Roy in these matters. We have converted the Brahma Samaj into an English Church ; this must be corrected. People must leave their shoes off during prayers. It is not proper to convert our Samaj into an English Church."

F. Maxmuller

The greatness of Rammohun Roy

(From his *Biographical Essays*, London, 1884.)

Rammohun Roy was to my mind a truly great man, a man who did a truly great work, and whose name, if it is right to prophesy, will be remembered for ever, with some of his fellow-labourers and followers, as one of the great benefactors of mankind. ...

The German name for prince is Fürst, in English First, he who is always to the fore, he who courts the place of danger, the first place in fight, the last in flight. Such a *fürst* was Rammohun Roy, a true prince, a real Rajah, if Rajah also, like Rex, meant originally the steersman, the man at the helm.

If however I was wrong in calling Rammohun Roy a really great man, I wish that those who seem so jealous of greatness would at least explain on what grounds they would bestow that ancient title.

An attempt was lately made in America to find out the Hundred Greatest Men of the world. The process was a very simple one. Greatness was settled by a majority of votes. Lists of names were printed and sent round to men of eminence in America and Europe, and whoever received the largest number of votes was admitted as one of the Hundred Greatest Men. The result was afterwards published in a splendid series of portraits, each portrait followed by a biography. It is astonishing to see what names were put forward, and what names were forgotten. Of course you see Napoleon the Great, and who could doubt that in one sense, as

a clever soldier, as a bold diplomatist, he was great ? But read the memoirs of his court, and you will call him the smallest, the meanest, the most wretched of men. Or take another case. Perhaps the greatest revolution in Europe was produced by the invention of printing. Would you call the inventor of printing a great man ? He did no more than what any carpenter might do,—cutting an engraved block into smaller blocks, each containing one letter. You may call that clever, you may even take a patent for it ; but surely there is nothing great in it. In fact, that title of Great Man has been used so recklessly, that to most people it conveys no longer any meaning at all.

And yet I like to call Rammohun Roy a great man, using that word, not as a cheap, unmeaning title, but as conveying three essential elements of manly greatness, namely, unselfishness, honesty and boldness. Let us see whether Rammohun Roy possessed in a high degree these three essentials. ...

There is a quiet courage, a simple straightforwardness in all Rammohun Roy's acts. Some of his friends have misunderstood him, and claimed him for a Mohammedan, or a Christian. He said himself, just before he set out for Europe, that on his death each sect, the Christian, the Hindu, and the Mohammedan, would claim him as their own, but that he belonged to none of them. His real religious sentiments are embodied in a pamphlet, written and printed in his lifetime, but, according to his injunction, not published till after his death. This work discloses his belief in the unity of the Deity, his infinite power, his infinite goodness, and in the immortality of the soul.

With such a faith nothing would have been easier for him than to do what so many of his countrymen, even the most enlightened, are still content to do, to remain silent on doctrines which do not concern them ; to shrug their shoulders at miracles and legends ; and to submit to observances which, though distasteful to themselves, may be looked upon as possibly useful to others.

With such an attitude towards religion, he might have led a happy, quiet, respectable, useful life, and his conscience need not have smitten him more than it seems to have smitten many others. But he would not. He might part with his old mother in silent love and pity, but towards the rest of the world he wished to appear as what he was. He would not say that he believed in three Gods when he believed in One God only ; he would not call idols symbols of the Godhead ; he would not have ritual, because it helped the weak ; he would not allow *Suttee*, because it was a time-hallowed custom, springing from the true love of a wife for a dead husband. He would have no compromising, no economising, no playing with words, no shifting of responsibility from his own shoulders to others. And therefore, whatever narrow-minded critics may say, I say once more that Rammohun Roy was an unselfish, an honest, a bold man,—a great man in the highest sense of the word.

And mind, I do not say that the world is poor in men as great as Rammohun Roy, and I know full well that many of them pass away unheeded, and leave behind them no name, no fame, no monument But what is that? It only shows that the world is richer in good and great men than we thought it was.

But why should we grudge their greatness and their fame to those whom the world likes to honour? Go into a great library if you wish to know the meaning of the immortality of a name. Go into Westminster Abbey if you wish to know the value of a crumbling monument. True immortality is the immortality of the work done by man, which nothing can make undone, which lives, works on, grows on for ever.

Keshub Chunder Sen

I. The Brahmo Somaj, or Theism in India.

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Among India's great men Rammohun Roy holds a high rank. Like all great men he brought into the world his own idea and devoted his life to its realization. That idea was *catholic worship*. Whoever has deeply studied his life and carefully looked into his speculations and movements, cannot but admit this to have been his guiding principle. That he was a religious reformer of India is universally admitted, and as such he is universally admired. He is also reputed as an extraordinary theologian. He knew English, Arabic, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and Hebrew, and his writings bear testimony to his vast and varied learning. He it was who abolished the obnoxious custom of *Suttee* ; he was one of the foremost pioneers of native education, and his name also figures in the valuable suggestions he offered in furtherance of the reforms which took place in the early political administration of this country. But such compliments to his great mind do not mark the real secret of his excellence : they do not point to *the* ruling principle of his mind which constitutes his greatness. His name shines in undying glory not only in India, but in England and America, for the valuable theological works which his master mind indited, and religious and social reforms which his philanthropic heart promoted ; but the real mission of his life, his peculiar ideal, so far as appears to us on careful analysis, was to give to the world a system of catholic worship. This, as we shall presently show, was prominently exhibited in the establishment of the church or place of worship which was subsequently designated the Brahmo Somaj.

From his very early days, Rammohun Roy's mind manifested a strong and unmistakable religious tendency. While yet a boy, he

appeared to be a staunch follower of Vishnu, and his first duty every morning was to recite a chapter of the Bhagabat. But his giant mind was not to be long in fetters, born as it was for the noblest type of religious independence. When about the age of sixteen he composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of Hindu idolatry, and thereby boldly and distinctly avowed his renunciation of the religion of his forefathers ; the result was, as might be anticipated, disagreement with his near relatives. To use his own words : "This, together with my known sentiments on that subject having produced a coldness between me and my immediate kindred, I proceeded on my travels." He travelled through several places of Northern India, cultivating theological studies and making theological researches, and spent three years in Thibet, where also his anti-idolatrous proclivities excited the anger of the worshippers of Lama. On his return he was taken back by his father and restored to his favour. But his obstinate and unflinching aversion to superstition and superstitious practices soon rekindled the spirit of persecution ; and he was again deserted by his father and his near relations. The death of his father, which took place in the year 1803, furnished an impetus to more independent and bold movements in carrying out his cherished ideas. His opposition to the advocates of idolatry was now open and fearless, and he at once commenced a series of publications in the native and foreign languages against the pernicious errors and absurdities of idolatry. His publications are numerous, and abound in singularly cogent and lucid arguments, and one has merely to read them to be convinced of their value.

His Persian work *Tuhfit-ul-Mowahedeen* (a Present to Unitarians), his three Appeals to the Christian public, his works on the Vedanta and discussions with eminent Brahminical Pundits, are masterly treatises which show the uncommon and varied theological erudition of the author. He spared no system of idolatry. He directed his able pen in exposing and denouncing in no measured terms the idolatrous prejudices of Hinduism, Mahommedanism and Christianity. But at the same time he culled together passages from these scriptures inculcating Monotheism. Thus he proved a friend and foe to each of the three principal religious systems of the world.

An unsparing and thoroughgoing iconoclast, he yet failed not to extract the simple and saving truth of monotheism from every creed, with a view to lead every religious sect with the light of its *own* religion to abjure idolatry and acknowledge the One Supreme. He went through the Hindu, Mahommedan and Christian scriptures with indefatigable perseverance, and set forth the unity of God from the teachings of these books, while he argued away with unsurpassed ingenuity and erudition all doctrines inculcating polytheism. A careful study of all his published writings will clearly show this two-fold policy of his theological

argumentation. Thus, while he evinced respect for every creed and aversion to every form of idolatry, and thereby excited and disarmed in turn the antagonism of his adversaries, his real faith lay shrouded in a value of mystery which made it wholly unintelligible to them. Hence conflicting opinions were put forth as to the creed which he professed. The Mahommedans claimed him as one of their sect, and gave him the title of Moulvie; some regarded him as a Christian; others, a Hindu of the Vedantic and primitive type. And yet nothing is more obvious than that Rammohun Roy was neither a Hindu, nor a Christian, nor a Mahommedan, although he partially identified himself with each of these denominations; else why the bitter invectives and thundering fulminations which were heaped upon him from all sides, and the grave charges of atheist, *mlechchha*, freethinker and infidel, which were laid at his door? To this day his creed is a standing mystery, and the world seems to be hopelessly disagreed as to what his real convictions were. His published writings—those stupendous monuments of his theological attainments—far from throwing any light on this complicated problem, show grave anomalies and inconsistencies which serve only to aggravate the difficulties of its problem. Nor do those of his enlightened contemporaries and friends who are still living seem to possess any definite ideas on the subject. To us it appears strange that the real creed of such a great reformer and extraordinary theologian should be a subject of such wild surmises and conflicting opinions, and even of severe criticism, especially when we recollect that scarcely a third of a century has elapsed since his demise, and his writings and doings are still in the possession of the present generation with all the weight of historic evidence. It is no less a matter of regret that many were led, in the absence of a satisfactory solution of the problem, to infer that Rammohun Roy had no positive religious convictions whatever: that he was simply a free-thinker and a roving adventurer in the domains of theology: that all that he desired or was able to do was to protest against this or that system of idolatry, and that he studiously concealed his real faith from the public eye with a view to win the esteem of all religious denominations, instead of exciting opposition by a manly and defiant exposition of his heterodox and unpopular views.

Verily, the grand idea of Rammohun Roy's mind has eluded the observation of his shrewdest critics, and prejudices and unwarrantable inferences have resulted from a partial research into his speculations. In that idea all seeming anomalies must blend together in a sublime consistency, and all discrepancies find a harmonious unity. So long as the real secret of his mind is not apprehended in all its comprehensiveness and greatness, his theological speculations will continue to be an intricate problem. It is only when the central truth is discovered that all the apparent divergencies and wanderings may be harmonised together and perfected into consistency and integrity. As we

have already remarked, the ruling idea of his mind was *to promote the universal worship of the One Supreme Creator, the Common Father of Mankind.* This catholic idea, while it led him to embrace all creeds and all sects in his comprehensive scheme of faith and worship, precluded the possibility of his being classified with any particular religious denomination. His eclectic soul spurned sectarian bondage ; it apprehended in the unity of the Godhead the indissoluble fraternity of all mankind. He belonged to no existing sect ; nor did he seek to found a new sect or originate a new creed, however refined and unexceptionable. His great ambition was to bring together men of all existing religious persuasions, irrespective of the distinctions of caste, colour or creed, into a system of universal worship of the One True God. Thus his catholic heart belonged to no sect, and to every sect; he was a member of no church and yet of all churches. He felt it his mission to construct a Universal Church based on the principle of Unitarian worship. His earlier controversies and discussions with the different religious sects exhibit but partial glimpses or dim forebodings of that grand scheme which was subsequently matured and perfected in his mind. Its fullest development and final realization was consummated, in the fulness of time, in the establishment of that institution which bears the name of the Brahmo Somaj, and which stands as a memorable monument of the founder's real creed,—*Rammohun Roy's grand idea realized.* The Trust Deed of the Somaj premises contains, we believe, the clearest exposition of his idea, and will, it is hoped, if duly appreciated, settle all contested points regarding that illustrious man's religious convictions. It provides that : "The said messuage or building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises with their appurtenances should be used, occupied, enjoyed, applied and appropriated as, and for, *a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction* as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly sober religious and devout manner *for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the universe,* but not under or by any other name, designation or title peculiary used for, and applied to, any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever, and that no graven image, statute, or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait, or the likeness of anything shall be admitted within the said messuage, building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises, and that no sacrifice offering or oblation of any kind or thing shall ever be permitted therein, and that no animal or living creature shall within or on the said messuage, building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises be deprived of life either for religious purposes, or for food, and that no eating or drinking (except such as shall be necessary by any accident for the preservation of life), feasting or rioting be permitted therein or thereon, and that in conducting the said worship and adoration no object animate or inanimate that has been or is or shall hereafter become, or be recognised as an object of worship by any man or

set of men, shall be reviled or slightingly or contemptuously spoken of or alluded to either in preaching, praying or in the hymns or other mode of worship that may be delivered made or used in the said messuage or building, and that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer or hymn be delivered made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue and *the strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds.*"

Accepting this as the highest and the final expression of the religious nature of Rammohun Roy, we find in it a clear view of both the negative and the positive side of his faith,—his aversion to idolatry and sectarianism, and his strong attachment to monotheism and catholicity. In language at once plain and unmistakable he herein directs that people of all "sorts and descriptions without distinction" should be allowed to congregate in these premises for the worship of the supreme "Author and Preserver of the Universe," in spirit and in truth, excluding every external ceremonial and symbol, and every deified thing or man, and that divine service should be conducted in such a way that not only should no offence be given to any sect, but every means should be resorted to for the promotion of brotherly feelings among "men of all religious persuasions and creeds". Who can contemplate without emotion the grandeur of such a Universal Church,—a Church not local or denominational, but wide as the universe, and co-extensive with the human race, in which all distinctions of creed and colour melt into one absolute brotherhood? Who can look without wonder and profound reverence upon the moral grandeur of that giant mind which conceived and realised such a Church? The philanthropic heart interested in the welfare of all mankind, cannot, in its highest aspirations, wish anything more; nor can the ambition of the greatest religious reformers fail to be satisfied in finding in it a realization of their ideal of the church of the future. It is not a church of Jesus or of Mahommed; but is emphatically GOD'S CHURCH. It is not a church of Hindus or Christians; it is the church of all mankind. It is not a church of Bengal, nor of India; it is the church of the world. In the conception of this Universal Church, the heart, lost in immensity, would exclaim, "Who can measure the length and breadth, the height and depth of this Universal and Eternal Church! Heaven and earth meet in this sublime conception, and time and eternity kiss each other. Built upon the imperishable and immutable principles of absolute religion, and upheld by the everlasting arms of that Great God to whose glory it has been upreared, it will continue to bless mankind through endless ages. Blessed child of God! Thy name shall live embalmed in the enduring gratitude of mankind for the whole legacy thou hast conferred on them."

We have reviewed the general features of Rammohun Roy's

creed as intended for all mankind and as related to the various specific systems of faith extant. We now proceed to consider specially its Hindu aspect, and study its bearings on Bengal and Hinduism. We have seen him as the founder of a system of catholic and universal prayer for men of all sorts and persuasions; we have now to canvass his pretensions as the religious reformer of his country, as the leader of the great Brahmo Somaj movement in India. For it must be remembered that though the scope of his mission comprehended all mankind, his immediate field of action was his own country, and his labours were directed chiefly to Hinduism. Though he had for his mission to realise a grand ideal of universal worship by ignoring all partitions between sect and sect, the actual execution of his project was affected by his surroundings, his relations to his idolatrous countrymen, and the prevailing customs and convictions through which he had to fight out his way. Besides, from the peculiar character of Rammohun Roy's ideal as set forth above, it may be clearly inferred that his object was not to give the world or his countrymen a complete creed of reformed doctrines, but simply a general scheme of monotheistic worship. It would not therefore be quite correct to state that he was the founder or even promulgator of that system of religion which is known at the present day as Brahma Dharma. For its rise and progress we must look to a later date. All that Rammohun Roy aimed at for the religious amelioration of his country was the reformation of the prevalent system of idolatrous worship. This he did not seek to achieve by his personal authority. He did not profess himself to be the originator of a new creed, but the reviver of an old one. He appealed to the Shastras in his protest against idolatry; he sought the overthrow of Puranism on the authority of the Vedas which he held up to his countrymen as the real standard of Hinduism. He declared his object to be the restoration of Hinduism to its primitive purity, and in all his anti-Brahminical controversies he drew his arguments invariably from the Vedas. In this his mission was analogous to that of Luther. Dr. Duff, who was intimately acquainted with him, and for several years co-operated with him in the cause of native education, observes on the testimony of the Raja's own statements:—"As Luther's design was to destroy Popery, the corruption of Christianity, by simply resuscitating genuine old Christianity as revealed in the New Testament, so his (Rammohun Roy's) mission was to destroy popular Puranic Idolatry, the corruption of Hinduism, by resuscitating genuine old Hinduism as propounded in the ancient Vedas."

From this it is evident that Rammohun Roy, far from endeavouring to overturn the gigantic system of Hinduism by revolting against the very authority of the Vedas, merely aspired to displace its idolatry by what is regarded as the primitive faith of the founders of Hinduism He thus professed himself a Hindu—not a Puranic but a Vedic Hindu, and his religious movement was not the organization of an absolutely theistic church, but simply the

revival of primitive Hinduism. We must not, however, rush to the extreme of supposing that Rammohun Roy was a thorough Vedantist, and that he offered implicit obedience to the authority of the Vedas as the infallible scriptures of God. All that we could gather from his published writings tends to prove that his idea of revelation was catholic, that he measured the inspiration of the so-called scriptures by the truths which they inculcated. Hence he attached great value and importance to the Christian scriptures, and he published a compilation entitled "The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness," for the welfare of his countrymen. We are therefore led to the inference that Rammohun Roy availed himself of the authority of the Vedas for emancipating his countrymen from the yoke of Puranic idolatry, not from an absolute belief of those ancient books having come from God himself, but on account of the sublime truths they set forth with all the weight of acknowledged authority, on the unity of the Godhead and the spirituality of true worship. Taking his stand on the vantage ground of these truths of Vedic theology, he called upon his Hindu countrymen, as a Hindu, and on the very authority of Hinduism, to eschew polytheism and become worshippers of one God. Hence his constant appeals to the Vedas in deciding theological disputes, and refuting the arguments of his adversaries; hence, too, the eminently Hindu aspect of the service conducted in the church established by him.

II. To the Portrait of Rammohun Roy in the Albert Hall.

Noble countenance! Beaming eyes! O thou illustrious progenitor of a new race! India's pride! Long may thy hallowed memory dwell in thy country's grateful heart! Half a century ago, thy genius bright, under Heaven's guidance, opened a new world of thought, a New Church, to thy ignorant countrymen. Alas! little did they know what untold treasure thou gavest them. They were unworthy of thee. Thy figure did tower above them, and thy soul was a giant among pigmies. A great idea, wide as the world, high as heaven, thou gavest them. Its height and depth they comprehended not. To millions sunk in gross idolatry and superstition thou didst boldly preach the one God. Nay, in their midst and in the face of fierce opposition, thou didst raise a Tabernacle unto His glory. And while ten thousand idol-shrines were filling the air with the deafening din of idolatrous praises and mantras, from this small Temple of the Living God, a very mustard seed in the vast ocean, there rose the solemn hymns and prayers of a handful of thy followers. How this small band has developed into a mighty community scattered all over the country, thou, Great Reformer, hast not lived to see. Thou didst sow the seed; we reap the harvest. Thy original mind did not merely attempt a revival. Thy hand was mainly employed in clearing the

jungle of polytheism, and restoring the ancient monotheism of the Vedanta. But thou didst not remain satisfied with this. Boldly didst thou cull truth from a foreign faith, and commend it to thy countrymen. With a view to put into their hands an unimpeachable moral code, thou didst republish "the Precepts of Jesus ; the Guide to Peace and Happiness." It argued uncommon heroism to present Christ to the Hindus. But thy heart shrank not. Thy eclectic genius commingled in that early stage of Indian reformation, the monotheistic theology of primitive Hinduism with the high standard of Christian life and holiness enjoined in the Gospel of Christ. These parallel streams of conviction and character, belief and life, devotion and conscience, have flowed ever since through the life of educated India. Honour, all honour to thee, India's illustrious benefactor ! Heaven-sent teacher, at thy feet we sit to learn the eclectic truth and devotion which thou camest to teach. May thy loud protests against idolatry, which those lips seem to be still uttering with heavenly enthusiasm, roll backward and forward throughout the land ! May thy public spirit animate the hearts of the thousands of young men who gather in this Hall from time to time ! May young India accept thy eclectic faith, cast off idolatry, go back to the earlier scriptures, and honour Christ ! May the wisdom, courage and enthusiasm which characterized thee find a place in our character ! Blessed patriot, benefactor of thy race, light of India, speak, speak continually unto us thy new gospel of Theism. Our teacher and our leader, may thy soul prosper in the realm of light and joy !—so prays grateful India.—(*From "The New Dispensation, or The Religion of Harmony", compiled from Keshub Chunder Sen's writings. Calcutta. 1903*).

Sir Gooroodas Banerjee, M.A., D.L., Ph.D.

Presidential Address at the Rammohun Roy Memorial Meeting, Calcutta, 27th September, 1889.

The thing that most forcibly strikes one is the versatility of Rammohun Roy's genius. He is generally known as a great religious reformer. But, as you have been told by the several speakers who have preceded me, there was not one single important question,—be it one in law, in politics, or in education,—in which he did not take a most leading part. His two essays,—one on the rights of the Hindu female, and the other on the rights of a Hindu over ancestral property, which you will find in his collected works, show at once his deep erudition as a lawyer and his broad views as a jurist ; and it is to the latter of these two essays that is due in no small measure the advanced state of the law relating to

the free alienability of property in Bengal The concluding paragraph of that essay is well worthy of Rammohun Roy, and will do honour to any lawyer or any jurist in the country. Every one who belongs to the profession to which I have the honour to belong will perceive here the rudiments of that discussion, which in the writings of Sir Henry Maine, have shed such lustre over his name. And Rammohun Roy was no professional lawyer.

In matters of politics his petition against the Act regulating the Press, and the evidence given by him before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, bear ample testimony to the value of his labours, and I would recommend those writings to every one of my countrymen, to study as texts for everything else that they may learn in politics and law.

In matters of education, you have already been told of the immense work that Rammohun Roy did. It is to him that we owe the early progress of English education in India, and, though in his letter to Lord Amherst, to which reference has been made, he may be accused of not having paid all due compliment to the ancient literature of his country, yet every one must feel the justness of his remark that mediaeval Sanskrit learning must bear the reproach that has been laid at the door of the learning of schoolmen in the days before Bacon.

In matters of religion, no doubt, every allowance must be made for diversity of opinion. But one thing, I believe, we all will be agreed upon,—all sects, whether orthodox Hindus or progressive Brahmos,—whether Mahommedans or Christians,—that to Rammohun Roy is due the credit of forcibly pointing out to learned Hindus that religion does not require one to be a *Yogi*, or a *Suttee*, or to go to the forest, but that home and society are the best surroundings of appropriate worship.

A mind so great, a heart so large, could never have been without its charms : and Rammohun Roy, though he was greatly in advance of his countrymen, was nevertheless not isolated from them,—nay, not from the meanest of them. Though there was opposition, and much bitter opposition, to his religious views, of which he now and then complains, I think I can justly say, and I have some evidence for saying, that even the orthodox amongst his countrymen, even his greatest opponents, had respect and admiration for him. I have had the pleasure of hearing a late distinguished Pandit, a Hindu of the orthodox school, speak of Rammohun Roy, and he spoke of Rammohun Roy's towering intellect and his graceful commanding presence in terms of admiration so glowing as vividly to recall to my mind the eloquent lines of Kalidas,—

"His mighty soul swelled from the vale like a towering hill."

If that is the tribute of respect paid to his memory by one who was orthodox to the backbone,—by one whose mind was not then a young growing mind, but whose mind had been imbued deeply

with the prejudices of his times, we may well imagine the true greatness of the man that inspired those words.

Since the days of Rammohun Roy, full fifty years and more of ceaseless intellectual activity have passed away, and yet the writings of Rammohun Roy appear as fresh and as instructive as when they were first written in those days of ignorance. The truth is that Rammohun Roy was one of those great missionaries whom Providence in its benign dispensation sends to us from time to time to dispel the darkness of ignorance and superstition and prejudice, when these become intolerable ; one of those luminaries that shine long and steadily, and never lose their primal glow, though we may be looking at them through long vistas of by-gone years. To focus and concentrate by reflection from clear discourse the light which the genius of Rammohun Roy has shed in his country is one of the objects of this gathering. May that light never grow dim, but ever grow brighter and brighter to lighten us in our path of piety and progress. May the life of Rammohun Roy remind his countrymen that they can make their lives sublime. ... And may we, guided by that sentiment and guided by that light, as time rolls on year after year, be enabled to offer to his sacred memory the only acceptable offering of some satisfactory account of our national progress, material and moral.

The anniversary of Raja Rammohun Roy's death is a solemn occasion which must awaken in every mind earnest thoughts as to what progress we have, since his time, been able to make in the fields of religious, social, political and educational reform, in every one of which the great reformer laboured with such indomitable courage, untiring perseverance, and disinterested zeal for his country's good. ...

The great educational controversy that engaged the attention of the Government and the public in the days of Rammohun Roy, shortly after the establishment of the Hindu College, was that between Orientalists who were opposed to English education and insisted on the study of oriental languages, literature, and philosophy, and the Anglicists who were for English education. It was in connection with this controversy that Raja Rammohun Roy addressed the memorable letter to Lord Amherst advocating English education ; and it is to his advocacy that we are largely indebted for the encouragement given by the state to English education. Whilst gratefully acknowledging our obligations to Raja Rammohun Roy and to our rulers for the blessings of western education, we cannot help expressing our regret that Government should be thinking of gradually withdrawing its support from the higher colleges. Though western learning is no longer an exotic plant here, but has taken deep root in the soil, and though it will continue to grow without the sunshine of state encouragement, yet I venture to think that the maintenance of first class colleges at the principal cities of the Province as models for other institutions is a duty which the state owes to the people,

just as much as the imparting of elementary education to the masses. And one of the many bonds that attach the people of the country to the British Throne is the blessing of liberal education.

In his letter to Lord Amherst referred to above, Rammohun Roy speaks of Oriental learning in terms of unmerited disparagement, which might puzzle and pain his countrymen to see that a man of his genuine patriotic feeling should have said what he did say. There seems to me however, to be a simple explanation of this. Sanskrit learning, whilst grappling with the great problems of metaphysics and theology with such success as is possible for finite intelligence to achieve in its endeavour to grasp the infinite, and with such depth and acuteness as has called forth the admiration of Schopénhauer and Maxmuller, devotes itself exclusively to the contemplation of the spiritual side of the universe to the utter neglect of the material. This abnormally undue attention to one side of the universe, even though it was the superior side, could never have been in accordance with the will of the Author of the Universe. A reaction in favour of material nature was inevitable, and the powerful intellect of Rammohun Roy gave the necessary initial impulse to restore harmony between physical and metaphysical knowledge, and in doing so he, as a reformer and an enthusiast, rated the latter as far below its legitimate value as it had aspiringly rated itself above.

There was another reason for Rammohun Roy's disrespect for Hindu metaphysics. Metaphysical and theological dogmas, not being capable of exact or experimental proof, rest for the most part on authority. Now, legitimate respect for authority is no doubt a characteristic of a well-regulated mind ; but this respect in the days of Rammohun Roy had degenerated into abject servility, and it was his mission in this province to liberate reason from the tyranny of authority ; and in the fulfilment of that mission he naturally showed intolerance and disrespect towards a system which had led to the thraldom of reason. The result has been the emancipation of reason, the assertion of individuality, and progress in the study of physical and natural sciences.

The study of English has made that language the common language of the different races of India ; and it is this more than anything else that has made it possible for men from different parts of India to meet on a common platform, and discuss questions of general interest. Then, again, the study of English has enabled Bengali authors to combine in our national literature the exuberant pathos and the gorgeous imagery of the East with the stern sentiments and the sombre grandeur of the West.

All this no doubt is good, very good. But few things are unmixed good, and under mysterious laws of progress and change few things left to themselves, without the continual application of correctives, steadily tend towards good. The emancipation of reason from the tyranny of authority has often led to its

subjection to the more insidious tyranny of conceit ; the assertion of individuality has made us in many cases more selfish, and the study of the material world has not infrequently made us forget our spiritual greatness.

The study of the English language and English literature, (except so much of it as is of universal interest, and not peculiarly English,) has engendered a spirit of imitation inimical to the development of boldness and originality of thought. The reaction which the influence of Raja Rammohun Roy brought about is now in some respects working beyond the normal point of progress, and stands in need of a gentle corrective reaction. It should be our aim now to free reason from the thraldom of conceit ; to reconcile individuality with self-abnegation when duty requires it ; to leaven largely the knowledge of physics with that of metaphysics : and to impress on the student the truth that though in our relations with things around us physical knowledge and material progress are necessary and useful, in our relation with things above, spiritual knowledge and spiritual progress paramountly demand our attention.

Let us by all means increase and improve our patrimony of spiritual progress with material progress of the West. Only, we must be careful not to exchange the one for the other ; for then it is certain that the exchange will be to our disadvantage much more than the ruinous monetary exchange is at the present day.

I shall conclude these few remarks with a well-known text recited in anniversaries of deaths when celebrated in the Hindu style,—

> "May generous natures in our midst increase,
> And sacred knowledge and progeny grow ;
> May never steady faith from us depart.
> May we have much on others to bestow".

The name of Rammohun Roy is so dear to India and is intrinsically so great that it will be sure to extert a most salutary influence on any association known after that name. Even the most superficial student of his life and writings cannot fail to be struck by the loftiness of his towering intellect and the greatness of his noble soul. If you wish to be able to write good English or good Bengali, and to wield your pen for the good of your country, notwithstanding the progress of education since his time, the powerful and impressive though sometimes quaint style of Rammohun Roy will serve as excellent models. Do you wish to learn to think for yourselves ? You cannot have a better teacher than the thinker who years before western education and culture had made any progress in this country, anticipated you in enunciating all the measures of reform that you are now able to formulate. Are you anxious to endeavour to follow the sublime precept of the Gita relating to self-abnegation and *Nishkama Dharma* ? You cannot have a better example before you than that of one, who,

though undoubtedly the greatest man of his day among his countrymen, used to subscribe as "one wanting in due observance of duty, and therefore full of remorse", and who declined the high honour of being a Member of the Council of Education, though unquestionably the fittest person to be on this Council, and offering to do all the work attaching to the office. The name of such a man must remind us of our duty to our countrymen, and must exhort us to forget our petty differences, our indolence, and our apathy more powerfully than the most eloquent appeal can do. —(*Abridged from "Reminiscences, Speeches, and Writings of Sir Gooroodas Banerjee", compiled by Upendra Chandra Banerjee*).

Dr. Mohendra Lal Sircar

Speeches at Rammohun Roy Memorial Meetings, Calcutta.

I. 27th September, 1886 (as President.)

Countrymen and friends, It is no ordinary honour you have done me to-day, and it would be superfluous on my part to say that in proportion to its greatness I feel my own unworthiness of it. But the honour has been conferred upon me by your unanimous voice, and I cannot, with any propriety, decline it. I have no other alternative than to accept it; and I do so, I would not say with thanks, but with the deepest humility. I have this consolation, that though wanting in every other qualification necessary in a chairman of this august, this solemn meeting, I am not wanting in one qualification, which, I think, is equally essential, and that is a genuine and heart-deep admiration for the man in whose honour we have met to-day. ...

Rammohun Roy is too well known generally to need any introduction from anybody to his own countrymen. That is a fact, for he has passed into the region of history. But for us it is a most melancholy fact, and I should go the length of saying, it is a fact which ought to cover us, his countrymen, with shame. This day it is exactly fifty-three years that the greatest Hindu that was born in these latter days, breathed his last in a foreign land, while there in the exercise of the most genuine patriotism and broadest philanthropy, in the active exertion of his head and heart for the good of his unfortunate country and of mankind at large. And yet, until this day, his countrymen have scarcely been mindful of him. To this day his Works in various languages, which exercised such a potent influence for good at the time they were literally poured forth, have not yet been collected. To this day his life, one of the most remarkable of the lives with which

our world has been blessed, and which, from its infancy to its termination was full of the most interesting, the most instructive, and the most elevating incidents, has not been written. It is true, an attempt has been made to bring out a complete edition of his writings, but that attempt has not yet seen its full fruition. It is true that we have several sketches of his life, but to show you how fragmentary and imperfect these sketches are, I have only to tell you that he is still claimed as a Mahomedan by the Mahomedans, as a Christian by the Christians, and that even Professor Maxmuller believes that he believed in the divine origin of the Vedas. His life has, therefore, to be written, his writings have to be collected, in order that his life-work and his true greatness may be justly appreciated. And when this will have been done, we shall have a suitable memorial of Rammohun Roy.

But yet something more seems to be needed. The heart of his countrymen has been awakened to a sense of gratitude towards him, and that heart demands some additional, some substantial, some enduring token to perpetuate his memory, some token that, while it will be a token of their gratitude, will, at the same time, be a token worthy of the man who, while the country was literally immersed in the thickest darkness of ignorance, superstition and idolatry, was the first to raise his enlightened voice against, and had the satisfaction to see abolished, that most astonishingly wanton and cruel practice, the *Sati* ; of the man who was the first to see the benefits that are to accrue from the introduction of Western learning into this country, and who, in point of fact, was the first and most unselfish pioneer of English education in India ; of the man, who, above all, saw and felt the baneful influence of superstition and idolatry on the intellectual, moral and spiritual growth, alike of his countrymen and of mankind at large,—who raised the most emphatic protest against them with all his energies,—and who showed how their own primitive writings pointed to the God without a second ; of the man who, while towering far high above his countrymen, and high even above some of his great contemporaries of the world, did not at that giddy height loss balance of mind for one single moment, did not look down upon his fellow-men by claiming special inspiration or special relationship to God.

Dr. Sircar then unveiled the cast of Raja Rammohun Roy from the original mould, taken after the Raja's death by Dr Estlin. It had been in the custody of Miss Estlin till lately, and arrived in India in April last, having been presented to the Brahmo Samaj by that lady.—(*From a Report of the Memorial Meeting held at the City College Hall.*)

II. 27th September 1889.

(In proposing a vote of thanks to the President the Hon'ble Sir Gooroodas Banerjee.)

... In connection with the versatility of the Raja Rammohun Roy, I hope I shall be permitted to take this opportunity of

saying that it is a matter of great rejoicing that he should be claimed by all sections of the community as a man who ought to be admired. Gentlemen, while it is a matter for rejoicing, I must at the same time raise my warning voice that we should not lose sight of the great central truth to the propagation of which the late Rammohun Roy devoted his whole life ; and that was, the unity of the Godhead. The great aspiration of the late Raja Rammohun Roy was to enable the human mind to acquire the highest truth which it was capable of acquiring, and that was to have a just, correct and true idea of the unity of the Godhead. I need not dwell and dilate upon the various reforms which he inaugurated ; those reforms are going on rapidly enough. But I must say,—and say with the greatest regret,—that the greatest reform at which he aimed, namely, to instruct his countrymen in the unity of the Godhead, has not made adequate progress. Of course you will rejoice at the establishment of Brahmo Samajes throughout India as evidence of the progress of the great central truth which the late Raja Rammohun Roy tried to inculcate. But compared with the masses of this country, who are deeply ignorant of the very fact of the unity of the Godhead, these various churches are but infinitesimal drops to propagate that noble idea. We have not done sufficient to propagate this idea and to do real homage to the Raja. With all our boasted education, we are, gentlemen, practically atheists, and, if I may be permitted to use the very strong language of the Raja himself, if atheists, we are scarcely better than beasts. I am an outspoken man, and may be blamed for making these remarks ; but still, when I recollect what the late Raja Rammohun Roy did for the abolition of idolatry, and what we have since been doing towards the same object, I must say that we cannot congratulate ourselves upon our energy.

Surendra Nath Banerjea

Speech at the Rammohun Roy Memorial Meeting, Calcutta, 27th September, 1888.

... Fifty years ago and more, Rammohun Roy sank into his grave in a distant land amid the faithful tears ("no faithless tears" in the language of the sonnets) of his English friends, but unwept and unhonoured by his countrymen at large. They regarded him as an outcast, and his death in a foreign land as perhaps the just punishment, the merited visitation of Providence, for his open defiance of the religion of his fathers. For years he lay unnoticed in the humble tomb which the piety of his English friends had raised for him, and it was not until the arrival of Dwarkanath Tagore in England that a suitable monument was

raised over the remains of the greatest Hindoo reformer of modern times. What a change has since taken place ! The grandsons of those who regarded Rammohun Roy as an outcast, a heretic, as one unfit to be associated with, are now gathered round his tomb to make atonements for the sins of the past, to redeem an unfulfilled duty, and above all to draw from him—aye, from his yet unextinguished ashes—the inspiration for whatever is honourable in life, noble in conduct, and true in religion, morals, politics, in the struggle for social reform. The ceremony of to-day would descend into a dead and meaningless form if divorced from such a purpose as this. This ceremony would only then be instinct with life, and replete with life, and replete with interest, when associated with such a high moral purpose.

Rammohun Roy is the mightiest product of English influences so far as they have yet displayed themselves, as Chaitanya was the mightiest product of Mohamedan influences in Bengal. There is a striking similarity in the circumstances which produced these wonderful men. A great man, it has been truly remarked, is the product of his age, the reflex of the energies of his time, the embodiment of the forces of his epoch. A great man is such as his age makes him, but he is something more. He reacts upon the age, carries it to a further stage of progress, be it in morals, or in politics or in religion. He gives back to the age more than what he has received from it. The age pours into the lap of its gifted son its choicest gifts. The hero improves, refines, and embellishes them, and repays them back with compound interest. Thus the age is illustrated, adorned and ennobled in the personality of its most gifted representative.

Chaitanya rose as a living protest against the abominations of Tantric worship. The struggle between Vaishnavism and Sakta worship had already commenced. The Bacchanalian orgies of those times were a disgrace to the age. Human nature rose in revolt against them. There is a divinity within us which, rough-hew it as we may, will amid darkness and despair re-assert its sovereignty. There are depths beyond which human nature will not go. The divine element comes to the rescue. In the hearts of others, it speaks tremulously, in half-broken accents, and in moments of temporary illumination. In the heart of the prophet, it glows with heavenly radiance. It is an all-consuming fire. It absorbs him and overpowers him and bodies itself forth in language of deep, burning and passionate conviction. Thus rose Chaitanya, the exponent of the purity, the moral forces and the religious energies of his times. But he brought to the age something which it did not possess, something which was his own, something it derived from the abundance of his own nature. He breathed into the sweet spirit of love—the spirit of *bhakti*—that spirit of charity of which St. Paul speaks, and which finds such striking illustration in the triumphant sufferings of the martyred souls of humanity.

When Rammohun Roy appeared on the scene, the struggle between Sakta worship and Vaishnavism was in full operation, It was indeed the old struggle between right and wrong, between the principle of light and that of darkness. Rammohun Roy was peculiarly situated as regards this struggle. On his father's side he was a Vaishnava ; on his mother's he was a Sakta. It seemed as if these two contending systems of thought had, after ages of conflict and struggle, met together in the same family to produce the greatest religious reformer of modern India, who, singularly enough, was neither a Sakta nor a Vaishnava, but sought to restore the religion of his fathers to its pristine purity. Rammohun Roy was singularly well-equipped for this struggle. Inferior to Chaitanya in the inexhaustible resources of deep spirituality and boundless love, he was superior to him in the incisiveness of his logic, in the breadth of his intellect, which excited the admiration of the most gifted minds of Europe, and in the keener appreciation and firmer grasp of the situation which he displayed as the result of superior culture and deeper insight. Chaitanya was such as Sanskrit learning and Mohamedan influences and his own sweet sprituality had made him. Rammohun Roy was the product of these factors, but he associated with them the inestimable benefit of English culture.

I fear we are not always sufficiently alive to the deep debt which we owe to the time of the Mohamedan conquest. The country was sunk in ignorance and superstition. To Islam belongs the credit of keeping alive in the recollections of our people the principles of the monotheistic creed which Rammohun Roy sought to read in the olden records of our race. Rammohun Roy was deeply versed in Sanskrit as well as in Arabic, and from the outset stood forth as the champion of monotheism. But the method which he followed was peculiar and singularly characteristic of the man and the reformer. He sought to build upon the old foundations, but only so far as they were compatible with truth. The truth he worshipped ; the truth he loved ; the truth was the adorable divinity of his heart. God knows what he suffered for the sake of truth. But deep as was his attachment to the truth, he likewise reverenced the past. His was no violent alienation, no bitter estrangement, no sudden cutting adrift from the sheet-anchors of the past. Of course everything that the past taught was not true. There was in it a good deal of "transcendental nonsense" in the expressive language of your illustrious chairman.* But here and there amid the decayed ruins of ancient Indian greatness there were to be found gems of priceless value. These he treasured up ; these he carefully studied, and these he incorporated into that system of progressive religion of which he was to be the immortal founder.

So will it always be with the march of reform, whether it be in religion, morals or politics. The history of the English constitution

* The Hon'ble Dr. Mohendra Lal Sircar.

is the history of steady and continuous progress, due to no violent changes, to no violent remedies, but to careful up-building upon the foundations of the past. English reform has always been actuated by deep reverence for the past, combined with careful attention to the requirements of the present, and presided over by the all-pervading spirit of truth. The history of the world furnishes the instance of a conspicuous departure from these lessons, followed by conspicuous failure. The French Revolutionists in the wildness of their revolutionary zeal dethroned their king and brought him to the guillotine. They disestablished their church, expelled the clergy, confiscated church property, and to complete the measure of their development in this new direction, they installed Reason as an object of worship in place of Almighty God. The retribution soon came. The reaction was a hundredfold more bitter and intense than the fury of that revolutionary zeal which had precipitated these changes. Those who had expelled their king and had massacred him and the members of his family submitted to a military despotism, the little finger of which was thicker than the loins of Louis XVI. Those who had disestablished the church and had expelled the priesthood, were once again, amid tears and penances, received back into the bosom of the Catholic Church ; and to mark the crowning triumph of the Church, the Pope came all the way from Rome to Paris to crown Napoleon as the anointed sovereign of France.

The apostle of monotheism, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj,—the activity of Rammohun Roy was not confined to religious matters. Religion shaped and guided his conduct. Deep religious convictions formed the nutriment of his soul as they were the crowning glory of his life. But he knew that duty to God comprised duty to man, and the most acceptable way of serving the Almighty is by serving his creatures. The activity of his political life was not the least conspicuous feature of his career. In these days, political agitation is viewed with disfavour and political agitators are regarded as a mischievous class. However that may be, we who belong to that class and glory in it, claim Rammohun Roy as our leader, our guide, our revered preceptor in the difficult struggle for political regeneration. He advocated the freedom of the Press at a time when the Press was not yet free. He advocated the separation of judicial from executive functions at a time when nobody had apparently thought of the reform ; and this is a reform which the National Congress urges from year to year, and urges in vain. With the prescience of genius as if anticipating an evil which did not prevail in his own time, and which it was reserved for Lord Salisbury to bring about in these days, he deprecated the appointment of men who were too young to offices in the Civil Service. Rammohun Roy suggested 22 years as the minimum limit of age for admission into the Covenanted Service. The Public Services Commission have recommended 23 years as the maximum limit of age.

I have heard it said that religious reformers should not take part in politics. Why not? Is not politics a part of our duty? And does not religion embrace the whole circle of our duties? Yes, politics based upon religion or deep moral earnestness is the one thing that is needful for this country. Politics divorced from a high moral purpose becomes the paltry squabble for power in which humanity can feel no interest. Take the case of the Home Rule agitation. Withdraw from it the personality of Mr. Gladstone and his intense moral earnestness, withdraw from it the deep fervour of the Irish patriots, and it becomes a miserable struggle for political power in which the deeper interests of humanity are lost sight of. Take again the case of the Pilgrim Fathers, the founders of American greatness. They were not allowed to worship God in their own country according to the light of their consciences. They preferred exile to the miseries of a life where their conscientious convictions had to be sacrificed. They crossed the ocean and settled in a foreign land. They established their own religion and their own government. They developed themselves into statesmen, and became the founders of the noblest Government and the freest race that the world has ever seen.

The first of political agitators, and the founder of the Brahmo Samaj,—Rammohun Roy was also the first of Indian social reformers. What is the essence of social reform? What is its first and last word—its vitalizing principle? All social reform consists in the elevation of women, the removal of their disabilities and the restoration to them of that position of dignity and honour which is theirs by right. Rammohun Roy was singularly well-equipped for this task. The fertilizing stream of deep motherly affection had been poured into his heart from his earliest years. Nay, more. When, driven from home by the persecuting hand of his relatives, he wandered among the wilds of Thibet, it was again the protecting arm of a woman that saved him from a violent death. He had throughout his life received in rich abundance the sweet and healing balsam of womanly affection. How could he disregard their claims upon his consideration? He knew how sweet and loving and tender Hindoo women were; and it was therefore with a sense of cruel agony that he saw perpetrated before his eyes the deadly horrors of *Suttee*.

I have read the opinion expressed somewhere,—I believe in a journal or in some book,—that *Suttee*, when voluntarily performed, represents the highest effort of womanly sacrifice and devotion to the memory of a dead husband. I regret I cannot accept this view of the matter. Is there no other means of illustrating womanly regard for a departed husband except by recourse to a practice from which human nature recoils with horror and indignation? Is it to be supposed that Hindoo widows are now less devoted to the memory of their dead husbands than they were in the time of Rammohun Roy, because, forsooth, they do not enjoy the liberty

of immolating themselves on the funeral pyre ? Against such an assumption I desire to enter my most emphatic protest. It would be nothing less than a libel on the womanhood of our race; for though I am a warm advocate of widow-marriage, I must observe that for purity of character, meekness of disposition and devoted self-sacrifice, the Hindoo widow is an ornament to her race and her sex.

Well, against this cruel rite Rammohun Roy commenced a crusade. The first pamphlet that he wrote on the subject was in 1818, and it was not till 1829 that the law was passed by which *Suttee* was declared penal. For 11 years, he continued the agitation. Hindoo society rose in arms against him. He never hesitated, never faltered, but with the calm clear eye of faith into the things of the future, he continued his work, till the victory was his.

I have read it stated in the columns of an influential English Journal—*The Saturday Review*—that the credit of the reform does not belong to Rammohun Roy in a special sense, but that he was one of a band of reformers who for some time had been pressing for it. The question is not of any great difficulty. It can be easily settled by a reference to a few facts. Rammohun Roy was the first to advocate the reform ; he was its most persistent advocate. When at last, the law was passed, he went to England armed with a petition to support it, against the protestations of the Dharma Sabha. But this is not all. Without him the law could never have been passed. The Government felt bound by every consideration of honour and expediency not to interfere in a matter which affected the religion of the people. It was not until Rammohun Roy had pointed out that *Suttee* was not sanctioned by religion or the ancient tenets of the Hindoo Shastras that the Government felt itself at liberty to take action in the matter, and to move in the interests of humanity. ...

The social reformer, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, the first of political agitators,—the claims of the Raja to the gratitude of his countrymen have not yet been exhausted. He was also the founder of the Bengalee Prose literature and the first of Bengalee journalists. There is hardly a field of public usefulness which he left unoccupied. Ladies and gentlemen, I do not know what your own feelings on the subject may be, but I venture to think that those who are engaged in the great task of improving our language, adorning it and perfecting it for the varied purposes of speech, are among the truest benefactors of our race. Their achievements are the most durable ; their fame immortal. In the progressive development of the human race it is possible to realise a time when the fame of a Marlborough or of a Wellington may be forgotten, and the memory of their victories may pass out of the mind. But the immortal creations of a Chaucer, a Shakespeare and a Milton, the noble thoughts of an Addison, a Bolingbroke or a Burke, will always linger in the recollections of the English-speaking races. They have endowed the people with the richest heritage. When the

history of our people comes to be written, as I trust it will be written by no unfaithful hand, the highest place will be accorded to the Conscript Fathers of our language; and in the immortal rolls of fame there are few names that will stand higher than those of Rammohun Roy, Iswar Chandra Gupta, Modhusudan Dutt, Akshay Kumar Datta, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Hem Chandra Banerji, and last but not least of the glorious band, Bankim Chandra Chatterjea.

Such was Rammohun Roy, and such was the nature of his achievements. Our national life may be said to flow from him as from a fountain. His labours have shaped the whole course of national development. Before him all was dark and gloomy. The sun of Chaitanya had long set, and the firmament was covered with deep gloom. Then rose Rammohun Roy, the apostle of modern progress. Others have followed him. Keshub Chunder Sen, Kristo Das Pal, Ram Gopal Ghose have come and gone; but they were no more fit to wear his mantle than we are to wear theirs.

I fear we have not been sufficiently respectful to the memory of Rammohun Roy. Three years ago you resolved to raise a national memorial in his honour. Where is this memorial? Your Town Hall is filled with the statues, busts and portraits of lesser luminaries. I do not grudge them these honours, which, no doubt, they richly deserve. But where is the memorial in honour of the greatest Hindoo reformer of modern times? I ask you to redeem the honour of your race, to make good your plighted faith, and to rescue the national character from the stain of dark ingratitude. But above all, gentlemen, I would ask you to raise in the temples of your hearts a monument that would be worthy of the great Raja. Purify your souls, hold communion with his blessed spirit, seek to elevate yourselves to the height of his moral greatness, and to assimilate his principles and his teachings into your every-day conduct; and then you will have raised a memorial not unworthy of the great Raja, or of this occasion, and one which would be in conformity with the spirit of his teachings.

Mahadev Govind Ranade

From Monotheism to Monolatry.

From *Religious and Social Reform*, a collection of Essays and Speeches, compiled by M. B. Kolasker, Bombay, 1902.

Rammohun Roy was at once a social reformer, the founder of a great religious movement, and a great politician. These three activities were combined in him in such a way that they put to shame the performances of the best among us at the present time.

Raja Rammohun Roy's services to the country were not confined to any particular department of human activity. ...

The spirituality, the deep piety and universal toleration which are manifest in every word of the Trust Deed of the Brahma Samaja, represent an ideal of beauty and perfection which ... it may yet take many centuries before its full significance is understood by our people. ... What Raja Rammohun felt was that we had in India a nation gifted with a religious history transcending all the records of every other race. Here was a nation which was gifted, was well endowed, was spiritual in all its real aspirations. This nation had gradually ascended to the conception of the purest form of Monotheism that the world has yet seen. In the Upanishads and in the Bhagavad-Gita it had developed,—not by a mere impulse, not by the command of any single prophet, but by the slow process of growth and evolution,—a system of the purest form of Monotheism that man can conceive. The higher thought of the nation had learned to place its trust in a Universal Spirit, the One without a second, in whom all lived and moved and had their being, who was the Cause of all, the Lord of all, the Friend of all, the Guide of all, the most fatherly of fathers, and the most motherly of mothers. One age after another constructed the edifice, laying brick upon brick and layer upon layer, and story after story rose. Well, this highest conception was not only confined to Pandits, Philosophers and Sastris, but it was the common property of every class. The very lowest of the low, men who were socially not much respected nor very respectable,—the poor villager, the hunter, the gardener, the fisherman, the weaver, the goldsmith, the barber, the shop-keeper,—they all shared this common faith equally with the Brahmins, the Pandits, and the Yogis.

While Raja Rammohun was struck with this universal prevalence of the monotheistic principle, he was deeply pained at the thought that this exalted faith was turned to no practical account, because it was associated with external observances and rites which were in entire discord with it. These external rites and observances made the nation worship all manner of gods and goddesses, elemental, mythological, tribal and local divinities. ... This polytheism had also grown side by side with the higher teaching of the Upanishads, that God was One without a second, and of the Bhagavad-Gita that He alone was to be worshipped. This contrast between the monotheistic spirit and the polytheistic observances strikes every student of our religious life as a puzzle which baffles the understanding. You can well imagine how it must have struck a great soul like that of the Raja, who from his very boyhood had been brought up as an iconoclast, and waged war with idolatry of all kinds. He brooded and thought over it, and he worked and suffered for it, in a way of which we have no conception. The question that he put to himself was, How does it come to pass that monolatry does not go hand

in hand with monotheism in India, when in other countries, where the monotheistic principle is less exclusively professed, monolatry has been for two thousand years and more the prevailing practice ? ... Rammohun Roy, ... with a view to bring into accord our practical devotions with our monotheistic faith, ... gathered together kindred souls who felt with him on this point, and established the Brahma Samaja. He did not regard the Brahma Samaja faith as a New Dispensation, or a new declaration of God's purposes. He aspired only to establish harmony between men's accepted faith and their practical observances by a strict monolatrous worship of the One Supreme Soul, a worship of the heart and not of the hands, a sacrifice of self and not of the possessions of the self. There was nothing foreign in its conception, origin, or method. He wanted men and women to cherish their own ancient treasures of faith, and to secure their freedom from the bondage of superstition and ignorance.

When this correspondence between the head and the heart, this concord between the flesh and the spirit is established, Indian monotheism will be a great power in the land, uniting 250 millions of men and women in a bond which shall be indissoluble. The historical differences of national creeds will continue to exist like the different styles of architecture. The Christian church will not look in outward appearance like a Mahomedan mosque or an Aryan temple, but the difference of style and form will not interfere with the spiritual unity of purpose. When this is accomplished, another great idea, the union of all religions, which Raja Rammohun Roy cherished deeply in his heart, will be realised, and with it people in all lands will say with one voice, "Thy Kingdom has come, and Heaven has descended on Earth."

Sjt. Bepin Chandra Pal

I. Rammohun's Fight Against the Forces of Mediaevalism.

From an article written in 1901, and re-printed in "The New Spirit", published in 1906.

The chief value of the Raja's labours, to our mind, seems to lie in his fight against the forces of mediaevalism in India, and it is for this reason that we claim for him the honour of being the Father of the present Indian Renaissance.

The characteristics of Indian mediaevalism are mainly two, each, however, being the logical sequence of the other. The first of these is the Abstract Universalism of the popular Vedantic schools, which, denying all marks, notes, distinctions or differentia-

tions in the Divine Entity, practically propounds a kind of veiled Agnosticism on the one hand, and emphasises the abstraction of the senses from their objects, of the mind from thinking, of the emotions from feeling, of the will from acting, of man from society, as methods of spiritual culture on the other. Thus, even without the Pauline doctrine of all flesh being corruption, this Hindu mediaevalism, from another standpoint, passed the same condemnation against all human instincts and all human desires, however legitimate these might be.

The second characteristic of Hindu mediaevalism is the prevailing ceremonialism of the country, which abstracts thought from feeling, reason from life, religion from theology, and reduces the religious life of the people to a round of external observances, and, even in its higher types, to a system of unethical disciplines.

A third characteristic of mediaevalism is a kind of chaotic homogeneity of the different departments of life's activities. Differentiation and autonomy, the essential conditions of healthy evolution, become impossible under the influence of this mediaevalism. Religion, or more correctly speaking, theology and ritualism, usurp the functions of the different organs of social and civic life, and everything is thought to be regulated and controlled by the fanciful abstractions and *a priori* assumptions of the priest's code. This mediaevalism sets up a false ideal of religion as an incubus upon every department of a people's life, whether economic and industrial, or political and legal, or educational and social. And, after the earlier and more primitive stages are passed, no true progress in any of these departments becomes possible unless the incubus of religious dogmas and disciplines is removed from them, and they are granted the fullest autonomy and freedom of movement along their own legitimate lines of development.

The objective of all the many-sided activities of Raja Rammohun Roy was to free his country from this fatal incubus of mediaeval abstraction. In theology, though he adopted the teachings of the Vedanta to fight the sensuous ceremonialism of the prevailing and popular Hinduism, he never emphasised that portion of it which lends itself to the propagation of Abstract Universalism, but persistently pushed forward those which presented the Absolute, the Brahman, through what is known as the *tatastha lakshana*, through His relation to the universe,—recognising both His transcendent and immanent aspects, thus seeking to work out a rational synthesis between the higher elements of the Sankara and the Ramanuja schools of Hindu thought. In ethics he added to the old individualistic and subjective disciplines of *sama*, *dama*, etc., the ideals of *loka-sreyas*,—of the service of humanity. In economics, politics, jurisprudence and education he always pressed for the due recognition of the fullest autonomy and independence of these departments of national life, and placed religion, at the top-place over

them all,—not as a mass of crippling dogmas and doctrines, or interfering observances and disciplines, but as a pure, a rational, a regulative principle of them all,—as the universal ideal which these different departments of human activities, each working in its own way, were to work together to attain,—the Kingdom of God which they were to bring on earth,—the New Jerusalem which they were all to establish,—by their free but well-regulated co-operation.

It is for this reason that he sought to work out the problems of economics by economic methods, along their own natural lines; to solve financial and political questions by the highest principles of the science of politics and government; to shape education for its own purpose, viz. that of the highest culture of the mental faculties; and thus he struck out a most happy balance between these different departments of national life.

His movement may well be characterised as a movement for a return to Nature, that is, to the realities of objective existences and laws, in a country where, owing to the prevalence of a kind of Subjective Idealism, the sense of the objective had, through centuries of neglect, been almost entirely deadened. This recognition of the realities of objective existence, Rammohun felt, was essential to the advancement of his people. It is therefore that in his famous letter on Education addressed to Lord Amherst, he pleaded so powerfully for the teaching of the science and literature of Europe to the inhabitants of India. What the Baconian Philosophy did in Europe, that was really what Rammohun Roy sought to do, through his manifold writings, in India. He raised his protest not merely against idolatry, but also against the Abstract Universalism of the popular Vedanta, *which really is the parent of idolatry*. He raised his voice of protest, not merely against monkish asceticism, but against that false view of Nature and life which gave rise to it. He pleaded for the sanctity of human instincts and human desires, when regulated by the laws of God as revealed through the ordinances of society; and for the sanctity of human relations and of all social institutions based upon justice and benevolence. And thus, his movement, in its rationality and humanising tendencies, may well be characterised as that of the Indian Renaissance, the full possibilities of which lie still in the womb of futurity.

II. Rammohun as Re-constructor of Indian life and society.

From an Article, *Calcutta and the Cultural Evolution of Modern India*, in the "Calcutta Municipal Gazette", December 22, 1928.

Raja Rammohun was not a mere theologian or philosopher. His interest in theology and religion was never divorced from his interest in the practical affairs of life. It is a mistake to regard Raja Rammohun Roy as either the founder of a new religion, the

religion, namely, of the Brahmo Samaj, or only as a Father of the Protestant Hindu Church that came into being with the delivery of the message of *Brahman* in the most ancient of the Upanishads, as Ranade used to insist upon. The Raja did not merely revive the theosophy of the Upanishads, but he tried *to reconstruct Indian life and society*, with a view to helping a fuller realisation of the spiritual truths and ideals of the Vedanta.

One of his most favourite texts was that which declared the essential Divinity of man as man. Man was by his very nature and constitution "eternally free". To deny this Freedom to man was an outrage upon his Nature and a sin against his Maker. This was the fundamental philosophy of the Raja's Humanitarianism. Inspired by it, the Raja worked to break every bond that binds man,—intellectual, sacerdotal, social and political. He was the first, therefore, to filiate political and social freedom to religious and spiritual emancipation or salvation, and to initiate the present Freedom Movement in all its aspects in Modern India.

He did more. He brought from the rich store-house of Hindu thought and experience new canons of criticism and interpretation, and applied them to the liberalisation of even 19th Century Rationalism and new social ideals,—new canons that, instead of repudiating the claims of the Unseen in the determination of the truth of the Seen, (which was a dominant note of the 19th Century Illumination), filiated to the deepest experiences of the religious and the spiritual life the message of the Social Democracy of the French Revolution.

But the greatest contribution practically of the Raja to his people was the new self-consciousness and self-confidence which he tried by his multifarious works, theological, social, educational and juridical, to create in them. In whatever he wrote or said or did, the Raja's one central idea or objective was to remove what modern psychologists call the "inferiority complex" of his people. Personal self-respect and national self-respect were the two most powerful forces that worked behind the Raja's relations with people of other races and cultures. The Raja's sensitive patriotism could not stand any manner of depreciation of the culture of his country, or of the character of his people. But his love of his own country was never divorced from his love of and regard for the good of other countries. His patriotism was a stepping-stone to his love of Universal Humanity, which had for its content all the races and nations of mankind : even as his love of humanity was a step towards the fullest realisation of his love of God. In all this the Raja presented a new ideal, both religious and social, not only to his own people, but to the modern world.

Lastly, the Raja was the first to deliver the message of political freedom to India. He so keenly felt the loss of this freedom by his people, that even as a boy yet within his teens he left his country and travelled to Tibet, because he found it difficult to tolerate the

domination of his country by another nation, though, subsequently, with closer acquaintance with the culture and character of the British people, who seemed to him to have been "more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct," the Raja became "inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants." But he never believed or found it possible to tolerate the idea that India's unending subjection to the British rule was at all necessary for the amelioration of the Indian people. Mr. Arnot, who was the Raja's Secretary in England, has left on record an expression of the Raja's opinion that forty years was the limit which the Raja allowed for working out England's cultural and humanitarian mission in India ; because he believed that during this time British rule would be able to bring the Indian mind into living contact with modern world-culture, and establish a system of modern democratic government in the country, which would bring India up to the level of the other civilised and free countries of the world. In his somewhat voluminous evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, the Raja clearly indicated the lines of reform which would help England to fulfil her moral mission in India. More than fifty years after the Raja's death the Indian National Congress, representing the high water-mark of India's political wisdom, and voicing forth India's political aspirations, was able to hardly go beyond what the Raja had advocated. For nearly a hundred years past, not only Bengal but all India is trying to translate into practical politics the Raja's ideal and programme.

Dr. Heramba Chandra Maitra, M.A., D.Litt.

Speech at the Rammohun Roy Memorial Meeting, Calcutta, 27th September, 1886.

In honouring Rammohun Roy we honour our race and country. He surely can gain nothing by our doing him honour ; he fought well, and he has earned his reward ; but we can gain much. Let us not take to exaggerating his merits and achievements ; but even without magnifying his memory beyond its legitimate limits, we must feel that he was a truly great man. He has been honoured more by foreigners than by his countrymen.

Rammohun Roy was born in 1774, and he died in 1833 ; thus a most eventful period of modern history is spanned by the years of his earthly existence. Between his birth and death the French Revolution had come and gone, Napoleon's career had begun and terminated, the War of Independence in America had been fought

and won. Turning to his own country, we find that a great part of the history of his times is made up of the life of Raja Rammohun Roy.

If history means something more than a record of battles and the succession of monarchs, the moment we dive below the surface, we find that, in the history of his day, the presence of the Raja is of an almost ubiquitous character. There is no sphere of public action in which we find him to be absent. We have not met here today to dilate upon the religious reform accomplished by the Raja ; we have met upon a common platform to do honour to him for services rendered to his country, in the estimate of which we all can agree. But still you will permit me to say that I consider his achievements in the direction of religious reform to be by far the most momentous part of his career. Even those who may not agree with his religious beliefs will not deny his earnestness and sincerity. They will not also deny that, for good or for evil,—I shall leave it to you to say whether it has been for good or for evil,—the reform that he accomplished in religion has exercised a most potent influence upon his country. But in other affairs too, in social, educational, literary and political matters, he did very great things.

To the events of his life I need refer but briefly. You have heard that he learnt Bengali and Persian in his native village, and Arabic at Patna from his ninth to his twelfth year. When he was a boy of twelve, he had read, not only the mystic writings of the *Sufis*, but also Euclid and Aristotle in Arabic. During these years he mastered some of the most recondite productions of the human intellect in a foreign tongue. At Benares, he studied the Vedas and Upanishads from his twelfth to his sixteenth year. He returned home in his sixteenth year, and, owing to religious differences with his father, and compelled to leave home without such facilities for travelling as you now enjoy, he went to Tibet, —and what did he do there ? He combated the errors of Tibetan Buddhism, and would have lost his life, but for the tenderness of the softer sex, for whom he ever afterwards cherished a warm regard, and in whose cause he spent a large part of his life and energy.

He came back to his paternal home in his twentieth year, and was after a few years again compelled to leave it. From 1800 to 1813 he was in Government service. He then gave up all worldly avocations, and devoted himself wholly to the pursuit of truth.

Eminently successful as he was in religious controversies, he was not merely a controversialist : his piety was of a constructive type. He could not rest satisfied until he had erected a house for the worship of God according to his principles. Having achieved this great object, he proceeded to England ; and we find a

remarkable proof of the breadth of his sympathies in the fact that, while in England, he took a keen interest in the agitation about Parliamentary reform there going on.

You have been told that he wrote his first tract on *Suttee* in 1818. You may form some idea of the social condition of the country at the time from the fact that between 1815 and 1828 no less than 8000 *Suttees* were burned. The law abolishing it was passed in 1829. Orthodox Hindus appealed to Parliament against this abolition, and in England, Rammohun Roy carried on the same struggle which he had won here, and he was present when the appeal against the abolition of *Suttee* was dismissed by Parliament in July 1832.

In the cause of education and literature, you are aware that he laid the foundations of Bengali prose literature, taught the public how to read prose, started a school and a newspaper, wrote grammars and geographies. We can scarcely conceive the difficulties under which he had to work. In those days it was a very hard task to make education possible, and a truly heroic achievement to create the branches of knowledge in which men were to be instructed.

In politics, you well know the part that he played in the cause of the liberty of the Press. You may judge of the despotic spirit of the Government of those days from the arbitrary restrictions which were imposed by it upon the freedom of the Press. Rammohun, in his Memorial to the King in Council, fearlessly condemned the action of the Government, and also the conduct of the Judge of the Supreme Court, in first having held out hopes that he might take into consideration any grounds that might be urged against the ordinance of the Government of India, and then having declared that he was pledged to support it. In his patriotism he was sincere and practical.

From all this you are able to judge how many-sided Rammohun Roy's genius was. His career furnishes a remarkable instance of the hollowness of the doctrine that has been broached in our own time, that reforms must be pushed "along the line of least resistance". This theory means that we are to take up those reforms which are the easiest to accomplish; in other words, that we are to avoid the tasks which are the most difficult. Such was not the spirit in which Raja Rammohun Roy acted. He boldly took up the questions in which he was to meet with the greatest opposition. That a reform has become easy means that the people are ready to accept it; such reforms are the least urgent. It is our duty to awaken the public mind to a sense of the duties which they have learnt to ignore through the influence of long-established customs.

In these days of fragmentary and desultory activity, our young men would do well to hold up constantly before their eyes such an ideal of complete and well-rounded manhood as is furnished by the life of Raja Rammohun Roy. Now it is often considered a

reproach to a politician to evince earnestness in a moral cause, and a reproach to a preacher of religious truths to take interest in political affairs. To this the Raja's life furnishes a complete answer. His career proves that a man engaged actively in politics need not and ought not to be indifferent to the cause of moral reform, and one engaged in promoting religious advancement must not necessarily be indifferent to political progress.

Brahmarshi Sir R. Venkata Ratnam, Kt., M.A., L.T., D.Litt., LI.D., K.I.H.

The Spirit of Raja Rammohun Roy

Presidential Address at the Theistic Conference, Calcutta, 1906.
(*Abridged.*)

Rammohun Roy is distinctly different from the other great men of India before his day. He is the father of a new race of Indian heroes. He heralds a new epoch in Indian history. His illustrious predecessors were mostly sages, a few philanthropists, some patriots. But he was the first and the greatest *nation-builder* that India has produced.

His spirit ramified into diverse branches covering the whole area of national life. In his career is illustrated the harmonious play of that cycle of forces which by their conjoint operation evolve and shape out a modern nation. In range of vision, in reach of sympathy, in versatility of powers, in variety of activities, in co-ordination of interests, and in coalescence of ideal,—in fine, as realising an all-round, all-receptive life in its manifold fullness, Rammohun Roy is a unique figure in the history of India,—if not in the annals of the race.

He had fraternised with different schools of learning in their cloistered seclusion ; he had plunged into the predominant theologies at their prime sources ; he had communed with nature in her sublime solemnity ; he had mixed with his kind in busy bustle ; he had widened his vision with extensive travels ; he had passed through the ordeal of domestic chastisement and social ostracism ; he had mourned for the victims of dire famine ; he had writhed in heart at the ghastly sight of the immolation of helpless widows. Here was one that could truly say, "Whatever concerns man is dear to me ; my heart is the home of all the race." Such was the rich outfit with which he set out on his great life journey as the forerunner of a new era.

Comprehensive past all comparison as was the Raja's view of a full life, he was essentially a religious genius. His faith in the saving, regenerating power of the Spirit was unbounded. To him a progress not impelled by a religious force was worse than inconceivable,—it was degenerating, degrading. To the myriad ills of India, the sovereign remedy, according to him, was a living faith in a wise and loving God : not a cloistered faith that scorns and shuns society, nor a busy care-worn faith that assigns the leisure hour to a hurried worship, nor the prudent faith that imports a God to watch a truant world, nor yet a speculative faith that prefixes a creator to a law-governed universe. It was a personal communion with an immanent Spirit, an implicit trust in an all-regulating Providence. It was a faith to which the universe was a consecrated temple, conscience a sacred oracle, duty a divine ordinance, truth the imperishable gospel, love the perfect rule, and life a progressive pilgrimage. It was a faith that interpreted law as the method, force as the will, and matter as the localised potency of God. It was a faith that esteemed the world as a reflection, and history as a panoramic presentation, of the nature and the purpose of the Deity. With Rammohun Roy this faith, this sublime, invigorating Theism, was a passion, a power, and a joy. To Rammohun Roy this faith furnished alike the enduring basis and the cementing strength of a united and vigorous nation. Religion he held to be a natural, irresistible instinct in mankind, an appetite that knew no satisfaction till it realised itself in a felt contact with the Supreme. This, the keynote of his religious message, is struck in what was perhaps his maiden work, the *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*. And this message of a whole-souled faith in God and a whole-hearted love for humanity runs through his works with a persistence of purpose that is marvellous for his times and surroundings.

The work of Rammohun Roy, as of every great nation-builder, was four-fold : (1) to re-assess the national heritage, (2) to replenish the national resources, (3) to infuse a new quickening and harmonising spirit, and (4) to use the awakened energies for the new national wants and demands.

1. *Rammohun's re-assessment of the national heritage.*— The hope and assurance of a reviving nation springs largely from its "storied past." Therein lies the evidence of national possibilities, the guarantee of national solvency, and in a large measure the impetus to national endeavour. His translations of the Upanishads, his elucidation of the Vedanta, his exposition of the Gayatri, his defence of Hindu Theism,—all these were suggested and sustained by his patriotic and nation-building purpose. He reiterates with tireless insistence that the most authoritative scriptures of India proclaim the absolute unity and omnipotence of the Supreme Being ; recognise Him alone as the object of worship, and His worship alone as the way to beatitude ; and declare the inseparability of pure morality from true worship.

It may be worth while dwelling a little on the spirit in which the genius of Rammohun Roy interpreted and used the national scriptures. It was in the spirit, as Max Muller has pointed out, not of a prudent adherence to mere antiquity, but of an honest search for seeds of imperishable truth, that he sought to lay down the Vedanta of the Upanishads, stripped of its strange and disguising coverings, as the basis of the new national life. Among the national scriptures he valued the Upanishads for their divine authority of eternal truth; among the great "world-books" he welcomed them for their bracing, cheering national air. Free yet authoritative, true yet familiar, lasting yet homely, imperishable yet national, the Upanishads were to him the national *(swadeshi)* type and mould for Universal Religion. Thus did he regain a national scripture for the rational soul, and furnish to the nation that hope and confidence from the past which is the indispensable precursor to national growth and expansion.

2. *Replenishing the national resources.*—Rammohun Roy, the restorer of the Upanishadic Vedanta as the deepest insight of the Hindu (the Eastern) genius, was likewise the interpreter of the richest expression of the Semitic (the Western) genius,—the heart of Jesus. The India of Rammohun was not,—could not be,—the India of the Rishis. A momentous change over the entire field of Indian life had resulted from the contact of Hindu and Mahammadan civilisations, culminating in the immortal declaration of Guru Nanak that he was neither a Hindu nor a Mahammadan, but "the equal soul's brother" of both. But heaven had ordained India to be a yet vaster spiritual *Prayag* of the world, the sacred confluence of the mighty world-currents of East and West. A more comprehensive synthesis than had hitherto been realised,—had hitherto been possible,—had to be attempted : a reverent garnering of 'the wisdom of the East and the West'. In this devout spirit of genuine yet thoughtful enthusiasm Rammohun Roy submitted his "Precepts of Jesus, the guide to peace and happiness" to the world, as an elevating spiritual and ethical code.

It is very cheering to note that this gradual commingling of the best in the East and in the West for the ultimate perfection of both,—aye, of the whole humanity, as being Heaven's own method, is being realised in an increasing degree on all hands. The East and the West are, according to Dr. Deussen, complementary as the Intelligence and the Will. The Upanishads seek to clear the vision of truth from the mists of ignorance and illusion ; the Bible would nerve the volition with the inspiration of love. Prof. Upton puts the same truth in another form : that the Aryan religious belief seeks to realise God as the self-manifesting substance of all objective phenomena ; while the Semitic faith is noteworthy for recognising the authority of God as the sanction for the sense of Duty and Righteousness. The Vedanta is the cradle of the sage and the seer ; the Bible is the nursery of the prophet and the martyr.

Nor need any suspicion be entertained that this commingling

of the East and the West would have any denationalising tendency for the East. To lower uplifting ideals, to impair inner vitality, to weaken a chaste 'passion for the past' is to denationalise ; but to swell the stream of life with incoming currents, to drain out its accumulated impurities, and to level down its hindering barriers of prejudice is truly to re-nationalise. This was an intuitive perception of Rammohun Roy, who was not only (to use Prof. Sir M. Williams's language) "the first earnest-minded investigator of the science of comparative religion that the world has produced", but also (as Prof. Max Muller put it) "the first to complete a connected life-current between the East and the West",—the inspired engineer in the world of faith that cut the channel of communication, the spiritual Suez, between and sea, land-locked in the rigid sectarianism of exclusive revelation,—and set their separate surges of national life into one mighty world-current of universal humanity.

3. *The infusion of a quickening and harmonising spirit.*—Rammohun Roy sought to embody in the Brahma Samaj, the Indian Monotheistic Church, his trust in the organic unity of truth and humanity. Quite imperfect and incorrect, though very common, is the notion that the Brahma Samaj is merely a crusade against idolatry and a protest against caste. All re-organisation—all national upheaval,—has an inevitable negative side, even as all cultivation involves an amount of weeding and pruning. But Rammohun's Theistic faith is a positive, constructive agency, advocating spiritual worship, individual and congregational, and imparting spiritual freedom through spiritual unity. As the immortal Trust Deed defined its object, the Brahma Samaj was to be a spiritual fraternity of all, without any artificial distinction, for the worship of God, limited by no sectarian conception, tarnished by no sectarian rancour ; but fruitful in promoting the union of man with man and the great virtues of morality and piety, charity and benevolence.

Rammohun's inborn synthetic temper has been exemplified even in the holy office of divine worship as prevalent in the Brahma Samaj. This 'divine service' is the joint gift of the East and the West,—of adoration mellowed into communion, of praise preluding prayer, of confession consecrated as self-surrender. Conjoint congregational worship is, no doubt, new to the spirit of ancient India. Yet, what is congregational worship but the profoundest expression of our common humanity in a spiritual fraternity ? In conjoint worship soul sits with soul in a sacred ring, soul moves with soul in a holy circle, around the One in whose Light they dwell, by whose Love they live. Congregational worship is the *Brindaban* of souls : and in hearty congregational worship lies the ultimate solution of all human problems.

Another prominent harmonising element of the new spirit that Rammohun Roy would pour into the ancient heart of Aryavarta is the universality of spiritual revelation. To him the presence

of rich saving truth in every great religious dispensation was an axiom : the direct approach of every soul to its Deity an implication, a corollary, of spiritual worship : and the ultimate salvation of all a guarantee of God's immeasurable love and invincible righteousness. How liberalising and harmonising this new spirit is may be realised through the work and examples of those who have been vivified by the inspiration of the Raja's life. Where, it may be asked, save in a liberal monotheistic church, could be fostered the spiritual versatility of Keshub Chunder Sen, and the "catholic wholeness" of Ranade ?

4. But few words are needed to sketch *Rammohun's application of the new spirit to the wants and demands of the age.* Here too, the Raja's synthetic spirit served to elevate the social sentiment and to enlarge the social outlook of the country. In fact, it is here that his nation-building purpose stands out prominent even to the casual observer. The ethical method of the East is personal discipline ; of the West, social service. The ethical end of the East is self-refinement ; of the West, social efficiency. But to the higher harmony of a soul that beholds in East and West the two wings of the same mansion of the Heavenly Father, may not the true ethical gospel lie in the self-realising fulfilment of the individual through social service, and the perfection of society through individual development ? It was through the co-ordination of individual and social interests that Raja Rammohun Roy employed the new spirit typified by him in furthering national progress in all directions. How he lived every day of his life for his country and for humanity : how he toiled and spent himself as under his great Master's eye : how he dedicated his talents and resources to the religious, moral, educational, social, political and economic needs of his nation :—aye, how his spirit went forth and his arm was stretched out in sorrowing sympathy or rejoicing fellowship, even beyond the concerns of India,—all that is for ever incorporated in the story of the race. Verily, Rammohun is the *Bhagirath* of the ever-expanding stream of modern Indian life.

Such was the spirit of Raja Rammohun Roy,—a comprehensive spirit of faith and freedom, of reverence and investigation, of simplicity and penetrativeness, of devotion and service, of enthusiasm and endurance. Into his soul poured in light and strength from all points of heaven : out of his heart went forth love and sympathy to all quarters of life. To his country he was the bridge between "her unmeasured past and her incalculable future". To the world at large he is the first arch,—the earliest Colossus,—that spanned the East and the West. The descendant of the Rishis, the disciple of Jesus, the ardent worshipper of the "One only without a second," the passionate devotee of freedom, the sorrowing friend of the bereaved, the dauntless champion of the oppressed, the merry companion of children, the sage counsellor of statesmen, he was even the prototype of the coming race, where man's soul shall be the mirrored miniature of the world.

Drawing his spiritual nurture from the great world-repositories of faith and hope, and realising in himself the abiding affinities of all revelations of God, his soul was one of the springs—the far-off sources—of that international spiritual federation, that distant divine event of universal humanity, to which the whole creation moves. If, according to Max Muller, the greatest discovery of even a century renowned for its revolutionising discoveries is that the original God-consciousness of the Hindu, Greek, Roman and Teuton was radically one, Rammohun Roy was an accredited pioneer of that sovereign discovery. Aye, he was likewise the herald that proclaimed that, philology apart, "Jove and Jehovah" are counterparts, supplementing aud fulfilling each other,—the God of consciousness and of conscience, of reason and of righteousness, being ultimately One. The Dream of Akbar was the Vision of Rammohun Roy. It was his epoch-making genius that sketched the plan and laid the foundation of that world-wide Temple that would be

"Neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,
But loftier, simpler; always open-doored
To every breath of heaven; and Truth and Peace
And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein."

—*(Messages and Ministrations. Vol. I.)*

TRIBUTES PAID TO THE MEMORY OF RAMMOHUN ROY AT THE

First Memorial Meeting in Calcutta

HELD ON 5th APRIL 1834.

Abridged from an Article by Mr. Manmatha Nath Ghosh, MA., F.S.S, F.R.E.S. in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, December 20, 1930.

The first meeting in honour of a distinguished Hindu citizen at the Town Hall of Calcutta was, we believe, the one held on the 5th April, 1834, to commemorate the talents and virtues of the illustrious Raja Rammohun Roy, and to determine the most suitable manner of perpetuating his memory. The chair was taken by Sir John Peter Grant (1774-1848), that most independent-minded Judge (afterwards Chief Justice) of the Supreme Court, Calcutta.

In explaining the object of the meeting, Sir John Grant regretted that owing to the little leisure left him by his duties as a Judge, he rarely had the advantage of taking part in the activities of the late Raja for the good of his country, but he hoped that those of his friends who had worked with him would assist in doing honour to the illustrious deceased, and would bring forward suitable resolutions.

The FIRST RESOLUTION, moved by Mr. James Pattle (1776-1845). Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, was the following :—

"*That it is the opinion of this meeting that the name of Rammohun Roy should be perpetuated, by whatever means will best indicate the high sense entertained of him by this meeting, as a philosopher and philanthropist, and of his increasing endeavours to improve the moral and intellectual condition of his countrymen and to advance and promote the general good of his country.*"

In moving the Resolution, Mr. Pattle remarked :—"He was a very great man. His fortitude and enlightened mind must call forth admiration in any part of the civilized world ; and no one, knowing his merits, can refuse him this tribute of praise. From the earliest dawn of his reason, he at once, by his intellectual light, discarded the prejudices of his birth, and would not allow himself to be dissuaded, either by the bigotry of the priesthood or the entreaties of his friends from seeking that illumination, which, they represented, would entail on him perdition in the next world, and render him an outcast from society in this. He rejected all their terrors, all the endearing persuasions of his parents, because his enlightened mind told him he had a great purpose to perform to remove the darkness from his benighted countrymen—to give them the light he had obtained—the moral and intellectual world he had discovered—to make them quit practices abominable to human nature, and such as his enlightened mind could only look on with abhorrence and disgust."

The Resolution was seconded by Babu Russick Krishna Mullick,* (1810-1858). Head Master of Mr. David Hare's School, and Editor of the *Jnananweshun*. In supporting the Resolution, Russick Krishna said :—"Rammohun Roy was a man of an extraordinary chararcter. His like we shall not see again. He arose amidst all the horrors of superstition to proclaim that India was capable of much better things than his countrymen themselves at that time imagined. The occasion which first led to Rammohun Roy's rejection of Hinduism was this. While he was young, an ascetic came to his father's house and begged his protection. His father complied with the ascetic's request, and recommended Rammohun to his care as a pupil. It was thus that Rammohun was first induced to study the *Vedas*. The perusal of the *Vedas* opened his mind, and induced him to reject superstition and to think of the future regeneration and improvement of his country. Along this line he proceeded further and further, till he accomplished many of those things which have made his name so famous. No doubt, most

* Russick Krishna was one of the prominent members of the *Academic Association* founded by Derozio. He was regarded by Ramtonoo Lahiry, the great Brahmo social reformer, as the wisest and most intelligent of the distinguished band of young men who surrounded Derozio. He afterwards became a Deputy Collector (1837), and died in 1858.

of my countrymen still object to Rammohun Roy on account of the pre-eminent part he took in the abolition of the *Suttee*. He was almost alone in the cause of humanity. He was not only the great man he is generally supposed to be, but also a good man, the friend of humanity and of his country, the saviour of the lives of many of his species.

A point which Rammohun Roy had peculiarly at heart was the education of his countrymen. In this matter his opinions were very correct and forcible. He maintained at his own expense a school where he had Hindoo boys taught. His works on theological subjects show that he was eager to impart that higher knowledge to others which he had found to be so beneficial to himself. Not being held in that respect in which he should have been held by his bigoted countrymen, he was prevented from doing all the good which he could otherwise have done. I allude to his not being allowed to join the Hindoo College, in which he might have been of the greatest service to his country. If he had been permitted, his benevolent mind might have suggested many measures which might have done still greater benefit to his country.

This, however, was not all that Rammohun Roy did. He did more. Before his time there was scarcely such a thing as Bengalee prose-writing. We owe its establishment to him, and he himself acquired in it a high degree of perfection. There is not a writer in the Bengalee language so polished as he was.

But he did more. He went to England, and to his going there we are in a great measure indebted for the best clauses in the new charter, bad and wretched as that charter is." (*Laughter*).

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

THE SECOND RESOLUTION, moved by Mr. Henry Meredith Parker (1795-1868), Member of the Board of Customs, Salt and Opium, (now merged in the Board of Revenue), and of the Marine Board, was the following :—

"*That subscriptions be opened to forward the object of this meeting in such a manner as may be determined by a majority of subscribers, they to vote by proxy or otherwise after six weeks' notice, which shall specify the place or places proposed.*"

The Resolution was seconded by Mr. Thos. E. M. Turton (1789-1854), Barrister-at-law and Registrar of the Supreme Court of Calcutta. He was one of the finest speakers of his day. He succeeded his brother as Baronet in 1884. In seconding the motion Mr. Turton observed that the death of Rammohun Roy was a great loss to the natives of India, as he was a mouthpiece to them to promote their interests. He recommended his example to them, and hoped that "since there was to be a Legislative Council, the natives of this country will not hesitate, when measures are likely to be adopted that may be disadvantageous to them, boldly to come forward and protest against them, as their patriotic country-

man Rammohun Roy did against the odious Press Regulation. They should not," he continued, "keep their complaints to themselves, for even in this much-abused charter (the deficiencies of which are attributable to the ministry's ignorance of the wants of the people of India) a desire may be traced to improve their condition and to promote their happiness. They who wish to benefit their country must not wait to see who will support them in their endeavours ; but boldly come forward, as Rammohun Roy did, and set an example rather than wait to follow one." After dwelling on the independent spirit of that "esteemed Native of this country," as exemplified in the bold opposition he had made to the Press Regulation during the administration of Mr. Adam, while others had not the courage to rise against it, Mr. Turton observed that if the public of Calcutta did not with one heart and soul come forward to honour and revere the memory of such a distinguished man, its character would be depreciated in the estimation of the world.

The Resolution was carried.

THE THIRD RESOLUTION, moved by Mr. James Sutherland (1794-1857), Editor of the *Bengal Hurkaru*, (and afterwards Principal of the Hooghly College), was the following :—

"*That certain gentlemen* (*of whom the following are at present in India*) *be constituted a Committee to collect subscriptions, and to call a meeting of the subscribers as soon as sufficient time shall have elapsed, for the receipt of contritions from all parts of India* : *Sir J. P. Grant ; T. E. M. Turton ; L. Clarke ; J. Sutherland* ; *G. J. Gordon ; W. H. Smoult ; Rustomjee Cowasjee* ; *Russick Krishna Mullick* ; *Biswanath Mutty Lall.*"

The Resolution was duly carried, and a sum of about six thousand rupees was collected at the meeting.*

It may seem strange to the present generation that the above Memorial Committee, which included six Europeans and one Parsee merchant, should contain only two Bengalee gentlemen. But it should be remembered that when Rammohun Roy died, ignorance and superstition reigned rampant in Bengal, and the *Dharma Sabha* of the orthodox Hindus, with its powerful weapon of excommunication from Hindu Society, was exercising its powers to the utmost.

The absence, however, from the Committee, of Dwarkanauth Tagore is very striking. It is indeed difficult to explain the circumstances in which Dwarkanauth abstained from taking a prominent part in the memorial meeting, and giving public expression to his sorrow and sense of loss at the untimely death of his great friend

* The list of subscribers and the amounts subscribed by each are given in Mr. Brajendra Nath Banerji's সংবাদপত্রে সেকালের কথা, Vol. 2, pp. 361—363.

and leader. But the fact that those who took active part in the meeting were all intimate personal friends of Dwarkanauth leads one to suspect that Dwarkanauth had a big hand in the organisation of the meeting, but perhaps his grief was too intense and personal for public utterance. His name was not in the Memorial Committee probably for the same reason as that for which the name of the Raja's son was not there.

It is not definitely known how the money collected by the Memorial Committee was disposed of. But the following three extracts from the *Bengal Spectator*, then edited by Ramgopal Ghose and Peary Chand Mitra, refer to the subject :—

(1) *July 1842.* (*Vol I, No. 5.*)—"Eight years have rolled away since this meeting was convened, and we are astonished to find that nothing has as yet been done for commemorating the memory of Rammohun Roy. If the Committee, with the sanction of the subscribers, were to devote the money (which we believe at one time amounted to Rs. 8,000) to the printing of all his writings, which are now not generally obtainable in a certain number of volumes of a convenient size, resolving that the balance of the fund and the proceeds of the intended publication should be placed at the disposal of a body of orientalists for the purpose of being appropriated to the cultivation of the Bengali language,—we know not of a more appropriate and suitable tribute that could be offered to the memory of that esteemed man."

(2) *16th July 1843.* (*Vol. II, No. 23.*)—"In July last we urged on the attention of the Committee that eight years had rolled away since their appointment, and that nothing had been done for the perpetuation of the memory of our most distinguished countryman, Raja Rammohun Roy. The Editors of the *Bengal Hurkaru*, the *Friend of India*, and the *Church of England Magazine* joined us in agitating the matter.

The more we reflect on his intellectual labours, his generous exertions for the enlightenment of the native mind and for the political amelioration of the country, the more we think it incumbent on his countrymen to adopt such means, as will hand down his name to posterity. Though his liberal views and the greatness of his mind were not appreciated here by the people at large, owing no doubt, to the ignorance of the age in which he flourished, he was looked upon with admiring respect and veneration in England, and is still remembered as the reformer of this land. Many eulogiums have been heaped upon the Raja, but the most valuable testimony to his great worth was from Jeremy Bentham, whose opinion of him in his own words was : 'Rammohun Roy has cast off thirty-five millions of gods, and has learnt from us to embrace reason in the all-important field of religion'. Bentham became so great an admirer of Rammohun Roy, that he addressed him as his "intensely admired and dearly beloved collaborator in the service of mankind."

(3) *24th August, 1843.*—"The remains of Rajah Rammohun Roy, who died at Stapleton Grove, near Bristol, the residence of M. H. Castle, Esq., several years since, and was buried in the grounds adjoining the house, have been removed to the cemetery at Arno's Vale, and interred in that portion appropriated to dissenters. A sum of money has been forwarded from India for the purpose of erecting a stately monument on the spot. It will be in the Hindu style of architecture, and upwards of thirty feet in height."

As we cannot trace the report of any public meeting held for raising *a separate fund for the erection of a monument* over the Rajah's tomb at Arno's Vale, it is to be presumed that the funds collected by the Memorial Committee were utilized in erecting the monument.

With regard to this monument, Miss Mary Carpenter wrote in her "Last days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy" (1866) :—"It was right that the public should have access to his grave, and should see a befitting monument erected over it. This could not be done at Stapleton Grove, which had now passed out of the Castle family. The Rajah's friend, the celebrated Dwarkanath Tagore, desired to pay this mark of respect to his memory, and it was therefore arranged that the case containing the coffin should be removed to the beautiful cemetery of Arno's Vale, near Bristol. This was suitably accomplished on the 29th of May, 1843, and a handsome monument was erected in the spring of the year following by his friend."

Miss Collet's version is apparently based on Miss Carpenter's statement quoted above :—"The grave in which he was laid was not, however, to be the final resting place. Ten years later, a new home was found for the earthly remains in the cemetery of Arno's Vale near Bristol. There the Rajah's great friend and comrade, Dwarkanath Tagore, who had come over from India on pious pilgrimage to the place where the Master died, erected a tomb of stone."

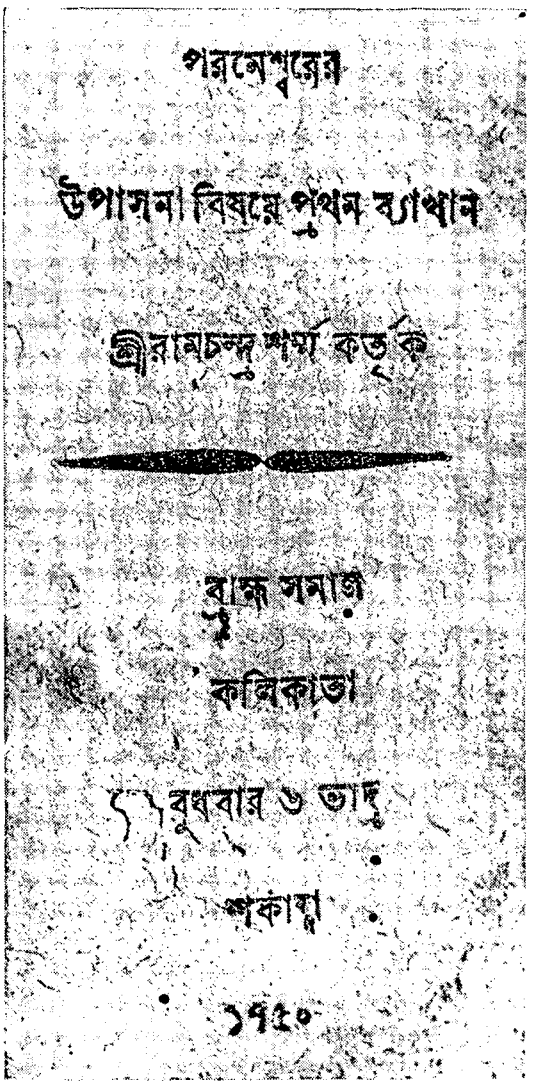
Both the above versions suggest that the monument was erected by Dwarkanauth at his own cost. But it seems to us more probable that although Dwarkanauth was entrusted with the work, and he had possibly to make up the deficiency, if any, the amount collected by the Memorial Committee formed the nucleus of the fund from which the cost of the monument was met.

We find that on the eve of the departure of Dwarkanauth for England for the first time in 1842, the *Friend of India* suggested that Dwarkanauth should be publicly delegated with the duty, and the matter was discussed by several speakers at the meeting held at the Town Hall of Calcutta on the 7th January, 1842 "for the purpose of offering some testimony of the esteem and regard of the community for Dwarkanath Tagore." In fact, Mr. Henry Piddington, Coroner of Calcutta, in the course of his address at the meeting, quoted the passage from the *Friend of India* containing the above suggestion.

FACSIMILE COPY OF

TITLE-PAGE OF THE FIRST SERMON

of the Brahmo Samaj, 20th August, 1828. (*Vide* Item No. 60 of the Catalogue of Exhibits, p. 37 of Part I.)



পরমেশ্বরের

উপাসনা বিষয়ে প্রথম ব্যাখ্যান

শ্রীরামচন্দ্র শর্ম্মা কর্ত্তৃক

ব্রাহ্ম সমাজ

কলিকাতা

বুধবার ৬ ভাদ্র

শকাব্দা

১৭৫০



Tara Chand Chakravarty (1804—1855). First Secretary of the Brahmo Samaj. (*Vide* p. 127 of Part II)



Prosunno Coomar Tagore (1801—1868). Friend and follower of Rammohun. (*Vide* p. 125 of Part II.)



Dwarkanauth Tagore (1794—1846). Friend and follower of Rammohun. (*Vide* p. 124 of Part II.)



Sir Raja Radha Kanta Deb (1784—1867). Compiler of the *Sabda-kalpa-druma* (Bengali lexicon.) Leader of the orthodox party among Hindus.



Dr. Alexander Duff (1806—1878). One of the pioneers of English education in Bengal, whose institution has now developed into the Scottish Church College.



David Hare (1775—1842). Rammohun's friend and collaborator in the introduction of English education in Bengal.



Dr. Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) of the Baptist Mission, Serampore. Editor of the *Friend of India ;* engaged in controversy with Rammohun about his *Precepts of Jesus.*

PART II

SECTION C

ADDRESSES, PAPERS, MESSAGES, ETC.

delivered or read at the Centenary Celebrations.

ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

CONTENTS OF PART II, SEC. C.

1. Addresses, Papers, Messages, etc., relating to the Celebrations in December 1933 by the Centenary Committee. [1—95]

[1, Tagore's Opening Prayer. 2—49, Addresses and Papers, Convention of Religions and the Conferences. 50, 51, Addresses at the Opening Ceremony of the Exhibition. 52, General Secretary's Report. 53—86, Messages received by the Centenary Committee. 87—95, Hymns sung at the Convention and the Conferences.]

2. Addresses and Papers relating to the Celebration in December 1933 by the Students of Calcutta. [96—99]

3. Addresses and Papers relating to Celebrations in the Provinces and States of India, Burma and Ceylon. [100—118]

4. Sermons delivered at Commemoration Services. [119—122]

5. Articles on Rammohun Roy that appeared in Periodicals in 1933.

(C) ADDRESSES, PAPERS, MESSAGES, ETC.

1. ADDRESSES, PAPERS, MESSAGES, ETC., RELATING TO THE CELEBRATIONS IN DECEMBER 1933 BY THE CENTENARY COMMITTEE

1

Opening Prayer

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high ;

Where knowledge is free ;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls ;

Where words come out from the depth of truth ;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection ;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit ;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action,—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

— Gitanjali (English), Song No. 35

2

RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S

Presidential Address

on

ভারত-পথিক রামমোহন রায়

(Rammohun, a traveller on India's Path)

ইতিহাসে দেখি অনেক বড়ো বড়ো প্রাচীন সভ্যতা দেশের নদীর সঙ্গে নাড়ীর যোগে প্রাণবান্। নদী দেশকে দেয় জল, দেয় ফল; কিন্তু সব চেয়ে বড়ো তার দান, দেশকে সে দেয় গতি। দূরের সঙ্গে বাহিরের সঙ্গে সম্বন্ধ শাখায়িত করে নদী, স্থাবরের মর্ম্মের মধ্যে নিয়ে আসে প্রাণের চলৎ প্রবাহ।

নদীমাতৃক দেশে নদী যদি একেবারে শুকিয়ে যায় তা হোলে তার মাটিতে ঘটে কৃপণতা, তার অন্ন উৎপাদনের শক্তি হয় ক্ষীণ। দেশের আপন জীবিকা যদি বা কোনোমতে চলে, কিন্তু যে অন্ন-প্রাচুর্য্যের দ্বারা বাহিরের বৃহৎ জগতের সঙ্গে তার যোগ, সেটা যায় দরিদ্র হয়ে। সে না পারে দিতে, না পারে নিতে। নিজের মধ্যে সে থাকে রুদ্ধ হয়ে, বিভক্ত হয় তার ঐক্যধারা, তার আত্মীয়-মিলনের পথ হয় দুর্গম। বাহিরের সঙ্গে সে হয় পৃথক্, অন্তরের মধ্যে সে হয় খণ্ডিত।

যেমন বিশেষ দেশ নদীমাতৃক, তেমনি বিশেষ জনচিত্ত আছে যাকে নদীমাতৃক বলা চলে। সে চিত্তের এমন নিত্যপ্রবাহিত মননধারা, যার যোগে বাহিরকে সে আপনার মধ্যে টেনে আনে, নিজের মধ্যেকার ভেদ-বিভেদ তার ভেসে যায়; যে প্রবাহ চিন্তার ক্ষেত্রকে নব নব সফলতায় পরিপূর্ণ করে, নিরন্তর অন্ন যোগায় সকল দেশকে সকল কালকে।

একদা সেই চিত্ত ছিল ভারতের; তার ছিল বহমান মননধারা। সে বল্‌তে পেরেছিল, আয়ন্তু সর্ব্বতঃ স্বাহা, সকলে আসুক সকল দেশ থেকে; শৃণন্তু বিশ্বে, শুনুক বিশ্বের লোক। বলেছিল, বেদাহম্, আমি জানি; এমন কিছু জানি যা বিশ্বের সকলকে আমন্ত্রণ ক'রে জানাবার। যে তারা জ্যোতির্হীন তাকে নিখিল নক্ষত্রলোক স্বীকার করে না। প্রাচীন ভারত নিত্যকালের মধ্যে আপন পরিচয়কে দীপ্যমান করেছে, বিশ্বলোকে সে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে প্রভূত দাক্ষিণ্যে আপনাকে দান করার দ্বারা। সেদিন সে ছিল না অকিঞ্চন-রূপে অকিঞ্চিৎকর।

শত শত বৎসর চ'লে গেল, ইতিহাসের পুরোগামিনী গতি হোলো নিস্তব্ধ, ভারতবর্ষের মনোলোকে চিন্তার মহানদী গেল শুকিয়ে। তখন দেশ হয়ে পড়্‌ল স্থবির, আপনার মধ্যে আপনি সঙ্কীর্ণ; তার সজীব চিত্তের তেজ আর

বিকীর্ণ হয় না দূরদূরান্তরে। শুক্‌নো নদীতে যখন জল চলে না, তখন তলাকার অচল পাথরগুলো পথ আগ্‌লে বসে। তারা অসংলগ্ন, তারা অর্থহীন, পথিকদের তারা বিঘ্ন। তেমনি দুর্দ্দিন যখন এল এই দেশে, তখন জ্ঞানের চলমান গতি হোলো অবরুদ্ধ, নির্জ্জীব হোলো নবনবোন্মেষশালিনী বুদ্ধি, উদ্ধত হ'য়ে দেখা দিল নিশ্চল আচারপুঞ্জ, আনুষ্ঠানিক নিরর্থকতা, মননহীন লোকব্যবহারের অভ্যস্ত পুনরাবৃত্তি। সর্ব্বজনের প্রশস্ত রাজপথকে তারা বাধাগ্রস্ত কর্‌লে; খণ্ড খণ্ড সঙ্কীর্ণ সীমানার বাহিরে বিচ্ছিন্ন কর্‌লে মানুষের সঙ্গে মানুষের সম্বন্ধকে।

ঘুমের অবস্থায় মনের জান্‌লা যখন সব বন্ধ হ'য়ে যায়, মন হয় বন্দী। তখন যে সব স্বপ্ন নিয়ে সে খেলা করে, বিশ্বসত্যের সঙ্গে তাদের যোগ নেই। কেবলমাত্র সেই সুপ্ত মনের নিজের উপরেই তাদের প্রভাব এক কেন্দ্রে আবর্ত্তিত, তা তারা যতই অদ্ভুত হোক্, অসঙ্গত হোক্, উৎকট হোক্। বাহিরের বাস্তব রাজ্য থেকে এই স্বপ্নরাজ্যে আর কারো প্রবেশের পথ নেই। এ'কে বিদ্রূপ করা যায়, কিন্তু বিচার করা যায় না; কেন না এ থাকে সকল যুক্তির বাহিরে।

তেমনি ছিল অর্থহারা আচারের স্বপ্নজালে জড়িত ভারতবর্ষ, তার আলো এসেছিল নিবে। তার আপনার কাছে আপন সত্য পরিচয় ছিল আচ্ছন্ন। এমন সময় রামমোহন রায়ের আবির্ভাব হোলো সেই দেশে, সেই আত্মবিস্মৃত প্রদোষের অন্ধকারে। সেদিন তার ইতিহাস অগৌরবের কালিমায় আবৃত। ভারত আপন বাণী তখন হারিয়েছে, নিখিল পৃথিবীর এই নূতন কালের জন্যে তার কোনো বার্ত্তা নেই, ঘরের কোণে বসে সে মৃতযুগের মন্ত্র জপ কর্‌চে।

যখন সে আপন দুর্ব্বলতায় অভিভূত, সেই অপমানের দিনে বাহিরের লোক এল তার দ্বারে। আপন সম্মান রক্ষা ক'রে তাকে অভ্যর্থনা কর্‌বে এমন আয়োজন ছিল না; অতিথিরূপে তাকে গৃহস্বামী ডাক্‌তে পারে নি, দ্বার ভেঙে দস্যুরূপে সে প্রবেশ কর্‌লে তার স্বর্ণভাণ্ডারে।

ভারতের চিত্ত সেদিন মনের অন্ন নূতন ক'রে উৎপাদন কর্‌তে পার্‌চিল না; তার ক্ষেত ভরা ছিল আগাছার জঙ্গলে। সেই অজন্মার দিনে রামমোহন রায় জন্মেছিলেন সত্যের ক্ষুধা নিয়ে। ইতিহাসের প্রাণহীন আবর্জ্জনায়, বাহ্য বিধির কৃত্রিমতায়, কিছুতে তাঁকে তৃপ্ত কর্‌তে পার্‌লে না। কোথা থেকে তিনি নিয়ে এলেন সেই জ্ঞানের আগ্রহে স্বভাবত উৎসুক মন, যা সম্প্রদায়ের বিচিত্র বেড়া ভেঙে বেরোলো, চারিদিকের মানুষ যা নিয়ে ভুল আছে তাতে যার বিতৃষ্ণা হোলো। সে চাইল মোহমুক্ত বুদ্ধির সেই অবারিত আশ্রয়, যেখানে সকল মানুষের মিলনতীর্থ।

এই বেড়াভাঙার সাধনাই যথার্থ ভারতবর্ষের মিলনতীর্থকে উদ্‌ঘাটিত করা। এই জন্যেই এ সাধনা বিশেষ ভাবে ভারতবর্ষের, যেহেতু এর বিরুদ্ধতাই ভারতে এত প্রভূত এত প্রবল। ইংলণ্ড ক্ষুদ্র দ্বীপের সীমায় বদ্ধ,

সেই জন্যেই তার সাধনা গেছে দ্বৈপায়নতার বিপরীত দিকে; বিশ্বে সে আপনাকে সুদূরে বিস্তার করেছে। দেশের বিশেষ অবস্থার মধ্যেই দেশের অঞ্জলি পাতা রয়েছে, সেই অঞ্জলির অর্থ এই যে, তার শূন্যতাকে পূর্ণ করতে হবে।

প্রত্যেক জাতির মধ্যে আছে তার নিহিতার্থ, তার বিশেষ সমস্যা, সেই অর্থ তাকে পূরণ করতে হয় নিরন্তর প্রয়াসে। এই প্রয়াসের দ্বারাই তার চরিত্র সৃষ্টি হয়, তার উদ্ভাবনীশক্তি বললাভ করে। মানুষকে তার মনুষ্যত্ব প্রতি ক্ষণে জয় ক'রে নিতে হয়। প্রত্যেক জাতির ইতিহাস আপন জয়যাত্রার ইতিহাস। কঠিন বাধা দূর করবার পথেই তার স্বাস্থ্য, তার সম্পদ্। এই জন্যেই বলেছে, বীরভোগ্যা বসুন্ধরা। দুর্গমকে সুগম করতে এসেছে মানুষ, দুর্লভকে উপলব্ধ। বিশেষ জাতিকে যে বিশেষ সমস্যা দিয়েছেন বিধাতা, তার সত্য উত্তর দিতে থাকার মধ্যেই তার পরিত্রাণ। যারা সমাধান করতে ভুল করেছে তারা মরেছে। আর দুর্গতিগ্রস্ত হয়েছে তারাই, যারা মনে করেছে তাদের সমাধান করবার কিছুই নেই, সমস্ত সমাধা হয়ে গেছে। যতক্ষণ মানুষের প্রাণ আছে ততক্ষণই তার সমস্যা; অবিরত সমস্যার উত্তর দিতে থাকাই প্রাণনক্রিয়া। চারিদিকে জড়ের জটিল বাধা নিত্যই; সেই বাধা নিত্যই ভেদ করার দ্বারা প্রাণ আপনাকে সপ্রমাণ করে। ইতিহাসে যে জটা পাকিয়ে থাকে, সেই গ্রন্থিকেই সনাতন ব'লে ভক্তি করলে সেটা মরণের ফাঁস হ'য়ে ওঠে।

মানব-ইতিহাসের প্রধান সমস্যাটা কোথায়? - যেখানে কোনো অন্ধতায় কোনো মূঢ়তায় মানুষে মানুষে বিচ্ছেদ ঘটায়। মানবসমাজের সর্ব্বপ্রধান তত্ত্ব মানুষের ঐক্য। সভ্যতার অর্থই হচ্চে মানুষের একত্র হবার অনুশীলন। এই ঐক্য-তত্ত্বের উপলব্ধি যেখানেই দুর্ব্বল, সেখানে সেই দুর্ব্বলতা নানা ব্যাধির আকার ধ'রে দেশকে চারিদিক থেকে আক্রমণ করে।

ভারতবর্ষে তার সমস্যা সুস্পষ্ট। এখানে নানা জাতের লোক একত্রে এসে জুটেছে। পৃথিবীতে অন্য কোন দেশে এমন ঘটে নি। যারা একত্র হয়েছে তাদের এক করতেই হবে, এই হোলো ভারতবর্ষের সর্ব্বপ্রথম সমস্যা। এক করতে হবে বাহ্যিক ব্যবস্থায় নয়, আন্তরিক আত্মীয়তায়। ইতিহাস মাত্রেরই সর্ব্বপ্রধান মন্ত্র হচ্চে, সং গচ্ছধ্বং সং বদধ্বং সং বো মনাংসি জানতাম্,—এক হ'য়ে চল্‌ব, এক হ'য়ে বল্‌ব, সকলের মনকে এক ব'লে জান্‌ব। এই মন্ত্রের সাধনা ভারতবর্ষে যেমন অত্যন্ত দুরূহ, এমন আর কোনো দেশেই নয়। যতই দুরূহ হোক, এই সাধনায় সিদ্ধিলাভ ছাড়া রক্ষা পাবার অন্য কোনো পথ নেই।

অন্য কোনো দেশের শ্রীবৃদ্ধি দেখে যখন আমরা মুগ্ধ হই, তখন অনেক সময়ে আমরা তার সিদ্ধির পরিণত রূপটার দিকেই লুব্ধ দৃষ্টিপাত করি; তার সাধনার দুর্গম পথটা আমাদের চোখে পড়ে না। দেখ্‌তে পাওয়া গেল স্বাধীন দেশের রাষ্ট্রব্যবস্থা; মনে করি, ঐ ব্যবস্থার একটা অনুরূপ প্রতিমা

খাড়া কর্‌তে পার্‌লেই আমাদের উদ্ধার। ভুলে যাই, রাষ্ট্রব্যবস্থাটা দেহমাত্র ; সেই দেহ নিরর্থক, যদি তার প্রাণ না থাকে। সেই প্রাণই জাতিগত ঐক্য। অন্য দেশে সেই ঐক্যেরই আন্তরিক শক্তিতে রাষ্ট্রব্যবস্থা গ'ড়ে উঠেছে। সে-সব দেশেও সেই ঐক্যে যেখানে যে পরিমাণে বিকার ঘটে, সেখানে সেই পরিমাণেই সমস্যা কঠিন হ'য়ে ওঠে। আমাদের দেশে জাতিতে জাতিতে পার্থক্য, পশ্চিম মহাদেশে শ্রেণীতে শ্রেণীতে। সেই শ্রেণীগত পার্থক্যের মধ্যে আন্তরিক সামঞ্জস্য যদি না ঘটে, তা হোলে বাহ্য ব্যবস্থায় বিপদ নিবারণ হবে না।

আমরা যদি কোনো ক্ষেত্রে দেখ্‌তে পাই প্রচুর ফসল, তা হোলে গোড়াতেই একথা মনে রাখ্‌তে হবে, এ ফসল বালিতে উৎপন্ন হয়নি, হয়েছে মাটিতে। মরুভূমিতে দেখা যায়, উদ্ভিদ্ দূরে দূরে বিশ্লিষ্ট, তারা কাঁটার দ্বারা নিজেকে অত্যন্ত স্বতন্ত্র ক'রে রক্ষা করেছে। তাদের জননী ধরণী এক রসের দাক্ষিণ্যে সকলকে পরিপোষণ করেনি, তাদের পরস্পরের মধ্যে প্রাণের ঐক্যে কার্পণ্য। এর প্রধান কারণ হচ্ছে, মাটির কণায় কণায় বন্ধন আছে, বালির কণায় কণায় বিচ্ছেদ। আমরা যখন সমৃদ্ধিবান্ জাতির ইতিহাস চর্চ্চা করি, তখন ভরা ফসলের দিকে চোখ পড়ে, এবং কৃষি-প্রণালীর বিবরণও যত্ন ক'রে মুখস্থ ক'রে পরীক্ষা পাস ক'রে থাকি। কেবল একটা কথা মনে রাখিনে ; এই ফসলের ঐশ্বর্য্য সম্পূর্ণ অসম্ভব যদি তার ভূমিকাতেই থাকে বিচ্ছিন্নতা। কৃষির যন্ত্রকেও আমরা দাবী করি, ফসলেরও প্রত্যাশা ক'রে থাকি ; কিন্তু আমাদের ভূমির প্রকৃতিতেই যে বিচ্ছেদ তাকে চোখ বুজে আমরা নগণ্য ব'লেই জ্ঞান করি, এবং ধর্ম্মের নামে তাকে নিত্যরূপে রক্ষা কর্‌বার চেষ্টায় সতর্ক হ'য়ে থাকি। আমরা ইতিহাসের উপরকার মলাটটা পড়ি, ভিতরকার পাতাগুলো বাদ দিয়ে যাই। ভুলে যাই, কোনো দেশেই সমাজগত বিশ্লিষ্টতার উপর রাষ্ট্রজাতিগত স্বাতন্ত্র্য আজ পর্য্যন্ত সংঘটিত ও সংরক্ষিত হয়নি। প্রজারা যেখানে বিভক্ত, সেখানে ব্যক্তি-বিশেষের একাধিপত্য তাদের বাহিরের বন্ধনে বেঁধে রাখে। তাও বেশি দিন টেঁকে না, কেবলি হাত বদল হোতে থাকে। যেখানে মানুষে মানুষে বিচ্ছেদ, সেখানে কেবল রাষ্ট্রশক্তি নয়, বুদ্ধিবৃত্তিও শিথিল হ'য়ে যায়। সেখানে মাঝে মাঝে প্রতিভাশালীর অভ্যুদয় হয় না, তা নয় ; কিন্তু সেই প্রতিভার দান ধারণ ও পোষণ কর্‌বার উপযুক্ত আধার সর্ব্বসাধারণের মধ্যে না থাকাতে, কেবলি তা বিকৃত ও বিলুপ্ত হোতে থাকে। ঐক্যের অভাবে মানুষ বর্ব্বর হয়, ঐক্যের শৈথিল্যে মানুষ ব্যর্থ হয় ; তার কারণ, সমবায় ধর্ম্ম মানুষের সত্য ধর্ম্ম, তার শ্রেষ্ঠতার হেতু।

ঐক্যবোধের উপদেশ উপনিষদে যেমন একান্ত ভাবে ব্যাখ্যাত হয়েছে, এমন কোনো দেশে কোনো শাস্ত্রে হয়নি। ভারতবর্ষেই বলা হয়েছে, বিদ্বান্ ইতি সর্ব্বান্তরস্থ-স্বসংবিদ্‌রূপবিদ্ বিদ্বান্,—নিজেরই চৈতন্যকে সর্ব্বজনের অন্তরস্থ ক'রে যিনি জানেন তিনিই বিদ্বান্। অথচ এই ভারতবর্ষেই অসংখ্য

কৃত্রিম অর্থহীন বিধিবিধানের দ্বারা পরস্পরকে যেমন অত্যন্ত পৃথক ক'রে জানা হয়, পৃথিবীতে এমন আর কোনো দেশেই নেই। সুতরাং একথা বল্‌তে হবে, ভারতবর্ষে এমন একটা বাহ্য স্থূলতা র'য়ে গেছে, যা ভারতবর্ষের অন্তরতর সত্যের বিরুদ্ধ, যার মর্ম্মান্তিক আঘাত দীর্ঘকাল ধ'রে ভারতের ইতিহাসে প্রকাশ পাচ্চে নানা দুঃখে দারিদ্র্যে অপমানে।

এই দ্বন্দ্বের মাঝখানে ভারতবর্ষের শাশ্বত বাণীকে জয়যুক্ত কর্‌তে কালে কালে যে মহাপুরুষেরা এসেছেন, বর্ত্তমান যুগে রামমোহন রায় তাঁদেরই অগ্রণী। এর আগেও নিবিড়তম অন্ধকারের মধ্যে মাঝে মাঝে শোনা গিয়েছে ঐক্য-বাণী। মধ্য যুগে অচল সংস্কারের পিঞ্জর-দ্বার খুলে বেরিয়ে পড়েছেন প্রত্যূষের অতন্দ্রিত পাখী; গেয়েছেন তাঁরা আলোকের অভিবন্দন গান সামাজিক জড়ত্বপুঞ্জের ঊর্দ্ধ আকাশে। তাঁরা সেই মুক্ত প্রাণের বার্ত্তা এনেছেন, উপনিষদ্ যাকে সম্বোধন ক'রে বলেছেন, ব্রাত্য স্বং প্রাণ, হে প্রাণ, তুমি ব্রাত্য, তুমি সংস্কারে বিজড়িত স্থাবর নও। সেই মুক্তিদূতের মধ্যে একজন ছিলেন কবীর, তিনি নিজেকে ভারত-পথিক ব'লে জানিয়েছেন। নানা জটিল জঙ্গলের মধ্যে এই ভারত-পথকে যাঁরা সেদিন দেখ্‌তে পেয়েছিলেন, তাঁদের মধ্যে আর একজন ছিলেন দাদূ। তিনি বলেন,—

ভাই রে ঐসা পংথ হমারা,
দ্বৈ পখরহিত পংথ গহি পূরা অবরণ এক অধারা,

ভাই রে, আমার পথ এই রকম, সে দুই পক্ষ রহিত, বর্ণহীন, সে এক।

তিনি বলেছেন,—

জাকৌ মারণ জাইয়ে সোঈ ফিরি মারৈ,
জাকৌ তারণ জাইয়ে সোঈ ফিরি তারৈ,

যাকে আমরা মারি, সেই আমাদের ফিরে মারে, যাকে ত্রাণ করি, সেই আমাদের ফিরে ত্রাণ করে।

তিনি বলেছেন,—সব ঘট একৈ আত্মা, ক্যা হিন্দূ মুসলমান।

সেদিন আরেক সাধু, ভারতের পথ যাঁর কাছে ছিল সুগোচর, তাঁর নাম রজ্জব, তিনি বলেন,—

বুংদ বুংদ মিলি রস সিংধ হৈ, জুদা জুদা মরু ভায়,

অর্থাৎ বিন্দুর সঙ্গে বিন্দু যখন মেলে, তখনি হয় রসসিন্ধু, বিন্দুতে বিন্দুতে যখন পৃথক হ'য়ে যায়, তখনি মরুভূমি প্রকাশ পায়। এই রজ্জব বলেন,—

হাথ জোড়ূঁ গুরু স্যুঁ হৌ মিলৈ হিন্দূ মুসলমান,

গুরুর কাছে আমি করজোড় করুচি, যেন হিন্দু মুসলমান মিলে যায়।

এই ভারত-পথিকেরা যে মিলনের কথা বলেছিলেন, সে মিলন মনুষ্যত্বের সাধনায়, ভেদবুদ্ধির অহঙ্কার থেকে মুক্তিলাভের সাধনায়; রাষ্ট্রীয় প্রয়োজন সাধনায় নয়। এই ঐক্যের পথ যথার্থ ভারতের পথ। সেই পথের পথিক আধুনিক কালে রামমোহন রায়। তিনিও প্রয়োজনের দিক থেকে নয়, মানবাত্মার গভীরে যে মিলনের ধর্ম্ম আছে সেই নিত্য আদর্শের দিক থেকে

ভারতের ইতিহাসে শুভ বুদ্ধির দ্বারা সংযুক্ত মানুষের এক মহদ্রূপ অন্তরে দেখেছিলেন। ভারতের উদার প্রশস্ত পন্থায় তিনি সকলকেই আহ্বান করেছেন, যে পন্থায় হিন্দু মুসলমান খৃষ্টান সকলেই অবিরোধে মিল্‌তে পারে। সেই বিপুল পন্থাই যদি ভারতের না হয়, যদি আচারের কাঁটার বেড়ায় বেষ্টিত সাম্প্রদায়িক শতখণ্ডতাই হয় ভারতের নিত্য প্রকৃতিগত, তা হোলে তো আমাদের বাঁচবার কোনো উপায় নেই। ঐ তো এসেছে মুসলমান, ঐ তো এসেছে খৃষ্টান,—

সাধন মাহিঁ জোগ নহিঁ জৈ, ক্যা সাধন পরমাণ ?

ঐতিহাসিক সাধনায় এদের যদি যুক্ত কর্‌তে না পারি, তা হোলে সাধনার প্রমাণ হবে কিসে ? এদের অঙ্গীভূত ক'রে নেবার প্রাণশক্তি যদি ভারতের না থাকে, পাথরের মতো কঠিন পিণ্ডীভূত হ'য়ে এদের বাহিরে ঠেকিয়ে রাখাই যদি আমাদের ধর্ম্ম হয়, তবে সেই পুঞ্জ পুঞ্জ অসংশ্লিষ্ট অনাত্মীয়তার নিদারুণ ভার সইবে কে ? প্রতিদিন কি এরা স্খলিত হ'য়ে পড়্‌চে না দলে দলে ? সমাজের নীচের স্তরে কি গর্ত্ত প্রসারিত হচ্চে না ? আপনার লোক যখন পর হ'য়ে যায়, তখন সে যে নিদারুণ হ'য়ে ওঠে, তার কি প্রমাণ পাচ্চিনে ? যাদের অবজ্ঞা করি, তাদের আল্‌গা ক'রে রাখি ; যাদের ছুঁইনে, তাদের ধর্‌তে পারিনে। আপনাকে পর কর্‌বার যে সহস্র পথ প্রশস্ত ক'রে রেখেছি, সেই পথ দিয়েই শনির যত চর দেশে প্রবেশ কর্‌চে। আমাদের বিপুল জন-তরণীর তক্তাগুলিকে সাবধানে ফাঁক ফাঁক ক'রে রাখাকেই যদি ভারতের চিরকালীন ধর্ম্ম ব'লে গণ্য করি, তা হোলে বাহিরের তরঙ্গগুলোকে শত্রু ঘোষণা ক'রে কেন মিছে বিলাপ করি ? তা হোলে বিনাশের লবণাম্বু-সমুদ্রে তলিয়ে যাওয়াকেই ভারত-ইতিহাসের চরম লক্ষ্য ব'লে নিশ্চেষ্ট থাকাই শ্রেয়। সেচনী দিয়ে ক্রমাগত জল সেঁচে সেঁচে কতদিন চল্‌বে আমাদের জীর্ণ ভাগ্যের তরী বাওয়া ?

আমাদের ইতিহাসের আধুনিক পর্ব্বের আরম্ভ কালেই এসেছেন রামমোহন। তখন এ যুগকে কি বিদেশী কি স্বদেশী কেউ স্পষ্ট ক'রে চিন্‌তে পারেনি। তিনিই সেদিন বুঝেছিলেন, এ যুগের যে আহ্বান সে সুমহৎ ঐক্যের আহ্বান। তিনি জ্ঞানের আলোকে প্রদীপ্ত আপন উদার হৃদয় বিস্তার ক'রে দেখিয়েছিলেন, সেখানে হিন্দু মুসলমান খৃষ্টান কারো স্থানসঙ্কীর্ণতা নেই। তাঁর সেই হৃদয় ভারতেরই হৃদয় ; তিনি ভারতের সত্য পরিচয় আপনার মধ্যে প্রকাশ করেছেন। ভারতের সত্য পরিচয় সেই মানুষে যে মানুষের মধ্যে সকল মানুষের সম্মান আছে, স্বীকৃতি আছে।

সকল দেশেরই মধ্যে একটা বিরুদ্ধতার দ্বন্দ্ব দেখা যায়। এক ভাগে তার আপন শ্রেষ্ঠতাকে আপনি প্রতিবাদ, তার অন্ধতা অহমিকা দ্বারাই তার আত্মলাঘব। এই দিকটা অভাবার্থক, এই দিকে তার ক্ষতির বিভাগ, তার কৃষ্ণ-পক্ষের অংশ। আর এক দিকে তার আলোক, তার নিহিতার্থ, তার

চিরসত্য। এই দিকটাই ভাবার্থক, প্রকাশাত্মক। এই দিকে তার পরিচয় যদি ম্লান না হয়, নিঃশেষিত না হয়, তবেই সর্ব্বকালে সে গৌরবান্বিত।

য়ুরোপের সকল দেশই একদিন ডাইনির অস্তিত্ব বিশ্বাস করত। শত শত স্ত্রীলোক সেখানে নিরপরাধে পুড়ে মরেছে। কিন্তু এই অন্ধতার দিকটাই আন্তরিক ভাবে য়ুরোপের একান্ত ছিল না। তাই লোকগণনায় এই বিশ্বাসের প্রসার পরিমাণ ক'রে এর দ্বারা য়ুরোপকে চিন্‌তে গেলে অবিচার হবে। এক দিন য়ুরোপের ধর্ম্ম-মূঢ় বুদ্ধি জিয়োর্ডানো ব্রূনোকে পুড়িয়ে মেরেছিল; কিন্তু সেদিন চিতায় জ্বল্‌তে জ্বল্‌তে একলা জিয়োর্ডানো দিয়েছিলেন য়ুরোপীয় চিত্তের পরিচয়, যে চিত্তকে সে যুগের সাম্প্রদায়িক জড়বুদ্ধি দল বেঁধে অস্বীকার করেছিল, কিন্তু যাকে আজ সর্ব্বমানব সম্মানের সঙ্গে স্বীকার ক'রে নিয়েছে। একদিন ইংরেজের সাহিত্যে, তার ইতিহাসে, ইংরেজের পরিচয় আমরা পেয়েছিলুম; দেখেছিলুম মানুষের প্রতি তার মৈত্রী, দাস প্রথার পরে তার ঘৃণা, পরাধীনের মুক্তির জন্যে তার অনুকম্পা, ন্যায় বিচারের প্রতি তার নিষ্ঠা। আজ যদি ভারতের রাষ্ট্রাসন জুড়ে তার এই স্বভাবের নিষ্ঠুর প্রতিবাদ অজস্র দেখ্‌তে পাই, তবু তার থেকে ইংরেজের চরম পরিচয় গ্রহণ করা সত্য হবে না। যে কারণেই হোক, তার অভাবার্থক দিকটা প্রবল হ'য়ে উঠেছে; এ সমস্ত তারি দুর্লক্ষণ। আজও ইংলণ্ডে এমন মানুষ আছে, ইংরেজ-স্বভাবের বিরুদ্ধগামী সমস্ত অন্যায় যাদের হৃদয়কে পীড়িত করুচে। বস্তুতঃ সব ইংরেজই যে ইংরেজ, একথাটা মনে করাই ল। খাঁটি ইংরেজের সংখ্যা স্বল্প যদি বা হয়, আর নিজের সমাজে তারা যদি বা লাঞ্ছনা ভোগ করে, তবুও তারা সমস্ত ইংরেজেরই প্রতিনিধি।

তেমনি একদা যেদিন বাংলাদেশে প্রগাঢ় অন্ধতা, কৃত্রিমতা ও সাম্প্রদায়িক সঙ্কীর্ণতার মধ্যে রামমোহন রায়ের আগমন হোলো, সেদিন এই বিমুখ দেশে তিনিই একলা ভারতের নিত্য পরিচয় বহন ক'রে এসেছেন। তাঁর সর্ব্বতোমুখী বুদ্ধি ও সর্ব্বতঃ-প্রসারিত হৃদয় সেদিনকার এই বাংলাদেশের অখ্যাত কোণে দাঁড়িয়ে সকল মানুষের জন্যে আসন পেতে দিয়েছিল। একথা মুক্তকণ্ঠে বল্‌বার দিন এসেছে যে, যে-আতিথ্যভ্রষ্ট আসন কৃপণ ঘরের রুদ্ধ কোণের জন্যে, সে আসন নয়,—যে-আসনে সর্ব্বজন অবাধে স্থান পেতে পারে সেই উদার আসন, চিরন্তন ভারতবর্ষের স্ব-রচিত। লক্ষ লক্ষ আচারবাদী তাকে যদি সঙ্কুচিত করে, খণ্ড খণ্ড করে, সমস্ত পৃথিবীর কাছে স্বদেশকে ধিক্কৃত ক'রে ভারত-সভ্যতার প্রতিবাদ করে, তবু বল্‌ব একথা সত্য। মানুষের পরম ঐক্যের বার্ত্তা রামমোহন রায় একদিন ভারতের বাণীতেই ঘোষণা করেছিলেন, এবং তাঁর দেশবাসী তাঁকে তিরস্কৃত করেছিল। তিনি সকল প্রতিকূলতার মধ্যে দাঁড়িয়ে আমন্ত্রণ করেছিলেন মুসলমানকে, খৃষ্টানকে, ভারতের সর্ব্বজনকে, হিন্দুর এক পংক্তিতে ভারতের মহা অতিথিশালায়,—যে ভারত বলেছে

যস্তু সর্ব্বাণি ভূতানি আত্মন্যেবানুপশ্যতি
সর্ব্বভূতেষু চাত্মানং, ততো ন বিজুগুপ্সতে,

যিনি সকলের মধ্যে আপনাকে, আপনার মধ্যে সকলকে দেখেন, তিনি কাউকে ঘৃণা করেন না।

তাঁর মৃত্যুর পরে আজ এক শত বৎসর অতীত হোলো। সেদিনকার অনেক কিছুই আজ পুরাতন হ'য়ে গেছে। কিন্তু রামমোহন রায় পুরাতত্ত্বের অস্পষ্টতায় আবৃত হয়ে যাননি। তিনি চিরকালের মতোই আধুনিক। কেননা তিনি যে-কালকে অধিকার ক'রে আছেন, তার এক সীমা পুরাতন ভারতে; কিন্তু সেই অতীত কালেই তা আবদ্ধ হ'য়ে নেই। তার অন্য দিক চ'লে গিয়েছে ভারতের সুদূর ভাবীকালের অভিমুখে। তিনি ভারতের সেই চিত্তের মধ্যে নিজের চিত্তকে মুক্তি দিতে পেরেছেন, যা জ্ঞানের পথে সর্ব্বমানবের মধ্যে উন্মুক্ত। তিনি বিরাজ করচেন ভারতের সেই আগামী কালে, যে-কালে ভারতের মহা ইতিহাস আপন সত্যে সার্থক হয়েছে, হিন্দু মুসলমান খৃষ্টান মিলিত হয়েছে অখণ্ড মহাজাতীয়তায়। বায়ুপোতে অত্যূর্দ্ধ আকাশে যখন ওঠা যায়, তখন দৃষ্টিচক্র যতদূর প্রসারিত হয়, তার এক দিকে থাকে, যে-দেশকে বহু দূরে অতিক্রম ক'রে এসেছি; আর এক দিক থাকে সম্মুখে, যা এখনো আছে বহু যোজন দূরে। রামমোহন যে কালে বিরাজ করেন, সে কাল তেমনি অতীতে অনাগতে পরিব্যাপ্ত; আমরা তাঁর সেই কালকে আজও উত্তীর্ণ হোতে পারিনি।

আজ আমার অধিক বল্‌বার শক্তি নেই, কেবল এই কথামাত্র বল্‌তে এসেছি যে, যদিও অজ্ঞানের অশক্তির জগদ্দল পাথর ভারতের বুকে চেপে আছে, লজ্জায় আমরা সঙ্কুচিত, দুঃখে আমাদের দেহমন জীর্ণ, অপমানে আমাদের মাথা অবনত, বিদেশের পথিক আমাদের কলঙ্ক কুড়িয়ে নিয়ে দেশে দেশে নিন্দাপণ্যের ব্যবসা চালাচ্চে, তবু আমাদের সকল দুর্গতির উপরে সর্ব্বোচ্চ আশার কথা এই যে, রামমোহন রায় এদেশে জন্মেছেন, তাঁর মধ্যে ভারতের পরিচয়। তাঁকে দেশের বহুজনে সাম্প্রদায়িক ক্ষুদ্র অহমিকায় যদি অবজ্ঞা করে, আপন ব'লে স্বীকার না করে, তবুও চিরকালের ভারতবর্ষ তাঁকে গভীর অন্তরে নিশ্চিত স্বীকার করেছে। বর্ত্তমান যুগ রচনায় আজও তাঁর প্রভাব ক্রিয়াশালী। আজও তাঁর নীরব কণ্ঠ ভারতের অমর বাণীতে আহ্বান করচে তাঁকে,

য একো হবর্ণো বহুধা শক্তিযোগাৎ
বর্ণান্ অনেকান্ নিহিতার্থো দধাতি,
বিচৈতি চান্তে বিশ্বমাদৌ, স দেবঃ,

প্রার্থনা করচে,—

স নো বুদ্ধ্যা শুভয়া সংযুনক্তু।

3

Rammohun, a Traveller on India's Path

(Summary of Rabindranath Tagore's Presidential Address at the Rammohun Roy Centenary. Based on an abridged translation, made the same day, by Prof. Humayun Kabir.)

We find in history that many of the greatest ancient cultures were related to the life of the country like the river to the land through which it flows. The river brings water to the soil and fructifies it, but the greatest of its gifts is that it brings movement to the land, and links it with the distant and outside world. If the river should ever die, the land becomes penurious in its produce. Perhaps the needs of life within the country can still be somehow met. But the gift of abundance which united it with the world at large withers and ceases to be. Such a land can neither give nor receive the gifts of life.

LIFE OF INDIA

Once the life of India was like such a flowing river ; the currents of its thoughts were fluid and moving. That is why India could then say 'Ayantu sarvatah svaha,' let every one come from every land ; 'srinvantu visve', let the world hear what I have to say ; 'vedaham', I know that I have a message to give to the world.

Ages passed, and the progress of history in this land ceased. The vast currents of thought in Indian life died. When the water no longer flows through a dead river, the stones in its bed become prominent. The sharp pebbles in the bed of the river are disconnected,—they are meaningless, they are obstacles in the path of travellers. Such were the products of the evil days that descended on this land of ours. The movement of knowledge became faint, inventive genius flagged, and dead conventions and meaningless customs jutted out, like stones on the track, to close the wide open road to the traffic of universal men.

On such a day, when India was oppressed with her own weakness, men from beyond the seas came to her door. She did not have the means to maintain her dignity as a hostess, and to welcome them as her guests. They therefore came as robbers, broke open the door, and entered in to violate her accumulated treasures.

SOUL OF INDIA

The soul of India was unable in those days to produce any new harvest for the mind. Her fields were covered with weeds. In such a period of penury was Rammohun born. He had an insatiable hunger for truth in his heart. The accumulated lumber of history, the artificial pomp of conventions, could not satisfy his mind. He brought with him a mind that yearned after wisdom, that broke

through the barriers set up by clans and communities, that felt impatient with the toys that engaged the attention of others around him. He sought that sanctuary of the human heart, where all men could meet, where the intellect freed of all bonds could find its own free home.

This endeavour to transcend all bonds, to break all barriers, is peculiarly the endeavour of India,—to seek for the sanctuary where all men could meet and be one. This is peculiarly the quest of India, just because the conditions in this land are so violently opposed to it. England is confined within the limits of a tiny island, and that is exactly why her endeavour has always been to transcend her insularity and realize herself by extending herself all over the world.

MESSAGE OF UNITY

The message of unity has been declared in the Upanishads with an emphasis which is perhaps unequalled anywhere else in the world. It is in India that it has been said: "Wise and learned is he who knows his own self as embodied also in the self of every man." And yet in this very land, we have innumerable artificial bonds and restrictions which divide man from man in a way which perhaps no other country in the world has ever known. We must therefore say that in India there is on the external plane a coarseness, a vulgarity, which is contrary to the inmost truth of India's soul. And the conflict between the two has revealed itself in the history of India in a thousand sorrows, sufferings and insults.

The student of history who would truly appraise the worth of a nation must remember this inner nobility, and ignore the external coarseness under which it often lies concealed. The true spirit of mediaeval Europe is revealed by Bruno who was burnt at the stake, and not by the multitude who burnt him. The true spirit of England shines in her past advocacy of the freedom of slaves and of weaker nations, and not in her present dealings with India which belie that spirit. In fact it is a mistake to suppose that all Englishmen are English. Those that are truly English in spirit have throughout the ages struggled bravely to bring victory to the inmost soul of England in her commerce with other nations.

Among those who have, in the annals of India, sought to bring victory to India's soul in the bitter struggle between her inner spirit of unity and her external disharmony, Rammohun is one of the foremost in the modern age. Even in the darkest days the same call to unity has been heard in India from time to time. Like birds of the dawn, dauntless spirits broke free of the bonds of immobile superstition which encaged the middle ages, and brought that message of free life which the Upanishads declared,—'vratyas tvam prana',—O Life, thou art free, thou art not entangled in superstitions! One of these messengers of freedom was Kabir, and he declared himself to be a Traveller on India's Path. Among those who saw this path through the dark forests, another was Dadu,

and he said, "O brothers, my path is such that there are no *two sides* to it : it is one and indistinguishably one."

These pioneers of India spoke of *unity*, a unity which in spirit is an endeavour after universal humanity, after freedom from all vanity of distinctions and divisions,— not merely a unity for the purposes of political need. Rammohun was also a traveller on this path. He saw the vision of India united, not merely because of political necessity, but for the sake of unity of religion, which lies deep in the heart of every man. He therefore sent his call to every one, and invited every one to travel on a path on which Mussalman, Christian and Hindu could together march towards the same goal.

INDIA'S PATH

If this wide and generous path be not the path for India, if the fragmentarinesses and distinctions of a hundred castes and communities separated by the barriers of customs and conventions be in the true nature of India, then I can only say that there is no hope for our land. The Mussalman has come, and the Christian has come, and if we cannot unite them all through the endeavours of our life-history, then what is the value of India ? If India does not possess the vitality to assimilate them, if our true nature be to keep them outside, by ossifying ourselves into cold hard blocks of stone, then who shall bear the deadly burden of that heaped up mass of unconnected no-relatedness ?

When one's own kith and kin separate from one, do we not know how very far and distant they can become ? All the evils for which we curse our fate have entered into the life of India through the thousand gaps that we have left open for alienating our own people. If we are going to keep our ranks always open and loose, can we then blame the enemy who enters in to conquer us ? If the planks, which together constitute the ship of Indian nationhood, must for ever remain disconnected and loosely knit,—if we regard it as our innate nature to preserve such intervals between the planks,—is there then any point in bewailing the waves which enter through those cracks ? Does not such an attitude lead to the conclusion that the ultimate fate of India is to sit immobile and be swamped in the salt waters of ruin ?

WHEN RAMMOHUN CAME

Rammohun came at the very beginning of the Modern Age in our country. Neither foreigners nor natives of the soil could at that time clearly understand what the age stood for. It was Rammohun alone who realised that the challenge of this age is the challenge of a deeper unity. He extended wide his heart, and invited Hindu, Mussalman and Christian there, for in the expanse of his heart there was no lack of space for any one of them. In this it was the real heart of India that he revealed, and expressed in himself her truest character. For the truth of India is in the man who honours all and accepts all in his heart.

A hundred years have elapsed since then. Many things of those times have become antiquated today. But Rammohun has not been swallowed up in the midst of archaeological obscurity. Like time itself he is eternally modern. For his age extends on the one hand towards ancient India, but on the other reaches forward towards the distant future which is yet unattained.

IGNORANCE AND POWERLESSNESS

I have not the strength to say much today. I have come to say only this. Ignorance and powerlessness crush the life out of us today. We are shamed, and we stagger under the burden of sorrow, and bow our heads under heaped-up insults and indignities. Alien travellers gloat over our faults, and trade in our calumny in foreign lands. And yet in spite of all this misery, we have a supreme ground for faith and hope : Rammohun was born in our land. It is in him that we find the truth of India. If peoples of our land disrespect him because of the petty vanities of their many communities, and even if they disown him, yet Eternal India, the India of all time, has accepted him as her very own in her inmost heart. Even today his influence lives in shaping the Modern Age.

4

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

Tribute to Rammohun,

embodying the substance of Tagore's Presidential Address.

This is one of the few occasions of my literary life when I am trembling with fear,—not as a matter of rhetorical expression, but really trembling from literal and physical cowardice,—because your President, who has just read, with a voice that does not grow old with years, his message to you, has *ordered* me,—not *requested* me,—to try and give —something that is impossible for me to give—the gist of what he has said, for the benefit of that portion of the audience who have not understood his own magical language.

In doing so, I feel just as a dewdrop on a lotus leaf might feel if the rainbow said to it, "Reflect me in all the splendours of my seven colours." I feel as a chirping cricket might feel if the morning star said to it, "Reproduce all the harmonies of my golden music." So I will not attempt to translate the language, which, I own to my shame, I understand so imperfectly. I will not try to translate it, and thereby do violence to the rhythm and delicacy of thought, the beauty and imagery, that the Poet has woven into his message in such exquisite language.

A FLOWING RIVER

But I think that his own poem—which was not a translation—was the prelude to his message, the key-note of his speech. The Poem of prayer which he read to you at the very opening of the session is really the sum and substance of what he has told you today.

The Bengali-speaking audience will forgive this ignorant woman, (and, I think, the Europeans will admire me for my courage), if I proceed now to repeat what Dr. Tagore has said in his Address. He has compared our country to a flowing river which gives to the earth a plenitude of gifts in fruits and harvests. But its chiefest gift is the gift of movement, as it flows and flows past villages and cities, conveying the rhythm of life from one place to another, and linking places together which otherwise would remain separated. But when the river ceases to flow, when its spring dries up, when its tributaries do not feed it with their liquid silver, it is no longer an ambassador to the static plains ; it can no longer convey the rhythm of life from one place to another ; it no longer feeds the mouths of hungry peasants ; it no longer contains those life-giving secrets that breathe prosperity to the country. It only breaks within itself ; it is sterile ; it is not worth while ; it is dead. So, too, if a star wishes to give light, it must shine in all its splendour. But if its light grows dim, how will it illuminate ?

A DEATH-LIKE SLEEP

So it happened with India. In the early morning of her glory, she was a life-giving river that inundated the plains and called forth a magic harvest. She was a river of life upon whose bosom plied crafts of the wide world, with all their gifts of culture and civilisation. She was a medium that gave to the world a new life.

But when the time came—for whatever reason—for India to decline, when her sources were dried up, when her tributaries betrayed her, she was no longer the moving ambassador of India's genius to the world. Then what happened ? She could neither bestow her gifts upon the world in accordance with her ideals and genius, nor could she give food to her own children by reason of her ineptitude and her static condition. She was in a death-like sleep.

We isolate ourselves from the world-current when we cease to move with the tides, when we begin to look upon the world with our doors and windows closed. When a river dries up, all its depth and volume of water is gone, and you see the stones at the bottom. Similarly all

obstacles of life, all dead customs, traditions and other obsolete things, which were hidden when the river was flowing, show their faces when the river is dry. So was India when her life was dried up, showing all those dead and forgotten customs, superstitions and prejudices, all the ignorance and fear, all feuds, all bitterness and separateness, all unreasonable remoteness from the wide world. Ancient India had said "Come to me one, come to me all. I am a hostess, who give hospitality to all, by my spirit, by my soul." When India ceased to be the hostess which she was in her past, she became manacled and fettered; and she had to take upon herself the shame and humiliation that her own children put upon her, leaving her unable to break the shackles of serfdom.

APPEARANCE OF A NEW STAR.

In that dark period of India's degradation there came a New Star. A poetess has said, "Before the star was born, the whole world said, The ancient stars grow dim, and announce the approach of a new star." And when the New Star did come, there was the illumination of hope again in the darkness of India. That Star was Raja Rammohun Roy. With him came back to India the fulfilment of her ancient promise; with him came back to India the regeneration of her ancient ideals, transmuted for the purposes of the modern age. He looked around him and said, "Is this my inheritance? The whole world inherited in the past the treasures of my country,—her culture and her spiritual achievements,—and is my legacy only a serfdom, a living tomb, which I shall carry like a snail on my back, with a debris of ancient superstitions, ignorance and slavery?" So he took upon himself to break the shackles from the feet of India, and to teach her once again her own ancient Mantra that life is based on Unity, that Truth is the only religion which cannot be subdivided and limited, which cannot be betrayed and violated by separateness and internecine war. And so he said, "Let there be Truth in India, as once there was Truth in India."

The earlier prophets, Chaitanya and others, had preached Love and preached Truth, and now and then India had turned a little in her sleep, and remembered her own ancient ideals. But this dynamic man did not come with a suppliant hand, but with a sword to make wide awake the slumbering spirit of the country. He said. "Is India only for the Hindus? Is not our civilisation greatly enriched by all those whom India has given shelter? The Muslims who came as traders, or as plunderers with trampling armies, the Zoroastrians who came from far-off Persia,—are not they also now the children of 'Bharata-

mata' ? Are not the Christians (who accept and yet daily deny the Oriental Christ) also the children of India, having been re-baptised in the Ganges water ? And therefore India should try to reform herself by co-ordination and unification."

INTERNATIONAL AMBASSADORS.

This is the message of Raja Rammohun Roy. Patriot that he was, he was not like us a narrow patriot. He was the first great modern International Ambassador. He was the one who united the people of Asia by his sympathetic scholarship and study of various cultures. Persian, Arabic, Hebrew,—all these languages were like Saraswati on his tongue. He took to Europe the wrongs of his people, but not in bitterness. He carried them to victory by the majesty of his genius, the reasonableneess of his pleading, and above all by the righteousness of his cause. He said to the world abroad, "Come to India. She is still the hostess, broken though she be, plundered though she be by every kind of foreign exploitation, including your own exploitation, you people of the West ! You are none the less welcome within the borders of my home."

He said to the people of India, "If you remain separate one from the other, if you are divided in your own home, if you are like a boat whose planks are all riven asunder, how shall you give potency to the message of India to the world ? If there are those whom you look down upon, how shall they become your own ? If there are those whom you will not touch, how will you hold them in your embrace ? If you are afraid, how can you conquer your enemy ? If you are untrue yourself, how shall you be the evangelist of truth ?" This is the message Rammohun Roy gave to India ; and this is the message which this great successor of Rammohun Roy, Dr. Tagore, the next International Ambassador of India's culture and genius, has said to you :—"In unity and unity alone lies the salvation of India."

The Poet said to you in the name of Raja Rammohun that though more than a century has passed since he died, he still continues to be the great exemplar of today, the great exponent of our needs of today ; for in him were reposed all the great intellectual and spiritual qualities, ideals and virtues, which we consider to belong peculiarly to our modern generation, but which, being the evolution of the Truth, are really eternal, whether enunciated more than a century ago by Raja Rammohun Roy, the Maker of Modern India, or by Mahatma Gandhi, her great Apostle of today.

5

MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA PANDIT

Pramathanath Tarkabhushan

on

রাজা রামমোহনের প্রভাব ও বর্ত্তমান হিন্দু সমাজ

(Rammohun from a Hindu view-point)

রাজা রামমোহন রায় তাঁহার সমসাময়িক ও বর্ত্তমান হিন্দুসমাজে কি ভাবে গৃহীত হইয়াছেন, এবং বর্ত্তমান হিন্দুসমাজ তাঁহার বিস্ময়কর ও লোকোত্তর কর্ম্মসমূহ দ্বারা কিরূপে উপকৃত ও পরিবর্ত্তিত হইয়াছে, এই প্রবন্ধে আমি তাহারই সংক্ষিপ্ত আলোচনা করিব।

রাজা রামমোহন রায় যে সময়ে প্রাদুর্ভূত হইয়াছিলেন, তখনকার হিন্দু সমাজ বর্ত্তমান হিন্দুসমাজের ন্যায় 'প্রাচীনপন্থী' ও 'নব্যপন্থী' এই দুই ভাগে প্রবিভক্ত ছিল না। তখন হিন্দুসমাজের অন্তর্নিবিষ্ট থাকিয়া কোন ব্যক্তিই বহু শতাব্দীর সুপ্রতিষ্ঠিত হিন্দুর আচার ও অনুষ্ঠানের মধ্যে, অমুকটি ভাল বা অমুকটি মন্দ সুতরাং পরিবর্জ্জনীয়, এইরূপ সমালোচনা প্রকাশ্য ভাবে করিত না, বা করিতে সাহসী হইত না। কৌলীন্য প্রথা অনুসারে এক জন কুলীন ব্রাহ্মণসন্তানের, ধন বা বিদ্যা না থাকিলেও, ইচ্ছানুসারে (অথবা বিশেষ অনুরোধবশে ইচ্ছা না থাকিলেও) বহু, এমন কি শতাধিক, ব্রাহ্মণ-কন্যার পাণিপীড়নে, অর্থাৎ হিন্দুর তাৎকালিক প্রচলিত সর্ব্বজনানুমত ধর্ম্ম-পত্নীরূপে গ্রহণে, কোন বাধা ছিল না। এই সকল বিবাহিত পত্নীর সহিত, বিবাহের রাত্রি ব্যতীত হইলে পর, এ জন্মে তথাবিধ ভাগ্যবান্ পতির দর্শন-সৌভাগ্য যদিচ না ঘটিয়া উঠিত, (এবং বহুস্থলে সত্য সত্যই ঘটিত না), তথাপি এইরূপ অস্বাভাবিক দাম্পত্য-সম্বন্ধের প্রকাশ্য ভাবে নিন্দা করিতে কোন প্রতিষ্ঠিত হিন্দু সামাজিক সাহসী হইতেন না। কুলীন বা তথাকথিত যোগ্য পাত্র পাইলে দুই বৎসরের দুহিতাকেও বিবাহবন্ধনে আমরণ আবদ্ধ করিতে কোন জনক জননী বা আত্মীয়বর্গ প্রায়ই দ্বিধা বোধ করিত না, বা হিন্দুসমাজে তাদৃশ বিবাহদাতার বা বিবাহকর্ত্তারও নিন্দা শোনা যাইত না।

সমাজের উচ্চ স্তরে অবস্থিত জাতিসমূহের মধ্যে বিধবার পক্ষে সহমরণ বা অনুমরণ অতি প্রশংসনীয় ধর্ম্মকার্য্য বলিয়া পরিগণিত হইত। সহমরণ বা অনুমরণ না ঘটিয়া উঠিলে বিধবার পক্ষে ব্রহ্মচর্য্য ও নিরম্বু একাদশীর উপবাস প্রভৃতি কঠোর ব্রতাচরণ অবশ্য কর্ত্তব্য বলিয়া পরিগণিত ছিল। শিক্ষা বলিলে তখন গ্রাম্য গুরু মহাশয়ের পাঠশালায় বাল্যকালে অক্ষর পরিচয় অক্ষর লিখন, যৎকিঞ্চিৎ গণিতানুশীলন, এবং তৎপরে নব্যন্যায় নব্যস্মৃতি বা ব্যাকরণশাস্ত্রের অধ্যাপনা যে সকল চতুষ্পাঠীতে হইত, তাহাতে প্রবিষ্ট হইয়া

সামর্থ্যানুসারে ঐ সকল শাস্ত্রের অধ্যয়ন, অথবা মুন্সী বা মৌলবীর নিকট জীবিকার অনুকূল আরব্য বা পারস্য ভাষার অধ্যয়ন বুঝাইত। অতি অল্প লোকেরই তখন ইংরাজী পড়িবার সুবিধা ঘটিত। অতি শৈশবে বিবাহের ফলে বালবিধবার সংখ্যা সমাজে প্রচুর ভাবে থাকিত। ঐহিক সমস্ত ভোগ-বর্জ্জিত ব্রহ্মচর্য্যপ্রধান জীবনে বহুবিধ ক্লেশ থাকিলেও, তাহাদের মধ্যে ধর্ম্মশীলতা, আর্ত্ত-স্বজন-শুশ্রূষা, অমায়িকতা, দেব-দ্বিজ-গো সেবায় তৎপরতা, ও সতীত্বের পবিত্র আদর্শ এমনই সুন্দর ভাবে ফুটিয়া উঠিত যে, তাহা দেখিয়া হিন্দুসমাজের ধর্ম্মপ্রকৃতিসম্পন্ন নরনারীবৃন্দ দেবতার ন্যায় তাহাদিগের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা ও ভক্তিযুক্ত হইত। এই কারণে হিন্দু রমণীর অলোকসামান্য পাতি-ব্রত্যের প্রতি চিরসঞ্চিত আদর ও গৌরববুদ্ধি সামাজিক হৃদয়ে শিলাফলকে উৎকীর্ণ প্রতিমার ন্যায় স্থির ভাবে অঙ্কিত হইয়া থাকিত।

এই প্রকার মনোবৃত্তিসম্পন্ন, স্মার্ত্ত ও তান্ত্রিক আচারনিবহের দ্বারা পরিচালিত, বঙ্গীয় হিন্দুসমাজে রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের ন্যায় ভবিষ্যদ্দর্শী অলৌকিক প্রতিভাসম্পন্ন সাহসী সত্যপক্ষপাতী নির্ভয় ও অত্যুদার মনীষিকুল-ধুরন্ধরের অপ্রত্যাশিত ও অনপেক্ষিত আবির্ভাবে তৎকালে বঙ্গীয় হিন্দু সমাজের মধ্যে যে বিশেষ চাঞ্চল্য ও সনাতনধর্ম্ম-লোপ-ভীতির প্রভূত সঞ্চার হইয়াছিল, এবং তাহাও যে সর্ব্বথা স্বাভাবিক, তাহা সহজেই অনুমিত হয়। এই সকল কারণে নেতৃস্থানীয় প্রবীণগণের মধ্যে রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের সমাজসংস্কারপ্রবণ কার্য্যসমূহের প্রতি অবিশ্বাস ও বিদ্বেষের আবির্ভাব ও প্রসার অনিবার্য্য ভাবে প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল। তাহার প্রভূত প্রমাণ এখনও আমাদের স্মৃতিদর্পণে সমুদ্ভাসিত হয়। সুতরাং তৎকালীন বঙ্গীয় হিন্দুসমাজে তিনি যে সমাজবিপ্লাবক, নাস্তিক, ও ভয়ঙ্কর পুরুষ রূপে বিবেচিত ও উদ্‌ঘোষিত হইয়াছিলেন, তাহা নিঃসন্দিগ্ধ সত্য।

তাঁহার সমাজসংস্কারার্থ বহুবিধ কার্য্যাবলীর মধ্যে, ইংরাজের আইনের সাহায্যে সতীদাহ নিবারণের জন্য আন্তরিক চেষ্টা, হিন্দু জাতীয় জীবনের মহোৎসবময় মূর্ত্ত প্রতীক প্রতিমাপূজার বিরোধিতা, এবং প্রচলিত আচার ও সংস্কারের প্রতিকূল ভাবে বিলাত যাত্রা, প্রভৃতি, সমসাময়িক আস্তিক হিন্দু জনসমূহের নিকট যে অত্যন্ত গর্হণীয় বলিয়া বিবেচিত ও বিদ্বিষ্ট হইয়াছিল, তাহা কে অস্বীকার করিবে? সেই নিন্দা ও বিদ্বেষের গুরু ভার পারিজাত-মালার ন্যায় আনন্দে শিরোদেশে বহন করিতে করিতে রাজা রামমোহন রায় ভারতীয় অলোকসাধারণ মনীষার বিজয়িনী বৈজয়ন্তী ইংলণ্ডে সগৌরবে সমুড্ডীন করিবার জন্য, উচ্চকুলোদ্ভব হিন্দুর পক্ষে তৎকালে একান্ত নিষিদ্ধ সমুদ্রযাত্রা স্বীকার করেন। গভীর পরিতাপের বিষয় এই যে, ভারতে প্রত্যাগমনপূর্ব্বক, তাঁহার এই দিগন্তজয়িনী বিজয়যাত্রা কি ফল প্রসব করিয়াছিল, তাহা তিনি দর্শন করিতে সমর্থ হন নাই।

ভারতের অতীত গৌরবোজ্জ্বল যুগের মহান্ আদর্শ প্রচার করিতে করিতেই তিনি ইংলণ্ডে তাঁহার নশ্বর দেহ অনন্ত কালের জন্য রক্ষণ করিয়া

অনন্ত ধামে প্রয়াণ করিলেও, তাঁহার অবিনশ্বর জ্যোতির্ম্ময় আত্মা এক ক্ষণের জন্যও ভারতভূমি পরিত্যাগ করে নাই। প্রত্যুত তাহা এই ভারতে উত্তরোত্তর সমধিক শক্তিসম্পন্ন হইয়া তাঁহার পার্থিব জীবনের অভীপ্সিত কার্য্যাবলীর ক্ষেত্রসমূহের বিস্তার করিতেছে। এই বিস্ময়জনক ব্যাপার দেখিয়া আজ ভারতে নবজীবিত হিন্দু জাতি বিস্মিত উৎফুল্ল ও তাঁহার প্রতি কৃতজ্ঞতাপূর্ণ হইয়া, আন্তরিক প্রীতি শ্রদ্ধা ও সম্মানের কুসুমাঞ্জলি ভারতের সকল প্রদেশে সমর্পণ করিয়া গৌরব অনুভব করিতেছে। ইহার জাজ্বল্যমান প্রমাণ, তাঁহার এই শতবার্ষিকী মহাপ্রয়াণতিথির ভারতব্যাপী এই বিরাট্ মহোৎসব। এই মহোৎসবের অনুষ্ঠানই, পুনরুজ্জীবিত হিন্দু জাতির শিক্ষিত সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে আজ রাজা রামমোহন কি ভাবে গৃহীত হইতেছেন, তাহার প্রকৃষ্ট পরিচয়।

ইহাও অনায়াসে হৃদয়ঙ্গম হইতেছে,—নব জাগরিত, নবাশা প্রফুল্ল, নূতন ভাবে পৃথিবীর সভ্যজাতিনিবহের মধ্যে আত্মসম্মান ও গৌরব প্রতিষ্ঠার জন্য ঐকান্তিক ভাবে সমুদ্যত নব্য হিন্দু, আজ তাঁহাকে সনাতন হিন্দু সভ্যতার মূর্ত্ত প্রতীক ভাবিয়া পূজা করিতে বদ্ধপরিকর হইয়াছে। তাঁহার জীবনকালে হিন্দু সম্প্রদায় তাঁহার প্রতি যে অবিশ্বাস, উপেক্ষা, ঘৃণা ও দ্বেষের কঠিন বাণ নিক্ষেপ করিয়াছে, তাঁহার মহাপ্রয়াণের শতবার্ষিকী তিথিতে তাঁহারই আদ্য প্রেরণায় লব্ধচৈতন্য নব্যভাবে শিক্ষিত নবীন হিন্দু আজ জাতিবর্ণ-নির্বিশেষে তাঁহার পবিত্র স্মৃতির উদ্দেশ্যে প্রীতি ও শ্রদ্ধার পুষ্পাঞ্জলি প্রকাশ্য ভাবে সমারোহের সহিত সমর্পণ করিতে অণুমাত্র সঙ্কোচ বোধ করিতেছে না; প্রত্যুত তাহা করিয়া আপনাদিগকে ধন্য বলিয়া গৌরব অনুভব করিতেছে। আজ হিন্দু বুঝিতেছে, হিন্দু সভ্যতার ভুবনব্যাপী জ্যোতির্ম্ময় আত্মস্বরূপ প্রকাশে ঊনবিংশ শতাব্দীতে সর্ব্বাপেক্ষা শক্তিশালী অগ্রদূত রাজা রামমোহন রায়। আজ হিন্দু বুঝিয়াছে, সনাতন হিন্দুধর্ম্মের ভিত্তি অপরিবর্ত্তন-শীলতা নহে; কিন্তু তাহা দেশ-কাল-পাত্র ও পারিপার্শ্বিক অবস্থার আনুকূল্যে নিত্য পরিবর্ত্তনশীলতা।

শাস্ত্রের প্রকৃত শিক্ষার অভাবে হিন্দু জনসাধারণ হিন্দুর উপাসনাতত্ত্ব না বুঝিয়া উপাস্য দেবতার অনেকত্ব-কল্পনায় উদ্‌ভ্রান্ত হইয়া উঠিতেছিল;

অদ্বয়স্যাপ্রমেয়স্য চিন্ময়স্যাশরীরিণঃ,
উপাসকানাং কার্য্যার্থং ব্রহ্মণো রূপকল্পনা,

এই শাস্ত্রনির্দ্দিষ্ট উপাসনার মূল রহস্য ছাড়িয়া হিন্দু ক্রমেই বিকৃত উপাসনামার্গ অবলম্বন করিতেছিল, এবং তাহার ফলে হিন্দু ধর্ম্মের মূল ভিত্তি যে অদ্বয় ব্রহ্মবাদ তাহা হইতে দূরে সরিয়া যাইতেছিল। ইহার পরিণাম জাতির নৈতিক ও আধ্যাত্মিক অবনতি,—এই কথাই সাহসের সহিত শাস্ত্র-প্রামাণ্যের ও মানবের বিশুদ্ধ বিবেকের দৃঢ় ভিত্তিতে দাঁড়াইয়া সদ্যোজাগরণোন্মুখ নব্য ভারতের শঙ্করাচার্য্য রাজা রামমোহন রায় বহু শতাব্দীর পর মুক্তকণ্ঠে ঘোষণা করিয়াছিলেন। যুগে যুগে ভারতের ধর্ম্মাচার্য্যগণ যাহা করিয়া গিয়াছেন,

রাজা রামমোহনও তাহাই করিয়াছিলেন, এই কথা এক্ষণে হিন্দু জনসাধারণ বুঝিয়া তাঁহার প্রতি সমধিক আস্থাসম্পন্ন হইতেছে। তাই আজ রাজা রামমোহনের শতবার্ষিকী তিথিতে তাঁহার প্রতি প্রীতি ও শ্রদ্ধাঞ্জলি প্রদান করিয়া সমগ্র হিন্দু ভারত আত্মতৃপ্তি লাভ করিতেছে।

আজ রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের প্রতি প্রীতি শ্রদ্ধা ও গৌরব প্রকাশের এই সর্ব্বজনীনতা নব জাগরিত হিন্দুর অদূরভাবী বহু কল্যাণেরই সূচনা করিতেছে, ইহা সনাতন হিন্দু সমাজের অকিঞ্চন প্রতিনিধিরূপে আপনাদের সম্মুখে নিঃসঙ্কোচে প্রকাশ করিবার অধিকার দানের জন্য এই শতবার্ষিক উৎসবের অনুষ্ঠাতৃবর্গকে আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ জ্ঞাপন করিতেছি।

6

MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA PANDIT

Pramathanath Tarkabhushan

on

Rammohun from a Hindu view-point

(*Author's own English version of his Bengali address.*)

I will attempt in this brief monograph to indicate how Raja Rammohun Roy was received by the Hindu society of his time, how he is being received at the present day, and how far the society has been moulded and benefited by his wonderful and extraordinary achievements.

At the time when the Raja flourished, Hindu society was not divided into two clearly marked sections, viz. the old and the new schools, as at the present time. No one professing to belong to the Hindu society would or dare openly criticize any of its time-honoured usages or institutions, and point to this custom as good, and another as bad, and as such fit to be discarded. Take, for instance, Kulinism with its resultant polygamy. There was absolutely no bar to a Kulin Brahmin, without either education or sufficient means, taking willingly or under pressure, as many as a hundred or even more wives, provided only that he married them in accordance with the widely accepted marriage rites of the time. Even though it were not in store for these girls ever to see their lucky (?) husbands again in their life-time after the wedding night,—and as a matter of fact, this happened in nine cases out of ten,—no well-recognized Hindu had the temerity to raise his voice against such unnatural marriage ties. If a Kulin or an otherwise eligible match offered, no parents or relatives in

any section of the community would feel any scruple to unite in blessed wedlock even a two-year old daughter with him, nor would any one venture to utter one word of remonstrance or censure against either of the parties to this transaction.

Self-immolation of a Hindu widow on the funeral pyre of the husband was considered to be an act of piety, and as such worthy of the highest praise. Failing self-immolation, it was the duty of the Hindu widow to practise austerities, such as fasting on certain days of the fortnight, and a life of continence. In those days education meant a grounding in the three R's in childhood at the village *pathasala* under a *guru*, and then either picking up, to the best of one's capacity, as much of logic, *smriti* and grammar as possible, at the *tols* provided for the purpose, or a course of bread-earning studies in Persian and Arabic under a Maulavi or a Munshi. Only a limited few enjoyed the facilities for learning English. On account of the prevalence of early marriage, there always existed in the body of the society a large number of child-widows. In spite of the sufferings and privations consequent on a life of complete *brahmacharya* and abstinence from worldly pleasures, there would often blossom forth in these widows such piety, such affectionate service to distressed relatives, such devotion to worship, such regard for Brahmins and tender care for cows, such amiability of disposition, and such a high and noble ideal of chastity, that pious men and women in society would spontaneously bow their heads to them, as to so many living deities, in respect and reverence. It is on this account that from time immemorial, this sense of glory in and deep respect for the uncommon devotion and chastity of Hindu women has remained, like an image carved on marble, indelibly imprinted on the heart of our community.

In a society governed by this mentality, and dominated almost exclusively by the rules of *smriti*, the emergence of a man of the far-seeing vision, uncommon intellect, courage, truthfulness, good will and liberal and enlightened views possessed by Raja Rammohun Roy was bound to create a deep stir, coupled with an alarm for the possible decay of the religion dating from hoary antiquity. Hence, such a feeling of suspicion and hostility against the reforms initiated by Raja Rammohun Roy inevitably sprang up and gradually grew in intensity among the leaders and elders of society, as is remembered even to this day. In these circumstances there can be no doubt that the Raja was looked upon as, and declared to be, a social rebel, an atheist, and a terror to society.

No one can deny that among the many reforms initiated by him, his sincere efforts to abolish the *Sati* rite by legislative enactments, his opposition to the worship of material images of the Deity,—the very embodiment of the festive side of our national life,—and his journey to England in defiance of all social conventions and prejudices, were looked upon with disapproval and positive resentment by his contemporaries of orthodox faith. But Raja Rammohun Roy gladly bore the brunt of this public opprobrium and rancour. He wore it like a crown of laurels round his head, and undertook his journey across the waters, strictly forbidden to caste Hindus, in order to unfurl triumphantly the banner of Indian, and particularly of Bengali culture in England in all its glory. It is a matter for deep regret that he did not live to come back and see what fruit his triumphant progress through foreign lands bore in his native country.

While preaching the noble ideal of the glorious past of India, he passed into eternity, leaving his mortal remains in the soil of England. But his imperishable and illustrious spirit has not for a single moment left his country. Rather, with ever increasing power, it has been working for the continued expansion of the activities initiated by him. The re-awakened Hindus of India, amazed and overjoyed at this unique spectacle, and with a heart full of gratitude for him, are offering from all parts of India their tribute of love, respect and honour to the hallowed memory of this great soul, a conclusive proof of which is furnished by this country-wide celebration of the Centenary of his death. It is also apparent that this universal celebration of his Centenary is an eloquent testimony to the high place of honour accorded to the Raja by the educated community among the revivified Hindus.

Modern Hindus, rejuvenated, buoyant with new hopes and aspirations, and in dead earnest to establish their claim to self-respect and glory among the civilized nations of the world, are out to worship the Raja as a representative of their ancient and eternal culture. The very Hindus who in his life-time regarded him with suspicion, indifference, and even hatred and bitterness, being restored to self-consciousness through the quickening inspiration initially set in motion by him, do not now hesitate to openly express their heart-felt love and regard, with pomp and ceremony, and irrespective of caste or social standing, towards his sacred memory. Nay, they are even taking pride in thus honouring the great man; for the realization has at last come to them that Raja Rammohun Roy was the most powerful pioneer in revealing the true inner significance of Hindu culture at the bar of the wide world. They have

now realized that the basic truth of Hindu civilization is not its immutability or rigidity for all time; but its constant adaptability to changing environments.

The want of true religious education had left the Hindus puzzled and bewildered, had made them lose sight of the true mode of worship, and conceive of a plurality of divinities.

"Advayasyā prameyasya cinmayasyā śarīriṇah
Upāsakānāṃ kāryārtham Brahmaṇo rūpakalpanā,"

—they lost sight of this basic principle of divine worship as propounded in the *sastras*, and took more and more to perverted and artificial methods, with the result that they drifted farther and farther from the monotheism, which is the very bed-rock of Hinduism. The ultimate effect of this was bound to be the moral and spiritual deterioration of the nation. It is this message that, after many centuries, Rammohun Roy, the prophet of the newly awakened modern India, fearlessly trumpeted forth. He, in fact, did no more than what prophets and religious exponents of India had done before him. Hindus in general, are gradually realizing this more and more fully, and are naturally getting to have a higher and higher regard for Rammohun. This explains why the whole of Hindu India is, with the greatest spontaneity and eagerness, according its tribute of love and respect to his memory on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of his death.

This universality in the expression of love, regard, and pride unmistakably points to the immense well-being that is to accrue to the nation in the near future as a result of his exertions.

As a humble representative of Hindu India, with my sincere regard for the *sastras* based on lifelong study, I am thankful to the organisers of his Centenary for the privilege of expressing this truth and laying bare my views.

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Maulavi Abdul Karim, M.L.C.

on

Rammohun as a Religious Reformer

The more I study the life of Raja Rammohun Roy, one of the greatest exponents of Theism the world has known, the more do I realise that the greatness of this great man has not been rightly appraised, nor have his inestimable

services to humanity been adequately appreciated. Rammohun Roy, to my mind, was one of those inspired messengers of truth whom God is pleased to send from time to time for the reclamation of degraded humanity,—for the reformation of demoralised society. Rammohun Roy's whole career was one of revolt,—revolt against interference with independence of thought and action, revolt against social and religious tyranny, revolt against superstitious customs and inhuman practices.

Early in life, Rammohun Roy came in close contact, in the course of his studies, with cultured Muslims, and made a careful study of their literature and scripture. He was deeply impressed by the universality and catholicity of the unalloyed monotheistic faith of his early associates. This broadened his views, and counteracted the influence of his surroundings to such an extent that though born and bred in an orthodox Brahman family, he began, even in his teens, a crusade against the idolatrous practices and superstitious customs prevailing in the country.

Rammohun Roy's advent synchronised with spiritual and intellectual stagnation in India, when the Puranic and Tantric cults had got a firm hold of the mass mind, and moral corruption and social degeneracy had set in with the decay of knowledge and deadening of conscience. The rational worship of the invisible Supreme Being, enjoined by the Upanishads and the Vedanta, was not only neglected, but even indirectly discountenanced by the priests, who had the conscience of the people in their keeping.

At such a time, when there was moral and spiritual chaos in the country, and three cults and cultures, the Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian, were in conflict, a reformer of Rammohun's calibre and character was urgently needed for the regeneration of his countrymen. He was well-equipped for the purpose by a thorough study of the Islamic lore in addition to that of his ancestors. He was as well-grounded in *shariat* as in *smriti*. Besides, he had made a careful study of Christianity and Judaism. All this eminently fitted him to be the precursor of the renaissance brought about by the impact of oriental and occidental cultures, which gave birth to a galaxy of illustrious personages who shed imperishable lustre on the land of their birth, and raised it high in the estimation of the world. While each of these outstanding personalities made his mark on the particular sphere of his activity, Rammohun left an indelible impression on all of them. He was in fact an inexhaustible source of inspiration to his countrymen, and his progressive work comprised the whole range of human activities and national aspirations. It was Rammohun Roy who laid the foundation of all the modern

movements for the amelioration and elevation of the people of India. His was a heart that transcended all geographical boundaries. His sympathies were world-wide, embracing all mankind. He felt that "in the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim."

Rammohun Roy thoroughly realised the two essentials of every true religion,—the glorification of God and the love of man. In his first published work written in Persian, named *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* (Gift to Monotheists), he vehemently attacked those who associated created things with the Creator, and trenchantly exposed superstitious beliefs, lifeless rituals and pernicious customs. Closely following Islam, he advocated a monotheistic faith that does not consist of mere rites and rituals, forms and formulas, terms and trappings, but of the realisation of God's greatness and goodness and of man's capacity for unlimited progress, which may extend even to the border of Divinity, if man can keep down his brutal propensities and imbue himself with the attributes of his Creator, whose greatest and grandest handiwork he is. According to such a faith it is not mere praying or fasting or keeping up so many other observances that makes man truly religious, but living a clean life of pure thoughts and virtuous acts. In an age when utility and rationality are the two dominant notes, the empty formalities of a hide-bound dogmatic faith cannot fully satisfy the modern man. Rammohun, therefore, emphasised the humanistic aspect of religion. Realising that unselfish service of fellow-beings is the special prerogative of man, who is born not for himself alone, like the beast, but is a part of an organisation in which he has a part to play and a function to discharge, Rammohun dedicated his whole life to the service of humanity, particularly to that of his countrymen. Time will not permit me to refer to all that he did. I think his services are too well-known to need detailed mention.

In his Brahmo Samaj, Rammohun Roy attempted a "synthesis of the cultural and religious outlook of the different communities living in India." His prophetic vision enabled him to visualize a time when the boundaries of creeds and scriptures would vanish, and people of all races would sit together to worship one "Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable God." His chief aim seems to have been, like that of Guru Nanak, (who was a great admirer of Islam and its prophet, and twice visited Mecca and Medina,) to bring about a lasting unity between the two great communities inhabiting his motherland, and if possible to bind them in one common faith. Alas, Hindus and Muslims for whom Rammohun lived and laboured, have been flying at each other's throats on the flimsiest pretext,

and that often in the name of religion, which is intended to be the most humanising and harmonising force for peace and good-will on earth. It is a matter of profound regret that narrow-minded people should have forgotten the fact indicated by their scriptures, that the goal of all true religions is one and the same, though the means of its attainment might be different. "Mankind comes to Me", says the Lord, "along many roads, and on whatever road a man approaches Me, on that road do I welcome him, for all roads are mine."

8

E. A. Arakie

Secretary, E. M. F. School and Talmud Torah of Calcutta,

on

Rammohun from the view-point of Judaism

We all know that Rammohun Roy was a great scholar, linguist, philosopher and writer. But, for the purposes of this paper, I am to confine myself to his adoption of the religious principle of Monotheism, which he derived from his study of the Koran in Arabic. This so deeply impressed his thinking mind that he vindicated its philosophy in his publication *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, written in Persian as a protest against idolatry.

In 1828, five years before his death, he founded the first Theistic Church of India. The declaration of faith of the new community which this great Hindu reformer founded, enjoined, *inter alia*, (1) "the worship of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being", and (2) that "no graven image, statue or sculpture, or the likeness of anything shall be admitted" into the new Church, or its land and premises.

These are the basic religious principles of the two great Monotheistic religions, Judaism and Islam,—both going back to the common ancestry of Abraham the Patriarch, who was the founder of the Hebrew race.

Abraham was indeed the first Monotheist. He forsook the idolatrous worship of his fathers, and fixed his mind and heart on the Great Eternal and Immutable Being, the Creator of all beings and things, and this was accounted to him for righteousness, and earned him the Divine blessing. So Abraham started the religious philosophy of Monotheism, which gradually developed and was firmly

established by the great Hebrew lawgiver, Moses. Judaism is the exponent of Mosaism, and its affirmations are embodied in the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments set out in the Old Testament,—the world's greatest Ethical Code.

The first of these affirmations is the Unity of God, and is the quintessential embodiment of Israel's religious philosophy. It is for the individual the basis of moral allegiance to a God of Justice and Mercy; and for the nations, it is the proclamation of human brotherhood, since the one God is the Creator of all humanity. And this Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient God, Judaism holds, is the Ruler of the world, the Judge of all the earth, whose kingdom of Righteousness will be realised in humanity. This cardinal Jewish dogma of an Eternal God who rules history has changed the heart and the whole outlook of humanity, and is the foundation of human education, whether of the individual, the group, or the nation.

The second affirmation is the negation of polytheism and idolatry. The second Commandment enjoins, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me, and thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; and thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them." This Commandment is a mighty sledge-hammer of the spirit before which the heathendom of antiquity crumbled.

Judaism believes in prayer, and maintains that one cannot honestly pray to a dumb and deaf god, nor to an unconscious and nebulous being chained in mechanical laws. Omar Khayyam, the 12th century Persian poet, clearly saw this when he sang,

"And that inverted bowl they call the sky,
Whereunder crawling, cooped, we live and die,—
Lift not your hands to it in prayer; for it
As impotently rolls as you or I."

Such a conception of the Supreme Being, who cannot speak nor hear, is infinitely removed from Israel's Eternal God, who, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, is our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King. The salvation of humanity lies alone in the recognition of this eternal truth.

I hope the points of similarity between the above affirmations of Judaism and the declarations of faith of Rammohun Roy's Theistic Church will be appreciated, and that all thoughtful men will acknowledge that Monotheism,—regardless of its exponents,—is far more than a Creed or a Theology, greater than a Denomination or a Church, and is a religious civilisation, deep-rooted in the Fatherhood of one Supreme God and the Brotherhood of all men.

9

Dr. Benimadhava Barua

on

Rammohun from the Buddhist Standpoint.

(Slightly abridged.)

We are assembled here today to celebrate the Centenary of Raja Rammohun Roy—an occasion which is momentous for the people of India—and to ponder over the inner greatness of the man. To honour him is to follow his teachings. To understand him is to comprehend his mind. To appreciate him is to measure the amplitude of his work for the cause of India and of humanity. To worship him is to cherish the progressive spirit which worked through him. To see him is to live eternally with him in the ever-renewed world of visions materialising into realities.

It would pain me, and I am sure it would pain you all, should we be celebrating this grand anniversary with the feeling that Raja Rammohun is dead. For, to us he is a living personality,—an undaunted and indomitable heroic spirit, a powerful embodiment of human energy, and a perennial source of inspiration. Should the thought press upon our minds that he is dead, we should rejoice that there is no longer *Rammohun the body* to hide from our view *Rammohun the spirit*. Let us rather think and feel that he is not dead, that he can never die ; and let us ultimately come to realise that we are all Rammohuns in spirit—in super-human energy, in clarity of vision, in soundness of judgment, in firmness of will, in courage of conviction, and, above all, in the sense of self-respect and dignity of man as man.

Just as in private life Rammohun synthetised in his person two different family trends and traits, so in public life he sought to synthetise and mould in one cast two different currents of civilisation—Indian and European, Eastern and Western, Ancient and Modern, Hindu and Moslem, Indo-Aryan and Christian.

In his agitations for reform and his excogitations for modernising Hindu society, he was in no sense an opponent of Brahmanism *par excellence*. To raise one's strong voice against the perversion of a thing is not to condemn it in its essence and entirety. With regard to Brahmanism as was understood and practised in his time, his was out and out a work of reform. The work of a reformer like Rammohun is fundamentally an interpretative

one. The reformation contemplated by him was based on such a rational interpretation of ancient texts as would present Brahmanism before the world in all its pristine glory, and at the same time afford a spacious and sure ground for laying the foundation of a universal religion. Every reformation is bound to involve an endorsement of the essential principle of conservatism, viz. the preservation of all that is valuable in the old order ; and Rammohun's programme of reform was no exception to this general rule.

Nevertheless, he was misunderstood, as reformers of all ages and climes are liable to be, including the great Buddha himself. When 2500 years ago the great Sakyan sage roared the lion's roar, deprecating all superstition and vain ceremonialism, he did not surely mean to condemn Brahmanism in any of its *essential* principles. The real motive in the case of the one, as in the case of the other, was to infuse energy in a field where lethargy, sleep, ignorance and inaction reigned, and to urge all to go forward. The fact, however, stands out that he too could not avoid being misunderstood. So Buddha had to frankly confess in a well-known stanza of the Dhammapada that no man, however upright and well-intentioned, can escape criticism, (*'natthi loke anindito'*.)

Finding fault only with the corrupt, superstitious and tyrannical ways of the Brahmins of his time. Raja Rammohun endeavoured to awaken them to a new and better life which lay ahead, by holding before them a vivid picture of the clear thought and pure idealism of their remote forefathers. This picture was based on a rational interpretation of some of the highly valued and authoritative ancient texts, including the Kena Upanishad of the Samaveda, the Katha of the Yajurveda, the Mundaka of the Atharva, the commentary of Vedanta, as well as the Gayatri hymns, all of which, as he honestly believed, inculcated a form of worship of God, the supreme Being, who is one, pure, and eternal. In order to praise a system or a people, it was not necessary, according to him, to be blind to its faults or shortcomings. The system of caste sanctified by the Smritis or Brahmanical codes created permanent barriers between man and man ; and hence it stood as a great obstacle in the way of progress of the people of India, particularly their national unity and political advancement. In this particular respect it is easy to notice a close similarity between the method and motive of Rammohun on the one hand, and those of Buddha on the other.

As children, while playing about on a public road, make boundaries with sand-heaps, each claiming an area

as exclusively his own, so the Brahmins planned a social scheme of mutually exclusive compartments separated by barriers built on the basis of caste, which was warranted neither by science nor by reason and morality. In finding fault with the Brahmins of his time, Rammohun extolled the inestimable virtues and qualities of the ancient Brahmins and sages, and cited texts and interpreted them rationally, in order to convince them that the tenor of those texts favoured the idea of a universal unity and a happy brotherhood. Just as the different rivers flowed down to merge themselves in the infinite sea to assume ultimately one common designation of the ocean, so there should be one great social order in which men of various narrow social grades will join hands and find their unity and strength.

The caste system has survived in India up to the present time with nearly all its social inequities and evils, defying arguments of reason, words of prudence, and voices of protest, offering many of the same old difficult problems to the modern age, and still needing hundreds and thousands of Rammohuns to face it boldly, patiently and consistently.

From this consideration we may naturally proceed to watch the epoch-making war into which Buddha, and many centuries afterwards, the valiant Raja Rammohun, plunged. It was a war against three predominant evils, which were, in the words of Rammohun, power, wealth and prejudice,—the last-named one being the most formidable of the three.

Power and wealth go to create certain vested interests, and prejudice is but the reverse side of the bias or predilection cherished by vested interests. In Buddha's phraseology, the term for prejudice is "Miccha Diṭṭhi," the one-sided, partial, prejudiced view of things, of facts, and of truths; and obstinacy, or exclusiveness is the mental mood of such prejudice with its characteristic expression "Idameva saccam, mogham aññam," i. e. "what I think or believe, say or do, speak or utter, is the only correct form of truth, or belief, or life, or action, or language; and every other form is incorrect." It is this prejudice which is at the root of all non-understandings and misunderstandings.

Rammohun bravely fought against prejudice with the three 'great weapons' as he called them, of Reason, Scripture, and Common Sense. Neither of the three was to be used as the sole criterion of the soundness of any position in an argument. The best, i. e. the most equitable, judicious and convenient position, was one which was consonant with reason, in harmony with the funda-

mental teachings of the Sastras, and in accordance with the dictates of common sense. Rammohun has warned us against giving preference to any one of the three at the expense of the others. "I have often lamented," he said, "that in our general researches into theological truth, we are subjected to the conflict of many obstacles. When we look to the traditions of ancient nations, we often find them at variance with each other; and when, discouraged by this circumstance, we appeal to reason as a surer guide, we soon find how incompetent it is, alone, to conduct us to the object of our pursuit. ... The best method perhaps is, ... by a proper use of the lights furnished by both, to endeavour to improve our intellectual and moral faculties, relying on the goodness of the Almighty Power which alone enables us to attain that which we earnestly and diligently seek for."

Raja Rammohun had engaged himself in a many-sided conflict, a war with many fronts, theological, social, moral and political,—Indian and international. In every single action he fought bravely and with fortitude, not ceasing to fight till he fought the battle to the finish. He had the wonderful capacity to carry the battle into the opponent's camp, meeting him on his own ground. When he fought with the Christian Missionaries and theologians, he did not put forth arguments based upon his own scriptures, but those based upon their own. When he fought with the Brahmins, his own castemen, he did not hurl arguments derived from the arsenal of others, but those from their own.

But with all this, it was always easy to enter into a peaceable treaty with him, provided that the opponent showed a reasonable attitude of mind, and strove for any noble cause for the good of humanity. To the Christian Missionaries he frankly pointed out that they could not promote their cause in India, and in the East generally, by dilating upon their myths and miracles, because the Indian and Eastern mythologies could never be outdone by Christian miracles. To justify their existence in the East, Christian Missionaries would do well to promulgate the simple but noble ethical teachings of Christ. The whole course of Rammohun's controversy with them was enlivened by a Socratic spirit, and permeated by good sense and noble motive. But though he had to fight on so many fronts, he had nevertheless a clear position of his own on which to take his stand. He welcomed the teachings of Christianity, not because he thought them superior to other doctrines, but because he sincerely believed that their introduction into India would be to the advantage of the Indian people,—their political advancement, moral

improvement, social reformation, and acquisition of educational facilities.

In order to be able either to appreciate and respect or to scrutinise and combat the things of others, one must first learn to appraise what is one's own at its true worth. Here was Rammohun's strong point. He had clearly perceived that the wealth of religious thought contained in the Upanishads was unsurpassed in value, and that in fathoming them one might enter into the profoundest depths of human thought, feeling and belief.

The part that Rammohun pre-eminently played in his controversies was that of a judge, and not that of an advocate or a partisan. According to the Buddha, a judge, to be worth the name, must, in formulating his judgment and giving his verdict, take care not to be actuated by any of these four wrong principles, viz. partiality, grudge, fear and delusion.

It was a remarkable trait in the character of Rammohun that whenever he had to pronounce any judgment or express any opinion on any burning question of the day, whether it was that of the settlement of Europeans in India, or the abolition of the *Suttee*, or the freedom of the Press, or trial by Jury, he clearly and unhesitatingly dealt with all advantages, all disadvantages, as well as all remedies that were possible of application. Whenever he had to give a judgment, he gave it impartially and fearlessly, with a clear notion of the situation that had arisen and that was going to arise.

Again, like the Buddha, Rammohun possessed certain admirable qualities necessary for being a leader. First, he was a man with the deepest conviction of the righteousness of the cause espoused by him, and of the victory that was ultimately sure to crown his efforts. Secondly, he had a strong self-confidence, an unerring vision of the future, and the finest imagination combined with practical wisdom. Through these he proved to be the moving spirit of his own age. But we feel that he is for all time, and his presence and guidance would be needed at all critical moments of national regeneration in India.

Raja Rammohun is credited with the founding of the Brahmo Samaj in the same way that the great Buddha was credited with the founding of a powerful Sangha. The Buddhist Sangha has built up a glorious record of civilisation and philanthrophy to its credit. The contributions of the Brahmo Samaj to modern humanity are also remarkable.

Again, though Buddha was the reputed founder of the Sangha, and all the laws and principles governing the

life of the Sangha were either enjoined or sanctioned by him, yet he never looked upon himself as its founder, nor did he hold that its members should look up to him for guidance. It is for this reason that he denied himself the right of nominating any successor. The whole position resolved to this : that a *principle* was to guide their action, and not any *person*. He was with the Sangha, and yet out of it ; for to be wholly identified with the order was to commit himself to the position of a partisan or sectarian, from which he had always recoiled. Similar would seem to be the relation between Rammohun and the Brahmo Samaj. Rammohun Roy never considered himself to be the founder of a new religious sect. But it cannot be denied that he inspired the ideals and principles working in the Samaj, particularly those connected with its anti-sectarian, universal aspect.

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Miss A. Margaret Barr, M.A.

Unitarian Minister, late of Rotherham, England, on

Rammohun, the Universalist.

I have been asked to read a paper on behalf of the "Order of the Great Companions." And indeed it is fitting that a Society which exists for the purpose of promoting those things which Rammohun Roy cared most about should blend its voice with the rest in this Memorial Meeting. For the Order of the Great Companions "was formed to further the study of Comparative Religion and all that makes for the realisation of the unity of all life. It aims at linking together those who are working for World-Brotherhood along spiritual lines, that is, by preparing the way for a World-religion. ... It has adopted as its motto, 'The Brotherhood of Nations through the Sisterhood of Religions.'" We believe that though religions are many, Religion is one ; though systems of faith are different, God is one. We believe further that it is institutions and priest-craft and rites and ceremonies that divide, whereas if men would but follow in the footsteps of the great founders of religions, and of those who, in every age and race, have recognised religion for what it truly is,—not a theology to be accepted, but a Way of Life to be lived,—we should enter at last upon that World-Brotherhood and World-Unity that have haunted the dreams of all the great prophets of humanity.

These are the Great Companions, our elder brothers,—teachers and shewers of the Way of Life, which is the Way of Love,—Lao Tse, and Confucius, Zoroaster and Buddha, Moses and Jesus, and in later times many a score of those who have caught their spirit and travelled through life with the "dream in their eyes of the great Unity of Races and Religions." Surely Rammohun Roy was one of these.

A man who studied ten languages, at least four of which were mastered solely with a view to exploring for himself the treasure-houses of the world's religious literature; whose study led him to the "momentous discovery" that "the core of religious truth, comprehending the Unity of God as Spirit, his worship in spirit and in truth, the immortality of the soul, and ethical discipline as the basis of spiritual life, formed the central teaching of the canonical scriptures of the historical religions"; whose study led him further to the true Universalism which sees in all great religious experience and teaching, not a part of truth only, but Truth itself expressed in different terms to meet the varying needs of different ages and races,—a Universalism which includes in its fellowship all "those who, by whatever name, would acknowledge some Principle of the Universe, the need of meditation on that Principle as good, and the love and service of Man as the guiding principle of the conduct of life", —such was Rammohun Roy, surely one of the great Universalists of modern times.

But it is not only for his teaching that we honour him, but even more for his fidelity to the things which he taught. Like all the Great Companions he practised what he preached, even in the face of misunderstanding and persecution, utterly faithful to his own great principles, and to their practical application to social, political, national and international affairs. A passionate lover of liberty, it was he who first sounded the trumpet-call which was to rouse the children of India to shake off all their fetters, and to awaken them into the heaven of freedom of which your poet prayed. But he did not only teach; he led the way himself. It is for this reason that his spirit still lives and bears fruit, not only in this land which he loved the most, but in many another land which never knew him in the flesh. The divine message that came to the Hebrew prophet of old might well have come to him: "Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak with thee. ... I send thee to a rebellious people; ... they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. ... I send thee unto them, ... and they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, yet shall know that there hath been a prophet amongst them." Today, India and the World

are beginning to recognise that there hath been a prophet amongst them,—a prophet and a great universalist.

In imagination we may put into his mouth the words of the Emperor Akbar in Tennyson's poem :

> "I dreamed
> That stone by stone I reared a sacred fane,
> A temple, neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,
> But loftier, simpler, always open-doored
> To every breath from heaven ; and Truth and Peace
> And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein."

For Rammohun Roy was one of those who had the vision of that temple, and lived and laboured for the building of it. For this he will remain for ever beloved and honoured by all those who are striving to follow in the footsteps of the Great Companions, to whom undoubtedly he belongs.

11

Swami Adyananda

of the Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Howrah, on

Rammohun and the Re-awakening of Modern India.

In the midst of the various cross-currents of thoughts and exciting events in India today, the greatest need is co-ordination of the different ancient forces of national life on the one hand, and assimilation of the new ideas on the other. Modern India can no longer be an isolated unit detached from all world-currents. She has to be a figure in the modern world, and play her role. However proud we may be of India's achievements in the past, we cannot ignore the need of tremendous reforms for the healthy growth of our national life in the present.

But then, every nation has a definite scheme of things, a general philosophy and outlook of life, which lie dormant in the national consciousness during the period of decadence. Hence the need of a national basis in an era of reform.

The great men of a nation are the centres of reconciliation between the old and the new. By their inspiration and initiative, the leaders awaken the nation to self-consciousness, and great changes follow. The great Raja Rammohun Roy, whose death centenary we are celebrating here today, was one of our great national heroes, who, during the dark hours of confusion, superstition and consequent degenera-

tion, showed a way of progress and freedom with great courage and conviction, despite many obstacles and oppositions. His great personality, deep scholarship, creative genius, and above all, his indomitable will, were instrumental in inaugurating the first chapter of reformation in the country at a time when the life-current of our dear motherland was at its lowest ebb. India, owing to various chaotic conditions, was in a state of great national depression at the end of the eighteenth century, and was faced with many problems which required the able guidance of a powerful personality. Raja Rammohun Roy with his farsighted vision and great intellectual genius handled almost all the problems of the time. Armed with reason and justice, he fought untiringly against the meaningless rigidity of customs and conventions, and thereby tried to revive the lost vitality, vigour and health of the nation.

From a study of the Raja's life and work, it can be seen that he was a great believer in the Monotheism of the Upanishads, though influenced by his study of Islamic literature. He insisted on the Upasana (worship) of one formless (*nirakara*) Universal Being (*Brahman*). He rejected what is commonly known as the polytheism of Hinduism. While believing in Upanishadic Monotheism, he held that scriptural authority had to be tested in the light of individual reason. The Raja by his studies in original of the Islamic, Christian and other scriptures, carried his Monotheistic faith to the higher plane of Universalism, and thereby tried to bring about national unity and a harmony between different faiths. He conceived the idea of a Universal Religion. We all feel today the need of harmony amongst the diverse faiths of the world, and our eyes are turned to the ideal of a Universal Religion. We have all experienced in recent years how conflict of religious ideals has created so much bad blood in our country, though we continue to talk glibly of religious toleration and synthesis of religions.

How can we harmonise the diverse conflicting creeds and faiths of the human world, from the fetishism and crude beliefs of the ignorant, and the dogmas of different historical and ethnic groups, to the supreme knowledge of the Jnani ? To arrive at a solution of this difficult problem, we must realise that religion is not a mere intellectual assent to any sacred scripture or to any theological dogma ; it is essentially a spiritual experience. Since religion is spiritual experience and the response of the human personality to the One Fundamental Reality in different ways, a synthesis of religions must have within itself spiritual ideals, sometimes apparently contradictory, because suited to the inclinations of different groups of men in society. It is

needless for me to say that such a synthesis of religions cannot be realised by a mere eclectic process. It is a happy sign that this important question is agitating the minds of many leaders.

It is not possible for me here to enter into a discussion about the solutions of various problems which the Raja suggested for the advancement of our country. But I think it may not be out of place for me if I attempt to compare very briefly the Raja's movement with the later movement which our great leader Swami Vivekananda inaugurated towards the end of the last century. Both the movements are mainly based on the philosophy and gospel of the Upanishads, and stand for unification of diverse creeds, sects and castes of the country under the banner of a universal philosophy.

Swami Vivekananda also gave us a universal philosophy and religion based on Vedanta. He preached the synthesis of different faiths, for which he received inspiration from his Divine Master, and wanted 'root and branch reform' in the country. His presentation was however different, and his approach towards national consolidation was more fundamental.

It is difficult to say whether Swami Vivekananda's exposition is re-interpretation of any particular classical school, monistic, monotheistic or otherwise. Speculations, characteristic of academic philosophers, were absent from his teachings, because he strongly held the view that Vedantic truths were records from the books of spiritual experience rather than mere intellectual ratiocinations, and that the apparently contradictory views found in the Upanishads are nothing but different readings of the Absolute at different psychological conditions of man's spiritual evolution during his search for the solution of the mysteries of existence. So the Swami did not put forward exclusively the claim of any particular system of philosophy as the only true meaning of Reality.

Thus the views of different schools of thought were blended into a complex harmony by him. Though he traced the foundation of the universe in One Eternal Self, he was not a Mayavadin pure and simple. He accepted Tantrik Saktivada and Vaishnava and Saiva Theism too. The result of this synthetic approach was that the Swami accepted all and rejected none. He pointed to us that 'Reality' cannot be shut up in a single formula.

Realising the Divine immanence, the Swami gave us the message of our Divine heritage, and inspired us towards progress in all directions by manifesting it. In India, we had long forgotten the message of freedom, which the early

seers of the Upanishads gave us centuries ago. Weakness over-powered us, and expansion of life stopped. Instead of gaining strength, we were trying to defend ourselves by narrowing our vision and making artificial divisions. On the one hand, a shadow of distrust was moving a section of the society, and it began to question the wisdom of our ancient Acharyas ; on the other hand, many were busy only with the non-essentials instead of getting at the root of things.

The movements of Rammohun and Vivekananda have both tried to awaken the nation to its cultural self-consciousness, each according to its own light and revelation. I have put only the main ideas of the two movements. Diversities of views are bound to exist, because variety, not uniformity, is the law of creation. But we can certainly find points of contact when we stand on the common platform of service of humanity.

Raja Rammohun Roy was the pioneer in modern times who inaugurated a movement of 'service' for the country and humanity. Swami Vivekananda by his message also inspired us to the service of the 'Narayana in Man', and thereby reminded us of the subjective aspect of social service.

We may try to justify social service, cosmopolitanism, collectivism, or any other altruistic movement on moral, intellectual or pragmatic ideals ; but unless we feel the fundamental spiritual unity of all beings, human problems are hard to solve. Man may conquer his environments, but unless he outgrows his lower nature, harmony will remain only the pious dream of a few philosophers. Service of humanity should therefore be inspired by the spiritual idealism of sacrificing the ego on the altar of an all-embracing Divinity. In studying the idealistic aspect of our civilisation, I find that this thought coloured all our social activities. Though it may appear paradoxical, the much abused 'caste system' also had at its background such an attempt of the spiritualisation of the social organism.

Whatever may be our particular views, let us accept this great occasion as an opportunity of expressing our mutual fellowship on the universal platform of Humanity in our common march towards light and progress. Let us hope and pray that this august assembly in memory of one of the greatest men of the modern times may herald the end of all bigotry, narrowness, fanaticism, sectarianism and racial animosity, which are shaking the very foundations of human civilisation. May peace and harmony reign supreme everywhere ! OM TAT SAT. SANTIH, SANTIH, SANTIH.

12

Pandit Rishi Ram, B.A.

Missionary, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Lahore, on

Rammohun from the standpoint of the Arya Samaj.

Before trying to understand the work of Raja Rammohun Roy from the view-point of the Arya Samaj, it is necessary to know the position of the Arya Samaj,—what it is, and what it stands for. The Arya Samaj, to start with, does not preach a new religion, nor is it a sect among so many others under Hinduism. It is a movement started by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1875 to purify Hinduism of the social and religious abuses which are no essential parts of it, and which crept into it when the Vedic studies were discontinued and forgotten. The Arya Samaj is trying to restore Hinduism to its pristine purity and glory. Aryan culture and religion as found in the Vedas and Vedic literature are grand and sublime, and have a message for the whole of mankind.

Taking his stand on the rational interpretation of the Vedas, Swami Dayanand preached the worship of one God, who is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, blissful, unborn, without any form, the maker and supporter of the whole universe. He condemned idol worship and worship of gods and goddesses so prevalent in Puranic Hinduism. He preached immortality of the human self, and pre-existence and rebirth according to the theory of Karma so universally accepted by the Hindus. He stood against caste system as based on birth, but advocated the fourfold division of men according to their profession and merits, thus solving the problems of inter-caste marriage, inter-dining and untouchability. He emphasised the need of the four Asramas of Brahmacharya, Garhastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa in individual life as contributing to the highest physical and moral welfare of the people. His whole programme of religious, social and educational revival, while it appealed to the intellect and to the patriotism of the Hindus, had its inspiration in the Aryan scriptures. He did not know a word of English, and his whole teaching was the outcome of the study of, and actual living up to, Vedic ideals. He repudiated the isolation of Hindu religion, and opened its doors to persons of all races and countries. He actively preached this religion to all, and directed the members of the Arya Samaj to carry these beneficial teachings to all corners of the world. Such, in short, is the genesis of the Arya Samaj movement.

Now with regard to the work of Raja Rammohun Roy. He is undoubtedly the first Hindu born in a high and privileged caste who, shattering all the fetters of blind custom and superstition, penetrated through the deep layers into the source of our true spiritual and national well-being. It can be better imagined than described,—the utter darkness of ignorance in which religion was shrouded at the time. Religion had been reduced to a mere mechanical performance of certain ceremonies without any consideration of their ethical and moral consequences. It was like a dark night of Amavasya, in which the groans of the widows burnt alive on the funeral pyres of their husbands were of no avail. Salvation was supposed to be won by people getting crushed under the wheels of the Car of Jagannath, or being killed by the axe at Kashikarvat. Worship of God was identified with the mere repetition of certain names, and the putting of certain outward marks on their body, without any reference to the moral life of the worshippers. Raja Rammohun Roy had the unusual moral courage to rebel against all these practices. The all-consuming passion of his life was his devotion to the worship of One God who is the maker and governor of this universe, and he could not tolerate any doctrine or practice which went against this principle. After gaining a thorough knowledge of the scriptures of other religions, he took up the study of Sanskrit literature, and to his great relief and delight he found the core of the Hindu scriptures also advocating the worship of one God. He thundered forth authorities from the Upanishads and the Vedanta, generally supposed to be included in the Vedas at that time. The study of the four Samhitas, Rik, Yajus, Saman, and Atharvan, properly speaking the four Vedas, was not popular, nor were they understood at that time. They were considered prescribing mere ceremonies and rituals and the worship of different natural elements. Raja Rammohun Roy went up to the Upanishads and the Vedanta. Swami Dayanand went a step further, and proved that the four Vedas were not only the foundation of the whole Aryan culture and philosophy, but they also inculcated the worship of one God under various attributes and names.

The chief characteristic of this Vedic monotheism is that it is absolutely unalloyed and pure ; no personality, however great, is indispensable for the Vedic conception of the worship of God. The history of the Aryan race is full of names of great sages and great teachers. Call them prophets or incarnations, if you like ; but they are all historic personages ; they come and go ; but God is the Master of all beings existing beyond the limits of time.

स एष पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात् ।– *Yoga-karika. 1, 26.*

Raja Rammohun Roy stood for this theism. He not only rejected the deities of Hinduism, but stood against deification of historic persons in other religions as well.

Raja Rammohun Roy gave full importance to the authority of the scriptures, and conformed to the belief in the Vedas in the generally accepted sense. In his *Defence of Hindu Theism* he says :—"From the perusal of these texts, I trust, he will be convinced that the Veds not only treat of astronomy, medicine and arms, but also of morality and natural philosophy, that all arts and sciences that are treated of in other Sastras were originally introduced by the Veds." In the *Introduction to the Abridgment of the Vedant* he says :—"In order, therefore, to vindicate my own faith and that of our early forefathers, I have been endeavouring for some time past to convince my countrymen of the true meaning of our sacred books." When the Brahmo Samaj was started, the worship was conducted purely on the basis of the Hindu Scriptures.

The Arya Samaj admits the essential unity of all religions in so far as the quest for the Infinite is common everywhere, and that there is a certain standard of morality which is recommended and preached by all. But if from this view, the idea is deduced that all religions are the same, and it matters little whether a man belongs to one religion or the other, the Arya Samaj does not accept it. The Arya Samaj appreciates the bright features of other religions, but at the same time it claims that Aryan religion and philosophy have a special message for humanity, that they must survive and contribute their share to the knowledge and happiness of the world. There are Hindus also, who declare themselves to be universal and cosmopolitan in their belief and sympathies, and say that salvation is after all in every religion, and if Hindus pass on to some other creed, there also they will obtain salvation, and therefore it is not a matter to be agitated and worried over. The Arya Samaj cannot appreciate this attitude, and reads in it the signs of demoralisation and deterioration.

We have to ascertain the attitude of Raja Rammohun Roy in this connection. He had universal sympathy, no doubt, and appreciated the good points of all religions. But to say that he was for the conversion of the Hindus to Christianity or any other religion is far from the truth. His was a devotional mind, and he was in search of a place where he could offer worship according to his convictions. He for a time thought that a Unitarian Church might prove a common ground for persons of all denominations who are for the worship of one God; and so he exerted himself for its establishment. It is a fact that this exotic plant

did not flourish, and withered away very soon ; while the Brahmo Samaj, started on the basis of the Vedas, at once appealed to the imagination of the Hindus and got a firm hold in no time.

Raja Rammohun Roy gives his own religious creed in a letter to a Christian friend, wherein he writes :—"In conformity with the precepts of our ancient religion, contained in the holy Vedant, though disregarded by the generality of the moderns, we look up to one Being as the animating and regulating principle of the whole collective body of the Universe." His faithful adhesion to Aryan religion in outward symbol is shown by his keeping the sacred thread up to the last moment of his life.

It is a matter for gratification that compared with the times of Raja Rammohun Roy and Swami Dayanand, there is at the present moment better mutual understanding of different religions, and greater appreciation of one another's good points, and less of hostile criticism. Let us hope that this process of good-will and better understanding will continue to progress, and ultimately bring unity among mankind.

I have to deal with one point more, and that is Universal Brotherhood. Today the world is suffering through being divided into a number of water-tight compartments, each looking to the other as an enemy. This is due mostly to the lack of realisation of this ideal of human brotherhood. But it is one thing to preach this doctrine, and quite another to observe it in practice. Unless we go deep into human nature, these exclusive tendencies will remain. If my humanity and feeling of brotherhood come into play only towards people who belong to my country, race or creed, it is no brotherhood at all ; it is pure and simple communalism. The Vedas declare the final goal of universal brotherhood and universal consciousness in the following mantras :—

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं, ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥
यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद् विजानतः ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

—*Isopanishad of the Yajurveda.*

दृते दृंह मा मित्रस्य मा चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षन्ताम् । मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे । मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे ।—*Sukla Yajurveda Samhita. 36, 18.*

This is the sublime goal enunciated by the highest Aryan scriptures ; but it requires a background of deep spiritual knowledge and enlightenment and practice.

Raja Rammohun Roy worked for this ideal throughout his life. He was deeply concerned in the freedom movements of all peoples of the world, whether in Europe, in America or elsewhere, and he felt elated whenever he heard of their success. He carried on a successful crusade against the inhuman custom of *Sati*, for which he will always be remembered with gratitude by future generations.

To summarise, Rammohun Roy was the first Indian of modern times to revive the ancient Aryan culture, and sow the seed of all those reforms which go to strengthen a people, and bring happiness and glory to them. Swami Dayanand, later on, developed the same programme by his independent thinking, and adopted ways and means to carry it to a successful end.

The mission of both the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj being similar, it would have been a happy consummation of things, if a way could be found by which the two bodies could work in co-operation for the common object, viz. the social and spiritual uplift of India and the world at large. On this solemn occasion, when we have gathered to pay our homage to this Superman of modern times, let us join our hearts in prayer to the Almighty so that our hopes may be fulfilled in the near future.

13

Prof. Uttam Singh Gheba, M.A.

of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, on

Rammohun and Sikhism.

Raja Rammohun Roy was one of the greatest reformers of modern India, who not only worked in the field of religion, but also made a permanent mark in the spheres of social, political, and educational activities. He pulled down superstition from the pedestal of religion, condemned the worship of idols, gods and goddesses, and exhorted all men, in his thundering voice, to worship One Almighty God and no other. Like Guru Nanak, the Founder of Sikhism, he did not believe in the supernatural revelation of the Aryan Vedas and the Semitic scriptures (Koran and the Bible). Nor did he believe in the principle of intervention insisted on by the founders of several religions. But he took up the same attitude as Sikhism as found in Sri Guru Granth Sahib :

"Bed kateb sansâr sabhâon bâhira,
Nânak kâ pâdshâh dise zâhira,"

that is, "God is beyond all *Vedas* (Indian sacred books) and

katebas (Semitic sacred books) in this world ; Nanak's King of Kings is directly visible and manifest." Just as a wife needs no go-between to have access to her husband, so Atma (the soul) does not require the intervention of a prophet in order to have union with Paramatma (God). This monotheistic faith of Raja Rammohun Roy, which is common with Sikhism, and his loud voice against superstition and idolatry prevalent among the Hindus of Bengal, turned many away from him. It has been well said that "Humanity has a bad ear for new music." As is usual with great men and reformers, the Raja had to face much opposition from his own society, so much so that his parents were once forced to turn him out of their home. Yet he went forward undaunted, and did not cease to effect reforms. Before he left his motherland,—for good, as it proved,—he had laid deep the foundations of a new church named the Brahmo Samaj, which has done a vast amount of good work in Bengal, and its influence has spread even to the Punjab.

The time at my disposal does not permit me to review Rammohun's life with any sense of justice. Yet before resuming my seat I must point out to the young men of Bengal that it is Rammohun Roy to whom they should feel most grateful and highly indebted. For at a time when their society discountenanced English education and voyages abroad, whether for study or for any other purpose, it was Rammohun Roy who faced the displeasure of society for introducing them. It shows clearly that the Raja possessed a broad outlook on life and had ideas of internationalism. Apparently he shared the views of Guru Nanak, who himself went out of India in order to preach to the people of different parts of the known world that there is but One God, our Father, and that we are all His children. Like him the Raja also advocated the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man.

14

Rev. W. S. Urquhart, M.A., D.Litt., D.D., D.L.

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A Pilgrimage in Memory from a Christian standpoint

It is an honour to be asked to take part in this Centenary celebration of one of the greatest men that India has known. He has been described by Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal as a "multiple personality", and therefore he requires, even more than most great men, to be approached from many different

points of view. Perhaps therefore it may be permissible for one who did not belong originally to this country, although he has lived considerably more than half his life within its boundaries, to share with you in your tributes of appreciation.

It might indeed be possible for me to claim a specially close association, inasmuch as I represent a College which at the time of its foundation owed much to the assistance and encouragement of Raja Rammohun Roy. As is well known, it was he who provided Dr. Alexander Duff with the room in Chitpore Road where his College was first started, and who introduced to him his first five pupils, removing,—though not perhaps in a way of which Dr. Duff would have fully approved,—their initial prejudices. During the few months of the Raja's continued residence in Calcutta after the arrival of Dr. Duff, he gave constant encouragement to the young missionary, and it is interesting to speculate what the results might have been if their association had been a longer one. Perhaps the religious history of Bengal might have been different if the Raja had been permitted to return to Calcutta, and to renew his friendly co-operation with one to whom at the outset he had been so strongly attracted.

A Centenary affords an opportunity of making a pilgrimage in memory and of expressing our reverence, and in this way we atone for the "persecution and wilful neglect" which some great men may have suffered in their lifetime, and we absolve ourselves also from the accusation of indifference. And if there is any truth in Maeterlinck's beautiful idea that the well-being of the departed depends upon the extent to which their memory is cherished in the hearts of their descendants, who knows but that we may be rendering a positive service to those whom we would honour? At the same time there is danger to ourselves in these pilgrimages of thought if we do not make them in the proper spirit of resolution to profit by them, if we expend in mere retrospective sentiment the energy which ought to be devoted to prospective action. In this way, as has been suggested, "we evade our responsibility to those who are immeasurably superior to us by repudiating them" in deeds, however we may honour them in words. In the life of him whom we are commemorating, there is to be found an example which will protect us against such a danger, for if there is one characteristic which is outstanding above all others, it is that the Raja, with all his learning and culture, was not an intellectual dilettante, but constantly wedded thought with action, to the lasting benefit of his contemporaries and of succeeding generations.

He is worthy of our honour, for of him it has been well said that he "laid the foundation of all the modern movements for the elevation of our people." In virtue of his clearness of mind and activity of spirit, he began, indeed, in revolt, refusing to tolerate superstition or degrading practice ; but his revolt was never mere negation. It was the cutting edge of a positive action, and destruction was always followed in his thought and practice by reconstruction.

His activity was the outcome of a well-informed and balanced mind. By wide-ranging and deep study he had entered into possession of the religious and philosophic heritage of India, and his interst was not confined to one faith only. His knowledge of Hindu, Mohammedan, Buddhist and Christian scriptures was profound, and he found truth in them all, evincing a marvellous power of synthesis and escaping from many of the weaknesses of mere eclecticism. His tolerance may have been intellectually unlimited, but practically it was always guided and limited by his respect for the welfare of the individual, and by his abhorrence of injustice or of anything that contributed to the degradation of personality. His devotion to study did not result in an attitude of detachment from practical concerns, but on the contrary his ruling motive was an application of spiritual principles to the world in which he lived.

Of the many ways in which he applied his wisdom to religious and social reform, it is perhaps unnecessary to speak. They are familiar to us all. He applied his garnered wisdom to the removal of idolatrous practices of a grosser kind, especially to such as were prejudicial to life or morality. His name is especially identified with the campaign against *Suttee*, and he did much for the furtherance of legislation which made it illegal. He devoted himself to the emancipation of women and to the removal of their legal disabilities in respect of inheritance and other matters. He took a deep interest in the reform of education, opposing the scholastic methods of those who were reverential only towards the old, and unreceptive of the new, and who showed sometimes in their mental attitude and in their practice that the more learned they became, the more ignorant they grew. In a sense he was the precursor of Macaulay in the institution and development of English education ; and again it might be interesting to speculate as to how far a continuance of the influence of the Raja upon this movement might have modified its onesidedness and abruptness of contrast, and hastened that *rapprochement* between Eastern and Western culture which is now happily increasingly in evidence.

It is the breadth of his reforming enthusiasm which is most of all impressive. His criticism and his sympathy alike were directed towards other countries as well as his own. He was never a believer in the principle, "My country, right or wrong." The rights and the wrongs of humanity were for him independent of geographical location. He was a nationalist-internationalist, and freedom of mind and deliverance from oppression were ideals which he cherished for all the peoples of the world. One instance of this was that, as is well known, he took as deep an interest in the passing of the British Reform Bill as if it had immediate effect upon his own country. He felt indeed that

> "Whatever wrong is done
> To the humblest and the weakest,
> 'neath the all-beholding sun,
> That wrong is also done to us."

As has been said, "He initiated us into the modern era of world-wide co-operation with humanity."

Above all, religion was the guiding principle of his thought and of his life. Beyond the warring of the creeds, he sought for a unity which might bring peace, and the ultimate secret of his love for all humanity was his belief that all men belonged to the family of the one Heavenly Father.

To a large extent he was influenced by the principles of the religion of Jesus Christ, and one of his most interesting and influential publications was a compilation from the Christian Gospels under the title of "The Precepts of Jesus". To a Christian it may seem surprising that he did not draw certain conclusions, which seem to us possible and even inevitable, from these Precepts, and that he was not more ready than was actually the case to assign to Jesus Christ that central place which is given to Him in Christianity. As I have already hinted, it might in this connection be both useful and instructive to indulge in a little historical speculation as to what might have happened if the association between the Raja and Dr. Duff had continued for six years instead of for six months, or if the Raja had been born three quarters of a century later. As it was, he was involved in a somewhat profitless controversy with some of the missionaries prior to 1830, who defended the Christian faith by means of categories of thought which nowadays we should not be inclined to use. We hold firmly to the truth underlying the Christian Trinitarian doctrine, but we should express it differently, and it was the rigid form of expression which seems to have constituted the chief obstacle in the mind of the Raja. Both he and his opponents in controversy were

unable to get beyond the associations of the Greek term for "substance" and the Latin term for "person" with all their concrete metaphysical implications, and thus their points of view were needlessly divergent. They felt compelled on the one side to vehement defence of, and on the other side to vehement opposition to, the idea of "one Substance and three Persons". To the Raja this savoured of tri-theism and was in contradiction to his central doctrine of monotheism. To the orthodox Christians of his day it seemed to be of the very essence of their faith, and thus there was on both sides a misunderstanding of the fundamental truth of Christianity. In the Raja's time many were driven from a Trinitarian to a Unitarian position by a mis-statement of the Trinitarian position ; and contrariwise, and for the same reason, many failed to reach the Christian faith that would have been the natural home of their spirits. We are not nowadays concerned to apportion metaphysical importance carefully between God and Christ, as if they were rivals one of the other ; and yet this was what the Raja thought, rightly or wrongly, that the missionaries were attempting to do, whilst he himself was equally concerned to show that Jesus Christ was of lesser metaphysical importance than God.

When nowadays we say of Christ, and believe of Him, that "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," we take this to mean that in the incarnate Christ we can discover the character of God in so far as that is related to humanity. We worship God as He is revealed to us in the face of Jesus Christ, and that revelation we consider to be the crowning answer of God to the age-long questing of humanity. Christ is the window through which we look upon God.

And we gladly join with the Raja in appreciating the value that is in other faiths, in admitting the wonderful unity of the consciousness of God in all humanity, in holding that nowhere has God left Himself without a witness. But we think that there is also another side to the matter, and that here we have to ponder not only upon the marvellously unified searchings of humanity, but also upon the answer of God,—the answer given in the actuality of Christ breaking into the world's history, as Immanuel, God with us. No one could have put the question more strikingly, more penetratingly, more comprehensively, than Raja Rammohun Roy ; and I think he was also waiting for the answer, and that he would have heard it more clearly if the voice in which he was invited to listen had been more sympathetic in its tones.

15

Ramananda Chatterjee, M.A.

on

Rammohun's Monotheism as an Aid to Nation-building

Of the three maxims in politics, in ethics, and in religion, which Rammohun Roy often repeated, the one on religion was from the Persian Poet Sadi, and runs thus in English translation :—

"The true way of serving God is to do good to man."

This puts us on the track of the mainspring of his multifarious activities for the welfare of his countrymen and of mankind in general. It was his religious faith. As I have observed elsewhere, all earnest attempts at reform, whether religious, social, political, or of any other description, are based on faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and justice and humanity, which is synonymous with a belief in the moral government of the universe. This is an essential element in religious belief. One would, therefore, expect to find Raja Rammohun Roy, the first all-round reformer in modern India, the first to act on the principle of the interdependence of different kinds of reform,—"above all and beneath all a religious personality. The many and far-reaching ramifications of his prolific energy were forth-puttings of one purpose. The root of his life was religion. He would never have been able to go so far or to move his countrymen so mightily as he did, but for the driving power of an intense theistic passion." He "made no secret of the theistic passion which ruled his life."

Yet, at the many meetings held on the occasion of the anniversaries of his death during a long course of years, and on the occasion of his Centenary also, speakers and writers have, for the most part, dwelt on his achievements as a social reformer, a political worker, a literateur, a linguist, and an educationist,—very often not even mentioning the fact of his having been a religious reformer, one who worked hard to uproot polytheism and idolatry.

This neglect of the religious side of his personality led the late Dr. Mohendra Lal Sircar, a great physician, and founder of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, to observe at the Rammohun Roy Anniversary held in Calcutta on the 27th September 1889 :—

"In connection with the versatility of the late Raja Rammohun Roy, I hope I shall be permitted to take this opportunity of saying that it is a matter of great rejoicing

that he should be claimed by all sections of the community as a man who ought to be admired. Gentlemen, while it is a matter for rejoicing, I must at the same time raise my warning voice that we should not lose sight of the great central truth to the propagation of which the late Raja Rammohun Roy devoted his whole life ; and that was the unity of the Godhead. The great aspiration of the late Raja Rammohun Roy was to enable the human mind to acquire the highest truth which it was capable of acquiring, and that was to have a just, correct, and true idea of the unity of the Godhead. I need not dwell and dilate upon the various reforms which he inaugurated ; those reforms are going on rapidly enough. But I must say,—and say with the greatest regret,—that the greatest reform at which he aimed, namely, to instruct his countrymen in the unity of the Godhead, has not made adequate progress. Of course, you will rejoice at the establishment of Brahmo Samajes throughout India as evidence of the progress of the great central truth which the late Raja Rammohun Roy tried to inculcate. But compared with the masses of this country, who are deeply ignorant of the very fact of the unity of the Godhead, these various churches are but infinitesimal drops to propagate that noble idea. We have not done sufficient to propagate this idea and to do real homage to the Raja. With all our boasted education, we are, gentlemen, practically atheists. I am an outspoken man, and may be blamed for making these remarks ; but still, when I recollect what the late Raja Rammohun Roy did for the abolition of idolatry, and what we have since been doing towards the same object, I must say that we cannot congratulate ourselves upon our energy."

At present there is little or no open advocacy of such idolatry as involves sexual immorality, at least among the educated classes,—though widely prevalent idolatry of certain kinds in the South involves the immoral and degrading *devadasi* system. Among an appreciable section of the educated public there is condemnation—at least in theory—of such idolatry as involves cruelty to animals, though it is practised over wide areas on a large scale. But opposition to and condemnation of idolatry as an error, a superstition, and an irrational practice unworthy of and unnecessary for civilized human beings, are practically confined to the Brahmo Samaj and some members of the Arya Samaj.

The discussion of this topic is not merely of academic interest. There is a great diversity of opinions on various matters of vital interest to the nation. But perhaps the greatest measure of agreement that exists relates to the elevation of the political status of the people of India. Opinions differ as to what that status ought to be in the

immediate future, or ultimately; and opinions differ also in relation to the methods to be adopted for winning that status. But all agree that a change for the better is necessary. It is also agreed that for effecting that change the people of India ought to unite and be better organized. What stands in the way of such unity and organization? I shall not here refer to all the obstacles that hinder unity or make unity difficult for all religious communities. I shall take only the case of the Hindu community, and refer to an obstacle or two which stand in the way of their unity.

It is a matter of common knowledge that caste and 'touchability' and 'untouchability' keep the Hindu community divided. But it is not always borne in mind that the worship of some particular god or goddess in preference to or to the exclusion of others, is, or at least has been, another dividing factor. Sectarian quarrels, sometimes of a sanguinary character, between Vaishnavas and Saktas, Saivas and Vaishnavas, worshippers of Siva and worshippers of the snake-goddess Manasa, and so on, used to disturb the mutual relations of different Hindu sects to a great extent in the not distant past. Perhaps they have not yet disappeared from all parts of the country among all strata of Hindus. To the extent that they have disappeared, the result may be due to religious indifferentism, or to the fact that present-day worship of some deity or other is not as sincere and ardent among all sections of the Hindus as it used to be in days gone by. In any case, it cannot be denied that the Hindus would be a more united and better organized people, if they individually and collectively worshipped One God in spirit and in truth, than they are now. If loyalty and obedience to one supreme political leader make for the solidarity and strength of a people or a political party, can it be doubted that devotion to the One True God would make a people united and strong? That the feeling is growing among Hindus that there ought to be collective or congregational worship among them, and the growing practice of *sarvajanina* or all-caste Durga Puja among Bengali Hindus, indirectly prove that unity of worship makes for national solidarity.

Faith in the Supreme Spirit has an energizing and strengthening effect, as it implies belief in the moral government of the universe, and faith in the ultimate triumph of truth, justice and righteousness. Hence, worship of the One True God and meditation on His attributes cannot but make for the vigorous conduct of all righteous national struggles and lead to their ultimate success.

For these and other similar reasons, Walter Bagehot wrote in his *Physics and Politics*,—"Those kinds of morals

and that kind of religion which tend to make the firmest and most effectual character are sure to prevail, all else being the same ; and creeds or systems that conduce to a soft limp mind tend to perish, except some hard extrinsic force keep them alive. ... Strong beliefs win strong men, and then make them stronger. Such is no doubt one cause why Monotheism tends to prevail over Polytheism ; it produces a higher, steadier character, calmed and concentrated by a great single object ; it is not confused by competing rites, or distracted by miscellaneous deities. Polytheism is religion *in commission*, and it is weak accordingly."

Whether literate or illiterate, Hindus of some education will readily admit that the worship of the formless Parabrahma is the highest religion taught in the Hindu Sastras. At the same time the vast majority of Hindus, including many persons of remarkable intellectuality, will urge that the worship of Parabrahma is meant only for great sages, and that image-worship is necessary for the generality of men, who cannot grasp the idea of the Formless Supreme Deity. But it is found that among some sects of Hindus, the *Bauls* of Bengal for example, even illiterate peasants are found to be great devotees of the Formless Supreme Spirit. So it is hard to believe that those classes of Hindus who continue to produce successful students of metaphysics, higher mathematics, higher science, etc.,—some of whom are able to do very abstruse original work in philosophy and science,—must be confined to the worship of images, and must not aspire to worship the Formless Oversoul in spirit and in truth, which is man's highest privilege, duty and bliss.

16

D. J. Irani

on

Rammohun and the Teachings of Zoroaster

Studying the life of Rammohun Roy, the one thing that strikes me most prominently is how truly he was the representative of the highest and purest in Aryan thought and culture. As a Hindu, he was a real Hindu expounding the finest teachings of Aryan thought ; and further, one is surprised to see how wonderfully the Aryan thoughts of a pure Hindu are closely akin to the teachings of Zoroaster, the Great Persian, the first Aryan Prophet.

In the 19th century, in the midst of the population of almost a continent, viz. 220 millions of people, hide-bound by hoary customs and a deep-rooted caste system, he boldly proclaimed that the ultimate authority for religion and morality was reason, and the interpreter of such reason was the conscience of each individual rational soul. Whilst we admire this courageous leader for standing by his conviction to appeal to 220 millions of Hindus to come out of the antiquated moulds in which their religion, morality and life were all cast, we can well imagine him carrying about the flame from the same torch that Zoroaster the Persian Aryan lit some thousands of years ago. Amongst the ancient and untamed Aryans round about him, Zoroaster with an equal courage asked the people to use their God-given intellect in the choice of their creeds and beliefs. With an amazing foresight he asked them to use their own individual judgment, and distinguish between right and wrong, and thereby bring ultimate victory to truth and right, basing their religion and conduct on reason and conscience.

The following quotation from Rammohun Roy may be taken as interpreting almost faithfully the law of Asha (the Divine Law of Harmony and Order), expounded by Zoroaster in the Gathas, which, with the use of the Good Mind, would take man and his civilisation to the summit of perfection :

> "A notion of the existence of a supreme superintending power, the Author and Preserver of this harmonious system, who has organised and who regulates such an infinity of celestial and terrestrial objects, and a due estimation of that law which teaches that man should do unto others as he would wish to be done by, reconcile us to human nature, and render our existence agreeable to ourselves and profitable to the rest of mankind."

Rammohun Roy's conception of the One Being who is the foundation of the hamonious organisation of the Universe is the exact interpretation of the concept of Asha expounded by Zoroaster in the Gathas. His appeal to distinguish Truth from Untruth and to find religion in Truth and Truth alone, echoes the thoughts of Zoroaster in the following Yasnas :—

> In the beginning there were two Primal Spirits, twins acting in consort ;
>
> These are the Good and the Evil in thought and in word and in deed.
>
> Between these two, let the wise choose aright ; be good, not base.

Of these twin Spirits, the evil-doer chose the worst one ;

While the follower of the Holy Spirit of Goodness, which clothes itself with the massy heavens for garment, chose the Truth ;

And so will those who would fain please the Wise Lord with righteous deeds, perform with faith in Truth.

To his admirers the teachings of Rammohun Roy as reflected in his life and works are too well-known. Let them compare the same with the teachings of Zoroaster as below summarised, and we shall see how a true and great Aryan of the 19th century is a worthy interpreter of the teachings and culture, not only of one branch of the ancient Aryans, but of the whole Aryan race, including its ancient Persian branch. Zoroaster the Great Persian taught :—

1. That there is one Supreme Being, the first Cause of all Causes, and the Ultimate Reality. Pythagoras, the Greek philosopher, who flourished in the 6th century before Christ, informs us, that the ancient Persians conceived of Him as having Truth for His Soul and Light for his body.

2. That the only religion for humanity was the Religion of Truth. An Avestan fragment says : "Aevo Pathao Yo Ashahe," meaning "There is only one path, and that is the path of Truth."

3. That the destiny of the world and of humanity was to progress towards perfection; that men and women were equal, and were equally entitled to the light of knowledge and wisdom.

4. That every man and woman should, of his or her individual choice, and using his or her individual intellect, choose between truth and untruth, between good and evil.

5. That it was the heritage of all men, whether rich or poor, prince or peasant, equally to reach perfection here and immortality hereafter.

6. That men should, following the Path of Truth and using always the Good Mind, establish the Kingdom of God,—of equality, harmony and peace, in this very world.

For this purpose Zoroaster in his Gathas taught that the Supreme Being, the great Designer of the Universe, was the embodiment of six immortal attributes, and that on all men and women living in their lives the first four of the divine attributes, the last two would be gifted. Zoroaster says :—

(*a*) Throughout our lives we must acquire the first attribute of Asha Vahishta, i.e. of perfect truth and righteousness.

(*b*) We must cultivate the attribute of Vohu Manah, i.e. the Good Mind; that is, our minds should be good and poised and resting at perfect peace. Then wisdom will guide our life, and every day we shall deliberately live on the principles of good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

(*c*) We must endeavour to help towards the establishment and maintenance of a righteous and good Government for the welfare of all, rich and poor, noble and peasant, through making our own the third attribute of Khshathra, i.e. Holy Sovereign Power, whereby the Kingdom of God can be realised for humanity in this very world.

(*d*) We must cultivate the attribute of Spenta Armaiti, i.e. devotion, love and zealous work for the welfare of humanity.

On our making these four beautiful divine attributes our own, we help the world in its progress towards perfection, and ourselves attain to peace and perfection here, which is the fifth attribute of Haurvatat, and when the final call comes, attain to the sixth attribute of Immortality in the presence of the Divine Essence in the Abode of Light and Song ever hereafter.

Rammohun Roy was a great Hindu Aryan. At the same time, he was equally a true follower of the teachings of the Great Persian Aryan, Zoroaster.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

17

Mrs. Hemalata Sarkar

on

যুগ-সারথি রামমোহন

(Rammohun, the Pioneer of the Modern Age)

ইংরাজ শাসনের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে এ দেশে এক নব যুগের সূচনা হইয়াছে। একাল আর সেকাল নাই। এই নবযুগের সারথি রাজা রামমোহন রায়। এই জন্যই রামমোহন রায়কে "Father of New India বলা হয়। কোকিল যেমন নব ঋতুর বার্ত্তাবহ, তেমনি রামমোহন রায় নব যুগের বার্ত্তাবহ।

সাধারণ লোকদিগের সহিত মহাপুরুষের জীবনের প্রভেদ এই খানে। আমরা কথায় কথায় বলি, মানুষ অবস্থার দাস,—অর্থাৎ চারিদিকের অবস্থা বা ঘটনা-পরম্পরা মানুষের চরিত্র গড়ে, সময়ের ছাপ মানুষের চরিত্রের উপর থাকিয়াই যায়। কিন্তু রামমোহন রায়ের জীবন তাঁহার সমসাময়িক অবস্থার অনেক উপরে ছিল। তিনি যে সময়ে জন্মগ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন, সে বড় অন্ধকারময় যুগ। ভারতের ঐতিহাসিক ঘোরতর দুর্দ্দিনে তিনি বাংলা দেশের এক ক্ষুদ্র পল্লীতে জন্মগ্রহণ করেন। ১৭৭২ সালে তাঁর জন্ম হয়; তখন সবে মাত্র ১৫ বৎসর ইংরাজ কোম্পানী বাংলার ভাগ্যচক্র ঘুরাইতে আরম্ভ করিয়াছেন। তখনও মুর্শিদাবাদে বাংলার তক্তে মুসলমান নবাব বসিয়া আছেন,—যদিও তিনি নামে নবাব, কাজে ইংরাজের হাতের পুতুল। কিন্তু বাংলা তখনও মুসলমান নবাবের মুল্লুক, ইংরাজের প্রভুত্ব তখনও স্থাপিত হয় নাই। তার ফলে ভারত তখন অনাথ, মাতৃপিতৃহীন। এই অভাগা দেশের তখন ঘোর দুর্দ্দিন। পুরাতন মনিব স্বাধীনতা হারাইয়া, সোনার মুল্লুক হস্তচ্যুতপ্রায় বুঝিয়া, প্রজার সুখ দুঃখে উদাসীন, মমতাবিহীন। নূতন প্রভু প্রভুত্ব করিতে শিখেন নাই। দেশে না কোন শুভকর্ম্মের সূচনা আছে, না কোন সাধুকর্ম্মের অনুষ্ঠান আছে,—না কোন বিদ্যামন্দির, না কোন পুণ্যতীর্থ। দেশে গভীর বনজঙ্গল, আর লুটপাট ডাকাতি চলিতেছিল। সকলেই নিজ নিজ ক্ষুদ্র স্বার্থের চিন্তায় মগ্ন, আত্মরক্ষার্থ সকলেই উৎকণ্ঠিত। এমন দুর্দ্দিনে রামমোহনের জন্ম। তখন ছিয়াত্তুরে মন্বন্তরের পর বাংলা দেশ শ্মশান; প্রকৃতই শ্মশান হইয়াছিল। তখনও ওয়ারেন হেষ্টিংস ঈষ্ট ইণ্ডিয়া কোম্পানীর মালিক। ইতিহাসে বর্ণিত দেশের সে কথা মনে হইলে প্রাণ ব্যথিত হয়। সেই ঘোর অন্ধকারের মধ্যেও ভগবান্ বাংলার এক ক্ষুদ্র কোণে এত বড় উজ্জ্বল বর্ত্তিকা জ্বালাইতে বসিলেন। যেন দীন দুঃখীর ঘরে রাজতিলক-চিহ্নিত পুত্রের আবির্ভাব হইল।

রামমোহনের জীবনের মহত্ত্বের সন্ধান তাঁহার পরিবারে, দেশে, কালে কোথাও খুঁজিয়া পাই না। এ যেন কক্ষচ্যুত কোন উজ্জ্বল জ্যোতিষ্ক অন্ধকারের কোলে আসিয়া অকস্মাৎ খসিয়া পড়িল। তাঁহাকে তাঁহার দেশ ও সময় বুঝিল না। তাঁহাকে সমাদর করিতে পারে এমন শক্তিও তাহাদের ছিল না। অদ্ভুতকর্ম্মা বিধাতা, তাঁহার লীলা বোঝে সাধ্য কার? ঘন তমসাবৃত যুগে কি উজ্জ্বল আলোক তিনি জ্বালাইয়া তুলিলেন!

বর্ত্তমান যুগ রামমোহন-যুগ। বর্ত্তমান ভারতের যাহা কিছু দুর্ব্বলতা, অভাব, অভিযোগ, সমুদয়ের মহৌষধি সঙ্গে করিয়া তিনি আসিয়াছিলেন। ইতিহাস বলিতেছে, রাজা রামমোহন রায় ধর্ম্মসংস্কারক, সমাজসংস্কারক, শিক্ষার পথ প্রদর্শক, বঙ্গ সাহিত্যের জনক, ব্যাকরণ ভূগোল জ্যামিতি ইত্যাদির লেখক, সংবাদপত্রের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা, ইংরাজি শিক্ষার প্রবর্ত্তক। তিনি এদেশে সুশিক্ষার জন্য বিদ্যালয় প্রতিষ্ঠা করেন, সতীদাহ নিবারণ করিবার জন্য প্রাণ সমর্পণ করেন। তিনিই রাজনীতি লইয়া প্রথম আন্দোলন করেন। যখন

ইংরাজশাসন সবেমাত্র প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইয়াছে, তখনই শাসনপ্রণালীর ত্রুটির বিষয়ে তাঁহার মনোযোগ আকৃষ্ট হয় এবং তিনি উৎকৃষ্টতর পন্থা দেখাইয়া দেন। ভারতের কোটি কোটি নির্ব্বাক প্রজার জন্য তিনি ব্যাকুলচিত্তে ইংরাজ পার্লিয়ামেণ্টের সম্মুখে কি গম্ভীর ভাষায় কি মহান্ আবেদন করিয়াছিলেন! এই বিশাল ভারতে এমন কোন্ সম্প্রদায় আছে যে, তাঁর নিকট অপরিশোধ্য ঋণে ঋণী নয়?

ভগবান্ তাঁহাকে অসামান্য দেহ-মনের শক্তি দিয়া এ জগতে পাঠাইয়াছিলেন। যেমন দুর্লভ কান্তি তাঁহার ছিল, তেমনি দেবোপম উন্নত বপু, তেমনি জ্যোতির্ম্ময় বিশাল নেত্রযুগল, তাহাতে হৃদয়ের প্রচণ্ড তেজ প্রতিফলিত হইত। যেমন তাঁহার মেধা, তেমনি হৃদয়, তেমনি প্রচণ্ড কর্ম্মশক্তি। বিরাট হিমালয়ের পার্শ্বে বালুকাস্তূপ যেমন দেখায়, তেমনি সেই বিরাট মহাপুরুষের পার্শ্বে আমাদের সন্ততিবৃন্দ।

ভারতের দুঃখিনী বিধবাগণ তখন পতির চিতায় ভস্মীভূত হইত। তিনি নিজের ভ্রাতৃজায়াকে দেখিলেন, আত্মীয়স্বজন তাঁহাকে ভস্মসাৎ করিল। তখন হইতে বিধবাদিগের প্রাণরক্ষার জন্য তিনি যে সকল কথা বলিয়াছিলেন, তাহা পাঠ করিয়া চক্ষে জল রাখিতে পারি না। তিনি কত না শাস্ত্র-সিন্ধু মন্থন করিয়াছেন, কত না তর্ক করিয়াছেন! দুঃখিনী নারীজাতির প্রতি কি তাঁহার গভীর সহানুভূতি! তিনি এক স্থানে লিখিয়াছেন, "তোমরা বল, স্ত্রীলোক স্বভাবতঃ অল্পবুদ্ধি, অস্থিরান্তঃকরণ, বিশ্বাসের অপাত্র, অনুরাগ ও ধর্ম্মজ্ঞানশূন্য হয়।" তার পর তিনি স্ত্রীজাতির সমুদয় নিন্দাক্ষালন করিয়া বলিয়াছেন, "স্ত্রীলোকের বুদ্ধির পরীক্ষা কোন্ কালে পাইয়াছেন যে বিনা কারণে তাহাদিগকে অল্পবুদ্ধি কহেন? আপনারা বিদ্যা শিক্ষা, জ্ঞানোপদেশ স্ত্রীলোককে প্রায় দেন না। তবে তাহারা বুদ্ধিমতী কি না, ইহা কিরূপে নির্ণয় করেন?"—আজ রামমোহন পরলোক হইতে দেখিতেছেন, নারীজাতির আজ কত উন্নত অবস্থা!

রামমোহন আবার বলিতেছেন, "দ্বিতীয়তঃ, তাহাদিগকে অস্থিরান্তঃকরণ কহিয়া থাকেন, ইহাতে আশ্চর্য্য জ্ঞান করি। কারণ, যে-দেশের লোক মৃত্যুর নাম শুনিলে মৃতপ্রায় হয়, সেই দেশের স্ত্রীলোক অন্তঃকরণের স্থৈর্য্য দ্বারা স্বামীর উদ্দেশে অগ্নি প্রবেশ করিতে উদ্যত হয়, ইহা প্রত্যক্ষ দেখেন। তথাচ কহেন যে তাহাদের অন্তঃকরণের স্থৈর্য্য নাই। তৃতীয়তঃ, বিশ্বাসঘাতকতার বিষয়। এ দোষ পুরুষে অধিক, কি স্ত্রীতে অধিক, উভয়ের চরিত্র দৃষ্টি করিলে বিদিত হইবে। প্রতি নগরে প্রতি গ্রামে বিবেচনা কর যে কত স্ত্রী পুরুষ হইতে প্রতারিত হইয়াছে, আর কত পুরুষ স্ত্রী হইতে প্রতারিত হইয়াছে। আমরা অনুভব করিতে পারিব, প্রতারিত স্ত্রীর সংখ্যা দশ গুণ বেশী হইবে। স্ত্রীলোকের এই এক দোষ স্বীকার করি যে, আপনাদের ন্যায় অন্যকে সরল মনে করিয়া হঠাৎ বিশ্বাস করেন," ইত্যাদি।—ভারতের দুঃখিনী নারীগণের

জন্য এমনি করিয়া সেই মহাত্মা সেই যুগে বলিয়া গিয়াছেন, যখন একটি নারীও তাঁহাকে দুঃখ জানাইতে বা কৃতজ্ঞতা দিতে আসে নাই। নারীর দায়াধিকার স্থাপনের জন্যও কত না সংগ্রাম তিনি করিয়াছেন! আজ আমি সমগ্র নারীজাতির হইয়া তাঁহার প্রতি কৃতজ্ঞতা জ্ঞাপন করিতেছি।

যাঁহার কর্ম্মশক্তির এই বিরাট প্রয়াস অন্তরের গোপনতার মধ্যে প্রচ্ছন্ন ছিল, কোন্ উৎস হইতে তাঁহার জীবনধারা এমন প্রচণ্ড শক্তিতে প্রবাহিত হইত? অন্তর বলিতেছে, তাহা তাঁহার গভীর ধর্ম্মবিশ্বাস। ভারতবর্ষ ঋষির দেশ, সন্ন্যাসীর দেশ। এ দেশে ধর্ম্মপ্রাণ ব্যক্তির অভাব কোন দিনই ঘটে নাই। কিন্তু রামমোহনের ধর্ম্মভাবের ভিতরে একটি বিশেষত্ব ছিল; সেইটি এই নবযুগের বাণী। সে বাণীর বিশেষত্ব,—ব্রহ্মোপলব্ধিই সকল সাধনার উৎস, সকল কর্ম্মপ্রচেষ্টার মূল। এখানেই ধর্ম্ম এবং কর্ম্মের সমন্বয়; যুগ-ধর্ম্মের ইহাই প্রধান লক্ষণ। স্বাভাবিক নিয়মে এ ধর্ম্মের ভিতর সন্ন্যাসের স্থান নাই। মানবজীবনের সর্ব্ব বিভাগে এই ধর্ম্ম রূপ ধরিবে। প্রধানতঃ এ ধর্ম্মে মানবাত্মার স্বাধীনতা ঘোষিত হইয়াছে; এই স্বাধীনতাই স্বরাজ্যের প্রতিষ্ঠা করিবে। এ ধর্ম্মে জন্মগত হীনতা অস্বীকৃত হইয়াছে, সেই জন্য জাতিভেদ বা অস্পৃশ্যতার স্থান এখানে নাই।

রাজা রামমোহন রায় সকল ধর্ম্মশাস্ত্র মন্থন করিয়া যে সত্যরত্ন সংগ্রহ করিলেন, তাহাই তাঁহার বিশ্বজনীন ধর্ম্ম। এখানেই সকল ধর্ম্মের মিলনভূমি। হিন্দুর ধর্ম্মশাস্ত্রে যে অমূল্য নিধিসকল গুপ্ত ছিল, তাহা তিনিই প্রথমে উদ্ধার করিলেন। একদিন তিনি ইংলণ্ডে গৌরবের সঙ্গে বলিয়াছিলেন যে, ইউরোপীয় সাহিত্যে আমি এমন কিছু দেখিলাম না, যাহা হিন্দুদিগের দার্শনিক তত্ত্বসমূহের সঙ্গে তুলনা করা যাইতে পারে। বিরাট বিশ্বের সম্মুখে আর কে এই গৌরব-বাণী শ্রদ্ধার সহিত উচ্চারণ করিয়াছিল? যদি 'পুরুষ-সিংহ' এই আখ্যা কাহারও প্রতি প্রয়োগ করা যায়, তবে সে বঙ্গ-জননীর সুসন্তান মহাত্মা রাজা রামমোহন রায়। বাঙ্গালীকে ভীরু বলিয়া লোকে ঘোষণা করে। এই বাঙ্গালীর ঘরেই এই পুরুষ-সিংহের জন্ম হইয়াছিল, যিনি স্বাধীনতার অমোঘ বাণী ঘোষণা করিয়াছিলেন।

এই দুর্দ্ধর্ষ বীর কেবল কৃপাণ হস্তেই ভারতের যুগ-সন্ধিস্থলে অবতীর্ণ হন নাই; যথার্থই এক হাতে তাঁর কৃপাণ ছিল, আর এক হাতে হার। তিনি সর্ব্ববিধ কুসংস্কারের উপর উন্মুক্ত কৃপাণ প্রচণ্ড বেগে যেমন চালাইয়াছেন, তেমনি তিনি আর এক হস্তে স্বদেশবাসীর গলায় ব্রহ্মজ্ঞানের দিব্য মালাগাছি পরাইবার জন্য ব্যাকুল হইয়াছিলেন। ধর্ম্মসাধনায় তিনি বিজাতীয় ভাব অবলম্বন করেন নাই। গায়ত্রী মন্ত্র জপ করিয়া তিনি ব্রহ্মোপাসনা করিতেন। একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ং তাঁহার ইষ্ট মন্ত্র ছিল। তিনি বাইবেল কোরাণ বেদবেদান্ত সবই জানিতেন, কিন্তু আসনবদ্ধ হইয়া উপাসনা করিতেন। জাতীয়তার গুরু রামমোহন।

কি জ্ঞান, কি পাণ্ডিত্য, কি হৃদয়, কি প্রচণ্ড কর্ম্মশক্তি, কোন বিভাগেই বিন্দুমাত্র দুর্ব্বলতা রামমোহনে খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যায় না। চিত্তবৃত্তির এমন অপূর্ব্ব সামঞ্জস্য আর দেখি নাই। তিনি মনুষ্যত্বের একটি পূর্ণ আদর্শ। সার্ব্বভৌমিক ধর্ম্ম, সার্ব্বভৌমিক উপাসনা, ইহাই ছিল তাঁহার মূল মন্ত্র। জাতি বর্ণ সম্প্রদায় নির্ব্বিশেষে একমাত্র সত্যস্বরূপ ভগবানের পূজা, ভারতবর্ষে ইহা তাঁহার নূতন বাণী। ধর্ম্মবিশ্বাস অন্তঃসলিলা নদীর ন্যায় তাঁহার অন্তরের মূলে নিত্য প্রবাহিত ছিল। তাঁহার জীবন আরম্ভ হইল ধর্ম্মবিশ্বাস প্রতিষ্ঠা করিতে গিয়া, জীবন শেষ হইল ঐ কথা বলিতে বলিতে।

আজ স্মরণ করি, কে বলিত, "ভাই, আমাদের বিশ্বজনীন ধর্ম্ম!" কার চক্ষে ধারা বহিত, সেই বিশ্বজনীন ধর্ম্মের কথা বলিতে গিয়া! কার বাণী এই,—"ভাই, তুমি হিন্দু হও, খৃষ্টান হও, যে কোন ধর্ম্মবিশ্বাসী হও না কেন, এস এখানে; একবার সমবেত ভাবে মিলিত কণ্ঠে সেই বিশ্বপতির নাম কর। বল, তমীশ্বরাণাং পরমং মহেশ্বরং। জান না কি, 'ভয় করিলে যাঁরে না থাকে অন্যের ভয়, যাঁহাতে করিলে প্রীতি জগতের প্রিয় হয়', সেই বিশ্বেশ্বরের দরবারে হিন্দু মুসলমান খৃষ্টান কাঁধে কাঁধ দিয়া বসে।"—সেই দরবারে ভগবান্ তাঁহার জন্য স্থান করিয়াছেন। ধর্ম্মই সেই একতা সেই মিলন ঘটাইতে পারে, যাহাতে মূলেই মিলন হয়; যাহাতে ভিতর হইতে মিলন গড়িয়া উঠে, বাহির হইতে মিলন গুঁজিয়া দিতে হয় না। যতদিন হিন্দু মুসলমান না বুঝিবে যে হিন্দুর দেবতা ও মুসলমানের ঈশ্বর একই, এক জনের হাতেই সকলে আছেন, ততদিন হিন্দু মুসলমানের প্রকৃত মিলন হইবে না। যদি কোন পথ থাকে, তবে ঐ রামমোহনের প্রদর্শিত পথই একমাত্র পথ। ধর্ম্মের ভিতর দিয়া সকলে 'একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ং' মন্ত্র জপ কর; নান্যঃ পন্থা বিদ্যতে অয়নায়।

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Mrs. Shams-un-Nahar Mahmud

মুস্‌লিম নারীর অর্ঘ্য

(The Homage of Muslim Womanhood)

প্রাতঃস্মরণীয় রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের,—মুক্তিমন্ত্রের সেই মহা উদ্গাতা, নব্য ভারতের স্রষ্টা রামমোহন রায়ের,—স্মৃতিবাসরে তাঁর প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা নিবেদনের সঙ্গী হ'তে আপনারা আমায় ডেকেছেন; এজন্য আমার ধন্যবাদ গ্রহণ করুন।

নারীর প্রগতি, নারীর কল্যাণ, নারীর মঙ্গলের জন্য রামমোহন কি করেছেন, তা আপনারা সবাই জানেন। সতীদাহ নিবারণ, নারীর দায়াধিকার, ইত্যাদির জন্য তিনি কতখানি ক'রে গেছেন, তাও আর নতুন ক'রে বল্‌বার দরকার নেই। আমি নারী, সেই হিসেবে নারীর পরম কল্যাণকামী এই মহাপুরুষের উদ্দেশে আজ আমি শুধু সহস্র সালাম জানাই।

আমি শুধু নারী নই, আমি মুসলমান নারী, সেই হিসেবেও রামমোহনের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা নিবেদন আমার কর্ত্তব্য। শুধু কর্ত্তব্য বল্‌লে ভুল হবে। আজ আমি সগৌরবে বলি, মুসলমান নারী হিসেবে রামমোহনের জীবন আলোচনায় আমার বিশেষ অধিকার। কারণ তৌহিদ-মন্ত্রী, সাম্যবাদী হজরত মোহাম্মদের শক্তিধর শিষ্য ছিলেন এই রামমোহন।

সবাই জানেন, অল্প বয়সে তিনি পাটনায় গিয়েছিলেন। সেই সময়ে তিনি ইস্‌লামের সত্যিকার শিক্ষা এবং মুসলমান সভ্যতার সঙ্গে গভীর ভাবে পরিচিত হবার সুযোগ পান। ইসলামের যা কিছু মূল্যবান্, যা কিছু স্মরণীয়, তার সারটুকু তিনি গ্রহণ কর্‌তে পেরেছিলেন,—এবং এমন পরিপূর্ণ ভাবে পেরেছিলেন যে তা থেকে একটা নতুন সৃষ্টি তাঁর পক্ষে সম্ভবপর হয়েছিল। কাজেই আমরা দেখ্‌তে পাই আধুনিক জীবনের প্রয়োজনে এক গৌরবময় নব সৃষ্টির ভিত্তি পত্তন কর্‌তে গিয়ে তিনি শুধু বেদ উপনিষদ থেকেই, শুধু হিন্দুর সভ্যতা এবং কৃষ্টি থেকেই, উপাদান গ্রহণ করেন নি; বরং মুসলমানের কোরাণ, হজরত মোহাম্মদের জীবনী, মোতাজেলা দর্শন, সুফী সাহিত্য, এবং মুসলমানী সভ্যতা থেকেই উপকরণ সংগ্রহ করেছিলেন সব চেয়ে বেশী। একথা মনে ক'রে আজ মুসলমান গৌরব অনুভব কর্‌তে পারে যে, রামমোহনের প্রতীক উপাসনার প্রতি বিতৃষ্ণা, বিশ্ব ব্রহ্মাণ্ডের অধীশ্বরের মহিমা সম্পর্কে তাঁর ধারণা, বিধর্ম্মীদের সঙ্গে ব্যবহার, নারী জাতির প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা, সর্ব্বোপরি লোক-শ্রেয়ঃ ও বিচার-বুদ্ধিকে প্রাধান্য দেওয়া, ইত্যাদি বিষয়ের জন্য তিনি ইসলামের কাছেই সব চেয়ে বেশী ঋণী।

রামমোহন ইসলামের কাছ থেকে অনেক কিছু গ্রহণ করেছিলেন, একথা বল্‌বার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে এ'ও স্বীকার কর্‌তে হবে যে, ইসলামকে তিনি নতুন ক'রে আবিষ্কারও করেছিলেন। মৌলানা রুমী বলেছিলেন, "আমি সারটুকু গ্রহণ কর্‌লাম, 'হাড্ডি'টুকু কুকুরকে বিলিয়ে দিলাম।" রামমোহনও তেমনি সব কিছুকে বাদ দিয়ে ইসলামের শুধু সারটুকু গ্রহণ কর্‌তে পেরেছিলেন। এই যে তিনি ইসলামকে নতুন ক'রে আবিষ্কার কর্‌লেন,—স্বীকার কর্‌তেই হবে, সেই হিসেবে রামমোহন আধুনিক মুসলমানের একজন অগ্রবর্ত্তী নেতা।

সবাই জানেন, মধ্যযুগে হিন্দু মুসলমানের সভ্যতা এবং ধর্ম্মের সংঘর্ষ থেকে উদ্ভূত হয়েছিলেন নানক, কবীর, দাদূ, আকবর, আবুল ফজল এবং দারা শেকো,—যাঁরা চেয়েছিলেন হিন্দু মুসলমানের মিলন ক'রে ভারতে এক অভিনব জাতি সৃষ্টি কর্‌তে। অনেক পরবর্ত্তী হ'লেও রামমোহন ছিলেন এঁদেরই বংশধর।

আজ বোধ হয় সকলেই স্বীকার কর্‌বেন যে রামমোহনের প্রদর্শিত পথই প্রকৃত মঙ্গলের পথ। ভারতের কল্যাণের জন্য তিনি যে পথ নির্দ্দেশ করেছিলেন, আজো বোধ হয় সেই শ্রেষ্ঠতম পথ-নির্দ্দেশ।

বড় দুঃখের বিষয় যে রামমোহনকে আমরা আজো গ্রহণ করতে পারিনি। শুধু মুসলমানেরাই যে তাঁকে স্বীকার করতে পারেন নি, তা নয়। হিন্দু সমাজও যে পেরেছেন, এমন মনে হয় না। তাঁদের মধ্যে এখনো অনেকে মধ্যযুগীয় ভাবোন্মত্ততা নিয়ে আছেন; আর কেউবা ঘুরপাক খাচ্ছেন হৃদয়ারণ্যের গহনে। একথা অপ্রিয় হলেও মিথ্যা নয় যে তাঁদেরও শুভবুদ্ধি আজ শোচনীয় ভাবে আচ্ছন্ন।

রামমোহনের শতবার্ষিক উৎসব করা সার্থক হয়, যদি ভারতের হিন্দু মুসলমান আজ তাঁকে নতুন ক'রে স্বীকার করতে শেখেন। তাঁকে যদি আমরা পরিপূর্ণ ভাবে গ্রহণ করতেই না পারি, তা হ'লে বিলিতী প্রথার অনুকরণে এই Centenary meeting করার কোনো মানেই হয় না।

ইংলণ্ডের দুঃসময়ে ইংরেজ কবি বড় দুঃখে বলেছিলেন—

"Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour,
England hath need of thee."

দেশের এই বেদনার্ত্ত মুহূর্ত্তে আজ আমরাও বলি, "রামমোহন, তোমাকে আমাদের বড়ই দরকার! তুমি যদি আজ বাঁচিয়া থাকিতে!!"

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Sja. Hemlata Devi

(*A great-great-granddaughter of Rammohun Roy*)

(i)

উৎকৃষ্ট নমুনার মানুষ

(A Man of a Noble Type)

প্রাণিজগতে যেমন নানা জাতির প্রাণীর আবির্ভাব দেখা যায়, এবং তার প্রত্যেক শ্রেণীর প্রত্যেকটি প্রাণী যেমন সেই শ্রেণীর উৎকৃষ্ট নমুনা নয়,—দেহের দিক থেকে কোনোটি বিকলাঙ্গ, কোনোটি আকারে বেঢপ-বেমানান, কোনোটি প্রাণধারণের পক্ষে নির্জ্জীব,—আবার কোনোটি সুস্থ, সবল, সতেজ, সুন্দর; কিন্তু উৎকৃষ্ট নমুনা ব'লে ধরা যেতে পারে, শ্রেণীবিশেষের মধ্যে তেমন নমুনা হয়তো একটিও খুঁজে পাওয়া যেমন একান্ত দুর্লভ,—মানুষ-জগতেও তাই।

দেড়শ' বছরের কিছু আগে একটি মনুষ্য-সন্তান বাংলাদেশে বাঙালী ব্রাহ্মণের ঘরে জন্মে' পৃথিবীর জন্য কিছু কাজ ক'রে,—শত বৎসর আগে দূর বিদেশে গিয়ে শরীর ত্যাগ করেছিলেন। ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তান জন্মেইছিলেন চেতনা-ভরা প্রাণ, সজাগ মন, ও স্বচ্ছ উজ্জ্বল তীক্ষ্ণ বুদ্ধি নিয়ে। দেশীয় সাধনার অভ্যাসে তাঁর প্রাণ-চৈতন্য উদ্বুদ্ধ হ'য়ে এক সত্যে জাগ্রত হয়েছিল। সকল শাস্ত্রগ্রন্থে একের সন্ধান পেয়ে স্বাভাবিক জ্ঞান-দৃষ্টি তাঁর প্রজ্ঞা-দৃষ্টিতে পরিণত

হয়েছিল। তাই সাধনমন্ত্র ওঁ সম্বল ক'রে তিনি সুদুস্তর সাগর পার হয়েছিলেন নির্ভয়ে। জাগ্রত প্রাণ সোণার-কাঠি সঙ্গে থাকতো তাঁর সব সময়। যাতে লাগ্‌তো ছোঁয়া, আলো পড়্‌তো তারই গায়ে, পথ খুল্‌তো সকল খানে।

ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তান অবতার নন; অবতার হ'লে বাদ পড়্‌তেন পৃথিবীর সুখ-দুঃখ থেকে। অবতার না হ'লেও কিন্তু তিনি কাজ করেছেন অবতারেরই মত'। তিনি প্রেরিত পুরুষ নন; কিন্তু কাজগুলি তাঁর এগিয়ে চলেছে প্রেরিত পুরুষদেরই মত' প্রেরণার বেগে।

দু'কথায় এই ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তানের সম্যক্ পরিচয় দিতে পারে, এমন ধীশক্তি-সম্পন্ন মানুষ পৃথিবীর কোনো জাতির মধ্যে আছে ব'লে আমাদের জানা নেই। কথায় তাঁর পরিচয় পাওয়া সম্ভব নয়; কাজে তাঁকে চোখ মেলে দেখ্‌তে হবে পৃথিবীর গতির পথে। হিন্দু-মুসলমান-খৃষ্টানের ধর্ম্মবিশ্বাস শত বৎসরে এগিয়ে পড়েছে একের দিকে। নারীর মনুষ্যত্ব মুক্তিলাভ করেছে পাষাণচাপা অন্ধকারের অতল গহ্বর থেকে। সভ্যতা নূতন আকার নিচ্ছে, নরনারী উভয়ের সম্মিলিত সাহায্যে। ছোট বড় সমান হ'য়ে এক শ্রেণীতে উঠে দাঁড়াচ্ছে নূতন জ্ঞান ও শিক্ষার গুণে। পৃথিবী মুহুর্মুহুঃ সাড়া দিচ্ছে সেই ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তানের সত্য বাণীতে। মানুষ-জাতির মধ্যে এই উৎকৃষ্ট নমুনার মানুষটিকে বিস্ময়ের চোখে চেয়ে দেখ্‌তে হয় বারম্বার। আজ তাঁর শতবার্ষিক উৎসবের দিনে পৃথিবীর সমগ্র নারী-জাতির তরফ থেকে তাঁকে শ্রদ্ধার কনকাঞ্জলি অর্পণ ক'রে আমরা কৃতার্থ হচ্ছি।

(ii)

ঘরোয়া ব্যাপারে রামমোহন

(Rammohun in his Family)

[This article by Sja. Hemlata Devi, being of special interest, is added as a supplement to her Address.]

রাজা রামমোহনের বড় ছেলে রাধাপ্রসাদের দুই কন্যা। তাঁর পুত্র সন্তান ছিল না। বড় মেয়ে চন্দ্রজ্যোতি, ছোট মেয়ে মৈত্রেয়ী। নাম দু'টি রাজারই রাখা। রাজার বড় পৌত্রী চন্দ্রজ্যোতির দশ বৎসর বয়সে বিবাহ হয়। রাজা স্বয়ং উপস্থিত থেকে বিবাহ দেন মুর্শিদাবাদ-নিবাসী ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তান শ্যামলাল চট্টোপাধ্যায়ের সঙ্গে। সমাজচ্যুতির ভয়ে রাজার পৌত্রীকে সে সময়ে অনেকেই বিবাহ করতে নারাজ হন, যদিও চন্দ্রজ্যোতি অসামান্যা সুন্দরী ছিলেন। দশ বৎসরের পৌত্রীটির পিতামহকে মনে ছিল স্পষ্ট। পর-জীবনে চন্দ্রজ্যোতি নিজের নাতী-নাত্‌নীদের কাছে রাজার সম্বন্ধে অনেক গল্প করতেন। দুঃখের বিষয় তার মধ্যে অনেকগুলি ছোটখাট গল্প এখন আমার স্মরণ থেকে স'রে গেছে। দু'একটা টুকরো যা মনে আছে, তাই জুড়ে গেঁথে বাঙলার ছেলেমেয়েদের কাছে তাঁর শতবার্ষিকে আজ উপহার দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

চন্দ্রজ্যোতি বল্‌তেন :—রাজাকে আমার স্পষ্ট মনে পড়ে। দুঃখ হয় যে একালের কাউকে দেখাতে পার্‌লাম না, কি বলিষ্ঠ দেহখানি ছিল তাঁর। ভোরে উঠে দু'হাতে দুটো ভীমের গদার মত মুগুর নিয়ে ভাঁজ্‌তেন তিনি খেলার মত হেলায়। বিশ-বাইশটা জলভরা সারি সারি সাজান কলসী স্নানের সময় রাজা মাথায় ঢাল্‌তেন চৌকিতে ব'সে স্বয়ং একটির পর একটি, একবার ডান হাতে একবার বাঁ হাতে নিয়ে।

দুপুরে খেতে আস্‌তেন অন্দর মহলে প্রতিদিন। তার ব্যতিক্রম হ'ত না কখনো। বাড়ীর মেয়েরা ছোট বড় সবাই ঘিরে বস্‌ত' তাঁকে খাওয়ার সময়। রান্না হ'ত অনেক পদ,—শুক্তানি থেকে পরমান্ন পর্য্যন্ত, প্রতিদিন। সঙ্গে থাক্‌তো সরুচাক্‌লী খানকতক, রাজা ভাল বাস্‌তেন ব'লে। পাক কর্‌তেন ঘরের মেয়েরা স্বহস্তে সব ; তখনকার দিনে ঠাকুর রাখার চল ছিল না কোনো পরিবারে, সবাই জানে। রাজা রাঢ় দেশের মানুষ, কড়াইয়ের ডাল পছন্দ কর্‌তেন খুব বেশী, চন্দ্রজ্যোতি বল্‌তেন। বাহির মহলে সারা দুপুর কাজ ক'রে বৈকালে পায়ে হেঁটে তিনি বেড়াতে বেরুতেন। যাওয়ার আগে অন্দরে এসে খানিকক্ষণ ব'সে যেতেন নিয়মিত ; তারও ব্যতিক্রম ঘট্‌ত না কখনো। চেয়ার পড়্‌ত' তিন খানি ; দু'খানি দুই স্ত্রীর, একখানি নিজের। স্ত্রীদের আগে না বসিয়ে রাজা নিজে বস্‌তেন না কখনো। সেকালে সেটা একটা অভূতপূর্ব্ব ব্যাপার। অন্দরের আর পাঁচ জন উঁকি ঝুঁকি মার্‌তো ; পরস্পর বলাবলি কর্‌তো, "দেখ দেখ, কর্ত্তা দেওয়ানজি দাঁড়িয়ে আছেন ; বস্‌বেন না, স্ত্রীরা না বস্‌লে !"

চন্দ্রজ্যোতির বিবাহ দেন রাজা কল্‌কাতার বাড়ীতে ; দেশে গিয়ে কাজ করার যো ছিল না তাঁর তখন,—জাত গেছে। সম্প্রদান করান রাজা পুত্রবধূ যজ্ঞেশ্বরী দেবীকে দিয়ে, চন্দ্রজ্যোতির বাবা রাধাপ্রসাদকে দিয়ে না করিয়ে। সম্প্রদানের সময় নিজে দাঁড়িয়ে ছিলেন বাইরে। বিবাহ হ'ল যথারীতি প্রচলিত অনুষ্ঠানে। রাজার পৌত্রীকে বিবাহ করায় শ্যামলাল নিজের দেশ মুর্শিদাবাদে যেতে পারেন নাই। তাঁর জ্ঞাতিভাইরা এখনো সেখানে বাস করেন। এই বিবাহের পরেই রাজা বিলাত যাত্রা করেন। ছোট পৌত্রী মৈত্রেয়ী দেবী তখন নিতান্ত শিশু, তাঁর রাজাকে আদৌ মনে ছিল না। চন্দ্রজ্যোতি বলেন, রাজা ভেঙে দিয়ে গেলেন কুলগুরু প্রথা, শিখিয়ে গেলেন নিজের ঘরের মেয়েদের ব্রহ্মমন্ত্রে উপাসনা, গায়ত্রী জপ। তাঁর ছোট পুত্রবধূ রমাপ্রসাদের পত্নী দ্রবময়ী দেবীকে ভোর রাত্রি থেকে মহানির্ব্বাণ তন্ত্রোক্ত ব্রহ্মপ্রতিপাদ্য শ্লোকগুলি আওড়াতে ইদানীং আমরা নিজের কানে শুনেছি। গায়ত্রী জপও কর্‌তেন দ্রবময়ী দেবী রীতিমত। যে গায়ত্রী মেয়েদের কানে শোনাও ছিল নিষিদ্ধ, রাজা এনে দিলেন তাকে ঘরের মেয়েদের আয়ত্তের মধ্যে ; ধর্ম্ম-সংস্কারে মেয়েদের বড় অধিকার পাওয়ার পথ খুল্‌লো প্রথম।

রাজার ছোট স্ত্রী উমা দেবী ছিলেন নিঃসন্তান। বড় স্ত্রীরই দুটি ছেলে, রাধাপ্রসাদ, রমাপ্রসাদ। রমাপ্রসাদ জন্মান রাধাপ্রসাদের জন্মের আঠার বৎসর পরে। জন্মসময় থেকেই বিমাতা উমা দেবী রমাপ্রসাদকে পালনের ভার নেন, একান্ত অনুরাগের সঙ্গে, স্বেচ্ছায়। পুত্রস্নেহে পালন করেছিলেন তিনি তাঁকে এত যত্নে, যে, যথেষ্ট বয়ঃপ্রাপ্ত হয়েও রমাপ্রসাদ জান্‌তেন না যে ইনি তাঁর বিমাতা কি গর্ভধারিণী। ভ্রাতুষ্পুত্রী চন্দ্রজ্যোতি ছিলেন বয়সে রমাপ্রসাদের প্রায় সমবয়সী; ভাইঝিকে রমাপ্রসাদ দিদি ব'লে ডাক্‌তেন। পিঠোপিঠির মত' দুজনে মারামারিও হ'ত। গল্প শোনা যায়,—শিশু রমাপ্রসাদকে পিতা রামমোহন পরীক্ষা করার জন্য দুই মায়ের সাম্‌নে একদিন বলেছিলেন, "কে তোমার মা, বলতো?" শিশু দৌড়ে গিয়ে বিমাতাকে জড়িয়ে ধ'রে ব'ললে, "এই"। পরজীবনে ঘটা ক'রে রমাপ্রসাদ যে মাতৃশ্রাদ্ধ করেছিলেন, সে এই বিমাতারই। কলিকাতার ভবানীপুর অঞ্চলে চন্দ্রনাথ চ্যাটার্জ্জি ষ্ট্রীট্‌টির নামকরণ যাঁর নামে, সেই চন্দ্রনাথের উমা দেবী ছিলেন আপন পিসীমা। বড় স্ত্রীর মৃত্যু হয় রাজা দেশে থাক্‌তে আগেই; ছোট স্ত্রী জীবিত ছিলেন রাজার বিলাত যাত্রা কালে। যাওয়ার খবর কিন্তু রাজা তাঁকে জানিয়ে যান নাই। রাজা জাহাজে রওনা হ'য়ে যাবার পরে সে খবর তিনি পান। রাজা আর ফির্‌তে পারলেন না;—ওঁর সঙ্গে আর দেখা হ'ল না, এই শোকটা উমা দেবী জীবনে কখনো ভোলেন নাই।—ঘটনাগুলি রাজার পৌত্রী চন্দ্রজ্যোতির চোখে দেখা; কানে শোনা খবর মাত্র নয়।

মহাতেজস্বিনী রামমোহন-জননী তারিণী দেবী সাধারণ নারী ছিলেন না। পরিবারের ছিলেন তিনি ফুল-বৌ, তাই শ্বশুরকুলে তাঁর ডাকনাম ছিল "ফুলঠাকুরাণী"। বিষয়বুদ্ধি ছিল তাঁর এতই প্রখর যে স্বামী জমিদারীর কাজ চালাতেন তাঁর পরামর্শ নিয়ে। বৈধব্যে তিনি স্বয়ং জমিদারী পরিচালনার ভার নিয়েছিলেন। জমিদার-সরকারের কর্ম্মচারীরা সময়ে সময়ে তাঁর আইনসংক্রান্ত কূট প্রশ্নে বিস্মিত ও চমৎকৃত হ'ত, শোনা যায়। একনিষ্ঠ দেবভক্তি তাঁর এতই ছিল প্রবল যে, দেবতার নামে প্রাণ-সম পুত্র রামমোহনকে বিধর্ম্মী জ্ঞানে পরিত্যাগ ক'রেছিলেন। মায়ে-ছেলেতে এ নিয়ে গোল বেধেছিল কম নয়। চন্দ্রজ্যোতি নিজের মা-ঠাকুরমার মুখে শুনেছিলেন,—দেশে গিয়ে রাজা একদিন মাকে প্রণাম কর্‌তে গেলেন পদধূলি নিয়ে। মা বল্লেন, "যে-সন্তান আমার ঠাকুরকে প্রণাম না করে, আমি তার প্রণাম গ্রহণ করি না।" রাজা এদিকে মাকে প্রণাম না ক'রে ফির্‌বেন না। ফলে তিনি রাধাগোবিন্দ বিগ্রহের সাম্‌নে মাথা নামিয়ে বল্‌লেন,—"মায়ের ঠাকুর, তোমাকে প্রণাম করি।" তবে তিনি মায়ের পায়ের ধূলো নিতে পেরেছিলেন।—(বঙ্গলক্ষ্মী, পৌষ ১৩৪০।)

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Mrs. Saralabala Sarkar

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নব্য বঙ্গ গঠনে রামমোহনের প্রভাব

(Rammohun and the Emergence of a New Bengal)

মহাত্মা রামমোহন রায়ের শতবার্ষিকীতে সমস্ত বাংলা দেশ এক হইয়া যোগ দিয়াছে। এই অভিনন্দন কেবল ব্যক্তিগত বা সম্প্রদায়গত শ্রদ্ধা নিবেদন নয়; ইহা যে সমগ্র জাতির শ্রদ্ধা-নিবেদন, আমরা এই শতবার্ষিক স্মৃতি-উৎসবে তাহা পূর্ণভাবেই অনুভব করিয়াছি।

সমগ্র জাতি যখন কোন এক অনুষ্ঠানে অথবা কোন মহান্ ব্যক্তির প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা-নিবেদনে আন্তরিক ভাবে মিলিত হয়, তখন, সে জাতির জাতীয় জীবনের যে কিছু পরিমাণে বিকাশ হইয়াছে, ইহা বুঝা যায়। আর সেই বিকাশের সহিত, যে-মহান্ ব্যক্তির প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা নিবেদন করা হইতেছে, তাঁহার জীবনের ও জীবনের কার্য্যাবলীর একটি বিশেষ সম্বন্ধ সূচিত হয়। এই সম্বন্ধের মধ্য দিয়াই জাতি তাঁহাকে অনুভব করে, স্মরণ করে, ও তাঁহার প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা-নিবেদন করে।

তাই আজ আমরা মহাত্মা রামমোহন রায়ের স্মৃতিপূজায়, তাঁহার ব্যক্তিগত জীবনের দিক দিয়া নয়,—সমস্ত বাংলাদেশের জাতি-বিকাশের সহিত তাঁহার জীবনের যে সম্বন্ধ সেই সম্বন্ধের দিক দিয়াই, তাঁহাকে বিশেষ ভাবে অনুভব করিতে চেষ্টা করিব। মানুষের প্রত্যেকেরই নিজের ব্যক্তিগত চরিত্র-স্বাতন্ত্র্য আছে। সেই চরিত্র-স্বাতন্ত্র্যেই মানুষ ধার্ম্মিক, অসাধু, ভাল, মন্দ, প্রভৃতি নানা প্রকার আখ্যা লাভ করে। সাধারণ মানুষের ব্যক্তিগত চরিত্রের প্রভাব অথবা কার্য্যের প্রভাব প্রায়ই গতানুগতিকতার সীমার মধ্যে আবদ্ধ থাকে। কিন্তু যে সকল ব্যক্তির চরিত্র ও কার্য্যের প্রভাব গতানুগতিকতাকে অতিক্রম করিয়া তাঁহাদের সমসাময়িক সমাজে একটা বিপ্লব আনয়ন করে, তাঁহাদিগকে আমরা সমর্থনই করি বা তাঁহাদিগের বিরুদ্ধতাই করি, সাধারণ শ্রেণীর অন্তর্ভুক্ত বলিয়া তাঁহাদিগকে মনে করিতে পারি না। রাজা রামমোহন রায় এই শেষের শ্রেণীর, অর্থাৎ অসাধারণ শ্রেণীর মানুষ ছিলেন।

'বিপ্লব' এমন একটি ব্যাপার, চূর্ণ করাই যাহার কাজ। সেই চূর্ণ করাটাই আমাদের চোখে পড়ে; কিন্তু ভাঙ্গার অন্তরালে যে নূতন গঠনের সূত্রপাত হইতেছে, তাহা সে সময় চোখে পড়ে না। তাই মহাত্মা রামমোহন রায় তাঁহার সমসাময়িক হিন্দু সমাজে যে একটা বিপ্লব আনিয়াছিলেন, তাহার ভাঙ্গার দিকটাই সে সময়ে বিশেষ করিয়া লোকের চোখে পড়িয়াছিল; ভাঙ্গার মধ্যেই নব গঠনের যে বীজ রোপিত হইতেছিল, সে দিকে দৃষ্টি পড়ে নাই।

'সমাজ' বলিতে বহু ব্যক্তির একত্রে মিলিয়া মিশিয়া বাস করা বুঝায়। মানুষ সামাজিক জীব; সমাজহীন অবস্থায় সে বাস করিতে পারে না। কেবল

তাহাই নয়, এই সমাজ-বন্ধনের উপরেই মানবসভ্যতার বিকাশ নির্ভর করিতেছে। মানুষ সমাজবদ্ধ হইয়া বাস না করিলে 'আত্মত্যাগ,' 'নৈতিকতা,' 'মনুষ্যত্ব' প্রভৃতি শব্দগুলির কোন অর্থই থাকিত না।

আদিম কাল হইতেই মানুষ সমাজবদ্ধ হইয়া বাস করিতেছে। অনেকে একত্রে বাস করিতে হইলে কতকগুলি নিয়ম প্রচলনের প্রয়োজন হয়। সেই নিয়মগুলির দ্বারা সমাজস্থ ব্যক্তিগণের মধ্যে শ্রেণী-বিভাগ, পরস্পরের সহিত সম্বন্ধনির্ণয়, ও সামাজিক সম্পদ ও পদমর্য্যাদা প্রভৃতির বণ্টন করা হয়।

কিন্তু সমাজগঠনের এই নিয়মগুলি অনেক সময় সকল ব্যক্তি বা শ্রেণীর পক্ষে সন্তোষকর হয় না। যদিও সমাজস্থ প্রত্যেক ব্যক্তিরই সামাজিক নিয়মের নিকট বাধ্যতা স্বীকার করিতে হয়, এবং সেজন্য নিজের ব্যক্তিগত ইচ্ছা প্রভৃতি কতকটা সংযত করিতে হয়, অর্থাৎ সমাজবাসী মাত্রকেই সমাজের জন্য কিছু আত্মত্যাগ করিতে হয়, কিন্তু সেই ত্যাগ সকলের ভাগ্যে সমান হয় না। সামাজিক বিধান কাহারও পক্ষে সুবিধাজনক, কাহারও পক্ষে বা দারুণ পীড়াদায়ক অত্যাচার স্বরূপ হয়।

সমাজগঠনের ইতিহাস আলোচনা করিলে দেখা যায়, প্রত্যেক সমাজেই উন্নত ও অবনত শ্রেণী আছে। এই অবনত শ্রেণীকে উন্নত শ্রেণীর সেবার জন্য অবনত করিয়াই রাখা হয়, উন্নত হইবার সুযোগ দেওয়া হয় না। প্রাচীনকালে যখন দাস-ব্যবসায় প্রথা ছিল, তখন গাভী প্রভৃতি পশুর ন্যায় মানুষও মানুষের সম্পত্তিস্বরূপ ছিল। দাস তাহার প্রভুর সম্পত্তি; দাসের শারীরিক পরিশ্রম দ্বারা প্রভু লাভবান্ হইতেন। স্ত্রীজাতিকেও পুরুষের অধিকারভুক্ত সম্পত্তি বলিয়া সমাজ মানিয়া লইয়াছিল। পুত্রকন্যাও পিতামাতার সম্পত্তির মধ্যেই গণিত হইত।

এমন অবস্থায় যদি সমাজবিদ্রোহী মনের ভাব কোন কোন শ্রেণীর মধ্যে দেখা দেয়, তাহা অস্বাভাবিক নয়; বরং একান্ত স্বাভাবিক। সমাজকর্ত্তাগণ নির্ব্বোধ ছিলেন না; বিদ্রোহ যে ঘটিতে পারে তাহা তাঁহারা বুঝিতেন। এইজন্য প্রায় সকল দেশেই সামাজিক নিয়মগুলির উপর ধর্ম্মের শিলমোহর দিয়া সেগুলিকে দৃঢ় করা হইত। কেননা মানুষ মানুষের প্রণীত নিয়ম লঙ্ঘন করিতে হয়তো সাহস করিতে পারে; কিন্তু ধর্ম্মের নিয়ম লঙ্ঘন করিতে অতি দুঃসাহসীও ভীত হইবে, ইহা নিশ্চিত।

মানুষের মনে আদিম 'ধর্ম্মভাবে'র উৎপত্তি কিরূপে হইল, এই প্রবন্ধের তাহা বিষয় নহে। তবে সকল দেশেই সমাজের সঙ্গে ধর্ম্মের সম্বন্ধ এত ঘনিষ্ঠ যে যাঁহারা সমাজ সংস্কার করিতে চাহিয়াছেন, ধর্ম্মের প্রচলিত মতবাদগুলির সহিত তাঁহাদের সঙ্ঘর্ষ অনিবার্য্য হইয়াছে। যে ধর্ম্মভাব মানুষের মনে প্রীতির অপেক্ষা ভীতিই বিশেষ করিয়া জাগাইয়া তুলে, তাহাকে 'ধর্ম্মভাব' বলা উচিত কিনা, ইহা ভাবিয়া দেখিবার বিষয়। 'ধর্ম্মভাব' মানুষের এমন একটি অনুভূতি, যে অনুভূতি লাভ করিলে কোন ভয়ই থাকে না, এমন কি

মৃত্যুভয়কেও মানুষ তুচ্ছ করিতে পারে, এবং কোন লাভের লোভই তাহাকে আবদ্ধ করিতে পারে না। সকল ধর্ম্মশাস্ত্রই এই ভাবে ধর্ম্মসম্বন্ধে ব্যাখ্যা করিয়াছেন। বিশেষতঃ হিন্দুদর্শনে 'বিগতভীঃ' হওয়া, অর্থাৎ ভয়কে অতিক্রম করাই ধার্ম্মিকের একটি বিশেষ লক্ষণ বলা হইয়াছে। কিন্তু প্রচলিত ধর্ম্মভাব তাহার একেবারে বিপরীত। ভগবান্‌কে দণ্ডধারী শাস্তিদাতা বলিয়া কল্পনা, ভীষণ নরকযন্ত্রণার নানারূপ বিস্তৃত বর্ণনা, এবং সেই সঙ্গে স্বর্গসুখের লোভ প্রদর্শন, প্রত্যেক ধর্ম্মেরই যেন একটা অঙ্গীভূত ব্যাপার। মানুষের বিচারবুদ্ধি ধর্ম্মের নামে যেমন অভিভূত হইয়াছে, এমন বোধ হয় আর কিছুতেই হইতে পারিত না। এমন অনেক প্রথা ধর্ম্মের নামে সমাজে অবাধে চলিয়া গিয়াছে, যে-সমস্ত প্রথা মানিয়া লওয়া মানুষের মনুষ্যত্বের পক্ষে দারুণ কলঙ্ক স্বরূপ। কেবল অসভ্য সমাজে নয়, সুসভ্য সমাজেও ধর্ম্মের নাম লইয়াই নির্দ্দয়ভাবে পশুবলি ও নরবলি চলিত। সুসভ্য রোমে ধর্ম্মের নাম লইয়াই খ্রীষ্টানদিগকে সিংহের মুখে ফেলিয়া দেওয়া হইত; পরবর্ত্তী কালে খ্রীষ্টিয় সভ্যতার আলোকপ্রাপ্ত খ্রীষ্টানগণও ধর্ম্মের বিচারালয়ে দোষী সাব্যস্ত করিয়া অনেক মানুষকে পুড়াইয়া মারিয়াছে। এইরূপ কত ব্যাপার,—যে সমস্ত ব্যাপার কোন মানুষই বিচারবুদ্ধি ও মনুষ্যত্বের দিক দিয়া সমর্থন করিতে পারে না,—ধর্ম্মের নাম লইয়া সেই সমস্ত ব্যাপার প্রকাশ্য ভাবে ও সমারোহের সহিত অনুষ্ঠিত হইয়াছে; অর্থাৎ সেই আচরণগুলি সমাজে সর্ব্বজন-সমর্থিত ভাবে গৃহীত হইয়াছে।

আমাদের এই ভারতবর্ষ পৃথিবীর মধ্যে আদিতম সুসভ্য দেশ। এই দেশে উপনিষদের ব্রহ্মতত্ত্ব প্রচারিত হইয়াছে, আবার এই দেশেই ধর্ম্মের নামে নরমেধ যজ্ঞ হইয়াছে। বৈদিক উপাখ্যানে আমরা দেখিতে পাই, দরিদ্র পিতা অসহায় পিতৃনির্ভর শিশুসন্তানকে মুদ্রা বিনিময়ে বলির পশুরূপে বিক্রয় করিয়াছেন; রাজাও তাহাকে রক্ষা করিতে অসমর্থ, কেননা সে বলির পশুরূপে ক্রীত হইয়াছে।

বৈদিক যুগের কথা ছাড়িয়া আমরা শতাধিক বৎসর পূর্ব্বের বাঙ্গলাদেশের হিন্দুসমাজের সতীদাহের কথা যদি এখন ভাবি, তাহা হইলে এই ভাবিয়া আশ্চর্য্য হই যে, যে-বাঙ্গালীর স্বভাবতঃ কোমল প্রকৃতি, সেই বাঙ্গালী কি করিয়া এই জীবন্ত নারীদাহ সমর্থন করিত? কেবল সমর্থন নয়, এই ব্যাপারে বাঙ্গালীই ভারতবর্ষের মধ্যে কৃতিত্বে অগ্রণী ছিল; কেননা বাঙ্গলাদেশে যত অধিক সতীদাহ হইয়াছে, ভারতবর্ষের মধ্যে কোন প্রদেশেই তত অধিক সতীদাহ হয় নাই।

এই সতীদাহ এখনও অনেকে সমর্থন করেন। অনেকে সতীদাহ ব্যাপারটির উপর এই বলিয়া সম্মান দেন যে, সতীদাহ প্রথায় সতীর পবিত্রতা, মৃত্যুভয়-তুচ্ছকারী সাহসিকতা ও দেবীভাব লোকের মনে একটি বিশেষ শ্রদ্ধা ও পবিত্র ভাব জাগ্রত করিত। কিন্তু এই যুক্তির কোনই মূল্য নাই। সতীর আত্মদানে সতীর সন্তানগণের (অর্থাৎ জাতির পুরুষগণের) মধ্যে

পবিত্রতার অথবা মৃত্যুভয়-তুচ্ছকারী সাহসের বিকাশ হইয়াছে, কিম্বা নারী-জাতির উপর সম্মানের ভাব বাড়িয়াছে, এরূপ পরিচয় অন্ততঃ বাঙ্গলাদেশে পাওয়া যায় না। বাঙ্গলাদেশে এত অসংখ্য সতীদাহ হইয়াছে, কিন্তু সমস্ত বাঙ্গলা খুঁজিয়াও সতীর একটি স্মৃতিচিহ্ন আবিষ্কার করা যায় না। কোন বংশ-তালিকায় সতীর আত্মত্যাগে বংশ পবিত্র হইয়াছে বলিয়া উল্লেখও দেখিতে পাওয়া যায় না। বাঙ্গলা দেশে সতীদাহ যেন একটি সাধারণ ব্যাপার। ইহার মধ্যে যে অসাধারণত্ব কিছু আছে, বিশেষ ভাবে শ্রদ্ধা ও সম্মানের কিছু আছে, সমাজের আচরণে সেরূপ মনোভাবের প্রকাশ পাইয়াছে বলিয়া কোন প্রমাণ নাই।

বরং নারীজাতি যে পুরুষের অধিকারভুক্ত সম্পত্তি, সেই ভাবটিই সতীদাহ ব্যাপারে বিশেষ করিয়া প্রকাশ পাইয়াছে। অন্যের হাত হইতে নারীদিগকে রক্ষা করিবার জন্য রাজপুতেরা জহর-ব্রতের অনুষ্ঠান করিত বটে, কিন্তু নিজেরাও সেই সঙ্গে যুদ্ধে মরিত। বাঙ্গলা দেশে সেরূপ দৃষ্টান্ত কোনখানে নাই।

নারী পুরুষের অধিকারভুক্ত সম্পত্তি, ভোগের উপকরণ, বা লুণ্ঠনের দ্রব্য, এই আদিম মনোভাব আজিও জনসমাজ হইতে একেবারে অন্তর্হিত হয় নাই; তবে সভ্যতার বিকাশে ক্রমশঃ এই ভাব পরিবর্তিত হইতেছে। ভারতবর্ষে মুখে নারীজাতিকে অনেক উচ্চ সম্মান দেওয়া হইয়াছে বটে, কিন্তু কার্য্যে সেই সম্মানের পরিচয় বিশেষ পাওয়া যায় না। ধার্ম্মিকাগ্রগণ্য রাজা যুধিষ্ঠির এবং নলরাজাও পাশাখেলায় সহধর্ম্মিণীকে পণ রাখিয়াছিলেন।

রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের সময়ে বাঙ্গলা দেশে এক দিকে সতীদাহ এবং অপর দিকে বহুবিবাহ, বৃদ্ধ বয়সে বালিকাবিবাহ, প্রভৃতিও অবাধে প্রচলিত ছিল। সমাজের সকল ব্যবস্থায় নারীজাতির প্রতি সম্মান ও সহানুভূতি প্রকাশ পাইয়াছে, এ কথা বোধ হয় কেহই মনে করিবেন না। বৃদ্ধের বালিকাবিবাহে যে সেই বালিকার শীঘ্রই বিধবা হইবার সম্ভাবনা আছে, এবং বহুবিবাহে যে একজনের মৃত্যুতে অনেক স্ত্রীর বৈধব্য ঘটিবে, ইহা তো স্থির নিশ্চিত; তথাপি এ সম্বন্ধে সমাজে প্রতিবিধানের কোন চেষ্টাই ছিল না।

ইহার পর, ধর্ম্ম সম্বন্ধে অধিকার ও অনধিকারের বিষয় বিবেচনা করিলে দেখা যায় যে, এদেশে এ বিষয়েও স্ত্রীজাতির কোন সম্মান নাই। পুড়িয়া মরিবার সময়ে তাঁহারা দেবী, এবং তাঁহাদের সে পবিত্র স্বাধীন ইচ্ছায় বাধা দেওয়া অতিশয় মূঢ়তা; কিন্তু অন্য কোন সময়ে তাঁহাদের স্বাতন্ত্র্য বা স্বাধীনতা নাই। ধর্ম্মাচরণেও তাঁহাদের স্বাধীনতা নাই। তাঁহাদের ধর্ম্মাচরণ কয়েকটি মাত্র সঙ্কীর্ণ অধিকারের মধ্যে আবদ্ধ; তাহার বাহিরে নারী যাইতে পারেন না। দেব-সেবা প্রভৃতিতে বর্ণশ্রেষ্ঠ ব্রাহ্মণেরই বিশেষ অধিকার। নিম্নবর্ণের অধিকার তো নাই-ই, ব্রাহ্মণপত্নীরও অধিকার নাই, কেননা তিনি নারী। ধর্ম্মসম্বন্ধে এইরূপ অধিকারভেদের বিভাগে অধিকারী ও অনধিকারী দুই শ্রেণীরই অবনতি অনিবার্য্য। অধিকারীগণ রহিলেন

নিজের পাণ্ডিত্যগর্ব্ব অহমিকা ও স্বার্থপরতা লইয়া, এবং অনধিকারীরা রহিল নিজেদের হীনত্ববোধ লইয়া। যে সমাজে কোন এক দল জ্ঞান ও ক্ষমতা নিজের আয়ত্তে রাখিয়া বহু সংখ্যককে বঞ্চিত ও অনধিকারী করিয়া রাখে, এবং অনধিকারীরাও বিনা প্রতিবাদে স্বীকার করিয়া লয় যে তাহারা অনধিকারীই বটে, সে সমাজে মনুষ্যত্ববিকাশের পথ রুদ্ধ হইয়া যায়।

ভারতবর্ষের সম্বন্ধে অনেকে গর্ব্ব করিয়া বলেন যে, "ভারতের সভ্যতার আদিম কালেই পূর্ণ বিকাশ হইয়া গিয়াছে, তাহার আর নূতন ভাবে বিকাশের কিছু নাই। ভারতের সামাজিক ব্যবস্থা যাহা ঋষিরা করিয়া গিয়াছেন, তাহা অনিন্দনীয় ব্যবস্থা, তাহার বিরুদ্ধে কিছু করিতে যাওয়া হঠকারিতা ও সমাজের সর্ব্বনাশ সাধন।" কিন্তু এই ভারতবর্ষেই যুগে যুগে নূতন পরিবর্ত্তনের তরঙ্গ উঠিয়াছে। হিন্দুসমাজ এইরূপে যুগে যুগে নবীকরণের মধ্য দিয়া নব নব ভাবে শক্তিলাভ করিয়াছে। প্রাচীনতাই মৃত্যু আনে, কিন্তু বহু প্রাচীন হিন্দুধর্ম্ম যে আজিও জীবিত আছে, যুগে যুগে নবীকরণই তাহার কারণ।

পরিবর্ত্তন সমাজকে নূতন করিয়া জীবিত করে, চিরাচরিতের প্রাণহীন আবর্ত্তনের মধ্যে চেতনা আনয়ন করে। এই পরিবর্ত্তনই জাতির জীবন, যেমন গতিই নদীর জীবন। অভ্যাস কোনও কোনও বিষয়ে মানুষের শক্তিকে বর্দ্ধিত করে বটে; কিন্তু অনেক সময়ই তাহাকে বিচারবোধহীন জড়যন্ত্রে পরিণত করে। ধর্ম্ম, কর্ম্ম, পূজা, অর্চ্চনা, প্রভৃতি যখন অভ্যাসের রূপ ধারণ করে, তখন সে-ধর্ম্ম সে-কর্ম্ম আর মানুষকে নব শক্তিতে উদ্বুদ্ধ করিতে পারে না। আত্মত্যাগে যখন কেবল অভ্যাসই থাকে, প্রাণের স্ফূর্ত্তি থাকে না, ত্যাগ তখন সহনশীল পশুজাতির ভারবহনের সমান হয়। সেই জন্য গীতাকার উচ্চ-নীচ ভেদে ত্যাগ প্রভৃতিরও ত্রিবিধ প্রকার বর্ণনা করিয়াছেন। এই অভ্যাসের বশেই মানুষ নির্ব্বিচারে প্রচলিত প্রথা মানিয়া যায়, সে প্রথা যতই মন্দ হউক না কেন। মানুষ যে আজীবন যোদ্ধা, বাধা জয়ের পথই যে মনুষ্যত্ব বিকাশের পথ, অভ্যাস-চালিত অবস্থায় মানুষ তাহা ভুলিয়া যায়।

সমাজের এই অভ্যাস-চালিত জীবনযাত্রায় সহসা যখন ঘা লাগে, তখন তাহার ফলে নির্জ্জীব সমাজেও একটি প্রতিক্রিয়া উপস্থিত হয়। এই ঘাত-প্রতিঘাতে সমাজের মধ্যে একটা চেতনা জাগে, সমাজবিপ্লবের ইহাই একটি বিশেষ সার্থকতা।

কিন্তু সমাজের চিরাচরিত প্রথা ও অভ্যাসে আঘাত করা খুব সহজ নয়। অতি-বড় দুঃসাহসী না হইলে, মনে প্রতিবাদ আসিলেও সামাজিক প্রচলিত নিয়মের বিরুদ্ধে মুখে কেহ প্রতিবাদ করিতে সাহস করে না। রাজা রামমোহন রায় সেইরূপ দুঃসাহসী ছিলেন, তাঁহার জীবন সম্বন্ধে ইহাই সর্ব্বপ্রথম কথা।

এই দুঃসাহস কোথা হইতে আসে? প্রচলিত মতের বিরুদ্ধে যাওয়া কত কঠিন, আজিকার দিনে আমাদের তাহা ধারণা হয় না। পাশ্চাত্য দেশে

প্রচলিত মতের বিরুদ্ধে অভিমত প্রকাশ করার অপরাধে অনেককে পুড়াইয়া মারা হইয়াছে। অনেক বৈজ্ঞানিক বিজ্ঞানের নূতন তথ্য আবিষ্কার ও প্রচার করার অপরাধে চিরকারাবাস বা মৃত্যুদণ্ড ভোগ করিয়াছেন। কিন্তু তাঁহাদের সেই আবিষ্কারে ভবিষ্যৎ জাতি লাভবান্ হইয়াছে,—সমস্ত পৃথিবীই লাভবান্ হইয়াছে। রামমোহন রায়ের সময়েও প্রচলিত প্রথার প্রতিবাদ অতি কঠিন কাজ ছিল। আর, আজিকার দিনে প্রতিবাদ যে অনেক সহজ হইয়াছে, মানুষের বিচারবুদ্ধি যে শাসনের পীড়ন হইতে অনেক পরিমাণে মুক্তিলাভ করিয়াছে, শতাধিক বর্ষ পূর্ব্বে রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের সাহস সহকারে প্রতিবাদই তাহার একটি বিশেষ কারণ।

প্রাচীন সমাজের অচলায়তন চূর্ণ করিয়া শক্তিমান্ সজীব নবসমাজের অভ্যুদয়ের মূলে সর্ব্বত্রই থাকে দুঃসাহসীর অকুণ্ঠিত প্রতিবাদ। দুর্ব্বলতাকে পরাস্ত করিয়া শক্তি এইরূপ ভাবেই নিজেকে প্রকাশ করে, আর এই শক্তির মধ্যেই নবজাতিগঠনের বীজ থাকে। কিন্তু দুঃসাহসীর সে সাহসের উৎস কি, এ কথার উত্তর যদি ভারতীয় দর্শনের দিক হইতে দিতে হয় তবে বলিতে হয়,—ভূমার উপলব্ধি, এক পরম বৃহতের সহিত যোগের অনুভূতিই সেই উৎস। তাহাকে আমরা জাতীয়তাই বলি, মানবপ্রেমই বলি,—অথবা সত্যোপলব্ধি, ভগবানের উপলব্ধি, যাহাই বলি না কেন,—সে একই কথা। মানুষের সমস্ত শক্তির ইহাই উৎস; "ক্ষুরস্য ধারা নিশিতা দুরত্যয়া" মনুষ্যত্বের দুর্গম পথে ইহাই পাথেয়; ইহারই বলে মানুষ সাধারণ হইয়াও নিজের চেষ্টায় অসাধারণত্ব অর্জ্জনে সমর্থ হয়।

রাজা রামমোহনের জীবনে সর্ব্বকার্য্যেই সেই বাধাজয়ী স্বাধীনতার প্রকাশ দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়। এ সম্বন্ধে রামমোহন রায়ের নিজের কথা এই, "এই সংগ্রাম কেবল সংস্কারক ও সংস্কার-বিরোধীগণের মধ্যে নয়; ইহা স্বাধীনতা ও নির্য্যাতনের, সুবিচার ও অবিচারের, ন্যায় ও অন্যায়ের সঙ্ঘর্ষের ভিতর দিয়া সর্ব্বত্র মূর্ত্ত হইয়া উঠিয়াছে।"

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Mrs. Sarojini Datta, M.A., M.Sc.

on

রামমোহনের মহাতপস্যা

(The Wonderful Self-consecration of Rammohun)

(Slightly abridged.)

আজ আসুন জননী, আসুন ভগিনী, আসুন কল্যাণী সুকন্যা, সবাই মিলে ভারতের দুর্দ্দিনে দেব-প্রাণ নারীদুঃখে কাতর রামমোহন রায়ের জননীর-মত' আপন-ভোলা স্নেহ-প্রেম-দয়ার কথা ভাল ক'রে অনুভব করি। ছিল ত অনেক

মানুষ সে যুগে। নারীর কোমলতা, নারীর জননী-মহিমা, ভগিনী-মাহাত্ম্য, সেবা-রতা কন্যার মধুর মাধুরী, রাজার প্রাণকেই কেন এমন মুগ্ধ করল? তাই তিনি তুলে ধরলেন জগতের সামনে নারীর মহিমা; বোঝালেন নারীর ত্যাগের ভিতর শুদ্ধ স্বরূপ। ঘোষণা করলেন, নারী হীনা নন, নারী উপেক্ষণীয়া নন। আর কে দেবে নারীকে অমন মর্য্যাদা?

সেই অজ্ঞান অন্ধকারের ভিতর তিনি কেমন বুঝেছিলেন ভারতের নব কল্যাণপাতের মর্ম্মকথা,—নূতন পুরাতনের সমাবেশে, প্রাচ্য প্রতীচ্যের মিলনে, কি ভাষায়, কি বিজ্ঞানে, কি ধর্ম্মশাস্ত্রে, স্বজাতীয় গৌরবের সহিত মিলিত বিজাতীয় গৌরবের পরম প্রেরণাতেই ভারতের সার্ব্বভৌমিক কল্যাণ। মনে হচ্চে সেই দিন, যে দিন লর্ড আমহার্ষ্ট্ কেবল প্রাচ্য ভাষা শিক্ষার জন্য কলেজ স্থাপন করতে চেয়েছিলেন। সেদিন উদারপ্রাণ রাজা রামমোহন রায় প্রতিবাদপত্র প্রেরণ ক'রে ভারতের বাণীমন্দিরের নব উন্নতির দ্বার উন্মুক্ত করলেন। আজ তাই, কি দর্শনে, কি রসায়নে, কি দেহতত্ত্বে, কত সাধনার বিপুল জয়ধ্বনি ভারতে উঠেছে।

আজ তাই নারীজীবনও কেমন জয়শ্রী-মণ্ডিত। শুনলাম, কলিকাতাতেই সহস্রের অধিক বালিকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষার্থিনী। শুনতেও আনন্দ, ভাবতেও আনন্দ। আজ তাই ইংরাজী সাহিত্য, দর্শন, গণিত, ও পদার্থ-বিদ্যার নানা বিভাগে নারীর কত উচ্চ স্থান। ভারতনারী চলেছেন দেশ দেশান্তে জ্ঞান আহরণে। সংস্কৃতে, উদ্ভিদে, রসায়নে, শিশু-মনোবিজ্ঞানে, কৃষি বিভাগে, চিকিৎসাশাস্ত্রে, ভারতনারীও গবেষণা আরম্ভ করেছেন। তবু প্রশ্ন জাগে, তেমন ক'রে ভারতনারী এই গবেষণার পথে অগ্রসর হ'য়ে আসচেন কই? আসুন ভারতনারী, দলে দলে নব নব গবেষণার ক্ষেত্রে, নব নব তত্ত্বসাধনে, কি বিজ্ঞানে, কি ব্রহ্মজ্ঞানে!

ইংরাজী সাহিত্যেও ভারত-নারীর কত উচ্চ স্থান, কি সুমহান্ গৌরব। স্বর্গীয়া তরু দত্তের ও দেশ-পূজনীয়া সরোজিনী নাইডুর ইংরাজীতে কবিত্ব-প্রতিভা জগতের গৌরবের বিষয়। তার পর, রাজা রামমোহন যে বাংলা সাহিত্যে প্রথম প্রেরণা দান করলেন, সেই বঙ্গভাষার লালিত্যসাধনে গদ্যে পদ্যে কত মহিলা লেখিকার কত শ্রেষ্ঠ দান দেশকে অলঙ্কৃত করেছে! তাঁদের সেই প্রতিভার কথা ভাবতেও আনন্দ, তার গুণ গাইতেও আনন্দ! এ আনন্দধারার উৎস প্রথম কে খুলে দিয়েছিলেন, সে কথা স্মরণ করি, আর তাঁর চরণে বার বার প্রণাম করি।

তার পর ভাবি, রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের সামাজিক রীতিনীতির সংস্কার-সাধনের কথা। সামাজিক গতানুগতিক নিয়মের ফলে রাজা রামমোহন রায় নিজে বহুবিবাহ করতে বাধ্য হয়েছিলেন। কিন্তু বুঝেছিলেন ইহার বিষময় ফল। তাই তিনি বহুবিবাহের মূলে কুঠারাঘাত করতে চেয়েছিলেন।

তার পর, এক শত বৎসর পরে, এবং আইনের সাহায্যে, আজও দেশবাসী বাল্যবিবাহ প্রথা রোধ করতে পারচেন না। সেই যুগে বীরহৃদয় রামমোহন

আপন পরিবারে ১৬ বৎসরে কন্যার বিবাহের আয়োজন করেছিলেন। তার পর রাজা বুঝেছিলেন, যে অবোধ অজ্ঞান বালিকা পাতিব্রত্যের মর্ম্ম কিছুই বুঝ্‌ল না, সে কেমন ক'রে ব্রহ্মচর্য্যের কঠোর সাধনায় জীবন উৎসর্গ কর্‌বে? তাই বিধবাবিবাহের প্রথা প্রচার কর্‌তে তাঁর মনে আকাঙ্ক্ষা জেগে উঠেছিল।

তারপর, স্বামীর ধনে বা পিতৃধনে বঙ্গনারীর কতটুকু দাবী? ন্যায্য অধিকার দানের দ্বারা নারীকে মর্য্যাদা দান কর্‌তে রাজা চেষ্টা ক'রেছিলেন।

সর্ব্বশেষে তাঁর পরম মঙ্গল অনুষ্ঠান, সহমরণ প্রথার বিরুদ্ধে আন্দোলন। ভ্রাতৃজায়ার চিতাগ্নিতে সহমরণের নৃশংস দৃশ্যে তাঁর কোমল প্রাণ মর্ম্মাহত হ'য়েছিল। তাই তাঁর প্রাণপাত চেষ্টায় আইনের দ্বারা সে নিষ্ঠুর প্রথা তিরোহিত হোল।

রাজা শুধু চিতাগ্নি থেকেই বিধবা নারীকে রক্ষা করেন নাই। নব যুগ, নব সমাজ, নারীর জন্য নব আদর্শ রচনা ক'রে, ভারতের সকল নারীর জন্য, বিশেষতঃ আমার মত' কত দুঃখিনী বিধবা নারীর জন্য, জ্ঞানে ও কর্ম্মে জীবনের নূতন সফলতার পথ তিনি উন্মুক্ত ক'রে দিলেন। শুধু কি তাই? দেখ্‌চি ত, এ সংসারে আমার মত' কত দুঃখিনী জননীর একমাত্র সন্তান, একমাত্র নয়নের আলো বুকের ধনও যেদিন চ'লে যায়, সেদিন আকুল মন কেঁদে জিজ্ঞাসা করে, "বলুন, ওগো স্বর্গবাসী রাজা! কি নিয়ে থাক্‌বেন শোকবিহ্বলা জননী এবার?" তাই বুঝি রাজর্ষি রামমোহন নারীর জন্যও বিমল ব্রহ্মজ্ঞানের সমাচার দিয়ে গেলেন; আমাদের ব'লে গেলেন "পতিং পতীনাং পরমং পরস্তাৎ যিনি, তাঁকে জানো!" রাজার এই পরম দান ব্রহ্মজ্ঞানের জন্য তাঁর চরণে বার বার প্রণাম করি।

সেই যুগপ্রবর্ত্তকের মহাপ্রয়াণ হোল সাগর পারে ইংলণ্ডের বৃষ্টল নগরে। ইহাও দেবতার পরম ব্যবস্থা। ভারতবাসীর পুণ্য সমাধিতীর্থ ইংলণ্ডে রচনা হোল। ধন্য হোলাম আমিও একদিন সে তীর্থধূলি মস্তকে স্পর্শ ক'রে। যেদিন সেই সমাধি-পুণ্যপীঠে এ মস্তক লুটিয়ে পড়েছিল, সমস্ত শরীর রোমাঞ্চিত হ'য়ে উঠেছিল, আনন্দ ও কৃতজ্ঞতার আবেগে ধমনীতে ধমনীতে রক্তধারা নৃত্য ক'রে চলেছিল। মনে হয়েছিল, এই যে রামমোহনের মহাজীবন ও মহামরণ, তারই ভিতর দিয়ে আমার মত' অভাগিনী বঙ্গনারীর জ্ঞান-আহরণে সমুদ্রযাত্রার আয়োজন সম্ভব হ'য়েছে; তারই ভিতর দিয়ে ভারতের কত কন্যার বিদেশে কত সম্মানলাভের অধিকার হ'য়েছে। ধন্য রাজা! ধন্য রাজা! বার বার তোমার উদ্দেশ্যে নারীপ্রাণের কৃতজ্ঞতার অঞ্জলি নিবেদন করি।

আজ নারীসমাজ স্তব্ধ হ'য়ে অনুভব করি, এ নব যুগে নারীর কল্যাণযাত্রা কোথায়? কোন্ পথে নারী অগ্রসর হবেন? কোন্ শিক্ষা দীক্ষা তাঁদের জ্ঞানে গরীয়সী, কর্ম্মে মহীয়সী, ধর্ম্মে শ্রেয়সী ক'রে তুল্‌বে? রাজর্ষি রামমোহন রায় চেয়েছিলেন, অপরা ও পরা বিদ্যার মিলনের দ্বারা জনসমাজের সফল্য, যাতে শুদ্ধ সত্য উদার ব্রহ্মজ্ঞানে, সকল ধর্ম্মশাস্ত্রসিন্ধু-মথিত অমৃত-সুধা-পানে,

মানবসমাজ জ্ঞানে গভীরতা, প্রেমে বিশালতা, চরিত্রে সংযম, কর্ত্তব্যে দৃঢ়তা ও ঈশ্বরে ভক্তি লাভ করেন। আজ এ স্মৃতিপূজায় মনে প্রশ্ন জাগ্‌চে যে, অমনিতর' সাধনমন্দিরের প্রয়োজন কি ভারতে নারীর জন্য ফুরিয়ে গেছে? যদি প্রয়োজন থাকে, তবে আবার সে শুভ সাধনা উজ্জল হ'য়ে উঠুক। কল্যাণদায়িনী হ্রী, বিশ্ববিজয়িনী ধী, ও দিব্য জ্ঞান,—যাহা নারীজাতির শ্রেষ্ঠ অলঙ্কার, তাহা নারীজাতিকে ভূষিত করুক। তবেই প্রাতঃস্মরণীয় রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের মহাতপস্যা ও নারীর কল্যাণে প্রাণপাত সার্থক হবে।

22

Mrs. Sobhana Nandi

on

Rammohun, the Apostle of Humanity

Life is a process of continuous conflict between two groups of warring forces, the forces of *Anandam*, of Light, of Life, fighting those of *Tamasa*, of Darkness, of Unreason, of Death. The grip of approaching death had already palsied the body of Indian society, and festering wounds were eating deep into its vitals, when Rammohun came with the light of reason and with abundant life for our deliverance.

Deliverance comes when it is most sorely needed, but rarely, if ever, does the deliverer come so fortified in reason as in faith, so well equipped in broadness of outlook as in passionate determination to hold fast to the truth. It is in the combination of devoutness with reason, of a faith which could remove mountains with a tolerance which is magnificent in its catholicity, that Rammohun stands unique among the leaders of the present age.

Dense was the darkness of gloom and despair when the Raja came. It is said to have been the darkest age in Indian history. A mighty empire had crumbled down to a mouldering heap with all its splendour and luxury, its power and wealth, its treasure of art and learning, and a new power had arisen, but not yet been able to consolidate itself into a stable state. Anarchy and brigandage drove out of people's minds all regard for ethical and social values. Age-old superstitions and blinding prejudices were revived with more sinister influence and implication than ever before, and social customs were created in the name of religion which were alike horrifying and degrading. The self-respect of the people was entirely gone.

Born amidst such surroundings, Rammohun had to encounter almost from his boyhood the mediaeval darkness of unreason and superstition. In the domain of religion the mediaevalism exhibited itself by upholding the abstraction of the senses from their objects, by divorcing all human instincts and emotions, however legitimate, from the pursuit of spiritual culture, and by giving supremacy to a demonstrative ceremonialism which reduced religious life to a round of external observances, and, even in its higher types, to a system of unethical disciplines.

The Raja realised early how this mediaevalism imposed an incubus upon every department of national life. He realised that any progress of our social and national life towards perfection was impossible unless this incubus was removed, and society was granted the fullest autonomy and freedom of movement in all departments.

In his own person and life Raja Rammohun Roy effected a synthesis of all the conflicting religious doctrines of his times, and gave to the world the seeds of a Universal Religion. And the fundamental tenet of this synthesis, in fact of the whole gamut of his teachings and precepts, was, in accordance with the special genius of the Bengali race, his vision of a perfect and universal humanity.

This was the inspiration of his life. His was truly the message, as Rabindranath says, of the Eternal Man. He picked out all that is imperishable and eternal in all societies and races, and exorcised his own society and his own people of all that was inhuman and anti-human in his endeavour to realise the Perfect Man. The special genius of the Bengali race had its consummation in the Raja, who tried to realise the Deity in man, and did homage to the Deity by the service of man.

But in the realisation of the Eternal Man, the word 'man' does not mean merely that incomplete half which is the *Purusha*, but the complete whole in the perfect union of the *Purusha* and the *Prakriti*. With the Vaishnava seers of the past, the Raja realised that the ideal of the Perfect Man could only be realised when union between the *Purusha* and the *Prakriti* takes place on a level of perfect equality in all spheres of life, social, intellectual and spiritual.

Unfortunately, however, the womanhood of his people, (and it may perhaps be said with perfect truth, of the whole world) were deprived of their rightful position in the social organisation. The ideal of *saha-dharma* or *sama-dharma* was completely negatived, so far as our women were concerned, in both the social and the religious life of

the community. The woman was robbed of a conscious spiritual and social life, and she was relegated to a position of absolute helplessness, and, consequently, of loss of self-respect.

The Raja felt the indignity of this helpless position of the woman, and was not content till he could substantiate her position as an essentially conscious unit in the social organism, and as integral to it as her male compeer. It is sometimes said that the identification of the teachings of the Raja with the principles of the Brahmo Samaj has prevented a proper valuation of his work. But so far as the position of woman is concerned, it may be said with perfect truth that the Brahmo Samaj has materially helped her in her evolution towards the ideal for which the Raja strove. It can hardly be conceived today how very difficult of realisation even this one item of reform was out of the many-sided programme of the Raja. It was not merely the male, who in his ignorance and prejudice stood in the way of woman's progress. The obstacle was placed often by the woman herself, who, in her blind folly and superstition, would not be emancipated and restored to her long-lost self-respect. But this Emancipator of Man could never rest content with the progress of one sex. In his all-embracing love he strove to restore woman to her proper position in spite of herself.

It is needless to enumerate the various projects of the Raja to render the life of woman honourable and useful. The reforms themselves are nothing when compared with the principle involved in them ; and the womanhood of modern India, if not of the modern world, owes to the Raja the dignity, the usefulness, and the respect she enjoys today as a fully responsible and integral unit in the social organism.

The perfect union of *Purusha* and *Prakriti* makes for a harmonious advancement of the life eternal of the Conscious Universe. In the creative forces of *Anandam* there is a perfect rhythm and poise pervading all things and all movements. It was the ambition of the Raja to see the same rhythm and the same poise established between man and woman in the social sphere. And today we can render no better, nor truer, homage to the memory of him than consciously to endeavour to attain that poise and that rhythm, through which alone the height of *Anandam* manifests itself for the complete annihilation of the darkness of *Tamasa*.

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Mrs. Sudha Chakravarti

on

Rammohun Roy as Champion of Woman's Rights

I rise here to-night on behalf of India's womanhood to pay homage to the sacred memory of the Prophet and Maker of Modern India, who stood as an indefatigable champion of woman's rights in an age full of superstitious bias against her. A glance at our social history would convince one of the degraded condition which women were subjected to, for about four centuries preceding the age of Rammohun. Not only was woman deprived of many of her birth-rights, but man in his perverted outlook looked down upon her as a source of evil. The Puranas and other religious books are replete with baseless calumnies of woman's character, and it is painful to remember that none of the famous religious reformers of Medieval India raised his voice against this demoralising prejudice against women.

Raja Rammohun Roy, however, inaugurated a religious reform of a different stamp. "Synthesis" as Sir Brajendra Nath Seal says, "was the characteristic mark of the Raja." He could not, therefore, omit woman's cause from the programme of his religious reform. Religion with him was a unifying force seeking to harmonise all aspects of life, individual and social. It gave him an insight whereby he could see even in those days of darkness that woman is an integral part of human society; and so he felt that it was impossible for him not to give the cause of woman an important place in the programme of his life-work. Today, we women have become alive to such of our birth-rights as freedom of thought and action, and equality with man in education, inheritance, franchise and administrative partnership. But in the dark days of Rammohun, so deep was the mental torpor among women, that they themselves had fallen in with the prevailing prejudice against their sex, and held that women had no right to a better social status than what was allowed them. Raja Rammohun Roy raised his clarion voice, and called out to women to awake, arise, and be conscious of themselves.

Over a century and a quarter ago, he started his movement to fight against the subjection of women to the selfish interests and supposed interests of the male sex. The most outstanding achievement of this fight is the abolition of the *Suttee*. The practice of the *Suttee*, i.e.

the burning alive of widows on their husbands' funeral pyres, could be traced in many cases to the selfish motive of interested persons. This was the darkest blemish in the nation's character in the 19th century, and its abolition was the most glorious achievement of that age. The inhumanity of the custom of *Suttee* will be well realised when we remember that as many as 309 widows were burnt alive with their husbands within the jurisdiction of the single town of Calcutta, and in one single year. It required the strenuous effort, extending through 25 years, of the undaunted Rammohun to fight the evil out.

Rammohun stood up for many of the rights of Indian womanhood which are engaging the attention of our leaders and thoughtful persons in the present age, and for which the educated Indian woman is fighting today.

Degrading the woman to a lower status of life with a stamp of inferiority, denying her the right of education and inheritance of property, subjecting her married life to the most insulting disgrace by the husband's right to polygamy, crippling the development of her natural powers by the system of child-marriage,—all these evils were sought to be removed by Rammohun at a time when social reform movements had not assumed definite and well-reasoned forms even in the West.

In those days people believed that women were doomed to perdition, and had neither the right to, nor the capacity for, the acquisition of rational ideas. Rammohun realised that Reason was the very essence of humanity, and by all reasonableness womanhood was entitled to acquire its development. This is what he says about the so-called inferiority of women :—"How ... can you accuse them of want of understanding ? If after instruction in knowledge and wisdom a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient ; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife of the prince of Karnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Sastras. Moreover, in the Brihadaranyakopanishad of the Yajurveda, it is clearly stated that Yajnavalkya imparted divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyi, who was able to follow and completely attain it."

It is unfortunate that Rammohun did not live to return to India to do anything practically for the introduction and promotion of female education in this country. But the good English lady Miss Mary Carpenter, imbibing from her contact with the Raja an enthusiasm for the education of

Indian women, came to our country and devoted her life to this cause. Time has proved the truth of the estimate the Raja had made of the mental capacity of the Indian woman, and we find her today shining brilliantly among the intellectual luminaries of our Universities. Many social rights and privileges have often been denied to woman on the ill-conceived idea that she falls far behind man in many of the moral qualities. This is what Rammohun says about it :—"You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised, for we constantly perceive, in a country where Death makes the male shudder, that the female from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband." Every Indian home, and the recent events of India's political life, bear testimony to the truth of Rammohun's opinion.

It cannot be known from his writings what his views about child-marriage were. But one could conclude that he felt the evil effects of this system ; for it is said that he gave his granddaughter in marriage when she was 16 years of age. His views against polygamy, however, are very definite. So strong was his antipathy to polygamy, that he inserted clauses in his Will disinheriting any son or descendant, who would have more than one wife at the same time. He also suggested that Government might step in the matter and check the evil. This is what he says :—"Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorised by the rulers of the Empire to receive applications for his sanction to a second marriage during the life of the first wife, the distress of the female sex in Bengal and the number of suicides would have been necessarily very much reduced."

From this one would be convinced of the practical solicitude the Raja had for the amelioration of woman's condition. It was the same solicitude which led him to make efforts for constituting a Society in Calcutta for the relief of destitute widows. The Raja was thus a fore-runner in respect of establishing philanthropic societies in Modern India.

The Raja also admitted woman's right to property. From a study of his "Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females, according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance," it appears that he held that for the healthy expansion of their natural capacities, right of inheritance played a most important part.

Rammohun's ideas and endeavours in respect of education of women and the rights of women anticipated even those of John Stuart Mill. An echo of the Raja's views is found in the latter, who about half a century afterwards said :—"If women's nature were left to choose its direction

as freely as men's, there would not be any material difference, or perhaps any difference at all, in the character and capacity which would unfold themselves."

From what has been said above, it is clear that Rammohun emphasised the natural rights of woman as distinct from those of man, and he desired that the law of the land could have secured to each individual woman her natural rights.

Rammohun's strivings for social reform had their source not merely in the softness of his heart, or in his ideal of philanthropy, or in the principle of altruism. They had a deeper and a more unifying background which was spiritual. By his spiritual insight, which was illuminated by his Vedantic studies, he realised the Divine in man, *and found it equally in the male and the female*. This is the secret of the great practical religion he promulgated.

A few years ago Sir Brajendra Nath Seal said :—"Rammohun Roy was a man of a thousand years." Indeed, he was so. He was a Rishi—a seer—and saw through the ages a vision of the future. He realised that a social polity bereft of the spiritual aspect would lead to dissolution and disruption. The ideal of woman free in thought, free in movement, and yet united in love and respect with her partner, grounding, as she must, all her strivings and aspirations consciously and rationally on the one unifying principle of the Universe, or Brahma, would require a thousand years to be fully established. But this is the only ideal which will fully develop each individual man and woman, and yet preclude the evils of ultra-individualism. The Message which reached us a hundred years ago through Rammohun, is indeed a Message for thousands of years.

GENERAL CONFERENCE

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Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, M.A., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S., C.I.E., C.S.I.

on

Rammohun and the Unity of all Truths

It is difficult to conceive that, more than a hundred years ago, India should have produced a personality so great as to liberalise and unify all the highest human efforts. The life and work of Rammohun Roy fully illustrate the great truth that the progress of the world cannot

be retarded by vested interests, however powerful they may be. On the other hand, it may be actually advanced by those rare few, who, because of their dedicated lives, give a new impetus to human aspirations. For the lure that draws such heroic souls is not a success that can be easily won, but the pursuit, in spite of repeated defeats and tribulations, of what seems unattainable.

Rammohun Roy fully understood that the world was inter-dependent, and that throughout the ages a constant stream of thought has enriched the common heritage of mankind. It is the realisation of this mutual dependence that has kept the mighty human fabric bound together, and ensured the continuity and permanence of civilisation. But this sense of mutual dependence can only be achieved by mutual exchange and contribution to the advancement of the highest human thought. It was Rammohun Roy who by his teachings demonstrated the Unity of all Intellectual life, and showed that for the human mind there can be no boundaries or separations. It was he who opened out for the world the enormous reserves of thought and spiritual experience of India.

He was not satisfied by a mere contemplation of the Vision of Truth, but regarded it as an injunction to transform his whole life by serving that universal cause whose aim is the establishment of righteousness. He did not belong to any narrow sect, nor did he entertain any theocratic bias. He liberalised all beliefs, and foresaw the importance of absolute freedom in all fields of inquiry. It was owing to his influence that the scientific advance of modern India has been rendered possible.

It is seldom that we find any one endowed with so great a range of human sympathy and many-sided activities. It is by his noble teachings that we have come to realise that communities stand or fall by the strength with which they subordinate their own to the general claims, and by the ability of each member to co-ordinate himself to all the rest. According to this liberal point of view, there is an Indian national conception of which the historical, the social and the religious ideas are the constituent elements. The Indian religious idea belongs to no single sect ; the social advancement is the monopoly of no caste or race. For there is a historical evolution in which all these are united, and no enthusiasm can be sufficiently great for the realisation of this common ideal. Let us realise that it is the clod-like indifference that is the rigor of death, whereas it is the fire-heat of incandescent life which by its radiance can vivify the dying. And there can be no doubt that it was the burning faith of Rammohun Roy that gave the needed stimulus to the revival and the maintenance of the heart-beat of India.

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Prof. Rajani Kanta Guha, M. A.

on

Rammohun and Politics

Rammohun Roy was born in 1772. The date is significant. It was the year in which Warren Hastings was appointed Governor of Bengal. Two years later, the Regulating Act came into force, and with Hastings as Governor-General, the East India Company definitely launched on its imperialistic career. In the last quarter of the 18th century, while England was losing her empire in the West, Hastings was building up an empire in the East. Rammohun grew with the growth of the British Empire in India, and in his mature manhood saw the Company develop into the paramount power.

Rammohun Roy was an outspoken critic of British rule, and carefully watched the working of the administrative machinery. He undauntedly raised his voice of protest whenever its operations jarred on his sense of fairness and justice. The Government of India was in his day a benevolent despotism. Rammohun wanted that it should retain its trait of benevolence, but outgrow its irresponsible character, and steadily move towards a representative form calculated to fulfil the noblest political aspirations of the Indian people. He further desired that there should be the closest co-operation between the rulers and the ruled for this purpose. Nay, more ; he so keenly felt that India needed the fellowship of the English people for her political and social uplift, that he did not hesitate to propose the settlement of English colonists in this land, with whose help he expected that India would be free in not perhaps a distant future. In fact, more than a hundred years ago, he dreamt dreams of the fatherland which completely take our breath away. So intense was his love of freedom, that he saw the vision of an independent India in the days when his countrymen hardly enjoyed any political rights. He had a prophetic prevision of the India of the twentieth century. He fought to his last breath for her political advancement, adumbrated the reforms that the intelligentsia of the country are demanding today, and presented to our rulers three alternative developments of the British connection, the second of which forms the greatest common measure of all shades of political thought in his country. Rammohun predicted that "were India to share one-fourth of the knowledge and energy of Ireland, she would prove from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population, either useful and profitable as a willing province, an

ally of the British Empire, or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy." Whether India will have self-rule in 1940 or 4019, Rammohun's forecast still holds the ground.

Rammohun Roy cherished enlightened ideas of the essentials of a good government. A free Press was according to him one of its indispensable conditions. He laid the finger on the weak spot in British statesmanship, which is the unwavering faith of the Olympians at home in the infallibility of the man on the spot. Rammohun sternly set his face against all brands of infallibility, spiritual, scholastic or bureaucratic. He held that every good ruler must be conscious of the great liability to error in managing the affairs of a vast empire, and therefore he should be anxious to afford every individual the readiest means of bringing to his notice whatever may require his interference. This object can be secured only by the unrestrained liberty of publication. Endowed with unusual physical and moral courage, he confronted the hauteur of the ruling caste with unruffled dignity.

Rammohun was no frothy-mouthed demagogue. He knew that for the realisation of India's political ambition, long years of preparation, and that under British rule, were absolutely necessary. The prerequisites of her advancement were, he felt, Western education, improvement of the status of women, and breaking asunder of the shackles of caste. In the domain of education, as in many other matters, he was far ahead of his age. In his letter to Lord Amherst, written in 1823, he, in opposition to the official policy, pleaded for the introduction of the teaching of Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, with other useful sciences,—and this he did 13 years before the foundation of the College of Chemistry, 37 years before the Faculty of Science was created in the University of London, and 46 years before the courses in science were established in any number in Oxford and Cambridge. His lifelong battle in the cause of India's womanhood, and his disregard of caste-restrictions in every-day practice, can but barely be mentioned here.

Patriotism has been defined as extended selfishness. There was no narrowness in Rammohun's glowing love of the land of his birth. With it was harmoniously blended a cosmopolitanism of the purest type. It was not that amorphous craziness which impels one to love every other country except one's own. His was not "a selfish indifference, masquerading under the name of enlightened cosmopolitanism." His heart spontaneously welled up for suffering humanity irrespective of latitude and longitude, and danced with joy whenever he heard that the

downtrodden and oppressed of the remote West were making head against lawless tyranny. He viewed all important problems from the plane of international brotherhood.

Let us now go back to the year of his birth. It was by the dispensation of Divine Providence that Rammohun Roy came into the world precisely at the time when the destiny of India was linked up with that of England. If England's mission be to carry this great dependency on the road to self-government, success can come only out of mutual understanding and appreciation, and this required an interpreter who stood forth as the noblest representative of the culture of the East as well as the culture of the West. Such an interpreter was found in Rammohun Roy. Born at the confluence of the three greatest theistic religions of the world, absorbing into his life-blood the best in each, with an unrivalled mastery of their scriptures, and steeped in the best and noblest thoughts of the noblest and best thinkers of Asia and Europe, "a multiple personality, a Hindu of Hindus, a Mohammadan with the Mohammadans, and a Christian with the Christians," (to borrow the words of Dr. Seal), and ceaselessly working for the realisation of his ideal of Universal Religion, Rammohun Roy was the fittest man to bridge the cultural, social and religious gulf between England and India, and to act as ambassador of the East to the commonwealth of nations in the West. In the language of Miss Collet, "he leads the way from the orientalism of the past not *to*, but *through*, Western culture, towards a civilisation which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both." In his outlook on education and politics, as on social and religious reform, Rammohun Roy was not an iconoclast, but a constructive statesman of the highest order.

26

Prof. Bimanbehari Majumdar, M.A., P.R.S.

on

Rammohun, the Father of Modern Political Movements in India.

As the history of Western political thought practically begins with the name of Aristotle, so the history of political thought in modern India begins with the revered name of Raja Rammohun Roy. After a full swing of twenty-three centuries there is a cry in the Western world to go back to Aristotle, and it is not unlikely that when the nature of

the political thought of the Raja comes to be correctly appreciated, there may be a movement in modern India to go back to the ideal of the Raja, who in so many fields of social and religious movements, is regarded as the Pioneer.

The Raja is known all over the world as the founder of the school of Comparative Religion, as the great Vedantist, who on the one hand combated the influence of the Christian Missionaries, and on the other, laid the foundation of a monotheistic revival in India. He is famous as the first advocate of social reform on rational principles, and the pioneer of Western education in this country. His social and religious reforms were of such absorbing interest that controversy has ever since raged round those ideas to the exclusion of discussions on his fruitful political thought. But in order to understand the political thought of modern India, it is absolutely necessary to arrive at a correct understanding of the political ideas of the great reformer.

The Raja was by his culture and temperament essentially a philosopher. The Western political thought has received its greatest contribution from philosophers like Plato and Aristotle in the ancient world, from Aquinas and Marsigli in the middle ages, and from Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Bentham and Green in the modern age. India did not suffer from any lack of philosophers in the middle ages, but none of the philosophers from Sankaracharya of the eighth century to Valadeva Vidyabhushana of the eighteenth century interested themselves in political speculation. Political speculation can hardly interest anybody where there is absolutely no guarantee of civil liberty, where there is scarcely any enlightened public opinion, and where politics is thought to be a concern of the Prince alone. Such was the condition of India in the middle ages, under the Rajputs and the Muhammadans. The villages enjoyed, indeed, a large measure of self-government during the Muhammadan rule, but the outlook of the villagers was essentially parochial in nature.

On the break-down of the Mughal administration, a period of anarchy and disorder followed. The East India Company resolved to stand forth as the Diwan in 1772 indeed, but it took them more than half a century to establish a well-ordered system of government, securing peace and order to their subjects. But from the very beginning of their rule they aimed at securing the enjoyment of civil liberty for their subjects. It is curious to note that the birth of Rammohun in May 1772 coincides with the first definite declaration of sovereignty by Parliament over the Company's territories. So Rammohun grew up to manhood in an age, when the sense of moral responsibility of the government to the people of India was being slowly but

gradually awakened. The people of Bengal had enjoyed a limited measure of civil liberty under the aegis of the British government for nearly half a century (1772—1821), when Rammohun started the vernacular journal *Sambad Kaumudi* in 1821 to rouse the political consciousness of the people of Bengal.

This was the earliest favourable opportunity which could be availed of to spread political ideas in Bengal. Security of life and property had been ensured in Calcutta, if not in the mufassils ; the English language had been picked up by a small number of wealthy citizens, and their ideas had been broadened and liberalised by their intercourse with the English merchants and officials in Calcutta. A selected band of devoted followers had gathered round Rammohun with a determination to disseminate English education and to regenerate the country by means of social and religious reforms. Of these the names of Dwarkanauth Tagore, Prossonnocoomar Tagore, Ramanauth Tagore, Kalleenauth Roy, Boykontonauth Roy, Ramchunder Bidyabagish, Hurchunder Ghose, Gowree Churn Banerjee, Shibchandra Deb and Tarachand Chuckerverty specially deserve mention, as they were closely associated with the Raja in his social, religious, educational and political activities. The names cited above show that the Raja was not a solitary figure in demanding elementary political rights for the people of India.

The Raja was a pioneer in establishing English schools and Vernacular and English journals in Bengal. The number of schools as well as of journals rapidly increased during his lifetime, and by the time he sailed for England, a new generation of Bengali youths had grown up under the influence of these two liberalising agencies. In 1823 Rammohun made a brilliant defence of the freedom of the Press in India in his Memorial to the Supreme Court and Appeal to the King in Council. But he did not live to see the establishment of a free Press in India. But neither the European nor the Indian citizens of Calcutta forgot that it was the effort of the Raja which secured to them the freedom of the Press in 1835. In the Free Press Dinner given to Sir Charles Metcalfe in the Town Hall on the 9th February, 1838, Mr. Leith proposed a toast to "the memory of Rammohun Roy," and Prossonnocoomar Tagore rose as a friend of the late Raja to thank the liberator of the Press.

The written evidence of the Raja on the judicial and revenue systems of India submitted to the authorities in England evoked the following comment from the Serampore Missionaries :—"Raja Rammohun Roy is said to have suggested various improvements, such as the Trial by Jury,

Native Judicial Assessors, Joint Judges, Regular Public Registers, Codes of Civil and Criminal Law, etc. ... Should he be instrumental in securing these advantages to the country, not only the present, but every future age will justly consider him a benefactor to the country." The editor of the *Bengal Spectator* wrote of Rammohun in 1842 :—"It is to him that we are in a great measure indebted for the concession in regard to the privileges of natives contained in the late Charter (1833.)"

The Raja was acknowledged not only in India but also in England as the pioneer of political movement in this country. When various schemes of future government of India were being suggested and discussed in England on the eve of the renewal of the Charter of 1833, a humourous writer published a caricature, entitled "Plans for the Government of India,—a Drama." In this drama the following plan is put forward by a Candidate for Parliament :—

"I propose, therefore, in the first place, that Raja Rammohun Roy be appointed Governor-General of India ; that all the judicial posts be filled by Mahomedans[1], all the revenue offices by Hindoos, and the police be executed by East Indians or Indo-Britons. The beauty of this plan, ladies and gentlemen, consists in this : the Raja is neither a Hindoo, a Mahomedan, nor a Christian, so that he can have no bias towards any part of the population of India ; and the rest being antagonistical, that is opposed to each other, they would keep, by their very opposition, the whole machine of government in steady operation, just as an arch is retained firmly together by contrary pressure on all sides of it[2]."

We find Rammohun Roy fighting vigorously against the corrupt practices in the Hindu religion, against the superstitious and inhuman customs of the Hindu society, and against the narrow parochial outlook of the Indian mind. But the following quotation from a letter of the Raja will show that behind all his ideas of social and religious reform, the ideal of bringing about the political regeneration of India was never absent from his mind. "I regret to say", wrote the Raja in 1828, "that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of political feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the

1. The Raja stated in his Evidence that the Muhammadans had better legal training and were more fitted for the judicial posts than the Hindus.

2. Asiatic Journal, 1832, Jan.—April. Pp. 281—288.

laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise. It is, I think, necessary that some changes should take place in their religion at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort."

Luther and Calvin, the pioneers of the Reformation movement in the West, did not consciously seek to strengthen the idea of nationality, nor to inaugurate democracy. But the earliest prophet of India in the nineteenth century clearly recognised the inter-dependence of political advancement and social and religious progress. His political programme was intimately and indissolubly connected with the social uplift of the nation.

The Raja not only started the first Indian newspapers to rouse the political consciousness of the Indian people; but he also established the first political party to agitate for reforms on constitutional lines. This party was composed entirely of his disciples; and but for his unexpected death so soon after leaving India, Rammohun would himself have founded political *organisations* too, which the party left behind by him created a few years afterwards. When the Raja sailed for England, Prossonnocoomar Tagore and Dwarkanauth Tagore took upon themselves the task of keeping alive the movement started in India for political reform. They took the initiative in founding the "Zamindary Association", the first organisation in Bengal with a distinct political object, in November 1837.

The next institution was established in England. Profiting by the example and the success of the Raja in carrying on agitation in England for the advancement of the political rights of Indians, in July 1839 another disciple of the Raja took a leading part in establishing an organisation named the "British India Society" in England. In January 1843 Dwarkanauth Tagore, when returning from England for the first time, brought George Thompson, a prominent member of this British India Society, to Calcutta, to educate Bengali youths in constitutional agitation. On 6th April 1843, at a meeting held at 31 Fauzdari Balakhana, George Thompson proposed the formation in Bengal of "a British India Society for bettering the condition of the people and disseminating correct information respecting the Institutions, Law and Government of the country, with a view to the expansion of the just rights and the protection of the interests of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects on these shores."

Two weeks later, the "Bengal British India Society" was formally established by the political disciples of Rammohun Roy.

Thus we find that more than half a century before the inauguration of the Indian National Congress, the inspiration of Rammohun Roy led to the formation of the first organisations, both in India and in England, for carrying on agitation for the advancement of the political rights of Indians.

27

Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni

on

Rammohun's Passion for Liberty

As one of his humble admirers for half a century and more, I have had the privilege, time and again, of pondering over the work and personality of the great man whose Centenary we are celebrating all over the country. While he has struck me as a unique figure, in Indian history at least, in his many-sided character, his intense and unquenchable passion for liberty,—social, intellectual, religious and political,—has always made a peculiar appeal to me. This passion for liberty I consider as the dominant note in his whole composition, which gives to his labours in many fields a harmony, a unity, and a significance all its own.

Deeply human himself, he was at his best as the interpreter of humanity for the benefit, not of this country or that, but for the whole of mankind. His entire life-work is an abiding witness to the fact that our deepest and most enduring interests consist in realising more and more our oneness with the indwelling spirit of all things great, noble and good, and not in erecting artificial partition walls separating country from country, class from class, and brother from brother. He recognised the respective claims and places of individualism, nationalism, and internationalism in a healthy and progressive society, but at the same time, he insisted upon maintaining a just proportion between their demands on our allegiance. Truly, he was a citizen of the world and not of India alone. He would stoop to do nothing for his motherland which was not also good for the other parts of the globe. Such were the underlying principles of his life and teaching, such the faith which sustained and guided him in all his long and arduous labours struggles and strivings. Both in India and abroad. he pleaded hard, and, I trust, not altogether in vain, for freedom for the fullest development of all and for all, so that the whole of mankind may share in its blessings, not at the expense of this nation or that, but in a

spirit of good-will, if not also of active co-operation of each with the others.

Doubtless he was an idealist. No great cause has ever been served by any one who is incapable of being inspired or stirred by a noble idealism. But Rammohun Roy's long training under William Digby in the day-to-day problems of administration, combined with his equally severe self-discipline as a rationalist had created in him an almost overpowering sense of realism which kept his subtler impulses completely in check. It would be perfectly correct to say that no idealist was so divorced from or uninfluenced by sentimentalism in any shape or form as was Rammohun Roy in all that he said or did. So strong and deep was his passion for freedom that it swept over and beyond his idealism and left him as severe and seasoned a critic of himself as of others.

His grateful countrymen love to call him the "Father of Modern India," and to associate the past hundred years with his name as the "Rammohun Roy Epoch." He was a giant among men. All his life he was incessantly engaged in breaking the coils of custom, tradition, ignorance, superstition, and religious, social and political servitude. Born and nursed in the expansive times of the French Revolution and of the "Rights of Man", he instinctively rushed to the fray whenever and wherever a live human issue of importance was involved.

As the architect of a New India, he saw a vision and had the courage born of a strong inner urge and deep conviction to draw, on a broad canvas, a small scale chart, to use H. G. Wells's phrase, of the roads and by-paths along which he wished and expected his countrymen to walk in fulfilling their national destiny. As we all know, the last two decades of his life (1814—1833) were devoted almost exclusively, persistently and passionately to the herculean task of pulling down the old tottering structure, brick by brick, and designing and upbuilding a new Temple of National Liberty on its ruins. During this period he was able to collect around himself a small but select band of kindred souls, and to create a new ferment, a new atmosphere and a new vision which opened out long and wide vistas of hope, endeavour and aspiration.

Again, looking at him from a slightly different angle, Rammohun Roy stands out before us as an intellectual and moral aristocrat, so to say, a character which is set off to great additional advantage by his tall, stately figure with his bright, penetrating eyes and noble bearing. He was an extremely conscientious scholar, and a keen and earnest seeker after truth. All his writings, not excluding his

letters to friends, which were necessarily of but passing interest, were composed with a deep sense of responsibility. But the thing that has particularly impressed me about all his pronouncements,—for such they are as coming from the prophet of the India that he was helping to come to birth,—are all instinct with the quality of spiritual manliness, and every word he uses is a word of weight and power. Indeed, even in the midst of the clash and conflict of public controversies in which he was frequently engaged, an extraordinary calmness of judgment and a deep sense of wholeness and intellectual integrity is seen to run through all his utterances.

The source and spring of all his wonderful energy which ramifies into so many channels, but which never loses the quality and warmth of moral and spiritual fervour, is to be found,—one should never forget,—in his deep sense of constant and ever-conscious presence of a Divine Being, the Author and Preserver of the universe, to whom alone he felt himself accountable. In other words, the primary roots of his being and becoming, of his struggles and achievements, lay in his liberal religion as enshrined and set forth by himself in the Trust Deed of the Brahmo Samaj. This was the seed from which Modern India has sprouted and developed. The liberty of thought and belief and the free and unhampered sway of moral and spiritual principles lie at the foundation of Rammohun Roy's gospel of liberty and human emancipation.

He was conscious, it would seem, of the deficiencies and shortcomings of what may be called *institutional* religion,—a hard, rigid, encrusted and solidified code or system of conduct and morality, which serves, in the course of time, as the dead and stiff hand of a statue, useful enough and extremely helpful for showing the direction in which we may proceed in our daily life, but lacking the power and authority which comes from the living voice of God in our own souls, as the voice of Conscience or Reason, which alone can carry individuals and nations through periods of moral or spiritual crises.

At a time like this, more than at any other time, India needs the amalgam of a liberal religion for "strengthening", (I am quoting Rammohun Roy's Trust Deed of the Brahmo Samaj,) "the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds."

28

Mr. Hemendra Prasad Ghosh

on

Rammohun and the Liberty of the Press

So vivid, variegated and various were the activities of the great Bengali who died under alien stars one hundred years ago, that it is difficult to form a just estimate of the massy, the splendid, and the various treasures laid up in his large mind, collected with infinite care during a long period of training. Among his many interests the liberty of the Press was one which cannot but attract our attention and enthral our admiration. For, when Rammohun Roy championed the liberty of the Press in India, the Press was an innovation,—nothing more than a puny little baby. The first newspaper appeared in India in 1780, and incurred the wrath of the Government within ten months of its appearance. Relentless Warren Hastings instituted suit after suit against its editor, and at last succeeded in strangling the paper. In 1791 William Duane was arrested by the Bengal Government, and ordered to be sent to Europe for some offending paragraphs in the *Bengal Journal*. Dr. Bryce, editor of the *Asiatic Mirror* made repeated representations against the Censor appointed by Government. On 12th February 1823, J. S. Buckingham of the *Calcutta Journal* was served with an order cancelling his license for "proceeding to the East Indies," and directing him to leave India within two months.

Thus, on the one hand, there was the undue interference of the authorities who contemplated with anxiety and alarm the growth of a powerful Press in a conquered country; and on the other, there were the excesses indulged in by the English editors, about whose papers Hunter has remarked,—"scurrility and servility long seemed the only two notes known to Calcutta journalism."

RAMMOHUN AS PUBLICIST

With unerring foresight Rammohun Roy, the first brilliant product of European influence in India, realised the utility and the potentiality of the Press in India, and himself started two newspapers, the *Sambad Kaumudi* conducted in Bengali, and the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* conducted in Persian. The former appeared in 1821, two years before Buckingham was ordered to leave India for discharging his duties as a journalist. Rammohun's papers were not exclusively political publications, and besides politics, contained subjects of a historical, literary and scientific character.

Rammohun had actually foreseen that the "cat-callings of bugle-boys, practising their 'prentice windpipes in some out-of-the-way angle of the ramparts, were destined to grow into clear trumpet notes which should arouse sleeping camps to great constitutional struggles, and sound the charge of political parties in battle."

Being enthusiastically patriotic, he always stood for liberty. It would be idle to imagine that he was oblivious of the numerous shortcomings of the Press of those days; but when the Government wanted to put a curb on the liberty of the Press, he said to himself, like Burke,—"My rigour relents,—I pardon something to the spirit of liberty."

Within a fortnight after Buckingham's departure from Calcutta, Mr. J. Adam, Chief Secretary to the Government, published in the *Government Gazette* (March 20th, 1823) the draft of a Rule to regulate the future publication of newspapers, etc., within the settlement of Fort William. This Rule required that "no person or persons shall, within the said settlement of Fort William, print or publish or cause to be printed or published, any Newspaper or Magazine, Register, Pamphlet or other printed book or paper whatsoever, in any language or character whatsoever, published periodically, containing or purporting to contain public news and intelligence, or strictures on the acts measures and proceedings of Government, or any political event or transactions whatsoever, without having obtained a license for that purpose from the Governor-General in Council, signed by the Chief Secretary of Government for the time being, or other person officiating and acting as such Chief Secretary."

According to prevalent custom, this Rule was laid before the Supreme Court of Calcutta on the 15th March, 1823, by the Standing Counsel to the East India Company to be registered when it was publicly read.

BEGINNING OF CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE

On the 17th March a brave band of Bengali patriots sounded the clarion call of a constitutional struggle which has since been going on. They made a Petition objecting to the Rule, "thus starting", as Romesh Ch. Dutt has put it, "that system of constitutional agitation for political rights which their countrymen have learned to value so much in the present day."

The history of the Press in India is a history of struggle against autocratic power and popular supineness. That history has yet to be written. But when it comes to be written, the names of the six Bengalis, whose action shines out clearly in a brilliant and honourable light amid the

darkness of autocracy and indifference, would occupy a brilliant chapter in it. The signatories to the Petition were Chunder Coomar Tagore, Dwarkanauth Tagore, Rammohun Roy, Hur Chander Ghose, Gowree Churn Banerjee, Prossonnocoomar Tagore,—brave men and true patriots, who fought for a right which was to benefit their countrymen more in the future than it could possibly benefit them,—fought for it because the vision of a New India rose before their minds' eyes, as rose the vision of New Jerusalem before the rapt eyes of the author of the Apocalypse.

A perusal of the Petition would go to show that Rammohun and his fellow signatories wanted liberty and not license. The risk they ran in taking the step they did was referred to by Dwarkanauth Tagore, when under Sir Charles T. Metcalfe the Indian Press was granted freedom, an act of justice which was hailed with acclamation by the public, who testified their approbation, not merely by laudatory addresses, but by the erection of a handsome public building devoted to literary purposes and designated 'Metcalfe Hall', (which, unfortunately, is no longer in the possession of the public.) Dwarkanauth related how it was said that he and his co-signatories to the Petition would be incarcerated for their impudence in challenging the wisdom of the authorities who were armed with arbitrary powers,—Regulation III of 1818 being one of the many weapons in their armoury.

That the Petition was rejected by the Supreme Court, and that the same fate overtook their subsequent appeal to the throne of England on the subject, cannot dim the glory of their action. For, history has recorded many defeats which are more glorious than victories; and as Byron has said,

> "Freedom's battle, once begun,
> Though baffled oft, is ever won."

THE PETITION

The Petition, we have been told by the Raja's son, was drafted by Rammohun, though he was not a lawyer. That it bears unmistakable signs of the touch of his Roman hand is evident. The lustre of the arguments that were adduced by Rammohun in it, age has not been able to tarnish; for truth successfully withstands the corrosive wear and tear of time. They pointed out the result of the Rule, which insisted on license "revocable at pleasure" being taken out by printers and publishers, and said:—

> "A complete stop will be put to the diffusion of knowledge and the consequent mental improvement

now going on, either by translations into the popular dialects of this country from the learned languages of the East, or by the circulation of literary intelligence drawn from foreign publications. And the same course will also prevent those natives who are better versed in the laws and customs of the British nation, from communicating to their fellow-subjects a knowledge of the admirable system of Government established by the British, and the peculiar excellencies of the means they have adopted for the strict and impartial administration of justice. Another evil of equal importance in the eyes of a just Ruler is that it will also preclude the natives from making the Government readily acquainted with the errors and injustice that may be committed by its Executive Officers in the various parts of their extensive country, and it will also preclude the natives from communicating frankly and honestly to their Gracious Sovereign in England and his Council, the real conditions of His Majesty's faithful subjects in this distant part of his dominions, and the treatment they experience from the local Government. Since such information cannot in future be conveyed to England, as it has heretofore been, either by the translation from the native publications inserted in the English newspapers printed here and sent to Europe, or by the English publications which the natives themselves had in contemplation to establish before this Rule and Ordinance was proposed."

For obvious reasons I refrain from applying the arguments set forth in this Petition to the present day; but I cannot resist the temptation of pointing out how Rammohun and his friends anticipated the "gagged silence" to which Dr. Rabindranath Tagore referred in his famous letter to Lord Chelmsford on the Punjab disorders.

A TOCSIN OF ALARM

The Petition also sounded a tocsin of alarm and said:—"Every good Ruler, who is convinced of the imperfection of human nature, and reverences the Eternal Governor of the world, must be conscious of the great liability to error in managing the affairs of a vast empire; and therefore he will be anxious to afford to every individual the readiest means of bringing to his notice whatever may require his interference. To secure this important object, the unrestrained liberty of publication is the only effectual means that can be employed."

In my peregrinations into the literatures of India and England I have nowhere found the higher functions of

journalism more truly and more frankly expressed than in the Petition these six Bengali patriots presented in 1823, the memory of whose work comes to us today wafted across the distance of a hundred and ten eventful years.

As a journeyman workman of journalism, as a member, however unworthy, of the profession which has suffered sacrifices but never suffered dictation from any quarter in the discharge of its duties,—a profession which had attracted men like Hurrish Chunder Mookerjee, Girish Chandra Ghosh, Keshub Chunder Sen, Kristodas Pal, Sambhoo Chunder Mookerjee, Dwaraka Nath Vidyabhushan, Narendra Nath Sen, Sisir Kumar Ghose, Moti Lal Ghose, Surendra Nath Banerjea, Shyam Sundar Chakravarty, Bipin Chandra Pal and many another *clarum et venerabile nomen* men, who have kept the torch lighted by Rammohun burning,—I say to the great departed—

> "I, wearing the garland of the day,
> Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away."

29

Prof. Naresh Chandra Ray, M.A., B.L.

on

The Early Indian Press and Rammohun Roy

In the last half of the eighteenth century there was an outburst of journalistic activity in Great Britain. The great efforts which the British people made in the 17th century for religious and political liberty was followed by a long period of reaction, which was not brought really to a close before the accession of George III to the throne. His installation as King marked the passing of the old inertia, and a new spirit of rejuvenation was now noticeable in every sphere of activity in Great Britain. The development of the Press was a symptom of this new energy. Various journals were started, and they inspired the growing class of readers with fresh ideas and thoughts. The Press became a force to reckon with. It was henceforward the Fourth Estate.

When the names of Wilkes and Junius were ringing in the ears of the English people, it was but inevitable that they should have their echo across the seas in the Indian territories of the East India Company. It was in 1780 or

in the following year that Hickey established at Calcutta his journal, the *Bengal Gazette*. This pointed the way, and other journals followed suit. In the nineties we come across the *Indian World* which was edited by William Duane, an Irish-American. These periodicals and newspapers did not prove successful, either as business ventures or as instruments of public education. The Indian society had not yet taken to the English education, and could not profit by this English journalism, and the European society, which consisted mostly of the civil and military officers of the Company, was too corrupt and too much engaged in shaking the pagoda tree to devote any attention to literature. It was personal details which alone interested some people, and consequently the journals of this period vended these details in all their nakedness.

No Press Regulation as such was yet on the statue book to restrict the freedom of the journalists. But though no Press Law had yet been passed, the sword of Damocles was continuously hanging over their heads. They stood the risk of being deported any day from the Company's territories to Europe. William Duane had in fact to pay this penalty towards the close of the year 1794. His arrest and deportation constitute a dramatic episode in the history of the Indian Press and journalism. Invited by the Private Secretary of Sir John Shore, he called at the Government House in expectation of a sumptuous breakfast. But instead of being greeted by the dainty dishes he had looked forward to, he was suddenly confronted by a number of soldiers who removed him by force to the Fort. From there he was taken to an armed Indiaman, and was not set free till he was conveyed safely to England.

The rigid censorship of the Press was not also long in coming. Lord Wellesley landed in this country in 1798 as the Governor-General, and soon after his taking charge of the office, the necessary Regulations were passed to shackle the Press. The time was abnormal, and the situation was perilous. England was then passing through the darkest period of her struggle with the French Revolution. Her Eastern possessions were being threatened at this time by Napoleon. It was thought dangerous that the newspaper editors should be allowed to air their views at their own discretion. The Chief Secretary to the Government was consequently invested with the functions of the Press Censor. Every newspaper was required to submit to him the printed 'proofs', which he could at his discretion pass, withold or modify. Every newspaper, again, had to take a license before its first publication. This license was withdrawable at any time by the Government on the recommendation of the Censor.

Danger to India from the side of France practically passed off before the dawn of the new century. Napoleon, after his discomfiture in Egypt, had to turn his eyes from the East. But although the emergency was gone, the censorship once established continued to hamper the growth of free opinion in this country.

It was not till 1818 that the shackles were removed. The new freedom that was vouchsafed to the journalists gave a great fillip to the development of the Press in this province. James Silk Buckingham who was later on made famous by his deportation to England in 1823 on a charge of publishing a paragraph distasteful to the then Government, now took advantage of the new freedom, and set up at once his paper known as the *Calcutta Journal*. The withdrawal of the Regulation of Lord Wellesley opened out an opportunity also to Rammohun Roy to start an organ of his own to ventilate his opinions and views. The Raja had permanently settled down at Calcutta since his retirement from Mr. Digby's service in 1814. He was devoting all his time to his theological pursuits and philanthropic activities. To educate his countrymen, to widen their outlook, and to infuse a new life into their dead bones,—these constituted the one engrossing ambition of the Raja. He had already rendered all the help that he was capable of in the establishment of the Hindoo College for the dissemination of Western education among the Bengali boys. But the starting of such institutions would open out only one avenue of progress. It was essential that other lines should also be explored for bringing enlightenment to his fellow countrymen. Accordingly the Raja, whose journalistic ambition was stimulated by his close and intimate association with James Silk Buckingham, planned the publication of a vernacular weekly at Calcutta. In November 1821 the prospectus of the new journal, which was to be known as the *Sambad Kaumudi*, was circulated both in English and in Bengali. Through this prospectus the Raja craved the support and patronage of the citizens of Calcutta in the name of intellectual and moral improvement, which was the one object of his weekly. On the 4th of the following month the first issue of this journal actually appeared. Rammohun was not only the proprietor, but was himself the *de facto* Editor of the *Kaumudi*. It appears that the publication of this paper was not welcomed by the Anglo-Indian society of the time. A wave of consternation rather passed through it when Rammohun made public his contemplation of starting his weekly. The *Kaumudi*, however, did not enjoy a very long life. The Indian public had not yet been sufficiently educated to take any intelligent interest in the questions with which the *Kaumudi* happened to deal. Besides, Rammohun had become an eye-sore to a

considerable section of the citizens of Calcutta for the religious and social views which he had persisted in expounding for the last one decade. In May 1822, barely one year and a half after its birth, the publication of the *Kaumudi* was suspended by the Raja. It will not be out of place here to refer to the type of subjects, with the discussion of which the *Kaumudi* during its short career was concerned. It took up in earnest the problem of education in this presidency and impressed upon the Government the necessity of establishing a seminary for free and gratuitous instruction of the children of the poor. It is significant that the free education which the Raja advocated in his organ as early as 1822 remains still a desideratum in 1933. The *Kaumudi* also tried to bring home to the Government the necessity of extending the Jury Trial, which was available only in Calcutta, to the local and district courts.

The suspension of the *Kaumudi* did not bring to a close the journalistic career of the Raja. He had already in April 1822 brought out a Persian weekly, the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*. Persian still occupied in India the linguistic position which English occupies today in this country. It was the medium through which the Raja could address not only the cultured people of this presidency, but the people of other provinces as well. It was in the *Mirat* that the Raja gave his penetrating analysis of the English Constitution and Government. It was in this journal also that he wrote a series of articles on the Irish situation, so that his countrymen might have an idea of the problem of that island.

The views he expressed and the opinions he published in this journal, though very moderate in tone, were not very pleasing to the Government. Even before the departure of Lord Hastings in January 1823, the Government of India had discussed the question of re-introducing the Press Regulation which had been suspended in 1818. The members of the Governor-General's Council all recorded their views in the matter. One of the members, Mr. W. B. Bayley, supported the cancellation of the freedom of the Press on the ground that the Native Press was abusing its privilege. And by way of illustrating his case he referred to several passages of the *Mirat*. These passages would not appear objectionable to any sane man in these days. But the members of the Civil Service in those days looked askance at every form of education of the Indians. The spread of education among the people of this country, and the continuance of British dominion over them, were looked upon as inconsistent with each other. Consequently education either through the schools or through the Press was denounced by these redoubtable members of the Convenanted Service. Early in the century, Captain

Sydenham, then Resident at the State of Hyderabad, presented a printing press to His Highness the Nizam, by way of acquainting him with the scientific appliances which the Western brain was producing. Immediately there was a hue and cry at Calcutta. An explanation was demanded of Sydenham as to why he had taken such an unwise step. This being the spirit of the Civil Service at the time, it was not very unnatural that the writings of Rammohun should be objected to by Mr. Bayley.

At last in March 1823 the rigorous Press Regulation was issued. This revived the practice of taking licenses. The Raja did his best to stop the operation of this Regulation. But when his efforts were unavailing, he decided to stop the further publication of the *Mirat*.

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Dr. Nareschandra Sen-Gupta, M.A., D.L.

on

Rammohun and Law.

Raja Rammohun was not a 'lawyer,' in the sense in which we generally understand the term. But as a litigant he had his hands pretty full ; and the time he spent as Dewan at Rungpore brought him into most intimate practical contact with the administration of law, for, as we understand from his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, many of the Judges of those days, who were also Commissioners of Revenue, relied exclusively on their Dewans for the discharge of their judicial duties.

The Raja was nothing if not thorough. When his duties brought him into contact with law, he was not content with knowing just so much of it as was necessary for practical purposes, but he made a thorough study of it. He not only studied Indian law, but familiarised himself with details of British jurisprudence. Illustrating one of his points in his Essay on Ancestral Property in Bengal, written in 1830, he shows an easy familiarity with the differences between the laws of legitimacy in England and Scotland, and with the peculiarities of the Gavelkind tenure of Kent.

The proficiency which the Raja thus acquired was not confined to a mere practical knowledge of the law. With a characteristically philosophic bent of mind he easily went behind the rules of law to their principles. His

scanty literary remains give us very little information about his actual equipment in this respect, but enough remains nevertheless to show that he was not only a most acute lawyer, but also a jurist with a firm grasp of principles and clear vision of legal possiblities.

One can discern that his pronouncements on the various problems of law that he discussed with such knowledge and legal acumen, and with an incisiveness and forensic eloquence that any legal practitioner might envy, were not isolated pieces of mental exercise on the basis of the mere letter of the law. Taking his legal contributions in a lump, one notices in them a unity of purpose and principle which would justify one in claiming the whole series as representing an underlying legal philosophy, which, though not explicit, is implied in all that he says.

The fundamental principle for him was evidently what he calls in one of his Bengali essays '*lokasreyah*', the good of the people, which was to him the purpose of all law and social regulation. What he means by it approximates more to the Hedonism of Aristotle, whom he is said to have studied early in life, than to the doctrine which was being promulgated about his time by Jeremy Bentham. It is difficult to imagine that in those days of difficult communication, the Raja, while in India, could have been acquainted with the doctrines of Bentham which had not yet obtained sufficient currency even in England. And there is nothing in his treatment of the subject to indicate any remarkable affinity with Bentham's mathematical method of deducing laws by a calculation of the pleasure and pain ensuing from any measure. Besides, to the Raja, imbued with the philosophy of the Upanishads, *sreyah* could not have meant pleasure, but Good, and *lokasreyah* was really the Good of humanity, in much the same sense as Aristotle understood the term.

Nor did the Raja proceed to elaborate any system of laws by *a priori* deductions from the absolute mathematical possibilities of particular laws in terms of pleasure and pain. He had an intensely practical mind, and was rather more concerned with the solution of the problems of the day by an empirical examination of their *pros* and *cons*. In this examination too, he seldom goes back to first principles, but principally proceeds to discuss them on considerations which a practical jurist would employ.

Considering the whole series of his contributions, however, one cannot fail to discern which way they all converge. The cause supported by the Raja is in every case *the cause of freedom*. He denounces *Suttee*, and proclaims against it by an analysis of the Sastric authorities on the subject; but the motive of his argument is supplied by his strong

feeling for the hopeless condition of dependence of women on men in Hindu society, and a desire to liberate them and enable them to lead the life of human beings, pursuing ends of their own for their own self-realisation.

In one of his controversial tracts on the subject he says,—"The Sastras have directed those men or women, who seek after a knowledge of God, to hear and reflect upon this doctrine, that they may escape from the grievous pain of this world ; and they have also prescribed daily and occasional rites to be performed, without the hope of reward, by those who do not seek after divine knowledge, in order that their minds may be purified and prepared to receive that knowledge. We, therefore, in conformity with the Sastra, make it our endeavour to dissuade widows from desiring future base and fleeting enjoyments, and encourage them to the acquisition of that divine knowledge which leads to final beatitude."

In reading this and other similar passages in the controversy regarding *Suttee,* we must remember that the Raja had, on purpose, confined himself to argument exclusively on the basis of the Sastras. Even within these limits he showed that women, like men, had spiritual purposes of their own to serve, rather than extinguish their lives on their husbands' pyres. That he had a much larger idea about freedom of women is shown by his treatise on "The Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females," where he pleads in effect for the economic independence of women by a recognition of their right to inheritance. Here, too, like the practical lawyer that he was, he confines himself to the word of the law, and only pleads for the abrogation of more modern doctrines limiting women's rights in favour of the older and more liberal view.

Here again the motive of his argument is supplied by the following :—"To these women there are left only three modes of conduct to pursue after the death of their husbands. Firstly, To live a miserable life as entire slaves to others, without indulging in any hope of support from another husband. Secondly, To walk in the paths of unrighteousness for their maintenance and independence. Thirdly, To die on the funeral pyre of their husbands, loaded with the applause and honour of their neighbours."

In his Bengali essays, moreover, he draws a truthful and pathetic portrait of the hopeless servitude and unhappiness of women in society. The Raja was, if anything, a worshipper of freedom, and it was natural that he should seek to lift the burden on the womanhood of his country so far as he might. He did not go so far as we may think he might ; but in so thinking we probably greatly underrate

the strength of the reactionary forces he had to fight in his time. It would be a great mistake to suppose that because he pleaded for what was, after all, little, he was content with just this much and wanted no more. These efforts were only indicative of the underlying spirit of freedom in him, though it was cramped in its utterance by the pressure of environments.

Yet another evidence of the inclination of his mind is furnished by his treatment of the "Rights of Hindoos over Ancestral Property," where he argues with the eloquence of a first-rate forensic orator against a decision of the Supreme Court denying to the Dayabhaga father the right of free disposition of ancestral immovables. It was the invariable principle of Rammohun in his controversies to fight with the weapons of his opponents. That this is not to be taken as an instance of his orthodoxy, or of his faithful adherence to the authorities that he cites, is clearly shown by this, that while in this essay and the subsequent controversies with "A Hindoo" he places strong reliance on the text of Jimutavahana which the Court was bound to administer, it is the tenets of this very author which he attacks as a "Modern Encroachment" on the Ancient Rights of Females in the other treatise. The reason behind his arguments assuredly lies in the fact that it was his firm conviction that freedom of disposition of property was founded on sound juristic theory, and to set aside the progressive views of Jimutavahna on this was wrong in principle, while the restrictions on women's right of inheritance placed by the same Jimutavahana were retrograde and bad in principle. In either case he appeals to authority and cites undoubted authority even for the proposition that the texts of Sastras had to be interpreted according to reason. But in both he concludes by assigning sound juristic reasons why the doctrines supported by him should be upheld.

His attitude of complete detachment from the Sastric law which he handled to such good purpose in these controversies is clearly shown in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee in 1832. There he was not handicapped by the limitations which, to some extent, cramp his expositions in these controversial treatises. He there proceeds to plead for laws purely on principles and from considerations of public good.

He makes a strong plea for codification, and frankly criticises the cumbrous and inartistic form of the Regulations then in force. He wants a Criminal Code and a Civil Code almost precisely for the reasons for which Bentham or Thibaut wanted them, and for others which were specially applicable to the Anglo-Indian government. He

was then in England, and probably had the benefit of intercourse with Bentham shortly before the latter's death in 1832. It is conceivable that his partiality for codification might have been inspired by Bentham. But, considering that Bentham was at that time hopeless of having a hearing for his plea for codification in England, it is none the less striking that Raja Rammohun should have been such a quick convert to his doctrines, (assuming that he was a convert, and not an independent thinker on the same lines.)

The Civil Code which the Raja wanted was to embrace the entire Civil Law, including the law of inheritance. With the wisdom of a practical statesman and lawyer, however, he did not want the Code to reform the law, but to lay down in precise terms the various laws of inheritance as they were, "until, by the diffusion of intelligence, the whole community may be prepared to adopt one uniform system." This shows exactly his real attitude towards the Sastric law which he seems to hold inviolate in his controversial treatises. He does not consider them as sacrosanct, but rather desires their gradual amendment according to rational principles. But he is not willing to let the Courts interfere with the laws as they were until they were modified by a legislative act. And even legislative interference should not, in his judgment, be violent or radical, but proceed with the advance of the ideas of the people. Miss Collet has noticed this caution and conservatism as an outstanding trait of Rammohun Roy, which she characterises as a "prudent, even timid disinclination to revolt." But one who appreciates in full measure the force of the conservatism which he was out to fight, will consider his choice of the line of least resistance as prudent rather than timid. That Rammohun Roy was constitutionally incapable of a revolution is borne out by many passages in his Bengali works. But he was undoubtedly a radical in thought, though very moderate in practice from considerations of prudence alone. The modicum of reform which he fought for, entrenched within solid ramparts of Sastric authority, raised such a tempest of opposition that a more advanced programme would probably have thrown him altogether out of bounds.

The liberal principles of jurisprudence which the Raja made the basis of his legal programme were borrowed chiefly from a study of English law, which he read with care, and for which he professed unbounded admiration in more places than one. One can gauge his proficiency in the principles of that law throughout the evidence which he gave before the Parliamentary Committee on the Judicial System in India. The evidence which he gave was such as could have been given by an English lawyer

of the front rank. He pleaded for trial by jury, for a separation of judicial and executive functions, for the power of the Sudder Court to issue writs of Habeas Corpus, for lawyer judges, and so forth, and he fortified his pleas by an armoury of argument which would stand close scrutiny even at the present day. In all this he was drawing upon English law. But he was equally alive to the conditions of the country, and his ready adaptations of English ideas and institutions to Indian needs are not only clever but wise. One is struck throughout by the ease and confidence with which he meets every contingency and suggests a remedy for everything. All this betrays a mind not only supremely quick, clear-sighted, and well-informed, not only well-stocked in legal principles and having a clear grasp of the entire system of administration of justice, but also the mind of a jurist and statesman with insight and vision. In law as in everything else, Rammohun Roy was an idealist with a great sweep of vision, and yet an intensely practical-minded man. While his mind rose to loftier heights of idealism than Bentham, he was a great sight more practical and prepared to take full account of facts. The frame of his mind reminds one of Aristotle, in the extensity of the province over which it played, the keen insight which he displayed, the lofty heights of idealism which he realised, as well as in the scrupulous attention he bestowed on practical details.

While his own country was undoubtedly benefited by it, the world lost a great deal in the fact that Rammohun had to spend so much of his time in pioneering every liberalising movement in the country, from a Press to a Theistic movement, and to exhaust himself principally in controversies. He did not leave any systematic treatise on laws or politics or even on the philosophy of his Theism. We are left to cull thoughts from stray passages in treatises in which the exigencies of controversy counted for more than a systematic presentation of his ideas, though these treatises are models of what controversial writings on such high topics ought to be. Enough remains in them, however, to indicate his high purpose, clear ideas and a lofty philosophy, and above all a great spirit of freedom underlying them, to make us sigh for a systematic treatise from his own hands.

In the legal treatises Raja Rammohun Roy displays a high degree of legal knowledge and an astonishing forensic talent. In appraising their worth we have to remember that he wrote about a century ago, when the great body of judge-made Hindu law had not yet been evolved, and a great many of the source-books on Hindu law which are now easily accessible were not available. It is possible for

us now to say a great deal more on the law relating to the rights of the father over ancestral property, and on the rights of women in property, than the Raja did say. But the point to note is that his knowledge of the Sastric law was at least on a par with the foremost Pandits of the day, whom he had little difficulty in meeting on their own ground in the various controversies with them. What one admires most in these is, however, not the amount of knowledge he displays, but the clever handling of his material and the closeness of his reasoning, which was buttressed in every case by considerations of common sense and legal principle with which his opponents were but poorly equipped.

Reading between the lines of these controversies, one clearly sees that the Raja was not a mere lawyer out to make hair-splitting distinctions to no purpose. He was a lawyer and reformer. He wanted to use the material at his command to support a better, freer and more liberal ordering of things than he found in vogue, and to withstand every effort to go back upon a liberal principle already recognised. He took his stand upon the works recognised in society as authoritative, but was determined to get the utmost out of them.

This is nowhere better illustrated than in his strong advocacy of *Saiva* marriage. In point of law and history the Raja never stood on weaker ground. For *Saiva* marriage was the name originally given in some Tantras to the temporary connection with the woman taken as *Sakti* for the purposes of the *Chakra*. For this purpose any woman could be chosen irrespective of caste or creed, but the connection was throughout deemed to be temporary, with no outstanding marital relations between the parties. The Mahanirvana Tantra, however, recognises *two kinds of Saiva marriage, temporary and permanent*. And the Raja pitched upon this fact as showing the validity of marriage contracted by *Saiva* rites outside the forms of marriage recognised by the Smritis.

From the point of view of the Smritis, this argument could have been easily met. In any case, the desuetude of such permanent marriages, if they ever existed at any time in any quantity, would have been a sufficient answer to his arguments, even on the basis of the Smritis. Yet the Raja pursues his opponents on the matter with the same vehemence of argument and closeness of logic that he displays in stronger causes. It was fortunate that he had to meet in controversy Pandits who were Vaishnavas, as the Saktas probably refrained from attacking an institution founded on the Tantras. And the Raja had little difficulty

in pinning his Vaishnava adversary by arguments which would have been futile against a *Smarta*, who was neither a Tantrik nor a Vaishnava.

The point to note about this controversy is the way in which the Raja uses his Sastric authority for his law. He is out to lay down laws which make for greater freedom, and arrives at his conclusions on reasons independent of Sastras. Then he ransacks the Sastras for authority for his view, and does not care where he finds the authority. His objective in pitching upon *Saiva* marriage was clearly the freedom of choice of the bride which it gave, for, in this form of marriage the Tantras did not recognise barrier of caste or even of widowhood. Just in the same manner, he culled from the Mahanirvana and Kularnava Tantras the passages dealing with Brahma-jnana and Brahma-sadhana, ignoring their elaborate provisions of Tantric rituals which form the bulk of these works. In the same spirit he proceeded to find, in the Vedanta, in the Koran, and in the Bible, support for the theistic doctrines which he was out to establish.

Neither in his religion and philosophy, nor in his law, was Rammohun a mere eclectic who pieced together fragments of truth from wherever he found it. His thought was not a repository of loose scraps collected at odd spots. It was an organic unity, and he had a complete and self-contained philosophy of his own in which he could find place for thoughts of a piece with it. Only, unlike many other thinkers, he had a wonderful catholicity of mind which enabled him to get at the view-points of others, and, where they agreed with his, he was not ashamed to absorb and interpret their thoughts.

This is the great secret of Rammohun's life and thought, the cardinal fact which explains everything which would otherwise be unintelligible. And this explains why, while he had ideas and principles in law at least on a line with those in the fore-front of legal thinkers of those days, he yet found it worth while to establish propositions of law on the basis of ancient texts of India, much of which he could not but have felt to be grossly out of date.

It is no discredit to Rammohun that he did not fully realise the relativity of positive law to the times and environments, though in his Essay on Ancestral Property in Bengal he comes very near to such a conclusion. Nowhere in his writings do we find any bold attempt to argue that a law laid down in the text-books, though it was valid in its time, was unsuited to changed environments. That sociological view-point of law came at a much later age, and was only developed after the ground had been prepared

for it by Darwin and Spencer in the domains of organic and social evolution, and the first speculations on these lines were commenced by Maine and Ihering. It is no disparagement of Rammohun that he did not forestall his successors. It is rather to his credit that, erudite lawyer that he was, he shook off the lawyer's conservatism so far as to plead for codification of laws, an appeal, which, made by Bentham, fell on deaf ears in England, and one to which the first response in India came only twenty years later. It is likewise to his credit that he had begun to pick and choose between the laws in force, and had given effect to large and liberal principles in his treatment of these laws.

Nor is it a serious disparagement of Rammohun that he did not know more of Hindu Law than he did. It is rather a matter of surprise that he knew as much as he did, specially as he was not a lawyer or *Smarta* by profession. Judged by modern standards, Rammohun knew very few of the authoritative text-books on that law. Had he known of the works of Mitra Misra, Nilakantha, Kamalakara and others, he could easily have enriched his contribution on the women's rights in property by numerous quotations from some of these authors. It is doubtful also whether he knew all the Smritis which he quotes in the original works. He rather seems to have taken them from quotations in the Nibandhas, except Manu, which had already been printed and translated by Sir William Jones. It is not surprising either that Rammohun seems to have known little of Mimansa exegesis beyond the knowledge one might get from a study of Raghunandana. If he had a good knowledge of Mimansa, he could have used it to good purpose in his support of the Dayabhaga doctrine with regard to ancestral property. We must remember that Bengal pandits of those days seldom knew more. Jagannath Tarkapanchanana, renowned as a scholar of the greatest repute, took his Smriti texts from Nibandhas, and if he quotes Viramitrodaya and others, he, too, was not very well posted in all the commentaries in use outside Bengal and Benares. As for Mimansa, it was never much studied in Bengal, and there is little evidence of its thorough study in Bengal at any date subsequent to Raghunandana. Rammohun therefore knew as much of Hindu law as the Bengal pandits and lawyers of his age. He was distinguished from his contemporaries not in the extensity of his reading of the law, but in the clear insight and lucidity of exposition that he showed,—characteristics which one largely misses in the encyclopædic work of Jagannath himself.

The only branch of law other than Hindu law which Rammohun had dealt with is the Revenue law of Bengal. His evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on the

Revenue System is very little studied now, and it is amazing to find that not a single reference was made to it even in the debate on the Bengal Tenancy Bill to which there is much in it that was very germane. The Raja's statement of the law and its history is precise and accurate, no less than it is clear and luminous. No student of the history of the land system of Bengal can afford to ignore it. It is not only a brilliant summary of the law as it then stood ; it shows a firm grasp of the principles on which those laws are founded, and a broad and generous outlook on facts bearing upon its consideration. The Raja maintains, throughout his suggestions and criticisms, an attitude of utmost fairness and justice to all. He exposes the enormous drain of India's revenues to England at the time, and refutes the argument that land was then under-assessed in Bengal. At the same time, in language quiet but firm, he relates how the landlords of Bengal had shamelessly exploited their tenants after the Permanent Settlement, and deprived them of their permanent rights. So far back as 1832 he put forward a plea for permanently fixing the rents payable by raiyats,—a plea which stands as valid now as then, and is even now equally unheeded. Throughout his evidence, both in his statement of the law and in his criticisms, the Raja displays a precise and accurate knowledge of the laws and the principles underlying them, and shows the outlook of a statesman of high calibre,—honest, far-sighted, fair and generous. Altogether, reading the scanty fragments left by Rammohun, one comes into contact with a legal mind of such amplitude and depth that one cannot but regret that he had not left a great deal more. Legal questions engaged a small fraction of the attention of the Raja. If it had done more, if he had devoted himself to a systematic investigation of the laws and drafted a Code, and if he could get the Government of the day to accept it, it does not require any violence of imagination to guess that the legal history of India of the past century would have been a brilliant chapter instead of being the indifferent patchwork that it is.

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Jitendra Mohan Sen, M.A., M.Ed.

of the Bengal Educational Service, on

Rammohun as a Pioneer of Education

In the Introduction to the Presidency College Register it was stated that "the Hindu College was the original institution which was transformed later into the Presidency

College. The Hindu College came into being as the result of the spontaneous desire of the Hindus of Bengal to diffuse the knowledge of Western science and literature." A meeting was held in May 1816, under the presidency of the Chief Justice, Sir Edward Hyde East, to discuss the proposal to establish "an institution for giving a liberal education to the children of the members of the Hindu community." Subscriptions to the extent of over a lakh of rupees were promised at the meeting for the College. Raja Rammohun Roy not only sympathized with the scheme, but was originally one of its promoters. He, however, on the advice of his friends, did not come forward openly in its support for fear of "alarming the prejudices of his orthodox countrymen and thus marring the whole cause." One of the foundation rules of the Hindu College laid down that "in the academy, besides the study of such languages as cannot be so conveniently taught in the school, instruction shall be given in History, Geography, Chronology, Astronomy and Mathematics and other sciences." The rule quoted above shows that although Rammohun was first trained as a Persian scholar, to which he subsequently added an intimate knowledge of Sanskrit, he did not believe in imparting merely oriental education to the people of India.

Raja Rammohun Roy's famous letter of December 1823, addressed to Lord Amherst, has now become a well-known document. But, for years before 1823, Rammohun along with Mr. David Hare, Raja Radhakanto Deb and Babu Buddinath Mukherji advocated the starting of English schools for the people of India. He believed that if schools were started by Unitarian Missionaries in Calcutta, giving instruction in the rudiments of European education in the English language, and in Christian morality, mingling with it very little instruction relative to the doctrines of Christianity, they would be of great use to the people of India. On this point he said,—"I may be fully justified in saying that two-thirds of the native population of Bengal would be exceedingly glad to see their children educated in English learning"; and "To the best of my knowledge, no benefit has hitherto arisen from the translation of the [Christian] Scriptures into the languages of the East, nor can any advantage be expected from the translations in circulation."

In December 1821 when Raja Rammohun Roy published the Bengali weekly newspaper called the *Sambad Kaumudi* he wrote an article appealing to Government for the establishment of a school for the *gratuitous instruction* of the children of poor but respectable Hindus. During the years 1822 to 1824, he published in his weekly paper

several articles on scientific subjects, e. g., 'echo in acoustics', 'properties of the magnet', 'description of a balloon', 'behaviour of fishes', etc. The articles proved his eagerness to popularise scientific topics amongst the educated people of Bengal through the medium of their vernacular.

The educational purpose which inspired Raja Rammohun Roy's journalism led him into several academic enterprises. His share in founding, along with others, the old Hindu College has already been noticed. In 1822 with his own funds he opened an 'Anglo-Indian School' for imparting education free of charge to Hindu boys. Mr. William Adam, who was one of the Visitors of the school, thus spoke of the school in 1827 :—"Two teachers are employed, one at a salary of Rs. 150 per month, and the other at a salary of Rs. 70 per month; and from 60 to 80 Hindu boys are instructed in the English language. The doctrines of Christianity are not inculcated, but the duties of morality are carefully enjoined, and the facts belonging to the history of Christianity are taught to those pupils who are capable of understanding general history." Mr. William Adam wanted to make the Anglo-Indian School a public institution, but Rammohun firmly refused his consent to the proposal, and he himself maintained the school till the time of his departure for England in 1830.

Macaulay in his Minute dated 2nd February 1835, i.e. nearly a year and a half after the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, said that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. Rammohun Roy, who was the founder of the Vedanta College, said the same thing twelve years before Macaulay wrote his famous Minute. Rammohun Roy used even stronger terms, when he wrote to Lord Amherst in 1823,—"We now find that the Government are establishing a Sanskrit school under Hindu Pandits to impart such knowledge as is already current in India. This Seminary can only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessors or to society. ... The Sanskrit language is well-known to have been for ages a lamentable check on the diffusion of knowledge. No improvement can be expected from inducing young men to consume a dozen of years of the most valuable period of their lives in acquiring the niceties of the *Byakurun* or Sanskrit Grammar. ... The Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness." A more damaging condemnation of the Sanskrit system of education in India could hardly have been penned in the first quarter

of the nineteenth century. He was so strongly convinced about the need of introduction of Western education in India that even in his pamphlet on *Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance* he wrote thus in 1822 :—"Should the Natives receive the same advantages of education that Europeans generally enjoy, and be brought up in the same notions of honour, they will, I trust, be found, equally with Europeans, worthy of the confidence of their countrymen and the respect of all men."

Raja Rammohun Roy's vision about the future of India under the influence of Western education was so clear that in the document on Settlement in India by Europeans which he submitted on the 14th July 1832 to the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company, he visualized the prospect of "India speaking English, India Christian, India socially anglicized, India *possibly* independent, and India the enlightener of Asia." To him Christianity had a meaning different from the one ordinarily understood by that term. But none the less the trend of events in India since 1832 has shown what prophetic vision Raja Rammohun Roy had about the influence of Western education on the future of India, when he submitted his last publication to the people of England.

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Prof. Sukumar Sen, M.A.

on

The Bengali Prose of Rammohun

BEGINNINGS OF BENGALI PROSE

In old and medieval Bengali literature prose had no place. Poetry, written in the *payara* metre mainly, was the sole vehicle of literary expression. Prose was used in epistles and legal documents. The earliest specimen of such prose occurs in a letter written in 1555 A. D. by Mahārāja Naranārāyaṇa of Coochbihar to the Ahom king Chukhampha Svargadeva[1]. It was the Portuguese missionaries who first used prose for a literary purpose. For the spread of the Christian (Roman Catholic) faith they wrote treatises and tracts in Bengali prose. Two such works are now extant. One was written by Dom Antonio de Rozario, who was, previous to his conversion into Christianity, the son of a Bengali chief at Bhūṣaṇā in

1. Vide Vangiya Sahitya Parisat Patrika, II, p. 1672.

Dacca. This work was written some time in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. It embodies a dialogue between a Roman Catholic Christian and a Brahmin as regards the comparative excellence of their faiths. (This book was never published. Its original MS. is preserved at Avora in Portugal. Professor Surendranath Sen had published a portion of it in the now defunct journal *Upasana.*) The other book entitled *Krepar Xaxtrer Orthobhed* (কৃপার শাস্ত্রের অর্থভেদ), was the first Bengali work to be printed and published. Its author was Manoel da Assumpçam, a Portuguese padre. It was written in 1734 A. D., and published in 1743 from Lisbon[1].

Bengali prose in the eighteenth century was a peculiar jumble. Stops or signs of punctuation were seldom used. This made it extremely difficult to find out the beginning or the end of a sentence. Moreover, several subjects and conjunctives were used in a single sentence, which made the language more a riddle than anything else. In the hands of the Vaiṣṇava writers (who wrote short treatises on their philosophical and esoteric cults), Bengali prose was less bewildering; but their short, clipped, verbless sentences appeared like formulae or like broken verses.

BENGALI PROSE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Attempts at creating a literary prose in Bengali were first made by the Christian missionaries at Serampore, and this was fostered by the newly created Fort William College at Calcutta in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The newly arrived young English civilians had to be taught the native languages, Bengali and the other Vernaculars. So of necessity text-books in Bengali (and also in the other Vernaculars, notably Hindi) had to be prepared. Of such text-books the first to be published was 'Rājā Pratāpāditya-Caritra' by Ramram Basu (1801 A. D.) It was followed by Dr. Carey's *Dialogues, intended to facilitate the acquiring of the Bengali Language*, (1801). Dr. Carey was a master of the Bengali language, and he was eminently successful when he wrote in colloquial Bengali.

Mṛtyuñjaya Vidyālaṅkāra was the best Bengali prose-writer of the period. His 'Batriśa Siṃhāsana' was published in 1802. Mṛtyuñjaya's language was a great improvement upon the current phase of Bengali prose. The order of words in the sentence was more natural and logical. Sentences were much less involved. Mṛtyuñjaya's colloquial style was really good, but his high style was rather stilted, and was often full of unknown and uncouth Sanskrit words.

1. Vide Manoel da Assumpçam's Bengali Grammar, edited by Dr. S. K. Chatterji and Mr. P. R. Sen, pp. xii, f.

RAMMOHUN THE FIRST WRITER OF GENERAL LITERATURE IN BENGALI PROSE

Then came Rammohun Roy in the field. His wonderful genius was then applied to the rescue of Bengali prose style from the unintelligible cumbrousness and verbosity which distinguished the writings of his predecessors. His first Bengali work, the 'Vedānta Grantha', was published in Śaka 1737 (1815 A.D.)

Rammohun's predecessors in literature were all text-book writers. Rammohun has the unique honour of being the first literary writer of Bengali prose, being the first to use Bengali prose as the vehicle of expression of higher thought and philosophy. Considering the state of contemporary Bengali prose, it was a very great achievement, and it showed the immense possibilities in store for the Bengali language and literature of the future.

The second Bengali work to be published by Rammohun Roy was the 'Īśopaniṣat' (1816). This was followed by two treatises on Sahamaraṇa (Suttee rite), published in 1818 and 1819 respectively. A number of pamphlets and articles were written in succeeding years.

DIRECTIONS GIVEN BY RAMMOHUN FOR READING BENGALI PROSE

In the opening sentences of the 'Anuṣṭhāna' or Introduction to his first Bengali work, the 'Vedānta Grantha', Rammohun describes the limitations of the contemporary Bengali prose, and also gives some hints to the reader as to how to read and correctly understand his book. This portion of the Introduction is very illuminating and instructive. I, therefore, quote it below, followed by an English translation.

প্রথমত, বাঙ্গলা ভাষাতে আবশ্যক গৃহব্যাপার নির্ব্বাহের যোগ্য কেবল কতকগুলিন শব্দ আছে। এ ভাষা সংস্কৃতের যেরূপ অধীন হয়, তাহা অন্য ভাষার ব্যাখ্যা ইহাতে করিবার সময় স্পষ্ট হইয়া থাকে। দ্বিতীয়ত, এ ভাষায় গদ্যতে অদ্যাপি কোনো শাস্ত্র কিম্বা কাব্য বর্ণনে আইসে না। ইহাতে এতদ্দেশীয় অনেক লোক অনভ্যাসপ্রযুক্ত দুই তিন বাক্যের অন্বয় করিয়া গদ্য হইতে অর্থ বোধ করিতে হঠাৎ পারেন না। ইহা প্রত্যক্ষ কানুনের তরজমার অর্থ বোধের সময় অনুভব হয়। অতএব বেদান্ত শাস্ত্রের ভাষার বিবরণ সামান্য আলাপের ভাষার ন্যায় সুগম না পাইয়া কেহ কেহ ইহাতে মনোযোগের ন্যূনতা করিতে পারেন, এ নিমিত্ত ইহার অনুষ্ঠানের প্রকরণ লিখিতেছি। যাঁহাদের সংস্কৃতে ব্যুৎপত্তি কিঞ্চিতো থাকিবেক, আর যাঁহারা ব্যুৎপন্ন লোকের সহিত সহবাস দ্বারা সাধু ভাষা কহেন আর শুনেন, তাঁহাদের অল্প শ্রমেই ইহাতে অধিকার জন্মিবেক।

বাক্যের প্রারম্ভ আর সমাপ্তি, এই দুইয়ের বিবেচনা বিশেষ মতে করিতে উচিত হয়। যে যে স্থানে 'যখন' 'যাহা' 'যেমন' ইত্যাদি শব্দ আছে, তাহার প্রতিশব্দ 'তখন' 'তাহা' 'সেইরূপ' ইত্যাদিকে পূর্ব্বের সহিত অন্বিত করিয়া বাক্যের শেষ করিবেন। যাবৎ ক্রিয়া না পাইবেন, তাবৎ পর্য্যন্ত বাক্যের শেষ অঙ্গীকার করিয়া অর্থ করিবার চেষ্টা না পাইবেন। কোন্ নামের সহিত কোন্ ক্রিয়ার অন্বয় হয়, ইহার বিশেষ অনুসন্ধান করিবেন; যেহেতু এক বাক্যে কখন কখন কয়েক নাম এবং কয়েক ক্রিয়া থাকে; ইহার মধ্যে কাহার সহিত কাহার অন্বয়, ইহা না জানিলে অর্থজ্ঞান হইতে পারে না। তাহার উদাহরণ এই—

"ব্রহ্ম, যাঁহাকে সকল বেদে গান করেন, আর যাঁহার সত্তার অবলম্বন করিয়া জগতের নির্ব্বাহ চলিতেছে, সকলের উপাস্য হয়েন।"

এই উদাহরণে যদ্যপি 'ব্রহ্ম' শব্দকে সকলের প্রথমে দেখিতেছি, তত্রাপি সকলের শেষে 'হয়েন' এই যে ক্রিয়া শব্দ তাহার সহিত 'ব্রহ্ম' শব্দের অন্বয় হইতেছে। আর, মধ্যেতে 'গান করেন' যে ক্রিয়া শব্দ আছে, তাহার অন্বয় 'বেদ' শব্দের সহিত; আর, 'চলিতেছে' এ ক্রিয়া শব্দের সহিত 'নির্ব্বাহ' শব্দের অন্বয় হয়। 'অর্থাৎ' করিয়া যেখানে যেখানে বিবরণ আছে, সেই বিবরণকে পর পূর্ব্ব পদের সহিত অন্বিত যেন না করেন।—এই অনুসারে অনুষ্ঠান করিলে অর্থবোধ হইবাতে বিলম্ব হইবেক না।—(রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের বাঙ্গালা গ্রন্থাবলী, শক ১৭৯৫, পৃঃ ১৩, ১৪)।—[*The division into paragraphs and the insertion of punctuation marks are made by myself.*]

First, there is only a limited number of words in the Bengali language, viz. words necessary for every-day affairs. To what extent this language is indebted to Sanskrit becomes apparent when a translation has to be made into it from a foreign language. Secondly, as yet no *sastra* or literature has been written in prose in this language. As a consequence, the written language being unfamiliar, many people are unable to make out with ease the sense of any prose writing in Bengali by syntactically connecting two or three consecutive sentences. This difficulty becomes evident when one tries to understand the sense of legal statutes which have been translated into Bengali. It is therefore to be feared that some people, not finding my translation of the Vedanta to be as easy of comprehension as the language of ordinary conversation, may not be disposed to pay it any attention. For this reason I am giving here rules of procedure about using the book. Those who have some acquaintance with Sanskrit, and those who through intercourse with educated people speak and hear Sādhu Bhāṣā (i. e. high language) will, however, be able to understand it with very little application.

(*i*) One should very carefully make out the beginning and the end of each sentence. (*ii*) Wherever one finds such words as 'when', 'which', 'as', etc., one should, before proceeding to the end of the sentence, carefully connect them with the corresponding correlatives 'then', 'that', 'so', etc. (*iii*) One should never admit a sentence to be complete, and attempt to understand its meaning, until one has found the finite verb of the sentence. (*iv*) The particular noun (nominative) with which each particular verb agrees should also be very carefully found out ; because very often a single sentence contains a number of nouns and a number of verbs, and the meaning (of the sentence) cannot be correctly gathered without finding out which of these (nouns and verbs) are mutually related. Here is an example :—

> "Brahma, whom all the Vedas sing about, and based upon whose existence all the activity of the world is being carried on, is the object of worship for all."

In this example, though the word 'Brahma' appears at the very beginning, still its syntactic connection is with the verb 'is', which comes at the very end. And in the middle the verb 'sing' is connected with the word 'Vedas', and the verb 'is being carried on' has connection with the word 'activity'. (*v*) Wherever a statement begins with the phrase 'that is' (*arthat*), that statement should not be connected with the preceding and succeeding words.—If one attempts to understand sentences by following these rules, one will not require much time to grasp the sense.

RAMMOHUN'S STYLE

The following are the ways by which Rammohun achieved the simplification of Bengali prose style. Bengali prose in the first two decades of the nineteenth century had become, in the hands of Sanskrit Pandits and of scholars well-versed in Sanskrit, a wilderness of parentheses and a hot-bed of Sanskritisms. These writers very often followed Sanskrit models too closely when writing Bengali. This made their Bengali prose practically a sort of Sanskrit without the Sanskrit inflexional terminations. Moreover, unknown and uncouth Sanskrit words lay in wait for the unfortunate reader. These writers, however, were successful when writing in the colloquial style. But in that period such colloquial writing was often indelicate, owing to the use of words and idioms which smacked of rusticity and obscenity. Those writers who were not Sanskrit Pandits or scholars were still greater sinners in this respect, as their language was often absolutely unintelligible, while the Pandits were on the whole intelligible.

Rammohun was not fond of parenthetic clauses and sentences, the use of which was a prevalent idiom at the time. But he could not altogether avoid them either. The very moderate use of parenthesis made his language much simpler than that of his contemporaries.

Again, Rammohun, in order to make his language easily comprehensible, introduced the use of the punctuation mark (stop) at the end of the complete sentence,—though in the use of this mark he was not always consistent, especially in his earlier works.

Sentences which were logically connected were generally not separated by him by any stop. Thus for instance,—

বেদান্তশাস্ত্রের ভাষাতে বিবরণ করাতে সংস্কৃতের শব্দসকল স্থানে স্থানে দিয়া [= দেওয়া] গিয়াছে ইহার দোষ যাঁহারা ভাষা এবং সংস্কৃত জানেন তাঁহারা লইবেন না কারণ বিচারযোগ্য বাক্য বিনা সংস্কৃত শব্দের দ্বারা কেবল স্বদেশীয় ভাষাতে বিবরণ করা যায় না।—(রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের বাঙ্গালা গ্রন্থাবলী, শক ১৭৯৫, পৃঃ ১২)।—[*Rammohun Roy's own punctuation left intact.*]

In his Bengali writings Rammohun did not use the interrogation mark, nor any other Western punctuation mark. The comma, however, appears in some later reprints of one or two of his Bengali treatises. But it is extremely doubtful whether it occurred in the original editions. It was Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar who used the comma (and other punctuation marks) systematically to indicate the natural sequence of words and clauses in the sentence.

PHILOLOGICAL TRAITS

I shall now attempt a philological analysis of Rammohun's language.

(*a*) One of the most outstanding traits in his language was the use of the copula. In modern Bengali the copula is never used, and it was seldom used even in medieval Bengali. Rammohun's use of the copula may be a Sanskritism, or an Anglicism, or both, or it may be a dialectal idiom. Examples : এ ভাষা সংস্কৃতের যেরূপ অধীন হয়, *to what extent this language is indebted to Sanskrit ;* বাক্যের প্রারম্ভ আর সমাপ্তি, এই দুইয়ের বিবেচনা বিশেষ মতে করিতে উচিত হয়, *it is proper that one should very carefully make out the beginning and the end of each sentence ;* etc.

(*b*) The negative particle না was very often put *before* the finite verb instead of *after* it. Thus : তাহার বিংশতি অংশের এক অংশ এই হিন্দোস্থান না হয়, *this Hindosthan is not*

even a twentieth part of it ; তাবৎ পর্য্যন্ত বাক্যের শেষ অঙ্গীকার করিয়া অর্থ করিবার চেষ্টা না পাইবেন, *till then one should never admit a sentence to be complete, and attempt to understand its meaning ;* etc.

(*c*) Another feature, interesting from the philological view-point, is the impersonal use of the verb. Thus : মধ্যে মধ্যে কহিয়া থাকেন যে, *some frequently say that ;* etc.

(*d*) The use of the future participle (such as করিবা–, হইবা–) for the simple verbal noun is another interesting idiom. This is probably a dialectal use. Thus : তবে বেদান্তের এ অর্থের বিবরণ ভাষাতে করিবাতে দোষের কিরূপে করিতে পারেন, *how can one find fault with this translation into the vernacular of the meaning of the Vedanta ;* অর্থবোধ হইবাতে বিলম্ব হইবে না, *there will be no delay in understanding the meaning ;* etc. In Rammohun's later works this idiom is very rarely in evidence.

(*e*) The use of the pleonastic affix –ক with the verb in the future and the past tense (করিলেক, হইলেক, etc.) is a dialectism. The present perfect form পারে নাই has often been used for the simple present.

(*f*) The most marked dialectism in Rammohun's Bengali is the use of the dative-accusative affix –কে with inanimate or abstract nouns in the objective case. Such use is unknown in the central dialects or in Sādhu Bhāṣā. But it was a special feature of south-western Bengali. Examples : ধ্বংসকে পায়, *attains destruction ;* ছাত্রেরা সেই বিবরণকে শুনেন কি না, *do the pupils hear that statement or not ;* যদি এই মতকে কেহো না জানিতেন, *had nobody known this opinion ;* আর কাগজ যে সাক্ষাৎ যবনের অন্ন, তাহাকে স্পর্শ করা, *and to touch paper, which is nothing but rice cooked by Mohamedans ;* এই সকল উপনিষদকে শ্রবণ এবং পাঠ করিয়া তাহার অর্থকে পুনঃ পুনঃ চিন্তন করিলে, *if these Upanisads are heard and read, and their meaning repeatedly pondered over ;* etc.

(*g*) The use of the plural suffixes –দের and –দিগো with the genitive and the base form respectively of the noun or the pronoun is plentiful in Rammohun's writings. It was a current idiom.

(*h*) The affix –তে for the instrumental and the locative is found abundantly. This is also an idiom of south-western Bengali.

(*i*) The pronominal form সে has often been used for the neuter তাহা. This is an archaism. So also is the use of the honorific তিঁহ; তিঁহো for তিনি. The use of the singular form তাহার for the plural তাহাদের is another archaism.

(*j*) The emphatic particles –ও, –ই were affixed to the connected noun or pronoun. Thus: প্রত্যয়ো, তাহারো, সকলেরো, কিঞ্চিতো, তাঁহারি, গৃহস্থেরো, নামো করেন না, অর্জ্জুনো, etc. This phenomenon is also a feature of the language of Maharṣi Debendra Nath and of Rabindranath.

RAMMOHUN THE FATHER OF A NEW STYLE

Rammohun was a master of four languages, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and English. But all this learning did not make his style pedantic. His Bengali is remarkably free from unnecessary Sanskritisms or unfamiliar Persianisms. This would undoubtedly not have been the state of affairs had he been simply a Brahmin Pandit or a Persian Maulavi. He was extremely careful in the choice of words. Perso-Arabic words are very few in his writings; but he was far-sighted enough to understand the importance of *tatsama* Sanskrit words in the Bengali language, (e.g. in the opening sentences quoted above from the 'Anuṣṭhāna' of his 'Vedānta Grantha'). On the whole he was very judicious in the use of Sanskrit words in his Bengali writings. The *tatsama* words used by him are simple, familiar to all, and just the words suited to convey the sense.

Rammohun wrote in the Sādhu Bhāṣā (high language) only. And this Sādhu Bhāṣā became a very powerful instrument in his hand. It was Rammohun who transformed the newly-born, amorphous, ungainly, immobile Bengali prose into a decent, pliable, powerful, and vigorous vehicle of higher thought and expression, and thereby laid the foundation stone of future Bengali prose literature, which in time came to boast of a Vidyasagar, a Bankim Chandra and a Rabindranath.

When we consider all these achievements of Rammohun in the field of Bengali literature and language, the least we can say is that without him Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra and Rabindranath would not have been possible.

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Mr. Pramatha Chaudhuri, Bar-at-Law

on

রামমোহন রায় ও বাঙ্গলা গদ্য

(Rammohun Roy and Bengali Prose)

রামমোহন রায় যে পাঁজীর হিসেবে না হোক, সাহিত্যের হিসেবে বাঙ্গলা ভাষায় প্রথম গদ্য লেখক, সে বিষয়ে কোন সন্দেহ নেই।

হয়ত মৃত্যুঞ্জয় তর্কালঙ্কারের 'প্রবোধচন্দ্রিকা' নামক গদ্য গ্রন্থ সর্ব্ব প্রথমে লণ্ডন নগরে ছাপা হয়েছিল। কিন্তু 'প্রবোধচন্দ্রিকা' সাহিত্য গ্রন্থ নয়, ইংরাজীতে যাকে বলে text-book, তাই। এ পুস্তক রচিত হয়েছিল দেশের লোকের জন্য নয়, ফোর্ট-উইলিয়ম কলেজের যুবক 'সাহেবজাত'গণকে বাঙ্গলা ভাষায় কিঞ্চিৎ বিদ্যাশিক্ষা দেবার উদ্দেশ্যে।

মানুষে অবশ্য কথা চিরকাল গদ্যেই কয়, পদ্যে নয়। কিন্তু মৌখিক গদ্য ও লিখিত গদ্য এক পর্য্যায়ভুক্ত নয়। প্রাচীন সাহিত্য মাত্রই পদ্য-সাহিত্য। গ্রীসের ইলিয়াড আগাগোড়া পদ্যে রচিত; আর এ দেশের বেদও প্রধানতঃ ছন্দোবদ্ধ। তবে বেদজ্ঞরা বলেন যে, বেদের অন্তরেও এখানে ওখানে টুক্‌রা টাক্‌রা গদ্য আছে। সে যাই হোক, এ কথা নির্ভয়ে বলা যায়, গদ্যতেও যে মানুষে আত্মপ্রকাশ কর্‌তে পারে, আর গদ্য রচনাও যে সাহিত্যপদবাচ্য হ'তে পারে, এ সত্যের আবিষ্কার মানুষে পরে করে। বাঙ্গলার আদিম সাহিত্য পদ্য সাহিত্য। ইংরাজী আমলে এ দেশে গদ্য সাহিত্য জন্ম গ্রহণ করে। কিন্তু মৃত্যুঞ্জয় তর্কালঙ্কারকে কোন হিসেবেই বাঙ্গলা গদ্যের জন্মদাতা ব'লে গণ্য করা যায় না।

'প্রবোধচন্দ্রিকার' সঙ্গে অনেকেরই পরিচয় নেই। সুতরাং সংক্ষেপে উক্ত গ্রন্থের পরিচয় দিই। এই গ্রন্থ দুই ভাগে বিভক্ত। প্রথম ভাগের ভাষা বাঙ্গলা নয়। ন্যায় অলঙ্কার প্রভৃতি সংস্কৃত শাস্ত্রের বাঙ্গলা অনুবাদও নয়, paraphrase মাত্র। আর দ্বিতীয় ভাগের ভাষা খাঁটি বাঙ্গলা। কিন্তু এ দুটি পৃথক পৃথক ভাষার অপর কেউ অনুসরণও করেন নি, অনুকরণও করেন নি। ফলে 'প্রবোধচন্দ্রিকা' একখানি literary curiosity মাত্র হ'য়ে রয়েছে।

অপর পক্ষে সেকালে বাঙ্গলা ভাষায় গদ্য লেখ্‌বার কৌশল যে বাঙ্গালীরা আবিষ্কার করে নি, সে বিষয়ে রামমোহন রায় সম্পূর্ণ সচেতন ছিলেন। তাই তিনি প্রথমেই কি-পদ্ধতি অনুসারে বাঙ্গলায় বাক্য গঠন কর্‌তে হয়, তার নিয়মাবলীর প্রতিষ্ঠা করেছেন। সংস্কৃতের অনুকরণে যে বাঙ্গলা গদ্য লেখা অসম্ভব, সে জ্ঞান তাঁর ছিল। আর তাঁর লেখা বাঙ্গলা ব্যাকরণে তিনি স্পষ্ট ক'রে লিখে গিয়েছেন যে, এক ভাষার ব্যাকরণ অপর ভাষার উপর

আরোপ করা যায় না, কারণ প্রতি ভাষার গঠন (structure) বিভিন্ন এবং ব্যাকরণ শাস্ত্রের উদ্দেশ্য হচ্ছে ভাষাকে শাসন করা নয়, ভাষার structureএর সন্ধান নেওয়া। বাঙ্গলা যে একটি স্বতন্ত্র ভাষা, ও তার বাক্যগঠন প্রণালীও যে বিভিন্ন, এ বিষয়ে তিনিই সর্ব্বপ্রথমে বাঙ্গালীর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করেন। সন্ধি সমাস যে বাঙ্গলার ধাতে সয় না, এ সত্য তাঁর চোখ এড়িয়ে যায় নি। ফলে তাঁর লেখা সম্পূর্ণ সমাসমুক্ত। সংস্কৃত ব্যাকরণের শৃঙ্খল থেকে মুক্ত করার ফল যে বাঙ্গলা ভাষাকে মুক্তি দেওয়া অর্থাৎ আত্মবশ করা, রামমোহন রায় প্রদর্শিত এই সহজ সত্যটি হৃদয়ঙ্গম করতে আমাদের প্রায় এক শতাব্দী লেগেছে।

ইতিমধ্যে আমরা বাঙ্গলা গদ্য নিয়ে নানারূপ experiment করেছি। সংস্কৃত ভাষার প্রতি আমাদের যে মোহ আছে, রামমোহন রায়ের তা ছিল না, কারণ তিনি ছিলেন সংস্কৃত শাস্ত্রে সুপণ্ডিত, আমরা তা নই। রামমোহন রায় বাঙ্গলা ভাষায় শুধু প্রথম গদ্য লেখক নন; গদ্য রচনার প্রকরণ পদ্ধতি বিধি-নিষেধও তিনি লিপিবদ্ধ করেছেন। এমন কি, কোন্ শব্দ কিরূপে বানান করতে হবে, সে বিষয়েও স্বজাতিকে তিনি উপদেশ দিয়েছেন। রামমোহন ছিলেন মুক্তির বাণীর প্রচারক, এবং তিনি স্বভাষা সম্বন্ধেও মুক্তিকামী ছিলেন।

রামমোহন রায় সংস্কৃত, আরবী, ফারসী, ইংরাজী ও বাঙ্গলা প্রভৃতি নানা ভাষায় নানা বিষয়ে তাঁর মতামত প্রচার করেছেন। ফলে তিনি কোন ভাষাতেই text-book রচনা করেন নি, রস-সাহিত্যও রচনা করেন নি। তাঁর সকল লেখার উদ্দেশ্য ছিল স্ব-সমাজকে কতকগুলি কর্ম্মে প্রবৃত্ত করা, অথবা নিবৃত্ত করা। তাঁর সকল বক্তব্যই কর্ম্মসাপেক্ষ ছিল। এস্থলে 'কর্ম্ম' শব্দ তার ব্যাপক অর্থে ব্যবহার করেছি। গদ্য সাহিত্যের প্রধান উদ্দেশ্যই হচ্ছে মানুষের কর্ম্মজীবনকে নিয়ন্ত্রিত করা, উন্নত করা; এ বিষয়ে তিনি যে উদার মনোভাবের পরিচয় দিয়েছেন, তা যথার্থই অপূর্ব্ব।

এখন তাঁর বাঙ্গলা রচনার ঈষৎ পরিচয় দিই। তাঁর গদ্য প্রবন্ধগুলি দু'ভাগে বিভক্ত করা যেতে পারে। প্রথমতঃ তিনি বেদান্ত শাস্ত্রের সঙ্গে স্ব-সমাজের পরিচয় করিয়ে দেন। হিন্দু সমাজ বহুকালাবধি উপনিষদ্, গীতা ও বেদান্তদর্শনকে মোক্ষশাস্ত্রের প্রস্থানত্রয় স্বরূপে গণ্য ক'রে আস্‌ছেন। আজকের দিনে শিক্ষিত সমাজ উপনিষদ্, গীতা ও বেদান্তদর্শনের মহা ভক্ত হ'য়ে উঠেছেন। রামমোহন রায়ই সর্ব্বপ্রথম এ তিন শাস্ত্রের সঙ্গে বাঙ্গালী জাতির পরিচয় করিয়ে দেন। তিনি দুই একটি উপনিষদের বাঙ্গলায় অনুবাদ করেন। নানা প্রবন্ধে তিনি গীতার বচন উদ্ধৃত করেছেন; আর, তিনি যে আচার্য্যের শিষ্য, অর্থাৎ শঙ্করাচার্য্যের শিষ্য, একথা নিজ মুখেই স্বীকার করেছেন। এসব গ্রন্থের সঙ্গে বাঙ্গলার পণ্ডিতসমাজের যে বিশেষ পরিচয় ছিল না, তার প্রমাণ এই যে, তাঁর সমসাময়িক অনেক পণ্ডিত সন্দেহ করেছিলেন যে, উপনিষদ্ শাস্ত্র তাঁর স্বকপোলকল্পিত।

রামমোহন রায়ের দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণীর লেখা হচ্ছে,—ইংরাজীতে যাকে বলে controversy। হিন্দু ধর্ম্ম ও আচার সম্বন্ধে তিনি নিজের মত ব্যক্ত ক'রেই ক্ষান্ত থাকেন নি। নিজের মত সমর্থন কর্‌বার এবং বিপক্ষের মত খণ্ডন কর্‌বার উদ্দেশ্যে তিনি প্রতিপক্ষের সঙ্গে তর্ক কর্‌তে সদাই প্রস্তুত ছিলেন। এ জাতীয় লেখায় শুধু তাঁর বিদ্যা নয়,—তাঁর অসাধারণ বুদ্ধিরও পূর্ণ পরিচয় পাওয়া যায়। তর্কক্ষেত্রে বিদ্রূপ কর্‌বার ক্ষমতাও তাঁর অসামান্য। শাস্ত্রাভ্যাসাৎ তিনি জড়বুদ্ধি হ'য়ে যান নি। অথচ তর্কক্ষেত্রে তিনি ভদ্রতার সীমা কখনও অতিক্রম করেন নি। এই সব লেখাতেই তাঁর প্রতিভার স্পষ্ট পরিচয় পাওয়া যায়।

রামমোহন রায়ের বাঙ্গলা রচনার সঙ্গে আমাদের সমাজের যে পরিচয় নেই, তার একটি কারণ, তাঁর রচিত সাহিত্যের কোন selection প্রকাশিত হয় নি; এমন কি, স্কুল কলেজের ছাত্রদের জন্য যে সব selection করা হয়, তাতেও রামমোহন রায়ের লেখার কোনও নমুনা নেই। যদি থাকৃত ত সকলেই দেখ্‌তে পেতেন, তাঁর ভাষা কটমটে নয়, আর তাঁর গদ্য ইংরাজীর অনুকরণ নয়, সংস্কৃতেরও নয়, কিন্তু খাঁটি বাঙ্গলা। রামমোহন রায় মুখ্যতঃ সংস্কৃতনবীশ হ'লেও, পূর্ব্ব যুগের বাঙ্গলার কাব্য সাহিত্যের সঙ্গে তাঁর পরিচয় ছিল। তিনি নানা স্থানে চৈতন্যচরিতামৃতের উল্লেখ করেছেন; অবশ্য ভক্তিভরে নয়, কারণ কোনও বাঙ্গলা গ্রন্থকে শাস্ত্র হিসেবে গণ্য কর্‌তে তিনি প্রস্তুত ছিলেন না। অন্নদামঙ্গল থেকেও তিনি দু'চার শ্লোক উদ্ধৃত করেছেন।

তাঁর লেখায় কিন্তু একটি দোষ আছে। তাঁর গদ্য রচনা তিনি ইংরাজী দস্তুরমত punctuate করেন নি। কিন্তু আমরা যদি তা punctuate ক'রে ছাপাই, তা হলেই সে লেখা আমাদের কাছেও অতি প্রাঞ্জল হ'য়ে উঠ্‌বে। ভাষা সম্বন্ধেও আমরা তাঁর কাছে চিরঋণী।

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Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Kt., M.A., D.Litt.

on

Rammohun, a Philosophic Modernist

Though a hundred years have gone by since Rammohun Roy died in far-off Bristol, and manifold changes have taken place in the course of their passing, the work to which he set his hand in times long past is not destroyed, nor could be, unless our country is doomed to founder in a night of hideous disaster. As a matter of fact, we are today able to realise the peculiar relevance of his message much more vividly than at the time of his death.

His wide-spread influence, as is evident from the celebration in every part of the country of the Centenary of his death, is not due entirely to the rapid increase of communications. It is because Rammohun Roy was the pioneer of the modern generation, the first to voice the aspirations of an epoch, of a spirit which, rising from the troubled waters of the old world, takes the shape and lineaments of the new. So long as we are held in the grip of old traditions, while eager to learn, Rammohun Roy has a message for us.

He felt the contradictions and confusions in society, the social suffering and injustice, the anguish and desolation in homes, due to hard dogmatism and fantastic notions. Our social difficulties were exaggerated into national proportions. Society was not a living whole. There was no sense of purpose in the social body. There was something wrong about the country, and it was the duty of all earnest and patriotic men to find out what was wrong with it. Our saints and seers, even those whom we worship as *avatars* have been at one in asking us to bring about adjustments of different races and communities in this land. It is the age-old spirit of India which has been voiced from the earliest times down to our own day, from the Ṛṣis of the Upaniṣads and Buddha to Rammohun Roy and Mahatma Gandhi. Soaring above the tumult of warring sects and rival communities, Rammohun Roy addressed his message to the suffering heart of humanity. There is no question that at this moment what the country requires is social readjustment. Even as we are entering on a new political future, communal feuds are threatening our very existence.

Rammohun Roy was a Philosophic Modernist, a progressive religious thinker, anxious to emphasise the essentials of religion. The modernist in every creed is anxious to cling to the old that ages not, and so is prepared to give up the old that ages. Only thus can religion become an instrument, not merely of conservation, but of progress as well.

George Tyrrell, the great Catholic modernist, said that the essence of religion lay in "mysticism and charity." Rammohun Roy came to the same conclusion. He studied the different religions of India,—Hinduism, Islam and Christianity,—in their sources, and founded a religious fellowship, which could bring together the liberal-minded of all denominations,—a Church Universal. Even those who belong to other faiths are the servants of God, though they labour in other parts of the vineyard. Only those can grasp the true spirit of any faith, who look at it as a historic movement, a growing tradition.

The spirit of Hinduism can be found not in this or that stage of its history, or this or that sectarian movement which arose within it. They are its lisping expressions; the intended significance is what binds the different stages and different movements, and makes them all expressions of one fundamental faith. If then we take a historical or synthetic view, we will discover that while the faith of the Hindus is as broad-based as human nature itself, its practical application cannot end short of the building of a human commonwealth.

The problem of practical religion is to preserve one's faith in the spirit, and bring it into a vital and reasonable relation with concrete actuality. The ordinary criticism that religion and politics should be kept apart interprets both these terms in a narrow sense. If religion is mistaken for routine and ritual, and politics for careers and communalism, then one has nothing to do with the other. But there is a sense in which religion is politics and politics religion. Religion is altruism as well as adoration. It has for its natural result social work. Worship of God is service of man. Mahatma Gandhi said somewhere that there are many people who are politicians at heart, who put on the garb of religious men; but he is a religious man putting on the politician's garb. Gandhi's great interest in politics is his interest in religion, in the religious principles of truth and ahimsā. He is anxious that society should adopt them and thus itself be raised.

Rammohun Roy was an ardent patriot, and therefore a social reformer. We cannot achieve our political ends if we do not build a juster and stabler social order. During his time, as it is to a large extent today, religion has been used to deny justice and delay reform. People were oppressed with a sense of false values and doubtful standards. He reflected on the religious principles, and found out that there was no justification for the horrors which were perpetrated in the name of religion, for the bitterness it has brought into human life. It has protected every abuse and sheltered every privilege, though these abuses and privileges are in direct violation of the central principles. Take caste exclusiveness. The Mahābhārata says :—

"Ekavarṇam idam pūrṇam viśvam āsīd, yudhiṣṭhira,
Karmakriyāviśeṣeṇa cāturvarṇyam pratiṣṭhitam."

(This whole world was originally of one caste, O Yudhiṣṭhira; on account of different vocations, the four-fold caste was established.) It is a matter of deep humiliation that in the 20th century we should be discussing the problem of untouchability. That there should be two opinions on

it, points out how superficial our culture and religion are. That we should think it possible to confine millions of our fellow-beings to hereditary degradation, and yet at the same time work a democratic constitution, shows how the human mind is a victim of self-contradiction. It is absurd to talk about *sastras*, for we have taken liberties with them whenever we wanted. To condemn a whole class of human beings who are perfectly innocent because of their birth is the height of human folly and insolence. The word 'caṇḍāla' is often used in the sense of a sinner, and if we are to treat all sinners, *patitas*, as untouchables, many of us will not escape that fate. It is an immoral custom for which there is no justification. It is just a matter of habit. "Na kulam kulam ityāhur ācāram kulam ucyate."

The motive force of Rammohun Roy's activity, social, political and religious, was a deep faith in the indwelling God. Dogmas might differ, but all religions speak with one voice as far as essentials are concerned. The one golden thread running through all religions is compassion for suffering humanity. If the memory of this great son of India serves to kindle in us a desire to follow his example, the celebration of the Centenary will have helped us along the road to a solution of our present difficulties.

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The Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan

on

Rammohun, an all-round Reformer

It is with the greatest diffidence that I have accepted the honour which the organisers of this Conference have thought fit to confer on me, and I say so in no spirit of modesty. For, after the brilliant and inspiring addresses that you all have listened to, I really feel that I could not contribute much that is valuable to the proceedings of this great and unique gathering. If I venture to associate myself with the celebration, it is because I feel that it is a great privilege to me to be given this public opportunity to pay my humble tribute to the memory of one who has been most appropriately described as the Inaugurator of the Modern Age in India.

From ancient times, even up to the present day, it is a common practice among the Hindus of the South to begin no joyous ceremony without invoking the blessings of the god Ganapati; and I take it that, in some form or other, this practice is common in other parts of the country as well.

Similarly, no man in our land, at the present day, can think of the many modern movements that make for peace and progress without recalling to his mind with pious gratitude the prodigious labours of Raja Rammohun Roy.

Though born in a high caste Hindu Brahmin family, and cherished, nourished and fostered in the traditions of his ancestors, he yet realised early that the pure religion of the Rishis was incrusted with the superstitions and practices which it was his duty to remove; and towards this end, he began a strenuous fight against established religion and custom, which cast him out of his paternal home, threw him adrift in the world and made him undergo sacrifices and sufferings which he, in the true spirit of the pioneer, bore with patience. But undaunted, he forged ahead with the task he had set himself. Even those who may not see eye to eye with Rammohun Roy in his efforts to create the Brahmo Samaj, must pay a fervent tribute to one who, a century ago, realised the grandeur and beauty of a Universal Religion, and who appreciated all that is best, truest and noblest in the religion of the Hindu, the Mussalman and the Christian, and thus paved the way for the idea of toleration, the lack of which one occasionally notices with sadness even in present times.

I take it that there is hardly any Indian today who is not conversant with the heroic fight that he made for the abolition of that horrible and heart-rending custom, *Sati*; of the protest that he made, from time to time, against the systems of child-marriage and polygamy; of his burning zeal for female education; and of his able advocacy of remarriage of widows, a cause which was afterwards taken up in this province by Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. Our sisters belonging not only to Calcutta but to other parts of India, who are now holding the All-India Women's Conference, would, I am sure, recall with pride Raja Rammohun Roy's passionate plea urging the rights of Hindu women.

Yet, it is not only as a social and religious reformer that he claims our attention. But for his strenuous efforts, the enemies of India's progress would have triumphed, and our country would have been deprived of the benefits of English education. He appeared on the stage at the psychological moment to second the efforts of Lord Macaulay for the introduction of a system of liberal English education, and strove successfully indeed for the establishment of a College for that purpose. He was himself an ardent student of Sanskrit and of Hindu philosophy; but he felt that, in the best interests of his country, English education was needed in a supreme

degree,—and who will say now that he was not right ? Not only Bengal, but all India owes a supreme debt of gratitude to him for his far-sighted wisdom in this matter. And be it remembered, in this connection, that Rammohun Roy, though an ardent advocate of English education, believed that one of the most useful ways of conveying enlightenment and instruction to his countrymen was through the vernacular ; and inspired by this faith, he himself wrote in Bengali a number of text-books, and also several articles giving useful information, eminently suited for incorporation in text-books, on grammar, geography, etc., for the education and uplift of his countrymen. And I am told on good authority that he may justly be regarded as the Father of Bengali prose.

If he stressed, and rightly indeed, on the value of education as a potent means for the uplift of his countrymen, he realised equally strongly the value of the Press as a means of educating and moulding public opinion. In journalism too, as in other directions, he was a pioneer. He established and conducted two newspapers, one in Persian and the other in Bengali ; and at a time when the liberty of the Press was threatened, he fought tooth and nail for the removal of restrictions that were placed on it. No one who is interested in a free Press can read without great emotion and admiration his passionate plea in its behalf. And his well-written and well-reasoned document has rightly been regarded as the *Areopagitica of Indian history*. No wonder his English biographer referring to it says : "Alike in diction and argument, it forms a noble landmark in the progress of English culture in the East, and one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand."

Rammohun Roy's interest in the welfare and advancement of his countrymen did not stop with his labours in the field of religious reformation, social reform and education. A careful study of his speeches and writings makes us realise what an able and wide-awake politician of his time he was. Love of freedom being perhaps the strongest passion of his soul, he "claimed in advance for his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilisation inevitably involves."

His faith in the British character and the possibilities of British rule for the uplift of India dominated his political convictions. And it is because he justly believed, as many others do even unto the present day, "that a nation who not only are blessed with civil and political liberty, but also interested themselves in liberty and social happiness", was bound to lead India onwards to the goal of self-government.

THE HON'BLE G. A. NATESAN

No survey of Rammohun Roy's activities will be complete without a reference to the excellent evidence which he gave in England before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1831 on the occasion of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company. No one who reads his memorable evidence can fail to be struck with the wonderful grasp and knowledge of questions that he displayed on every subject. And moreover, over what a wide field was he taken by the members of the Select Committee! The reform of the courts, the jurisdiction of the country's courts over Europeans, the Jury system, the separation of the executive and judicial offices, the codification of laws, the advisability of consulting the people in matters of legislation, the establishment of a native militia, the larger employment of natives in the public services, the amelioration of the condition of the tenantry, and the framing of laws for their protection,—on all these topics Rammohun was subjected to a searching examination, and he did his task so well and so thoroughly that he won the admiration of every one who watched the proceedings on that occasion.

We are now passing through a critical period of our history, and it is good that we should recognise the heroic and magnificent work which men like Rammohun Roy did amidst stupendous difficulties and against heavy odds. Many are the lessons which we may learn from his life and his wonderful career. In our labours for the uplift of our motherland and our attempt to obtain for her a proper place in the Commonwealth of Nations, we have always to remember what Rammohun Roy in his time thought it necessary to stress, namely, that none of us, engaged in the great task of nation-building, should cultivate anything like a narrow and parochial patriotism. For, Rammohun Roy's patriotism was broad-based on the doctrine of the solidarity of humanity, and inspired by his passion for world-wide liberty. Of him and of his noble endeavours it can justly be said that he was neither a Hindu, nor a Mohammedan, nor a Christian in the narrow sense, but that he typified whatever was universal in every faith. What nobler inspiration and worthier guidance could Young India expect or need?

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Maulavi Abdul Karim, M.L.C.

on

Rammohun, the Type and Pioneer of Modern India

The life of Raja Rammohun Roy, the Maker of Modern India, the Herald of a New Epoch in the history of this country, is a subject of enthralling interest. The inestimable services Rammohun Roy rendered to humanity in general, and to his countrymen in particular, do not seem to have been adequately realised. It no doubt takes time to properly understand an extraordinary personality, appearing at a time when his countrymen are not prepared to adequately appreciate his high ideals. Rammohun Roy was not the product of his age ; rather the age was created by him. He was much ahead of his time. A century later, he might have found the soil much better prepared for the seed he sowed, which has germinated too slowly to bear sufficient fruit even in a hundred years' time.

Rammohun Roy's many-sided and multifarious activities in the field of social and religious reform, in the sphere of cultural and intellectual advancement, and in the arena of political and constitutional evolution, mark him out as the most outstanding personality modern India has produced. As a reformer, as a linguist, as an educationist, as a patriot and as a politician, he brought about a great awakening among his countrymen, and inaugurated the Modern Age in India.

What strike one most as prominent features in Rammohun's extraordinary career are his versatile genius, his uncommon linguistic erudition, his unbounded catholicity of heart, his indomitable will, his unabated zeal for religion, his burning love for freedom, and, above all, his unflinching courage of conviction. It is but natural that a combination of all these noble qualities of head and heart should have excited great esteem and admiration throughout the civilised world.

Early in life Rammohun Roy gave unmistakable indication of his great intellectual powers, exceptional spiritual insight and an essentially modern outlook. In conformity with the usage of his ancestors, he was taught Arabic and Persian, of which he acquired such a thorough knowledge that later in life he came to be known as a "zabardast Maulavi." He was versed more or less in ten languages,—Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, English, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and French. He made a thorough study of the Islamic lore in addition to that of

his ancestors. Moreover, he learnt much about Christianity and Judaism. All this well-fitted him to be the precursor of the renaissance brought about by the impact of oriental and occidental cultures, which gave birth to a galaxy of illustrious personages, who shed lustre on the land of their birth and raised it high in the estimation of the world. It was Rammohun Roy, who inspired religious reformers like Dayananda Swami, Debendra Nath Tagore and Keshub Chunder Sen, political leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Badruddin Tyabji and Surendra Nath Banerjea, and advocates of modern education like Sir Syed Ahmad, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Asutosh Mookerjee. While each of these made his mark in the particular sphere of his activity, Rammohun left an indelible impression on all of them. He was in fact an inexhaustible source of inspiration to his countrymen, and his progressive work comprised almost the entire range of human activities and national aspirations. He vigorously, and to a certain extent successfully, tackled an amazingly large number of social, religious, cultural and political problems.

If Rammohun Roy inaugurated a new era in the religious history of India, surely his extraordinary activities, pregnant with far-reaching consequences, in political, educational and other spheres, were no less important. In fact, he presents a most "instructive and inspiring study for the New India of which he is the type and pioneer." He prophetically envisaged those aspirations of his countrymen and vigorously agitated for those rights and privileges,—Freedom of the Press, Local Self-Government, employment of Indians in the Civil Service of the country, codification of Civil and Criminal laws in India, separation of judicial and criminal functions, Jury system, consultation of public opinion before enacting legislation,—some of which have not materialised even in the course of a century inspite of the strenuous fight put up by a Surendra Nath, a Tilak, a Motilal, a Chittaranjan. In fact, there is hardly any important problem confronting us today which is not associated with the hallowed name of the great Rammohun Roy. He assiduously ventilated the grievances of his countrymen, persistently discussed their requirements, and vigorously advocated their rights. A free Press being one of the strongest safeguards of liberty, he entered a most vigorous protest when the first Press Regulation was enacted. Holding that the development of the mother tongue has much to do with the intellectual progress of a people, he took steps for the creation of a Bengali literature. He was the father of the Indian journalism, which has played a great part in creating political consciousness in the people. With his extraordinary foresight he cautioned the British

statesmen not to rule India at the point of the bayonet, and forecast the day when educated Indians would throw themselves into the thickest of the fight for freedom of their motherland. Such were the dreams which Rammohun Roy dreamt a hundred years ago.

But for the part which Rammohun Roy played in the controversy that raged over the question of oriental and occidental education for the people of India, and the effective influence he brought to bear upon the far-seeing administrator, Lord William Bentinck, and the eminent jurist, Lord Macaulay, our Pandits and Maulavis would have carried the day, and perhaps we would not have had education in English,—a language that has put us into possession of the accumulated thoughts of Europe and America, and has enabled us to carry on communication not only with our countrymen throughout India, but with the whole civilised world. Rammohun Roy realised that if Indians were to take their legitimate place in the comity of nations, they must have modern scientific education after the model of the West.

Love of liberty was perhaps the strongest passion in Rammohun's life. He heartily wished to see all the nations of Asia and Europe free from despotic and foreign yoke. He was very much distressed when he learnt that the people of Naples, after extorting a constitution from their despotic king, were crushed back into servitude by the Austrian troops. He wrote in his Persian weekly, the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*, a strong article on "Ireland, the cause of its distress and discontent." When the news of the establishment of constitutional government in Spain reached India, he gave a public dinner in the Calcutta Town Hall. So great was the enthusiasm of this redoubtable champion of freedom when he got information of the French Revolution, that "he could think and talk of nothing else."

How very zealous Rammohun Roy was of self-respect and what moral courage he showed for its preservation in those days of servility, may be well-illustrated by an incident. Once Lord William Bentinck sent his aide-de-camp to him with a request to see him. To the aide-de-camp's great surprise, Rammohun Roy expressed his inability to call upon the Governor-General. Wondering at what appeared to him nothing short of audacity and insolence on the part of a *Kala Admi*, the aide-de-camp reported to Lord William Bentinck what had happened, thinking perhaps that some drastic measures would be taken to bring the impudent fellow to his senses. But Lord Bentinck, without showing the least sign of annoyance, enquired what were the exact words used by the aide-

de-camp in conveying the message. He said, "I told him, 'His Excellency Lord William Bentinck would be pleased to see you.' " On hearing this, Lord Bentinck, to the utter amazement of the aide-de-camp, said, "Go back, and tell him again that *Mr. William Bentinck* will be highly obliged to him if he will kindly see him once." This order was promptly carried out, and Rammohun Roy could no longer refuse the urgent and polite request of His Excellency.* This might well serve as an object lesson to toadies and sycophants, whose number is legion even in these days of so-called independence and public spirit.

I am not certain how far the females in this country realise the immense debt of gratitude that Indian womanhood owes to the great champion of their cause, who did all he could for their emancipation from the tyranny of cruel abominable customs. Horrified at the sight of the burning of a widow in his brother's family, had he not moved with all his might for the abolition of *Suttee*, helpless Hindu widows might have still to end their innocent lives on the funeral pyre to which an inhuman society pitilessly consigned them. Rammohun's keen sense of chivalry may be judged from the fact that he would not remain sitting in the presence of a woman standing before him, however low her position in society might have been.

The last thing that Rammohun Roy did was to break the spell which for ages the sea had laid on Hindu India. He was perhaps the first high-caste Hindu to cross the ocean. In 1831, accompanied by his adopted Muslim child, whom he used to call Rajaram, he arrived in England, where he met with a most enthusiastic reception, his reputation as a reformer, as a linguist, as a philanthropist, as a statesman having preceded him there. In Europe he tried to interpret the East to the West, as in India he had interpreted the West to the East. In 1832 he paid a visit to France, where both literary men and political leaders strove to testify their respect for him. While preparing for a visit to America, he suddenly died of brain fever on the 27th September 1833. He was buried at Bristol, which has since then become a place of pilgrimage for Indian visitors to England.

Thus closed the eventful and epoch-making career of almost superhuman activity of the great Rammohun Roy, who heralded the dawn of a new era in this country. It embodies the loftiest aspirations of New India, with the history of which his illustrious name will ever remain indissolubly associated. May his glorious example continue

* Vide Miss Collet's Life of Rammohun Roy, Chapter VII.

to inspire his countrymen to carry on the noble work he began,—the work of proclaiming the unity of God and the equality of man, and of procuring freedom for the motherland. Amen !

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Dr. Subimal Chandra Sarkar, M.A., Ph.D.

on

Rammohun as Herald of the New Age

The New Age, the age in which we live and move forward, is still a Young Age, barely a century and a half old. Its features are gradually becoming firm-set and typical ; and we can now say with some confidence along what lines this Young Age is going to develop. But a countryman of ours, about 125 years ago, reflected in his own personality, as it were in a fortune-teller's crystal, the whole subsequent life-history of this youngest creation of Time, this promising New Age : that was Rammohun Roy.

The essential circumstance of the New Age is the coming together of diverse peoples and cultures, the frequency, the intensity and the variety of their contacts being ever on the increase. The need that arises out of this situation is one of synthesis, universalism and unity, to enable men to rise superior to the limitations of localised, parochial, isolated life of the preceding ages. In Rammohun's days, it was India, of all the other regions of the world, where the many and the various had come into close relation first, and it was in that great Indian's mental content that this multiple contact was further multiplied by scientific enquiry,—so that in that representative and sensitive mind was produced the inevitable echo of that clash, the solution to that puzzle and tangle of diverse human ideas and institutions, namely, a philosophy of synthesis, of finding unity in the diversity of Man. In Rammohun's richly flowing mind was produced the antitoxin for combating the epidemic of the New Age,—multiplicity of contacts,—wherewith to inoculate for surviving and becoming immune.

Clashes indeed have always produced attempts at synthesis in history, and history itself grows to maturity through such broadenings of the base of human civilization. Thus the Christian culture stands for a synthesis of Israelite, Mesopotamian, Buddhistic, Hellenic, Roman and Barbarian Aryan contacts. The Islamic force stands for

a synthesis of Jewish, Arabic, Hellenic, Iranian and Indian contacts. In India itself, a Babel of races and cultures, traceable even as far back as to the Mahenjo-daro period, produced the synthesis of the Brahmanic caste-polity ; in India again, in the spacious 6th century B. C., when the whole ancient world was brought together by various forces, a common universal platform of co-operative endeavour for uplift of humanity was evolved by Gautama Buddha. Again in India, the clash of the Muslim and the non-Muslim in the middle ages led to the synthetising thought and preachings of the Indian Reformation of the 15th and 16th centuries. Then, finally in the 18th and early 19th centuries, as the world was getting smaller to men, as age-old barriers were crumbling, and undreamt-of connections were being forged,—it was in India that the force of the general re-making was felt most. It has, indeed, been the special privilege of India to have ever been a centre of convergence for all and sundry in the human family, and to have therefore, more than any other country, felt the constant necessity of seeking and realising the great truth of unity in diversity.

In the India of Rammohun's youth the past was making its exit, leaving on the stage unrealised ideals of Hindu-Moslem synthesis, an arrested growth of the Indian renaissance and reformation, and a social and political fabric torn by reactionary conflicts. Hindus and Moslems were drifting apart in bitterness and prejudice. Amongst Hindus, the Marathas, divided among themselves, alienated and injured grievously the Rajputs, the Sikhs and the Gangetic Hindus of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Amongst Moslems, Shiahs, Sunnis, Roshaniyas and Mahdavis, had plunged into intolerant strife. The synthesis of the Hindu and Moslem reformers of the 15th and 16th centuries had for various reasons ceased to be operative for more than five generations, being clogged with the mud of the return tide of medievalism in the 17th and 18th centuries.

On the other hand, the Future was drawing apart the curtains for entry on that wreck-strewn stage. Following upon growing Indo-European trade and commerce, a true and abiding Indo-European state had come to be formed, strangely combining Indian and European elements of law, polity, and civilization; and this was steadily further breaking up the fragments of the past and absorbing them. The Sunni-Muslim Padshahi had become a haunting shade after suicide; the rival Hindu Padshahi had missed its purpose and ended in a fiasco; the Sachcha Padshahi of the Sikhs had by disunion and narrowness become untrue and limited to inaction; while the new Inglistani Padshahi was acquiring stability and form.

A pretty long period of international trade and of adventure had by that time brought into our country diverse men from distant regions, Asiatic, African and European. Thus in the latter half of the 18th century, in the village marts and town streets (of Bengal in particular), on roads and riverways and at the ports, groups of strangers, domiciled or visiting, brushed shoulders: Armenians, Georgians, Jews,—Central Asiatics, Persians, Arabs, Afghans,—not to speak of Marwaris, Marathas, Telingas or Sikhs from remoter parts of India itself,—Abyssinians and other Africans of the coasts and islands,—Chinese, Japanese, Indo-chinese, Tibet-Burmans and Indonesians of the Easter Seas,—English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Danes and Germans,—even French, English or Latin Americans. The whole world from Atlantic to Pacific seemed let loose on Bengal; and along with the economic and political enterprises of these various peoples, were also introduced elements of their cultures, specially of the new cultures of the western world. Thus through the French and the English, the best and the most characteristic thoughts of what is called the Age of Illumination and Rationalism in Europe were filtering into Bengal, and the series of stirring events and movements of the West (from the American Independence to the Revolutions of the Thirties) were rousing truer and truer echoes in the distant East.

Further, the continuance of West Asiatic contacts right up to the close of the 18th century and even after, kept alive the stream of Muslim Perso-Arabic learning in the Gangetic plains, while the foundation of an abiding Indo-British state necessitated a mutual understanding of cultures by people who had come to be new fellow-subjects; and thus with the starting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784, had begun a revival of Oriental learning and studies on critical and rational lines, in the Hindu and Sanskritic field in particular.

Plunging and bathing at such a tremendous confluence,—a 'Maha-sangama'—of historic forces, the pilgrim soul of Rammohun experienced a prophetic vision of reconciliation of conflicting values and ideals; and following it by blending them in his own life-history, he discovered a point of concord and convergence, whereby "he became the Father and Patriarch of modern India,—India with a composite nationality and synthetic civilization; and by the lines of convergence he laid down, as well as by the type of personality he developed, he pointed the way to the solution of the larger problem of international culture and civilization in human history, and became a precursor, an arch-type, a prophet of coming Humanity. He laid

the foundation of the true League of Nations in a League of National Cultures."

Rammohun's own personality was an epitome of this 'League of National Cultures' of the world. Born in a family with Vaishnava and Saiva traditions, he was reborn into the educational tradition of Islamic West Asia, and the early schooling at Patna passed on to him the legacies of Greece and Rome through the Arabic channel. Learned in orthodox Muslim Law and Theology, he found his kin in the Sufis, the Muslim Rationalists and Muslim Unitarians. It was fortunate that he mastered the Brahmanical literature at a somewhat later stage, so that he could be free from the preconceptions of a blindly inherited culture and take a rational view. So far as was possible in his days, he tapped Jaina scriptures and Buddhistic traditions; and of course he was easily familiar with the 15th and 16th century monotheistic religious thought of India which was still surviving in the country amongst various decaying sects. Acquiring English in the midst of official duties, and roused to curiosity by the American and French Revolutions, he directed his studies to the scientific, philosophical and political writers of England and France, from Bacon to his own day. Then his Christian controversies drew him into deeper study of Christian and Hebrew cultures, and to analysis of the Western civilization, wherein he spotted its main basis as scientific, economic and utilitarian thought, as distinct from the Jewish and Graeco-Roman heritage. Following up his studies in the Brahmanic literature, he found his element in the philosophical literature of the Vedanta, and developed his own exposition of it, which he made his spiritual anchor. His Upanishadic and Vedantic studies led him to a proper evaluation of Scripture as insufficient without, dependent on, and a crystallization of Reason.

Such a wide cultural equipment led him to create a new line of thought, the science of Comparative Religion, and from the position of a comparing scholar he passed to that of a philosopher of universalism, to a realization of a universal truth and authority underlying all historic scriptures,—a truth emphasised in different ethnic ways, each way with a peculiar excellence of its own. Appreciative of this nature of the truth in all religious thought, *and therefore seeking to justify each against the attacks of the others*, he came into conflict with Pandits, Maulavis and Padres, though he really fought their battles. Thus with Brahmins he was a Sastric 'Brahma-vid', with Muslims a master of theology, with Christians a doctor of divinity. He bore aloft a tri-colour standard, to fight for

and justify all three against all three, so as to make them understand and learn from one another, and to impel them to converge towards one another. He therefore thought of a universalised Hinduism, a universalised Christianity, and a universalised Islam, a great Trinity ever approaching Unity,—wherein Scripture would coalesce with Reason, non-canonical accretions of creeds and regulations would be shorn off, rituals and symbols would be deposed from their stolen throne, social usages would ever be remodelled according to the progressive realization of the laws of nature and God and the principle of 'Lokasreya' or social well-being. With that ideal of convergence, he learnt to undergo the characteristic spiritual experiences of all the religious systems he knew,—as 21 centuries before him the Great Asoka had recommended to Indians in his famous *Toleration Edict*,—*to know and live the life and faith of* others as well. Yet Rammohun could unify all these experiences organically,—could identify himself with the many yet be himself,—could be in the thick of the procession of mankind, yet see it in the proper perspective from a detached position.

Such Multiple personality, held together by an organising principle, is the type that the modern world is developing in increasing numbers amongst us at the present day. One of my Professors at Oxford once remarked to me in a Psychology class, that he feels that the modern European has a multiple personality,—Jewish, Greek, Roman, Teutonic and even Oriental personalities combined into one,—and I told him that this was true of every civilized man in the modern world. In fact it is so because that is the way to avoid strife and clash, the way to peace and understanding. The solution of the woes of this post-war world does not lie with states and armies and financiers ; it lies even with each of us, as individual souls, —as personalities in the making. If Indians can take up the cause of Englishmen, and Englishmen champion the cause of the Indians, if the Frenchman can view with German eye, and *vice versa*,—if each of us can strive to justify the rest of the world and each one of the world, experiencing in our mind the problems, tribulations and achievements of each,—would there by any more of communal or racial bitternesses, or economic and imperialistic wars ?

If not for anything else, at least for hitting so early upon the two great paths of Synthesis of Cultures and Multiple personal experience, Rammohun deserves to be called the Path-finder of our Age.

38

S. K. Datta, M.B , Ch.B.

Principal, Forman Christian College, Lahore, on

Some Personal Traits of Rammohun

One of the prominent traits in Rammohun which strikes me is his intellectual curiosity. When he started his campaign of Monotheism as the root and basis of all the great world-religions, he studied the Bible and the Christian scriptural literature, not only in English, but also in Greek and Hebrew, so that he might go to the source, and know at first hand what the teachings of Christ were.

Bengal was blessed recently in having another man possessing this intellectual curiosity in an unusual degree,—and that was the late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee. We feel proud that through the zeal of Sir Asutosh a chair on Christian Religion has been endowed by a Bengali Christian gentleman in the University of Calcutta, the city which is the scene and centre of Rammohun's activities.

Another characteristic of Rammohun which strikes me is his sense of dignity, and the clean and polished method of conducting public affairs, a method in which there was no room for personal bitterness or enmity. He carried on many a controversy with the professed champions of many faiths and cults, but he never lost temper. Even when Dr. Tytler rather violently attacked Rammohun in his defence of orthodox Christianity, subscribing himself as "Your inveterate and determined foe in the Lord", Rammohun never replied to any of his angry words.

Rammohun was not only endowed with uncommon political wisdom, his tenacity of purpose was marvellous. I did not fully realise till recently how thorough Rammohun's work in connection with the abolition of the *Suttee* was. But certain recently discovered pamphlets which are in my college, copies of which are at the present moment being exhibited in the Rammohun Exhibition, as well as other connected records, have opened my eyes to the fact. After their defeat in India, the anti-abolitionists appealed to the Privy Council for a declaration that the *Suttee* Regulation was unconstitutional. Rammohun saw through the game. The Judges of the Privy Council, being far away from India, and ignorant of the law and scriptural injunctions in the matter, might perhaps be led to declare in favour of the anti-abolitionists. Rammohun was equal to the occasion. He went to England, and presented a counter-

petition, as a result of which the prohibition of *Suttee* became permanent. Not only so. Interested parties in England were trying to bring into discredit the authorities of the East India Company for having promulgated the *Suttee* Regulation. Rammohun, coming to know of this while in England, promptly prepared and published a Pamphlet defending the action of the Parliament in giving support to the *Suttee* Regulation,—so thorough was he in the pursuance of the causes he championed. It is this Pamphlet which has recently been brought to light at Lahore.

Like all great men Rammohun had wonderful powers of personal magnetism. He could draw to himself people differing from him in faith, nationality and race. This trait of Rammohun was prominently evident while he was in Calcutta as well as when he was in London. The late Sir Alexander Johnstone, who became a champion of the rights of the African peoples, was one of those who was drawn to him, and perhaps he received his inspiration for justice and freedom for all from Rammohun.

39

Rao Sahib Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao, M.A., L.T., Ph.D.

on

Rammohun and the Larger Unities of Life

Mr. President, Sisters and Brothers in the ever-holy, all-unifying sentiment of Hero-worship,—From this radiating centre of Cultural, Academic India, shall we transport ourselves awhile upon the wings of pious imagination far off to the ancient city of Athens, the Queen of Greece? There witness we one of those sacramental ceremonies fraught with exquisite symbolic significance aptly applicable to the present context. It is an imposing demonstration renewed every year in the recurring round of the seasons close upon Eastertide. Vast multitudes of eager, expectant souls stand congregated, each with an unlighted candle in his hand, upon the wide, open grounds encircling the chief Cathedral of the City. The anxious gaze of one and all in the bustling throng is riveted to a single common point in the closed portal of the stately shrine. Presently, the door opens; and there emerges the venerated figure of the hoary hierarch arrayed in sacerdotal robes and upholding a lighted candle in his own hand. Forthwith, the breathless waiters, one by one,

solemnly make up to the cynosure of far-extending eyes, and reverently light up their own respective tapers from the sole flaming light before them.

There, in the concrete, you see a reflex, a replica representation, of the central source of illumination and inspiration for Modern India along many channels and through manifold agencies. How the grand Renaissance and the glorious Reformation of the New Era had to stand over until the appearance, on the tense scene, of the Prelate-torch-bearer of the dual Movement in the charming, outstanding personality of him whom we commemorate today ! Verily, from his one light have all other later lights been kindled. Even so, Erasmus and Luther happily blended into one, the acknowledged Pioneer-patriarch of the New Spirit counts for immeasurably so much in the world's consensus of judgment at this pregnant hour of conjoint reverence. For now, in very truth, reaping the golden harvest of full one hundred years and more, Mother India, joined by sister nations abroad, rejoices to pour forth her heartfelt admiration, her soulful gratitude, towards the eldest of the elect ones among her regenerators—

"Minions of the morning star,
Who the future's gates unbar."

And how belongs to Rajarshi Rammohun Roy, above all others, that peerless pre-eminence as the primal fount of all the national aspirations and activities of a singularly spacious epoch, so diversified in scope and direction, yet so unified in spirit and aim ? We turn back our pilgrim steps to the precincts of his native home. There we behold, charactered round about the *vedi* he erected for himself, the key-note of his supremely synthetic genius at once all too fecund and far-reaching. As upon that material tablet, so upon his entire spiritual being, he inscribed the sacred Ekamevādvitīyam, the distinct reverberations of which he had caught up so early in life from all points of the compass through the ringing grooves of time. Thus it is that, as the Herbert Spencer of the Synthetic Philosophy of the spirit, not alone on the speculative but essentially on the practical side, he shines forth before us, in the light of his resplendent labours, a living pattern and a lucent mirror of the larger unities of life. These for him, were grounded upon the deeper, broader universals of common human nature. And these, by him, were applied with open-eyed clearness, thoroughgoing consistency and constructive orginality to the entire business, from out of the very bosom of work-a-day humanity. Acclaimed as 'India's Columbus in the discovery of a new'—in fact, ever old yet ever new—'continent of truth,' even the eternal truth of Ekamevādvitīyam in all the opulent richness of

its concrete content, Rammohun becomes easily understandable and eminently appreciable in his homely answer unto his wife Umadevi's simple query as to the relative merits of the diverse systems of faith : "Cows", he said, "are of different colours ; but is not the milk they yield one and the same in substance ?" That same, common milk of all *Kamadhenu*-dispensations, Ekamevādvitīyam, *that* was the heavenly manna Rammohun derived from every source and served up in every quarter. The forthputtings of all his prolific energies on quite a colossal scale—what were they but the necessary applications and expressions of the vital, dynamic principle of Ekamevādvitīyam in reference to the multiplex manifestations of being through the gradations and aspects of nature and the interests and relationships of life ?

This supreme discovery (or rediscovery) Rammohun reached, first by the direct, Eastern route of mystic penetration and perception, as witness the earliest of his extant publications, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, and next, again, by the devious, Western path of rationalist research and recognition. Prophet first and philosopher next, the mystic in him only preceded and never superseded the rationalist. Earliest systematic student of comparative theology as he was, the rationalist in him was employed to verify and confirm, to emphasise and amplify, to illustrate and work out in practice, the prior intuition of the mystic. And the distinctive feature which marked off his own insight and outlook from those of other seers and savants consisted in this: that he brought the amplitude of his native endowment as well as mature experience to bear unreservedly upon his exigetical investigations into, and interpretation of, the world-scriptures, and set the individual consciousness at every turn to correct, while laying itself out to be corrected by, the universal. So avails his life-work to bring home to after-generations the truth of Emerson's dictum that life, and life alone, is our dictionary.

Himself no master of the positive sciences in those days of unscientific Oriental scholarship, Rammohun came, nevertheless, to be the in-seeing appreciator and the far-seeing advocate of occidental scientific culture. Apart from the facts of science, it was given to him to gauge aright the pointings and to grip fast the purports of science in their direct bearings upon the complex phenomena and the challenging problems of existence—"Eko bahūnām", "Eko vaśī Sarva-bhūtāntarātmā", "Ekaṃ rūpam bahudhā yah karoti." The unity-in-diversity revealed to, and discovered by, the Prophet-philosopher was, in short, the inner, deeper unity of all seemingly self-secluded, self-subsistent, self-sufficient units—those in the mineral, vegetable, animal

and human orders of creation ; in the thinking, feeling and willing faculties of sentient existence ; in the physical, economic, educational, political, moral and spiritual concerns of human life ; and in the entities of individuals, families, races, cultures, civilisations and religions in the social group. In this superb vision of one only Life vibrant, one only Light radiant, and one only Love dominant through all, the units, however, were not simply submerged but only summed up in unity. So that, unto Rammohun, the totality was not one of colourless uniformity or undifferentiated homogeneity, but the concreteness of the universal with all the wealth of its actual vastness and variety. The saving gospel proclaimed by the Seer-sage of so sublime a vision may well be pondered in terms of the spirit of modernism, briefly and beautifully epitomised thus by the most sensitive, the most representative and the most faithful singer of the century across which, though dead, he yet speaketh to us :

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."

(1) "One God." Herein Rammohun found the fundamental unity, the final ground and the ultimate guarantee of all other unities. Hence the fact of his being more than content throughout to take his stand upon the all-inclusive certitude—

"One thought I have, my ample creed ;
So deep it is and broad
And equal to my every need :
It is the thought of God."

Hence the whole-souled stress he breathed into the clarion-call of his comprehensive evangel, "Nations, behold your God ; rejoice, rejoice !" Hence, too, his organisation of the Brahma Samaj with no other mark of identification or bond of filiation than that its followers were to be known as the votaries of Brahman. And Brahman, to him, was neither the extra-cosmic God of Deism delegating the governance of the universe to a set of regent laws nor the inter-cosmic God of Pantheism exhausted in and through the manifested universe. It was, of course, far other than the hierarchical God of Polytheism parcelled out into gods many and lords many—the populous pantheon of thirty-three crores of deities and the metaphysical tritheism of three-in-one and one-in-three having, in his reckoning, to be clubbed together under the self-same vinculum of pluralism, as in the Tytler Controversy. Rather was it the In-Soul and the Over-Soul of inviolable Monotheism rooted in the indivisible unity of a Godhead at once immanent and transcendent.

(2) "One law." In the forefront of the necessary corollaries and logical consequences of the concept of One God, Rammohun placed the commandment of One Law as a 'natural law in the spiritual world'—even the law of aspiration followed by inspiration in the most vitalising exercise of worship. His signal service to the cause of Ekamevādvitīyam comprised the uncompromising enforcement of 'Nedaṃ yadidam upāsate'. His declaration, once for all, of the irrefragable Magna Carta of every citizen in the commonwealth of souls vindicated the scientific naturalness, the practical possibility and the sovereign efficacy of spiritual worship. His reaffirmation of the ancient rule that spiritual things are spiritually discerned and, therefore, can alone be spiritually approached, spiritually apprehended and spiritually assimilated, allowed no secure quarter to the prevalent practice of idolatry, in which he beheld clearly the hydra-headed monster-mother of multiplex ills. Thus altogether, in the phrasing of the sacred Bristol Mausoleum, "a conscientious and steadfast believer in the unity of the Godhead, he consecrated his life with entire devotion to the worship of the Divine Spirit alone." And, thanks to his Heaven-ordained mission, the grim, glaring paradox of the age-long, baneful divorce between Monotheism and Monolatry has, in these later days, come to be annulled for the individual and the congregation in a custom-ridden land of countless idols alongside of the pervasive consciousness of the 'One only without a second'.

(3) "One element." Next followed, in realisation of that one touch of nature which makes the whole world kin, Rammohun's large-hearted insistence upon the element of universal love as the atmosphere of spiritual democracy through all the realms of creation starting with the human. "Under Heaven, One Family" was evermore the working formula of him whose genuineness of cosmopolitanism, not mere catholicity, was aptly appraised, on his demise, in the votive tribute—

> "Thy caste was human kind ;
> Thy home, wherever Freedom's beacon shone."

Anti-idolatrous in his spiritual relations with God, he could not but be also anti-caste in his social attitudes towards God's children. All, all, he averred even then, were equal Harijans—first-born and last-born alike. 'Biradar' was how he would invariably greet every one of those with whom his love-intoxicated soul of tropical warmth sought and held intimate communion. Also, as between caste and caste, so between sex and sex, he nobly upheld the inherent demands of their mutual complementariness as the head

and the heart, the Siva and the Parvati constituents in the wholeness of normal humanity. Likewise, as to the wide-yawning oceans of patriotic prejudice and the high-heaving mountains of national parochialism all over, he exemplified in himself how the 'many mansions' in the 'Father's house' were to attain live spiritual at-one-ment, one with another, in an international confraternity of races, cultures and civilisations with interdependence as against independence as the basis, not of fusion mechanical and sterile, but of fellowship organic and vital, healthy and fruitful.

(4) "One far-off divine event." Lastly, the *finale* of the Divina Comedia of Cosmic Evolution Rammohun perceived in the ever-progressive consummation of universal salvation and corporate immortality through eternity, God Himself constituting the ultimate assurance of life everlasting unto His own 'amṛtasya putrāh.' If all are, all must needs subsist for ever, as the offspring of one immortal Sire without exception, without exclusion, without elimination.

Accordingly, in his Brahma Samaj with its ever-memorable Trust-Deed bearing the patent hall-mark at once of modernity and eternality, the prime Architect of the Age erected the newer Fatehpur-Sikri of a new scientific and spiritual epoch—the focal centre and the rallying-point of of the One in the Many and the Many in the One, of the Divinity of the soul and the Humanity of the Over-soul, of *Jnana* and *Bhakti* and *Karma*, of East and West and North and South, of the Parliament of Man and the Federation of the World. Each succeeding generation, through the secular-to-be, proving increasingly worthy of its benignant shelter, so shall it endure, *Dei gratia*, upon the foundation-rock of the Fellowship of Faiths and under the beacon-banner of Ekamevādvitīyam, the All-Being of the Church Universal, the Pentecost Perennial, the Choir Invisible and the Life Immortal !

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Madame L. Morin

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Rammohun Roy and France.

RAMMOHUN'S STAY IN PARIS

It is with the deepest sympathy of heart and mind that I associate myself to this commemoration of Rammohun Roy's memory. Leaving aside my own insignificant personality, I am proud and happy that France should be represented here and also have the honour of paying

homage to this great awakener of India. France has always struggled for and proclaimed the ideals of truth and liberty, the ideal of high and impartial knowledge, which were also his ideals. It is not without emotion that I recall how keenly conscious Rammohun himself was during his lifetime of this link between his ideals and those of my country.

I have been asked by the Indian Institute in Paris to convey to you their tribute of admiration and respect for the personality and the work of Rammohun Roy. The Indian Institute also celebrated the Centenary in Paris,[1] but only after I had sailed for this country.

All that I have seen and heard since I have come to your country has encouraged and confirmed me in the intention of writing the life of Rammohun Roy in French. I have already been working on the subject for some time in France; and although Calcutta is really the place where one ought to study Rammohun Roy, I have been able to discover in French Libraries one or two facts which, if they had already been alluded to, had never been thoroughly established and accurately verified.[2]

When I first started the research, I was told by the most competent people that it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. And I must confess that I had to spend long weeks of patient perusal of Reports, Proceedings, and especially of the daily papers of the time before getting any results. But in the end I have been able to establish the exact date of Rammohun's presentation to King Louis Philippe,—14th October, 1832,—by the ordinary usher of the ambassadors. This date is mentioned by two different daily papers of the time.[3]

Further, by consulting the most ancient volume of the Proceedings of the Asiatic Society in Paris, in manuscript form, I have been able to prove that Rammohun Roy was effectively nominated as a member of that learned body as early as the 5th of July, 1824. There are interesting details relative to that nomination, but it would be too long to mention them now.[4]

1. Vide Part I, p. 187.—(EDITOR.)

2. A more detailed account of these researches, contributed to the *India and the World*, December 1933, is added as a *Supplement* to this Paper.—(ED.)

3. *Journal des Débats*, 15 Octobre 1832, Page 2, Col. 1. *Le Constitutionnel*, 15 Octobre 1832, Page 3, Col. 1. Complementary information is also to be found in *Journal des Débats* of the 19th October 1832.

4. Manuscript Proceedings of the sittings between 1822 and 1844 : Sitting of the 7th June, 1824 ; sitting of the 5th July, 1824. (Page 58 of Manuscript).
Complementary information to be found in :
Manuscript Proceedings of Asiatic Society in Paris, Sitting of the 3rd January, 1825. Page 66.
Journal Asiatique 1825 (1er semestre), Tome 6, Page 63.

Another point upon which a little light has been thrown, is the question of the *duration* of Rammohun's stay in France. Miss Collet says in her biography of the Raja : "We do not know when he went or when he returned."[1] In fact, the stay of Rammohun Roy had up to now only been located vaguely between the 31st of July 1832 and the 31st of January 1833, both these dates corresponding to letters written by the Raja from England.[2]

In Mary Carpenter's *Last Days of Rammohun Roy*, however, there is a photographic facsimile of one of Rammohun's letters dated 22nd September 1832 and written in Bengali. I had the idea of showing this letter to a Bengali scholar in Paris, Dr. B. K. Ghosh, and he was able to tell me that it had been written from England. Therefore, on the 22nd September 1832, Rammohun Roy was not in France yet. On the other hand, I found in the Paris National Library an article of Pauthier in the *Revue Encyclopedique*, dated December 1832, where Rammohun Roy's visit is mentioned *retrospectively*. These two points enable us to curtail the conjectural period of Rammohun's stay in France by at least three months, and we are thereby able to limit the researches to the last week of September and the months of October, November and December 1832.[3]

A full-size photograph of the above-mentioned Bengali letter is to be found in the present Exhibition of Rammohun Roy's Relics organized for the duration of the Centenary. In France we have a Victor Hugo Museum, a Rodin Museum, etc. If I may be allowed to express a wish, I would suggest that the precious relics of your national precursor should likewise become the nucleus of a Rammohun Roy Museum. They would thereby become available to scholars as well as to the public at large, instead of remaining dormant in the seclusion of private collections. If the expense of a separate building cannot be incurred, surely one of our public museums or libraries could spare a small room and give hospitality to those relics.

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1. Collet's *Life and Letters of Rammohun Roy*, page 200.

2. Letters written respectively to William Rathbone, Esq., and to Mr. Woodford. (Miss Collet, p. 200).

3. It is however likely that Rammohun Roy had already returned to England by December, and even perhaps as early as November, since a letter of Miss Aikin written in October 1832 is the only letter that we know of referring to the Raja as being in Paris at the time. His presentation to the King took place on the 14th of October, and we can infer from other letters that the Raja only stayed a few weeks in Paris, and that he curtailed his stay owing to the difficulties arising from a language which was foreign to him.

RAMMOHUN'S PERSONALITY

What seems to me the most striking characteristic of Rammohun Roy is his powerful personality—unique and admirably concentrated, and yet infinitely rich and diverse, dynamic as well as comprehensive. I consider him as the most wonderful prototype in modern times of your Indian genius, which is not limited as the Western genius is by the principle of contradiction, but manages to combine analysis and synthesis. Diversity, more often than not, results in dispersion. But, while Rammohun Roy cultivated a great diversity of interests, yet his mind remained so concentrated, his discrimination so lucid, that he could co-ordinate the various factors into a harmonious whole; and his purpose remained so firm that he could focus his magnificent ideals into practical realization.

He was powerful enough to draw from East and West, from every religion, from all cultural traditions, and clarify all these diverse elements, to weld them into a lofty and rational philosophy, a universal religion.

And yet, personally, I do not believe that Rammohun Roy's greatest achievement has been the creation of a new religion. Before him, India had had many outstanding philosophers and religious men; I know that he was very deeply religious at heart, but as far as his action and influence are concerned, he appears to me particularly significant as a social reformer. I am even strongly inclined to think that most of his outward religious activities (as distinct from his own inner life) were conducted in view of practical aims, ethical reform being viewed as the soundest basis for a new social and political order where Indians could enjoy higher cultural enlightenment as well as a better standard of health, welfare and general prosperity. This can be substantially inferred from many passages in his writings.

Some people stand for undiluted orthodoxy with all its nefarious forms of superstition; others, on the reverse, see no other way of salvation than doing away with religion altogether. Rammohun Roy was determined to do away with the superstitious practices which had undermined India's lucidity and vitality; but in his wisdom, he realized that the religious instinct corresponds to such a vital need, that it cannot be easily uprooted, either in the individual man, or in the evolution of large collectivities. He realized through the study of history how potent that force had been in the development of human civilization. He understood that the right course was not to suppress it—it cannot be suppressed—but to purify and simplify it and to use it as a means to serve social equality and fraternity as well as political emancipation.

From a purely philosophical point of view his partiality to the Hindu doctrine is evident. He finds in the Gayatri, the Upanishads and the Vedanta all the spiritual nourishment that a human soul can crave for.

But, on the other hand, he is struck by the social welfare and political progress of Europe ; he also becomes acquainted with the moral precepts of the Christian gospel, and he concludes that this simple code of morality has been one of the chief instruments of the social and political achievements of the West. This is not the place to discuss how far this inference is founded, but I feel certain that it was the basis of Rammohun Roy's eagerness to diffuse Christian ethics among his countrymen.

Many passages could be quoted to substantiate this view ; I shall limit myself to one or two.

> I presume to think that Christianity, if properly inculcated, has a greater tendency to improve *the moral, social and political state of mankind* than any other religious system.
>
> Every one who interests himself in behalf of his fellow creatures would confidently anticipate the approaching triumph of true religion should *philanthropy* induce you and your friends to send to Bengal as many serious and *able teachers of European learning and science and Christian morality unmingled with religious doctrines*, as your circumstances may admit, *to spread knowledge gratuitously among the native community*, in connexion with the Rev. Mr. Adam.[1]—(Letter to Rev. Henry Ware, Unitarian Minister of Harvard College, Cambridge, United States, in reply to an enquiry of his, dated February 1824. Quoted in pages 87, 88 of Miss Collet's Biography.) (Italics ours.)

Every word of Rammohun's declarations has to be read very attentively, if one wishes to understand his real thought underlying the studiously cautious and courteous language.

His religious point of view can also be understood by a careful perusal of his "Humble Suggestions to his Countrymen who believe in the One true God," where he says about non-Unitarian missionaries that "When they endeavour to make converts of us, ... even then we should feel no resentment towards them, but rather compassion, on account of their blindness to the errors into which they themselves have fallen : since it is almost impossible, as every day's

1. Mr. Adam was Rammohun Roy's 'convert' to Unitarianism. (*Vide* Miss Collet, p. 66.)

experience teaches us, for men, when possessed of wealth and power, to perceive their own defects."

Religion and Philosophy are opposed by some progressive Indians on the ground that they are a source of division among themselves. Here, another point that Rammohun Roy discerned with marvellous lucidity is that it would be far wiser and more realistic to make this great religious force of India a common instrument of unification, a common basis for constructive action. This can only be done in the broad spirit of tolerance which animated Rammohun Roy himself. And Rammohun, as a matter of fact, did not limit himself to preaching tolerance, which is only a first stage : he personally practised understanding.

He was the first Indian brave and bold enough to break the rules of orthodoxy and cross the Kala Pani, to come and study the culture and institutions of Europe with an open mind, and to observe Europeans and their mode of living with a critical—if sympathetic—curiosity. And I believe this intellectual curiosity has been one of the most important traits of Rammohun's remarkable personality. Without this universal critical curiosity, he would no doubt never have dreamt, and never have achieved as much as he did in every field of human thought and activity. Curiosity leads to comparison, to confrontation of values, to eager desire of knowledge of all forms of civilization. That is why Rammohun Roy was the first to perceive, by a prophetic and generous vision, what cultural fellowship between East and West could bring to both parties, if it were understood in the right spirit : how much it could broaden the field of research, how fully it could enrich experience and human understanding, how enlivening it could prove as a mutual stimulant, how powerfully it could foster international brotherhood.

Apart from all these exceptional gifts, Rammohun Roy was also endowed with the specific qualities which make a man a real leader.

First of all, he was a realist as well as an idealist. Everything that he preached by word or pen was instantly translated by him into constructive action or active struggle. His personality is all aglow with inspiration, but it possesses also this healthy sturdiness, this sound and perfect balance, which only come to those who do not refuse to act, but bravely accept to grapple day after day with hard and unpleasant realities.

Secondly, Rammohun Roy possessed an indomitable energy. He belonged to that type of people who are never curbed by circumstances, but who fight to dominate them until their aim is realized. This untiring perseverance in

effort could be illustrated by more than one instance taken from the Raja's life. (Among other facts, let us recall how he created his own press amidst the greatest difficulties, when he was refused hospitality by the press that had printed his previous pamphlets relative to his controversy with the missionaries.)

As all real leaders who deserve that appellation, Rammohun was a selfless man. He gave the first place to his cause and not to himself; he was always ready to recede into the background when he thought it necessary. His attitude in the fostering of educational reform is characteristic of this.[1]

Always tactful and courteous, he remained implacably firm when essential principles were at stake, thereby commanding respect from his opponents. In our time, many so-called leaders are apt to shirk responsibilities; Rammohun Roy had such a keen conscience in that matter that he would rather go out to meet responsibilities in anticipation, with the most daring courage.

We are inclined to forget that Rammohun was a rebel in his own time; in this respect also, his example is a great lesson. He never allowed himself to be excessive or fanatical; he was a self-possessed, generous, realistic and intelligent revolutionary.

His was a fearless life,—a lonely life also,—but he was powerful enough to stand alone and remain all the greater; as sometimes, at dawn, a tall mountain peak appears in isolation against the pale sky, shining already while everything is still in darkness, proud and fully radiant as the first herald of the rising sun.

Mrs. Naidu, in one of her inspiring speeches, very appositely said that Rammohun Roy had felt the challenge of the past. I know that the Indians of today feel the challenge of Rammohun Roy's lucid and generous vision. Your great precursor has been dead for a hundred years, but his powerful ideals are alive in the heart and mind of every one of you today. Some of the reforms which he has struggled for have already been realised; it will be your privilege to complete the work and reach the goal. May this date of Rammohun Roy's centenary inaugurate the incarnation of his prophetic dreams into tangible and constructive realities.

1. Evidence given by Dr. Alexander Duff, before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1853. Quoted by Mr. Hem Chandra Sarkar in his Introduction to the 1913 edition of Miss Collet's Biography. Pages xxxix and xl of the Introduction.

Supplement to Madame L. Morin's Paper.

(Madame Morin's Article in *India and the World*, Calcutta, Dec. 1933)

Rammohun elected Member of the Asiatic Society of Paris

The two important dates in the history of Rammohun Roy's relations with France refer to his nomination as a member of the Asiatic Society of Paris, and to his presentation to King Louis Philippe. My researches into the contemporary papers now permit me to bring some precision to these important dates.

In the sitting of the *Société Asiatique* dated the 7th June, 1824, there was the question of nominating some Associate-Correspondent, and MM. Le Comte d'Hauterive and Baron de Sacy formally proposed the conferring of the title to Pandit Rammohun Roy, and that proposal was referred to a Commission composed of MM. Lanjuinais, Burnouf and Klaproth.

On the 5th of July, 1824, "M. Klaproth in the name of the Commission made a report on the literary titles of Pandit Rammohun Roy proposed as an Associate-Correspondent. The conclusions of that report were submitted to the deliberation of the Council, and the title of Associate-Correspondent was conferred on Rammohun Roy." (—Process Verbaux des séances. The same text was printed in the *Journal Asiatique*, Tome 5, Page 62, July 1824.)

Miss Carpenter in the Appendix to her book, "The Last Days of Rammohun Roy" (pp. 23, 24, Calcutta edn., 1915) communicates a letter of a retired English officer, Mr. Lachlan, who is reported to have been charged by the Asiatic Society of Paris to hand over to Rammohun Roy the Diploma of an Honorary Member. From the Proceedings of the Society dated 3rd January 1825, we know that MM. Abbé Dubois,[1] retired missionary, and Captain Lachlan were proposed and accepted as Members of the Society. Is it possible that Captain Lachlan was charged at that moment to transmit the Diploma to Rammohun Roy ?

Presentation of Rammohun Roy to King Louis Philippe.

I found the following entries of interest in *Journal des Débats* : ~~"Prince Talleyrand arrives today in Paris" (30th September, 1832.)~~ "Prince Talleyrand departs for London next Tuesday" (Saturday, 6th October, 1832.) "Talleyrand leaves for London" (10th October, 1832.) "Prince Talleyrand was still in London on the 27th October, 1832." On the 22nd December, 1831, from 48, Bedford Square, London, Rammohun Roy thought of "applying to Prince Talleyrand for a passport." On the 27th September, 1832, he was writing

1. Rammohun Roy quotes approvingly Rev. Abbé Dubois in his letter dated February 8, 1824, on the "Prospects of Christianity" addressed to Rev. Henry Ware of Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A. On the 5th April, 1825, the Société Asiatique elects as its Member Prince Talleyrand to whom Rammohun was thinking of applying for a passport to France, as we find from his letter dated London, 22nd December, 1831.—*Ed., I. and W.*

from England a letter in Bengali to his son which has been reproduced in facsimile in Miss Carpenter's "Last Days". In December 1832 Mon. Pauthier published a long article on the works of Rammohun Roy referring at the end to his staying in Paris *retrospectively*. Hence his stay in Paris may be placed between September and December, 1832.

From two contemporary papers *Journal des Débats* (15th to 19th October, 1932) and *Le Constitutionnel* (15th October) we find definitely that the '*Radjah*,' an Indian Brahmin, had the honour of being presented to the King by M. de Saint-Maurice, usher of the Ambassadors (Neuilly, 14 October.) Prince Talleyrand was therefore not present, being away in London, while Rammohun was presented to the King. It is interesting to note, 4 days after, the *Journal des Débats* (19th October, 1832) printing the following note on Rammohun Roy : "This is what Mon. Victor Jacquemont wrote from Simla in the Himalayas, on the frontiers of Tibet, on 25th October, 1831, on the Hindu *Radjah*, who had recently the honour of being presented to the King : 'The journals (Gazettes) of Calcutta bring to my notice that Rammohun Roy has embarked for London. He is a Bengalee Brahmin, the most learned among Orientals. He knows perfectly Greek, Latin, Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit. He writes English admirably. Although high above the superstitions of his country, he never took to Christianity as has been alleged. On the contrary, he seemed to have converted to Unitarianism some clever priests of the English Episcopal Church. I used to meet him often in Calcutta where he enjoyed the highest esteem for the extent and diversity of his knowledge. It is probable that he will not leave Europe without having visited France, and I shall be very happy indeed to meet him again in Paris on my return.'"

41

Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, M.A., Ph.D., D.Sc.

Presidential Address on

Rammohun's Universal Humanism

In the panorama of modern culture and civilisation three peaks stand out prominently. The first is represented by Rammohun Roy. He was the harbinger of the idea of Universal Humanism. Though Voltaire and Volney had a glimpse of the rising sun of Humanism, they distorted the view by pitting the East against the West, and minimising and traducing Christian culture. Theirs was a militant humanism, as opposed to the Raja's synthetic and universalistic point of view. It is interesting to note here that a third stage was reached on this line in the creed of

Neo-theophilanthropy conceived as a new love of God and man. The second peak is represented by Tolstoi and Gandhi with their gospel of passive resistance and non-violent non-co-operation. The third peak in this panorama is represented by the modern movement of scientific humanism leading to Cosmic Humanism.

Let us take these movements in the order just mentioned. The first is represented by Rammohun Roy's idea of Universal Humanism. As I have said elsewhere, Raja Rammohun Roy was a Brahmin of Brahmins. He was also a Mahomedan with Mahomedans, and a Christian with Christians. He could thus combine in his personal religion the fundamentals of Hindu, Christian and Islamic experiences. In this way he was, strange to say, multi-personal. But behind all these masks there was yet another Rammohun Roy, the humanist, pure and simple, watching the procession of Universal Humanity in Universal History.

He strove to reconcile opposites. In the sphere of speculation he sought to reconcile individual reason with collective wisdom and scriptural authority, while in the sphere of social construction he aimed at the reconciliation of the good of the individual with the good of the greatest number. Thus he tried to harmonise individualism with socialism. This harmonisation, which is a necessity of life, has been attempted in different cultures in different ways. I may mention, *en passant,* that this balancing of what may be termed in a general sense individualism and socialism was a fundamental note of certain early civilisations, for example, the Dravidian and the Aryan. In the former, an original leaning towards socialism was corrected by a counter-emphasis on individualism, while in the latter a radical stress on individualism was tempered by socialism. The same process of counter-balancing is observable today in the capitalistic and socialistic polities of the West, where capitalism is being corrected by socialistic legislation and taxation (as in Britain and America), and on the other hand socialism, where it has been adopted as the basic principle (as in Russia), is being tempered by individualistic principles.

While Rammohun Roy was thus laying the foundation of the comparative method as applied to the study of Religion and Culture history, he made two profoundly original contributions of high practical import :—

(1) He helped to establish public education in India on the basis of real and useful knowledge, more particularly of science and the application of science to industry.

(2) He made a forecast of the future political history of India and her relation to Great Britain on plantation (or colonial) lines. Indeed, he would even welcome high-grade European settlements in certain parts of the country as a tentative measure to hasten this consummation. But the march of history has annulled the practicability as well as the value of this suggestion.

The second peak, as I have said, is represented by Tolstoi and Gandhi, (though Shelley had anticipated them.) Here the fundamental principles are Passive Resistance, *Philosophical* Anarchism and Non-violent Non-co-operation. It was Tolstoi who interpreted Christ's teachings as embodying the quintessence of passive resistance as applied to the whole of life. This has been followed by the concept of Philosophical anarchism which rejects the very idea of government, and it does not merely confine itself to Herbert Spencer's principle of mutual non-interference as the basis of legislation, but is so interpreted as to imply a total rejection of all legislative authority and sanction. Gandhi has rejected this philosophical anarchism, and has crystallised passive resistance into non-violent non-co-operation, rejecting all use of force, and preaching the doctrine of suffering as the only means for the conversion of the resisting factors. Thus it is claimed on behalf of this triple movement that it has promulgated a new gospel of deliverance for Universal Humanity.

I may here note that the Raja's survey of religion can find an easy place for all these later varieties of belief and experience.

We now come to the third peak. This represents a new religion,—the Religion of Man. Here (as for example in Julian Huxley's attempted rehabilitation) we shall find the usual paraphernalia of religion with divers symbols, rites, observances and dogmas, replacing the existing religious institutions and codes. It aims at placing the internal relations of society on a positive scientific basis, ousting the Gods of the extant credal religions; and it is confidently asserted that it will form the creed of a universal humanism based on Science. Eddington, Jeans, Bertrand Russell and Whitehead are the protagonists of these movements of thought which seek to liberate man from the dominance of the old creeds and dogmas.

Here also it may be noted that the Raja's survey of religion can find an easy place for all these varieties of belief and experience.

But Science is not the whole of life: other phases,—the emotional, the socio-ethical and the spiritual,—must also be

given a proper foundation and structure in the organisation of life. Thus, scientific humanism is only the vestibule of the cosmic humanism of the future.

Such would be the outcome of the Raja's survey of human history. And it was Rammohun Roy who had a glimpse of this rising sun. It was he indeed who viewed from dizzier heights the procession of Universal Humanity in Universal History.

And in the end, as I have said elsewhere, there came to this prophet of Humanity on his death-bed the vision of a free, puissant and enlightened India, the civiliser and enlightener of Asiatic nationalities, a golden link between the Far East and the Far West, a vision as emblematic of the past, as it was prophetic of the future history of humanity.

But the old order changes, and the race grows evermore. Yet Rammohun Roy shall be honoured as the prophet and precursor of Universal Humanism.

But there are deeper reaches than all this. For, what enters into the norm of modern life is not merely emotional exaltation, not merely imaginative transfiguration, not merely a disinterested criticism of life, but also, in and through them all, the creation of a personality with an individual scheme of life, and an individual outlook on the Universe. And it is only faint streaks of a new light that we see on the horizon.

The individual personality will grow more and more multi-personal. The hero indeed will be transformed. In this process, the idea of mass-consciousness will be the first stage, wherein everything in life and art will be evaluated in terms of the mass life. In other words, the needs of the masses, and not of the individual, will be the primary and guiding concept and measure of value. In the next stage this will develop into the concept of the Community-consciousness, wherein the life of the community will be the guiding principle of all life constructions. This community-consciousness is the consciousness of a more organised body than the masses. The next stage in this development will be the concept of Race-consciousness, in other words, the idea of the race as the centre of all values and organic constructions. The final step will be reached when all these elements will be synthetised and concretised in the concept of the age (and the march of ages) as embracing the whole field of life. This will transform the entire panorama of life and art, bringing on a transvaluation of all values, and elevating Art to new heights and undreamt-of altitudes.

42

Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan

on

Rammohun's Idea of Worship, and its subsequent development by his followers

It cannot escape even the most superficial reader of the Raja's works, that notwithstanding his admiration for whatever was good and noble in Christianity and Muhammadanism, the type of Theism which he cherished with the deepest love and respect was unmistakably the Hindu type. It was Hindu Theism, as expounded in the *Upanishads* and the *Vedanta* Philosophy, and in later works based on these, which gave Rammohun Roy the deepest solace in his spiritual struggles, and inspired in him the warmest enthusiasm. It was the Rishis who laid the foundations of India's National Theism, and the great Sankaracharya, who helped in the revival, development and propagation of this religion after its partial and temporary collapse under the Buddhist ascendance,—it was these apostles of the deeper religion of India of whom the Raja was most fond of speaking, and whose writings and utterances he laboured most strenuously to make better known to his countrymen as well as to foreigners. It was not a mere instinctive fondness for what is nearest to one in time and place; it was not a mere feeling of nationality; neither was it merely the apostolic policy of being all things to all men that led him to bring these repositories of sacred learning to prominence, and appeal to his countrymen in their name. It was evidently a hearty acceptance of their substantial truth, of their value as helps to the attainment of the higher life, that led him to devote the best days of his life to their propagation and to the vindication of their fundamental teachings against the attacks, both of the corrupt and degenerate priesthood of the land, and of foreigners who did not appreciate or would not admit their merits.

Unlike the teachers who taught the Hindu Religion in the recent period of its decadence, and following the ancient leaders of Hindu thought, Rammohun Roy held the *Upanishads* to be the highest authority in matters pertaining to the National Religion, and considered the Law-books, *Puranas*, *Itihasas* and *Tantras* as of comparatively minor importance. He held that the worship of the various Puranic gods and goddesses by means of images and material offerings was intended only for those pitiable beings whose intellects were utterly incapable of conceiving

the formless, infinite One, and rendering Him a worship in spirit and in truth. Such people, he says, require something to keep themselves from becoming utterly irreligious and immoral, and idolatry is such an expedient devised by the wise teachers of the National Religion. He would not object to the worshipper concentrating his mind on particular objects of nature considered as so many manifestations of the Divine Power, but the worship of distinct gods and goddesses he considered to be unworthy of intelligent and thoughtful men, and expressly opposed to the teachings of the Vedas.

It is not perhaps generally thought by those who are trying to revive the National Religion that Raja Rammohun Roy was the first Hindu Revivalist in the truest sense of the term. He it was who, in recent times, first drew the attention of his countrymen to the hidden truth and life-giving power of the religion of India's noblest sons, after their successors had been fed with husk for centuries by its selfish leaders, and at a time when those who had imbibed the influences of English education were looking for life and light to the religion of their rulers. Rammohun Roy sought to revive just what could and can be revived,—what can bear the light and heat of the day, and not what could not, by any means, be made to live.

The Raja could penetrate into the truth, not apparent to the superficial student, that the Theism of the Vedas was not merely *a religion to be believed in and practised* like Christianity or Islam, but that it was also closely allied to a profound and elaborate system of philosophy and *sádhaná*. Its fundamental principles, as set forth in the *Upanishads*, give unmistakable tokens of their being conclusions arrived at by a long course of intellectual searchings. When it is seen that the same truths have been obtained by independent Western thinkers of modern times by long courses of thinking, it becomes evident that Vedic Theism must have had a *sádhaná* and a philosophy at its back.

Such a philosophy is the *Vedanta*, which is erroneously identified with the *Vedánta Sútras* and Sankaracharya's Commentary on the same, but which is in fact a living and growing system of philosophical thought, putting itself forth in innumerable treatises commencing with the *Upanishads*, all devoted to the same grand themes that they treated of, and all inspired with the same keen search after the One undivided Reality underlying all existence that inspired the Vedic seers. The Raja saw all this very clearly, and, as a worthy son of the Rishis, contributed his part to this grand system of national thought.

Those who are competent to pronounce judgment on the subject unequivocally declare that the Raja's interpretation of the Vedanta is not, as he himself modestly says, only a 'derivative', or an 'abridgment' of Sankara's views, but is so original as to be fit to be mentioned with the great Commentaries of Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbarka and others. The originality of the Raja's way of thinking may be best seen by the general reader in the records that have come down to us of his controversies with his Christian opponents. In these the Raja stands out prominently as a defender of philosophical thought on Vedantic lines against dogmatic thought of the ordinary Christian stamp. He defends only the fundamental unity of thought—the sole reality of God—which the Vedanta insists upon, against the cavils of ordinary dualistic thinking. Christian missionaries then, as now, had, as their stock arguments against the Vedanta, its supposed tendency to immorality and impiety, since it unified, and thus equalised, all things including virtue and vice ; its practical denial of creation, since it made the Creator and the created fundamentally one ; and so on. Rammohun Roy met these objections in a way which showed how deeply he shared in the insight of the Hindu sages of old, and how, amidst the dust and smoke of controversy in which he had to pass his days, the social reformer and politician had his feet firm upon the solid rock of fundamental truth,—upon the eternal verities of which all that meet the eye are only passing appearances.

Let us now turn our attention to the subject of Rammohun Roy's efforts to evolve a system of *sádhaná* and of worship from the philosophic position on which he took his stand.

In his collected Bengali works we find a short form of worship recommended by him. It consists in the meditation of God with the help of the texts *Om Tat Sat*, *Ekamevádvitíyam*, and the well-known *Taittiríya* passage *Yato vá imáni bhútáni* etc. An interpretation or expansion of the passages in both Sanskrit and Bengali is also given. Then follows, for recitation, the *Mahánirvána Tantra* Hymn beginning with *Namaste Sate* in its entirety. This form was, however, not actually used in the services of the Brahma Samaj founded by the Raja, which consisted in the reading and exposition of the *Upanishads*, the singing of hymns, and the delivery of a sermon.

The Raja, in his writings, distinguishes two modes of worship, which he calls *Parampará Upásaná* and *Samádhi* or *Átma-sákshátkára*. In the former, God is thought of as quite distinct from the human self and the world, his existence being inferred from these two realities, which

alone are supposed to be present to the worshipper ; while in the latter, the notion of the distinct existence of the world disappears, and God manifests himself to the worshipper directly as the one sole Reality, identical in essence with the individual self. Though he was not a dogmatic Vedantist like the exponents of the Vedanta who preceded him, or some of his own immediate followers, he accepted the fundamental teachings of the *Upanishads* on the nature of God and his worship. He understood the Vedanta much in the same way as Sankara did, accepting in a manner even the latter's doctrine of illusion, and even taking glory in calling himself his follower, but unlike Sankara, emphasising the *saguna* or personal aspect of God, which Sankara indeed never denies, and insisted on life-long worship and the faithful discharge of domestic and social duties.

The Raja's successor in the Brahma Samaj, Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, and the colleagues who gathered round him, professed to accept the Vedanta as infallible in their early years. At that time they seem not to have read the Raja's most rationalistic work, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, and to have misunderstood his method of taking his stand on religious scriptures, and appearing, temporarily, to identify himself with them for the sake of teaching the spiritual worship of God with their help. Neither do they seem to have made anything like a close and deep study of the *Upanishads*. Later, when the four Brahmana students sent by the Maharshi to Benares to study the Vedas returned, and the Maharshi studied the *Upanishads* with their help, he discovered ideas in them diametrically opposed to his,—opposed specially to the Dualism of mind and matter, Finite and Infinite, which he had accepted either from tradition or from Western thinkers studied by him. This led to what he called his 'discarding of Vedantism', though he retained a good deal of his former reverence for the *Upanishads*.

From this time onward the religion of the Brahma Samaj became a species of Dualistic Theism, akin to that of our Naiyāyikas, or rather that of Newman and Parker, who were at that time better known to English educated Indians than were the thinkers of their own country.

Now, though this movement of the Maharshi and his followers was in certain aspects a retrogression, there was a redeeming feature in it. The Theism thus briefly indicated being far more easily intelligible than the Monism, qualified or unqualified, of the Raja and of the Upanishadic thinkers, a highly emotional religion, which finds its clearest expression in the Maharshi's *Vyākhyānas* was sought to be built on the Theism. This was a distinct advance, in some

respects, on Raja Rammohun Roy, in whose teachings we miss this emotional element, or find it only in a germinal form. The best fruits of this movement were Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen and the band of young enthusiasts who gathered round him, and subsequently founded the Bharatavarshiya Brahma Samaj. To give a definite shape to the Raja's idea of worship, the Maharshi prescribed a form which is to be found in the preliminary portion of his *Bráhma Dharma Grantha*. There worship is divided into five sub-forms, which are named *archaná, pranáma, samádhána, dhyána, stotra* and *prárthaná*. The nature and distinction of these sub-forms are not shown. The whole consists of texts from the *Upanishads* and the *Mahánirvána Tantra*, with Bengali translations of them, and an original prayer in Bengali.

Keshub conceived a simpler, more logical and more spontaneous form. He saw three attitudes in the act of worship,—*árádhaná* (adoration), *dhyána* (meditation or realisation), and *prárthaná* (prayer proper), and clearly defined their nature and distinction. He adopted four Upanishadic texts, gathered previously by the Maharshi, and setting forth the attributes of God, as a guide to *árádhaná* or adoration. What particular form the adoration should take, what should be the thoughts and words in which the worshipper's realisation of God should be expressed, was left to the worshipper himself,—to his own choice and endeavour.

Now, those who have earnestly adopted this method in their private and public devotions speak highly of its efficacy. But what reasoned system of theology, what system of *sádhaná* should be the foundation of such a method of worship? The *mantras* which guide this act of adoration had behind them a system of profound *sádhaná*, of spiritual culture, both intellectual and emotional. To successfully realise God as manifested in the attributes enumerated in the *árádhaná mantras*, the same *sádhaná*, in its broad outlines, if not in its details, must be gone through, as was done by the Rishis of the *Upanishads* and their followers.

At the very beginning of such a *sádhaná*, there must be a reasoned system of theology before the aspirant. Feelings, to be real and permanent, presuppose a belief in the attributes of God, a belief definite and absolutely beyond doubt. Raja Rammohun Roy did not try to give such a system. He seems to have found one in the thoughts of the Upanishadic Rishis and the works of the later Vedantists. For a long time after him, his followers seem not to have felt any urgent need for such a system. Lately, however, in the youngest section of the Samaj, the Sadharan, an earnest endeavour after reaching a system has been manifesting

itself. While fully accepting the Bhakti Dharma of the Maharshi and the Brahmananda, this endeavour has gone back, in spirit, to the Jnana Dharma of the Raja and the Vedantic saints and sages to whom he appealed, seeking to realise the *Ekamevádvitíyam*, a Unity comprising the infinite diversity of subject and object in the universe, which was the God worshipped by Raja Rammohun Roy and the Rishis and Acharyas he professed to follow.

But in one respect this endeavour goes beyond Raja Rammohun Roy. It takes the Brahma worshipper much nearer to the popular Bhakti Dharmas from which Vedantic *Máyáváda* cuts off its followers. To the Brahma worshipper, the world, in its manifoldness of sensuous, intellectual, and spiritual life, is not illusive in any sense. It is a divinely ordained scheme of progress from the imperfect to the perfect. Even in the highest stage of worship which the Raja speaks of—the stage of *samádhi* or *átma-sákshát-kára*,—the human self does not merge, as the Mayavadin thinks it does, in an abstract undifferentiated unity. It continues to be different from the Infinite, different from and yet one with Him, for concrete unity is unopposed to difference, and concrete difference unopposed to unity. In the exalted condition of *Bráhmí sthiti*, the soul continues to be a distinct object of God's love, and the member of a society here and hereafter.

Those who successfully practise and realise this form of worship in their personal and social lives,—and thus help to form a model Indian society, by whatever name it may be called,—are true followers of Rammohun Roy, as they are inspired by the same spirit that lies at the basis of all his endeavours after the reform, revival, and all-round progress of our beloved mother-country.

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Maulavi Wahed Husain, B. L.

Advocate, Calcutta High Court, on

Monotheism and Universalism in Rammohun and in Islam

(*Abridged*)

In what sense did Raja Rammohun Roy use the words 'Unity' and 'Monotheism'? Did he use them in the sense in which Sankara used them, or in the sense in which Ramanuja explained them, or in the sense in which they are used in the Quran? Let us try to ascertain his views on the subject.

According to Sankara the Supreme Being is the Absolute. His metaphysical arguments reduce the Divine entity into a mere abstraction. As pointed out by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Sankara's Brahman is a luminous mass of consciousness, motionless and actionless, and without initiative and control. Such a concept may come up to the visionary standard of an idealist or a dreamy metaphysician, but certainly it cannot satisfy the cravings of a religious mind. Sankara's subtle exposition of the nature of the Absolute is an outcome of the "wonderful feats of an intellectual acrobat," but it is as incomprehensible as the "Divine Essence." Sankara's Supreme Being is not a personal God. "An actionless and motionless Being without any power of initiative and control" can hardly listen to the supplications of a devout soul and give it solace. A religious reformer like Raja Rammohun can never remain an idealist only. Such a reformer must have a concrete idea of the Divinity. He cannot invite people to adore a Deity who is powerless to do anything for them. The world has no need of such an impotent and useless God. I am inclined to think that Rammohun's conception of Godhead does not, in this respect, coincide with that of Sankara, and that his religion is a concrete theism.

His idea of the Divinity is more akin to what we find in Al-Quran. He called himself a Muwahid which means a believer in 'tauhid', a word frequently used in the Islamic scriptures. When Rammohun uses the word 'Monotheism' with reference to the teachings of the Upanishads, according to which "all this is Brahman," he does not forget to inculcate a "Monotheism in Pantheism," if I may be permitted to use the expression. Such a conception of Divine Unity is akin to what a section of the Sufis call *Wahdat-ul-wajud*, i.e. the doctrine that "all existences make up one Existence." It is really the same unity in diversity which the Upanishad explains by saying *Neha náná asti kinchana.*

Ramanuja also is an authoritative commentator and expounder of the doctrines of the Upanishads. He has strongly criticised and controverted the theory of Sankara. His conception of Godhead is *Visishtádvaitaváda*, i. e, qualified duality ; in other words, his Divinity is not only an Absolute Being, but a Personal God as well, who has power of initiative and control. This conception of Ramanuja's Godhead is to a great extent in accord with that of Islam. Rammohun Roy very seldom refers in his writings to the opinion of Ramanuja. But it is evident from his works that he did not differ much from him. If this view is correct, it may be said that Rammohun Roy's conception of the Divinity is in accord with that of Ramanuja, and consequently with that of Islam.

It is true that the Quranic conception of the Divinity is a *concrete* monism; and generally the acceptance of the import of 'tauhid' (oneness of God) implies a belief in a concrete Divinity as contradistinguished from an abstract Essence. This is certainly the predominant Islamic idea of religion. But the idea of *abstract* monism also comes in when the Quran speaks of God as an Absolute One. Such passages have misled some writers, who have concentrated on them alone, and who have, in consequence, held that according to Islam the conception of the Divinity is abstract monotheism. But the fact is that the Quran is replete both with the realistic conception of God and idealistic descriptions of the Divine Essence. However that may be, the most distinct feature of the Quranic monotheism is an acknowledgment of the existence of one God, involving a distinct denial of any other Deities or Elements of Nature as either co-equal or co-eternal with God. From the writings and views of Raja Rammohun Roy it is evident that he is in entire agreement with this feature of the Quran. In this respect it is more correct to call Rammohun a follower of the Quran than that of the Upanishads. For the Upanishads sometimes admit the existence, and even mention without objection the worship of, minor gods. There Rammohun distinctly differs from the Upanishads.

Taking his stand on the doctrines of the Vedanta philosophy, Rammohun Roy sounded the clarion note of the Divine Unity, and invited his countrymen to the pure worship of the Supreme Being, discarding the rites of idol worship. In its rejection of idolatry, his movement was a revolt in the Hindu society, and he led it boldly with all the resources at his command. This religious revolt was akin to the similar revolts led by Kabir, Nanak and other reformers, who rose like shining stars in the firmament of India during the Muslim Rule, and tried to reconcile the Vedanta philosophy of India with the teachings of Islam. Like Raja Rammohun Roy, those religious reformers also founded their own religious institutions, and broke away from the current Hinduism of their times.

The religious revolution brought about by Raja Rammohun Roy in the Hindu society did not cease with the foundation of the Brahmo Samaj. His luminous writings and convincing arguments gave impetus to further religious movements in the Hindu society. Other religious reformers (such as Dayananda Saraswati) rose, and founded new societies of their own. If we compare all the religious movements that have arisen in India since her contact with Islam, we find that the teachings of Kabir, Nanak and Rammohun bear a very close resemblance to those of Islam. It will not be far from truth to say that the religious institutions which they have founded are a blending of

Islam and the Theism of the Upanishads; while the Arya Samaj and certain other offshoots of Hinduism bear a closer resemblance to the Vedic religion, and differ in many respects from the fundamental doctrines of Islam. To the credit of these reform movements it must be said that they all strive to establish the Divine unity and restore the pure adoration of the Supreme Deity.

The writings of Rammohun as also of Kabir and Nanak clearly show to what extent they were influenced by the philosophy of the Upanishads on the one hand, and the teachings of Islam on the other. Their expositions and elucidations of the doctrines of the Vedanta philosophy clearly show that they tried to make them consonant with the doctrines of Islam, and to remove all religious conflict. Raja Rammohun, besides being well versed in Hindu Sastras, was a Persian and Arabic scholar. No less were the great Kabir and Guru Nanak. It is no wonder then that they were greatly influenced by the Islamic culture and the doctrines of Al-Quran. Numerous passages may be quoted from the writings and sayings of Raja Rammohun and Guru Nanak which bear a close resemblance to the teachings of Islam; while the poetic effusions of the great Kabir tend to produce an impression in our minds that a Hindu mystic is pouring out his heart in Hindi rhapsodies in the strain of a Sufi.

But among all Hindu religious reformers, Raja Rammohun Roy stands on a distinct footing. His Peshgah is the high pedestal of Universalism, and not the narrow sphere of the Vedic religion. His object was to establish a brotherhood of all religious creeds, and assimilate the noble thoughts and ideals of all religions. With this object in view he opened a common Hall where people of all denominations could meet for the worship of One God, and for interchange of views and assimilation of the higher and nobler ideals of one another. Except in respect of idolatry, he never assumed a militant attitude. This peaceful attitude and wide vision of his, devoid of racial prejudices or religious conceits, have given to the Brahmo Samaj a distinctive feature not to be found in the other Samajes which may be called the offshoots of Hinduism. This feature consists in its wider religious outlook, its belief in the truth of all established religions, its veneration for all prophets and religious teachers, and its desire for establishing a brotherhood of all creeds and sects.

The question is sometimes asked,—Is Rammohun Roy's Universalism a form of eclecticism? I am assured, it is not. Eclecticism is good in some respects, but leads to vain wanderings and often degenerates into latitudinarianism, which in turn leads to laxity of moral and spiritual

responsibility. Eclecticism is not free from danger. In the sphere of religion, it often proves deceptive, as the mind is left to revolve round a shapeless flexible circle bereft of a centre or a pivot, which an uncompromising and firm faith in a personal moral God only may supply. Though Rammohun Roy revered all religions, he never meant to make eclecticism a rule of worship or of spiritual culture for his Theistic Church. At the same time it appears that he preferred eclecticism to a dogmatic and narrow system of religion.

The universalistic ideas and sentiments of the Brahmo Church are but echoes of the emphatic declarations of the Al-Quran fifteen centuries ago. The main object of Islam has been to establish a Universal Religion by declaring that all established and revealed religions of the world are based on truth, and that all prophets are the chosen men inspired by God to teach mankind religious truths, and all are therefore entitled to our respect. The Quran, in numerous passages, confirms the truth contained in previous scriptures, and makes no distinction between them. It looks upon all prophets as inspired messengers of God, and upon all scriptures given to other prophets of the world as receptacles of revelations successively made in different ages for the guidance of mankind. I can make room here for only two such passages :—

(1) "We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down to us, and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus, and that which was given to the prophets from their Lord. No distinction do we make between any of them : and to God we are resigned."

(2) "They who believe not in God and His apostles, and want to make a distinction between God and His apostles, and say, 'We believe in some of the apostles, and reject others of them, and seek to make a middle path in this matter',—they are really unbelievers : and we have prepared for the unbelievers an ignominious punishment. But they who believe in God and His apostles, and make no distinction between any of them, unto these we surely give their reward ; and God is gracious and merciful."

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Prof. Dhirendra Nath Chowdhuri, Vedantavagis, M.A.

on

Rammohun's Conception of God and the World

The Supreme Being as conceived by Raja Rammohun Roy, whom he variously calls Brahman, Para-Brahman, Iswara, Parameswara, Atman, Paramatman indifferently, is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. There are those who do not take kindly to the worship of the Supreme Being, but are rather violently opposed to it. Rammohun controverts their standpoint and firmly asserts: "Should adoration imply the elevation of the mind to the conviction of the existence of the Omnipotent Deity (an Almighty Superintendent of the Universe) as testified by His wise and wonderful world, and continual contemplation of His power, as so displayed, together with a constant sense of the gratitude which we naturally owe Him for our existence, sensation and comfort,—I never will hesitate to assert that His adoration is not only possible and practicable, but even incumbent upon every rational creature." (*Second Defence of the Monotheistical System of the Hindoos.*) And in order to prepare ourselves for the proper adoration of God we must purify our moral nature. So Rammohun prays : "May God speedily purify the minds of my countrymen and lead their hearts to that pure morality which is inseparable from the true worship of Him." To Rammohun the prayer ordinarily so-called is not an one-sided intellectual gymnastic, but a real spiritual intercourse between God and man. Mark, he prays for others also. Rammohun believes that the worship of the Supreme Being is the giver of all good here and hereafter, including *moksha*, liberation.

There are *máyávádins* who split the idea of God into two categories, *nirguna* and *saguna*, Para-Brahman and Apara-Brahman. The one is real while the other is phenomenal, in the sense that when any one attains true knowledge, for him the latter vanishes from existence altogether like a mirage; ज्ञानोदये मायामरीचिकावत् विनष्यतीति:। Rammohun never cherished such an idea of Brahman in his mind. He inculcates that the God we worship as the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the universe, in which acts His hand is unshackled, is to be adored as All-in-all when we attain the power of *Samádhi*. And Rammohun rejects *in toto* the popular view of *Samádhi* against which an early protest was made in the Chhandogyopanishad.

Complains Indra to Prajapati : "Surely, sir, in this state one does not know oneself thus—'This is I' ; nor does one know these things ; one rather reaches a state of annihilation. I do not see any good in this doctrine." Rammohun also saw no good in it, and therefore rejected it. According to him, *Samádhi* is the state of the self in which one sees the Supreme Self in all things, including one's own self, and abides in that state. It is not a state of unconsciousness allied to a state of swoon or a state of stupor ; but with Rammohun at least it is a state of illumined consciousness. In this respect Rammohun is better grouped with the Sufis Maulana Rumi and Hafiz than with any other body of Sadhakas.

Misunderstanding about Rammohun arises, because in Bengali he adopted the nomenclature of the current *máyávádi* Vedanta. Take, for example, the unmeaning term *máyá*. I say 'unmeaning', and say so advisedly. Sureswaracharya in his Taittiriya Vartika says, To try to understand *máyá* is to enter a cave with a lantern to discover darkness. Rammohun never uses it in the popular sense of illusion. With him "Maya is (primarily) the creating power of the Eternal God," (*Brah. Mag.*), and secondarily the work of that power, which is creation. For the explanation of creation, the Illusion theory adopts it as an unreal adjunct. But with Rammohun it is the real energy of the Absolute, the Eternal God,—his will. *(Ibid).* "God is the wilful agent of all that can have existence." (*Abr. of V.*) But no being can be called an agent, unless an action is found in him. God has created the world, and created it with a purpose. Rammohun's God is tremendously earnest in His creation. He is its 'wilful agent.' He has not created it merely out of 'sport,' as some would have us believe. Nor does He play the role of a magician, creating for the purpose of deluding His creatures,—themselves offsprings of that delusion. Now, it comes to this : the world owes its existence to the volition of God ; it is dependent on God for its existence, as "existence in reality belongs to God alone." The upshot of all Rammohun has taught in this connection is that any conception of the world as apart from God makes the world false. The current Vedanta says, परमात्मा हि संसारमायया न संस्पृश्यते ; it could not be otherwise. The world to it is non-existent, so God cannot be concerned with it in any way. Rammohun approaches the question from quite the opposite angle of vision. The world existing in God as it does, ('partaking in the life of God' as we now say,) is true ; but conceived separated from God, is untrue. This is exactly what Hegel has said :—"God who is truth, is known by us in his truth, that is, as Absolute Spirit, only in so

far as we at the same time recognise that the world which he created,—nature and the finite spirits,—are in their difference from God, untrue." (*Wallace's Logic of Hegel*, p. 155.) So, according to Rammohun, the world is as real as God himself when conceived as existing in God. "Substance," asserts Rammohun, "is as much dependent on the possession of quality or qualities for its existence, as a quality on some substance. It is impossible even to imagine a substance divested of qualities." (*Second Defence.*) But he admits "the superiority of substance over its qualities" ; of course, in the sense of logical priority.

Now the question arises, How did God create the world ? Did he create the world out of nothing ? Rammohun rejects the idea as absurd, as opposed to both reason and common sense. Before creation the world was in God, as after creation it is upheld by Him, but is not different from Him. "Yet God is at the same time quite different from what we see or feel," (*Preface to Isa. Up.*) ; because, argues Rammohun, though it is true that "God is the World," the conclusion "the World is God" cannot be deduced from it as true by conversion. Rammohun maintains both immanence and transcendence of God. He steers clear of the Scylla of popular dualism as well as the Charybdis of rank pantheism. His creed is unity in difference. In his Bengali hymns Rammohun sings : एकात्मा जानिबे सर्व्व अखण्ड ब्रह्माण्डमय। तीमाते ये आत्मारूपे प्रकाश, सेइ व्याप्त चराचरे।—(The one undivided Absolute Self that manifests itself as the human soul pervades the whole universe.) None is to be merged in the other.

In fine, we, individual souls, are inferior agents dependent in all our acts on the will of God ; and even when we attain supreme knowledge, we ever continue to attempt at ethical perfection. Rammohun silently passed over the popular faith, viz. परमात्मा हि संसारमायया न संस्पृश्यते, and its corollary, विरक्तस्य हि संसारात् भगवती तत्त्वज्ञाने अधिकारी, नान्यस्य। Nor did he accept the maxim का तव कान्ता, क ते पुत्रः ; he definitely and zealously promulgated that our social obligations, such as the father's duty to the son, the son's duty to the father, etc., are rules ordained by God himself, and we should religiously obey them. We should always endeavour to improve our intellectual and moral faculties, relying on the goodness of the Almighty Power, which alone enables us to attain that which we earnestly and diligently seek for. (*Intro. to Kena Upa.*) And when we repent, it is His mercy alone that brings us forgiveness. Should we cease to worship when we attain liberation ? No. "Even then do not forsake His adoration," enjoins Rammohun. (*Abr. of V.*)

I cannot more fittingly bring this incomplete account of Rammohun's Conception of God and the World to a conclusion than by praying with him : O Thou Supreme Lord, Controller of our hearts, but incomprehensible by our senses, so bless us that instead of remaining indifferent to the quest of the Spirit, we may know Thee firmly as One Undivided, All-inclusive and All-ruling Dispenser of our destiny, now and for ever. Amen. ॐ तत् सत्।

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Dr. Saroj Kumar Das, M.A., Ph.D.

on

Rammohun, the true Vedantist

PLACE OF VEDANTA IN INDIAN THOUGHT AND CULTURE

If the Vedanta, as Max Muller once put it, "is clearly the native philosophy of India," then assuredly Rammohun is the truest exponent and the best embodiment of the spirit of the Vedanta. Indeed, the safest general characterisation of the Indian philosophic tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to the Vedanta. Truly, that is where the heart of India beats, and Max Muller, by virtue of his invaluable gift of intellectual sympathy, has faithfully recorded this heart-beat, so far as he adds that "with the Hindus the fundamental ideas of the Vedanta have pervaded the whole of their literature, have leavened the whole of their language, and form to the present day the common property of the people at large." Now the phrase, 'native philosophy', may, for aught we know, be easily paraphrased into the much too complacent assurance that we are all 'born Vedantists.' If it means no more than that ideas of the Vedanta permeate and enliven the cultural atmosphere in a way in which those of the other indigenous systems of thought do not, then the interpretation is clearly beyond challenge. Indeed, it is no senseless exaggeration to say that every Hindu is suckled at the breast of the Vedantic ethos. But it is just possible to gloat upon a mere possibility, and thus for ever remain a suckling in the realm of mature philosophic thinking. In the sphere of intellectual achievements, there is no established law of inheritance whereby one can claim to be a born legatee of a traditional faith; in fact philosophic persuasion, like freedom, can never be given,—it has always to be earned.

DR. SAROJ KUMAR DAS

THE MESSAGE OF THE VEDANTIC CULTURE

If philosophy is but life brought to the focus of self-consciousness, Rammohun Roy was the truest apostle of Vedantic thought and culture. That does not mean, however, that he had been wedded to a pet theory or creed which he sought to foist upon the world at large. He was constitutionally incapable of fraternising with anything that was parochial, sectarian or merely nationalistic. The Vedanta provides him with just that vantage-ground, from which fall away all these narrow, communal or nationalistic accretions. In short, the Vedanta stands for the cult of *no-cult*. It presents the impressive spectacle of the Spirit of Humanity passing under review all the distracting cults of human life,—the cult of communalism, of nationalism, or even of so-called 'internationalism,'—with the perpetual warning: "Not this false god that people worship" (नेदं यदिदमुपासते.) In thus carrying out his life-giving mission, the Vedantist reminds one of the much persecuted preacher of Galilee, drawing men away from the delusive worship of minor deities with the forceful reminder: "My Kingdom is not of this world!"

RAMMOHUN, THE INCARNATION OF THE SPIRIT OF THE VEDANTA

Such is the rigour of the Vedantic discipline to the height of which a nature like Rammohun's could alone rise equal. He was a true Vedantist, and thus a votary of Truth which has no geography of its own. From such a platform of thought and existence, conceivably the highest of its kind, it was all the easier for Rammohun to realise that nationalism or patriotism is not enough,—the truth that was revealed to Nurse Cavell as she died the martyr's death. Our heart instinctively responds to the call, however much our head might linger and hesitate. Being in the blessed company of those "spectators of all time and all existence" whom Plato has immortalised in his own writings, Rammohun had the insight to discern in time "the moving image of eternity." It is his Vedantic discipline that enabled him also to realise that the economics of spiritual values requires that there should be no meaningless duplication of functions. It is because and so far as East is East and West is West that they do, and must ever, meet to their reciprocal advantage at the thought-exchange of the world. But Rammohun is careful enough not to barter away the individuality of Eastern thought and culture in order to secure an international credit. In short, Rammohun has exemplified in and through himself what the biological principle of cross-fertilisation may achieve in the realm of cultural values.

GREATNESS OF RAMMOHUN *sui generis* ; COMPARTMENTAL ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION OF IT IMPOSSIBLE

This is what makes a respectable characterisation of Rammohun's greatness all the more difficult, if not altogether impossible. To say that he is a Vedantist is not particularly illuminating. It may mean everything, or it may mean nothing at all. For the Vedanta was with him not a creed, but the medium in which he saw and assessed everything else. Or better, it is the atmosphere that he breathed and diffused through all his writings. Accordingly, all such characterisations and labellings of Rammohun must needs be imperfect and misleading. For example, he has been called, and that with strict justice, an orthodox Vedantist among the Hindus, a Zabardast Maulavi among the Mahomedans, and an unordained Padre among the Christians. In a sense all these characterisations are, and none of these in particular is, true. But these leave the peculiarity or individuality of his greatness untouched. Indeed, his is a greatness that defies compartmental analysis and classification; the method of rule-and-compass assessment is here shamed out of existence. He is his own exemplar,—a thinker absolutely *sui generis*. Indeed, it would not do to forget that the great man, as "the real individual, is the sphere which his activity doth fill." It is true that the admirer has to reverse the procedure of the Creator, and begin with the dismembered parts in order to reconstruct the whole in its all-round perfection. This method, we know, is foredoomed to failure; but we have no other alternative to fall back upon.

CRITICAL STUDY OF RAMMOHUN;—ITS USE AS WELL AS ABUSE

The limitation of this method of studying a great man must always be kept in view. To disengage any item of thought and action from the centripetal influence of the sphere, which the individual is, and pursue it in a centrifugal direction would be courting sure misrepresentation. That is the original sin of a method of interpreting Rammohun that is making itself heard in certain quarters. It is all the more sinister because it is being sponsored in the name of historical scholarship and scientific accuracy. To put it briefly, it betrays an essential lack of the historical sense and the scientific temper. Facts cease to be facts and become fictions, when they are torn out of their proper context, and made to do the duty of a truthful representation. Too high a premium has been put, for example, upon the disproving of Rammohun's visit to Tibet, and to Benares for Sanskritic studies, or to the proving of some shady *benami* transactions which he is alleged to have been drawn into. [Perhaps I should have been well-advised not to

refer to such controversial topics on a ceremonial occasion like the present. But my apology is that I am no believer in the policy of 'burying the hatchet'; for it is, at best, a counsel of despair. The hatchet that is buried today may be exhumed tomorrow. If there be a hatchet at all, let it be unearthed and cast into the sea, and thus removed out of harm's way altogether.]

Against this superstitious idolatry of 'facts',—which is wrong in principle,—the criticism one would like to register is that it is not facts as such that we seek, but the meaning of facts as the standard-bearer of truth. To use the beautiful imagery of Rabindranath, the fact is like the blind lane that closes upon itself; it shuts out from view the open firmament of truth. Indeed, facts are like "words by which the wise reckon, they are the money of the fools." A fact-ridden verdict is not necessarily the most authoritative one. Such is also Katherine Mayo's 'Mother India', which claims to have given us *facts*, but has it given us the *truth* about 'Mother India'?

Here exactly comes the challenge to the younger generations of today. Theirs is the duty rather to strive 'towards making, than repose on aught found made.' It is no use looking up to the older generations,—crabbed and cabined in their inelastic mummified scholarship. Not unjustly did Mr. G. Bernard Shaw remark the other day: 'A man after forty is a scoundrel.'

Now, I propose to concentrate on those live issues of modern times wherein the Vedantic inheritance of Rammohun stood him in good stead. Rabindranath hails Rammohun as the Inaugurator of the Modern Age in India —"the only person in his time, in the whole world of Man, to realise completely the significance of the Modern Age." But the Modern Age represents, in the words of an illustrious thinker of the last century—"Protestantism in the sphere of the thinking spirit." Happily, Rammohun's title to greatness, to be reckoned the interpreter of the Modern Age, does not consist merely in the assertion of the Protestant rights of private judgment, of free-lance thinking. He had the insight to perceive that man in any age cannot live upon mere negation or protestation. The spirit of Protestantism, although necessary as a prelude to all constructive endeavours and all reforms, is, as he truly foresaw, only a means and not an end, a precept and not a doctrine, the starting-point and not the goal of final achievement. He had the intellectual sufficiency to realise that a doctrine is true not because it is modern, but that it is modern as well as for all time because it is true. If "truths wake to perish never," neither antiquity nor modernity can either detract from or add to the truth of a doctrine.

FREEDOM THE KEYNOTE OF RAMMOHUN'S GREATNESS

The Keynote of all his greatness,—indeed, what makes him one of all ages and climes,—is that he was a free man in the most comprehensive sense of the term. In the words of William Adam, Rammohun would be "free or not be at all." In point of fact, freedom was an elemental passion of his soul,—not freedom of action merely, which is of secondary and subsidiary importance, but freedom of mind, which is far more comprehensive and radical. Here, again, the distinctive individuality of his character comes out in prominent relief. Freer than the Free-thinkers and Rationalists of eighteenth century Europe, Rammohun had the competency to reconcile the natural light *(lumens naturalis)* of individual reason with the authority of the scriptures as the collective wisdom of the race, handing on the torch of illumination from age to age. Although he received his first schooling among the image-breakers of the West as well as the East, he did not indulge in the pastime of image-breaking unto the last. If that had been the main plank in the platform of reform upon which he took a firm stand, he would have remained a pigmy indeed in the realm of spiritual values. It is in the constructive part of his programme of reform,—in his effecting the much-needed adjustment of the rights of Authority and Free-thinking,—that we discover the unmistakable signs of a master mind that he was. To that extent he was as much the product as the creator of the age to which he belonged. He came in the fulness of time ; and the opposition he encountered in his life-time was the surest index of the genuine need of reform in that age. But this is a truth often lost upon reviewers of Rammohun's life, who seek to enhance the historical importance of Rammohun by discounting the spirit of the times, the *Zeit-geist*, as the Germans would put it. Wanting in an historical sense, they fail to take time seriously, and thus miss the home-truth that great men are but the rallying-points of the invisible currents of time-forces that operate the history of human civilisation. Great men do admittedly appear as 'strangers from afar', so far as they emerge on the scene with a higher certificate of birth, but this emergence of theirs is not at variance with continuity in the cultural history of the race. These are the people in whom find a vocal expression the ideas that stir the sub-conscious mind of the race. Rammohun was similarly circumstanced in relation to his own age,—an age of which the dominant note was the need for a new orientation, a 'creative synthesis' in the truest sense of the term. Of this historic synthesis Rammohun gave one formulation, the saintly Ramakrishna another,—typical of their respective genius ; but neither could possibly

replace the other, each being illustrative in its own way of the characteristically Hindu genius for synthesis.

UNIVERSALISM OF RAMMOHUN ; THE MESSAGE OF THE CONCRETE UNIVERSAL

It is the possession, in an abundant measure, of this synthetic genius, or what is the same thing, his Universalism in thought and culture, that explains the secret of his greatness. Here we notice a remarkable kinship between Rammohun and his illustrious contemporary Hegel, who preceded Rammohun in birth by four years and death by two years. What Hegel preached as the message of the Concrete Universal, Rammohun translated into practice as the underlying principle of his reformative zeal. The fact that one developed the theory in ignorance of the other argues a pre-established harmony, a spiritual fellowship between the two. Now, as against the insurgent abstract universalism of the eighteenth century, Rammohun had his faith pinned to the Concrete Universal. The characteristic note of eighteenth century Universalism is typically expressed, as one present-day literary critic observes, in the well-known lines of 'Love's Philosophy'—

> All things by a law divine
> In one another's being mingle.
> Why not I with thine ?

—Why not ? Shelley's life has given the answer to that. It meant for him absence of all bondage in whatever shape and form such bondage invaded us. It was worshipped in the abstract, but resented in the concrete and the particular.

It is this message of the Concrete Universal that enabled him to avoid two dangerous pitfalls :—one, Eclecticism,—the danger of Comparative Religion ; and the other, the so-called Internationalism of today,—the danger of Comparative Politics. Rammohun has been christened the 'Father of Comparative Religion,' and so it is all the more necessary to know how he stood in regard to it. Comparative Religion, however laudable in its ambition, has a tendency to effect an L.C.M. of religions, and thus to dilute the significance of religion past all recognition. Not unreasonably, therefore, did one devoted student of Comparative Religion once remark,—"The study of Comparative Religion has left me comparatively religious" !

With regard to his faith in international fellowship, it is significant to note that in the historic letter which he wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, he made no secret about his conviction that "all mankind are one great family of which numerous nations and tribes

existing are only various branches." Here we find no doubt clear evidences of his Internationalism,—but not of the European brand, which gives us only a side-view of Humanity. The roots of modern thought, as one European thinker writes, "are sunk deep in the fruitful soil of nationality, while the top of the tree spreads itself far beyond national limitations. It is national and cosmopolitan together ; it is international as the common property of the various peoples which exchange their philosophical gifts through an active commerce of ideas." Nothing could be a truer description of the cult of internationalism that has its root struck deep in the soil of nationalism. Mischief, they say, always lies about the root. Nor is the root a faithful index of the thing in question. We have the age-long prescript, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and not by their roots.

Now, the method of working from the roots upwards has been tried and found wanting. Why not try the other, namely, of working from above downwards ? That is exactly what Rammohun has tried, and invites the distracted world of today to try. As the inheritor of the cultural universalism of the Vedanta, Rammohun had his vision attuned to the master-light of all our seeing,—the Vedantic revelation vouchsafed in ages gone by to the Upanishadic sages who declared, with a suggestive symbol, that the ancient holy fig-tree (symbolising the infinite creation) has its roots in heaven and its branches spreading downwards. (ऊर्द्ध मूलो ऽवाक्शाख एषो ऽश्वत्थः सनातनः ।)

THE MAKING OF THE INTERNATIONAL MIND,
THE SUPREME NEED OF THE HOUR

Accordingly, a Parliament or a Federation of Mankind must for ever remain a pious wish merely, and a League of Nations is too apt to degenerate into a clique of nations, until and unless the making of the international mind is an accomplished fact. This can be achieved, be it remembered, not on any platform of diplomatic relations or by means of any pact of patch-work, be it communal, political or international. It is to this making of the international mind that Rammohun by means of the example of his life and teaching invites us today. Shall we respond to this invitation, or cling to our pettinesses ? It is easy to deride this notion of human solidarity and take to the blunt Johnsonian method of refuting it by kicking against it. If it be contended that the vision is too good to be true, Rammohun as the truest representative of the Vedantic universalism would rise equal to the occasion, and affirm that the vision of such a Federation of Mankind is too good *not* to be true.

Indeed, as I try to visualise the greatness of Rammohun, there appears before my mind's eye a majestic figure, towering head and shoulders above all his compeers, and over-riding by virtue of his compelling greatness all our misrepresentations, wilful or otherwise. And I am disposed to accost him in the words in which Matthew Arnold invoked Shakespeare :—

> Others abide our question ; thou art free.
> We ask and ask ; thou smilest, and art still,
> Out-topping knowledge, ... the loftiest hill
> That to the stars uncrowns his majesty.

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Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

(Presidential Address)

Rammohun as the Reconciler of Irreconcilables

Friends, I do not know why it is necessary to have yet another presidential speech, when for the last three days Calcutta has heard a number of speeches, presidential and non-presidential. (*Laughter.*) But there is one thing, one touch of nature that is peculiar to the whole of India, and that is a love for speaking and an interminable love for hearing speeches. (*Laughter.*) I confess that I do not like hearing speeches ; still less do I like making them. On this occasion, when all that could be said has already been said, when nothing remains that could be bettered after the golden speech of your silvery-haired poet Rabindranath Tagore, after the learned dissertations by men of different creeds and cultures, men of different types and temperaments, men with varied achievements in all the different departments of intellectual and social life,—what is there left for a mere poetess like me to say, when the greatest poet has already spoken ? And yet, may be, there still remains something to be said.

Some years ago, when I was in Europe, I happened to be in the neighbourhood of Bristol. I went to visit that tomb of Raja Rammohun Roy where year after year there is an exodus of pilgrims from the city of London and neighbouring places. And year after year, standing beside that tomb, men and women recall with pride and with real joy that once there was a man born in India but buried in England, who, in his life, as in his death, affirmed the great ideal of Unity for which he stood. (*Applause.*) Born in India, and

buried in the soil of the West, a hundred years ago, this man was a symbol of the reconciliation of those things which are considered irreconcilable, and was a true ambassador of human unity, which he not only believed in, but also fulfilled in his own life.

In this Conference we have discussed his life day after day. This being the age of isolated specialisation, each expert in his enthusiasm has spoken of one aspect or another of the Raja's contributions to life. Some have referred to his great religious enthusiasm; some have spoken of the reverberations in their own hearts of his great message of social emancipation; some have pondered over the profundity of his academical knowledge; some have quoted him time and again as a great legal exemplar; some, again, have said, "Why not look upon him as a great man who combined within himself all the cultures that Asia produced and Europe had to give?" And some described him as a great feminist and saviour of degraded womanhood. Journalists looked on him with pride as the Father of native journalism in India, and men of letters said that he created the Bengali prose. But to me the real greatness of Raja Rammohun Roy lies in this,—that he believed and he realised within himself Goethe's saying, "We shall live in the Absolute, in the Beautiful and in the Good." In the Absolute, in the Beautiful, and in the Good Rammohun lived. You cannot separate any single item of activity, intellectual, social or spiritual, in the life of the Raja, and say, "This is he."

To me the great lesson of his life is that he was not a product of his age. It is only the mediocrity who is the product of his age. But in the case of Raja Rammohun, he is the *prophet* of a new age, and he prophesied in his time what has actually come to pass in modern times. He was far ahead of his time. All those virtues that we consider particularly modern, all those ideals that form the very best of our lives,—all these he prophesied, and he himself fulfilled. One thing which he fulfilled more than anything else is the prophecy of United Brotherhood.

Alas, in Europe and in America, and a thousand times alas, in India, we are unfortunately beginning, owing to the tragedies of historic circumstances, to narrow down the horizon of our vision. But Raja Rammohun understood that the narrowness of patriotism, the limitations of sympathy, the pride of race, the arrogance of religions, doctrines and dogmas, the barriers of rituals and different methods of worship, constituted obstacles in the progress of humanity. He realised and preached the gospel of unity for the salvation of divided humanity. And therefore, making no difference between sect and sect, sex and sex, race and race, religion and religion, nation and

nation, culture and culture, civilisation and civilisation, history and history, language and language, of whatever country, he preached that our destiny is bound by a common purpose, a common sacrifice, and a common suffering in the crucible of endeavours and aspirations, for the sake of attaining an indivisible humanity. That was the greatest lesson that he taught us.

Here in India, we daily betray the genius of India. Day after day we do violence to our own spiritual inheritance, and hour after hour we pride ourselves on an aggressive nationalism. We misinterpret great words to narrow meanings. We think of ourselves as patriots merely, as people different from the world of men outside. We think of ourselves today in geographical terms, in ethnological terms, in terms of province, in terms of sex, and in terms of sect. There in the West, again, there is the instinct of foreign exploitation and domination. All this sort of nationalism is wrong; all limitation bred of racial consciousness is wrong. It only proves that we are inferior, and therefore we build around us such barriers. But the man who died a hundred years ago in that little isle of England realised that unless and until India recovered that consciousness of her own world-wide hospitality and unbounded generosity, and until she realised that she had a great gift to offer to the wide world,—till then India cannot redeem herself, not only from the servitude imposed upon her by the arms and armies of foreign nations, but also from the servitude imposed upon her by prejudice and isolation, by her weakness and inferiority. Therefore our first duty as custodians of the great ideal of Raja Rammohun Roy is to recover the equilibrium of our spiritual dignity, but not by a sense of hatred, not by a sense of isolation, not by a feeling of recrimination against the West.

The other day Rabindranath Tagore spoke of the river that flows with its many tributaries, that conveys the message of life from city to city and from village to village, that goes and goes thousands and thousands of miles, linking up continent with continent, and ultimately reaches the sea that has no boundary. So has been the destiny of India in the past, and so must be the destiny of India in the future. For us, Indians, the river is the true symbol of our civilisation,—the river that moves and moves with its epic rhythm towards the sea, carrying the tidings of life and freedom to the world. And Raja Rammohun Roy conveyed the message of this great civilisation to the world. He had no exclusion. He had the all-inclusiveness which is characteristic of the universal quality of the Mission of India.

He wished that India should co-ordinate all her energies, all her enthusiasm, all her sacrifices and all her realisations, for the one common purpose of re-creating the gods,—the gods that had been broken up into so many fragments,—into the integrity of her one Godhead that the great spiritual teachers of old taught her. Their lessons were co-ordinated and completed in the life of Raja Rammohun Roy, who declared that all religions are one, though men speak in many tongues, though there are so many different sects. The One true God is the creation of that unity and that beauty which our souls thirst after. Raja Rammohun Roy said that no doctrine, no dogma, no ritual, no foolish ceremonies that split up the Godhead have any meaning. If we realise the message of the man whose memory we are honouring today, that we are not merely the glorious children of the gods, but we have to be the creators of God, to realise in our lives the One that is the True, the Good, and the Beautiful,—our purpose will be achieved, and our mission will be fulfilled.

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Prof. Humayun Kabir, M.A.

on

Rammohun and the Fundamental Unity of all Faiths

Great men have been compared to Janus, the Roman god. On the one hand, they face back towards the past, and sum up in their personality the accumulated culture of the ages. Yet their gaze is turned towards the promise of the days to come, and they already see in their hearts the vision of a richer, fuller life. In them, the past with all its strife and endeavour and achievement, its success and its failure, seeks a full and final synthesis; in them the future with its hopes and fears, its aspiration, challenge and potency, lives a vivid, intense life. They stand, each solitary upon a peak in the ocean of time; and, bathed in the radiance of their own inner light, they watch with calm and tranquil heart the panorama of the ages spread before their eyes.

Like all great men, Rammohun was also Janus-faced. To realise the greatness of the man, we have to understand the richness of the culture in which he was born, and foresee the splendour of the age he was to usher in. For, he comprehended in himself the wealth and variety of the culture which India had evolved: a rich and complex

symphony woven of the mingled strains of Islam and the indigenous faiths, with the first faint murmurings of a newer tone which in the immediate future was destined to become a dominant note. A man is great, not merely by what, as an individual, he achieves himself, but also by the achievements of his forbears, which enable him to start from where they had left. Their failures are the pillars on which he builds the monument of his success.

It is therefore bad history and worse philosophy to condemn in unqualified terms the age in which Rammohun was born; his greatness itself is proof that there were elements of greatness incipient in the times. The first bitter struggles of Mussalman and Hindu were not only for the possession of India's material wealth; it was also a conflict of cultures for the possession of India's soul. On every plane of life and thought,—in dress and speech, in habits and conduct, in custom and religion,—the bitter fight was fought, till out of the clash at last was born a new culture which was neither purely Muslim, nor purely Hindu, for it contained within itself the elements of both. For, the tale of bitterness, of hatred and of clash was not the whole of the story. Hindu fought Mussalman on many a bloody field, but behind the noise and tumult of the war, great spirits worked patiently and silently to bridge the gulf which sought to separate the battling hosts. A common language had been newly forged, the eternal truths of faith were sought in common forms, and from the chaos of conflicting ideals, a common code of life and manners had been slowly evolved. In the world of art, this Indo-Saracenic spirit found its type in the marble marvel of the Taj. In the realm of personality it found one of its finest embodiments in Raja Rammohun Roy.

Rammohun's greatness therefore is, that he summed up in himself the conflict and the synthesis of seven centuries. This is all the more remarkable when we remember that the process came to self-consciousness in him at a time when to the external view the cause of synthesis had already been lost. Kabir and Nanak had striven for the self-same end on the spiritual plane. Akbar, with all the majesty of genius, had strained every nerve to realise it in the political field, and a hundred nameless seers and singers had poured out their lives to bring the message to the common folk. And yet it seemed that they all had failed, that the forces against them had proved too strong. Rana Pratap of Mewar, heroic and noble, and yet narrow and unimaginative in his patriotism, was the first to rally the forces of reaction, and collect under his banner all the mass of age-long inertia and exclusiveness that sought to hinder the process of synthesis. Once the movement of progress had received a check,

impediments gathered. Aurungzeb was the natural sequel to Pratap, both equally admirable in their lifelong devotion to a cause, and both equally unimaginative in the choice of their mission of life.

Rammohun then appeared on the scene when the impulse towards unity had almost spent itself, and the memory of the effort was itself fading fast. In the reaction that followed, the general ebb of life all over the land had only enhanced and intensified the differences and distinctions between the communities and groups, which jutted like rocky islets that stud the floor of the sea after the retreat of a vast tidal wave. It was Rammohun's endeavour to see unity in this variety, to find harmony among the discordant notes of warring sects, to realise the whole *where others saw only broken and unrelated fragments.*

Rammohun was peculiarly fitted, by heredity and upbringing, by his nature and temperament, for this Herculean task. The two great and conflicting schools of Hinduism, Vaishnava and Sakta, were united in his birth, and yet training and environment from childhood made him almost a Mussalman in his mode of life. The background of Hinduism was in his blood, but his conscious life and conduct were shaped by this early impact of Islamic thought. Herein we find the significance of his rediscovery of the deepest truth in Man : the discovery of the principle of Unity which underlies and must underlie the religious life of all mankind. "There is no god but God" was stamped upon his consciousness, till it burnt away the dross of all customs and conventions, and brought him face to face with the Unity lying deep down in the universe,—not the metaphysician's abstract unity of concept, but the conviction born of the experience of the religious man.

Rammohun's deep conversance with Islamic thought expressed itself not only in his external mode of living ; it also supplied the basis and orientation of his intellectual and spiritual life. It was brought home to him that all religions are fundamentally the same, that God has spoken to all peoples of the earth in their own native speech, and sent them teachers from among their own flesh and blood. Manners and customs vary from age to age and from land to land, but the Spirit of God that expresses itself in man's religious quest remains eternally the same, and the reformer's task is only to seek for it and preserve it and cherish it when it is found. The religious history of man all over the world is therefore nothing but the continual rediscovery of the One Eternal Truth, the deep unity of life in the universe that we call God.

Rammohun's whole being responded to the unity of the Eternal One, and he sought to discover this call in the

scriptures of his land. Deep study convinced him of the truth of his belief in the fundamental unity of all faiths, for he found in the Upanishads and the Gita the same spiritual message of the unity of God which the Quran had burnt into his consciousness. They also equally taught that the One remains, though the many change and pass. He realised that the idolatry and polytheism prevalent in the Hinduism of his times were mere excrescences, a later outgrowth impairing the purity of the original religious consciousness that found its embodiment in the Gita and the Upanishads. The expression of this conviction with all the zeal of a new discoverer led to his expulsion from home while yet in his teens, but nothing daunted, Rammohun ventured out into the world to prove for himself the truth of what he believed.

Later in life Rammohun came into contact with the Christian missionaries who brought to India the message of the Bible. With his deep conviction of the unity of God, he could not accept the theology of the official Christian church, but recognised in the life of Jesus an expression of the same fundamental spiritual truth. His discussion of the question of Trinity, which led to the conversion of a missionary to Unitarianism, has become classic, but behind all the sectarian distinctions and formalisms of organised churches, Rammohun saw the deep fervour and high ethical consciousness of the faith of Jesus. There, again, in the heights of spiritual attainment, he felt the human spirit worshipping at the altar of the One and Eternal God.

Convinced of the basic unity of all religious faiths, Rammohun expressed this his deepest conviction in the *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, where he appealed to all Believers in One God to forget their differences in their deep agreement on this fundamental point. From then on, his life was one continuous effort to reconcile and explain the differences and distinctions of diverse faiths, to separate the core of spiritual truth in them from all the excrescences that had collected in the course of time, to distinguish truth from untruth, and free the human mind of the dogmas and prejudices that separate man from man. When at last he was led to found the Brahmo Samaj, he established it not as a fresh religion or a new dispensation, but as a religious fellowship where devout and earnest followers of all religions could meet together in the worship of "the One Being who is the fountain of the harmonious organisation of the universe."

With his vast and deep scholarship, Rammohun was perhaps the first to plead for an impartial and just enquiry into the nature and principles of the relgious doctrines of different peoples, in order to find in all of them the same

deep underlying unity. The founder of the comparative study of religion in the modern world, his work was throughout marked by an unflinching love of truth which enabled him to rise above the superstitions of his race, the prejudices of his times, and even the bonds of personal predilection and habit. His pioneer work in the cause of education and intellectual co-operation of East and West, his endeavours on behalf of the freedom of the Press, his struggles for the rights of India's womanhood and for emancipation from outworn and hampering social and religious customs, his heroic efforts for the political, economic and constitutional progress of his people, and his founding of a religious fellowship which was perhaps unique in history,—are all deeds for any one of which a leader deserves the gratitude of his nation and the world. But to Rammohun belongs a still greater glory, for in him there burnt a spirit that was greater than all his deeds, and made him the first true Indian in the fullest sense of the term.

A Brahmin of Brahmins, Rammohun was deeply versed in Sanscritic lore, and proclaimed the eternal truths enshrined in the scriptures of the Hindus. Among the Maulavis learned in Arabic and Persian, he was one of the most *zabardast*, and placed the whole emphasis of his life upon the declaration of the Unity of God. Among Christians, he spoke with the authority of a church divine, and interpreted anew the life of Jesus so as to fit in with the religious experience of all mankind. The child of multiple cultures, with his unerring sense of truth he saw the unity underlying all of them, and with his unfailing courage he accepted the truth that he saw, and proclaimed it to all the world.

It was this quality of truth and courage which is the most distinctive character of Rammohun Roy. In spirit ever young, he dared to make experiments with his life, and follow unflinchingly wherever truth might lead. Always eager for fresh experiences, his whole life was a glorification of the Spirit of Man, questing eternally to seek light in the depths of primeval dark, and to create out of chaos the beauty and order of the universe. In the India of alien communities, torn by the conflict of warring cultures, and at the parting of ways between the old and the new, Rammohun had the vision and the courage to see the greater unity enveloping all apparent clash, the expanse of personality to accommodate the old and the new, and the energy of spirit to comprehend the diverse elements in one final synthesis. He was the first citizen in the India of Akbar's dreams.

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Prof. Kshiti Mohan Sen, M.A.

on

যোগক্ষেত্র ভারতের পূর্ণ সাধক রামমোহন

(Harmony, the Message of India through the Ages, and its Fulfilment in Rammohun)

আজ তিন দিন নানা দিগ্‌দেশের জ্ঞানী গুণী পণ্ডিতের দল দেখাইলেন যে, প্রত্যেক ক্ষেত্রেই রামমোহনের গভীরতার তল মেলে না। এমন অবস্থায় সবার পরে দাঁড়াইয়া নূতন আর আমি কি বলিব?

তাঁহার সার্ব্বভৌম মহত্ত্ব অনির্ব্বচনীয়, অতুলনীয়। কিন্তু ইহাতেই কি সব বলা হইল? দেশে দেশে কালে কালে মানব-সাধনার ধারা একটি জীবন্ত প্রবাহ। ইহার মধ্যে যাহা-কিছু আনিয়া বসাইয়া দেওয়া চলে না। আমাদের দেহের মধ্যে কত সহজে সব বড় বড় অস্থি ও পেশী আছে,—তাহারা দেহের সঙ্গে প্রাণযোগে যুক্ত বলিয়া। কিন্তু এই দেহেই অযুক্ত একটি সূচীর প্রবেশও দুঃসহ। তাই প্রশ্ন হইতেছে, রামমোহন কি ভারতের পূর্ব্বাপর সাধনার নিত্য ধারার সঙ্গে আন্তরিক প্রাণযোগে যুক্ত, না, তিনি অকারণে বাহির হইতে আপতিত একটি আকস্মিক উপদ্রব মাত্র?

কালের দিক দিয়া দেখি, তাঁহার পর ভারতের ইতিহাস এক শতাব্দীর সাধনা শেষ করিল, তবু তিনি আজও আমাদের ছাড়াইয়া এত আগে আছেন যে, কি আমাদের চিন্তা, কি আমাদের কর্ম্ম, তাঁহার সম্যক্ নাগাল পায় না। তবে কি রামমোহনের দেশ ও কালের সঙ্গে তাঁহার যথার্থ যোগ নাই? স্থূল দৃষ্টিতে তাহাই মনে হয়, অথচ মর্ম্মদৃষ্টিতে দেখিলে দেখা যায়, তাঁহার যোগই গভীরতম, নিত্য ও শাশ্বত।

যে মাহাত্ম্য পারিপার্শ্বিক ক্ষুদ্র মাপকে অতিমাত্রায় অতিক্রম করিয়া যায়, তাহার বহু দুঃখ। তাহার একটি চমৎকার দৃষ্টান্ত পাই ভক্ত তুলসীদাসের রামায়ণে। হনুমান লঙ্কাপুরীতে রাক্ষসদলের মধ্যে ভক্ত ও ভাবুক বিভীষণের ভক্তি ও মাহাত্ম্যের পরিচয় পাইয়া বলিলেন, "এ কিরূপ? তোমার চারিদিকে দেখিতেছি শুধু দংশনপটু রাক্ষসের দল। তার মধ্যে তোমাকে দেখিতেছি একলা একজন যথার্থ রসজ্ঞ, কৃতজ্ঞ ও অন্তরের আনন্দ প্রকাশে উন্মুখ। এ কি আশ্চর্য্য!" তখন কবিই উত্তরটি যোগাইয়া দিতেছেন, "এও সেই বিধাতার লীলা,—যিনি চতুর্দ্দিকে দংশন-মাত্র-নিপুণ বত্রিশটি দন্তের দ্বারা পরিবৃত করিয়া একটি মাত্র রসজ্ঞ ও সেই আনন্দ প্রকাশশীল জিহ্বাকে সর্ব্বত্র দিয়াছেন রাখিয়া! তেমনি চতুর্দ্দিকে রাক্ষসকুলের মধ্যে ভক্ত বিভীষণের অবস্থিতি।"

যে সব মহাপুরুষকে ভগবান মানব-সাধনার যুগগুরু করিয়া পাঠান, তাঁহাদের প্রতি বিধাতার এই অলঙ্ঘ্য কঠোর আশীর্ব্বাদ। এই দুঃখের

মূল্যেই মহাপুরুষেরা তাঁহাদের মাহাত্ম্য লাভ করেন,—যেমন দগ্ধ হইয়া দীপ-পায় তার আলোকের আশীর্ব্বাদ। রামমোহনের জীবনেও ইহাই ঘটিয়াছে। চারিদিকের দুঃখজালের মধ্যে এই যুগের মহাগুরু তাঁহার জীবন গিয়াছেন কাটাইয়া; সে দুঃখজালের আজই কি অবসান হইয়াছে?

রামমোহন প্রচলিত বহু প্রথা ও বস্তুর বিরুদ্ধে যুদ্ধ করিয়াছেন। এ কাজ তো তাঁহার পূর্ব্ববর্ত্তী বহু সাধক ভক্ত জন, এমন কি বড় বড় স্মৃতিকার ও নিবন্ধকারেরাও করিয়াছেন। তাহাতে কিছু আসে যায় না। কারণ, তাঁহারা তখন তিরস্কৃত হইলেও পরে পুরস্কৃত হইয়াছেন। মোট কথা, তখন সমাজের মধ্যে জীবন ছিল, কাজেই যুদ্ধ করিবার সাহসও ছিল। আজ জীবন নাই, তাই সে সাহসও গিয়াছে। অশ্বমেধের ঘোড়া শক্তিতে ও প্রাণে ছিল জীবন্ত, তাই বিপথেও মাঝে মাঝে সে চলিত। তাহাতে বিস্তর যুদ্ধও হইত, তবু সেই ঘোড়া ছাড়া যজ্ঞ চলিত না। রথের যে কাঠের ঘোড়া, তাহার তো সে সব বালাই নাই, তবু তাহা যজ্ঞের অযোগ্য। জাতীয় জীবনযজ্ঞে যখন কাপুরুষের দল বিপদ এড়াইতে গিয়া কাঠের ঘোড়ায় চায় কাজ চালাইতে, তখন দারুণ দুর্দ্দিন। সেই দুর্দ্দিনের অবসান ঘটে মহাপুরুষদের প্রচণ্ড আঘাতে। রামমোহনকেও তাই প্রচণ্ড আঘাত করিতে হইয়াছে; তিনি দুঃখ দিয়াছেন ও দুঃখ পাইয়াছেন। তিনি যে মহাপুরুষ!

তবু আজিকার দিনে এ প্রশ্ন আসিবেই যে, হউন তিনি মহাপুরুষ, তবু রামমোহনের সঙ্গে ভারতের সাধনার ইতিহাসে পূর্ব্ব-পরের জীবন্ত কোন সংযোগ আছে কি না? তিনি কি তাঁহার পূর্ব্ববর্ত্তী সমস্ত ভারতীয় সাধনার পরিপূর্ণতা?

দেখিয়াছি, বড় বড় নদীর পথে নূতন নূতন মোহানায় আসিয়া পৌঁছিলে, জাহাজে নূতন পরিচালকের (pilot) প্রয়োজন হয়। অজানা অচেনা প্রবল নদীর সন্ধিস্থলে জাহাজ যদি কাঁচা হাতে থাকে, তবে ভরাডুবির বিপদ। ভারতের ইতিহাসেও তেমনি দেখিয়াছি, যখন জাতির সঙ্গে জাতির, সভ্যতার সঙ্গে সভ্যতার, ধর্ম্ম ও 'কাল্‌চার' (culture)এর সঙ্গে ধর্ম্ম ও 'কাল্‌চারের' দেখা হইয়াছে, অথচ ভাল করিয়া যোগ স্থাপন হয় নাই, তখন সেই সেই উত্তাল তরঙ্গময় মোহানায় এক এক জন যুগগুরু আসিয়া যোগ স্থাপন করিয়া দিয়া গিয়াছেন। রবীন্দ্রনাথ তাঁর 'ভারত-ইতিহাসের ধারায়' এই সত্যটি চমৎকার করিয়া দেখাইয়াছেন। এই কারণেই তো রাম, কৃষ্ণ, মহাবীর, বুদ্ধ প্রভৃতি এই দেশে এক এক জন যুগগুরু।...

তার পর ঘটিল হিন্দু-মুসলমানের সাক্ষাৎ। বিরুদ্ধতায় বিরুদ্ধতায় সঙ্ঘর্ষে সঙ্ঘর্ষে কি প্রচণ্ড সেই মিলনভূমি! তখনই বিধাতা পাঠাইতে আরম্ভ করিলেন ঐক্যের ও যোগের সুর মহাগুরু। কবীর, নানক, দাদূ, রজ্জব প্রভৃতি দলে দলে আসিলেন; শাহ ইনায়ৎ, শাহ লতীফ প্রভৃতি আসিতে লাগিলেন। ক্রমে শিবনারায়ণ, বুল্লে শাহ, প্রাণনাথ, পল্‌টু শাহ প্রভৃতি প্রায়

দুই শত সাধক আসিলেন। তাঁহারা প্রত্যেকেই এক এক জন মহাপুরুষ। যে ঐক্য বিধাতা চাহেন, তাহা পূর্ণ হয় না,—আর, দলে দলে তিনি পাঠাইয়া দেন তাঁহার সব আপন ভক্ত বীরকে। এমন করিয়া গেল রামমোহনের পূর্ব্ব ভারতের অবস্থা। তার পর আসিলেন রামমোহন।

রামমোহনের যুগে কি শুধু হিন্দু-মুসলমানের মিলন? কি প্রচণ্ড শক্তি লইয়া আসিল য়ুরোপ! পাশ্চাত্য বিজ্ঞান, সাহিত্য, শিক্ষা, 'কাল্‌চার' ও ধর্ম্মের বন্যা আসিয়া উপস্থিত। সে এক বিরাট ব্যাপার! ইহার উপযুক্ত পরিচালক (pilot) তো চাই। ভগবান যোগ্য সন্ধিক্ষণে যোগ্য যুগগুরু পাঠাইলেন তাঁহার বীর ভক্ত রামমোহনকে।

পুরাতন সাধকদের ধারা ভারতে রামমোহনের সময় পর্য্যন্ত আসিয়া ঠেকিয়াছে। সেই একই কালে দেখি, মধ্য যুগের বোধ হয় শেষ দুই জন মহাপুরুষ ভারতের অন্য স্থানে তাঁহাদের সাধনা চালাইয়াছেন। তাঁহাদের মধ্যে এক জনের নাম দেধরাজ। পাঞ্জাব ও রাজপুতনার মাঝখানে নারনৌল জেলায় ধারসু গ্রামে ১৭৭১ খৃষ্টাব্দে অর্থাৎ রামমোহনের জন্মের ঠিক এক বৎসর পূর্ব্বে তাঁহার জন্ম। তাঁহার মৃত্যু রামমোহনের মৃত্যুর পরে। রামমোহন তাঁহার বিষয় কিছুই জানিয়া যাইতে পারেন নাই।—আর এক জন পল্‌টু সাহেব। তিনি আর কিছু দিন আগেকার লোক। তাঁহার কথা পরে বলা হইবে।

দেধরাজ ব্রাহ্মণ। মধ্য যুগের মহাপুরুষেরা প্রায় সবাই নীচকুলসম্ভূত। এই দেধরাজ ও তুলসীদাস হাথরসী প্রভৃতি দুই এক জন ছাড়া ব্রাহ্মণ বড় একটা দেখা যায় না। ইঁহার পিতার নাম পূরণ শর্ম্মা।

আপন গ্রামে কিছু লেখাপড়া করিয়া ইনি চাকুরীর চেষ্টায় আগ্রায় আসেন। মাধবজী সিন্ধিয়া তখন রাজা। দেওয়ান ধরমদাসের অধীনে তিনি একটি চাকুরী পাইলেন। কিন্তু চাকুরীর পথে উন্নতি লাভ করার জন্য ভগবান তাঁহাকে পাঠান নাই। তিনি হিন্দু ও মুসলমান সাধকদের সঙ্গে গভীর ভাবে মিশিতে লাগিলেন। তাঁহার মতামতের জন্য তাঁহার চাকুরী ছাড়িতে হইল। তেত্রিশ বৎসর বয়সে অর্থাৎ ১৮০৪ খৃষ্টাব্দে তিনি খোলাখুলি ভাবে তাঁহার স্বাধীন উদার ধর্ম্মমত প্রচার করিতে লাগিলেন।

শুধু ধর্ম্মসাধনার প্রণালী দিয়া দেখিতে গেলে অনেক বিষয়ে তিনি রামমোহন হইতেও আধুনিক। যথা:—

(ক) জাতিভেদের বিরুদ্ধে তিনি প্রবল ভাবে প্রচার করেন। তখনও দেধরাজ অবিবাহিত ছিলেন। লোকে যখন বলিল, "নিজে তাহার দৃষ্টান্ত দেখাও", দেধরাজ বৈশ্যের কন্যা বিবাহ করিলেন। এইরূপ প্রবল ভাবে সমাজকে উপেক্ষা রামমোহনের জীবনে দেখি না।

(খ) লোকে যখন বলিল, "বিদেশে অনেক কিছুই বলা চলে, দেশে গিয়া এই মত প্রচার কর দেখি," তখন দেধরাজ আপন দেশে গিয়াই প্রচণ্ড জোরের সহিত প্রচার করিতে লাগিলেন। জ্ঞাতি বন্ধু-বান্ধব তাঁহাকে

ত্যাগ করিলেন ও দুঃখ দিলেন। চাকুরী-ত্যাগী দরিদ্র দেধরাজ তাহাতে বিন্দুমাত্র দমেন নাই।

(গ) নারনৌলের অধিপতি নবাব নজাবত আলি তখন তাঁহার এই অহিন্দু ও অব্রাহ্মণ-জনোচিত আচরণের জন্য তাঁহাকে কারারুদ্ধ করেন। হিন্দু সমাজের রক্ষার জন্য দণ্ড দিলেন মুসলমান নবাব, ইহাই মজার কথা! প্রায় আট বৎসর কারাগারে দেধরাজ বহু দুঃখ পান, তবু তিনি বিন্দুমাত্র আপন আদর্শ সত্য হইতে টলেন নাই। তিনি বলিতেন, "মানুষের উৎপীড়নে যদি বিধাতার ব্রত হইতে ভ্রষ্ট হই, তবে আমার নিত্যকালের প্রভুর কাছে কেমন করিয়া এই পাপ মুখ দেখাইব?"

শেষে, বৎসর আটেক পরে, নানা বিপ্লবে নবাবের রাজ্য যায়-যায় হইল। রাজ্যে এমন গোলমাল লাগিল যে, এক দিন কারারক্ষক কারাগার খুলিয়া সব বন্দীকে মুক্তি দিয়া দিলেন। দেধরাজকে সাবধান করিয়া দিলেন, তিনি যেন আর ধর্ম্মপ্রচার না করেন। মুক্তি পাইয়াই দেধরাজ খেতরী জেলায় ছুরীনা গ্রামে প্রচার করিতে লাগিলেন। ক্রমে চারিদিকে তাঁহার প্রভাব বিস্তৃত হইতে লাগিল। যে নূতন ধর্ম্মমণ্ডলীটি তাঁহারা গড়িয়া তুলিলেন, তাহার মোটামুটি মত এই:—

(১) ঈশ্বর এক, অরূপ, অপ্রতিম, নিত্য, সর্ব্বব্যাপী। (২) মূর্ত্তি, প্রতীক, শিলা প্রভৃতির পূজায় ভগবানেরই অবমাননা। (৩) শাস্ত্রের ভাল অংশ শ্রদ্ধার যোগ্য হইলেও শাস্ত্র অভ্রান্ত নয়। (৪) জাতিভেদ মিথ্যা। (৫) সাধনাতে নর ও নারীর সমান অধিকার। (৬) নারীদের পরদা মানা উচিত নয়। (৭) পুরুষ ও নারী পরস্পর সব ভাই ভগ্নীর মত'। (৮) হিন্দু মুসলমান প্রভৃতি সকল ধর্ম্মই শ্রদ্ধার যোগ্য। সকল সাধনার মধ্যেই একটি ভ্রাতৃত্ব আছে। (ইহারা আপন মণ্ডলীতে সকল ধর্ম্মের উপাসককেই গ্রহণ করিতেন)। (৯) ধর্ম্মসাধনাতে চলিত ভাষাই ব্যবহার করা উচিত।

ইহাদের ধর্ম্মমন্দিরে উপাসনাতে নারীরা গান করেন; তাঁহারা প্রায়ই সুকণ্ঠ। J. W. Parry, Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengalএ ১৮৮৩ খৃষ্টাব্দে ইহাদের বিষয়ে এক প্রবন্ধ লেখেন, তাহাতেও এই মণ্ডলীর নারীদের সুকণ্ঠের খুব সুখ্যাতি করিয়াছেন।

ইহাদের নারীরা পরদা মানেন না বলিয়া তাঁহাদের 'নাঙ্গী' (নগ্ন, অর্থাৎ বে-পরদা) বলে। তাই লোকেরা উপহাস করিয়া ইহাদের পন্থকে বলিত 'নাঙ্গী পন্থ'। পরলোকগত কবি সত্যেন্দ্রনাথ নাঙ্গীপন্থের কিছু গান অনুবাদ করিয়া গিয়াছেন।

কাজেই দেখা যাইতেছে, ইহাদের মধ্যে যে সব উদার প্রণালী অবলম্বিত হইয়াছিল, তাহা রামমোহনও তাঁহার সময়ে প্রবর্ত্তিত করিতে পারেন নাই। পুরুষদের সঙ্গে নারীর উপাসনার অধিকার ব্রাহ্মসমাজে বোধ হয় প্রবর্ত্তন

করেন কেশবচন্দ্র। তিনিও পরদা দূর করেন নাই। মনে রাখিতে হইবে, যে দেশে দেধরাজের জন্ম, সেখানে পরদা প্রথার পূর্ণ প্রভাব। বাঙ্গলা দেশ হইতেও সেখানে পরদার বাঁধন বেশী।

দেধরাজ ও রামমোহন পরস্পরকে না জানিলেও সমসাময়িক। তবে কেন দেধরাজকে এই যুগের গুরু না বলিয়া রামমোহনকেই এই যুগের নেতা মহাগুরু বলিতেছি? তাহার হেতু এই, এখন সমস্যা শুধু ধর্ম্মে ও ধর্ম্মসাধনায় নয়; এখন বিরাট সমস্যা হইল প্রাচ্য ও প্রতীচ্য সাধনার যোগ সমাধান লইয়া। আমাদের শিক্ষা, দীক্ষা, 'কাল্‌চার' প্রভৃতি জীবনের সর্ব্ব অঙ্গে এই সমস্যা। ধর্ম্মকেই যে জীবনের সাধনার একমাত্র ভিত্তিভূমি না রাখিয়া, রামমোহন সে সাধনাকে জ্ঞানের ক্ষেত্রে কর্ম্মের ক্ষেত্রে ও সর্ব্ববিধ ক্ষেত্রে প্রসারিত করিয়া দিলেন, এখানেই তিনি প্রাচীন অন্ধ যুগের (medievalism) অবসান করিলেন। পূর্ব্বেই বলা হইয়াছে, আগেকার কালে কেবল হিন্দু-মুসলমান ধর্ম্মের যোগই ছিল সমস্যা। রামমোহনের সময়ে আসিয়া পড়িল য়ুরোপ, তাহার বিজ্ঞান, কর্ম্ম, শিক্ষা, সভ্যতা, 'কাল্‌চার', ধর্ম্ম প্রভৃতি লইয়া। এই মোহানা বড় বিশাল ও বিপদসঙ্কুল। এখানে পরিচালকও (pilot) চাই তদুপযুক্ত। তাই বিধাতা রামমোহনকেই এই যুগের আরম্ভ-সময়ে ভারতের সার্ব্বভৌম যুগনেতা করিয়া পাঠাইলেন।

তাই দেখিতেছি, রামমোহন ভারতে আকস্মিক নহেন। তিনি ভারতে সনাতন চিরন্তন ধারারই যুগ-গত পরিপূর্ণতা। রামমোহনকে দিয়া বিধাতা সেই ধারাকেই মুক্ত, সার্থক ও পরিপূর্ণ করিয়াছেন।

ভারতে যখন দুইটি মাত্র প্রধান সম্প্রদায়, তখন তাহাদের মিলাইতে গিয়া তখনকার যুগগুরু কবীর কহিলেন,—

কিতনো মনাউঁ পাঁর পড়ি, কিতনো মনাউঁ রোয়,
হিন্দু পূজৈ দেবতা, তুর্ক ন কাহূ হোয়।
—(কবীর, ক্ষিতিমোহন সেন, ৪র্থ খণ্ড, ১ম পৃষ্ঠা)

"কত বা বুঝাইলাম পায়ে ধরিয়া, কত বা বুঝাইলাম কাঁদিয়া; হিন্দু দেবদেবীকেই করিয়া চলিল পূজা, আর মুসলমানও হইল না কাহারও আপন।"

হিন্দূ তুর্কহি মিলিকে মানহুঁ বচন হমার।—(ঐ, ২।১০)

"হিন্দু মুসলমান উভয়ে মিলিয়া আমার বচন মানো।"

জো খোদায় মসজীদ বসতু হৈ, ঔর মুলুক কেহিকেরা?
তীরথ মূরত রাম নিবাসী, বাহর করে কো হেরা?—(ঐ, ৩।২)

"খোদা যদি মসজিদেই করেন বাস, আর সব মুলুক তবে কাহার? তীর্থে মূর্ত্তিতেই যদি রাম করেন বাস, তবে বাহির দেখে কে?"

দেখিতেছি, সাধনা আরম্ভ হইয়াছে। পরিপূর্ণতা হইবে ইহার কবে? দাদুও (১৫৪৪—১৬০৩ খৃষ্টাব্দ) বলিলেন,—

হিংদূ লাগৈ দেহুরৈ, মুসলমান মসীতি।—(দাদু, মধিকো অংগ, ৫২)

"হিন্দু লাগিয়া রহিল তাহার দেবালয়ে, মুসলমান লাগিয়া রহিল মসজিদে।"

না তহাঁ হিংদূ দেহুরা না তহাঁ তুরক মসীতি,
দাদূ আপৈ আপ হৈ, নহীঁ তহাঁ রহ রীতি।—(ঐ, ৫৩)

"না আছে সেখানে হিন্দুর দেবালয়, না আছে সেখানে মুসলমানের মসজিদ। সেখানে আপনাতে আপনি তিনি প্রতিষ্ঠিত, সেখানে নাই কোন সঙ্কীর্ণ বিধিদ্বারা বদ্ধ কোন সত্য।"

দাদূ অলহ রামকা দ্বৈ পথ তে ন্যারা,
রহিতা গুণ আ রকা, সো গুরু হমারা।—(ঐ, ৪৮)

"আল্লা ও রাম এই উভয় সম্প্রদায়ের যিনি অতীত, যিনি গুণ ও আকার-রহিত, তিনিই আমার গুরু।" কাজেই দাদূ বলেন,—

না হম হিংদূ হৌহিংগে, না হম মুসলমান।—(ঐ, ৪৬)

"না হইব আমি হিন্দু, না হইব আমি মুসলমান।"

রামমোহনের বহু পূর্ব্বে দাদূ এইরূপ ধর্ম্মের যোগানন্দে ভরপূর হইয়া শুধু যে বাণীই বলিয়া গিয়াছেন, তাহা নহে। তিনি সকল ধর্ম্মের মধ্যে যোগ দৃষ্টি ও সাধনার জন্য একটি মণ্ডলী প্রবর্ত্তিত করেন, যাহার নাম দিলেন 'ব্রহ্ম সম্প্রদায়'। পরে মাধ্বদের মধ্যে 'ব্রহ্ম সম্প্রদায়ের' কথা জানিয়া ইহার নাম দিলেন 'পরব্রহ্ম সম্প্রদায়'। (প্রবাসীতে আমার লিখিত "দাদূর ব্রহ্ম সম্প্রদায়" দ্রষ্টব্য)।

বাহিরের আচারে বিচারেই ধর্ম্মে ধর্ম্মে বিরোধ। ধর্ম্মের মর্ম্মের মধ্যে ডুবিয়া প্রবেশ করিতে পারিলে সকল ধর্ম্মেরই ভিতরের ঐক্যটি সহজে ধরা দেয়। দাদূকে যখন জিজ্ঞাসা করা হইল, নানা বিরুদ্ধ ধর্ম্মের মধ্যে কেমন করিয়া তিনি ঐক্য দেখিবেন, তখন দাদূ উত্তর করিলেন,—"আত্মার মরম দৃষ্টি দিয়া দেখিলে সকল মানবই এক, আর কায়ার দিক দিয়া দেখিলেই নানা বরণ ও অনেক।"

আত্মাকে মরম দেখিয়ে, সকল মানব এক।
কায়াকে গুণ দেখিয়ে, নানাবরণ অনেক॥

এই আধ্যাত্মিক মর্ম্মদৃষ্টিটি দিয়া ভগবান্ পাঠাইলেন তাঁহার প্রিয়পুত্র রামমোহনকে; তাই যত দুঃখই তাঁহার জীবনে ঘটুক না কেন, এই ঐক্যদৃষ্টিটি তাঁহার ছিল সাথের সাথী।

রামমোহনের মত' দাদূও এই মর্ম্মদৃষ্টির জন্য প্রভূত দুঃখ পাইয়াছেন; তাহা তাঁহার কথাতেই বুঝি। "যেদিন হইতে আমি সম্প্রদায়ের সীমা ছাড়িয়া দিলাম, সেদিন হইতে সবাই আমার উপর হইলেন রুষ্ট, কিন্তু সদ্‌গুরুর প্রসাদে আমার না তাহাতে আছে কোনো হর্ষ, না আছে কোনো শোক।"

জব-থৈ·হম নিরপখ ভয়ে, সবৈ রিসানে লোক।
সতগুরকে পরসাদ থৈ মেরে হরষ ন শোক ॥—(দাদূ, মধ্য অংগ, ৫৯)

এ কথা কি ঠিক রামমোহনের কথার মত'ই নয়? দাদূর সম্বন্ধে তাঁহার শিষ্য মহাভক্ত রজ্জবজী যে বলিয়াছেন,—

ভগবা জী ভারৈ নাহীঁ, বিভূতি লগারৈ নাহীঁ, ...
টীকা মালা মানৈ নাহীঁ, ঐসা কচ্ছু ভার হৈ ॥
তুরকৌ তৌ খোদি ডারী, হিন্দুনকী হদ্দ ছাড়ী।
—(দাদূ দয়ালজীকা ভেটকা সবৈয়া)

"এমন একটু বিশেষ ভাব ছিল তাঁহার যে, তিনি গেরুয়ার ধার ধারিতেন না, বিভূতি তিনি লাগাইতেন না, মালা তিলক তিনি মানিতেন না, মুসলমান সাম্প্রদায়িক ভেদবুদ্ধি তিনি ত্যাগ করিলেন, হিন্দুর সঙ্কীর্ণ সাম্প্রদায়িকতার তিনি ছিলেন অতীত।"

চলি সব হদ্দসৌ আয়ে বেহদ্দ, ...
পরবীন বিগ্গান হৈ ॥—(রজ্জবজী, নিহপক্ষ নিজ অংগ)

"তিনি সকল প্রকার সীমা ছাড়িয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছিলেন আসিয়া অসীমে; এক কথায়, তিনি ছিলেন প্রবীণ-বিজ্ঞান।"

দাদূ সম্বন্ধীয় এই সব কথা কি রামমোহন সম্বন্ধেও বলা যায় না? রামমোহনের সাধনা তখনই আরম্ভ হইয়া গিয়াছে; সমাপ্ত হয় নাই। দাদূর সম্বন্ধে তাঁহার শিষ্য সুন্দরদাস বলিলেন,—

দাদূ দয়াল দহ দিশি প্রগট, ঝগড়ি ঝগড়ি দ্বৈ পখ থকী।
কহি সুংদর পংথ প্রসিদ্ধ য়হ সম্প্রদায় পরব্রহ্মকী ॥—(গুরু কৃপাষ্টক, ৯)

"(হিন্দু মুসলমান দুই পক্ষ যখন বৃথা বিবাদ করিয়া হয়রান, তখন) দাদূর (সর্ব্বজনীন সাধনা) দশ দিক উদ্ভাসিত করিয়া হইল দীপ্যমান। (তিনি সঙ্কীর্ণ কোনো পথ প্রবর্ত্তিত না করিয়া) চিরপ্রসিদ্ধ সুন্দর পরব্রহ্মের সম্প্রদায় করিলেন প্রবর্ত্তিত।" এই দাদূর সম্বন্ধেই সুন্দরদাস বলিলেন—

জিনি জাতি কুল অরু বর্ণ আশ্রম কহে মিথ্যা নাম হৈ।
দাদূ দয়াল প্রসিদ্ধ সদ্‌গুরু তাহি মোর প্রণাম হৈ ॥—(গুরু উপদেশাষ্টক, ৫)

"(মানুষের সৃষ্ট কৃত্রিম) জাতি কুল বর্ণ আশ্রম প্রভৃতিকে যিনি কহিয়াছেন 'মিথ্যা নাম', সেই দাদূ দয়ালই প্রসিদ্ধ সদ্‌গুরু; তাঁহাকেই আমার নমস্কার।" এই কথাই কি রামমোহন সম্বন্ধেও প্রযোজ্য নহে? দাদূ হইলেন পূর্ব্বসাধক; পূর্ণতা দেখিলাম রামমোহনের সাধনায়।

দাদূর ভক্ত রজ্জবজী যেন রামমোহনের মত'ই জগতের সার্ব্বভৌম সত্যের সন্ধানে বসিলেন সাধনায়। লোকে বলিল, "এত বড় সার্ব্বভৌম সত্য দিয়া কি হইবে?" রজ্জব বলিলেন, "যে ঘোড়া লইয়া সর্ব্ব দেশ জয় করিয়া না আসিতে পারি, তাঁহাকে দিয়া অশ্বমেধ হয় না; যে সত্য দিয়া সকল বিশ্বকে যুক্ত করিতে না পারি, তাহাকে দিয়া সাধনা হয় না।"

সব সাঁচ মিলে সো সাঁচ হৈ, না মিলে সো ঝূঠ।
জন রজ্জব সাঁচী কহী ভাবৈ রিঝি ভাবৈ রূঠ॥

"বিশ্বের সকল সত্যের সঙ্গে যাহা মেলে, তাহাই সত্য; না হইলে তাহা ঝুঠা। রজ্জব নিজে সত্যই ইহা করিতেছেন ঘোষণা; চাই ইহাতে কেহ হউন তুষ্ট, বা হউন রুষ্ট।" এই বিশ্বসত্যকে সাময়িক ভাবে পরাস্ত করিলেও নিত্য কালের জন্য মিথ্যা ইহাকে চাপিয়া মারিতে পারে না।

সাঁচ সজা দে ঝূঠ কুঁ জুগি জুগি বারংবার,
রজ্জব ত্রাস ন কিজিয়ে, তামে ফের না ফার॥

"যুগে যুগে বার বার মিথ্যার উপরে সত্য হইবেই জয়ী। হে রজ্জব, ত্রাসের কোনো হেতু নাই, ইহার ব্যতিক্রম কখনও ঘটিবার নহে।" এই কথা কি রামমোহনের কথা নয়? এই ভাবিয়াই তো রামমোহন চিরদিন তাঁহার আদর্শকে বিশ্বসত্যের যোগে প্রতিষ্ঠিত করিতে চাহিয়াছেন।

সিন্ধুদেশের সুফী শাহ ইনায়ৎ ও শাহ লতীফ্ তো সকল সাম্প্রদায়িকতার অতীত ধর্ম্মের ভ্রাতৃত্ব উপদেশ দিয়া গেলেন। আজও তাহার সাক্ষ্য মেলে যদি কেহ শাহ লতীফের পীঠস্থান 'ভীটে' তীর্থযাত্রায় যান। সেখানে প্রতি বৃহস্পতিবার রাত্রিতে একটি অসাম্প্রদায়িক ধর্ম্মসাধনার মহোৎসব চলে।

দিল্লীর বাবরী (১৬০০এর কাছাকাছি) ছিলেন সুফী, তাঁহার শিষ্য বীরু ছিলেন হিন্দু, তাঁহার শিষ্য য়ারী শাহ ছিলেন সুফী (১৬৬৮—১৭২৫)। ইঁহাদের ধারায় কেহ হিন্দু, কেহ মুসলমান। একটুও সঙ্কীর্ণ সাম্প্রদায়িকতা ইঁহাদের ধারার মধ্যে নাই। এই ধারাতেই কেশবদাস, বুল্লা, গুলাল সাহেব প্রভৃতির পরে জগজীবন প্রবর্ত্তন করেন 'সৎনামী' সাধনা। তাহা হিন্দু মুসলমান উভয়ের কাছেই সমভাবে মুক্ত। সকল সাধনায় মৈত্রী ইঁহাদের সাধনীয়। এই ধারাতে মুসলমান গুরু আছেন, তাহা জানিয়াও ব্রাহ্মণ ভীখা আসিয়া ইহাতে যোগ দেন। ভীখার শিষ্য গোবিন্দ, তাঁহার শিষ্য পল্টু সাহেব (প্রায় ১৭৫৭—১৮২৫) রামমোহনের সঙ্গে অনেক পরিমাণে সমসাময়িক।

দেধরাজের সঙ্গে পূর্ব্বেই যে পল্টুর নামমাত্র উল্লেখ করা গিয়াছে, এখানে তাঁহার একটু সামান্য পরিচয়ও দেওয়া যাউক। পল্টু বলেন,—"নীচ জাতিকে নষ্ট করিল উচ্চ জাতিরা, এবং তাহাতে নিজেরাও হইল নষ্ট।" "যে সত্যকে দেখিয়াছে, তাহার আর দেশ বিদেশ নাই।" "প্রত্যক্ষ সত্য বড় সত্য নয়, অন্তরে দেখা সত্যই বড়।" "সত্য অন্তরে; বাহিরে খোঁজা বৃথা।" "ভগবান্ কোনো সম্প্রদায় বিশেষের সম্পত্তি নহেন।" "জাতি পংক্তির ক্ষুদ্র পরিচয় ছাড়।"—পল্টু সাহেবের বাণী রামমোহনের বাণী হইতে বিশেষ বিভিন্ন নয়।

দীন দরিদ্র সাধক ছাড়া এই ধর্ম্মযোগের ঐক্যের ভাব ভারতে কোনো কোনো দেশপতিকেও পাইয়া বসিয়াছিল। সম্রাট আকবরের "দীন ইলাহীর"র কথা খুব সম্ভব সকলেই শুনিয়াছেন; তাহার আর পুনরুল্লেখ করার প্রয়োজন নাই। আবুল ফজল, ফৈজী প্রভৃতি সকলেই সার্ব্বভৌম সত্যের ও ধর্ম্মের উপাসক ছিলেন।

আকবরের পৌত্র দারা শিকোহ্ ছিলেন একজন বড় দরের ভাব-রসিক। সকল ধর্ম্মের সমন্বয়-স্বপ্ন তিনি জীবন ভরিয়া দেখিয়াছেন। কিন্তু তিনি বিশেষ কর্ম্মপটু (practical) ছিলেন না বলিয়া তাঁহার স্বপ্নটি বাস্তবে পরিণত করিতে পারেন নাই। ইঁহার একটি চমৎকার ভাব-রসিক মণ্ডলী ছিল। ইঁহার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে সবগুলিই নষ্ট হইয়া গেল।

দারা শিকোহের ভাবের ভাবুক একজন ছিলেন শিবনারায়ণ। ১৭১০ খৃষ্টাব্দের কাছাকাছি তাঁহার জন্ম। বালিয়া জেলায় তাঁহার স্থান। ইনি ছিলেন একজন বিশুদ্ধ একেশ্বরবাদী। ইঁহারাও পৌত্তলিকতা ও জাতিভেদ মানেন না। হিন্দু মুসলমান সকল ধর্ম্মের লোকই ইঁহাদের মণ্ডলীতে আসিতে পারে। ইঁহাদের দলে খৃষ্টানও গৃহীত হইয়াছেন।

হিন্দু মুসলমান উভয় সাধনার মধ্যে যোগস্থাপন চেষ্টায় আর এক জন বড় লোকের নাম করা যায়। তিনি প্রাণনাথ। ১৭০০—১৭৫০ মধ্যে তিনি জীবিত ছিলেন। সর্ব্বধর্ম্মের মৈত্রী ইঁহাদের লক্ষ্য। ইঁহাদের মধ্যে হিন্দু মুসলমান উভয় দলের লোকই একত্র বসিয়া পংক্তিভোজন করেন।

বুল্লে শাহ্ নামে একজন মহাপুরুষ ভারতের সাধনায় আকৃষ্ট হইয়া কন্‌ষ্টান্টিনোপ্‌ল্ হইতে এদেশে আসিয়া পাঞ্জাব কস্থরে বাস করেন। ১৭০৩ খৃষ্টাব্দে তাঁহার জন্ম। তাঁহার বাণী যেমন শক্তিশালী তেমনি উদার। হিন্দু মুসলমান কোনো সম্প্রদায়ের গণ্ডী তাঁহাকে বাঁধিতে পারে নাই।

এই ভাবের দুই শতাধিক সাধকের পর এই যুগের প্রারম্ভে আসিলেন রামমোহন। ভারতের জন্য বিশেষ একটি ঐক্যের ও সমন্বয়ের সাধনা বিধাতার মনে আছে। তাই যত দিনে ইহা পূর্ণ না হইবে, তত দিন তিনি তাঁহার ভক্তের দল ক্রমাগত পাঠাইতে থাকিবেন। তাই এত অনৈক্য-বিড়ম্বিত, এত ভেদবাদ-দূষিত এই দেশে ক্রমাগতই আসিয়াছেন যত ঐক্যের ও অভেদের গুরু। এই যেন এক পরম দুর্ভেদ্য রহস্য। এই যে ধারা চলিয়া আসিয়াছে, এই যুগে তাহার সম্মুখে বিধাতা রাখিলেন তাঁহার যোগ্য সেবক রামমোহনকে। তিনিই এই যুগকে ধন্য ও পূর্ণ করিলেন।

সকল ধর্ম্মের মধ্যে যোগস্থাপনই রামমোহনের অতি মহৎ সাধনা হইলেও তাহা তাঁহার একমাত্র কাজ নয়। কেহ কেহ মনে করেন, কেবল মাত্র ধর্ম্মেই প্রধান লক্ষ্য,—ইহা ছিল মধ্য যুগের লক্ষণ। রামমোহন সেই মধ্য যুগের সঙ্কীর্ণতা (medievalism) সম্পূর্ণ অপগত করিলেন। জ্ঞানে-বিজ্ঞানে, শিক্ষায়-দীক্ষায়, রাজনীতিতে-সমাজনীতিতে, জীবনের সর্ব্বক্ষেত্রে তাঁহার সমান উৎসাহ। শিক্ষার আদর্শও তাঁহার সার্ব্বভৌম।

এ ক্ষেত্রেও তিনি ভারতে সৃষ্টিছাড়া নহেন। ১৬০০ খৃষ্টাব্দের ভক্ত-শিরোমণি রজ্জব জীবনের সাধনাতে আদর্শকে এইরূপ সার্ব্বভৌম ভাবেই দেখাইয়াছেন। রজ্জব বলিয়াছেন, জীবনের সকল ভাবকে সমান ভাবে সামঞ্জস্য রক্ষা করিয়া সাধনা করিতে হইবে। কোনো একটি ভাবের প্রতি

বেশী লক্ষ্য দিতে গিয়া অন্য ভাবের প্রতি অনাদর যথার্থ সাধনা নহে। তাই রজ্জব বলেন, "দয়া প্রবৃত্তির উৎকর্ষের জন্য মানুষ যে মনুষ্যত্বকে বধ করে, তাহাতেও একটা ঘাতকবৃত্তি আছে। ঘাতক ধর্ম্ম তো কোনো ধর্ম্ম নহে। এক ভাবকে হত্যা করিয়া অন্য ভাবকে উৎকর্ষ দান হইল এক ভাইকে মারিয়া অন্য ভাইকে পোষণ করা। বুঝিয়া দেখিলে ইহাতে বড় দুঃখ হয়। বাঘ বিড়াল যেমন এক বাচ্চা মারিয়া অন্য বাচ্চাকে খাওয়ায়, তেমনি এক ভাবকে মারিয়া অন্য ভাবকে যে সাধনা, বলিহারি সেই সাধনায়!"

দয়া লাগি নরপন্ বধৈ, ঘাতক-ধরম নন কোয়।
ভাইকুঁ হতি ভাইকুঁ পোষৈ, সমঝে বহু দুখ হোয়॥
বচ্চা মারী বচ্চ খিলারৈ জৈসে বাঘ বিলারী,
ভাবকুঁ মারী ভাবকুঁ সাধৈ, সাধনকী বলিহারী!

ঠিক এখনকার যুগের মতই রজ্জব ব্যক্তিত্ব ও ব্যক্তিত্বের উৎকর্ষে যে বৈচিত্র্য, তাহার প্রতি একান্ত শ্রদ্ধার ভাব পোষণ করিতেন। রজ্জব বলেন, "সেই বিশ্বম্ভর চৌরাশি লক্ষ সম্প্রদায় সৃষ্টি করিয়া বৈচিত্র্য করিলেন রচনা। জনে জনেই তাঁর বৈচিত্র্যের লীলা।"

চৌরাসী লক্ষ সম্প্রদা করি বিশ্বম্ভর সোয়,
রজ্জব, বৈচিত্র্য রচিয়া, জন জন বৈচিত্র্য হোয়।

অথচ রজ্জবজী ভক্তজনের মণ্ডলীতে নানা উৎসবে ও ভক্ত-জন-সমাগমে আগ্রহের সহিত সর্ব্বদা যোগ দিতেন। লোকে প্রশ্ন করিল, "ব্যক্তিত্ব ও ব্যক্তিত্ব-গত বৈচিত্র্যই যদি মান, তবে আর মণ্ডলীতে তোমার আস্থার ও যোগদানের হেতু কি?" রজ্জবজী বলিলেন, "প্রতি বিন্দু জলের মধ্যেই সাগরের প্রতি ব্যাকুল প্রেম নিহিত আছে। তবু একলা একটি বিন্দুর মধ্যে যে প্রেম, তাহা মহা ব্যর্থতা। তাই একটি বিন্দু ডাকে অন্য সব বিন্দুকে; কারণ, সকল বিন্দু মিলিলেই মিলে গতি। একেলা বিন্দু তো পৌঁছিতেই পারে না; পথের ব্যবধানই তার সবটুকু জীবন ও শক্তিকে ফেলে শুষ্ক করিয়া! সকল বিন্দু যদি হইতে পারে মিলিত, তবে বাধা-স্বরূপ সেই পথকেই করিয়া দিতে পারে তাহাদের সম্মিলিত প্রাণ-ঐশ্বর্য্যে প্লাবিত। হে প্রভু, তোমার দয়াতেই তবে তোমার মিলে দরশ!"

প্রীত অকেলী ব্যর্থ, মহাসিংধ-বিরহী দিল হোয়।
বুংদ পুকারৈ বুংদ কো, গতি মৈলৈ সংজোয়॥
অকেল বুংদ পহুঁচৈ নহী, সুখৈ পংথ জীব জোর।
পংথ ভর ভরে এক হোয়, দরস দয়া প্রভু তোর॥

এই বাণীটি মনে মনে ভাল করিয়া প্রণিধান করিলেই বুঝিতে পারা যায়, কেন ব্যক্তিত্বের বৈচিত্র্য স্বীকার করিয়াও রামমোহন একটি অন্তরঙ্গ সাধনার মণ্ডলী গড়িতে চাহিয়াছিলেন। যে যুগে রামমোহনের কাজ, তিনি সে যুগ ছাড়াইয়া অনেক আগে অগ্রসর। এই সব বিরুদ্ধতার দুঃখ তো তাঁহার জীবন ভরিয়াই ছিল।

ধর্ম্ম শুধু জপ তপ ধ্যান ধারণায়, ব্রতে উপবাসে,—এই ভাবই হইল য়ুরোপে যাহাকে বলে 'medievalism,' অর্থাৎ অতীতের অন্ধ যুগ। এখন য়ুরোপে মহামনীষীরা বলিতেছেন, প্রত্যেককেই কিছু সৃষ্টি করিতে হইবে। রামমোহনও তাঁহার সময়ে জীবনের সকল ক্ষেত্রে কিছু না কিছু নূতন সৃষ্টি করিয়া গিয়াছেন।

এই উদার সাধনারও আদি প্রেরণা পাই আমরা রজ্জবজীর বাণীতে। রজ্জব বলেন, "এই জগতে আসিয়া যে একটি রূপ দেখিয়াছি, তাহা তখনই জানা যাইবে সত্য বলিয়া, যখন কিছু যাইবে রচনা করা। না-দেখে না-শোনে এমন করিয়াই তো বহিয়া যাইতেছে জীবনের সব মুহূর্ত্ত। নানা রীতিতেই হইতে পারে সেই রচনা। হয়তো কেহ বর্ণ দিয়া করে সৃষ্টি, কেহ বা করে রেখা দিয়া; কেহ বা রচে বাণীতে, কেহ বা রচে ধ্বনিতে (সুরেতে); রীতি ভিন্ন হইলেও বস্তু সেই একই,—অর্থাৎ সৃষ্টি সৃষ্টিই। কোনো সাধক জন হয়তো বা ধ্যানে পরিপূর্ণ হইয়া আপন জীবনের মধ্যেই পূর্ণ করে তার রচনা। কিন্তু কোন প্রকারেই যে কিছুই করিল না সৃষ্টি, সে তো পৃথিবীতে আসিয়া কিছুই দেখে নাই।"

রূপ লখ্যা তৌ জানিয়ে, জৈ কছু রচি সকায়।
লখৈ নহী, শুনৈ নহী, ঐসহী মহূরত জায়ি।
রীত রীত মেঁ রচি সকে লই বরণ অরু রেখ।
কৈ রচে বাণী ধুনীসো; রীত ভিন্ন, বস্তু এক॥
ধ্যান ভরি কোই সংতজন রচৈ জীবন মাহি।
কোই রীত কছু না রচ্যা, সোতো লখ্যাহি নাহী।

ধর্ম্মসাধনায় এমন সব উদার মত যেখানে মেলে, তেমন বেদশাস্ত্র পাই কোথায়? লোকে বলে, তিনটি বেদ, সেই তিনটি বেদই সকলের চারিদিক আছে ঘিরিয়া। তাই রজ্জব বলিলেন, "সকল বসুধাই হইল বেদ, সমগ্র সৃষ্টিই হইল কোরান। কতকগুলি লিপির সমষ্টি দপ্তরকেই বিশ্ব সংসার মনে করিয়া পণ্ডিত কাজীরাই তো লইয়া যান্ ব্যর্থতার পথে, ও দুঃখ দেন। সৃষ্টিই হইল যথার্থ শাস্ত্র, বেত্তামাত্রই ইহার দিবেন সাক্ষ্য। হে রজ্জব, বৃথা কাগজ কি পড়? বিশ্বেই তো নিত্য তাজা জ্ঞান।" (প্রথম বেদ)

রজ্জব বসুধা বেদ সব, কুল আলম কুরান।
পণ্ডিত কাজী বৈথড়ৈ, দফ্তর দুনিয়া জান॥
সৃষ্টি শাস্তর হৈ সহী, বেত্তা করে বাখান।
রজ্জব কাগজ ক্যা পঢ়ৈ, নিতহী তাজা ন্যান॥

"লিখিবার পত্র হইল সাধকের অন্তর। তাহার মধ্যে প্রাণ অক্ষরে নিত্য চলিয়াছে লেখা। এই অন্তর বেদ ক্বচিৎই কেহ দেখে পড়িয়া, অন্তরের মর্ম্ম শব্দ শুনিয়াও শোনে না কানে।" (দ্বিতীয় বেদ)

সাধনহারকী অংতর কাগদ, প্রাণ অক্ষর মাহিঁ।
য়হ পুস্তক কোউ বিরলা বাঁচে, মর্ম্ম শব্দ ন সুনাহিঁ॥

"কোটি মানব-প্রাণের ব্রহ্মাণ্ডে, অর্থাৎ মানবের (humanity) ইতিহাসের মহাকাল-প্রাঙ্গণে, অনন্ত বেদ ঝলমল করিয়া দীপ্যমান। বাহিরে সব কৃত্রিম আলো নিবাইয়া দিলে তবে মরমী জন পায় তার মরম।" (তৃতীয় বেদ)

প্রাণ কোটি ব্রহ্মাণ্ড মেঁ ঝলকে অনংত বেদ।
বাহরা জোত বুঝায়কে ভেদী পারৈ ভেদ॥

কেন বৃথা আপন আপন সঙ্কীর্ণ সাম্প্রদায়িক শাস্ত্র লইয়া ঝগড়া করিয়া মরা? তাই রজ্জব বলিতেছেন, "হে হিন্দু-মুসলমান, প্রাণ-পুস্তক দেখ পড়িয়া। সকলের মধ্যে দেখিবে, একই বিদ্যা। যে ইহা পড়িয়া দেখিল, সেই তো পণ্ডিত-প্রাণ! মৃত কাগজে যে মৃত অক্ষর, তাহার পাঠক মিলে অনেক! ঘটে ঘটে প্রতি মানবের অন্তরে অন্তরে যে প্রাণময় বেদ, হে রজ্জব, তাহা একবার দেখ পড়িয়া।"

প্রাণ-পুস্তক দেখহ হিন্দু মুসলমান,
সব মেঁ বিদ্যা এক হী, পঢ়ৈ সুপংডিত প্রাণ।
কাগদ মুরা অক্ষরৈ পাঠক মিলে অনেক,
বেদ ঘট ঘট প্রাণময়ী, রজ্জব বাঁচকে দেখ।

রামমোহন তো তাঁহার সকল শাস্ত্রবিচারে, সকল বেদবেদান্ত ভাষ্যে এই প্রাণবেদই খুঁজিয়া বেড়াইতেছেন। রামমোহন যদিও কোথাও সত্য স্থাপনের ভারতীয় পুরাতন পথ ত্যাগ করেন নাই, যদিও তিনি তাঁহার নিজের বক্তব্য বিষয় 'প্রস্থানত্রয়' দিয়াও সিদ্ধ করিলেন, তবু তাঁহার প্রাণ চাহিয়াছে এই প্রাণবেদেরই মহাসত্য। যদি কেহ এই জন্য রামমোহনকে বলেন, তিনি ভারতীয় সাধকদের পদ্ধতি হইতে ভ্রষ্ট হইয়াছেন, তখনই দেখা যায়, সাড়ে তিন শত বৎসর পূর্ব্বকার ভারতীয় সাধক রজ্জবজী এই কথাই বলিয়া গিয়াছেন। রামমোহনের মধ্যে পুরাতন এই সব মহা সাধকেরই পরিপূর্ণ পরিসমাপ্তি (fulfilment)।

মহাকালের মানবসাধনার বিরাট ক্ষেত্রে চাহিয়া দেখি, রামমোহনের পশ্চাতে ভারতের অগণিত সাধু ভক্ত মহাত্মাদের সকল প্রাণ-মন-আত্মার মহাযোগ। ভারতের অগণিত সাধু ভক্ত সাধকের পরম পরিপূর্ণতা এই যুগে রামমোহনেরই মধ্যে। ভারতের সাধনায় নিত্যকালের মহাসত্যকে তিনি এই যুগের মত' করিয়া উদার ও সার্ব্বভৌম করিয়া দিলেন। যাহা কেবল মাত্র ধর্ম্মের সাধনাতে আবদ্ধ ছিল, তাহাকে সমগ্র জীবনে প্রসারিত করিয়া দিলেন। অথবা ধর্ম্মকেই তিনি জীবনের সর্ব্বক্ষেত্রে করিলেন বিস্তৃত।

তবু রামমোহন তাঁহার আপন পরিমিত যুগের মধ্যে কি দুঃখই পাইয়া গিয়াছেন! সকল ভারতের সর্ব্বকালের সকল সাধকজনের তপস্যা ও সত্যের জন্য যুদ্ধ, নিরন্তর একাই তিনি করিয়া গিয়াছেন। সাহিত্য, রাজনীতি, সমাজনীতি, জ্ঞান-বিজ্ঞান, শিক্ষা, 'কাল্‌চার', ধর্ম্ম,—সর্ব্ব ক্ষেত্রে তিনি একাই গিয়াছেন যুদ্ধ করিয়া। একা বরং ভাল; যাহাদের জন্য তাঁহার এই নিরন্তর যুদ্ধ, তাহারাই নির্ম্মম ভাবে দণ্ডে দণ্ডে নিরন্তর তাঁহাকে পিছন দিক

হইতে আঘাত করিয়াছে, ও আঘাত করিবার প্রত্যেকটি সুযোগ পরম আগ্রহে পরম আনন্দে খুঁজিয়া বেড়াইয়াছে। আজও কি সেই নীচ ও কাপুরুষজনোচিত আঘাতের অবসান হইয়াছে?—কিন্তু আঘাত হইতেও সাঙ্ঘাতিক হইল উপেক্ষা ও ঔদাসীন্য। বিরুদ্ধতা বরং ভাল।

মহাপ্রভু চৈতন্যের অনেক পরে নরোত্তমের জন্ম। বাউলদের মতে মহাপ্রভু নাকি রামকেলির পথে যাইতে এক বৃক্ষতলে বসিয়া বিশ্রাম করেন। উঠিবার সময়ে তিনি তিন বার 'নরোত্তম, নরোত্তম' বলিয়া উঠিয়া যান। নরোত্তম রাজা হইবেন, এমন সময়ে এক দিন বেড়াইতে গিয়া বৃক্ষতলে উপবিষ্ট এক বৃদ্ধের মুখে শোনেন, সেই বৃক্ষতলে মহাপ্রভু তিন বার 'নরোত্তম' বলিয়া গিয়াছেন। তখনই নরোত্তম বলিলেন, "প্রভু তো আমার জন্য বহু পূর্ব্বেই তাঁহার ডাক থুইয়া গিয়াছেন। এত কাল সেই ডাক আকাশে নিরবলম্ব হইয়া ভাসিয়া বেড়াইয়াছে। কি দুঃখের কথা! আজ আমার জীবনে তাহাকে গ্রহণ করিয়া তাহাকে প্রতিষ্ঠিত করিব।" তাই বাউলদের মধ্যে একটি কথা আছে, "ডাক থুইয়া যাওয়া।"

মহাপুরুষেরা নাকি উত্তর কালের জন্য ডাক রাখিয়া যান; তাহাই মন্ত্র। শিমুলের বীজ যেমন তাহার ক্ষেত্র খুঁজিয়া আকাশে সর্ব্বত্র ভাসিয়া বেড়ায়, মন্ত্র তেমনি যোগ্য সাধকের চিত্তে তাহার আপন স্থান প্রতীক্ষা করিয়া হয় তো যুগের পর যুগ ভাসিতে থাকে। যিনি ইহাকে গ্রহণ করিয়া আপন জীবনে প্রতিষ্ঠিত করেন, তিনি মন্ত্রকেও সার্থক করেন, আপনাকেও ধন্য করেন। আকাশের নিরবলম্ব নিরাকার বীজ তাহার যোগ্য ক্ষেত্র পাইলেই দিনে দিনে তাহার অন্তরস্থিত ঐশ্বর্য্য বিকশিত প্রকটিত করিয়া চলে। ইহাই তো আসল মন্ত্র। এই মন্ত্র কি মুখে উচ্চারণ করা যায়? যে সাধক আকাশ হইতে জীবনে ইহাকে গ্রহণ করিতে পারিল, সেই তো সিদ্ধার্থ। তাই তো বাউলের গান—

মন্ত্র ভাসে সাধন-আকাশে!
মন্ত্র কি কেউ বল্‌তে পারে এই মুখের ভাষে?
সে অদেখা চীজ, নিজধারা বীজ, ভুঁই পাইলে নিজ স্বরূপ প্রকাশে।
যদি না মেলে ঠাঁই, শোক তাথে নাই, (মন্ত্র) রাইখা যা তুই পরম বিশ্বাসে।
তার যে নাইরে মরণ, ভয় অকারণ, যুগ যুগান্ত অলখ নিবাসে।
যদি সে মাথার উপর পায় সে নিজ আকাশ,
তার আধার-মূলে যদি খুলে অতল রস নিবাস,
তখন রূপ আর অরূপ সম্‌রস রূপ, তখন মন্ত্র স্বরূপে ভাসে।
(তখন শিব আর শক্তি সমে মুক্তি, এক রসে তার স্বরূপ প্রকাশে)।

যুগগুরু রামমোহনও বড় আগে আসিয়াছিলেন। তখন ক্ষেত্র কই? তাই তাঁহার মহামন্ত্র, এই যুগের ডাক, তিনি থুইয়া গিয়াছেন। ক্ষেত্রের অভাবে নিরবলম্ব সেই বীজ আজও আকাশে ভাসিয়া বেড়াইতেছে। মহর্ষি তাঁহার জীবনে দেখাইয়া গিয়াছেন, আকাশে ভাসা বীজ জীবনে লইলে কি হয়।

তাহাতেও এই যুগের মহা বীজমন্ত্র নিঃশেষ হয় নাই। বীজমন্ত্রে এই যুগের সাধন-আকাশ ভরিয়া আছে। কতকাল তাহা নিরবলম্ব রাখিব? আজ উৎসব উৎসবই নয়, যদি আমাদের জীবনে এই সব জীবন্ত বীজমন্ত্রকে আশ্রয় দিতে না পারি। কিন্তু সে সাধনার জন্য দীর্ঘকালের তপস্যা, জন্মভরা তপশ্চরণ চাই। ক্ষণস্থায়ী উত্তেজনার মধ্যে তাহাকে প্রতিষ্ঠিত করিতে গেলে তাহার অপমান।

আজ জীবনে সেই বীজমন্ত্র গ্রহণের দিন, মহা দীক্ষার শুভ মুহূর্ত্ত। তাই ভক্তিতে শ্রদ্ধায় আমাদের চিত্ত প্রণত হউক। তবেই আমাদের এই মহামহোৎসবকে পূর্ণ করিবার বিপুল প্রয়াস সার্থক হইবে।

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Rabindranath Tagore

Concluding Speech of the Centenary Celebrations.

রামমোহনের মতো প্রাণবান্ হও

(Be full of life like Rammohun)

আজ যে সভার শেষ দিনে আমাকে পুনশ্চ বল্‌বার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হয়েছে, তার জন্য আপনাদের কাছে ক্ষমা প্রার্থনা কর্‌চি। কারণ, এ কথা গোপন রাখ্‌লে চল্‌বে না যে, আমিও আমার শতবার্ষিকীর অতি নিকটে। আমার শক্তি-ভাণ্ডার দিন দিন শেষ হ'য়ে যাচ্চে। আমার ভক্তির সীমা নেই রামমোহন রায়ের প্রতি; কিন্তু আমার শক্তির সীমা আছে।

আজ অধিক কথা বলা আমার সাধ্যাতীত, তাই সংক্ষেপে বল্‌ব। আমি আজ সঙ্কুচিত চিত্তে বল্‌চি, পরিমাণের আধিক্য উৎকর্ষের লাঘব ঘটায়। রামমোহন সম্বন্ধে কয়েক দিনই আলোচনা যথেষ্ট হয়েছে। অত্যধিক আলোচনায় আর প্রয়োজন নেই; তাহোলে সত্য আপন অসীমতাকে সীমাবদ্ধ কর্‌বে। আলো—দীপশিখা— ছোট, তবু সে সমস্তকে প্রকাশ করে; কিন্তু কুহেলিকা আপন পরিব্যাপ্তি দ্বারা যে আধিপত্য বিস্তার করে, তাতে কিছুই প্রকাশ পায় না। আপনারা জানেন, আমি শৈশবকাল হ'তে সাহিত্যচর্চ্চা কর্‌চি; ভাবকে ভাষা দেওয়া আমার কাজ। আমি ভাষার আর্টিষ্ট,—ভাবকে মূর্ত্তি দিয়ে থাকি। কিন্তু আর্টিষ্টের প্রকাশের প্রধান ভঙ্গী হচ্চে থামা,—থেমে যাওয়া—শেষ করা। তাই আপনাদের বলি, বেশী আশা কর্‌লে ভাল হয় না। যদি অনেক বলার মধ্যেও সত্যকে স্পষ্টতা দিয়ে রক্ষা কর্‌তে পার্‌তাম, তবে কৃপণতা কর্‌তাম না। কিন্তু তা সম্ভবপর নয়।

আমাদের প্রাণ বিদ্রোহী। বিদ্রোহই প্রাণের লক্ষণ। প্রতি মুহূর্ত্তেই আমাদের প্রাণ জড়ের বিরুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহ ঘোষণা করচে। জড় যেন দানবের মতো অসংখ্য বাহু বিস্তার ক'রে ব'সে আছে। ক্ষুদ্র প্রাণ তারই বিরুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহ করে। এই বিদ্রোহেই তার আত্মপ্রকাশ। বিদ্রোহ আছে ব'লেই প্রাণ আপনাকে প্রকাশ করতে পারে। জড়ের অবশ্যম্ভাবী ফল, ক্লান্তি। এই যে ক্লান্তি—আমাদের নিয়ত কর্ম্ম দ্বারা,—এই ক্লান্তি বেষ্টন ক'রে আছে আমাদের দেহ-পিণ্ডকে; আমাদের প্রাণের চারদিকে দেহ যেন একটি ক্লান্তির প্রাচীর রচনা করেছে। সেই ক্লান্তির প্রাচীর ভাঙ্‌তে হবে, তাই আমাদের হৃৎপিণ্ড এক মুহূর্ত্ত বিশ্রাম করতে পারে না; তার নিয়ত সংগ্রাম হচ্চে জড়ের সঙ্গে। এই সংগ্রাম যখন থাম্‌বে, তখনই মৃত্যু।

দেহে এই যে এমনতর' প্রাণের ক্রিয়া, মনেরও তাই। তার কেবল অনন্ত জিজ্ঞাসা। সে কেবলি বলে, উত্তর দাও! এইরূপে মন আপনার জ্ঞান-ভাণ্ডার বিস্তার করে। মন যে মুহূর্ত্তে সমস্তই জেনে নিয়েছি ব'লে ভেবে নেয়,—ভাল, মন্দ, সত্য মিথ্যা,—তখনই তার মৃত্যু,—তখনই তার পরাভব। মানুষের সমাজে নিয়ত এই প্রশ্ন,—কি ক'রে সত্যকে পাব? মাঝে মাঝে যখন আমাদের এই জড়ের সঙ্গে ক্লান্তির সঙ্গে আপোষের কথাবার্ত্তা হয়, তখনই মানব-চিত্ত জড়কে মেনে নেয়। তখনই তার মৃত্যু।

আমাদের দেশে মানুষের মনে এক সময়ে এমনি নিদ্রা এসেছিল। তখন আমরা সবই নিঃসন্দেহে মেনে নিয়েছিলুম,—কি সত্য কি মিথ্যা। নূতন ক'রে যে চিন্তা করা যায়, তা ভুলে গিয়েছিলুম! পূর্ব্বপুরুষের উপর সমস্ত ভার দিয়ে নিজেরা চুপচাপ ক'রে বসেছিলুম। ধর্ম্ম, অর্থ, বিজ্ঞান কোন কিছু সম্বন্ধেই নূতন চিন্তা ছিল না। ভেসেছিল সবাই গতানুগতিকতার টানে। আলস্য নিশ্চেষ্টতা নিষ্ক্রিয়তা আমাদের দেহ মন অধিকার করেছিল। আমরা তখন ছিলাম সুপ্ত। রাত্রিকালে যখন আমরা সুপ্ত থাকি, তখনি আমাদের বিপদ। তখনি চোর ডাকাত ঘরে প্রবেশ ক'রে আমাদের সর্ব্বস্ব হরণ করে। ভারতে এমনি এক দিন এসেছিল; আমাদের মন ছিল তখন সুপ্ত, অলস দুর্ব্বল নিশ্চেষ্ট। মৃত্যু তখন ঘনিয়ে এসেছিল। তখন বাইরে থেকে এল এক প্রচণ্ড শক্তি,—আমাদের সব লুণ্ঠন করতে। এমনি ক'রেই আমাদের সব লুণ্ঠিত হয়েছে।

এই জন্যই যখনি আমাদের মন অলস, দুর্ব্বল হয়,—যখনি আমাদের শারীরিক, মানসিক, আধ্যাত্মিক শক্তি বিনষ্ট হয়,—তখনি আমাদের দুর্ব্বল মনে শক্তি সঞ্চয়ের জন্য—আমাদের উদ্ধারের জন্য, মহাপুরুষের প্রয়োজন। মহাপুরুষ রামমোহন এসেছিলেন আমাদের উদ্ধারের জন্য। মহাপুরুষগণ যখন আসেন, তখন আমরা তাঁদের বাধা দি; মহাপুরুষগণও, আমাদের যেখানে দুর্ব্বলতা, সেখানেই ঘা দিয়ে থাকেন। ডাক্তার যেমন নিষ্ঠুর ভাবে, রুগ্নের যেখানে ক্ষত, সেখানে সজোরে অস্ত্র বসিয়ে দেন, মহাপুরুষগণও জনচিত্তের যেখানে দুর্ব্বলতা,

সেখানে ঘা দেন। প্রকৃত কথা, তাঁরা মিত্র হ'য়েও যেন শত্রু সাজেন। সেই শত্রুতা রামমোহনও করেছিলেন। কিন্তু যে জন্য রামমোহন শত্রু সেজেছিলেন,—আমরা কি তার সব কর্‌তে পেরেছি? সত্যই কি সব তমসা কেটে গেছে?

বাঙ্গালী জাতি কার নামে বিশ্বের কাছে গর্ব্ব কর্‌তে পার্‌বে, যদি রামমোহনের নামে না করে,—যে নামে পৃথিবী ভক্তি করে? এইরূপে মহাপুরুষগণ,—যাঁহারা সকলের চেয়ে দেশের আত্মীয়, তাঁহাদিগকে অনাত্মীয় ব'লে আমরা ভুল করি।

আজ আশা করি যে আমাদের দৃষ্টি হ'তে এ কুহেলিকা কেটে যাবে। রামমোহনের চরিত্রকে স্বীকার কর্‌বার শক্তি আমরা যেন ফিরে পাই। তাঁর দ্বারা সমস্ত দেশ আলোকিত। তাঁর আলোকে আমরা সকলে ধন্য হব; আমাদের দেশের অন্তর্নিহিত শক্তির উপর আশা স্থাপন কর্‌তে পার্‌ব। সমস্ত কুহেলিকা দূর ক'রে দিয়ে আমাদের দাঁড়াতে হবে, সকলকে বল্‌তে হবে, "মা ভৈঃ, সত্যের পথে পরমার্থের পথে অগ্রসর হও!"

সমস্ত ভারতের সম্মিলিত জনচিত্তে রামমোহনের আসন প্রতিষ্ঠিত হোক। তিনি বলুন,—তিনি আশীর্ব্বাদ করুন, "তোমরা সত্যের পথে জয়ের পথে অগ্রসর হও; অকল্যাণের সঙ্গে নিয়ত সংগ্রাম ক'রে জয়ী হও। অসত্য হ'তে সত্যে উপনীত হও,—অসতো মা সদ্ গময়—অন্ধকার হ'তে আলোর পথে অগ্রসর হও, তমসো মা জ্যোতি র্গময়,—মৃত্যু হ'তে অমৃতত্ব লাভ কর,—মৃত্যো র্মা ঽমৃতং গময়।" রামমোহনের প্রার্থনা আজ ধ্বনিত হোক দেশের এক প্রান্ত হ'তে অপর প্রান্ত পর্য্যন্ত।

'ভারত-পথিক' একটা বড় কথা। ভারত একটা মহা রাজপথ। ভারতের একটা চলমান ধারা রয়েছে। এই পথ ধ'রে কত জাতি এল এবং গেল। চীন জাপান এসেছিল জ্ঞানের আলোকের জন্য ভারতের সেই পথে। আবার এসেছে, যারা অর্থকামী তারা। এ পথে যারা এসেছে, তারাই আতিথ্য পেয়েছে। রামমোহন এই ভারতের মহাপথে এসে দাঁড়িয়েছিলেন। রামমোহন সমাগত সকলকে শ্রদ্ধার সহিত আতিথ্য দিয়েছিলেন। আতিথ্যের মূলে আছে ভারতের আধ্যাত্মিক সম্পদ। ভারত এক দিন বিশ্বকে সম্বোধন ক'রে বলেছিল, "ভয় নেই, হে পথিক, আমাদের ঐশ্বর্য্য আছে, সম্পদ আছে; আমাদের আতিথ্য হ'তে তুমি বঞ্চিত হবে না।" ভারত এ ভাবে শত্রু মিত্র, আর্য্য অনার্য্য, সকলকে আপন ক্রোড়ে টেনেছিল। রামমোহন এক দিন সে পথে দাঁড়িয়ে সকলকে ডেকেছিলেন, এস আত্মীয়, এস অনাত্মীয়, এস শত্রু, এস মিত্র! তিনি বলেছিলেন, "আয়ন্তু সর্ব্বতঃ স্বাহা," তিনি ডেকেছিলেন সবাইকে। তিনি দিয়েছিলেন সবাইকে বিনয়ের সঙ্গে, শ্রদ্ধার সঙ্গে,—কারণ "শ্রদ্ধয়া দেয়ম্।" সেই ভাবে তিনি 'ভারত-পথিক'; তিনি আমন্ত্রণের বাণী নিয়ে এসেছিলেন।—সেই প্রেরণায় উদ্বুদ্ধ হ'য়ে এ কবি এক দিন যে কবিতা লিখেছিল, তাই আজ আপনাদের কাছে প'ড়ে আমার বক্তব্য শেষ কর্‌ব।

হে মোর চিত্ত, পুণ্যতীর্থে জাগো রে ধীরে,
এই ভারতের মহামানবের সাগর-তীরে।
হেথায় দাঁড়ায়ে দু-বাহু বাড়ায়ে নমি নর-দেবতারে,
উদার ছন্দে পরমানন্দে বন্দন করি তাঁরে।
ধ্যান-গম্ভীর এই যে ভূধর, নদী-জপমালা-ধৃত প্রান্তর,
হেথায় নিত্য হেরো পবিত্র ধরিত্রীরে,
এই ভারতের মহামানবের সাগর-তীরে।

কেহ নাহি জানে কার আহ্বানে কত মানুষের ধারা,
দুর্ব্বার স্রোতে এল কোথা হ'তে, সমুদ্রে হোলো হারা।
হেথায় আর্য্য, হেথা অনার্য্য, হেথায় দ্রাবিড়, চীন,
শক-হুন-দল, পাঠান মোগল, এক দেহে হোলো লীন।
পশ্চিমে আজি খুলিয়াছে দ্বার, সেথা হতে সবে আনে উপহার,
দিবে আর নিবে, মিলাবে মিলিবে, যাবে না ফিরে।
এই ভারতের মহামানবের সাগর-তীরে।

রণধারা বাহি জয়গান গাহি উন্মাদ কলরবে
ভেদি মরুপথ, গিরি-পর্ব্বত, যারা এসেছিল সবে,
আমার শোণিতে রয়েছে ধ্বনিতে তার বিচিত্র সুর।
হে রুদ্র বীণা, বাজো বাজো বাজো, ঘৃণা করি দূরে আছে যারা আজো,
বন্ধ নাশিবে, তারাও আসিবে. দাঁড়াবে ঘিরে।
এই ভারতের মহামানবের সাগর-তীরে।

হেথা এক দিন বিরামবিহীন মহা ওঙ্কার ধ্বনি
হৃদয়-তন্ত্রে একের মন্ত্রে উঠেছিল রণরণি।
তপস্যা-বলে একের অনলে বহুরে আহুতি দিয়া,
বিভেদ ভুলিল, জাগায়ে তুলিল একটি বিরাট হিয়া।
সেই সাধনার সে আরাধনার যজ্ঞশালায় খোলা আজি দ্বার,
হেথায় সবারে হবে মিলিবারে আনত শিরে।
এই ভারতের মহামানবের সাগর-তীরে।

সেই হোমানলে হেরো আজি জ্বলে দুখের রক্ত-শিখা,
হবে তা সহিতে, মর্ম্ম দহিতে, আছে সে ভাগ্যে লিখা।
এ দুখ বহন করো মোর মন, শোনো রে একের ডাক,
যত লাজ ভয় করো করো জয়, অপমান দূরে যাক।
দুঃসহ ব্যথা হ'য়ে অবসান, জন্ম লভিবে কী বিশাল প্রাণ!
পোহায় রজনী, জাগিছে জননী বিপুল নীড়ে,
এই ভারতের মহামানবের সাগর-তীরে।

এসো হে আর্য্য, এসো অনার্য্য, হিন্দু মুসলমান,
এসো এসো আজ তুমি ইংরাজ, এসো এসো খৃষ্টান।
এসো ব্রাহ্মণ, শুচি করি মন ধরো হাত সবাকার,
এসো হে পতিত, হোক্ অপনীত সব অপমান-ভার।
মার অভিষেকে এসো এসো ত্বরা, মঙ্গলঘট হয়নি যে ভরা,
সবার পরশে পবিত্র-করা তীর্থনীরে।
আজি ভারতের মহামানবের সাগর-তীরে।

EXHIBITION OF RAMMOHUN'S RELICS

50

Raja Kshitindradeb Rai Mahashai

on

Rammohun's Life and Relics.

I consider it a unique honour and a high privilege to be called upon to say a few words in connection with the Centenary Celebration of Raja Rammohun Roy, the Maker of Modern India, and the unsurpassable religious reformer who ushered the new era of educational enlightenment, and I am grateful to the organisers of the Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee for allowing me a chance of expressing my views on the personal relics of the Raja,—results of his gigantic labours in various departments of human activity amidst bitter opposition and conflicting interests. But these interesting and instructive relics are also splendid examples of the great and glorious past of India's culture and her traditions. Our sacred Vedas and Upanishads, which represent her highest moral and spiritual culture, and which drew forth the admiration of European savants, found in Raja Rammohun Roy their true exponent, and India found in him a real interpreter of her traditional inner consciousness. Raja Rammohun lived up to that ideal which stood for the highest physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual greatness of India.

It is high time for us to consider whether we have raised ourselves to the highest level of India's greatness, or lowered ourselves to the deepest depths of degradation in the eyes of both God and man, along with the rapid march of events during the last hundred years. The life and teachings of the Raja afford us ample food for this reflection on this memorable occasion.

The Raja's personal grace, his comprehensive mental, moral and spiritual equipment, his social reforms, his artistic and aesthetic sense, his robust optimism, his courage of conviction, his wonderful power of abstraction, his knowledge of legal lore, his innate love of humanity and liberty of mankind, his persistent search after truth, his indomitable spirit of enquiry, his mastery over languages both Indian and foreign,—all made him an ideal personality worthy of our love, admiration, reverence and gratitude.

Let us not be absorbed in the fleeting interests of the moment, ignoring all that is great and good in the culture and traditions of this ancient land of ours. Let us so regulate our lives that they may be compatible with her glory, and that each of us may have the satisfaction of a life nobly lived. Then and then only would these relics cease to be meaningless enigmas, and be valued as priceless heritages which redound to the lasting glory of the Raja and the good of Indian people.

The life of Raja Rammohun Roy is founded on the bed-rock of unflinching faith and radiant hope which are evidenced by his efforts for the intellectual, social, moral, spiritual and political advancement of his countrymen. His life should serve as an inspiration and an example to generations yet unborn. The Raja is universally recognised as a master mind and a superman,—titles which he has won by his natural talents. The chastening influence of persecutions to which he was ruthlessly subjected for clinging to his faith stood him in great stead in awakening the inner man, whose dictates he followed with unswerving fidelity like a true Hindu. The Raja's thoughts and actions are invested with a dignity all their own, and they are accepted as models of catholicity in the truest sense of the term, viz. the unity of all sects and creeds under one universal faith in the Supreme and Adorable Brahma, who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and it is for this reason that the Centenary of the death of this outstanding personality is being celebrated all over the world as an international duty and a sacred privilege.

In conclusion, I would suggest that a statue in Calcutta, and a Commemoration Pillar, suitably inscribed with the words "Faith and Hope" in all the living languages of the world at his birthplace Radhanagar, and an endowed chair on "Comparative Religion" in the University of Calcutta, would be a fitting culmination to the honour that is being shown to him.

51

Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikary, M.A., D.L., Ll.D.

Presidential Address

at the Opening of the Exhibition, 27th Dec., 1933. *Vide* Part I, pp. 25--41.

Though there is and can be nothing sensational, dramatic or histrionic about the simple exhibits relating to the life and career of Raja Rammohun Roy collected by those in charge of the Centenary Celebrations, the Exhibition which I have been called upon to open has a value and import all its own, to which I shall try to call attention.

Among us there is a belief, and also an adage, that even he or she earns untold merit, who performs the humble duty of brightening up the *cherag* in a national festival like the *Durgotsava*. This merit will be mine, who has been acceded the high honour of attempting to brighten up the *cherag* of the truly national festival we are celebrating in different buildings in the University compound,—a fitting *venue* of this celebration. It has been my privilege to preside at two meetings at Hooghly, one at Howrah, and one at Behala, and finally today, at the opening of the Exhibition,—a meeting of Christians, Brahmos, Muslims and Hindus, all vying with one another to show respect and reverence to the Raja's noble memory. It is my privilege to call attention to the encyclopaedic mind and activities of one, who as a man or a superman, has always stood out as the foremost intellectual product of the century in which he was born and the one that followed. This I shall attempt to do briefly in the light of the exhibits reverentially gathered together by his admirers.

Before I proceed to do so, as one coming from the village of Raja Rammohun Roy, Radhanagar, I may be permitted to present a short analysis of the surroundings amidst which the Raja was born and worked early in life. Radhanagar and the villages around and across the river were strongholds of intellectual and spiritual activities, which alone could have inspired and fostered what the Raja stood for in later life. Sanskrit and Persian were the educational assets of the well-to-do and middle-class people of those days. There were hundreds of *tols* round about which gathered geniuses that grappled with and modified the teachings of the redoubtable Raghunandana of Navadwip. Here began the Raja's knowledge of Sanskrit, which he adored and utilised for his combats in later life, but the teaching of which in a Government College he opposed only because he wanted English learning to grow and prosper. Here, in

the humble *munshi-chálá* of Ram Narayan Sarvadhikary, the Raja had his early Persian and Arabic training, which he expanded in Patna, as he expanded his Sanskrit training in Benares. Here flourished the teachings of Abhiram Swami, one of the favourite *Gopals* of Sri Chaitanya, who had himself visited the locality to assist Abhiram's Vaishnava propaganda, on his way to Orissa, the royal road to which goes past the prosperous surrounding villages. Here flourished the Saivite creed under the shadow of the temple of Ghanteswar Siva, one of the twelve Jyotirlingas adored by Saivites. Here flourished Kanad, and near about was the *pancha-mundi ásan* of Agamavagisa, the Tantric sect which gave the Raja one of the foundations of his creed,—the *Mahánirváná Tantra*,—along with *Vedánta* and *Upanishads*. Not far were the mosque of the pious Moslems of Dharmapur and the Dharma Temple of the Buddhists ; and in the *atithisálá* or the guest-house on the Puri Road close by, used to congregate pious *sádhus* and holy *sannyásis*, from whom young Rammohun had teachings and ideas that stood him well in all his life. Amidst such surroundings and such surroundings alone could one have taken his first breath, who, later on, was accepted as the founder of Comparative Religion. Amidst such surroundings alone could be born one, about the year of the Raja's death, who kept the glorious flag flying, as Ramakrishna Paramahansa did, a few miles from Radhanagar in the village of Kamarpukur,—a mighty soil indeed for the production of mighty minds, the greatest that India had produced in recent times.

The exhibits displayed here, which, though not complete and well classified, yet help one in visualizing the great man with all his achievements and accomplishments, —and with his 'imperfections,' as hypercritical mentality would call them. We are helped by these exhibits to realize that he was "a man's a man for a' that," neither a demon nor a demigod. His worldliness and other-worldliness are fairly and demonstratedly balanced, and nothing has been exaggerated nor extenuated. His portrait,—depicting fine, forceful and commanding features,—is one that might almost go for the portrait of a *beau* or a *dilettante*, almost like that of his friend and admirer Prince Dwarkanauth Tagore, also exhibited in the room. His head-dress,—the attractive *pagri* of the day,—and his curly flowing black hair, draw immediate attention. And the self-same *pagri* and some of the fine locks over which it rested in life, are among the remarkable exhibits. Alongside is the classical *upavita*, the sacred thread, which the Raja forbade being taken off even in death, and which was reverentially brought back from

Bristol. With this sacred thread on, and with the silken robes of the Hindu Brahmin put on after the purifying bath, (seated on the stone bathing platform, also exhibited at the entrance downstairs,) used to be held the Raja's *upásaná* or worship, amidst burning incense and fragrant perfume, according to Vedic and Tantric *mantras*, which have been handed down to Brahmos from generation to generation, and are still a part of their *upásaná paddhati*. Where, then, was the so-called superstition of which one hears so much in connection with the Raja's supposed iconoclastic ideas? He never himself used the word 'idolater', though he deprecated the worship of images in the light of what the *Vedánta* and the *Upanishads*, garnered from the Hindus' ancient store-house, had taught him. He was all for reform, and never for revolution.

We find him late in life, after the settlement of the ruinous family litigation, assisting his combatants to settle down in life and also assisting his mother Tarini Devi, believed to have been the inciter of the litigation, to proceed to the holy temple of *Jagannáth*, and end her days in wiping with her flowing hair the steps of the temple of the 'Lord of the Universe.' We find him providing generously for his youngest wife, a staunch devotee of Hinduism, who accompanied Jadunath Sarvadhikary in his memorable pilgrimage in Northern India. Amidst the exhibits are clear photographs of pages from the manuscript of Jadunath Sarvadhikary's classical journal about the pilgrimage, which the *Bangiya Sahitya Parishat* has printed and published. On three pages of the journal have been mentioned Rammohun's youngest wife,—the step-mother of Rama Prasad Roy,—for whom Rammohun had generously provided. Here, then, and thus, do we find the unflinching reformer, who balanced his thinkings and doings so as not to hurt any one's feelings: which he proclaimed as his abiding creed in the memorable Trust-Deed of the Brahmo Samaj.

We next turn to the other exhibits,—the early and late editions of his various works about grammar, language, literature, law, sociology, religion, civics, economics, administration, and everything else included in modern intellectual and social activities,—a master-mind, indeed, that turned into gold all that it touched. There has been nothing in our national activities for the last hundred years, that that super-mind—that hydra-headed intellect—had not thought out, cleared up, provided for, and proclaimed in clarion notes. I need only refer to the draft of the petition to Parliament about our flagging Jury System, that has just been discovered and published in the morning papers. I would also refer to the tracts advocating woman's rights, which find an honourable place among the exhibits, and

which have roused the admiration and wonder of our late Law Member, Sir Bipin Bihari Ghose, sitting alongside me. Time will not permit minute reference to other exhibits, each of which will amply repay the reverent student of the details of the Raja's multiple mind.

But I must for a moment refer to some deeds and documents about the Raja's property, and dealings with property, and a draft for Rs. 5,000 in favour of his friend, Prince Dwarkanauth Tagore, and his eldest son, Babu Radha Prasad Roy. The collectors of these exhibits have not, as I have already said, shut their eyes to the other-worldliness of the prince of men whose glorious memory we have been celebrating. Such organic presentation of all the factors and elements inseparable from humanity as a whole are, indeed, worthy of study by all interested in humanity as a whole. And from this point of view is the efficacy and excellence of the Exhibition, in spite of all imperfections, which now I have the honour of declaring open, as a remarkable and indispensable appanage of our Centenary Celebration.

May all who dutifully study these factors have Heaven's guidance in the appreciation and realization of the ideals of the great Raja, who lived and died in his tireless efforts to place them before his own people and the peoples of the world.

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REPORT

OF THE CENTENARY COMMITTEE

Presented by Mr. J. N. Basu, Hony. Secy., at the General Conference, 31st December, 1933. *Vide* Part I, p. 24.

The proceedings in connection with the celebration of the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy commenced with a Preliminary Meeting held in this Hall on the 18th February last with our illustrious President in the chair. At that meeting three Resolutions were adopted,—the *first* offering homage to the memory of the Raja, and calling upon all sections of the people of this country to co-operate in making the celebration a success; the *second* appointing, for the purposes of organising celebrations in Bengal, a General Committee, with instructions to co-opt representatives from different districts of Bengal; the *third* arranging for celebrations in other parts of India.

A comprehensive Scheme of Celebrations (given in our Publicity Booklet, pp. 152—155) was framed, and a Working Committee and several Sub-committees formed, to give effect to it.

The Scheme comprised :—

(*a*) Celebrations in Calcutta during the Christmas holidays, consisting of a Convention of Religions, a General Conference for papers and speeches on the Raja, a Women's Conference, and an Exhibition of various articles connected with the Raja's life and activity.

(*b*) Preparation of Publicity literature, and with the help of such literature, and by correspondence, organisation of celebrations throughout Bengal and the other provinces of India, and also in London, Bristol, Paris, New York, Chicago, and Geneva.

(*c*) Pilgrimages to Radhanagar and Bristol.

(*d*) Publication of the Raja's Works, an Anthology from his writings, interpretative Studies, and a Commemoration Volume.

(*e*) Permanent Memorials, in the shape of a Portrait in oils and a Bronze Statue in Calcutta, re-naming the northern half of the Upper Circular Road as 'Rammohun Avenue', and the completion of the Memorial Building at Radhanagar.

(*f*) The Foundation of a Rammohun Roy Chair and Fellowships.

Throughout the year the endeavours of the Working Committee have been directed mainly to the items (*a*) and (*b*). The most outstanding achievements in these respects are, (i) the Publicity Booklet, "Rammohun Roy: The Man and his Work", edited by Mr. Amal Home,—to whom we are indebted in more than one way,—which has been a powerful instrument in the hands of the Working Committee in organising celebrations, and in helping people to form some estimate of the multi-sided personality of Rammohun, and (ii) the success of our efforts to rouse the enthusiasm of people throughout the length and breadth of India, and in places abroad, for the celebration of the Centenary, as has, we presume, been apparent to the public from a perusal of the newspapers throughout the year. We may perhaps add to these the Exhibition of the Raja's relics, and the Celebrations which are just being terminated in Calcutta.

For various reasons, not the least of which is the present state of financial depression prevailing in the country, the funds that the Working Committee have so far been able to raise are very small. An account of the receipts and expenditure will be published in the newspapers as soon as possible.

The inadequacy of funds prevented the Working Committee from taking any active steps during the year towards the publication of the Works of Rammohun, which was the most cherished item in their Scheme, or towards the Permanent Memorials. It is gratifying to note, however, that the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, the renowned Literary Society of the province, has undertaken the publication of a comprehensive edition of the Raja's collected Works under the General Editorship of one of our Vice-Presidents,

Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee. In view of this fact, the "Works and Studies Sub-committee" decided at its meeting of the 2nd December last, not to proceed with a separate project for the same purpose. The question of co-operating with the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad in this respect is being considered, and the formation of a small but influential All-India Committee to raise funds for financing the publication and also for the Permanent Memorials is under contemplation. It is to be hoped that when such a Committee is formed, and the necessary appeals issued, public response will be forthcoming in a generous measure, so that this Centenary may have something tangible and permanent as its record and achievement.

In conclusion, we take leave to convey our thanks to all those who have helped us in any way in connection with the present Celebrations. While it is not possible to mention all names individually, we shall be failing in our duty if we do not take this opportunity of recording our sense of deep gratitude to all who have come from far and near to participate in our celebrations,—notably to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Mr. G. A. Natesan, Dr. S. K. Datta, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Rao Sahib Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao, and to Madame L. Morin, who has travelled all the way from Paris; to all our friends in the other provinces of India, in Burma, in Ceylon, and in Europe and America, who have enthusiastically organised similar celebrations; to the authorities of the University of Calcutta for placing this Hall for the Inaugural Meeting, and for the Convention and the Conferences, and a room in the Asutosh Building for our Exhibition; to the Albert Institute for the use of a room for our Committee meetings throughout the year; to the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj for lending us a room for the Centenary Office; to Mr. N. Mukherji of the Art Press for printing our literature at exceptionally moderate rates; to Messrs. Dwarkin and Son for lending us the use of a large Organ-harmonium; and to our volunteers and musical choirs.

Good Government and the Liberty of the Press

Every good ruler, who is convinced of the inperfection of human nature, and reverences the Eternal Governor of the world, must be conscious of the great liability to error in managing the affairs of a vast empire; and therefore he will be anxious to afford every individual the readiest means of bringing to his notice whatever may require his interference. To secure this important object, the unrestrained Liberty of Publication is the only effectual means that can be employed.—*Rammohun Roy in the Memorial to the Supreme Court against the Press Regulation, 1823.*

MESSAGES AND GREETINGS
RECEIVED BY THE CENTENARY COMMITTEE

53
Mahatma Gandhi

Ellore, 28 December 1933. (*By telegraph.*)

Regard Rammohun Roy as one of the greatest reformers of his time. He was undoubtedly father of advanced liberal thought in Hinduism.

54
Sir P. C. Ray

The greatest Indian ever born in Modern times,—Maker of New India. His many-sided activities and versatility strike us with awe, wonder and astonishment. It seems as if Providence has ordained that unhappy India should be lifted out of the quagmire of ignorance and age-long superstition which has encrusted the Hindu religion. In him we find a harmonious blending of all that is noble and good in the East and the West. His was a colossal intellect. He foresaw with prophetic vision all the elements that were needed in the making of India of the Future. His activities began in Calcutta in 1815, and he devoted himself heart and soul for the inauguration of all the movements connected with social, religious, and educational uplift of his mother-country. What Luther was to Europe, Rammohun has been to India. Like Wycliff and Luther, he used the despised mother-tongue for the propagation of his views, and thus, in a manner, he might be called one of the founders of modern Bengali Prose. By celebrating the Centenary of the death of such a great man, we are not only paying homage to his memory, but also carrying his great message among ourselves and posterity.

55
Rev. C. F. Andrews

Indian Students' Union and Hostel, 106—112 Gower Street, London.

In modern India there has been no greater personality, with a wider range of intellectual and spiritual vision, than Raja Rammohun Roy. He stands out like a great snow-clad mountain peak in the far distance, rising out of the lower mists, high up in the firmament of heaven. He was always far in advance of his own times, and his greatest thoughts have not yet found their full accomplishment in the history of India and the modern world. Indeed, a hundred years ago, at the time of his death, some of the greatest of his aspirations seemed almost nearer to realisation

than they do today. For he himself ushered in, in the East, a new era, in which it was a joy to be alive ; and after his death wave after wave of reaction swept over the land, and dimmed hopes that were bright.

Nevertheless, he laid down the lines both of religious and of social progress which humanity must follow, if it is to attain its ideal. He believed in the divine unity of mankind, because he had at heart a deeply religious nature which was permeated with the Divine Spirit. Not only did he give us the ideal for the progress of his own country, and establish the foundations of modern Bengal, but he also laid down the lines which East and West must follow if they would come at last, on the basis of true equality, to a unity that should embrace all mankind.

56

Prof. Sylvain Levi

(i)

University of Paris, 9th December 1933. (Vide Proceedings of the Celebration at the University of Paris, Part I., pp. 187, 188.)

With Rammohun Roy begins the renaissance of Indian wisdom. Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya announced the religious awakening of India, and Sivaji her spirit of independence. Rammohun Roy completed their task. The high position he holds in his nation also speaks of his importance for the whole of humanity. He was, above all, religious in spirit, but religious in the Indian way. Attracted by an equal sympathy towards all the highest forms of human faith, familiar with the Bible as well as Islam, he accepted them only to deduce from them their universal values. He took from them without the slightest hesitation the purest of their doctrines, but only to incorporate them with the Brahmanical tradition. As for this tradition, although he respected it, he was not its slave. He resolutely rejected without passion, all those unhealthy elements which the long centuries and the decadence of Hindu genius were responsible for introducing into it. He proclaimed the Upanishads in which was vested the authority for two milleniums. He interpreted them with the help of Vedantic Monism and in the light of modern ideas. He placed India in the midst of humanity, and assigned to her a seat among the *élite*.

(ii)

(Professor Sylvain Levi spoke the following words in course of his reply to an address of welcome from the Indo-Latin Society at the Hall of the Asutosh Building, Calcutta University, in September 1928.)

The Father of Modern India, Rammohun was one of the most remarkable personalities of his age. While representing all that was best in Indian tradition, he showed his special genius in a line where the Indians of today are weakest,—in translating into practice

by the force of will the dictates of idealism. Not satisfied with merely ascertaining the ideal, Rammohun fought, with phenomenal heroism, against desperate odds, to *realise* his ideal. If India today wanted any model to shape her present destiny and future history, Rammohun should be that model. He was really the first to bring Modern India abreast of universal history. A profound scholar in Sanskrit and Brahmanical lore, the Rajah's unbounded intellectual curiosity and insatiable thirst for the discovery of the fundmental unity of the human mind drove him to study the ancient Hebrew, Arabic and Persian literatures. Ever drawn towards France and a finished scholar in Persian as he was, Rammohun might have come in touch with the great French Orientalist Eugene Burnouf (search should be made into Burnouf and other French archives) and also with those who were editing the Avesta at that time. His philosophical acumen, the rare universality of his outlook, and the courtesy he showed towards his Indian as well as European contemporaries opposed to his views, go to make him a great man in the real sense of the term.—(*The Modern Review*, Calcutta, *October 1928.*)

57

Devapriya Valisinha

General Secretary, Mahabodhi Society, Sarnath, Benares.

Benares, 29th December 1933. (*By telegraph.*)

On behalf of Mahabodhi Society and Buddhists of India, I send hearty greetings to all assembled to celebrate Rammohun Roy Centenary, and wish great event unqualified success. Rammohun Roy's life will ever remain a bright example of a life devoted to higher things of life and mutual understanding among diverse races and creeds. May it inspire us to lead purer nobler lives for the happiness of all beings.

58

Rev. D. A. Dharmacharyya

Editor, Buddhist India, *and General Secretary, All-India Buddhist Conferences.*

120, Harrison Road, Calcutta. 28-12-1933. 2477 B. E.

I have the pleasure to convey, on behalf of the All-India Buddhist Conferences and Council, representing about four hundred thousand members of the Indian Buddhist Community, hearty congratulations and a message of cultural good-will and cordial co-operation, on the eve of the Centenary Celebrations in honour of the great Raja Rammohun Roy.

Raja Rammohun Roy was undoubtedly a pioneer of modern education, a scientific exponent of Indian learning and civilisation, a zealous champion of the feminine movement, and a pioneer social reformer in the nineteenth century, whose influence pervades not only this province of Bengal, but the entire continent of India, if not the whole world. The Bengalees in particular, and the Indian nation as a whole, feel pride in his remarkable achievements, brilliant career and worthy examples worth practical imitation by the present generation. And I am sure your Conferences will be able to impress upon the masses the great life and example of this great hero of India.

59

Mr. Puran Chand Nahar, M.A., B.L.

(On behalf of the Jain Community.)

48 Indian Mirror Street, Calcutta. 28 December 1933.

In this age of Centenary movements both in India and outside, it is indeed befitting that a suitable Centenary should be celebrated at the Shatabdi anniversary of the illustrious Raja Rammohun Roy, who was pioneer of the noble and catholic religious movement in India in the present age. The organisers, with their President Dr. Tagore, the universally acknowledged leader of most advanced ideals, should be congratulated for giving this opportunity to the followers of all sections of Aryan faith and culture to convey their hearty greetings on this solemn occasion. On behalf of the Jain community, as well as as an inhabitant of the same district to which the great Raja belonged, I take this golden opportunity to convey our most sincere greetings and felicitations on this exalted occasion of his Centenary, and offer our prayers to the Almighty that the liberal movement inaugurated by the great Raja Rammohun Roy may ever remain as our guide and aim for all our future actions.

60

Pandit Dev Sharma

Principal of Gurukula University.

Gurukula University, P. O. Gurukula, Kangri, Dist. Saharanpur.

Raja Rammohun Roy was a great man. Like all great men, he looked upon the world from a lofty and catholic standpoint. His broad outlook upon life was manifest in all his works. He was a great scholar, writer, thinker and reformer. But what specially appeals to me in him is that he revealed the lofty and the liberal aspect of Hinduism. He was the first to declare that the Vedas taught the worship, not of many gods but of the ONE without a second; that 'Savita' meant not the sun, but God, the creator. Thus the Brahmo Samaj of Rammohun Roy paved the way for the Arya Samaj of Dayananda.

61

Hon. Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh

Minister for Agriculture, Punjab.

The name of Raja Rammohun Roy brings back memories of 40 years ago, when I first heard of the achievements of his disciple, Keshub Chunder Sen. Raja Rammohun Roy was imbued with Eastern culture, both Muslim and Hindu. One hundred years ago, he realised that if India was to become a nation, it will have to purge itself free of castes and creeds and communal conflicts. He was conscious of the difficulties that lay in the way of unity and social freedom. He, however, was full of faith that truth will prevail, and these difficulties will be overcome. He raised the banner of social freedom and unity, and though he did not live to see the realisation of his dreams, much that he had worked for has already been achieved, though much that he would have wished to preserve has been lost in the process. The unity for which he worked has receded owing to new political factors which have come into play, and the Brahmo Samaj, which gave the advanced spirits of Bengal a centre to work from, no more retains its position; for, what members of the Brahmo Samaj attained is now shared by people outside the Brahmo Samaj.

Time, however, cannot dim the light of his message that there is essential unity in all religions, as has been said :—

Gavám anekavarnánám kshírasyástyekavarnatá,
Kshíravat pasyate jnánam, liinginais tu gavám yathá.

(Cows are of many different colours, but the milk of all is of one colour, white. So the proclaimers who proclaim the truth, use many varying forms to put it in. But yet the truth enclosed in all is one.)

Jama-e-sad-rang zan khumm-e safa sad o yak-rang gashtah chun ziya.

(Put many clothes of many houses into one vat, and out of it they come washed off all clean and white.)

"To but one goal are marching everywhere
All human beings, though they seem to walk on
Paths divergent; and the goal is I,
The Universal Self, Self-conscious."

Religion being one, the message of the prophets can only have one meaning, and just as we respect our own prophets we must respect prophets of all other religions.

62

S. Partap Singh, M.A., LL.B.

Advocate, Lahore.

Lahore, 10. 12. 33.

Raja Rammohun Roy was one of those saints and seers, who, in the words of Rabindranath Tagore, had carried on much farther India's great attempt to evolve a human adjustment of peoples and races, who broke through barriers of social and religious exclusiveness, and brought together India's different communities on the genuine basis of spiritual reality. He was a great unifier, and may be regarded as the usherer-in of the Modern Age for India.

63

Sir Syed Ross Masood

Vice-Chancellor, Aligarh University.

Aligarh University, November 21, 1933.

I wish you great success in the various functions that you are arranging for his Centenary, and assure you that I have the deepest reverence for the memory of that truly great and noble son of our motherland, Rammohun Roy.

64

Right Rev. Bishop H. Pakenham-Walsh, D.D.

Bishop's College, 224 Lower Circular Road, Calcutta.

Rammohun Roy was one of India's great men. His fearlessness of character made him stand for truth as God revealed it to him, even at the cost of much suffering and loss, especially estrangement from many of those whom he loved most. He opposed what he considered wrong in religious beliefs, in political action, and in social custom. But he was far from being merely destructive; he taught great and positive principles in all these spheres, laboured incessantly with voice and pen to draw others to his views, and succeeded in influencing many of his own age and of succeeding generations. He was loved alike by the English and Indians, and both unite at this time to honour his memory.

65

A. J. Appasamy

of the Bishop's College

Bishop's College, 224 Lower Circular Road, Calcutta. Dec. 22, 1933.

It is fitting indeed that the representatives of all communities in India should gather together at this time to pay tribute to the memory of a great Indian leader. Since coming to Bengal about

eighteen months ago, I have noted with real joy the devotion which the people of Bengal have to their departed leaders. This strikes me as an important characteristic of the Bengali race,—to hold in deep veneration its distinguished sons. A nation's great leaders are its real assets. Their ideals, their achievements, their longings, their visions form a heritage of undying value. It is therefore necessary that we should continually dwell on the memory of those who have blazed new trails through difficult regions.

Raja Rammohun Roy was a versatile genius, a great scholar deeply learned in many languages. He combined with his scholarship a genuine interest in living affairs. He realized the tremendous need for social reform, and set himself with great courage to inaugurate it. He was a fearless reformer, and struck boldly and vigorously at the abuses which he saw. He was a spiritual genius. Religion meant everything to him. Worship was the very breath of his life. He resented every practice and tradition in India which threatened to stand in the way of the soul's communion with God, who is Spirit and Truth. He attacked all the ceremonies which interfered with the purity and spirituality of worship. Long before we began to think and speak in international terms, he assimilated Western currents of thought and had intimate friends in the West. His genius blended all that is valuable in the East and in the West.

It is my ardent hope and prayer that all that is permanent and valuable in the life and work of Raja Rammohun Roy should be preserved and cherished by all the communities in India.

66

Father Verrier Elwin

Gond Seva Mandal, Karanjia P. O., Mandla Dist., Central India.
Nov. 25th, 1933.

I trust that your Centenary celebrations will be enthusiastically attended, and be in every way worthy of the great hero to whom they are devoted. We are all still working beneath his shadow, and are children of his genius. May the spirit of the Rajarshi triumph over all sectional, denominational and communal distinctions, building us all into the one great family of Man.

67

Rev. W. H. Drummond

15, Rawlinson Road, Oxford. Dec 6. 1933.

I should like to send a message of deep regret that I cannot take part personally in your celebrations in Calcutta, and my earnest hope that they will be a great success. As you revive a great memory and renew your vows of loyalty to the cause of spiritual

freedom and social reform, may there be given to the members of the Brahmo Samaj, and to many others beyond their borders, fresh power for service, and a deep sense of the permanent value of the ideals of Rammohun Roy for India and for the world.

68

Dr. George Boros, D. D.

President and Bishop, Unitarius Puspok
Cluj-Kolozsvar, Rumania. December 1, 1933.

All hail to the Memory of RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY,
the great heroic Inaugurator of Modern India !
From the Descendants and Spiritual Heirs of
FRANCIS DAVID,
Martyr-reformer of XVIth Century Unitarianism in Transylvania.

Happy are all partakers of the Memorial Celebrations of him who "through the dynamic power of his personality and his uncompromising freedom of the spirit, became the great pathmaker of this Century", thus giving encouragement to the present generation of this unfortunate Europe, merged into the oblivion of an anti-Christian manslaughtering War, the terror of which still rages over us to silence our faint hope in the resurrection of a new Christ and Saviour.

Accept our cordial greetings and appreciation of the greatness of him whose spirit is present wherever men are searching for eternal truth.—*The Representative Consistory of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church, established in the year 1566.*

69

An Appreciation by Rev. Jabez T. Sunderland

1510 Cambridge Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, (U. S. A.) June 24, 1933.

THE FATHER OF MODERN INDIA

I am glad to add my humble word to the many testimonies to the nobleness and greatness of Raja Rammohun Roy, which the Centenary of his death will call out.

I find myself compelled to regard this illustrious son of India as one of the very greatest men of the modern world. Let me briefly enquire, How was he great?

To my thought, his achievements were extraordinary in two general directions, namely, in service rendered to the world as a whole, and in service rendered to his own country in particular.

First, It is unquestionable that he did high and lasting work for mankind, as a religious scholar. It seems to me it cannot be denied that he has a better claim than any other scholar to have been the founder of the important science of Comparative Religion. This alone should insure for him a permanently conspicuous place in history.

Secondly, He did priceless work for India, of three kinds.

(1) I am not a Bengali scholar; but I judge, from the testimonies of competent authorities, that through his extensive, able and scholarly writings he gave the Bengali language (his native tongue), distinctly increased range, versatility, strength and attractiveness, and did much to raise the literary quality and standing of Bengali literature.

(2) He founded the very important religious and social reform movement, or church, known as the Brahmo Samaj, which notwithstanding its slow numerical growth so far in its history, has, I am convinced, kindled a light in India which will not be extinguished; has set up an ideal of religion so living, so vital, so in harmony with the best modern thought, and so adapted to the practical needs of today, that the whole religious thinking of India will more and more realize its truth and beauty, feel its influence, and move in its direction.

(3) Rammohun Roy seems to me to have given the initiatory word, the first clear break-of-day impulse, in creating India's absolutely vital modern movement to shake off her intellectual, social, moral, and political bondage to foreigners, and to become free,—free to think her own thoughts, to develop her own institutions, to occupy once more the great place among nations which she filled so long, and to render to God and humanity the high service which her illustrious past and her rich spiritual genius so indisputably fit her to render.

Rammohun Roy wrote the great and heroic words, "I WANT TO BE FREE, OR I DON'T WANT TO BE AT ALL." That was a clarion note, which meant nothing less than a political as well as a spiritual rebirth of his country. The spirit of that note has spread, until all India is feeling the thrill of it.

If with good reason RAMMOHUN ROY is called "the Father of Modern India," chained as she now is, with still more impressive reason will he be called "the Father of the more glorious India of the Future," when her chains shall be broken.

I am sure that when India becomes once more a free and great nation, as under God she is sure to do at no distant day, she will recognize Rammohun Roy as in a large and true sense her immortal—what shall I say—MOSES? or MAZZINI? or WASHINGTON? or all in one?

70

Dr. Franklin C. Southworth and Mrs. Alice B. Southworth

Little Compton, Rhode Island, (U. S. A.) September 22, 1933.

The Spirit of Rammohun working on American Soil

It is a rare privilege for an American to be permitted to take part from the other side of the globe in celebrating the Centenary of Rammohun Roy. Five years ago, we had the honor of representing the American Unitarian Association at the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Brahmo Samaj, and of coming into personal contact with many of Rammohun Roy's spiritual descendants. In various parts of India we were given the great pleasure of hearing from the lips of these men and women the story of what the great Rajah had done for India: his important contribution to the cause of education; his heroic efforts in behalf of the freedom of the Press, emancipation from outworn and hampering social and religious customs, and his founding of a religious fellowship which was unique in religious history, broad enough to include the earnest-minded and forward-looking spirits of all the great religions and bring them together for worship of God and service of man. Before coming to India we had known of his admiration for Channing, the founder of American Unitarianism, of the enthusiasm with which he greeted the determination of the leaders of the French Revolution to destroy autocracy, and of his eager and whole-hearted support, while visiting England, of the Reform Bill of 1832.

During the past summer the story of Rammohun Roy has been retold in some of the pulpits of America and in American Journals. For there are many Americans who hail him as a kindred spirit to whom the world's freedom and democracy were as dear as they were to the founders of the American Republic. We wish therefore, as Americans, on the eve of the Rammohun Roy Centenary, to remind our friends in India that some, at least, of the causes for which Rammohun labored are in process of realization in America.

Rammohun Roy was the foremost man in the Orient in the early part of the Nineteenth Century to set his face resolutely against human slavery in any form. Within thirty years of his death our great President, Abraham Lincoln, had given the boon of freedom to ten million African slaves. If Rammohun Roy had been alive on the First of January, 1863, he would have rejoiced at Lincoln's Proclamation, as he had rejoiced at the passage of the Reform Bill in England. He would have rejoiced again half a century later, when, after years of patient and heroic effort on the part of pioneers, the franchise was accorded to American women.

But the interest of Rammohun Roy in religion antedated his interest in government and in social reform. He was the first

competent scholar in any land whose interest in religion so far outran his interest in the particular religion of which he was the product, that he sought, by mastering many ancient languages, to penetrate to the sources of power on the part of all the great religions of the world.

American scholarship has followed with increasing rapidity in the steps of the great Rajah as the century has waxed and waned. In 1833 Comparative Religion was not taught at a single American University. Today it is winning an ever enlarging place in American Universities and also in theological seminaries from the Atlantic to the Pacific. When Rammohun Roy died, the training schools for the ministry were sending into American pulpits ministers who had been taught that the final authority for religious faith and the conduct of life was a book written in ancient languages two thousand years ago. Today in the leading seminaries of America, both Jewish and Christian, the same canons of criticism are applied to the study of the Jewish and Christian scriptures as to the study of the Vedas and Upanishads, and the ultimate authority, both for faith and conduct, is the reason and conscience of the individual soul. What a Hindu Rajah proclaimed at immense personal cost in 1833, the educated portion of Christian America accepts without serious question in the present year of grace.

We would adduce two illustrations of what we have been trying to say, one of forty years ago and the other from the date at which we write. In 1893 there assembled in Chicago a gathering such as had never assembled before on American soil. There were brought together from all parts of the world leading representatives of the great religions, not to denounce or refute one another but to speak from a common platform in the freedom of the spirit on their own religious faith. It was a memorable occasion, not only because no Christian country had ever issued such an invitation before, but because of the power and persuasiveness of the representatives of the Brahmo Samaj who eloquently proclaimed the principles set forth by the founder of their society more than sixty years before. The Parliament of Religions in Chicago was a blow from which sectarian bigotry in America has never completely recovered.

Rammohun Roy was the first conspicuous Hindu of his time to welcome Christian missionaries to India. He welcomed them, not because he accepted all of their theology, but because he believed they would help lift the masses of India above the ignorance and superstition of the time. Alexander Duff, the first important Presbyterian missionary to India, has proclaimed his great indebtedness to Rammohun Roy.

The Christian churches of America have of late experienced a noteworthy slackening of zeal for foreign missions. Contributions have seriously fallen off, and the work has been greatly curtailed.

A group of New York laymen, in a church which had been conspicuous for its missonary zeal in former years, invited similar groups from six other leading Protestant denominations, to join them in sending to the Orient a Commission of fifteen to study the situation at close range, and on their return, to formulate a Report as to the result of their observations. The Commission comprised men and women of distinction in philosophy, education, medicine, engineering, business and philanthropy, as well as religion, and was expected to arrive at a conclusion : first, whether foreign missions should be retained or abolished, and secondly, if retained, whether there was need of change in their method of approach.

The Commission returned and startled their various constituencies by declaring in no uncertain tones that the task of making occidental Baptists and Methodists out of forward-looking Hindus and Mohammedans was an utterly impossible one, that it was worse than futile to seek to perpetuate American sectarian divisions in the Orient, that it were better to recall all missionaries at once than to permit them to approach adherents of non-Christian religions in a spirit of condescension, and that the time had come for a new and more careful study of non-Christian faiths and a keener appreciation of Oriental culture. The Commission spoke with high praise of the work of many able and consecrated missionaries. But it held that the missionary of the future must come to his field in the spirit of a learner as well as a teacher, that he must seek, on the whole, not to convert but to co-operate ; not to render a glowing report in terms of statistics, but to render a service to human beings which no statistics can adequately portray. The time has come, the Commission continued, not for more missionaries, but fewer, and incomparably abler and better trained.

The Laymen's Report has met with a varying reception from different sections of the Protestant Church : sometimes with frightened opposition, at other times with hearty approval, but everywhere with a sense of its epoch-making importance. It is the herald of a new day in the relations of the Occident to the Orient, and in its spirit and essential features it was anticipated by Rammohun Roy a hundred years ago.

In these ways and in other ways is the spirit of Rammohun Roy working on American soil. May the ideals of this great pioneer and prophet be realised in increasing measures during the coming century, bringing an ever enlarging freedom to those who sit in bondage, and uniting in a fellowship of the spirit those who love God and seek righteousness in all parts of the world.

71

Alma L. Lissberger

of New York.

O PIONEER ! O VOYAGER ! RAJARSHI RAMMOHUN ROY

A lonely figure treks the *Kálá Páni*,
Immortal Wanderer. ... Spirit-bound,
Westward thy course, East thy mission,
Light-Bearer of Hindusthan.

Vaishnava and *Shákta* in thy blood were wedded ;
Of *Ekamevádwitíyam* thou spake as Moses of old.
Vedánta for thy people stirred the fire within thee,
Burning the Upanishads to purer gold.

Unto ascending altars thy lotus-heart unfolded wide.
Islam, ... the Hebrew Prophets, ... Seer Jesus,
Each thy Vision glorified,
Kindling the dreams of storm-tossed pilgrims
In the earthen lamp of brotherhood.

Out of the rock of pain universal striving was builded
Bráhma Samáj in roots of Mother Earth.
There came unto the gate a *Suttee*, unbound woman,
Meek, flower-like thing with promise in long-shadowed eyes,
Tear-flowing eyes across the mystic waters where
The prophet-son lay chanting the word-prayer OM.

Only the strings of a *Viná* in heaven answered
As the moon wrapped in silvery shadows his soul.
Suddenly his gaze looked eastward to the Mother :

As Night watched, gently the amber eye-lids closed—
His mortal flame of life was lowered—
But over IND glowed dawn in deeper tones.

72

Robert C. Dexter

Secretary, Department of Social Relations, American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., (U. S. A.) June 7, 1933.

I am very happy to join in the words of greeting which are going forward from your co-workers in America on the occasion of the Rammohun Roy Centenary. It must be very gratifying to those of you who have carried on the torch which this great leader dropped, to be able to look back over a hundred years of history.

My own particular work with our Unitarian Churches naturally gives me deep sympathy with the pioneer work of Rammohun Roy and with what you and his other followers have been trying to do since his departure. Unitarians in America, as the members of the Brahmo Samaj in India, have always felt that religion had a very close contact with life. Almost all of our great leaders in this country were pioneers in the social field as well.

Rammohun Roy, so nearly as I understand his life, was as much devoted to changes in Indian social life, as he was in bringing in a purer religious system. His protest against the burning of widows can be paralleled in our Unitarian history with the protests of our great leaders Channing and Parker against human slavery. His objection to the caste system is paralleled in our country to the effort toward a fairer economic system with which many of our leading ministers and laymen are at present engaged. Rammohun Roy was also concerned with the great problem of education, and here, of course, he has many Unitarian parallels in this country,—great names such as Charles Eliot, Horace Mann and others in American history.

It is significant that the fruit of what we both consider a purified religion should be so similar, although local conditions are so different and geographical distances so vast. Rammohun Roy stands among the great social pioneers of the world just as he stands among its religious pioneers, and we Unitarians of America are glad to recognize his contribution, and to greet you of India who are carrying on in his place.

73

Dana Mc Lean Greeley

of the Young People's Religious Union.

25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., (U. S. A.) 21st July 1933.

It is the challenge to transform the ideal into the actual that rallies the young people of many lands, and causes them to be leaders rather than followers in their respective communities. It is this same challenge,—this urge after better things and a deeper, fuller life,—that has brought the young people of the Unitarian Churches in America together. Where there is common aim there is union, and where there is union there is strength.

We take pride in the fraternity that we have with young people of different nations who are striving toward the same general ideals as are we. We glory in the lives of all heroes of freedom and liberal religion, men of vision, breadth and understanding, who have made their contributions to the health and happiness and spiritual insight of the world of our day. We feel with humility but with courage that they are asking us to take up and carry on the torch.

We join you, people of India, in paying reverence to such a great man and leader as Raja Rammohun Roy. We congratulate you on your loyalty to his ideals. We invite you ever and again to join hands with us around the world, and to help us realize the universal responsibilities and privileges of Liberal Religion.

74

Rev. Henry Wilder Foote

Minister, the First Church in Belmont.

112 Clifton Street, Belmont, Mass., (U. S. A.) 20 June 1933.

As a member of the American Committee appointed to co-operate with the Brahmo Samaj in commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, I am glad to add my word of praise to the memory of this great honored reformer. His work for the religious and social life of India was like fruitful seed sown in the waiting soil, which decade after decade has enriched the lives of those who came after him; for he was one of those rare and gifted souls whose vision looks forward beyond their own day, and who lay foundations for mightier structures than they themselves will ever build.

To us of the western world, his life has also an especial significance, because through him the Unitarians of Great Britain and America became aware of the noblest aspects of the religious life of the Hindu people. The religious kinship which he recognized has had great value for us, and we cherish the memory of the man who first brought face to face the religious liberals of three continents.

Rammohun Roy made so large a contribution to the nobler life of mankind that at the coming Centenary his career will be recalled with gratitude by many in Europe and America, in addition to the multitudes in India who reverence his name.

75

L. D. Wald

of the Henry Street Settlement, New York.

265 Henry Street, New York. June 20, 1933.

I feel that the spiritual convictions of Rajah Rammohun Roy were of peculiar importance, because he made intelligent and often successful efforts to translate these into the life of India.

That he urged the removal of caste distinctions and of the old Vedic sacrifices, and that he was responsible to a very large degree for the abolishing of the *Suttee*, would make him a figure to rank with the great abolitionists. And women may take special satisfaction in the fact that this was a great step in the growing emancipation of women in the East.

76

Secretary, East Bengal Brahma Samaj

Dacca, 29th December 1933. (*By telegraph.*)

East Bengal Brahma Samaj offer homage to sacred memory of great Raja Rammohun, Herald of new Era in human history. Wish Conference all success.

77

Mr. Giris Chandra Nag

Retired Member of the Bengal Civil Service.

Dacca, the 28th December, 1933.

I send my heart's homage and salutation to the illustrious Raja Rammohun Roy, the Apostle of Universal Religion, the Spiritual Guide of the Modern Renaissance in India, the Pioneer of reforms, the Maker of New India, the Father of Indian Nationalism, the Builder and Moulder of Indian political life, the Creator of the New Age, the Herald of a New Dawn, the Ambassador of the East, the Prophet of Freedom, the Champion of Truth, the Cosmopolitan and Rationalistic thinker, the Social and Religious legislator, the Renovator of national scriptures and revelations, the Hindu Pandit, the Zabardast Maulavi, the Christian Padre, the Rishi of the Twentieth Century, the Mehdi of a new Tradition, the Messenger of a new dispensation, the Messiah of harmony and peace, the Emancipator of Humanity.

78

Secretary, Andhra Theistic Conference

Rajahmundry, 28. 12. 1933.

The Andhra Theistic Conference in session conveys its fraternal greetings to the All-India Rammohun Centenary Celebrations Committee on the occasion of the ensuing celebrations.

79

Rai Bahadur Harbilas Sarda

Civil Lines, Ajmer. 9th Nov. 1933.

It is a matter of regret for me that though I am a great but humble admirer of Raja Rammohun Roy, one of the greatest Indians of modern times, I should be unable to join the celebrations.

80

E. V. Selzam Esq.

Acting Consul-General for Germany.

It is always good to remember the great men who worked for the progress of their own country and mankind.

Rammohun Roy is well known, not only in his own country, but even in Europe and in Germany, where a keen interest in Indian culture has existed since the days of our classical poets.

Rammohun Roy on behalf of the East realized the truth of Goethe's word, "Orient and Occident sind nicht mehr zu trennen," (East and West cannot be separated.)

81

The Consul for Czechoslovakia

Konsulat Ceskoslovenske Republiky v Calcutte.
(Consulate of the Czechoslovak Republic in Calcutta.)
34 Park Street, Calcutta. 27th December 1933.

I thank you for your cordial letter and invitation to the Rammohun Roy Celebrations. As I already mentioned to your Secretary, I shall with great pleasure attend the function on the 29th of December. I agree with you that a sincere wish for the success of the celebrations may surely not be in collision with the usual duty of International reserve, and, if you find it suitable, you may include the congratulations and best wishes for success of the Celebrations of the Centenary of the great Prophet and Reformer Rammohun Roy also from the Czechoslovak Consul in Calcutta.

82

Lt.-Col. Bonnaud

French Trade Commissioner for India, Burma and Ceylon.
Bombay, 27th December 1933. *(By Telegraph.)*

On the occasion of the Centenary celebration of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, who sojourned in France in the year 1832, and was a member of the Asiatic Society of Paris, we feel honoured today to pay a tribute of admiration and respect to the memory of the great Hindu. With the exceptional diversity of his knowledge, the tolerance and high spirituality of his doctrine as a religious and politic reformer, and above all, with his love for equality and friendship among men irrespective of race and creed, the name of Rammohun Roy cannot but be revered in France. His ideals regarding the relations between far and distant lands were, and remain, the traditional and deep-rooted principles of our country, who may well say with him that "all mankind are one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches." The noble example given to humanity one hundred years ago by Rammohun Roy will for ever inspire and guide us in our common effort to tighten intellectual and social links between India and France.

83

Sir Atul C. Chatterjee

WITHDEAN, Cavendish Road, Weybridge, Surrey, England.
November 29, 1933.

I am not competent to speak with authority about the work of Rammohun in the sphere of religion and philosophy. There is no doubt, however, that in every respect Rammohun Roy was the greatest Indian of the 19th century. His far-reaching vision, his selfless work for the social, educational and political regeneration and advancement of all sections of Indians, his devotion to the interests of the weak and helpless, and his work for women, give him a position far ahead of any other Indian in the last hundred years. He was much in advance of his own time, but his teaching and his example should be our inspiration today. He had no sectarian, communal, or class feeling, and that should be our lesson today.

84

Greetings from the London Celebration Committee

The following Resolution was moved from the chair by Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., C.B.E., High Commissioner for India, at the meeting of the London Celebration Committee, 22nd September 1933, and carried unanimously :—

"That this Meeting convened as the first of three Celebrations to commemorate in England the Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, sends its cordial greetings to the Rammohun Roy Centenary Committee in Calcutta, and congratulates it on the enthusiasm with which it has promoted its commemoration throughout India, of a man, who by his natural endowments and his devotion to the ideal of one God, who is in all and over all and through all, became the inaugurator of a new epoch for his own land, and one of the outstanding spiritual leaders of the world."

85

Greetings from the American Unitarian Association

when forming a Celebration Committee.

"The American Unitarian Association, at its meeting in Boston, Mass., May 23, 1933, salutes its brethren of India at their approaching celebration of the Centenary of the death of their distinguished apostle of civil and religious liberty, Raja Rammohun Roy. A relentless foe of every kind of superstition and intolerance, equipped by a powerful intellect and long and arduous

training for a sympathetic understanding of India's various faiths, passionately resolved to do everything in his power for the emancipation of women and the destruction of the evils of the caste system, the founder of colleges and of journals which were to shed the light of learning upon some of the dark places of the earth, he gave unstintedly of his time and fortune to the founding and maintenance of the Brahmo Samaj, the Free Church of Modern India, and won for himself a place with Channing and Parker and other emancipators of the human race as one of the world's immortals."

86

(I.) Message from Nicholas Roerich

NICHOLAS ROERICH, the renowned Russian painter, the Founder-director of the Roerich Museum of New York and of the Himalayan Institute of URUSVATI, sent to Dr. KALIDAS NAG, *Secretary, International Celebrations and Memorials Sub-Committee* of the Centenary, a Message from Naggar (Kulu), expressing his deep admiration for Raja Rammohun Roy.

Himself an intrepid explorer of Tibet, Central Asia and the Himalayas, Mr. Roerich appreciated the urge of spiritual adventure in Rammohun, opening a new era in the religious history of the Orient. The elements of tolerance and peace pervading all the thoughts and actions of the Raja roused sympathetic chords in the heart of this Russian mystic, who has the honour of sponsoring the "Roerich Pact of Peace" for the Preservation of Art-treasures in the time of War.

(II.) Greetings from the University of Paris

Forwarded by S. Charlety, Rector of the University.

[*Vide* Proceedings of the Celebration at Paris, p. 188 of Part I of this Book. Facsimile copies of the Greetings and the signatures given below will be found on the immediately succeeding pages. Dots indicate signatures that could not be deciphered.]

Les amis de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, Université de Paris, en Sorbonne reunis pour commemorer le souvenir de Raja Rammohun Roy, le veritable createur de l'Inde moderne, envoient à leurs amis de l'Inde ce temoignage de leur sympathie avec l'expression de leur admiration pour l'oeuvre de ce grand homme.

Paris, le 9 décembre 1933.

Translation of the Greetings from the University of Paris.

The friends of the Institute of Indian Civilisation of the University of Paris have met in the Sorbonne to solemnize the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy, the real creator of Modern India. They send to their friends in India this testimony of their sympathy together with the expression of their admiration for the work of that Great Man. (Paris, 9 December, 1933.)

Signatures on p. 449

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Signatures on p. 450

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MADAME D. SYLVAIN LÉVI

Les amis de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, Université de Paris, en Sorbonne
réunis pour commémorer le souvenir de Raja Ram Mohan Roy, le véritable créateur
de l'Inde moderne, envoient à leurs amis de l'Inde ce témoignage de leur sympathie
avec l'expression de leur admiration pour l'œuvre de ce grand homme

Paris, le 9 décembre 1933

Sylvain Lévi

30. डिसेंबर

S. R. Rana

A. Guarisco

J. Bacot

Fossey

Maurice Leenhardt

J. Buffard

S. Charléty

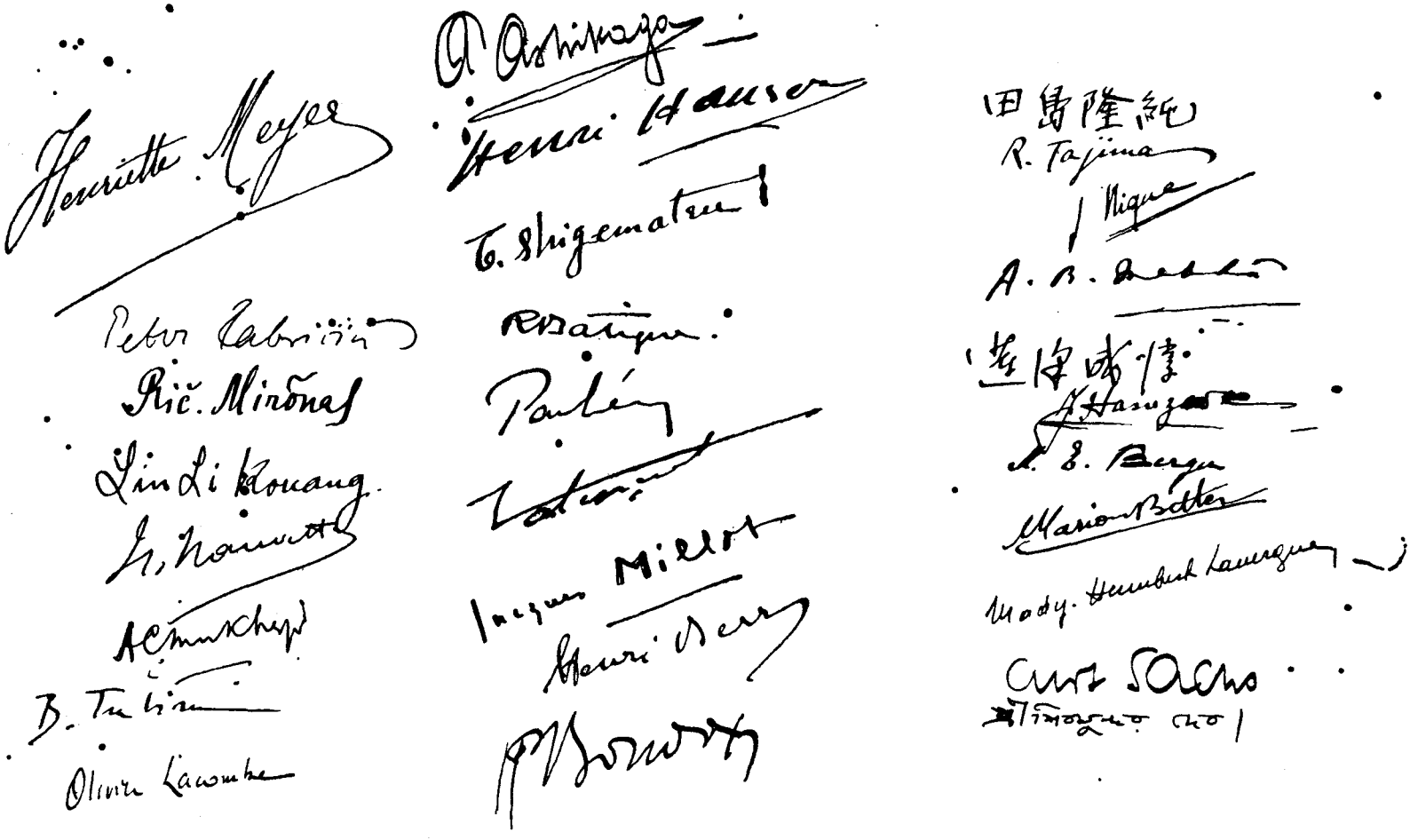
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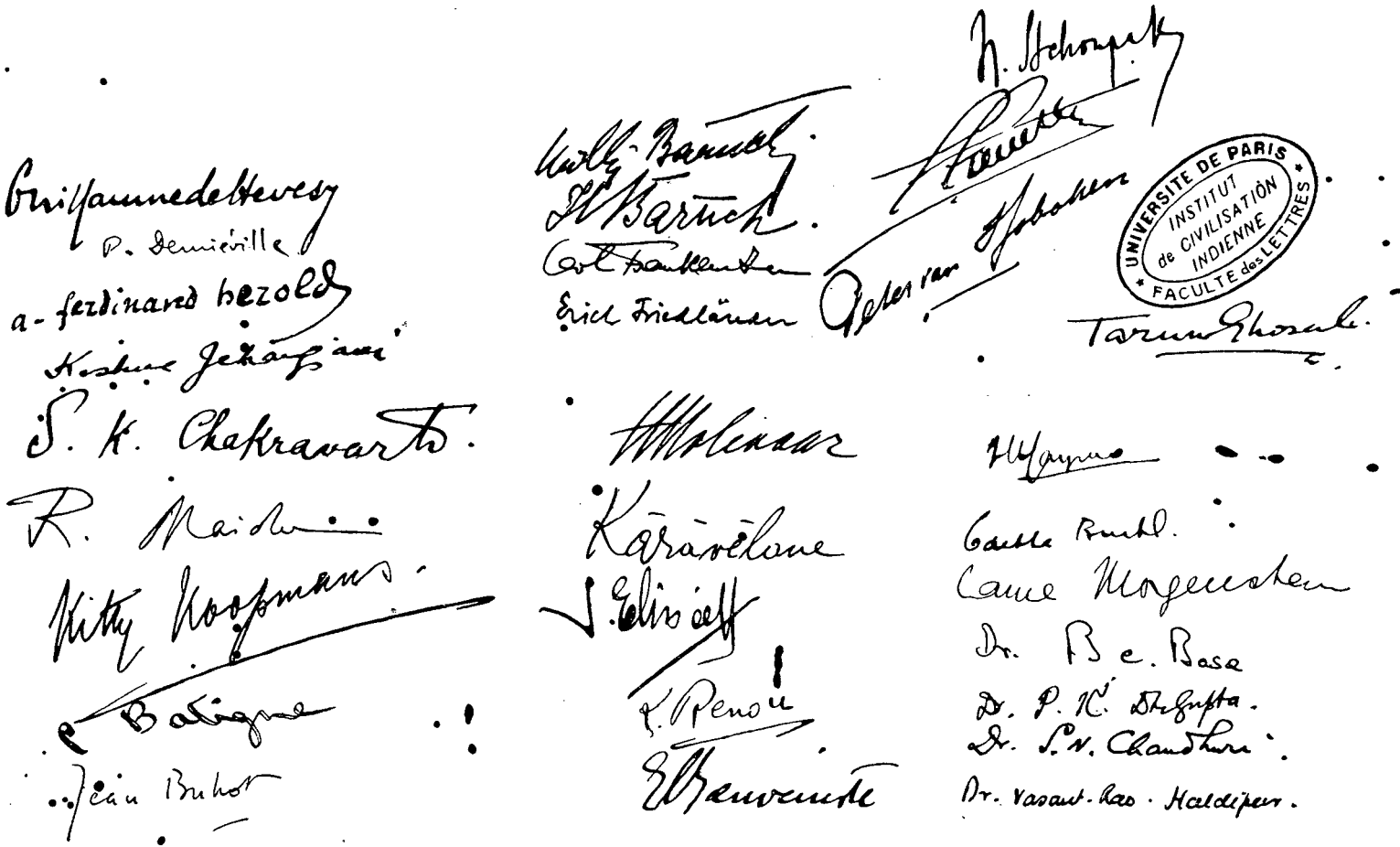
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HYMNS SUNG

AT THE CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS AND THE CONFERENCES

87

(Opening hymn, Friday, 29th December, 1933)

ওঁ যো দেবো হগ্নৌ যো হপ্সু, যো বিশ্বং ভুবনমাবিবেশ,
য ওষধিষু যো বনস্পতিষু, তস্মৈ দেবায় নমো নমঃ।
অগ্নির অগ্নি হ'য়ে বিরাজেন সদা যিনি,
জলেতে স্নেহরূপে আছেন পশিয়া যিনি,
ওষধি বনস্পতি সবার দেবতা যিনি,
তাঁহারে ভক্তিভরে নমি নমি, সদা নমি।

—(Vedic hymn, with Bengali rendering by Kshitindranath Tagore)

88

(Convention of Religions, Friday, 29th December, 1933)

ভুবনবাসী সবে গাও, সবে গাও,
জগত-পিতার গুণ গাও, সবে গাও!
হিন্দু মুসলমান, বৌদ্ধ ও খৃষ্টান,
জৈন পারসী শিখ, গাও সবে গাও, মিলি মিলি গাও!
এক তিনি দেব-দেব নিখিল-কারণ,
খুসী তাঁর এ ধরা, সৃজন পালন,
তাঁর ভয়ে বায়ু ধায়, জনম, মরণ;
তাঁরে চাও, তাঁরে চাও, তাঁরে চাও! জীবনে মরণে তাঁরে চাও!
ঐ হের' ত্রিভুবনে সবে তাঁরে গায়,
রবি শশী তারা যত গেয়ে গেয়ে ধায়,
ফুল গায়, পাখী গায়, সিন্ধু সরিৎ গায়,
বন্দনা করে তাঁরে নরে দেবতায়।
এস মোরা ভাই বোন্ মিলি সবে আজ
তাঁরে ডাকি, তাঁরে গাই, যিনি রাজ-রাজ;
তনু মন ধন আর আশা তৃষা লাজ,
ডালি দাও, ডালি দাও, ডালি দাও! তাঁর পায়ে সব ডালি দাও!

—(Nirmalchandra Baral)

89

(Women's Conference, Friday, 29th December, 1933)

ভাব সেই একে।
জলে স্থলে শূন্যে যে সমান ভাবে থাকে।
যে রচিল এ সংসার, আদি অন্ত নাহি যার,
সে জানে সকল, কেহ নাহি জানে তাকে।
তমীশ্বরাণাং পরমং মহেশ্বরং, তং দেবতানাং পরমঞ্চ দৈবতং,
পতিং পতীনাং পরমং পরস্তাৎ, বিদাম দেবং ভুবনেশমীড্যং।

—(Rammohun Roy)

90

(Women's Conference, Friday, 29th December, 1933)

ভারত-ভাগ্য-আকাশে উদিছে মেঘমুক্ত তরুণ তপন,
মোহমুক্ত আঁধার ভেদিয়া মেলিছে দিব্য উদার নয়ন।
খুলিছে বন্ধ পাশ, মুক্ত কৃপাণে দুলিছে মালিকা, কণ্ঠে পরাবে, আশ।
নাশি স্বার্থ দ্বন্দ্ব কলুষ সত্যে চিত্ত উদ্বোধন,
ভেদ-মন্ত্র-মথিত গরল প্রেম মন্ত্রে উদ্‌যাপন।
নামিছে চিত্ত ভার, বেদনা-ব্যথিত বক্ষে ঝরিছে সান্ত্বনা-সুধা-ধার।
পুণ্য-পূরিত অমৃত-ক্ষরিত শোধন শুভ্র-মন
লক্ষ্য-বদ্ধ কোটি নারী আজ জাগ্রত সচেতন।
জাগিছে দৈব বল, ব্যর্থ জীবনে সার্থক করি দিবে অক্ষয় ফল।
ভগ্ন ভিন্ন প্রাণ অগণ্য মুক্ত করিবে পণ;
জ্ঞান-দীপ্ত কল্যাণ-ব্রত নূতন সংগঠন।

—(Hemlata Devi, a great-great-granddaughter of Rammohun Roy)

91

(General Conference, Saturday, 30th December, 1933)

শুভ দিন ক্ষণে, শুভ এই মাসে,
পূজে ভারত আজি অনাদি মহেশে।
'একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ং' ঋষি-বাক্য পুরাতন,
পুন কর কীর্ত্তন এই আর্য্য দেশে।
সকল ছলনা ছাড়ো, বিমল কর অন্তর,
কর স্বার্থ বলিদান সত্যের উদ্দেশে।
মৃত ধর্ম্মে আনো প্রাণ, ঘোষো সবে ব্রহ্মনাম,
অবনতি অপমান ঘুচিবে নিমেষে।

—(Jyotirindranath Tagore)

92

(General Conference, Saturday, 30th December, 1933)

কি স্বদেশে কি বিদেশে, যথায় তথায় থাকি,
তোমার রচনা মধ্যে তোমাকে দেখিয়া ডাকি।
দেশ ভেদে কাল ভেদে রচনা অসীমা,
প্রতি ক্ষণে সাক্ষ্য দেয় তোমার মহিমা ;
তোমার প্রভাব দেখি মা থাকি একাকী।

—(Rammohun Roy)

93

(General Conference, Sunday, 31st December, 1933)

অয়ি ভুবনমনোমোহিনি ! মা !
অয়ি নির্ম্মল-সূর্য্য-করোজ্জ্বল-ধরণি, জনক-জননী-জননি !
নীল-সিন্ধু-জল-ধৌত চরণতল,
অনিল-বিকম্পিত শ্যামল অঞ্চল,
অম্বর-চুম্বিত ভাল হিমাচল,
শুভ্র-তুষার-কিরীটিনি !
প্রথম প্রভাত উদয় তব গগনে,
প্রথম সামরব তব তপোবনে,
প্রথম প্রচারিত তব বন-ভবনে
জ্ঞান, ধর্ম্ম, কত পুণ্য কাহিনী ;
চিরকল্যাণময়ী তুমি ধন্য,
দেশ বিদেশে বিতরিছ অন্ন,
জাহ্নবী যমুনা বিগলিত করুণা,
পুণ্য-পীযূষ-স্তন্য-বাহিনি !

—(Rabindranath Tagore)

94

(General Conference, Sunday, 31st December, 1933)

দেশ দেশ নন্দিত করি মন্দ্রিত তব ভেরী,
আসিল যত বীরবৃন্দ আসন তব ঘেরি,
দিন আগত ঐ ভারত তবু কই ?
সে কি রহিল লুপ্ত আজি সব-জন-পশ্চাতে ?
লউক বিশ্ব-কর্ম্ম-ভার, মিলি সবার সাথে।
প্রেরণ কর ভৈরব তব দুর্জ্জয় আহ্বান হে, জাগ্রত ভগবান হে !
বিঘ্ন বিপদ দুঃখ-দহন তুচ্ছ করিল যারা,
মৃত্যু গহন পার হইল, টুটিল মোহ-কারা,
দিন আগত ঐ ভারত তবু কই ?
নিশ্চল নির্ব্বীর্য্য-বাহু কর্ম্ম-কীর্ত্তি-হীনে,
ব্যর্থ-শক্তি নিরানন্দ জীবন-ধন-দীনে,
প্রাণ দাও, প্রাণ দাও, দাও দাও প্রাণ হে, জাগ্রত ভগবান হে !
নূতন যুগ-সূর্য্য উঠিল, ছুটিল তিমির রাত্রি,
তব মন্দির-অঙ্গন ভরি মিলিল সকল যাত্রী।
দিন আগত ঐ ভারত তবু কই ?
গত-গৌরব, হৃত-আসন, নত-মস্তক লাজে,
গ্লানি তার মোচন কর ; নর-সমাজ-মাঝে
স্থান দাও, স্থান দাও, দাও দাও স্থান হে, জাগ্রত ভগবান হে !
জনগণ-পথ তব জয়-রথ-চক্র-মুখর আজি,
স্পন্দিত করি দিগ্-দিগন্ত উঠিল শঙ্খ বাজি।
দিন আগত ঐ ভারত তবু কই ?
দৈন্য-জীর্ণ কক্ষ তার, মলিন শীর্ণ আশা,
ত্রাস-রুদ্ধ চিত্ত তার, নাহি নাহি ভাষা।
কোটি-মৌন-কণ্ঠ-পূর্ণ বাণী কর দান হে, জাগ্রত ভগবান হে !
যারা তব শক্তি লভিল নিজ অন্তর মাঝে,
বর্জ্জিল ভয়, অর্জ্জিল জয়, সার্থক হ'ল কাজে।
দিন আগত ঐ ভারত তবু কই ?
আত্ম-অবিশ্বাস তার নাশ' কঠিন ঘাতে,
পুঞ্জিত অবসাদ-ভার হান' অশনি-পাতে,
ছায়া-ভয়-চকিত, মূঢ় ;—করহ পরিত্রাণ হে, জাগ্রত ভগবান হে !

—(Rabindranath Tagore)

95

(Concluding Hymn, Sunday, 31st December, 1933)

জনগণমন-অধিনায়ক জয় হে ভারত-ভাগ্য-বিধাতা !
পঞ্জাব সিন্ধু গুজ্‌রাট মরাঠা দ্রাবিড় উৎকল বঙ্গ,
বিন্ধ্য হিমাচল যমুনা গঙ্গা, উচ্ছল জলধি-তরঙ্গ,
তব শুভ নামে জাগে, তব শুভ আশিষ মাগে,
গাহে তব জয়গাথা।
জনগণ-মঙ্গলদায়ক, জয় হে ভারত-ভাগ্য-বিধাতা !
জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় জয় জয় জয় হে !

অহরহ তব আহ্বান প্রচারিত, শুনি তব উদার বাণী,
হিন্দু বৌদ্ধ শিখ জৈন পারসিক মুসল্‌মান খৃষ্টানী ;
পূরব পশ্চিম আসে, তব সিংহাসন পাশে,
প্রেমহার হয় গাঁথা।
জনগণ-ঐক্যবিধায়ক, জয় হে ভারত-ভাগ্য-বিধাতা !
জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় জয় জয় জয় হে !

পতন-অভ্যুদয় বন্ধুর পন্থা, যুগ যুগ ধাবিত যাত্রী,
হে চির-সারথি, তব রথচক্রে মুখরিত পথ দিন রাত্রি।
দারুণ বিপ্লব মাঝে তব শঙ্খধ্বনি বাজে,
সঙ্কট দুঃখত্রাতা।
জনগণ-পথপরিচায়ক, জয় হে ভারত-ভাগ্য-বিধাতা !
জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় জয় জয় জয় হে !

ঘোর তিমির-ঘন নিবিড় নিশীথে পীড়িত মূর্চ্ছিত দেশে,
জাগ্রত ছিল তব অবিচল মঙ্গল নতনয়নে অনিমেষে।
দুঃস্বপ্নে আতঙ্কে রক্ষা করিলে অঙ্কে,
স্নেহময়ী তুমি মাতা।
জনগণ-দুঃখ-ত্রায়ক, জয় হে ভারত-ভাগ্য-বিধাতা !
জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় জয় জয় জয় হে !

রাত্রি প্রভাতিল, উদিল রবিচ্ছবি পূর্ব্ব উদয়গিরি ভালে,
গাহে বিহঙ্গম, পুণ্যসমীরণ নবজীবন-রস ঢালে।
তব করুণারুণ রাগে, নিদ্রিত ভারত জাগে,
তব চরণে নত মাথা।
জয় জয় জয় হে, জয় রাজেশ্বর ভারত-ভাগ্য-বিধাতা !
জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় হে, জয় জয় জয় জয় হে !

—(Rabindranath Tagore)

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE CONCLUDING HYMN BY TAGORE

(Translation by Indira Devi)

Hail, Holy Spirit ! that dost dwell within
The hearts of men to guide them ! Ruler thou
Of India's destiny. Her diverse realms,
Her hills and streams and surging seas respond
Unto thy call, thy benediction crave,
And sing thee hymns of praise.

O giver of all good, we bow to thee,
O Ruler thou of India's destiny !

Thy call sounds day by day, thy message great
Draws men from East and West around thy throne ;
Hindu and Buddhist. Jain and Mussalman,
Christian and Sikh, in one love-garland weaves.

O unifying Soul, we bow to thee,
O Ruler thou of India's destiny !

Uneven lies our path with rise and fall,
And pilgrims through the ages hasten on.
Thou ever art our charioteer ; thy car
Rolls on its course, resounding night and day.
In perilous times thy holy conch doth blow,
Thou Saviour of mankind !

O leader of all men, we bow to thee,
O Ruler Thou of India's destiny !

Amidst the darkness deep of India's night,
When she lay faint and ill, thy steadfast good
Gazed down on her with ever-wakeful eyes.
Through trembling terrors thou didst keep her safe
Within thine arms, O tender Mother thou !

Protector of all men, we bow to thee,
O Ruler thou of India's destiny !

The night is gone, the morning sun doth shine,
The birds are singing, and the halcyon breeze
Scatters abroad new life, fresh vigour pours,
And at the soft touch of thy golden light
India awakes, and bends her knee to thee.

All hail ! O King of Kings, we bow to thee,
O Ruler thou of India's destiny !

2. ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

RELATING TO THE CELEBRATION IN DECEMBER 1933 BY

THE STUDENTS OF CALCUTTA

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Rev. W. S. Urquhart, M.A., D.Litt., D.D., D.L.

The Abiding Influence of Rammohun Roy

It is a very great privilege and great honour to be asked to take part in these celebrations which have been organised by the students of the University of Calcutta. I consider it very fitting that they should organise such Centenary celebrations. While we cannot claim the Raja as the founder exactly of the University of Calcutta, although he was associated with this historic house in which we meet, we can well say that the foundation of this University was largely due to the inspiration which he gave to his countrymen and to the work undertaken by him. He has been described by Dr. Brajendra Seal as a multifarious personality, and when we read his works, when we ponder over the record of his life, we can see that that description is accurate. And because the Raja's was a multifarious personality, it is necessary that for its interpretation men should come forward to discuss it from many points of view, and should consider him from different angles. It is only in this way that we can hope to understand the man who is, I think, the heritage of not one nation but of all humanity.

Here lies the special reason for organising a Centenary celebration in honour of the memory of the Raja. Some of you know, and many of you remember, that recently we celebrated the Centenary of the foundation of the Scottish Church College. Between the founder of that College and Raja Rammohun Roy there was a very close connection. When Dr. Alexander Duff came to Calcutta, he consulted many people as to what kind of work he should do. He went out to the missionaries of Serampore. Dr. Carey advised him to settle in Calcutta and undertake educational work of the kind with which his name was afterwards associated. Having formed his resolution he immediately went to see the great reformer, the great scholar Raja Rammohun, and from him he received the greatest encouragement. In the conditions prevailing at that time, Dr. Duff found it difficult to get a building in which he might start his College, and it was Raja Rammohun who provided him with the first accommodation for his educational work. He had just erected a hall in connection with the earlier organisation of the Brahmo Samaj. The room in which he had

started work of that Church was no longer found adequate, and the Raja was glad to make it over to Dr. Duff to enable him to lay the foundation of the modern educational system of Bengal. Throughout his life, the Raja kept up the closest co-operation with Dr. Duff. Dr. Duff came to take up his residence on the south side of the old City College building, and in proximity to the original St. Paul's College, and in near neighbourhood to our University of Calcutta.

The Raja has been described as the man who initiated and laid the foundation of all the modern movements for the alleviation of our people, and it is but right that we should pause and recollect the incidents of a hundred years back, as we are sure to profit by reflecting on the wonderful characteristics of this great man.

It is said sometimes, and it has been recently said, that we have been guilty of showing disrespect to those who are superior to ourselves by repudiating them. In all pilgrimages to things of the past there has been this danger that we may fail to realise our responsibilities in these modern days.

There is a beautiful thought in a modern writer, that the welfare of those who have gone depends upon the recollection of those who succeed them. If there is any truth in that theory, I think that it gives us an additional incentive for the celebration of this Centenary, because we feel that we are contributing something to the well-being of those who have gone from us. That may be a sentimental aspect of the matter, but it certainly is an additional reason why we should gather together in full strength for the Centenary celebration in honour of the memory of this great man. Who knows that we may not be contributing some spiritual energy to his continuing existence? I think such a conception is full of beauty.

This man whose Centenary we celebrate today is certainly worthy of respect, as it has been said, he "laid the foundation of all modern movements for the alleviation of our people." If we read an account of his life we find that he had to fight against many established customs, and it might be said that one great aim of his life was to deliver his fellow-beings from the tyranny of decadent traditions.

It has been truly said that he fought against forms of decadent religious worship and custom, and did his best to free himself and free his associates from them. We must remember that facing of opposition was by no means the only characteristic of his life as a whole. He soon passed through it, and his contribution to our development became positive rather than negative. He studied with assiduity and with great earnestness all forms of religion, and as a magnet he seemed to be able to draw from each of them much of value. Then having gathered their values together, he tried to make a synthesis out of all the different elements from which he could draw inspiration. He was tolerant and liberal-minded; but

his was not a facile toleration. It was not that toleration which was able to tolerate everything. It had certain limitations. And whenever toleration meant offence against the rights and liberties of his countrymen and encouragement of offences against justice, the Raja had nothing to do with that. He said, "No, these must not be I can receive only those which stand for righteousness and truth."

He tried to draw out from the past all the inspiration he could get, and applied that inspiration to the reformation of that society in which he found himself. His devotion to the past and his spirituality did not consist in withdrawing from the world. On the other hand, he was of opinion that inspiration for the eternal verities of life could be drawn from this world.

We have heard of his learning. We have heard how he went to the treasures of the past and brought out the wisdom that was found in them. But his learning did not degenerate into dilettantism or assume a scholastic stiffness. It became for him the inspiration of an eminently practical man, to find truth in religion, truth in science, and truth in philosophy. He devoted all his energies to the task of social reform, to the task of opposition to the practices of idolatry. And for this he studied the gross abuses which he found in society, and did his best to put an end to all those.

There is no one whose name is associated more closely and more honourably with the fight against the practice of *Suttee*. He also set his hand to all measures for the emancipation of women from the disabilities which they suffered. He then set himself to the task of educational reform. Perhaps many people would say at the present day that if he had not lent his support to Macaulay, it would have been better for education today. Whatever may be the truth of this opinion, we are to remember this, that along with the encouragement of Western education he combined an intense admiration and diligent study of the oriental languages.

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Dr. P. G. Bridge

The Dynamic in the Social Reform Movement initiated by Raja Rammohun Roy.

Hundred years ago, an inspired prophet appeared, like a star, in the firmament of India's clouded world. India was wrapped up in clouds of moral, social and religious degraded practices. The sun shone brightly as usual in the physical world, but in the moral, social and religious world, the sun of righteousness was obscured by customs and traditions, men's inventions, which

instead of rightening the relationships between man and man, and between man and God, obscured them, depriving large number of human beings of their rights to truth and social justice. India has had prophets in the past—men imbued with the Spirit of God and the love of mankind—who denounced social injustices and recalled men to a real love of God and man. Kabir, to mention only one, stands out as a real prophet of India. Raja Rammohun Roy is the prophet of the new India. His voice still re-echoes in the whole of India, calling the nation to the removal of social injustices and of religious degradations.

The actual achievements by Raja Rammohun Roy in the field of social reform and religion are too well known to require detailed mention at this stage. What concerns us vitally is the dynamic power which was both an inspiration and strength to him in the titanic struggle he had to carry on with the forces of injustice and oppression. The celebration of this Centenary ought to be a great deal more than the spectator's satisfaction in watching a contest, praiseworthy as this satisfaction may be. We should jump into the arena, and struggle there against all the forces of evil.

The motive force in all the efforts made by Raja Rammohun Roy for the amelioration of the social condition of his fellowmen was religion. In conversation with Dr. Alexander Duff, the reformer is reported to have said:—"All true education ought to be religious, since the object was not merely to give information, but to develop and regulate all the powers of the mind, the emotions, and the workings of the conscience."

His universal sympathy was the outcome of his universal religion. The sufferings, whether physical or moral, of mankind oppressed him. He could have truly said that he suffered with the oppressed, the downtrodden and the outcast. As an instance of his wide sympathies, the case of his reaction to the news of the freedom achieved by the Spanish-speaking republics could be cited. "The lively interest Rammohun took in the progress of South American emancipation, eminently marks the greatness and benevolence of his mind." A note of a truly great mind is sensibility to others' pain and suffering. The narrow, parochial mind is affected by the sorrows and pains of those closely related to him, of father and mother and sister or brother. It is kinship which reacts to the sight of sorrow in this case. The mind has not risen to the level of humanism; still less has the mind discovered that kinship of souls, the divine image in every human soul, which in St. Tolin's language, is the dynamic of Christian law and humanism. What distinguishes Rammohun Roy from lesser philanthropists is his enthusiasm for humanity.

The Rev. Dr. MacNicol in his book "The Making of Modern India" has a penetrating account of the work of Raja Rammohun Roy. The great religious reformers—those whose work lasts, are "men in whom has awakened a sense of their own personal need of

a great personal Helper, and who summon men back to Him." And applying this to Rammohun Roy he says, "He is a great religious messenger because of his intense conviction of the unity and spirituality of God, a conviction that he owed to no human teaching, and yet so deep and strong that rather than surrender it, he went forth, when only sixteen years of age, from his father's house, a homeless and a friendless wanderer." Here we touch the dynamic power of his long campaign of social reform and of religious renaissance. He felt an intense personal need of a Helper. He found that in the one supreme Ruler of the Universe.

Dr. George Smith in his biography of the great Scotch Missionary Alexander Duff has a striking remark about the way in which the Raja was spending his declining years: "In a pleasant garden house in the leafy suburbs of Calcutta, Raja Rammohun Roy, then 56 years of age, was spending his declining days in meditation on divine truth." ... Like the fiery prophets of Israel whose eyes were constantly lifted to the tops of the hills from which cometh power, strength, and salvation, the Raja was absorbed in the meditation of divine truth.

That is the legacy of the Raja to the present generation, and indeed, to all generations. Our generation has distinguished itself by the enormous advance made in social service. The average young man is full of enthusiasm for the amelioration of the condition of the poor and the down-trodden. He dreams of social service. He fancies himself as an apostle of social service. Raja Rammohun Roy spent his days in meditation on divine truth, "broken only by works of practical benevolence among his countrymen." No social reformer is able to carry on his work successfully and for a long period of time who does not nourish his life in the fresh air of the mountain-tops of communion with divine Truth. "Religion was to him not an intellectual curiosity, but a necessity of life."

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Dr. C. Riaudo

of the Italian Seminary, who was present at the Preliminary Meeting held at the Senate House, Calcutta, on 18th February 1933.

A Tribute From Italy

Some of the eulogies dedicated to the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy resemble to such an extent, both in poetic lyricism and philosophic insight, the devoted homage that great men only can offer to a departed Genius, that one feels reluctant to add one word more; but would rather concentrate his thoughts in silent meditation.

Still, as an Italian, I cannot help expressing my feelings of gratitude, nay, the gratitude of my whole country, to the memory of the man, whose sentiments and passions were, a hundred years ago, in sympathy with those of my oppressed countrymen.

In his days, Italy was making most heroic efforts to throw off the burden of servitude that had been imposed on her ever since the fall of the Roman Empire; and we were all gathering the spiritual strength that had been accumulated and transmitted to us by our ancestors, in order to attain our liberty, and make of Italy a name no longer 'vano senza soggetto.'

I do not know how far my countrymen of those days were aware of this magnanimous Indian brother who was so anxiously following their tragic and sublime attempts; most of them, perhaps, were so deeply taken in and blinded by their patriotic passion that nothing but the thought of a free Italy could find access to their minds. And yet, how very alike to his was the desire for freedom that possessed his Italian contemporaries, Alfieri, Foscolo, Mazzini!

The Papal seat had given us a religion, and Dante, five hundred years before, a national language, from the slopes of the Alps down to Sicily. Fighting heroes only were wanted: and they too began to come out of the very soil, as from a divine source, with amazing abundance, originating first from the kingdom of Naples, just where the sympathetic eyes of Raja Rammohun Roy were turned to.

In the region of Naples, soon after 1815, the society called 'Carbonari' was founded, and it became at once so popular that in 1820–1821 the Neapolitan Carbonari insurged against the Bourbon king of Naples, claiming a constitution, equality among all classes, and the right to the people to decide their own destiny.

This first insurrection was immediately and savagely repressed: Morelli and Silvati, two of the people's leaders, mounted the gallows. It is then that the solitary gigantic voice of Raja Rammohun Roy was heard: "My mind is oppressed by the late news from Europe. ... I consider the cause of Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies as ours."

But the revolt, so tragically born and suppressed in Naples, spread through the whole of the country. Insurrection was followed by insurrection in Milan, Modena, Cotrone, Rome, Palermo, Venice; martyrs were followed by martyrs, and war by war, without interruption for 50 years, until Rome could be proclaimed the Capital of Italy in 1870.

One hundred years have gone by since the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, and 63 since the unification of Italy. Italy of 1933, the proud heiress to the imperishable glory of Rome, pays her tribute of gratitude to the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy, and associates his name to those of Morelli and Silvati.

A philosopher, a reformer, a patriot, the world was his country, India his mother.

As a philosopher, though his universal religious conception is still too far out of men's reach to become a universal acquisition, he has showed his countrymen that the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran are not barriers to unity, meeting, as they do, on their highest plane of perfection.

As a reformer, he indomitably set out to demolish the caste system and the *Suttee* practice, to uplift womankind and improve learning among all classes, to spread the knowledge of the one English language from the slopes of Himalayas to Cape Comorin, enabling his countrymen to become more and more a vital and active part of the government machine.

As a result of his masterful unifying power both as philosopher and as reformer, he is the Patriot whom India has to look to as her purest and most perfect symbol.

In February 1933 at the Senate House in Calcutta I saw some 400 leading men of India (among whom several were of world-wide repute) assembled to organize the Rammohun Roy Centenary. I wish to India that for the next celebration there may assemble not 400 leading men only, but thousands of her people, from the greatest to the humblest, from the remotest villages as from the biggest towns, to clearly prove that his mind and aims have become a symbol of worship even in the poorest hut. So much is due to this Genius, who, as such, claims to be made the property of the entire population of India.

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Hazari Prasad Dvivedi

of Santiniketan

হিন্দী ভাষায় রামমোহন

(Rammohun and the Hindi Language)

হিন্দী গদ্যের খুব বিস্তৃত পুরাতন ইতিহাস নাই। পুরাতন হিন্দী সাহিত্যে দেখিতে গেলে দেখা যায় 'দেব' প্রভৃতি কয়েক জন কবি কিছু গদ্য লিখিয়াছেন, কিন্তু তাহা অতি সামান্য। কয়েকটি খুব প্রসিদ্ধ গ্রন্থের টীকা ব্রজভাষা গদ্যে লেখা হইয়াছে ; তাহা ছাড়া অধ্যাপক ক্ষিতিমোহন সেন মহাশয় দাদুপন্থী সাধকদের কয়েকটি গদ্য পুস্তকের সন্ধান পাইয়াছেন। 'জটমল' নামক একজন গদ্য লেখকের পুস্তকের আলোচনা মিশ্র বন্ধুরা করিয়াছেন, কিন্তু উক্ত লেখকের বংশধর শ্রীপূরণচন্দ্র নাহর মহাশয় বলিয়াছেন যে জটমলের মূল বইখানি গদ্যে নয়, পদ্যে। "কাশী নাগরী প্রচারিণী সভার" রিপোর্টের মধ্যে আরও কয়েকটি গদ্য পুস্তকের নাম পাওয়া যায়। কিন্তু যে ভাষা নিজের প্রাচীন সাহিত্যের বিপুলতায় উত্তর ভারতের সর্ব্বশ্রেষ্ঠ ভাষা বলিয়া গণ্য হয়, তাহার সাহিত্যের ৮০০ বৎসর ব্যাপী বিরাট ইতিহাসে এইটুকু গদ্য যে নিতান্ত অল্প, তাহা না বলিলেও চলে।

উপরে যে গদ্যের কথা বলা গেল, সে গদ্য আজকালকার হিন্দী গদ্য নয়। লল্লুজী লালকেই বর্ত্তমান যুগের হিন্দী গদ্যের প্রথম লেখক বলিয়া অনেকে মনে করেন। ইনি ফোর্ট উইলিয়াম কলেজের অধ্যাপক ছিলেন, এবং সেই সূত্রে 'প্রেমসাগর' নামে একটি গদ্য গ্রন্থ লেখেন। সদল মিশ্র নামে আর একজন অধ্যাপকও সেই কলেজে অধ্যাপনা করিতেন। তিনি

'নাচিকেতোপাখ্যান' নামে আর একটি গদ্য গ্রন্থ লেখেন। এই দুইখানি বই ইং ১৮০১ খৃষ্টাব্দে লেখা হয়। তাহার মধ্যেও শুধু 'প্রেমসাগর' ইং ১৮০৭ সালে ছাপা হয়। কিন্তু ইহাদের পূর্ব্বে মুন্‌শী সদাসুখ লাল বলিয়া আর একজন লেখক সমগ্র ভাগবতের হিন্দী গদ্য অনুবাদ করিয়াছিলেন। এই অনুবাদের নাম 'সুখসাগর'। সুখসাগর যদিও হিন্দী ভাষাতে লেখা হইয়াছিল, তবুও উহার লিপি ছিল পারসী। ফোর্ট উইলিয়ামের অধ্যাপকদের পরে মুন্‌শী ইন্‌শা অল্লা খাঁ নামক জনৈক মুসলমান ভদ্রলোকের হিন্দী গদ্য পাওয়া যায়। ইনি "রাণী কেতকী কী কহানী" নামে একটি কথাপুস্তক লেখেন। তার ভাষার সম্বন্ধে তাঁহার প্রতিজ্ঞা ছিল যে তাহাতে একটিও আরবী কিংবা পারসী শব্দ লেখা হইবে না। কিন্তু সেই পুস্তকও উর্দু অক্ষরেই লেখা হইয়াছিল। ১৮১০-১১ সালের কাছাকাছি ইন্‌শা অল্লা খাঁ তাঁহার পুস্তকটি প্রণয়ন করেন। আমরা তাঁহার সঠিক সময়ের সম্বন্ধে বিশেষ কিছু জানি না। তবে, ১৮৫২ খৃষ্টীয় সালে বেঙ্গল এসিয়াটিক সোসাইটির জর্নেলে ধারাবাহিক রূপে "রাণী কেতকী কী কহানী" ছাপান আরম্ভ হইয়া গিয়াছিল। এই বই ১৮৫৫ খৃষ্টাব্দ পর্য্যন্ত প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল। এই জর্নেলেও এই পুস্তকের লিপি পারসীই ছিল।

সকলেই মনে করেন যে তাহার পর ৬০ বৎসর পর্য্যন্ত হিন্দী গদ্যের আর কোনও পুঁথিপাতি পাওয়া যায় নাই। এই পর্য্যন্ত হিন্দী গদ্যের ঐতিহাসিকেরা একস্বরে এই কথাই বলিয়া আসিয়াছেন। কিছুদিন হইল রাজা রামমোহনের জীবনচরিত এবং গ্রন্থাদি আলোচনা করিতে গিয়া দেখি, আমাদের এই বিশ্বাস ভুল। কারণ, রাজা রামমোহন ১৮১৫ খৃষ্টাব্দে বেদান্ত-সূত্রের হিন্দী অনুবাদ প্রকাশিত করিয়াছিলেন। ১৮১৬ খৃষ্টাব্দে তাঁহার আর একটি ক্ষুদ্র পুস্তিকা হিন্দীতে প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল। এই পুস্তিকার বিষয় ছিল কাশীর সুপ্রসিদ্ধ পণ্ডিত "সুব্রহ্মণ্য শাস্ত্রীর সহিত শাস্ত্রার্থ*।" এই শাস্ত্রার্থটি হইয়াছিল বিহারীলাল চৌবের কলিকাতার বাড়ীতে। পরবর্ত্তী সাহিত্যে অনুসন্ধান করিয়া দেখিলাম, এই বিহারীলাল চৌবে সুপ্রসিদ্ধ ভারতেন্দু হরিশ্চন্দ্রের কবিমণ্ডলের একজন প্রবীণ কবি ছিলেন।

এই কথা মনে রাখিতে হইবে যে, রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের হিন্দী বেদান্তসূত্র যে বৎসরে প্রকাশিত হয়, তাহার ঠিক আট বৎসর পূর্ব্বে লল্লুজীর 'প্রেমসাগর' প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল। অর্থাৎ রাজা রামমোহনের হিন্দী পুস্তক প্রকাশিত হইবার পূর্ব্বে হিন্দী ভাষায় এই যুগের গদ্যে একটি মাত্র পুস্তক প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল। লেখন-ক্রমানুসারে যদি দেখা যায়, তাহা হইলেও হিন্দী গদ্যে রাজা রামমোহন অতি উচ্চ ও বিশিষ্ট স্থানের অধিকারী। কারণ, এই পর্য্যন্ত তাঁহার পূর্ব্ববর্ত্তী চারি জন হিন্দী গদ্য লেখকের নাম পাওয়া যায়; এই চারি জনের মধ্যেও দুই জনের ভাষা যদিও হিন্দী, তাঁহারা নিজ নিজ গ্রন্থ পারসী অক্ষরে লিখিয়াছিলেন। কালক্রমানুসারে রাজা পর্য্যন্ত গদ্য লেখকের ক্রম এই :—

* হিন্দী ভাষায় 'শাস্ত্রার্থ' শব্দের অর্থ, বিচার।—EDITOR.

সদাসুখলাল	(১৭৮৩ খৃঃ)	পারসী লিপি
লল্লুজী	(১৮০১ ")	দেব নাগরী লিপি
সদল মিশ্র	(১৮০১ ")	"
ইন্‌শা অল্লা খাঁ	(১৮১০ ?)	পারসী লিপি
রাজা রামমোহন	(১৮১৫ ")	দেবনাগরী লিপি

এই কথা মনে রাখিতে হইবে যে, ভাষার সঙ্গে লিপির সম্বন্ধ অতি ঘনিষ্ঠ। বস্তুতঃ যাঁহারা দেবনাগরী আশ্রয় করিয়া হিন্দী লিখিয়াছিলেন, তাঁহারাই বর্ত্তমান হিন্দী গদ্যের যথার্থ পথপ্রদর্শক। এই কালক্রমানুসারে রামমোহন হইলেন এই যুগে তৃতীয় হিন্দী গদ্যলেখক। কিন্তু তাঁহার লিখিত হিন্দী ভাষার মহত্ত্ব আরও বাড়িয়া যায়, যখন উপলব্ধি করি যে ফোর্ট উইলিয়ামের অধ্যাপকেরা কেবল চাকরীর দায়ে পড়িয়া গদ্য লিখিতে বাধ্য হইয়াছিলেন; কিন্তু রাজাই ছিলেন বর্ত্তমান হিন্দী ভাষায় দেবনাগরী লিপির প্রথম স্বেচ্ছাপ্রবৃত্ত লেখক।

রাজা রামমোহন রায় জীবনের প্রারম্ভ কাল হিন্দী-ভাষী নগরেই কাটাইয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার শিক্ষা-কালের বেশী ভাগ সময় পাটনা এবং কাশীতেই ব্যয়িত হইয়াছিল। ইহার পরেও তিনি মুর্শিদাবাদে থাকিতেন। শ্রীযুত সুনীতিকুমার চট্টোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় দেখাইয়াছেন যে, সে যুগে মুর্শিদাবাদ এবং ঢাকাতে হিন্দুস্থানী ভাষা 'ফ্যাশনেব্‌ল্' ভাষা বলিয়া গণ্য হইত। যাহাই হউক, রামমোহনের বাল্যজীবন হিন্দী-ভাষী নগরেই ব্যতীত হইয়াছিল। তাঁহার ভাষাতেও এই দুই নগরের ভাষার প্রভাব রহিয়া গিয়াছে। রাজার প্রকাশিত বেদান্তসূত্রের হিন্দী অনুবাদ আমি দেখি নাই। শ্রদ্ধেয় ক্ষিতি বাবুর মুখে শুনিয়াছি যে তিনি এই অনুবাদখানি মির্জ্জাপুরের জনৈক ভদ্রলোকের কাছে দেখিয়াছিলেন। রামমোহন-গ্রন্থাবলীতে এই পুস্তকের সংগ্রহ নাই। সংগ্রহ-কর্ত্তারা এই গ্রন্থখানির মহত্ত্ব একেবারেই বুঝিতে পারেন নাই। গ্রন্থাবলীতে হিন্দীতে লেখা একটি ক্ষুদ্র পুস্তিকা মাত্র দেখা যায়, যাহা আশ্রয় করিয়া এই আলোচনা করা গেল। শুনিয়াছি, তিনি আরও কয়েকখানি হিন্দী পুস্তিকা প্রকাশিত করিয়াছিলেন। গ্রন্থাবলীতে যে পুস্তিকা সংগৃহীত আছে, তাহার ভাষার বিশেষত্ব সম্বন্ধে আমি বিস্তৃত ভাবে অন্য স্থানে বিচার করিয়াছি ('বিশাল ভারত', ডিসেম্বর ১৯৩৩, কলিকাতা)। এইখানে সংক্ষেপে এইটুকু মাত্র বলিতে চাই যে রাজা রামমোহনের হিন্দী "বাঙ্গালী হিন্দী" নয়। তাহা ব্যাকরণ হিসাবে খুব বিশুদ্ধ। যেটুকু ত্রুটি আছে তাহাও তাঁহার নিজের দোষে নয়। তিনি কাশীতে শিক্ষা পাইয়াছিলেন। সেখানকার পণ্ডিত-মণ্ডলীর মধ্যে যেরূপ ভাষা প্রচলিত ছিল, রাজা অবিকল সেইরূপ ভাষাই লিখিয়াছেন। অধুনাতন হিন্দী গদ্যে যে রকম বানান ব্যবহার করা হয়, রামমোহনের বানানে তাহা হইতে একটু প্রভেদ দৃষ্ট হয়। তাহা কতকটা পরিমাণে বাংলা বানানের মতন দেখায়। তিনি 'করনে'র স্থানে 'করণে' লিখিয়াছেন। এই রীতি আজকাল বাংলা

বানানে দেখা যায়। বর্ত্তমান বাংলাতে 'রানী' না লিখিয়া লেখা হয় 'রাণী', অর্থাৎ উচ্চারণে না থাকিলেও লেখাতে সংস্কৃতের ণত্ব-বিধানের নিয়ম পালন করা হয়। রাজা রামমোহন এই নিয়মেই লিখিয়াছেন। কিন্তু সে জন্য তাঁহাকে দোষ দেওয়া যায় না। কারণ তাঁহার হিন্দী পুস্তক প্রকাশিত হইবার পূর্ব্বে একখানি মাত্র হিন্দী গদ্য পুস্তক মুদ্রিত হইয়াছিল। সে বিষয়েও একটু ভাবিবার আছে। কে জানে তিনি মুদ্রিত 'প্রেমসাগর' বইখানি আদৌ দেখিতে পাইয়াছিলেন কিনা।

বেদান্তসূত্রের ইংরাজী অনুবাদের ভূমিকাতে তিনি লিখিয়াছিলেন যে "এক দিন আসিবে, যখন আমার এই বিনম্র প্রযত্নসকল ন্যায় দৃষ্টিতে বিচারিত হইবে, এবং সম্ভবতঃ কৃতজ্ঞতার সহিত স্বীকৃত হইবে।" এখন আর এই কথা বলিবার প্রয়োজন নাই যে সেইদিন ইতিপূর্ব্বেই আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইয়াছে। তাঁহার ভবিষ্যদ্বাণী হইতে 'সম্ভবতঃ' শব্দ এখন আপনিই মুছিয়া গিয়াছে। সমাজ ও ধর্ম্ম প্রভৃতি নানা ক্ষেত্রে রামমোহনের সাধনা আজ সকলেই কৃতজ্ঞভাবে স্বীকার করিয়াছেন। আজ ভক্তিভরে আমরা তাঁহার হিন্দী ভাষা সম্বন্ধীয় সাধনাও কৃতজ্ঞতার সহিত স্বীকার করিতেছি।

'বিশাল ভারতের' উক্ত প্রবন্ধে আমি সে যুগের ইউরোপীয় বৈয়াকরণদের লিখিত ভাষা উদ্ধৃত করিয়া দেখাইয়াছি যে সে-ভাষা কি রকম অশুদ্ধ এবং বিশ্রী ছিল। রাজা রামমোহনের হিন্দীর কাছে এই বৈয়াকরণদের হিন্দী নিতান্ত হাস্যাস্পদ। রাজার অর্দ্ধশতাব্দী পরে বাঙ্গালী সংবাদপত্রকাররা যেরূপ হিন্দী লিখিয়াছিলেন, তাহা আরও অদ্ভুত। তাহাতে না আছে কোনও শুদ্ধাশুদ্ধির বিচার, না আছে ভাষার সৌন্দর্য্যের দিকে কোনও দৃষ্টি। রাজার হিন্দী অতি ললিত এবং প্রাঞ্জল। তাঁহার ৬৬ বৎসর পরে স্বামী দয়ানন্দের সেই বিষয় প্রতিপাদক গদ্যের সহিত নিঃসঙ্কোচে তাঁহার ভাষার তুলনা করিতে পারা যায়। যে সব ত্রুটি সেই যুগে রাজার হিন্দীতে অগত্যা রহিয়া গিয়াছিল, প্রায় সেই সব ত্রুটি তাঁহার ৭০ বৎসর পরে লিখিত জৈন সাধু আত্মানন্দের গদ্যের মধ্যেও দেখিতে পাই। এই সব কথা ভাবিয়া দেখিলে রামমোহনের যুগে তাঁহার হিন্দীর বিশিষ্টতা ও উৎকর্ষ দেখিয়া বিস্মিত হইতে হয়।

যে পবিত্র মনীষা ভারতের রাজনীতিগত সমাজগত এবং ধর্ম্মগত প্রভৃতি বিবিধ সংস্কারের মহত্ত্ব ও ভবিষ্যৎ পন্থা চিন্তা করিতে পারিয়াছিল, সেই ভবিষ্যদ্দর্শী মনীষা ভারতের কেন্দ্রীয় ভাষা হিন্দীর মহিমাও বুঝিতে পারিয়াছিল। তখন 'রাষ্ট্র ভাষা' বলিয়া কোনও শব্দ কেহ শোনে নাই; শুনিয়াছিল শুধু সেই মহাপুরুষের মহিমাশালী শ্রবণ। দুঃখের বিষয়, এতদিন তাঁহার এই মহান্ উদ্যোগ কেহই লক্ষ্য করেন নাই; তাহার ফলে বেদান্তসূত্রের প্রথম হিন্দী ভাষান্তর প্রায় লুপ্ত হইয়াছে। সে পুস্তকখানি খুঁজিয়া এখন প্রকাশিত করা তাঁহার সর্ব্বশ্রেষ্ঠ স্মৃতিরক্ষার মধ্যে অন্যতম হইবে।

3. ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

RELATING TO CELEBRATIONS IN

THE PROVINCES AND STATES

OF INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON.

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The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Coimbatore

27th September, 1933.

To Rammohun religion was the central interest, and therefore quite early, much earlier than in the case of other youths, he began to think of the great problems of God and of the way He should be worshipped by men.

His mind seems to have been of a very capacious order. No branch of knowledge, but was familiar to him. His special interest was in religion. His idea was that under the surface of all the different established religions, there was a common core of spirituality, of truth, which alone was the vital thing. Any one who, not understanding this, or understanding this only partially, let his life linger amongst the superficialities and observances of the various religions, denied himself true contact with God. And so throughout his life, Rammohun laboured to establish the nature and scope of this inner core. Towards the end of his life, in order to give an objective form to these teachings of his, and to provide a home where people of his way of thought might meet and carry on their prayers in their own way, he founded what is now known as the Brahmo Samaj.

Besides this religious activity, there were many other things to which Rammohun devoted himself. The institution of *Sati* had got a great hold on the Bengali mind. It was much more prevalent there at that time than it was over the rest of India. Proof of it is to be found today in the stray cases that are reported even nowadays of an actual *Sati* having been performed, or an attempt at it having been made. It was quite an extraordinary grip that this idea had on the Bengali woman. Even in this sphere Rammohun Roy's labours were not destined to bear fruit easily or quickly. It was not until the year 1829 in Lord William Bentinck's time that the reform was actually promulgated as a decree of the Government.

But perhaps the most interesting episode in his life was connected with the freedom of the Press. In the interregnum between Lord Hastings and Lord Amherst, the Senior Member of the Council, Mr. Adam, acted as Governor-General. In his time there was published in Calcutta a paper called the *Calcutta Journal*. Its editor was J. Silk Buckingham. Once an ecclesiastic of the Scottish Church named Rev. Bryce took the very remarkable step of changing his profession. We do not hear nowadays of a Bishop becoming a Collector. But this gentleman performed an exploit of that kind. He changed over from his ecclesiastical office, and took the place of Clerk of Stationery under the East India Company. Mr. Silk Buckingham grew indignant. He wrote in his paper that this conduct was unbecoming, and that Government should not have given the job to him,—a perfectly legitimate criticism in these days. But it was too much for Mr. Adam, the acting Governor-General. He straightway ordered that Mr. Silk Buckingham should leave India within the space of two months, and if he was found in India after that time, he would be deported. Not content with that, the next day he suppressed this newspaper, and promulgated a rule and ordinance that all newspapers and printing establishments should take out licences before the papers could be published.

This restriction on the freedom of the Press excited a great deal of criticism at the time. Raja Rammohun Roy and his friends straightway prepared a great petition to His Majesty in England. This petition is commonly regarded as the Raja's masterpiece. It was an eloquent defence of the freedom of the Press; and therefore it has been compared to the most famous plea for the establishment of unlicensed printing in England, Milton's great work, known by the unpronounceable name of *Areopagitica*. It is a rare piece of literature. The love of liberty which it breathes is of the most exalted kind. Rammohun's appeal from the decision of the Chief Judge of the Calcutta High Court is regarded as the *Areopagitica* of India. It contains 55 paragraphs of glowing prose. Even today they are worth reading; for journalists have to carry on work under conditions which make it difficult, and their criticism of affairs is not free, spontaneous and helpful. In those days the whole subject was discussed by Rammohun Roy in terms which would be applicable today.

The subsequent history of that matter might be told in a few words. The petition to His Majesty had no effect at all, and the Press continued in shackles for a period of 12 to 13 years thereafter. It was in another interregnum that another temporary Governor-General, Sir Charles Metcalfe, rescinded the restriction, and the Press became once more free.

Rammohun Roy, in order to find a home where the one common God of all could be worshipped, free of ritual, free of all ceremony, and free of all particularities, founded the Brahmo Samaj.

The document by which he endowed this church and dedicated it to the public is very interesting, and furnishes abundant proof of the breadth of view that he took, and the anxiety that he had that his church should really be a place of reconciliation of all creeds, that it should be a place where God would be approached in the purest and simplest manner.

Love of liberty was one of his most remarkable qualities. There is a story how, when he was in England, and when the Reform Bill of 1832 was being discussed in Parliament, he watched the proceedings with the greatest interest, and told his friends that he would have nothing to do with England thereafter if that Bill did not go through Parliament. It did go through, and Raja Rammohun Roy lived long enough to see the first Parliament under the new regime.

In England the Court of Directors could not recognise his deputation as an Envoy of the Emperor of Delhi. But they were so anxious to show their high regard for the personality of Raja Rammohun Roy that they organised a public dinner in his honour. He was lionised during his brief stay there. He saw the King more than once. That was a great thing in those days, and it was proof of the hospitality and the appreciation of worth characteristic of the British race.

He is regarded commonly as the Maker of Modern India. That designation is no over-statement. The fact that he belonged to Bengal, that all his time was spent there, need not prevent us from appreciating the comprehensiveness of his outlook, and the rare quality of his patriotism. In the Evidence that he gave before the Select Committee of Parliament (which every 20 years inquired into the affairs of India) for the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, he put in three or four Memoranda which are still cherished as monuments of learning and store-houses of accurate knowledge of Indian conditions.—(Abridged from *the Hindu*, Madras.)

101

Sir Shanmukham Chetty, K. C. I. E.

President, Legislative Assembly, Delhi.

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Delhi

18th December, 1933.

Sir Shanmukham Chetty, in his Presidential address said that if anybody would look into the history of the world, he would find periods when thoughts and ideas underwent revolution, and in such periods there arrived, under the providence of God, men with new ideals and new aspirations. The period preceding the advent of Raja Rammohun Roy was a period of confusion in Indian history. Raja Rammohun marked a new era in the cultural and political history of India. It was his genius that constructed the cultural bridge between India and the West, which had then begun to approach each other.

Sir Shanmukham went on to speak of the great work Raja Rammohun Roy did for social reform, and said that it was he who first pointed out the need for removing the accumulated social rot of the ages. Sir Shanmukham concluded : "We should not forget to pay our debt to the genius of this great soul, who not only lived for the uplift of his country in all respects, but also died for it."

102

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, K.C.I.E., O.B.E., M.L.A.

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, New Delhi

16th December, 1933.

In modern times memory is proverbially short, and if all over India people are meeting to remember one who died a hundred years ago, we must take it for granted that he must be exceptionally great in his own country. Rammohun Roy was a social reformer. We have social reformers even today, and will continue to have them even in the future ; but it is a hundred years since Rammohun foresaw the future of his country, and was able to lead the way to India's greatness, which, he saw, could not be achieved till all India was united.

It was Rammohun Roy who protested against *Sati*, and asked Government for legislation to put an end to that custom. We hope that in the very near future, Indians will no longer have to approach a foreign government for social legislation, but would have the power to legislate social reforms on their own initiative. If we do not get social reforms then, the fault would be our own.

Rammohun Roy is one of the greatest men that India has ever produced, and we hope and pray that India would continue to produce many more Rammohun Roys for the uplift of the country and its teeming millions.

103

Sir C. V. Raman

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Bangalore

27th September, 1933.

Rammohun Roy is the founder of a community, which though numerically small, has yet exercised great influence on present-day India. One has only to read the barest account of the life of Rammohun Roy to realise that he was truly a remarkable man. At the present day, much of what he had done might appear a little obvious. But to realise the value of the Raja's work, one must transport one's self to the days when he lived,—a period when western education

had yet made no kind of impression in India. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore truly summed up the Raja's position in modern India, when he said that "Rammohun Roy was the first and the greatest of the Indians of Modern India".

One of the most striking differences between Bengal and South India is that in Bengal they love to honour their great men. During the last 4 or 5 years, I was frequently called upon to speak on this or that anniversary or centenary. Such a spirit is not to be found in South India. I sometimes wonder why nothing of the kind is done to honour great South Indians. I would only mention Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, who has transformed Mysore. This instance is only typical.

Rammohun Roy was a great Indian, and his message was one that would appeal to every community, every province, and every man and woman in India. His message has a significance. It is the true voice of a new India trying to be heard in every nook and corner, viz. to banish suspicion, superstition and obscurantism. I do not think that even at the present day the need for that message has disappeared. We in India are, in many matters, living still back in the 18th century. The hundred years of progress of Rammohun Roy's influence has not touched us in many matters. We have yet to realise that if India is to hold her own, we should have no hesitation in sternly rejecting everything, which, though sanctified by time, is nevertheless something we should be ashamed of. One can notice in our present social and religious belief many an attitude and habit which are wholly unjustifiable. I would only mention the attitude of orthodox men in regard to the rights of women. The advocate of orthodoxy shouts in horror when the rights of women are sought to be improved. So long as there are such men who exercise their influence on the minds of the country, it would be very necessary to recall the lesson of Rammohun Roy, and his message is very necessary to raise Indians from this quagmire of superstition and ignorance.

About the religious activities of Rammohun Roy I would not speak. Personally I think that the less of religion we have, the better we all shall be.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

104

Sir P. Sivaswami Iyer

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Madras

27th September, 1933.

Raja Rammohun was one of the earliest and finest products of the Renaissance movement in India, which owes its origin to the impact of Western thought and culture upon the mind of India. Great as was his work as the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, noble as was his attempt to find a common platform for different religions, high as was his endeavour to find the unity of all faiths, these

were not his only aims or work in life. He set before himself the ideal of quickening the life of India in every department of national activity. He laboured with equal assiduity and with no small measure of success for the inauguration of social reform, for the improvement of the status of women, for the promotion of education, for the abolition of cruel practices like *Sati*, for the freedom of the Press, for administrative reforms, and for many another thing which help to advance a nation in the world. To the performance of all the various tasks he took upon himself,—it is stated of him that "he undertook the work of six giants,"—he brought the highest qualifications, great scholarship, grit, mastery of many languages, and a command of style and forceful presentation which elicited the admiration of Jeremy Bentham. The Raja was free from all taint of sectarianism.

It may be asked, if the influence of the Brahmo Samaj which he established is as potent today as before. It seems to me on a superficial view,—I claim no intimate knowledge of the affairs of the Brahmo Samaj,—that its influence at present is on the wane, and that the members of its church show no tendency to increase. But this, I think, is due to the lack of religious conviction noticeable all the world over. But whatever the strength of the Brahmo Samaj church, and whatever its appeal to the educated classes or to the masses, the spirit which inspired its founder is one which should be an inspiration to all workers for the good of the country and its advancement. His love of lofty ideals, his high sense of responsibility, his sanity of outlook, and the comprehensiveness of his view of national life and national needs, are qualities which every one must endeavour to acquire, and his life and example must ever remain a shining light to us all. If there is one thing that sustained him in the service of the causes he espoused, it is his deep religious conviction and profound enthusiam,—I would say, profound and enlightened enthusiasm.—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

105

Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Kt., M.A., D.Litt.

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Vizagapatam

15th October, 1933.

When Raja Rammohun Roy died a century ago at Bristol, his message and his work could not have been so very well and widely known as they are today throughout the whole of the country. His influence is infinitely greater today over India than it was when he lived. And this is undoubtedly due to the celebration every year in every part of the country of his death anniversary.

SIR SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

We are today entering upon a different political future. We see around us racial and communal feuds which are threatening our future. Attempts are being made to divide the country, and not to strengthen it by creating unity. Our social difficulties are exaggerated into national proportions. We require a remedy for this state of affairs, and the message of Raja Rammohun Roy is peculiarly appealing at this time. We are struggling for the development of national self-respect and unity. A juster social order and a more stable unity are necessary for the realisation of our social and political ambitions and the achievement of our national progress. It is therefore imperative that all patriots and political and social reformers should find out what is wrong with our nation. We must be able to discern what are the essentials and non-essentials of religion. The Mahabharata says, "Whatever is offensive to your mind, do it not unto others." This is a gospel of universality, a gospel of inclusiveness. In this respect, there is today a great divergence between principles and practice. The message of Rammohun Roy should help to bring about a reconciliation between the two, and to clear up maladjustments.

There has been a very ordinary criticism in recent times that religion and politics should be kept apart. So long as we interpret both in a narrow sense, the criticism is well deserved; but there is an essential sense in which religion is politics, and all politics is the highest kind of religion. If politics means communalism, sectarianism, job-hunting, etc., then it is purely selfish, and there is no religion in it. Our own great reformer of the present age, Gandhiji, has said that there are many people who are really politicians at heart, but put on the garb of religious men, while there are many religious men who deal with politics. Gandhiji's great interest in politics is to establish the essential principles of religion by truth and non-violence. We may criticise his methods, but the fundamentals are there. We shall never be able to establish unity in the country until we understand the fundamental truth underlying society, and build up a stabler and juster social order. Raja Rammohun Roy was an ardent patriot and an intensely religious man, and he went to England not so much for the attainment of a religious task, as with a practical object in view for the furtherance of India's happiness. He realised that, until the people built up a more equitable social order, no unity could be achieved. It is absolutely imperative that before we are able to work together as a single nation, harmony and unity must be established,—not a unity by calculation, but one from deeper motives. The motive force of Rammohun Roy's religion was a deep faith in the indwelling God. Dogmas might differ, but all religions speak with one voice as far as essentials are concerned. The one golden thread running through all religions is compassion for suffering humanity. The essence of all religions is service to humanity, for there is nothing nobler than humanity.

Sir Radhakrishnan, in his concluding speech, said,—"The various speakers have made a comparison between the condition of

India a century ago and the condition of it at present, and then speculated on the future. We have lived in this holy land for millenniums, and although we have made mistakes, not an age has passed in the history of our country without producing a saint, not a single generation has passed in which types of great religious austerities have not been produced, from the great Buddha of the old to the present Mahatma Gandhi. Incessant has been the contribution of India to the cult of spiritual religion. So far as great spiritual ideals are concerned, India has kept the lamp alight during all the centuries."

Referring to a remark made by Dr. T. A. Purushottam that when asked about religion several young men emphatically stated that they considered that "religion was bunkum," Sir Radhakrishnan said,—"I have great deal of sympathy for such young men. Religion today consists of ritual. The so-called anti-religious movement in Russia is not so much directed against religion as such, but against an injustice perpetrated by an established body in not improving the condition of the millions committed to its care. The proletariat only wishes to establish a social brotherhood in the world. True religion may be defined as 'spiritual good manners.' Just as we have in society certain good manners, even so we have in matters of religion, which it is the duty of every individual who claims to be cultured to possess. Universality and spiritual good manners form the cardinal principles of the Upanishads. Raja Rammohun Roy was able to achieve what he did, because he knew what was the husk and what was the essence in religion."—(*The Hindu*, Madras.)

106

Ramananda Chatterjee, M.A.

Address at the Centenary Meeting, Allahabad.

15th October, 1933.

It is related in Rammohun Roy's biography that he used to address his friends and associates, his colleagues as well as his disciples, as *biradar*, a Persian word. That was the very index of the life of the man. He never pretended to be either an incarnation of God, or a messenger of God, or a prophet; but he simply wished that he should be taken as a brother, as a colleague. Those who try to follow his example also look upon him as an elder brother, as a precursor, as a fore-runner, as a man who foreshadowed what India would be in future,—not India alone, but in many respects the world also.

Rammohun Roy seems to be a most remarkable example of a unifier of peoples of different creeds and different races. He was a reconciler between the conflicting creeds, races and peoples in this world. In fact, he was the greatest synthetist of his age. He was also, perhaps, the originator of the science of Comparative Theology. The idea of international fellowship, international co-operation,—internationalism,—of which people are now beginning to talk, Rammohun Roy conceived and gave expression to more than a hundred years ago. In the letter to the Foreign Minister of France which he wrote on the question of demand of passports from foreigners, Raja Rammohun Roy referred to methods of settlement of differences between different nations. From that letter it can be seen that a century ago Rammohun Roy outlined principles which have afterwards led to the foundation of the League of Nations.

The idea of Rammohun Roy that all men in the world should share the joys and sorrows of one another, was not a mere theory with him. He actually practised what he professed to teach. He was such a lover of liberty that he declared that if the law abolishing slavery, then on the legislative anvil, was not passed, and the people were not given liberty, he would give up residence in the British Empire. He had great regard for the French Republic.

Rammohun Roy thought that all reforms were interdependent. He faced like a man all the burning problems of his day, political, social, economic and educational, and tried his best to solve them.

The foundation of all the efforts of Rammohun Roy for the amelioration of the condition of India was religion. The root of all his efforts lay in religion ; but he did not think that his religion was the only religion. He accepted the principle that truth was to be found in all religions, and he included all men in his religious brotherhood.

Referring to Rammohun Roy's activities in connection with social reform, we find that he did a great deal for the abolition of *Sati*. He published a translation of a very ancient Sanskrit book which was against caste, and he demonstrated his belief against the caste system by crossing the ocean and taking food with non-Hindus. He showed in two of his pamphlets that modern Hindu law was very unjust to widows, the older Hindu law giving a just and proper share to the widow in ancestral property. It is said that if Rammohun Roy had lived longer, he had in contemplation an enactment making the marriages of widows legal. He was also in favour of the education of women. He condemned polygamy.

Rammohun Roy's love of freedom was so great that he would rather cease to exist than not be free. That was his idea of freedom, not only for himself alone, but also for others. As regards his efforts for the political freedom of the country, everybody knows now what he did for the liberty of the Press, for the system of trial by Jury, for the separation of executive from judicial functions (which has not taken place yet.)

About economic reforms, Rammohun Roy gave two tables showing how many millions of rupees were every year taken away to England. He complained that when British servants went back to England on retirement, they not only took away wealth but also experience. But had the officers been Indians, the experience would remain in India. His complaint, therefore, was that not only was there a drain of wealth, but also a drain of experience.

Rammohun Roy was the first to propose that the rents of tenants should be fixed, and if they were excessive they should be reduced, and that all the peasants should be formed into a militia, so that army expenditure might be reduced, and the people prepared for the defence of the country. He said that the caste system of the Hindus stood in the way of the improvement of industry, because people of some castes would not lay their hands to some kinds of handicraft. He felt that if people got over their prejudices, then they would become great industrialists. He also felt that the caste system prevented unity, and that was one reason why Indians were lacking in patriotism. He, therefore, thought that for the sake of happiness in this world, they should get rid of caste restrictions.—(*The Leader*, Allahabad.)

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Mr. C. Y. Chintamani

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Lucknow.

11th October, 1933.

Mr. Chintamani said that it could be asserted without any exaggeration that Rammohun Roy was the greatest Indian of all time. He enumerated the monumental achievements of the Raja in practically every sphere of public life, social, religious, economic and political. "When you think of his successful attempts for the abolition of *Suttee* and of polygamy from Hindu life, his attempts for the establishment of English colleges for the education of Indian youths, his revival of Hinduism in a highly scientific and purified form, his pioneer but great *debut* in journalism, his stern fight against the newly imposed Press Act of 1823, and his open and trenchant criticism of the form of the Government of India which did not distinguish between the executive and the judiciary, you feel that there hardly was a public activity which did not engage his attention. In short, there was no reform he did not dare, there was no improvement in existing life for which he did not care, and there was no suffering which he did not bear to recall the glories of ancient India. A progressive India was his dream, which unfortunately remains yet unfulfilled, and will remain so, as long as the present form of Government continues in India,—a form which, according to Rammohun Roy's

political disciple Mr. Mahadeva Govind Ranade, has 'organised hypocrisy' as its basic structure." Rammohun Roy himself tasted the bitterness of this 'organised hypocrisy' in political life when he launched his campaign against the Press Act. Nevertheless, Mr. Chintamani felt proud for the rare honour shown to Rammohun Roy, (one of his own countrymen,) by English people when he went to England on a political mission, and also for the fact that he was incidentally responsible for the establishment on a liberal basis of the Unitarian Association of England.

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Dr. R. P. Paranjpye

Vice-Chancellor, Lucknow University.

Address at the Centenary Meeting, Lucknow.

11th October, 1933.

Born and brought up in the midst of orthodoxy, Rammohun Roy had, said Dr. Paranjpye, the breadth of vision to realise that the West had its good points which the East could profitably assimilate. He perceived that one of the principal causes of the downfall of India was the proneness of her people to hug the dead past and their refusal to adjust themselves to changing conditions. Rammohun set himself to giving the outlook of his people a new orientation and bringing about harmony between the East and the West.

He was a great reformer in all spheres, social, religious, moral, political and educational. The abolition of *Suttee* was his crowning achievement, for which he laboured strenuously and ceaselessly.

A great believer in liberty, he founded the Brahmo Samaj, and thus gave an impetus to independence of thought and the fearless pursuit of a new faith. Dr. Paranjpye pointed out how much India owed to the Brahmo Samaj movement, which had comparatively few adherents, but had produced some of the greatest leaders of India.

It was in no small measure due to Rammohun Roy's endeavours that a change came over the system of education in the country. Whatever the defects of modern education, it was a fact that the growth of nationalism in India was the outcome of that education, and thus Rammohun Roy could justly be called the Father of Modern India.

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Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Guntur.

27th September, 1933.

We are passing through the days of Asiatic renaissance and of a struggle for national freedom carried on by every Asiatic country; and so far as India is concerned, Rammohun is rightly called the Father of Modern India and of Indian Renaissance.

He was born at a time when the East and the West had come together for good, when the British Rule was being consolidated in India, and when scientific, political, and economic movements were going on in the West. He wanted that his country also, which had for some time been in spiritual, moral and political decadence, should become once more a great nation. He deplored that the country should have been divided into innumerable warring creeds, sects, and castes.

He was a profound scholar in several languages, and studied Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism in the original, and made a synthesis of all these great religions. He declared that there was an underlying unity in all of them, and that was the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. He wanted that his countrymen should give up their appalling superstitions and go back to Monotheism as preached by the Upanishads, the Quran and the New Testament.

His great contribution to religious reform is invaluable even today, as our salvation lies in understanding and appreciating the fundamental unity of all religions existing in India, and rising above communalism and sectarianism, which are the greatest barriers to our national progress. The sympathetic understanding of, and the respect and tolerance for, the various religious sects, as preached and practised by Rammohun Roy, is even today an invaluable principle for attaining solidarity.

The Trust Deed of the Brahmo Samaj, according to which all persons without distinction of caste and creed can meet together on equal terms and worship the common Father, is a document of national importance. It is only on such principles that we can fight for the removal of untouchability and of the inequities of caste and creed, and establish a real social democracy.

Raja Rammohun Roy, Mustafa Kemal Pasha and Mahatma Gandhi are the greatest friends of womanhood, as they respectively abolished *Sati*, removed the Purda system, and made women equal partners with men in national struggles and national freedom.

Rammohun wanted that his countrymen should become modern in outlook and thought by imbibing western science and western political and economic ideas, without at the same time destroying the inherent spiritual genius of India. He had a vision of India as she would be, if she could attain political freedom, a hundred years after him.—(*The Swarajya, Madras.*)

110

Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni

I. Speech at the Public Meeting, Punjab Brahmo Samaj, Lahore

27th September, 1933.

Whenever I think of Rammohun Roy, before my mind's eye rises the picture of a man who can be truly called the Architect of Modern India. He laid the foundation of a grand national edifice, which he broadbased on freedom and equality. That grand edifice has several storeys, but the whole structure stands on the rock of freedom,—freedom for man, freedom for woman, freedom for the so-called untouchable. That is the real secret of Rammohun Roy's life. Only if people realise that secret, would they truly honour the memory of that pioneer of Indian regeneration.

The people of India, perhaps, have not been able to hold aloft the torch of freedom handed to them by the Raja. They have not been able to complete the edifice of which he laid the foundation. That is their fault, and not the fault of the great teacher. The Brahmo Samaj is the first society in India which has consistently fought against untouchability and social and sex inequality. A true Brahmo never tolerates any kind of social oppression.

The Raja was a great lover of human freedom. When the news of the inauguration of self-government in Spain reached India, he held a public dinner in Calcutta to celebrate the event. Similarly, on his way to England, even though he was ill, he insisted on going over to a French frigate to salute the Flag of the French Republic.

The Raja's political and religious outlook knew no bounds of race or clime. He had studied the scriptures of all religions, and had the highest respect for all of them. At the same time he had staunch faith in Hinduism. What he was opposed to was blind superstition and unreasoning prejudice. The great principle of the Brahmo Samaj and of its founder is the realisation of the true spirit of Brotherhood of Man. The Raja laid well and truly the foundation of freedom in India,—social, religious and political,—and it is for the people of India today to realise the significance of that freedom. I hope that the people of Lahore would spread this message of Rammohun Roy far and wide in the province, so that when the bigger centenary celebration is held during the winter months, the message of the Raja may have reached every hamlet in the province.

II. Speech at the Memorial Meeting, Town Hall, Lahore.

27th January, 1934.

I have been acquainted with the works and activities of the Raja for the last half a century; but I can truly say that my respect and admiration for the Raja have grown year after year. The more I think of the principles of his life and his many-sided activities, the better I am able to understand and realize his title

to give his name to a new epoch. I can, this evening; refer only to a single aspect of the Raja's life and faith, but it is an aspect which covers, links and explains his activities in many fields.

The Raja may fitly be called a "Barrier-breaker." He pulled down the barriers that divide race from race, religion from religion, and one type of civilization and culture from other types. But his mission was not confined merely to the work of pulling down barriers. That would have been only a negative work. He did the positive work of the intermingling of those that were previously divided from one another. In other words, he was a reconciler of apparently divergent races, religions, civilizations and cultures. It is well-known that one of the reasons which took him to England was to act as an Envoy of the Mughal Emperor of Delhi to the British Parliament in London. In a wider sense Rammohun Roy may be considered as an Envoy from the East to the West (and also from the West to the East.)

Rammohun Roy studied the Quran in the original Arabic, the Vedas and Upanishads in the original Sanskrit, the Old Testament in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek. More than this. In order to understand those great religious works thoroughly, he made a wide and intimate acquaintance with the literature of the period during which the sacred books had been written in those languages. He was thus able to *enter into the spirit* of the teachings of the Quran, the Vedas and the Old and New Testaments. He could interpret the essential teachings of all those great faiths, and reconcile them with one another. According to him all religions were true, for they all taught the central doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. For him the service of humanity was in a real sense the service of God. It was on such a broad and liberal basis that he founded the Brahmo Samaj, as the Trust Deed of the Samaj says, for "strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds." He condemned caste on moral, religious, and above all, on political grounds, for he said that so long as India was cut up into castes, there could be no Indian nation.

It was in the fitness of things that such a man should become the Founder of Comparative Religion. As Prof. Sir Monier-Williams says, "The Raja was the first earnest-minded investigator of the Science of Comparative Religion that the world had produced." Prof. Max Muller bears a similar generous testimony to Rammohun's claim, not only as the founder of Comparative Religion, but as the interpreter and the reconciler of the West to the East. He says, "Raja Rammohun Roy was the first to complete a connected life-current between the East and the West.' According to Max Muller, he was "the inspired engineer, in the land of faith, that cut the channel of communication, the spiritual Suez, between sea and sea, land-locked in the rigid sectarianism of exclusive revelation, and set their separate surges of national life into one mighty world-current of universal humanity." All honour to him !

PROF. RUCHI RAM SAHNI

III. Speech at the Social Conference, Town Hall, Lahore.

29th January, 1934.

I am sure the spirit of Rammohun would rejoice to find that his work and teachings have not been in vain. It is said that when, having been driven out of home by his father at the age of sixteen for preaching the worship of One God in spirit, he wandered to Tibet and began to preach the same doctrine, he was attacked by some Buddhist monks. On that occasion his life was saved, so the story goes, by the intervention of some women. He made up his mind to do all he could for the cause of the sex to which he owed his life.

It is a commonplace thing now to call Rammohun Roy the Father of Modern India. With a prophetic vision he sketched out the scheme of reforms in every branch and department of life according to which he would like India to progress. Not content with merely laying down the outline scheme of advancement, he tried to build up the various departments of it himself. I would call the grand edifice so conceived by Rammohun by the name 'the Palace of Liberty'. The central halls of this palace were devoted to what may be called the Temple of Religious Liberty, because it was on the great doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man that the whole scheme was based. Let no one imagine that Rammohun ever claimed to have invented this great doctrine himself,—nothing of the kind. He found by his deep and intimate studies of the Sacred Books of the Hindus, the Mohamedans, the Christians, and the other great faiths of the world, that this doctrine was common to them all, and it was the shortsightedness of the followers of those faiths which made them narrow-minded and fanatical. He discovered again that the belief that truth conquers, and not falsehood, was in the moral realm common to all the great faiths of the world. It was on such common basis that he built his church of the Brahmo Samaj.

It should never be forgotten that during the early years of Rammohun Roy the cry of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," was in the air. The French Revolution had taken place some years earlier, and the great levelling doctrine was making a powerful appeal to people all over the world. At the same time Payne's book, *The Rights of Man* had come out, and was making a great noise everywhere. Rammohun Roy, who was in touch with the thought-currents of Europe, could not have remained uninfluenced.

The scheme of New India that he sketched out and helped to build up, was, therefore, a scheme based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in all departments of life; but its key-stone was, as I have pointed out before, the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. It was on this key-stone that the whole grand edifice of New India was supported.

If we understand the true significance of the doctrine of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity of the French Revolution, and the religious doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man, both of which Rammohun Roy kept before him as his guides, we would have no difficulty in understanding why he was able to draw up a scheme of reform so comprehensive and all-embracing.

In the social sphere he made no distinction between the rights of men and those of women. We find him labouring hard for ten long years in the face of the bitterest opposition and persecution to get the abominable custom of *Suttee* abolished, and he did not rest content till it was made impossible by law. He advocated the remarriage of widows, and pleaded for their legal rights to the property of their husbands and their parents.

He condemned the caste system of the Hindus on religious, moral, social and political grounds. The people of today cannot realise what persecution Brahmos had to suffer for taking a cup of tea with non-Hindus. All the older members suffered excommunication from their communities for many years. The 'outcastes' were only the natural result of the caste system. If there were no caste, there would be no 'outcastes'.

As the Builder of Modern India, Rammohun Roy declared that so long as the caste system remained, India could not be a nation ; and it could not have, therefore, a political future such as he dreamt for it. After the lapse of a hundred years, we find to our shame that it is still necessary for a man like Gandhiji to take it upon himself to uproot untouchability.

On the occasion of his Centenary it is a special duty of us Indians to push forward his mission with redoubled vigour.

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Prof. Upendra Nath Ball, M.A.

Speech at the Centenary Meeting, Govt. College, Ludhiana.

25th November, 1933.

In his own time Rammohun was looked upon by observers of Indian social life as a great man. The great orientalist Horace Hayman Wilson said that he was no common man, and India may very well be proud of him. Eloquent tributes were paid to his memory by eminent scholars and thinkers, when the report of his death was received in 1833. He died in 1833 at Bristol, and it is a matter of great pleasure that his Centenary is being celebrated not only in all the important cities of India, but also in England and America. Rammohun was the pioneer of modern education, and it is but proper that tributes should be paid to his memory in a Government College. Rammohun pressed for the introduction of scientific education along the lines of European Universities, and the letter he wrote to Lord Amherst was a remarkable document as coming from an Indian urging the necessity of modernism.

Rammohun was a prophet of Modern India, and as Miss Collet has said, he "presents a most instructive and inspiring study for the new India of which he is the type and pioneer." India is pulsating today with a consciousness of her greatness. But in the days of Rammohun, she was passing through dark clouds. The Moslem Rule had collapsed, and the British were still struggling for supremacy. In this period of transition Rammohun gave a turn to the life of his people. He desired his countrymen to set their own house in order. Early in life he developed theistic tendencies. He had suffered for his convictions, but throughout his life he remained true to the light he had received. He roused up his countrymen from their traditional apathy, and prepared them to take up their position among the nations of the world. He taught the first lessons of patriotism and public service. The cruel custom of the burning of Hindu widows was abolished mostly at his instance. He did not find rest so long as he found that widows were being forcibly put to death in the name of custom.

He protested against the restrictions put upon the liberty of the Press by the Regulation issued by the Acting Governor-General Adam, and his petition against it was a remarkable document of human interest. Though the citizen of a subject country, he demanded the full rights of a free citizen. In his Evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons he urged for a number of reforms which would have made India take her place among the other nations on a footing of equality. He suggested the settlement of well-to-do English landlords in India in the belief that they would improve the condition of the masses, and on the development of good relations between the landlords and the tenants they would press for constitutional progress for India. He had no inferiority complex in him. He believed that India could contribute to world culture, and she could also grow by taking lessons from others. We are in the midst of a world-culture, and we can ill afford to stand aloof from world movements. Miss Collet said that Rammohun "led the way from the Orientalism of the past, not *to* but *through* Western culture, towards a civilization which was neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both."

The power that impelled him to undertake such tasks was Religion. Rammohun was a devout believer in God, who, he felt, inspired him with all noble impulses. His religion was all-comprehensive, and he cherished deep respect for all dispensations and all teachers and prophets. He approached his God in the quietness of his heart, and showed his love towards Him by good works and philanthropy.

No man has done so much for the consolidation of national life in India as the Raja has by appealing to his country to give up Idolatry and caste system, which, he believed, divided the nation. If these were removed, most of the differences between

different groups would disappear. His idea of unity was vividly expressed in the Brahmo Samaj, where he invited all to worship one God in a spirit of harmony and humility. Rammohun never preached religion from the pulpit, but by quiet conversation and close reasoning he performed his work of enlightenment.

He was the forerunner of the New Age, an apostle of Modern Democracy. He wanted to bring about a reconciliation between the past and the present, and his eyes were beaming with the hopes of a bright future.—(*The Tribune*, Lahore.)

112

Mr. K. P. S. Menon

Address at the Centenary Meeting, Colombo.

27th September, 1933.

Mr. Menon said that a hundred years had passed since the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, but his fundamental dream, the spiritual and cultural unity of India, still remained unfulfilled. Perhaps the more critical among modern Indians might say that that meant that either his dream was unattainable, or that Rammohun Roy was not capable of realising his dream. Let them frankly admit that Rammohun Roy was not successful in seeing his dream fulfilled, but let them at the same time remember that success and greatness were not convertible terms. Not all successful men were great. If they were identical one with the other, one of the greatest men in the world today would be Lord Rothermere, (*laughter*) ; and one of the greatest pieces of literature would be His Lordship's *Daily Mail*. (*Renewed laughter.*) In judging the greatness of men like Rammohun Roy, however, they must adopt a higher criterion than success,—not what he did for his own generation, but what he left for succeeding generations to accomplish.

But the speaker did not for a moment mean to say that Rammohun Roy was deficient in practical achievement, or that he was a mere dreamer, and only a visionary. He was a dreamer, but he was also a realist, who dreamed by night and worked by day. He had a positive passion for work, and he did as much work and achieved as much as would crowd into a hundred lives, and in that respect he was undoubtedly great. His most notable triumph was in the sphere of social reform. A previous speaker had that evening given the meeting a fascinating account of Rammohun Roy's championship of the cause of women, but perhaps that speaker was too modest to say how much the women had championed the cause of Rammohun Roy. (*Laughter.*) But for the kindness of women in Tibet he might have died,—unwept, unhonoured, and unsung. He was the knight-errant of women, and consequently remained always a favourite of women. ...

Mr. Menon then went on to speak of Rammohun Roy's successful efforts to suppress *Sati*, and said that he was always on the side of the under-dog. The cry of the under-dog always reached him, no matter from where it came. His sympathies were more than national ; they were international.—(Abridged from the *Ceylon Daily News*, Colombo.)

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Dr. V. N. Naik, M.A.

Address at the Centenary Meeting, Bombay.

27th September, 1933.

In a memorable address on Rammohun Roy, Justice Ranade enumerated the characteristics of greatness, which are *first*, sincerity of conviction, and energetic action following upon that conviction; *secondly*, a magnetism that attracts and inspires, and the power to look at life steadily and as a whole ; and *thirdly*, persistency to live up to that power. We know from history that heroes are cast in the mould made of these essential ingredients. Rammohun Roy was a personality of that type.

He was his own leader, because he was intellectually great and morally firm. It is rare in any age to get in one person a combination of these two qualities. Those who are intellectually great—the thinkers and philosophers, the savants and the wise ones—are not unoften over-cautious, infirm of will. They weigh and balance so much, that their action results in a minus quantity. Whereas those who are strong in will and bold in action—heroic as we call them—are not unoften characterised by a minus quantity in point of intellectual grasp. We will not discuss who benefits the world more, or who pushes it along in advancement and progress. Suffice it to say that in the life of a nation, the longest road often proves in the end not only the safest but the shortest. Rammohun Roy combined in his life intellectual greatness with moral fervour and courage in a rare combination. He had not only a clear vision of what India needed, he had also "the habit of greatness to lay down, all alone", the lines and the foundations of the superstructure in which that vision could be made to embody itself.

He was no amateurish lover of freedom. It was not with him intellectual conviction merely, or moral enthusiasm divorced from the ways and means to achieve it. He was not, that is to say, a mere Erasmus or Melancthon, nor a mere Luther. He combined the fervour and deep conviction of the latter with the intellectual breadth, insight, culture and wisdom of the former. Are we really rich today in leaders that are reformers, and in reformers that are leaders ? We swear by freedom, but in act stifle both opinion and conscience. We work in the spirit of the saying that "my doxy must be all men's doxy !" Hence slogans, catchwords and stunts of

all kinds are so rampant among us. Reasoned scrutiny is completely at a discount. Rammohun Roy was in his age in the minority of one in the opinions that he held. But we, today, quail to be in a minority, and swallowing our personal convictions, would shout with the majority.

Rammohun Roy was a national leader who transcended nationalism. He was a citizen of the world, who loved and understood his country the better for that cosmopolitan outlook. He was a modern in the days when the modern spirit in India was yet to be born. And he was an ancient to his own generation, when that generation had completely forgotten how their forefathers had thought on the deeper problems of life and philosophy.

He was a pioneer in journalism, and yet in those far off days he stopped the publication of his Persian paper, rather than submit to its being issued under a license from government. The reasons that he has given are well worth noting even now. Says he as early as 1823 :—"After incurring the disrepute of solicitation, and suffering the dishonour of making an affidavit, the constant apprehension of the license being recalled by Government which would disgrace the person in the eyes of the world, *must create such anxiety as to destroy his peace of mind*, because a man, by nature liable to err, in telling the truth cannot help sometimes making use of words and selecting phrases that might be unpleasant to Government." He prophesied that this method of muzzling the Press would encourage "the evasion of establishing fictitious proprietors", which he maintained was "contrary to law and repugnant to conscience." There are journalists today, of not a few of whom it could be asserted without injustice that they do the sort of evasion which Rammohun considered as repugnant. And it cannot be denied that it is the licensing method, albeit under a new name and with heavier penalties accompanying it, that encourage that evasion. Rammohun fought hard and constitutionally to do away with this form of Press Ordinance. He petitioned to the King in Council,—a petition that one of his eminent biographers has described "as one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand." It was after his death that the Indian Press was restored its freedom by Sir Charles Metcalfe. And yet his fight for freedom was not forgotten. At a dinner given to Sir Charles Metcalfe in honour of the Free Press in 1833, Mr. Leith proposed a toast to the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy, as the noblest and the most powerful worker in that cause.

In religion, in social reform, in journalism, in education, in scholarship, in international relations and national outlook, it would be idle to deny that we have advanced some little way further than the times opening with the regime of Warren Hastings in Calcutta. But whatever the difference in our favour between those times and these, politically, socially and economically, and in point of religion and culture, we cannot gainsay the fact, (to quote the

famous words in *Julius Caesar*,) that across a century and a half that has passed since his birth in 1772, Rammohun Roy still bestrides the Indian world like a Colossus. He had a prophetic vision of the India to be, in those days of cimmerian darkness and of superstitious clinging to old forms that he witnessed around him. And he had not only the vision and the pre-vision, but what is rarer still, the ability and the power of will to map out the ground of it all, and lay out the lines of the broad foundations on which alone the superstructure of our national life could be soundly erected.

He strove hard in his day and succeeded in extinguishing the fires of the *Suttee*, in stopping the wail of the baby-wife and the Indian widow. He opened the doors of English education to man and woman alike. He made people understand the rich treasure of thought and civilisation that they had inherited from their own past; he taught them to prize what was valuable in that treasure, and brush aside the cobwebs that had settled upon it, and, above all, he added to that the rich inheritance from fresh conquests and explorations in new fields, so that the old may be transformed by the new and the new be assimilated to the vital that was in the old. He was for truth, and for service through truth as he saw it.

His verdict, given in 1821, that "the enemies of liberty and friends of despotism have never been, and never will be, ultimately successful," has to be borne well in mind, not only so far as political liberty is concerned, but more still by the opponents of social and religious and economic freedom as well. "The distinctions of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among us, had entirely deprived us of patriotic feeling", asserts Raja Rammohun Roy, and he adds, "the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification had totally disqualified us from undertaking any difficult enterprise. A change, therefore, must take place in religion, *at least for the sake of our political advantage and social comfort.*" These words may not commend themselves to our friends in the Sanatanist camp, but the lapse of a century since they were uttered, has not made the truth they contain either inapplicable or superfluous. The state of things that we witness around us today shows clearly how in the deeper things of life and in the forces that build up, we are still not further ahead of the position that Raja Rammohun had taken in his age.

Emerson has described how the scholar and the patriot, if blended together, becomes the regenerating influence of his country, and reaches from his own generation to posterity. Such was Rammohun, and his message has lasted to this day because he was, in addition, a true man of God. The contact with the West that had but just begun in that era of political conquest and expansion was rapidly pulverising the old in a manner that very few, except Rammohun, could foresee. And he chalked out the lines of social and

religious consolidation and reconstruction, long before political consolidation could even begin.

Raja Rammohun Roy was born 15 years after the Battle of Plassey, which gave the Britishers their first and strong foothold in the North of India. He died 25 years before the Proclamation of Queen Victoria. His visit to England, as ambassador from the nominal Emperor of Delhi, marks the end of his career. The Evidence he gave before the Committee of the Commons appointed for the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, gives us a complete resume of his political opinions, as also the picture of his times,—times of anarchy, misrule, political ineptitude, crass superstition, moral corruption, and national humiliation and degradation following in their wake. He did not live to see the epoch of political reform opening in India. The Renascence that came later was indeed begun by him. And yet the lines of that consolidation and reconstruction he had marked out with a fullness which stamps him as a patriot, statesman and reformer of no mean rank.

He had outlined the consolidation of the country in the interests of the people, and the consolidation of the people from within through social and religious amelioration, in the interest of freedom and democracy.

He has left to us all the precious legacy of a noble ideal and of a strenuous life lived in pursuit of that ideal. Would that we could profit by it better than we have done in the past, and cease running after such will-o'-the-wisps as lead us not on the high lands, but in marshes and bogs to our own ruin, and to the despair and confusion of the country we serve. It is as the type of a true patriot that I would hold him up to your emulation, on the occasion that has called us together in this hall, namely, this Centenary celebration. Would that we could prove, by our life and our conduct, worthy of the great ancestor whom we claim as our very own. If India will but follow him in letter and in spirit, she need not despair. —(Abridged from the *Subodha Patrika*, Bombay.)

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Rev. James Kellock, M.D.

Principal, Wilson College, Bombay.

Address at the Centenary Meeting, Bombay.

28th September, 1933.

We are assembled here today to do honour to the memory of a great man. I esteem it a high privilege to have been asked to take part in these celebrations, and to speak in the Mandir of the Prarthana Samaj, which is an offshoot or rather a direct descendant of that splendid movement of religious reform which Rammohun Roy launched into the life of India a little over 100 years ago.

REV. JAMES KELLOCK

Wondering why it is that I, a professor in a Scottish Mission College, have been invited to address you on this occasion, I like to think that perhaps it is not without reference to that storm of hostility, criticism and opprobrium that Rammohun Roy had at one period of his career to face, and in connection with which he wrote as follows:—"This raised such a feeling against me, that I was at last deserted by every person except two or three Scottish friends, to whom, and to the nation to which they belong, I always feel grateful."

I propose, during the time at my disposal this evening, to consider with you *the choices* which Rammohun Roy made. The power and capacity for choosing the ends of his activities and the methods of his living is the distinguishing feature of *Man*—it is the thing that demarcates him from all the lower animals that follow the unquestioned ways of unmodified instinct. Man chooses what aims he shall follow, how he can adapt the environment to his purposes, how he can make life interesting and worthy. That is the general characteristic of Man. What is the *Great Man?* The great man is the man who chooses rightly amid great and significant alterations. The great man, it seems to me, is the man whom circumstances have placed amid conditions that call for a great choice,—who has the insight and capacity to choose rightly amid things that bear upon the very foundation and structure of human society.

If I but mention the names of some of the world's great ones, you will feel, I think, that the main mark of their greatness lies in an activity, by which they choose ways of life and thought which profoundly influence the lives of their fellowmen. Think of St. Paul, Luther, Hampden. The attitudes they chose, the ways of life they promulgated, were worked into the very texture of the life of their fellow-men. So is it in the case of Gandhi and Lenin and Mussolini.

It is a noticeable thing that the choosing—the great choice of the great man—is always accompanied with strain, tension, suffering, because it involves breaking with the old, the accustomed, the time-hallowed. Rammohun Roy experienced this tension early in his life when as a young man he had to leave his home on account of the hostility roused in his father by his attacks on idolatry.

Rammohun Roy chose clearly and decisively in the four great realms of human experience,—the religious, the social, the political and the economic.

It was in the sphere of religion that his choice was most radical, and its effects most far-reaching, and in connection with which the hostility roused against him was greatest. With splendid strength of conviction he embraced monotheism and declared "for the worship of the One Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe". His relinquishment of idolatry was, as his friend and

colleague Rev. Mr. Adam said, "absolute, total, public and uncompromising." Like an Old Testament prophet he thundered against the delusions and the evils of worshipping stocks and stones instead of the Eternal Spirit, and swept aside as follies the efforts of some European writers to palliate and to soften the crass facts of Hindu idolatry by allegorical interpretation. He cited against those who would justify idolatry the 'Pran-pratishtha' ceremony and all that it involved with regard to the infusion into the image not only of life but of supernatural power. With a moral indignation similar to that of Plato he recalls the stories told concerning the unworthy, obscene and sinful activities of gods and godlings, and denounces them for their corrupting influence upon the minds of those who are taught to regard such imperfect beings as divine.

He chose *the Precepts of Jesus*. He says: "The consequence of my long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles and better adapted for the use of rational beings, than any others that have come to my knowledge." With his characteristic enterprise he set about making these Precepts available for his countrymen, collecting them out of the Gospels and publishing them in 1820, under the title *The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*. He tells us why he chose the Precepts of Jesus. The Hindus, he says, "are, with a few exceptions, immersed in gross idolatry, and in belief of the most extravagant description respecting futurity, antiquity, and the miracles of their deities and saints, as handed down to them and recorded in their ancient books. Weighing these circumstances, and anxious, from his long experience of religious controversy with the natives, to avoid further disputation with them, the Compiler selected these *Precepts of Jesus*," because, he said, they were such as could be universally accepted, and "obedience to which he believed most peculiarly required of a Christian, and such as could by no means tend, in doctrine, to excite the religious horror of Mahomedans, or the scoffs of Hindoos."

It was a mighty act of choice, this choosing of the Precepts of Jesus. Think of the pull of hereditary training and influences to which he had to go counter in so choosing. Think of the difficulty of striking out on so unusual a line, when nearly all his countrymen were thinking differently. Think of the opposition he had to encounter from the hostility of an interested priesthood. Think too of the patient labour behind his choice, involving as it did the acquisition of the Hebrew and the Greek languages, so that he might know at first hand what really the Bible taught.

Was Rammohun Roy a Christian? In funeral sermons that were preached in England at the time of his death, he is hailed by the preachers as a Christian Brother. He was a Christian in the sense in which he understood Christianity. He believed that Unitarianism was the true Christianity, and that the doctrines of

the Trinity and the Incarnation were accretions to the pure religion of Jesus. I do not go into this here, but would refer you for an excellent discussion of the question to Manilal Parekh's *Life of Rammohun Roy*. The truth is that Rammohun Roy cannot be unambiguously classified in this connection. He was a Christian with the Christians and a Hindu with the Hindus. He retained his Brahmanical rights and kept the rules of caste, and yet he could write (1824) to an American friend as follows :—"Christianity, if properly inculcated, has a greater tendency to improve the moral and political state of mankind, than any other known religious system."

He chose the abolition of *Suttee*, and was a mighty factor in the movement for the stopping of that dreadful practice. He spoke, wrote and agitated for its immediate abolition. Going to the root of the matter, he showed in a pamphlet entitled "Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance", that the cruel custom arose from the fact that no provision was made by the modern Hindus for women as such in the inheritance of property. Rammohun Roy was consulted by Lord Bentinck, when he was contemplating that act of true statesmanship by which *Suttee* was made illegal, and government was greatly fortified in its intention by Rammohun Roy's assurance that *Suttee* is not enjoined by the sacred scriptures of the Hindu religion.

The truth seems to be that his differences both from organised Hinduism and organised Christianity kept him from fully identifying himself with either. "The profession of Christianity", as Mr. Adam (the Baptist missionary who was deputed to turn Rammohun Roy towards orthodox Christianity, and who was himself converted to Rammohun Roy's Unitarian position) says,—"The profession of Christianity would inevitably, in the present circumstances of this country, identify him with persons from whom he differs as widely as from those with whom he is now identified. He has therefore only a choice of evils, and he has hitherto chosen that which, although he groans under its bondage, leaves him greater liberty and usefulness than he could otherwise possess." Fundamentally Rammohun Roy's belief was that Unitarianism or Christian Theism was simply the perfect form of the Theism which was to be found in the Vedas. He wanted to commend this monotheistic, ethical faith to his countrymen. He wanted neither to identify himself with any form of belief in which the purity of the strictest monotheism seemed in any way compromised, nor did he want to do anything that would make it more difficult for his countrymen to follow him along the line of monotheistic faith. His final solution was the formation of a new religious society, the Brahmo Samaj, in 1828.

In the social sphere, besides helping greatly to spread humane and enlightened views regarding women's status and rights, and regarding polygamy, child-marriage and caste, Rammohun Roy

was a powerful advocate of education, that great solvent of social problems. And not only did he advocate education in his speeches and writings, but he initiated and fostered many important educational institutions. He played an important part in drawing the Christian Missions into the sphere of Indian education. When the Scottish Chaplain to Calcutta sent a petition to the General Assembly of the Church in 1824, directing its attention to India as a field for missionary work, Rammohun Roy supported the memorial in a separate communication, expressing his happiness at the prospect of such an enterprise proving conducive to the diffusion of religious and moral knowledge in India. These advances resulted in the Rev. Alexander Duff coming to Calcutta in 1830. He was taken to visit Rammohun Roy, who, after listening to the young missionary's account of his aims and plans, expressed general approval, agreeing that all true education ought to be religious "since the object was not merely to give information, but to develop and regulate all the powers of the mind, the emotions, and the working of the conscience." Rammohun Roy not only encouraged Duff with his understanding sympathy, but also he found him a building in which to house his school, persuaded his friends to send their sons to be taught by Duff, and helped to dispel the fear of reading the Bible which for a time looked like keeping the early pupils away.

Rammohun Roy very emphatically chose *Western* education. The Government were on the point of yielding to the insistence of the Orientalists who wanted Indian education to be directed along the lines of Sanskrit and Arabic culture. Rammohun Roy flung the weight of his advocacy of the Western learning into the scale, and won the victory for it. He felt that an Orientalised education would keep India in Mediævalism, whereas what was needed was a learning that was inspired by the modern ideal and adapted to modern conditions. He foresaw that Western education would bring about a renaissance and create a new India.

In the *political* sphere, Rammohun Roy maintained an attitude of cordial acceptance of the British connection. In recent years Indian politicians have been inclined to resent the British connection or to acquiesce in it with an unhappy and grudging spirit. Forty or fifty years ago, politicians like Mahadev Govind Ranade accepted it as a necessary discipline, useful for India's social and political education. But Rammohun Roy regarded it as an almost unmixed blessing. Speaking of the attitude of his Brahmo Samaj, he wrote:—"Among other objects we frequently offer up our humble thanks to God for the blessings of British Rule in India and sincerely pray that it may continue in its beneficent operations for centuries to come."

This satisfaction with British Rule was not incompatible with a love of freedom, or with a foresight of the time when India would come into its national heritage. "Love of freedom," said Mr. Adam, "was perhaps the strongest passion of his soul, freedom

not of action merely, but of thought." He saw India a hundred years after his own day endued with the spirit effectually to resist unjust and oppressive measures. He saw the question arising in the future whether India was to be a willing ally of the British Empire, or a determined enemy, troublesome and annoying. Freedom of speech—the tendency to the suppression of which in so many countries in our own day is so portentous and disconcerting a fact—was regarded by Rammohun Roy as a necessary condition of healthy political life. A Government ordinance which shackled the freedom of the Press was the occasion of a Milton-like protest against what he regarded as an attack on the main safeguard of liberty, and in his protest he "invokes against the arbitrary exercise of British power the principles and traditions which are distinctive of British history."

As regards the *economic* sphere, we shall content ourselves with calling attention to the fact that Rammohun Roy pleaded strongly in the interests of those voiceless millions, the agricultural peasants of India. He appealed to the Government to do all in its power to alleviate their miseries, and especially he urged that reform should be carried out along the line of giving the peasant security of tenure and a permanent interest in the soil.

Rammohun Roy was a great man, endued with exceptional powers of mind and excellencies of character. How magnificent he was in the wide sweep of his thought, the breadth of his mind, the truthfulness of his moral judgment, the penetration of his spiritual insight! He is great as one who chose resolutely and perseveringly amid the multifarious and chaotic elements of a social environment wherein three great cultures were mingling their streams—the Hindu, the Mahomedan and the Christian. He is great because the choices he made were laden with destiny for multitudes of his fellow-men. And his greatness is a beneficent greatness because his choices were in the direction of true human progress and happiness. So we not only honour his memory : we give thanks to God for him. For great men whose lives have wrought beneficently are God's precious gifts to mankind.—(*The Subodha Patrika*, Bombay.)

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Mr. F. E. James, M.L.A.

Address at the Centenary Meeting, New Delhi.

16th December, 1933.

Mr. F. E. James, M.L.A. said that the Centenary celebrations were not foreign to him. While he was in Bengal, he attended all the meetings held annually in memory of Rammohun Roy. Rammohun Roy lived during an epoch of history which was very significant to India. In the year he was born, the first Governor-

General of India came to this country. In the year he died, a new Bill granting more reforms in the political sphere was passed by Parliament for this country. One thing that struck the speaker was that Rammohun Roy was a religious reformer in his early years; but in later years he was a political reformer too. He had suffered persecution from the members of his own community, who considered him unorthodox. There came a time in Bengal when the influence of the West first began to touch Eastern teachings, and it moved many dormant things which gave birth to great political and social movements. Rammohun Roy was the outstanding figure in the initial stages of those movements, and the speaker appreciated his catholicity of life. Rammohun Roy believed in equal partnership between India and Britain. He knew that they had many things to give and take from each other. Only when they had settled adjustments between the two nations, would historians be able to say what had been to the mutual good of each country.

Continuing, Mr. James said that Rammohun Roy was one of the greatest builders of Modern India, and was also a great internationalist. He went to Europe at a time when depressed people were rising against their oppressors, and liberation movements were forging ahead in that continent. Nationalist as he was, he looked ahead beyond the confines of his own country, and thus came to die in a foreign land. But although he died in a foreign land, he died at a time when the ideals for which he stood had blossomed into full freedom.

Concluding, Mr. James paid his tribute to the rationalistic outlook of life of Rammohun Roy, and said, "We are living at a time when liberal ideals are at a discount. Yet I believe that the ideals for which Rammohun Roy stood are more necessary today than in the past."

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Rev. J. G. W. Hendrie

Minister, St. Andrew's Scots Kirk, Colombo.

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Colombo.

27th September, 1933.

Rev. Hendrie, addressing the meeting, explained that they had met that afternoon to have their memories refreshed about the ideals for which Rammohun Roy had lived, and to pay a tribute to what he had in his lifetime accomplished. He referred to the fact that on his death Rammohun Roy was buried under some elm trees in Stapleton Grove, Bristol, without any religious ceremony, and that 10 years later his remains were removed to one of the Bristol cemeteries. The life and work of Rammohun were summed up by his friend in the memorial tablet over his grave, (*vide* Plate facing p. 101 of Part II of this book,) which Rev. Hendrie read out in full.

REV. J. G. W. HENDRIE

Rammohun Roy was born in the year in which the first Governor-General was appointed to India (1774). He belonged to a Brahmin family. The first period of Rammohun's life might be taken as that extending up to 1790, when he was 16 years old. Up to that time his education had been directed by his father. He was sent to Patna to learn Persian and Arabic, and there he came into contact with Mahomedanism, and possibly also with the Buddhist religion. Later, he was sent to Benares to study the ancient Sanskrit language, and in 1790 he returned home already convinced and determined as an opponent of idolatry. There was no peace in his family after his return, as neither his father nor his mother could understand what had happened to their son, and they went to the extreme length of driving him out of the home.

For four years he wandered from province to province, and even to the frontiers of Tibet, and it was not until 1796, when he was 22 years old, that he commenced the study of the English language, although later on he was a foremost supporter of Western education in India. It was then also that his opposition took definite shape to certain superstitious rites, particularly in connection with the treatment of women.

In 1804 his father died, and with a freer hand he began publishing pamphlets in Persian, Arabic and Bengali. In this he was an expert, and, to quote a sentence from his own work,—because that sentence explained why the speaker had been selected to take the chair that evening,—"This (the publication of the pamphlets) raised such a feeling against me that I was at last deserted by every person except two or three of my Scottish friends ; and to them and to the nation to which they belong I always feel grateful."

From 1800 until 1812 he was employed in Government service in various parts of Bengal, but in 1814 he retired, and came to Calcutta, and built a house which became the centre of the church which was to become the Brahmo Samaj. From that time he devoted himself entirely to social reform, politics, and always and specially religion, because he realised, (what they were today apt to lose sight of,) that without a sound religious faith, social reform was likely to bring no results at all.

From that year until his death, he worked for the social cause, for religious tolerance, and for truth. Finally, in 1830 he went to England, it being said of him that he was the first Indian of rank and influence who had ventured to break through the inveterate prejudices of centuries by crossing the black waters. He went to England because he feared that the law which had been passed abolishing *Sati* might not be confirmed by Parliament, and he saw that reform through its very last stages. Whilst he was in England, he was received by the King and by leaders of thought. He gave evidence before several committees. But he was never to return. He took ill of fever, and died on the 27th September, 1833.—(From *the Ceylon Daily News*, Colombo.)

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Rev. C. L. Conrad, B.A., B.D.

Superintendent, A. B. M. Pwo-Karen Mission, Bassein, Burma.

Presidential Address at the Centenary Meeting, Bassein.

16th December, 1933.

I have been intensely impressed by the personality of Rammohun Roy. I have no doubt that he has left his stamp upon India for all time. His name will be written among India's great men. He was the type of man who would win the confidence and respect of any fair-minded person today. First, I am impressed by his independence of thought and action even when a boy. This was characteristic of him throughout his life, and it often led him into embarrassing situations, but he always had the moral courage to stand by his convictions. We must admire these qualities of character whenever and wherever we see them.

Secondly, I am impressed by his tremendous desire for the acquisition of knowledge, and the efforts he was willing to make in order to acquire knowledge. Not only did he have a thirst for knowledge and an untiring effort to acquire it, but the wonderful gifts and talents he possessed, which enabled him to master so many languages, are to me most remarkable.

Thirdly, the extraordinary moral courage he possessed, which enabled him to take his stand on matters which he believed to be right, even though it countered the religious and social beliefs of his countrymen, sets him out as a man of unusual greatness. His stand for the recognition and rights of women, and his efforts to remove caste distinctions in Hindu society, are examples of his courage. His expulsion from home for his religious convictions is also an instance where his moral courage is manifest.

Fourthly, that he could rise above the darkness and superstition which had fallen upon India, and get a vision of a new age, and, of course, along with this of a new India, are signs of a great personality. Coupled with this was his love for his country and for his countrymen.

Fifthly, his love for liberty, both of thought and action, placed him far ahead of his contemporaries.

In fact he was a man of keen insight, able to discern the signs of the times, and so with prophetic insight he followed the gleams of light which were breaking upon the world, and appropriated for himself everything which he believed to be of service to man, no matter from what source it came.—(*The Rangoon Gazette.*)

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Dr. T. G. P. Spears, Ph.D.

Professor of History, St. Stephen's College, Delhi.

Address at the Centenary Meeting, Delhi.

18th December, 1933.

Dr. Spears said that the men whom people remembered were not men important in history, but in ideas. "We celebrate Raja Rammohun Roy's Centenary, not merely because he was a great personality, but because his name is linked with great ideas." Rammohun lived in an age which was singularly barren of ideas, when people did not believe in ideas, but believed in physical force. Rammohun was neither a soldier. nor an official to command a force. Even then his influence has greatly affected the destinies of India. He was a man who lived in ideas, and believed in ideas.

Indian communities, he went on, saw no future before them at that time ; but Raja Rammohun was the man who conceived the idea of unity between India and the West. He was a man of extraordinary intellectual attainments. He was a versatile scholar. He was the first Indian to be the master, not only of Indian culture and learning, but of Western culture and learning as well. He was a great statesman. He never went beyond actual possibilities, and he did what was most necessary in those times.

Concluding, the speaker said that Raja Rammohun had a balanced outlook on life. "He was," he said, "an ambassador, a scholar, a journalist, a statesman, and everything in one."

Rammohun on the alleged inferiority of women.

Women are in general inferior to men in bodily strength and energy ; consequently the male part of the community, taking advantage of their corporeal weakness, have denied to them those excellent merits that they are entitled to by nature, and afterwards they are apt to say that women are naturally incapable of acquiring those merits. But if we give the subject consideration, we may easily ascertain whether or not your accusation against them is consistent with justice. As to their inferiority in point of understanding, when did you ever afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting their natural capacity ? How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient ; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice, pronounce on their inferiority.—*Second Conference on the Practice of Burning Widows Alive.*

4. SERMONS DELIVERED AT COMMEMORATION SERVICES

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Mr. Satis Chandra Chakravarti, M.A.

Rammohun the Man

(Substance of the Sermon delivered in Bengali at the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta, on the morning of the 27th Sept. 1933, rendered freely into English.)

THE NIGHT OF 27TH SEPTEMBER, 1833

Let us try to picture to ourselves the scene of that memorable night, exactly a hundred years ago. The place is 'Stapleton Grove', Miss Castle's residence in the suburbs of Bristol. It is the night of the *Ananta Chaturdasi*. Outside, the beautiful English rural landscape is shimmering in the silvery light of the almost full autumn moon. Inside, a most solemn scene meets the eye : the great soul of Raja Rammohun Roy is in the act of bidding adieu to his mortal frame. His adopted son Rajaram holds his hand. Miss Hare, who has nursed him with more than a daughter's devotion, Mr. John Hare and Dr. J. B. Estlin, his affectionate friends, stand around in solemn silence, unable to restrain their tears.

As long as Rammohun Roy had any consciousness left, he softly muttered his gratitude to his loving friends, and repeated his familiar and favourite *mantra*, '*Om ! Om ! Om !*.' At last, towards the morning, at twenty-five minutes past two, he breathed his last breath. The corresponding Calcutta time was very nearly the hour when we shall be concluding this morning's memorial service.

THE PROPHET AND THE MAN

On such a solemn occasion it behoves us to try to be in commune with the spirit of the departed. The Brahmo Samaj has taught us this noble spiritual ideal of the *Srâddha* ceremony.

On such an occasion as this, our thoughts naturally turn to the massive genius, the many-sided activities and the noble achievements of our great leader. But a duty that is still higher is that of concentrating our thoughts on his personality, on *Rammohun as a Man*, of realizing his presence, of seeking inspiration from his spirit.

Of Rammohun the Prophet, therefore, I shall deal today with only one aspect, and then ask you to join me in an earnest endeavour to catch a glimpse, if we can, of Rammohun the Man.

The one aspect of the extraordinary pre-vision of the Prophet which claims most our attention today is that which led to the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj. We all know how religion was, from childhood, the strongest passion of Rammohun's soul ; so, when in after years he came to apply his mind to the problems of the regeneration of India, the solutions he arrived at all took colour from his conviction that the security and the progress of human society alike depended on a firm religious foundation.

The French Revolution, which he followed with anxious attention, confirmed him in this conviction ; and he eventually came to look upon all schemes of national reform divorced from religion with alarm.

We therefore find that prior to his departure for England, at the maturity of his fifty-eighth year, his thoughts and aspirations, so far as his country was concerned, have assumed definite form. They are as follow : The India of the future is to be a free India ; a spirit of progress and freedom is to pervade her, so that her destiny may one day be to find a place in the front rank of the great nations of the world ; religion is to be to her the ever-living fountain of this spirit of progress and freedom, and also a source of ever-growing strength through the spirit of unity which religion alone can foster ; and therefore the future religion of India is to be a liberal, non-sectarian, unifying and universal Monotheism.

It is this idea which moved Rammohun to establish the Brahmo Samaj. He saw the vision of the day when the common worship of the Supreme Deity would extinguish all mutual antipathies born of differences of class, creed and race, and when the existing religions of India would continue to be pursued by their votaries as but the various phases of *one common religion*.

This vision of Rammohun explains the otherwise inexplicable fact that though in his writings, and in the practice actually followed in the Brahmo Samaj since its foundation in 1828, are to be found forms of worship based on the Upanishads, in 1830, *when drawing up the Trust Deed of the Brahmo Samaj*, Rammohun makes absolutely no reference to any form of worship whatsoever. Neither the Upanishads, at whose fountain he drank deep throughout his life, nor the Islamic scriptures which first initiated him into Monotheism, and furnished him with many a potent

shaft in his armoury, nor the precepts of Jesus which he looked upon as the guide to peace and happiness, are in evidence in that remarkable document. For Rammohun's idea was that his Samaj was to be, not a temple of a new sect, but the *unifier of all India, through the common worship of One God by members of all denominations.*

Rammohun must have clearly perceived that modern India was no longer the India of the Aryan, or of the Hindu, or of the Rishis. The Aryan, the Dravidian and the Semite have now equal claims on her. In her vast continent have come together,—only to be fused into a composite nation,—the Hindu, the Muslim, the Christian, the Buddhist, the Jain, and the Jew. Rammohun could not contemplate an Indian nation from which any class or any creed or any sect of contemporary India would ever be excluded. He regarded even the English as an indispensable part of the future Indian nation. The religion of future India as conceived by him, therefore, could not have any such specific designation, or any such specific character, as would identify it with one of the many existing religions to the exclusion of the others. Further, Rammohun's hope was that the pure Monotheism which he promulgated would not be a religion for India alone, but for the whole world. It was to be a *universal* Monotheism; it was to embrace and enfold all sects and all races, and thus help in the establishment of a world-peace and world-fellowship.

When even now, after the lapse of a century, we come across schemes of nation-building in which a wholesale conversion from one religious fold to another is advocated covertly or overtly, we feel disposed to exclaim, "Alas! how far we still are from the ideal set forth by Rammohun!"

We Brahmos too, I am afraid, often fall short of Rammohun's ideal in this respect. We are inspired by the outpourings of divine grace which descend on us when we meet together at the footstool of the Almighty Father. But we rarely realize the faith and vision of Rammohun, viz. that the Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian, each pursuing his faith, may yet unite in worship, and be vouchsafed the same outpourings of grace that bless our spiritual festivals.

RAMMOHUN'S INNER LIFE

Let us now turn to Rammohun the Man,—no easy task in the present age, the age of two-volume biographies, dilating on the hero's public activities, and concealing, rather than revealing, the inner man. For, though Rammohun was a man of extraordinary foresight, activity, and energy, his real self was not made up of these; for,

before his God, Rammohun was more of a Sufistic *bhakta* than of a *karmayogin*; among men he was more of a warm and tender friend than of a puissant leader or a strong master; the main spring of his multifarious activities lay more in his ardent emotions and noble impulses than in his powerful genius and intellect. He was an ever fresh, ever vital, ever warm MAN. The most significant thing about him was his captivating and refreshing personality.

FOUR PERIODS

His biographers usually divide his life into four periods: (1) Early life. (2) Official career, from about his twenty-second year up to the forty-second, i.e. up to 1814. (3) Life in Calcutta, fifteen years, 1815 to 1830. (4) Life in England, 1831 to 1833.

As we propose to dwell this morning not on his activities but only on a few traits of his inner life, this division would not be of much avail to us. Human character is too complex a fabric for any one to be able to lay his finger on a particular spot, and say that a particular strand that has been woven into it starts here. But still it is convenient to use these periods as points of reference even in a discussion like ours.

FIRST PERIOD : BOYHOOD : DEPTH OF SOUL

A peculiar depth, a peculiar earnestness and seriousness of spiritual nature, characterised Rammohun from early boyhood. There are two distinct types in the attitude of the human mind towards truth. One is, that truth is to be *known*; the other is, that truth is to be *obeyed*. Look at one who is a mere student: there the Man masters the Truth. Look at a man of spiritual depth: there the Truth masters the Man. Rammohun belonged to the second type. In such a man, the seriousness of nature usually first sprouts forth in early life in the shape of a scrupulous, sensitive anxiety to speak and to avow the truth under all circumstances; and later, it matures and hardens into an unflinching loyalty to the noble ideals and the high principles of life.

It was this inborn seriousness of nature which precipitated the boy Rammohun's conflict with his father, and drove him out of hearth and home at an age when the shelter of the home is indispensable to the ordinary human child. It was this which supplied the urge to all his wanderings with sannyasis to the very outskirts of Northern India. It was the tone of this seriousness, again, which rang out later in Rammohun's historic exclamation of surprise before another boy, the boy Debendra Nath,—

"*Me* you invite to the Durga Puja !"—and inspired Debendra Nath even then, (as he always loved to acknowledge with an emotion he could hardly control), with the same spirit of lifelong faithfulness to truth.* It was this loyalty to truth which taught Rammohun in his public career both to bravely breast the storms of opposition and to humbly "lament his inability to perform all righteousness."

VAISHNAVIC ANCESTRY

This brings us to a consideration of Rammohun's Vaishnavic ancestry. Did he inherit his modesty, humility and gentleness, his loving sympathetic nature, his delicate consideration for others,—a trait of character which charmed the ladies of England,—with the Vaishnava blood that coursed through his veins ? It is difficult to answer this question. His writings, indeed, contain strictures on the vulgarities of contemporary Bengal Vaishnavism. But the spirit of a religion *that is lived* is apt to permeate the atmosphere of the home, and even when its tenets are repudiated by the mind, its atmosphere influences the character, particularly in the plastic years of early youth. It is quite possible that all these traits were stamped on Rammohun's character by the silent influence of his Vaishnava home. At any rate this is clear : his strong faith in a personal God, his craving for the raptures of exalted worship, and his longing for the company of fellow-worshippers, grew in him not as a result of, but rather in spite of, his Vedantic studies. The Vaishnava ancestry may not have sown the actual seed, but it certainly supplied the fertile soil, for the subsequent efflorescence of Rammohun's character.

SECOND PERIOD

The second period of Rammohun's life, (usually demarcated by his biographers as the years of official career), was a wonderfully formative period. Contact with the Christian religion and with a few noble-minded Englishmen on the one hand, and a first-hand knowledge of the common people of India on the other, worked during this period so powerfully upon his mind and heart, as to give definite shape, both to his character as a man, and to the dreams that had been coming to him ever since his childhood, of his future life-work.

In Christianity Rammohun first came across a religion in which the One God of the universe is conceived as a Person, addressed as a Father, and worshipped, not only in the

* *Vide* Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore's Reminiscences, pp. 173 and 175 of Part II of this book.

sanctuary of the devotee's heart, but also in congregations of fellow-believers. It was his first encounter with a religion characterised by a distinctly ethical and practical emphasis. He found that, unlike Hinduism, the religion of Christ valued obedience to God's will and the perfection of human character as higher than external observances, higher even than rapt communion; the type of piety it cherished most was service of mankind, not renunciation of the world.

In Rammohun's ardent soul this contact set a sympathetic chord vibrating. The spiritual earnestness that was innate with him, the compassion for human suffering that his Vaishnavic environment had fostered in him, the rationalism in spiritual matters that his early Sanskrit and Arabic philosophic studies (particularly the study of Arabic Logic) had infused into him,—all these had created in his soul a predisposition for the new type of piety and philanthropy that now revealed itself to him. After this contact, the desire to devote himself to the two-fold cause, one part of which was Monotheism, and the other, the moral and material advancement of India, which had for years been smouldering in Rammohun's breast, now burst into a flame, and became the consuming passion of his life.

Among the Englishmen whom Rammohun came to know directly or indirectly, the majority, no doubt, had come out to India with the avowed object of making money. But there were others, notably among missionaries, judges and journalists, who were high-minded, who maintained a living contact with public movments at home, and who tried to do all the good in their power to the land of their sojourn. At what exact period of his life Rammohun first began to learn English cannot now be definitely ascertained. But early in this period we find that he could count among his intimate friends a few such Englishmen; later, during his Calcutta period, he had of course many more.

The most outstanding feature of Rammohun's public career has been singled out by his admirers as his multi-sided activity. It has been pointed out, time and again, that he is not only the *first* public man of Modern India, but also the *most multi-sided*, so that even after a century of progress he has not in this respect been equalled, much less surpassed. What is the explanation of this fact? At a time when there was absolutely no public life among Indians, how could so many lines of advance for India,—religious, social, educational, political, economic,—even suggest themselves to the mind of this lonely pioneer? The explanation is to be found in the way in which he utilized this period of his life; for we find him, during these years, devoting all his

energies to the intensive cultivation, of friendship with liberal-minded Englishmen, and of acquaintance with modern European history, with the sole object of exploring as many avenues as possible of future service to his beloved motherland.

Rammohun's friendship with Englishmen was *real* friendship. He was singularly free from that inferiority complex which makes real friendship with Englishmen an impossibility for the average Indian. Alike in his recorded conversation and his published correspondence with English friends, we notice a dignity and an independence,—the tone of an equal accosting an equal. How he refused to tolerate the *hauteur* of overweening officials, how he announced his intention of repudiating his allegiance to England in the event of the failure of the Reform Bill, are now matters of common knowledge.

There was a material background, too, behind the firmness he exhibited in maintaining his dignity before certain officials. The erroneous notion that he was driven by necessity to seek service under the East India Company has been dispelled by records recently unearthed. We now know that Rammohun had considerable resources of his own, independent of service. When he began to have intercourse with English civilians, he was already a man of substance ; and naturally keen as he was about his personal self-respect and the prestige of the Indian in the eyes of the foreigner,—trait of character which extort our admiration,—he knew, when occasion arose, how to demand and to exact from civilians the respect that was due to his position.

These remarks apply equally to his friendship with Digby. Mutual respect, the taking of counsel together about measures for the welfare of India, and—last but not least—Rammohun's position as creditor,—all went to the cementing of a friendship, unique in the annals of the East India Company. Rammohun's acceptance of service under Digby and his accompanying him to several districts of Bengal can only be explained on the basis of this personal attachment ; for the East India Company had once fallen foul of Rammohun's strong sense of dignity and self-respect, and never afterwards treated him according to his merits. Indeed, from records recently brought to light, it appears that he often served under Digby in *other* capacities,—not as a servant of the East India Company.

The noble metal of which Rammohun's character was composed was a gift of nature. Certainly it was neither produced nor nurtured by the society in which he had to move. Hunter has remarked that the only

two notes known to Calcutta journalism in those days seemed to be scurrility and servility. Though the 'only' is an evident exaggeration, still the dictum sufficiently indicates the low state of social morals and of social taste which the Press of the day did but reflect. It is just within the bounds of possibility, however, that the noble metal in Rammohun, the lustre of which constantly flashed in his acts of magnanimity and self-effacement, in his never striking a weak or a fallen adversary, in his stern refusal to mix up his reputation or even a consideration of his public usefulness with questions of religious faith,—all of which marked him out as a man with a high sense of honour, as a man belonging to a higher plane than a man of mere honesty, —received additional polish from contact with the chivalry which greeted his eyes in the pages of European history and in the lives of some of his noble-minded European friends.

Rammohun's official duties as Dewan under Digby contributed towards making him the practical philanthropist that he was. The earnestness with which he followed truth, already noticed in his early life, had given a peculiar thoroughness to all his researches and studies; he hated hazy notions, slip-shod methods, and taking conclusions for granted. That intellectual thoroughness, that capacity for entering into detail, that habit of sifting evidence before suggesting a solution, he now turned to the acquisition of an exhaustive first-hand knowledge of the condition of peasants and of Hindu women. Two important results of this comprehensive acquaintance with the country are traceable in Rammohun's life. First, all the measures Rammohun Roy adopted or proposed for the amelioration of Hindu society or the condition of peasants were eminently *practical*, and entirely free from any trace of sentimental extravagance. Secondly, a practical turn was given to Rammohun's personal religion without, however, impairing in the least his deeper realisations, with which we shall presently have to deal.

The effect which contact with Christianity had on his spiritual life has already been mentioned. On top of that contact came this thorough study of men and of the conditions in which they lived and died. It now became an impossibility that Rammohun, the theological enthusiast of early years, should ever develop into a recluse, or become the adherent of an ascetic or a pietistic type of religion. Thus Rammohun the man-of-the-world, and the friend to the man-of-the-world, stands before us enveloped in a greater halo of glory than he should have been, if he had kept himself immured all his life in the cloister of theological or spiritual studies.

THIRD PERIOD

From what we have seen of the second period of Rammohun's career, we may well imagine that when he came and settled in Calcutta towards the end of the year 1814, he towered head and shoulders above his contemporaries in several respects,—in the vastness of erudition and the close acquaintance with the history and the public movements of contemporary Europe, which won for him the esteem of many Europeans in India ; in his clear conception of what was needed for the regeneration of his country, for which his company was eagerly sought by the best and most eminent among his fellow-citizens ; and in the position and the public esteem which was his on account of his reputation as a man of wealth. In many respects he was a right royal personage, though the title of 'Raja' had not yet come to him.

Let us try to picture to ourselves the Rammohun Roy of the Calcutta period. His mind and thought, his time and energy, are daily being more and more engrossed with various measures for the promotion of the country's welfare. The wealth accumulated by him is always readily and freely placed at the disposal of any noble cause that draws his sympathy. His fame as the most enlightened native of India and as a man of unparalleled generosity and public spirit grows daily, spreads daily, and reaches the shores of distant England and America. The greatest men of India and the West are drawn into the circle of his friendship. By and by he comes to be one of the busiest and most sought-after men of Calcutta ; but in his dealings, both with the high and the low, he always remains easily accessible, generous, forbearing, large-hearted.

Of his circle of admirers and friends, a small group gradually comes closer and closer to his heart, bound to him by the ties of the strongest spiritual affinity. The monotheistic belief of his early years deepens in his soul into a loving communion with an ever-present Father. Rammohun comes to realize that that faith possesses the power to cement strong spiritual friendships ; to unite classes, communities, races and creeds ; and to inspire Indian men and women for the high endeavour and the large sacrifice needed for India's regeneration.

The devoted band of friends and the vision of a united India,—these are by no means the only results of his deepening spiritual experience. The principal effect of that mature experience is exhibited in Rammohun Roy himself. It makes a new man of him. It fills the inmost recesses of his soul with perennial inspiration. For Rammohun now, in

his sádhaná, reconciles Brahman and Bhagaván, the Vedánta and the Bhágavata. His wide studies, his deep contemplation, his strenuous spiritual endeavours, gradually open up, deep down in his soul, a spring of never-failing sweetness and freshness, a fountain in which are mingled three of the most delectable streams of spiritual experience that human history has ever revealed : the Upanishadic communion with the One, of whom the Many are but the fleeting and varied manifestations, the One who has manifested Himself in the Many out of his Ananda or Love ; the loving trust and self-surrender, even unto death, of the martyr of Nazareth ; and the sublime Sufistic realisation of the love of the Eternal Beloved. So deeply was he steeped in the ecstasies of this three-fold current, and with such spontaneity would they well forth in his speech and glance and gesture, that friends in his company, would, as it were, be baptised ever and anon in the gushing waters of a spiritual fountain.

And this fountain continued to gush forth unabated even when Rammohun was in the midst of the strenuous labours and the acrimonious controversies of his Calcutta period.

The Calcutta period being the most active, the most heroic and the most prolific of all the various stages of Rammohun's career, has naturally received the greatest measure of attention at the hands of his biographers. But still it is easy to miss the significance of these years in the history of his inner life. It is easy to fall into the error that what occupies most of his time is also what nourishes most, and is cherished most by, his heart. But one who would catch a glimpse of the real Rammohun of this stage, should seek him, not in the dust-clouds of controversy, but in the company of his beloved friends and followers, or when playing with little children, or when reverently bowing his head in a place of worship with tears rolling down his cheeks.

Rammohun's heart was like a surging sea of human affection. He both gave love profusely and yearned for love ardently. The stories of his deep attachment to his mother, and of his helping with his own hands his young son Ramaprasad and his companion Debendra Nath enjoy a swing in his Manikta.. garden, are well known. His affections overflowed the bounds of his family, and were lavishly bestowed on his friends and fellow-believers. Such was the ardour of his affection for his companions that a word that touched his heart would make him instantly spring up and lock the speaker in a warm embrace.

None amongst his followers and companions, however, possessed the depth either of human affection or of religious

experience, to be a true spiritual comrade to Rammohun. Not even could Ram Chandra Vidyavagis, whom he installed as Minister of his Brahmo Samaj, approach within a measurable distance of his spiritual wealth or depth. Vidyavagis was a faithful follower, no doubt, and Rammohun in some of his letters has expressed satisfaction at the discourses delivered by him. But the deep hankerings of Rammohun's own soul could never be satisfied by the spiritual nourishment that Vidyavagis had the capacity to offer. Rammohun's soul yearned for that sweet worship, that rich devotion, in which contemplation and love, gratitude and trust, obedience and self-surrender, repentance and supplication, all blend together, and the worshipper realises God as a Person, as a Father, and not merely as an Infinite Formless Spirit. In the Brahmo Samaj congregations of today, this spiritual ambrosia that did not fall to the lot of Rammohun, is abundantly served to our hungry souls. But Rammohun could not enjoy it, except perhaps on rare occasions when attending service in a Christian church, where the worship was real worship, and not merely elucidation of doctrine.

Rammohun founded, indeed, the Brahmo Samaj; but that spiritual atmosphere in which develop the sweetest blossoms of spiritual comradeship could not be produced in a day. Rare, indeed, were the occasions when his longing for the deeper blessings of congregational worship could be satisfied in India.

For that deeper satisfaction Rammohun's heart yearned towards England, which he regarded as his spiritual home, where in the company of brothers and sisters of the spirit he would join in that richer and fuller worship which his soul was eager to offer to God. This is the explanation of the strange fact that Rammohun the devoted patriot, Rammohun the intense lover of liberty, Rammohun the unwearied fighter for India's political freedom, always cast loving longing eyes towards England.

FOURTH PERIOD

The reputation of his vast erudition, his liberal and progressive ideas and his extensive philanthropy had preceded him to England. While there, he won almost instant recognition in the most exalted circles for his talents, for his mastery of facts and figures respecting India, and for his liberal outlook on human affairs, which was in advance even of that of the foremost thinkers of that country.

But in his case the charm of personality outshone even the effulgence of genius. During the brief two years of his stay, he was the most beloved of all foreigners

sojourning in England. The reminiscences left of him and the tributes paid to his memory by contemporary English writers are simply full of the raptures of the personal affection and reverence that he inspired in the hearts of all with whom he had any intercourse.

To the last he remained a man of ardent human affections and fervent piety. On Sundays he would go to the most soul-satisfying services that were accessible to him, and not to those which simply offered food for the intellect without touching the deeper chords of the heart.

RAMMOHUN AS A MAN AMONG MEN

Our vision of the great religious teachers of the ancient world,—Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus, etc.,—is dimmed by the mists of the intervening centuries. We do not know much about what they did for the common world in which mankind moves.

About Muhammad we know a little more. We are conversant not only with his teachings and ideals; but we also have a picture of how he thought and fought and strove for the amelioration of his country, his times and his contemporaries.

The same is the case with Rammohun. No doubt we revere him as a prophet, as a teacher, as the maker of a new era. But the man Rammohun appeals to us most. He is eminently lovable as a man among men, as a man of the world, as a worker on the worldly plane, within the sweep of whose vision came not only the spiritual condition of his countrymen, but also their social rights and wrongs, their education and morals, nay, even their material prosperity and earthly comfort.

Such is the Rammohun Roy we would contemplate today. So large is his human heart, so noble and refined is his behaviour to men, so magnificent are his devotion to and sacrifice for noble causes, so remarkable is the blending of courage and humanity in him, that to think of him is to love him. Indeed, for his own dear sake, for the sake of his charming personality, do we feel impelled to love his religion, to love the causes he loved, and to strive to reach the high level of his life and character, so that we, too, may one day be fit to be called his associates.

The attempt to portray Rammohun as a man apart, as having been an infant prodigy, a saint from childhood up, or as a sinless man, is, therefore, both a futile endeavour and a travesty of history. Rammohun had his limitations, most of which were the products of the time in which he lived. Yet, considered as a *man*, he is really great; and as a man he deserves our highest esteem and our profoundest homage.

Today we would remember *that* Rammohun who, in the midst of his myriad occupations, would yet be a pleasant companion to little children, would play with them and rock them in their cradles; *that* Rammohun who, though the most manly among men, was most tender towards women, whose respect for the sex of his mother was so high that he would not be seated even when a servant-maid remained standing*; *that* Rammohun who, on the one hand, asserted his dignity even before the Governor-General, and on the other, on the open road, did not hesitate to help a poor vegetable-seller lift his load; *that* Rammohun who had the humility of a Jesus, and the modesty of a Vaishnava, and yet could be stern, when necessary, in rebuking meanness and deception.

Today we would remember *that* Rammohun who stood before the Western world as the embodiment of India's enlightened manhood; who went to the West not merely as the first reformer, the first statesman, the first philanthropist, but also as the first *bhakta*, of New India; *that* Rammohun who, in his all-embracing love, esteemed England as his spiritual home and cherished her people as his kinsfolk. At the present moment much bitterness of feeling has arisen between India and England out of political considerations. We must confess that we do not feel happy at this condition. We look forward to the day when a purer and warmer love for the Father of all will weld the hearts of India and England together, and fufil Rammohun's glorious vision.

Today we would remember *that* Rammohun whose memorable message still inspires and enlivens us across the interval of a century: "By taking the path which conscience and sincerity dictate, I have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches, even of some of my relations. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear, trusting that a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice,—perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation: my motives are acceptable to that Being who beholds in secret and compensates openly!"

Let us today remember *that* Rammohun who, on the eve of his sailing for England, exhorted his weeping son with the words: "Play the man, my son! Why weep?" Let our Founder repeat to us, let the Pioneer of the New Era speak anew to his countrymen: "Be ye men, O my

* *Vide* Hemlata Devi's Reminiscences on p. 283 of Part II of this book, where she describes how Rammohun would never, in his own home, be seated before his wives had taken their seats.

children ! Be fearless in your pursuit of the good ; be not disheartened at the sight of impediments; be not discouraged at any delay in success." May the message of fearlessness (*ma bhaih*) from his fatherly spirit reverberate in our souls ! May that message nerve us to advance along our paths with undaunted, courageous hearts !

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Pandit Nirmal Chand

Rammohun Roy's Philosophy

(Sermon delivered at the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, Anarkali, Lahore. 25th January (11th Magh), 1934.)

Raja Rammohun Roy is called the Father of Modern India. But it is not sufficiently realised that the foundations of his great mission and his many-sided activities were laid deep and strong on the strata of innate spiritual greatness of the people.

We have within us a natural tendency towards idolatry, and so we always tend to worship and follow personalities, and forget the Eternal Life of which they themselves are only the passing manifestations. We regard great men as separate from one another, while all men of all times, being only the imperfect and partial manifestations of One Eternal Life, have a relation of organic unity among themselves. In fact, all men are the different faces of what Swedenborg calls the Grand Man. Not to see this truth is the cause of so much religious pride, hatred, and discord in the world.

If we want to realize the spiritual greatness of the Raja in so many fields of work, then its secret will be found in his wide spiritual vision. The world in which we live, and the life of each of us, are the results of our view-points. As our vision, so is also the world of our creation and experience. The real religion of every man lies in his habitual point of view, according to which he lives his every-day life. The Raja was a true knower of Brahman. That Rajarshi had the sublime vision that essentially nothing but Brahman exists by itself. But his Monism should not be confounded with that of Sankara.

In the time of the Raja, the country was the victim of two extreme misconceptions. (1) People were busy in the worship of grosser objects, and the performance of external rites was exalted above everything else. (2) True religious life was not considered as possible in this world.

But like Nanak and other saints of the sixteenth century, Rammohun Roy taught that God could be realized in this world and in the midst of worldly surroundings. He did not regard the world and human life as illusions created by a mysterious and

indescribable principle called Maya. He laid emphasis on action in this world. The logical conclusion of the doctrine of Maya was that one should forget both the world and the soul for the realization of God, because Brahman and the world would be in the light of that doctrine quite incompatible with each other, like light and darkness. The Raja did not regard Sannyasa (renunciation of the world) as the necessary condition of salvation. That doctrine in ancient time had led the best brains of the country to the forest, and their services were thus lost to the country.

The Raja, while believing in the oneness and infinity of Brahman, taught that, like the manifestation of the tree from its seed, this world also is the manifestation of His nature and the eternal play of His love and joy. He regarded Maya not as a principle of illusion, but as the Creative Power, or Will, of God. He taught also that the being of the world is in the Being of Brahman. The world is real in God, but false when we come to regard it as having existence outside, or independently of, God. The Many is the manifestation of the One, and true wordship of God consists in sensing and realising the existence, the goodness, and the beauty of God in all manifested things. In this living worship, we can have the fulfilment of our whole being in its rich variety. For the same reason, Rammohun never regarded life in the world and spiritual life as separate from each other, or incompatible with each other.

The separation in thought of the world from its Creator causes in our life a conflict which continually saps our energy. The result of doing so is that it becomes impossible for us to perform our worldly duties and the worship of God simultaneously, just as when we look to the heavens, it becomes impossible for us to look upon the earth, and contrary-wise, when we look upon the earth, it becomes impossible to look towards the heavens. But if we follow the Raja's teaching, we can quite naturally perform all our worldly duties in the spirit of Divine worship.

But the Raja never said that the world is Brahman, and that there is nothing beyond it. He held that the Eternal One is not limited to his temporal manifestation.

He did not teach that the world and the human soul were illusions, and that by their complete destruction alone we could realize Brahman. He said that the human soul is a necessary and immortal centre of God-manifestation, and God-realization consists not in the destruction of the soul but in its progressive unfoldment through the surrender of self to God, who is our inner soul. The divine life flows into us in ever fresh and progressive currents through our adoration and prayer; and all the faculties of the soul are, as it were, different ways or arms to embrace the beloved.

While the Raja has laid emphasis on self-effort, he has also taught us to remain always open to the grace of God. By means of our individual efforts we can have progress ; but spiritual perfection can be attained only through divine grace.

The Raja who himself was a man of action, never advised us to renounce action. He regarded action as necessary for even a Jivanmukta.

According to the Vedantists of the Mayavadi School, the way to salvation lies in escaping from this life and in being merged in the abstract, absolute, or relationless Brahman. But the Raja has taught us by his doctrine and by his own example in life to face and embrace life, and transform the world into a medium of communion with God. The Mayavadi tries to present God in the aspect of Truth (*Sat*) alone, but the Raja's Brahmavad teaches us to realize God, not only as True (*Satyam*), but as the Good and the Beautiful (*Sivam* and *Sundaram*) as well.

The depth and vastness of the Raja's vision can be realized from the fact that he founded the Brahmo Samaj, not on any book or personality of any time or place, but on Brahman alone. So he shows us the royal path of being reconciled or reunited, not only with the Source of all life, but with men of all places, times and climes, truly and in spirit. We are not simply brothers, but the different organs of the one and the same Cosmic Life.

Today we need badly this Brahmavad of the great Rajarshi, which instead of making our life sapless and dry, teaches us the flowering of life. Mayavad is a great and terrible illusion, which makes all life, science, art, morality and culture wholly devoid of meaning and purpose. It is one of the ever memorable services of the Raja that he has tried his best to save us from the dark abyss of Mayavad, and shown us the way to worship God in our every thought, word and action.

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Rev. W. H. Drummond

An Indian who belonged to the World

(Sermon delivered at the Memorial Service, Chapel of the Manchester College, Oxford, Sunday, 29th October, 1933.)

"All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name. For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things: Thou art God alone."—(Psalm 86, vs 9 & 10.)

I have taken these words to strike a key-note to our thoughts this morning, because I have been asked to speak about one of the greatest religious teachers and leaders of modern times, who dwelt in India, but who belonged to the world,—I mean Raja Rammohun Roy,—who died just a hundred years ago. And I have another reason for quoting these words, and you will pardon me if I feel some pleasure in doing so, because one hundred years ago Dr. William Hamilton Drummond, my grandfather, preached in his church in Dublin, taking this very text for his sermon, just after the death of the great Raja. It is not often that such coincidences occur.

For a long time has the Unitarian Church in England had intimate connections with the religious life of India, and particularly wih the Brahmo Samaj, that religious society of which Raja Rammohun Roy was the Founder. When Rammohun Roy died one hundred years ago in Bristol, he was on terms of intimate friendship with the Carpenter family, and it was through this friendship that Miss Mary Carpenter was inspired to do her wonderful work for Indian women and girls, and I have no doubt in my own mind that it was by her that the former Principal of our College at Oxford, Dr. Estlin Carpenter, was inspired to take up his study of Indian religions, of which there is a permanent memorial in that College in the "Carpenter Library of Comparative Religions."

I need not describe in detail the incidents of the Raja's life, but I would refer specially to his work for religion. It was in 1816, that he published his "Abridgment of the Vedant," which may be taken as the beginning of the modern study of the Vedanta, not only in India, but in all the civilized countries of the world. This was followed in 1820 by a remarkable work in English "The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness," which consisted chiefly of the ethical teachings selected from the four Gospels. The purpose of this book is best described in his own words taken from the Preface:—

> This simple code of religion and morality is so admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of one God, who has equally subjected all living creatures, without distinction of caste, rank or wealth, to change, disappointment, pain and death, and has equally admitted all to be partakers of the bountiful mercies which he has lavished over nature,—and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves, and to society,—that I cannot but hope the best effects from its promulgation in the present form.

The publication of this book brought him into no little trouble, alike with his Indian friends and with the orthodox Christian Missionaries at Serampore. The result of it was that Rev. William Adam, an English Baptist Missionary, was converted to the Raja's own theistic position, and for a time Mr. Adam conducted Unitarian services in Calcutta, which were attended and generously supported by the Raja himself. But it soon became clear that this movement made little appeal to the Indian mind. The attendance declined, and the Raja was urged by his friends to start a movement of his own for teaching and worship. This was the origin of the Brahmo Samaj, which was founded in 1828. In 1830 the first Mandir was dedicated in Calcutta. The spirit of the movement is contained in the memorable words of the Trust Deed,—

> For the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being, who is the Author and Preserver

of the Universe, but not under or by any other name, designation or title peculiarly used for, and applied to, any particular being or beings, by any man or set of men whatsoever.

No sermon, preaching or discourse, prayer or hymn be delivered, made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue, and the strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds.

Like all movements which have attracted men of strong independence of mind, the Brahmo Samaj has had a chequered history. After the Raja's death, it was revived by Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, and later spread far and wide through India through the missionary zeal of Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen. People who observe simply from the outside, and regard it as a small minority movement, may be inclined to think that it has not done much for Indian life. But any one who remembers the company of remarkable men and women who have belonged to it, and still more, those who have had the opportunity, given to me on two occasions, of visiting the centres of Brahmo worship all over India, will recognise how deep and pervasive its influence has been, in the witness it has borne for a deeply spiritual worship, in the work that it has done for education and reform, and in its unflinching witness for the emancipation of women and for social equality.

Two things stand out prominently in the Raja's life. One is his passion for freedom. All forms of oppression, with their attendant cruelty, were hateful to him. He believed equally in intellectual liberty, and opposed whatever cramps or enslaves the mind. "Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism", he wrote, "have never been and never will be ultimately successful"—words which might be written in letters of gold in some places in the Western world at the present time.

The second thing is the depth and fervour of his personal religion. But his love of God did not make him a recluse. It linked him with all mankind, for, are not all men God's children? This was the real source of his internationalism. All international feeling which has real value for the world must be rooted in religion. We get nowhere by flattening out differences and pretending that they have no significance. The East and the West are not the same. The rich variety of gifts must be brought into a common treasury, and all be made subordinate to the one Divine purpose in the world. It was because he saw this so clearly, as is given only to few men of rare spiritual gifts to see, that Raja Rammohun Roy takes his place among the prophets and pioneers of the new international order.

Like all men who have learnt to measure life and its tasks by a Divine standard, he was very modest about his own achievements.

"A day will arrive", he said, "when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice, perhaps acknowledged with gratitude." How much more than this do we want to say today! He passed through long periods of controversy and bitter opposition with serene dignity, but nothing was able to cloud his vision or damp his courage. If his countrymen rightly celebrate his memory as the Father of Modern India, we in this place may also claim him for our own, as one of the great lovers of God who gave his life to the service of religion, the love of his native land, and the good of all mankind. As we keep this week* the Christian festival of All Saints, let us think of him as numbered among those whom we hold in everlasting remembrance.

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Sir Albion R. Banerji

The great Truths revealed by Rammohun's Life and Work.

(Sermon delivered at the Memorial Service, Unitarian Church, Highgate Hill, London, Sunday, 24th September, 1933, evening.)

It is in keeping with the spirit of Raja Rammohun Roy's life and work, that I am privileged, as a representative of the Brahmo Samaj which he founded, to address this congregation this evening, gathered together in a Church which was founded by Rev. Robert Spears in 1885. Mr. Spears also was long associated with the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj,—Keshub Chunder Sen, Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, and also my father Sevavrata Shashipada.

The memory of the great men of the world in the fields of religion, social uplift, and even politics, has a tendency to fade with the process of time. Their living examples and the heroic efforts they put forth are forgotten as things of the past. We of the present generation forget what we owe to our forefathers, and take much credit for the conditions in which we find ourselves when they are agreeable to us, and blame our predecessors for anything that we find irksome or don't quite appreciate. The master minds and master builders of human culture in every age or epoch fulfil a special destiny, and come to perform a special mission. The duty of the youth of today is, by the aid of such celebrations as we are holding this evening, to realise the significance of the life and work of such outstanding leaders of human thought and human activities as Rammohun Roy, so that they may find the many perplexing problems, which they in course of time will have to solve, less difficult of solution.

* This was delivered on 29th October. All Saints' Day is on 1st November.

First and foremost, the need of the present world, rent in warring nationalism, and guided principally by a material conception of human civilization, is spiritualism, and restoration of the religious sense, which is becoming weaker and weaker under the stress of political and economic turmoil. Rammohun Roy's greatest work was in this sphere of human endeavour, and on this occasion when we are holding a Divine Service with special reference to the Centenary of the Raja's death, it is only befitting that I should lay emphasis on a few of the dominating principles which guided his life and work.

It has to be remembered that when the Raja was born in the last quarter of the 18th century, the British had not yet established settled government in India. The country was unsettled from north to south and east to west. The Moghul Empire was tottering towards destruction. The education of the people was, for the most part, directed by the policy of exclusion, so that only high caste Brahmins were taught, and the majority of the population were steeped in ignorance and superstition. The teachings of the Hindu scriptures had almost been forgotten, and the religion of ancient India degenerated into all forms of idolatry, some of which were crude and vulgar. Owing to the disappearance of everything that was noble and good in the culture of the Hindus, the social condition amongst the people was deplorable. The Raja was so influenced by these distressing circumstances that he resolved to acquire such knowledge and erudition, through the study of the scriptures in their original languages, as would enable him to unearth the hidden truths of the religion of the Upanishads, as well as of other religions, such as Christianity, Mahomedanism, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, irrespective of dogma.

Amidst all the activities by which the Raja's early years were crowded, he never lost his desire to purify the religious life of his people. The turmoil of political work, the agitation for the abolition of *Suttee*, the spread of English education, and the resuscitation of ancient Sanskrit learning, drew forth his best energies; but the Raja never lost sight of what he deemed to be the main purpose of his life. He could have been the most successful man of his day from the worldly point of view, but he sacrificed everything; for, even as early as in his 16th year, he stood up against idolatry, which caused a breach between him and his father, with the result that he was exiled by his family. He travelled extensively, reaching, it is said, even distant Tibet. In the prime of manhood, about his fortieth year, he gave up all worldly avocations and engaged himself in religious culture, and in the investigation of truth. Surrounded by an atmosphere of corruption, intrigue, unholiness, licence and indulgence, the spirit of the Raja shone forth like a radiant lamp to dispel the darkness that spread over the whole land. With his reforming zeal, he was anxious not only to restore the monotheism and the spirituality of the ancient sages, but he wanted to spread true religion amongst all classes of men, without distinction of caste or sex. The position

of women at that time had degraded to a status so low that they were subject to every kind of suppression and disability. His great leadership gained the abolition of *Suttee*, and this was the first step towards breaking through those customs which were established by the practice of corrupt Hinduism, and allowed by fictitious religious sanctions.

At that time, as every one knows, with the advent of the British trading classes in India, came also Christian Missionaries. And they attempted to propagate a form of Christianity which was full of dogmas and doctrines that appeared repugnant to the Raja's ideas of true religion. This brought him into conflict with the Christian Missionaries, and he compiled "the Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to peace and happiness," to show the excellence of *pure* Christianity. In one of his works, written after the publication of the 'Precepts,' viz. the "Second Appeal to the Christian Public," he stated his views on Christianity as follows :—"My view of Christianity is that in representing all mankind as the children of one Eternal Father, it enjoins them to love one another without making any distinctions of country, caste, colour or creed."

In spite of the Raja's scholarship, literary ability, and fighting characteristics in the field of social and political reform, he never lost his innate spirituality and prayerfulness. In 1828 he established the Brahmo Samaj on a broad and catholic basis. The principle of this Church which he founded was that in it the Supreme Being alone was to be worshipped. Rammohun described the Samaj in these words :—"A place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction, as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner, for the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being, who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe, but not under or by any other name, designation or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever." In his life, he exemplified the union of true wisdom and the love of God. The Raja was a Brahmin of Brahmins, a Hindu of Hindus, a Mahomedan of Mahomedans, and a Christian of Christians. This synthesis was the characteristic mark of his life.

A century has passed, and yet we are no nearer a just and adequate appreciation of the qualities of Rammohun Roy. Let us all hope that this Centenary may bring us nearer the great truths his life and work revealed, viz.—

1. The paramount need for the consolidation of the national life of the people of India, irrespective of caste, creed or religion.
2. The need for the uncompromising spirit to fight corruption, falsehood, and social and moral degeneration.
3. The need for a strong and abiding faith in One Universal God, and the conviction which guided his whole life, that "the true way of serving God is to do good to man."

5. ARTICLES ON RAMMOHUN ROY

THAT APPEARED IN PERIODICALS IN 1933

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Visva-Bharati News

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Rammohun Roy, the Messenger of Truth

Santiniketan, Bengal, March 1933.

It takes time to understand and appreciate any rare personality who comes at an age when his country has lost itself and contradicts its own majesty. His voice sounds painfully discordant only because the people have allowed the strings of their own instrument to slacken, and fail to make them harmonise with the music of truth which once originated in the sublime height of their nature.

Rammohun Roy was one such man who had been rudely rejected by his country, which refused to be reminded of the responsibility of its great inheritance while clinging with desperate infatuation to its degeneracy. But the occasion was urgent, and therefore his appearance in the midst of an angry annoyance was inevitable. He came to represent the change of season which must follow the long indigence of drought, and bring the wealth of shower which inspires in the heart of a parched up bareness a magnificence of life. It seems like a bewildering surprise, such a shifting of scene, and its fulness of meaning must wait to be unfolded till the harvest ripens and the reapers no longer hesitate to acknowledge it. Rammohun came to his countrymen as an unwelcome accident stupendously out of proportion to his surroundings, and yet he was the man for whom our history has been watching through the night,—the man who is to represent in his life the complete significance of the spirit and mission of the land to which he belonged. It was a lonely life, but it had for its comrades the noble path-seekers who preceded him in India, whose courage was supreme in their adventure of truth.

It is a matter of infinite wonder that at an obscure age of narrow provincialism Rammohun should be able to bring as a gift to his people who did not understand him, the mind that in its generous sympathy and understanding comprehended the best aspirations of the East and the West,—the mind that opened to itself the confluence of cultures on which have ever come sailing great epochs of civilisation. The vision of the modern age with its multitude of claim and activities shone clear before his mind's eye, and it was he who truly introduced it to his country before that age itself completely found its own mind.

We in India have occasions bitterly to blame our destiny. We have reasons to deplore our past, and despair of our future, but at the same time we have the right to hope for the best when we know that Rammohun has been born to us. Such a marvellous fact has to be fully realised by us through series of years, and great as is the glory that it carries in itself, great will be our shame, in proportion if we fail in the least to offer him our best recognition even after a century of his death. Let us be worthy to own him by our capacity to understand him and willingness to dedicate to him our proud homage of gratitude. For a long time we have kept him aloof from us as an alien, and thus proved ourselves small; but the opportunity has come today when we can show that the country that produces great messengers of truth knows how greatly to receive them.—(From the *Liberty*, Calcutta, March 10, 1933.)

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The Guardian, Madras.

EDITED BY A. N. SUDARISANAM

(i) Raja Rammohun Roy

Leading Article, 6th July 1933.

On the 27th September 1833, there passed away at Bristol the Prophet of Modern India, whose life is no mere memory today, but conveys a message appropriate for the times. The zeal with which India, and Bengal in particular, propose to celebrate the Centenary, has other reasons besides pious devotion to the hero of a past age. In the galaxy of illustrious men whom India has produced during the century, there is hardly any personality whose penetrative insight was so universal and so profound as to merit the claim of being a prophet to whom the country can turn now and for a long time to come for sure guidance and inspiration. If Rammohun Roy was a light who shone in the darkness of a century ago, he is also a beacon of light out of whose range India may not yet be said to have passed.

To call him a 'universal man' is not the language of rhetoric. It is not a contemporary recognition of value. It is a belated posthumous estimate prompted in succeeding generations by their bewilderment at the ever-widening issues of a growing nation, and the contrast afforded by Rammohun Roy's early clarity of vision and his discovery of the roots of life. He was a rebel in the society of his day, which knew its own best traditions but feebly, and could discern the future evolution in no clear outline. Perhaps then more truly than now could India have said to have been made up of "masses" literally rendered lifeless and ineffectual by economic degradation, a growing political subjugation, and spiritual chaos. There was no living conflict as in the centuries that had preceded. Those troubles had done their work, and left a mental debris of which the external political unification that had started under the British had not yet taken account. It is under such conditions that Rammohun Roy enunciated principles that have stood the test of time and bear testimony to his synthetic personality.

There was enough of the dead past to make a mere crusader of a prophet and bestow temporary glory. But Rammohun Roy possessed the true prophet's faith in humanity and in its Creator. He brought dry bones to life in his day, and his constructive temper envisaged a destiny for the nation that has not been excelled in conception.

His contempt for customs, traditions, and institutions bred no contempt for any section of his fellow countrymen. His exploration of the ancient lore of India, just when in the name of that heritage he was exiled, was characteristic of his love to discover the spirit beneath all externals. He went where the spirit led him, into the sources of Hindu and Muslim culture and philosophy, into reason and contemplation. It was a divine passion which set no limits to his search. He probed many religions and philosophies, and saw their worth for man. His quick grasp of their essentials made him a social reformer, the champion of modern education, a spiritual seer, and a political worker. To say that he thought ahead of his times is to say little. The particular measures that he laboured for, were based upon such a clear conception of fundamentals, that they proved to be but the precursors of larger changes in that direction at a later date. "He based his reforms, social or political, agrarian or industrial, on a criticism of social life, on ulterior postulates and concepts, in which he effected a synthesis between the East and the West." At his time of Indian history, his views might well have been regarded as outrageous or fanatical, but he found their sources in the cultures of the land and of the West, both of which were sealed books to his fellow countrymen. To conceive in his day such a fusion of the different cultures is a standing wonder, made more so by the fact of those cultures being represented by politically hostile races. The 'Father of Modern India' is a fitting appellation for the seer who found the synthesis.

To the politically minded India of this day, Raja Rammohun Roy's view of Western civilization and his relationships with the new conquerors must seem remarkable ; but subsequent history has justified his faith. He saw beneath the artificial connections established by political conquest, the possibilities of the enrichment of life that neither his countrymen nor the political invaders so clearly perceived. Who knows but that it was Rammohun Roy who converted the British political mastery of India into a definite moral trusteeship ? His large contacts with Europeans and with the authorities were made to serve this purpose. It is a testimony to the large faith that inspired the man that he should commit the welfare of the country to strangers, when evidence had already become apparent that racial superiority and mistrust had become part of the British attitude, and that the material benefits of conquests were luring the rulers into other paths. While he fought against these, often in vain, he knew that apart from these aberrations, lasting good would result from international relationships. It was not a popular step with Rammohun Roy's

countrymen. Had that ideal been maintained in its purity, the century that has passed would have seen India more of an 'advanced' nation than a 'backward' one.

All these, however, were external landmarks in Rammohun Roy's mental history. They show that after he had laid the theoretical foundations of his synthesis by extensive thought and study, the stage came when his mind turned from theory to practice, from doctrine to institutions, from polemics to reform.

But it is as the apostle of a Universal Religion that Rammohun Roy achieved his greatest distinction. His own contribution may be said to have been of a more permanent nature than the offshoots of a later day. He had studied the three scriptures,—those of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, and had discovered the core of each religion. Strengthened by these convictions, he waged war against the accretions in each of these, even if it led him into controversis with the exponents of each religion, or rendered it necessary for him to defend any one of them against the others. He stood for the truth and universalism of every religion. "He had been brought by his pioneer studies in Comparative Religion to Universalism, and what is more, to a universal scripture, a universal authority, as underlying all historic authorities. ... But he perceived that the Universal Truth was stressed in different ways, had different accents. The Vedanta, which had restored him to faith, he always considered as strongest in *Jnana*, the knowledge of the Unity of all souls and of the world in Brahma; Islam, which had given him his early iconoclastic zeal, he considered as strongest in the sense of divine government and a militant equality of man with man; and Christianity, which gave him the divine exemplar, he considered as strongest in ethical and social guidance to peace and happiness on the path of life. Thus his universalism in Religion passed on to a historic synthesis, which was distinguished from eclecticism in two ways. First, none of these religions was only *a part of* the truth; each in its pristine purity was *the* truth, specifically and ethnically expressed or embodied. Secondly, each in his view was to preserve its historic or traditional continuity, though each was to grow *by mutual contact and assimilation and by convergence to a common ideal.*" [Sir B. N. Seal.]

There may be doubts about the correctness of his judgments and his interpretation of individual religions. But he approached so near an acceptance of the central truth of each of them, that he was claimed in turn to be a Muslim, a Christian, a Hindu, and so on. It is not by the standards of the feeble replicas of a later day that we can dismiss the early founder as a spiritual adventurer or an accommodating syncretist. His aspiration to find and follow the Truth places his sincerity beyond doubt. If it led him in the direction of finding the universal in religion, the step is praiseworthy, for it was not by the sacrifice of the purity and essentials of any religion that he meant to do so.

That later developments fell short of his ideal shows the magnitude of his endeavour and its limitations.

But the inscription on his tombstone at Bristol will command general assent: "A conscientious and steadfast believer in the Unity of the Godhead.—He consecrated his life with entire devotion to the worship of the Divine Spirit alone. To great natural talents he united a thorough mastery of many languages, and early distinguished himself as one of the greatest scholars of the day. His unwearied labours to promote the social, moral and physical condition of the people of India, his earnest endeavours to suppress idolatry and the rite of *Suttee*, and his constant zealous advocacy of whatever tended to advance the glory of God and the welfare of man, live in the grateful remembrance of his countrymen."

(ii) Editorial Note on the Centenary

September 28, 1933.

The Centenary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy, which was celebrated yesterday all over India, falls at a time when the lessons of his life appeal with special appropriateness to thinking minds of the present day. This fact should account for the outburst of spontaneous enthusiasm we witness. In politics, Rammohun Roy had to decide between an attitude of hostility towards, or reconciliation with, the new political power that had been established in India recently. In spite of the intense nationalism evoked by the presence of alien authority, which was consolidating its power for permanent domination in the country, Rammohun Roy chose the latter alternative as containing the promise of enlightened progress in the land. The present generation is afflicted with a similar perplexity, whether to work for complete independence, implying separation from Britain in all respects, or to so adjust matters that partnership with Britain can be maintained without that country dominating our affairs. In regard to religion, Rammohun Roy set himself to the task of preserving the ancient heritage, but purifying it in the light of modern knowledge to serve the aspirations of a new generation. A similar process is now being attempted in India. The problem for the religious reformer is to assimilate the best of modern thought into his own spiritual consciousness without destroying his heritage. Whereas Rammohun Roy was led to seek concrete embodiment for his spiritual ideals, and in that way lent his support to tangible experiments, which, by the creation of sects, reduced the value of his contribution, men of this generation are wiser in engaging in thought movements alone. In regard to social matters, Rammohun Roy was inpressed with the urgent necessity of reform if the vision of a new India which he saw was to be fulfilled. He explored the problem thoroughly, and discovered the root causes, so that the lessons that he taught at the dawn of social reform era are found to be applicable now when the task is assuming the proportion of a national mass movement, under the

sense of an urgency that self-government requires the solid basis of a rationalised society. In the search for principles of action, the present generation finds in Rammohun Roy a guide whose wisdom and sagacity stand vindicated in the light of subsequent history.

The 'Father of Modern India' is thus not merely a memory, but a living force in intimate converse with a generation as perplexed as his own.

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The Leader, Allahabad

EDITED BY C. Y. CHINTAMANI

(i) A Great Occasion

Leading Article, Sunday, September 17, 1933.

For many long years Indians, as a grateful people, have been celebrating with due ceremony the death anniversary of Raja Rammohun Roy, who cast off his mortal coil at Bristol on September 27, 1833. The celebration of the day this year, which is shortly coming, will assume special significance as it happens to be the centenary of his death.

Rammohun Roy was *something more than a great Indian* : he was the first great man of Modern India. Almost in every sphere, in education, journalism, literature, politics, social reform and religion, he was an outstanding figure with the supreme distinction that he broke the ground where others did not trace a furrow. In the choice language of Dr. Tagore, "He is the great path-maker of this century, who has removed ponderous obstacles that impeded our progress at every step, and initiated us into the present Era of world-wide co-operation of humanity." To celebrate the centenary of the death of so great a man is not only a privilege, but also a duty, and it is but right that adequate arrangements should be made to observe the day on a bigger scale than usual, as befitting the occasion, and in a manner worthy of the man and of the country. Already in Calcutta a comprehensive scheme has been developed by representative public men under the distinguished leadership of the Poet. ... It was but in the nature of things that these Centenary celebrations should find (as they are likely to do) more eloquent and wide-spread manifestations in Bengal than in other provinces. It should however be borne in mind that if Rammohun Roy belonged to Bengal more, he did not belong to the rest of India less. In fact he belonged to humanity. Who can ignore the force of Jeremy Bentham's tribute to him as "an intensely admired and beloved collaborator in the service of humanity" ? May it be hoped that the U. P. will enthusiastically join its voice to the national chorus in singing the glory of Rammohun, whose name is always an inspiration to every good cause and noble effort ? It is a great occasion which no province or community in India should miss, for much of the progress the country has made during the last hundred years can be traced to the lofty-minded and high-souled endeavours of Rammohun Roy.

(ii) Raja Rammohun Roy

Leading Article, Thursday, September 28, 1933.

Today India pays homage to and blesses the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy on the occasion of the centenary of his death in true and grateful recognition of his unparalleled services, which rescued her from darkness, degradation and decadence, and singled him cut as a man of imperishable greatness. India has produced men of varied types of distinction and eminence—sages and saints, prophets and priests, scholars and statesmen, educationists and reformers, politicians and administrators, artists and men of letters. Some of them, in their respective spheres, outshone Rammohun Roy, but to none of them has been vouchsafed that rare synthesis of intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities, which enabled him to challenge the crude and outworn theories of the day, and create a new order of things out of utter desolation.

Flung into life at a time when the country was struck with a sort of paralysis (for which the only remedy was the message of God's chosen man), when industries were killed, and illiteracy and ignorance stalked the land, when there was little political consciousness, and less of social conscience, and when, in the words of a scholar-Governor of Bengal, "the people's vital spark had burned low, whose religion of Power had become a mockery of self—had lost its soul of beneficence in the repetition of empty formulae and the observance of meaningless mummeries," Rammohun entered the lists alone and dauntless, and ruthlessly wiped out the enemies of progress. In India there was no parallel or precedence to the work that had fallen to his lot. He was his own mentor and monitor, his own guide and philosopher, and like the ancient Roman general, "he came, he saw, he conquered." It would not be an exaggeration to say that he found India a mere geographical expression, and left her a historical entity. ...

Every form of nation-building activity had its origin and example in Rammohun's endeavours, which, as a later-day follower* of his said, were four-fold: "To reassess the national heritage, to replenish the national resources, to infuse a quickening and harmonizing spirit, and to use the newly awakened energies for the new national wants and demands." Rammohun did things in no half-hearted way or in no small measure. He mastered ten languages; he understood the spirit of different religions; he wrote books and treatises which comprised a vast range of subjects, and undertook tasks which covered almost the entire field of man. He allowed nothing to come in his way, be it the displeasure of parents, the ostracism of society, the apathy of friends, or the opposition of enemies. With trust in himself and faith in God, he went ahead as a multi-sided man. He had a hand in the inauguration of English education in India, laid the foundation of Bengali prose, started papers not only for discussion of social

* Sir R. Venkata Ratnam. *Vide ante*, p. 209.

and religious problems, but as means of popular education, strove hard to preserve the liberty of the Press as a *sine qua non* of good government, employed his pen in securing the legal rights of women and safeguarding the political interests of men, founded the Brahmo Samaj as the culmination of his religious work, rendered unequalled service in securing the suppression of *Suttee*, which was his greatest achievement, and in so many ways stirred national consciousness. He was a great Indian—the greatest of his time, and was rightly hailed as 'the Universal Man'. According to Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal "he was a Brahmin of Brahmins, a Hindu of Hindus; he was also a Mohammedan with the Mohammedans and a Christian with the Christians; he could combine in his personal religion the fundamental Hindu, Christian and Islamic experiences; and above all, he was the Humanist, pure and simple, watching from his conning-tower the procession of Universal Humanity in Universal History."

Such men as Rammohun Roy adorn the earth once in an age like gods in exile. As a British statesman said: "Their's the task to restore the life that had fled, to revivify the soul that was all but dead." This was precisely and pre-eminently what Rammohun did. Hence the varied epithets freely, but not too lavishly, applied to him, as for instance, "the prophet of a new age, the father of modern India, the Rishi of the modern age, the builder of the modern nation, the first arch—the earliest Colossus —that spanned the East and the West, the morning star, the path-maker of this century, the pioneer of modernism, the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future." Who deserves this garland of tributes better?

In the enthusiasm of the celebration of his Centenary, let Dr. Tagore's words be recalled that "we in this country, however, owe a special responsibility, not only of bringing to light his varied contributions to the Modern Age, but of proving our right of kinship with him by justifying his life, and by maintaining in every realm of our national existence the high standard of truth which he set before us." The India of today should realize that Raja Rammohun Roy's life was, in the poet's words, "a loan to be repaid with use."

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The Sind Observer, Karachi

EDITED BY K. PUNNIAH

(i) The Greatest Nation-builder

Leading Article, Rammohun Centenary Number, 27th September, 1933.

Ancient India was the leader and teacher of the world in all the arts and sciences, and its religious and spiritual Guru. The country overflowed with creative vitality, exuberant vigour, and a spirit of bold and vigorous enterprise and pioneering. Aryan

civilisation then spread to all the parts of the known world, by land and sea, over hill and dale, over desert and prairie. The India of the Rishis, of the Upanishads, and the great epics and schools of philosophy, of the Buddhist gospel of love and service, was loved and respected, and led the world in the march of civilisation. Indian merchants traded with all parts of the world on land and sea, and made their country the richest in the world. That was ancient India.

Then India fell from its high estate and lost its glory. It became a prey of foreign invasions, lost its intellectual vigour, fell into spiritual stagnation, and moral and social degradation, superstition and servitude. This is the dark age of Indian history.

Contact with the West during the last two hundred years and the complete conquest of the country by the British introduced new forces into India, that have begun a new process of spiritual transformation. This is a period of renaissance, and the father of the new era is Raja Rammohun Roy. The New India that we see before us today is his entire creation.

THE FALLING SCEPTRE

When Rammohun was born in 1772, the Mahomedan sovereignty of India was collapsing ; the Marathas proved unequal to hold the falling sceptre ; and the British came in and were led from one conquest to another to hold that sceptre. Dense clouds of darkness were brooding over the land. There was decay of knowledge, the deadening of conscience, moral corruption and social degeneracy, which made conquest of the country by the British very easy. The sense of social justice was dead. Personal purity and integrity of conduct were at a low ebb. The spirit of true religion as preached by Vedas and Upanishads was dead, and superstition, gross idolatry and outward forms of ceremonialism only remained. The tyranny of indigenous rulers became intolerable. The luxury of the rulers and the poverty of the people stood in great contrast. Men could marry any number of wives among Hindus and Muslims, and sexual purity among the male sex was not considered to be necessary at all. Women were mere chattels, and condemned to drag on a miserable existence. In some parts of the country female children were killed as soon as they were born. What little education the people received was in *maktabs* and *páthashálás* in the ancient way with no modern touch.

CREATOR OF AN AGE

The great distinction of Raja Rammohun Roy was that he was not the product of his age, but rather the age was of his creation. Rammohun educated himself properly in the languages and cultures of the East and the West, discovered what his mission in life was, and steadily worked, often at imminent danger to his own life at the hands of Hindu orthodoxy, to realise that mission.

All modern reform movements, educational, social, religious and political, have emanated from him, and all Indian reformers of the present day are spiritually his children.

Religion was the main spring and the chief concern of his life. The Brahmo Samaj is the concrete embodiment of his religious and social ideal. "It has thoroughly discarded idol worship and the fetters of caste and priestcraft, the bondage of infallible Guru and Book which for centuries dominated oppressively over the spirit of the nation and defied successfully all endeavours at reformation. In a country divided and subdivided into innumerable castes and sub-castes without the commonest amenities of fellowship, it has united men of all castes and creeds, languages and nationalities, in a close spiritual and social brotherhood, inter-caste and inter-communal marriages in the Brahmo Samaj being the rule instead of the exception."

HE EDUCATED HIS PEOPLE

Rammohun helped Dr. Duff to start an English school in the premises rented by him for his Brahmo Samaj. He started and maintained English schools at his own expense in Calcutta ; and through English education, English history, literature and Western sciences, he thought, India would regenerate itself, regain its lost glory, and become great again.

Today, a hundred and thirty years after the first English school was started, we have a number of universities and various colleges and other educational institutions, splendidly housed, educating hundreds of thousands of Indians in various branches of arts and sciences, who can hold their own with the highly educated and cultured people of any country or clime. These men and women are the gifts of Rammohun Roy to his country, inasmuch as in the great controversy of his time, whether oriental or occidental learning should be taught in Government institutions, he fought for Western education in his famous letter to Lord Amherst, and succeeded in his advocacy.

HE REVIVED THE VERNACULARS

Rammohun discovered early enough that only a few could learn the English language, and, therefore, resuscitated the vernacular language (Bengali) for the education of the masses. He was the originator of Bengali prose writing. He published vernacular newspapers and text-books, and translated important Sanskrit and English works into Bengali and Hindi, and carried on all his reforming activities through the medium of the vernacular as much as through English.

Today there are hundreds of newspapers and books published in the vernaculars of India, and the level of intelligence of the people has greatly increased. There is no science, no art, no subject, however abstruse, that cannot be dealt with and explained in the vernacular to the people.

WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION

When Rammohun Roy inaugurated social reform activities, single-handed, there was none to help him, and there were many ready to stone him to death. Today, we are all social reformers. Women are no longer the suppressed and oppressed sex,—specially among the higher classes and communities. Hundreds of women come out of the universities and are modelling the new life of the nation. Widow marriage is not forbidden, and is becoming common ; polygamy among the Hindus is extremely rare ; women occupy seats in legislatures, and conduct educational, social and religious institutions : they are authors, journalists, politicians, orators, painters, teachers, professors, lawyers, and no profession and no activity is closed against them. They have come and are coming to their own, and Rammohun's spirit, which fought against the cruel customs of *Sati*, polygamy, and the suppression of women as a class, would be rejoicing in heaven that the sex for the cause of which he had started crusades is on a fair way of obtaining equality of status and treatment in all matters.

HE CROSSED THE SEAS

A hundred years ago, no Hindu dared to cross the *Kalapani* for fear of the extreme penalty of excommunication and boycott imposed by caste and community. Rammohun Roy broke that terror by himself going abroad, and led the way for thousands of his countrymen to go to the West and East for educational and business purposes, and to return home laden with knowledge and wealth, and to act as the leaven to leaven the mass of Indian life. These pilgrims to the West brought with them liberal social, political and educational ideas during the century since the death of Rammohun Roy, that have transformed the life of the country, and placed in the hands of Indians some of the highest positions under Government. This act of breaking the 'spell of the sea' alone entitles Rammohun Roy to our eternal gratitude.

FATHER OF POLITICAL AGITATION

Rammohun is rightly called the father of political agitation in India. Having studied English history, literature and parliamentary institutions, he introduced methods of political agitation in India by petition, pamphlet, memorial, public meeting and the Press. He educated people in their own rights ; he started political associations to carry on agitation, and, though oftentimes beaten, he never gave up a political cause which he considered to be right and just. He cultivated friendships in England, and carried on agitation at the centre of the empire. His self-respect was so great that when his petition against the Press regulations failed, he closed down his paper as a protest.

SWARAJ FOR INDIA

Today the country demands Swaraj, and the British are, however reluctantly, forced to accept the claim and prepare the way for it. "Home Rule for India" was an object not far from

his mind, though it looked to him to be a very distant object. His biographer, Miss Collet, says that the prospect of an educated India, of an India approximating to European standards of culture, seems never to have been absent from Rammohun's mind, and he did, however vaguely, claim in advance of his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilization inevitably involves. Here again Rammohun stands forth as the Tribune and Prophet of New India.

Such is the man, whose hundredth death anniversary India is celebrating this week.—(*Contributed.*)

(ii) T. L. Vaswani

The Forerunner

Rammohun Centenary Number, 27th September, 1933.

I have called him 'The Forerunner.' I believe history will justify his claim to this title. The true proportions of this great man are not yet seen by the present generation. I trust a careful study of his life and writings may indicate to Young India that he was really a forerunner of Indian freedom. Passionate was his love of liberty. He expressed it in his actions. He had a strong sense of social justice; he resented the injustice inflicted on the men and women of his country. So he bestirred himself to abolish *Suttee*. So he protested against the Press Regulation; he put in an earnest plea for a Free Press in India; and he asked for India's freedom.

In his "Appeal to the King in Council" he pointed out that while "under their former Mohamedan rulers Indians enjoyed every political privilege in common with Mussalmans, being eligible to the highest offices in state, entrusted with the command of armies and the government of provinces, and often chosen as advisers to the Prince without disqualification or degrading distinction on account of their religion or the place of their birth, under British Rule the natives of India had entirely lost their political consequence." He dreamt of free India and pointed out to the British that their own interests should dictate a progressive policy in this country. With increasing "knowledge and energy," he added, "India would move from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population," either useful and profitable as an "ally of the British Empire" or "troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy." He it was who, almost a century ago, pointed out also that if India chose, she could be more "troublesome and annoying" even than Ireland. An Englishman of his day rightly said of Rammohun :—"He would be free or not be at all. Love of Freedom was, perhaps, the strongest passion of his soul,—freedom not of action merely, but of thought."

In him was the power of the Spirit; and they whom the Spirit raises to redeem societies, to help the nations, to bear witness to the values of life and be the burden-bearers of His Truth, they,

indeed, are our Rajas,—Kings in the realms which will endure through the ages when the kingdoms of the earth will have passed away. Homage to this Raja who was a servant of India ! Homage to Rammohun Roy !

This man, who stood on the warrior's path to fight for truth and right was a seer. This soldier of the Spirit was a seer. What did he see ? In his own heart he saw the glory of an India going abroad on a world mission, becoming again a preceptor of the nations, and honoured by the peoples of East and West. In his own heart he saw a New India strong in the strength of her ancient wisdom, and in touch with modern science and culture. But the *actual* India he saw with his eyes,—how different this from his vision ! He lived from 1772 to 1833. Dark days had come upon the India of that age ; the ancient glory had departed. How could such an India be honoured among the nations, and make the message of her ancient wisdom,—the wisdom of the Vedas and Upanishads,—heard in a modern world ? India must become herself to give her message.

And, to be herself, India must be free. The years of Rammohun's life were spent in efforts to break India's bonds. He saw that there were customs, institutions, creeds, which had stifled for centuries the life of the Indian people. These, he felt, must go, if India was to step forth with the strength and freedom of a vigorous nation. I can think of no greater blessing for individuals and nations than freedom ; let their energies have free play, and they will yield rich harvest.

The main incidents of his life have been recited by many, many times. I do not wish to repeat them. Love of freedom runs as a thread through them all. On receiving the news of Spain's being granted a constitutional government, he is filled with joy ; he gives a dinner at the Town Hall in honour of the event ! On his way to England he halts at the Cape for a short time, and though limping, he walks up to the French Flag there to touch it and so to salute symbolically the Spirit of the French Revolution ! He expresses sympathy with Ireland in her struggle for freedom. He pleads for a free Press in India. In his Evidence before the Board of Control in India, he condemns Acts and Regulations passed by Government ignoring the "feeling of Indian subjects." He urges that all posts should be thrown open to Indians, and points out that even under Moslem rule, Hindus were of "political consequence, the highest posts being always open to them." He asks his countrymen to educate women, pointing out that India produced in the days of her greatness such cultured ladies as Maitreyi, Lilavati and the wife of Kalidas. He organizes a Vedanta College. He fights with success against the cruel custom of *Suttee*. He publishes pamphlets on the teachings of Christ, of Islam, and of the Upanishads. He establishes the Brahmo Samaj. He does it all to help India become a nation of the free.

Rammohun passed away at Bristol in 1833. In a quiet place there stands the *samádhi* of this great man. Many years have passed since I visited that shrine at Bristol. An Englishman was there to guard it. He had a book, a register; to look into it was joy; it was full of tributes to Rammohun and his work by men of different creeds and countries, who had visited the *samádhi*. I wrote some words in the book, then returned to the *samádhi*. How quiet the place, how lonely! A bird or two sat above it. Was he a lover of birds? And did they commune with the departed Man? I placed flowers of affectionate reverence. I sat for some time in silence, and I asked:—"What is thy message for this thy servant and thy countryman?" Did I feel a responsive vibration at the moment? Something sprang spontaneous in my heart:—"I am lonely. Unite and build."

Yes; Rammohun is lonely. A century has passed since he passed away in Bristol. He is lonely still; not yet has the spirit of his teaching penetrated the heart of India; not yet have the great masses of India heard his message; not yet have we carried the Light to the villages of India. In a lonely spot is his shrine in England; Rammohun is lonely; and he asks us all to unite and build a new temple for the Mother! Let Hindus and Moslems, Parsis and Christians, unite and build. Not by smooth words but by strong resolves and noble deeds may we build a a New India. The path of freedom is not strewn with roses; the path is paved with pains and penalties, with suffering and sacrifice. Therefore have I asked young men to practise *tapsyá* in daily life; therefore do I ask all to build with a strength born of suffering, with hearts inured to sacrifice. Unite and build,—not barter the Mother's honour for ease and the yellow dust. Build with love and truth the Mother's new Temple. Unite and build, so that Hindus and Moslems and Parsis and Christians, all communities and all classes, crossing the limit-lines of castes and creeds, may bring their diverse gifts, and in the joy of fellowship worship Her,—the One Mother. Unite and build! The lights of the New Temple will shine afar, and its song will ring again India's Message to the Nations.

(iii) Dr. Tarabai

Rammohun Roy and the Ancient Rights of Women

Rammohun Centenary Number, 27th September, 1933.

Raja Rammohun Roy was, it is needless to add, a great champion of the cause of women. By deep study of the ancient laws of the Hindus and their customs and manners, he found that women were accorded a high place in society, and that Aryan women were treated as in no way inferior to men.

He wondered how women lost their high place, became degraded to be the mere chattels of men, with *Suttee* and polygamy rampant in the country, with innumerable other social evils affecting them.

He felt that no society could be healthy unless women were elevated, and hence his lifelong championship of their cause and the unbounded chivalry he displayed towards them.

This attitude was the more commendable when his own domestic life was almost a tragedy. Before the age of twelve, his father married him to three girls, one of whom died young. He had to live with two wives as a man, and could'nt discard any from a sense of duty. When he became a reformer and an 'outcaste', his both wives and mother left him, and he lived a lonely life. A tragedy like this would have turned another man into a hater of the female sex. On the contrary, it had the effect of broadening and deepening his sympathies for the sex of his mother.

Polygamy and *Suttee* would not stop unless women are made economically independent, thought Rammohun. He made a study of ancient Hindu law, and produced a valuable tract on "Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindu law of Inheritance." By numerous citations he proved that "all ancient law-givers unanimously award to a mother an equal share with her son in the property left by her deceased husband in order that she might spend her remaining days independently of her children." But unfortunately later jurists made void, by their expositions, this salutary law. As a consequence, "both step-mothers and mothers have, in reality, been left destitute in the division of their husband's property, and the right of the widow exists in theory only among the learned, but unknown to the populace."

Hence, "a woman who is looked up to as the sole mistress of the rest of a family one day, on the next becomes dependent on her sons, and subject to the slights of her daughters-in-law." On the death of their husbands women had, said Rammohun, only three courses left before them. "First, to live a miserable life as entire slaves to others, without indulging any hope of support from another husband. Secondly, to walk in the paths of unrighteousness for their maintenance and independence. Thirdly, to die on the funeral pile of their husbands, loaded with the applause and honour of their neighbours."

Having shown that Hindu antiquity, far from demanding *Suttee*, had made honourable provision for the maintenance of the widow, Rammohun Roy passes on to attack the institution of polygamy, which had made difficult the fulfilment of the ancient law of female inheritance. Where plurality of wives was most frequent, as in Bengal, the number of female suicides was proportionately great. "This horrible polygamy among the Brahmans is directly contrary to the law given by ancient authors." A second marriage, while the first wife was alive, was allowed only on the ground of specified physical or moral defects. Under his will Rammohun disinherited all members of his family from sharing his property if they married more than one wife.

In his tract on the subject the Raja further recalls ancient authorities to show that the daughter was entitled to receive a fourth part of the portion which a son could inherit. This had been so far set aside by modern practice that the daughter has no share in her father's property if she has a brother living. Rammohun desired that Hindu women should be restored to their rights in property, which would accord them proper position in society and not put them in dependence.

And after a hundred and thirty years, Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda has a Bill today on the legislative anvil to obtain proper maintenance for Hindu widows, which is meeting with much orthodox opposition!

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The Tribune, Lahore

EDITED BY KALI NATH RAY

The Maker of Modern India

Leading Article, Thursday, September 28, 1933.

The 27th of September is for ever consecrated to the memory of Raja Rammohun Roy, undoubtedly the Father and Maker of Modern India. The day is specially sacred in the present case, because it was on this day exactly a century ago that the great Raja left the scene of his earthly labours, and died in a foreign country, if any country could be foreign to a universal mind and soul like his. An intellectual giant, with a physique cast in nature's finest mould, the founder of a religion, and great alike as a linguist, a social reformer, an educationist, a humanitarian and philanthropist, an ardent advocate of the rights of women, a passionate lover of liberty and freedom, Raja Rammohun Roy would have made his mark in, and shed imperishable lustre on, any country or age, and would have been regarded as one of the first men in any society into which nature or circumstances might have thrown him. As it was, he was born in India at a time when she stood in imperative need of transcendental talents and gifts like his to accomplish her transition from medievalism to modernity. In the words of his fair biographer, "Rammohun stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. He was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and a conservative progress. He was the mediator of his people, harmonizing in his own person, often by means of his own solitary sufferings, the conflicting tendencies of immemorial tradition and of inevitable environment."

In thinking of Raja Rammohun Roy we are almost overwhelmed by his greatness. This greatness was not of the ancient order, the perfection of one type of excellence, but of the distinctively modern type, a synthesis, a harmonious blending of many types of excellence. There was scarcely a field of human activity, with the exception of the military and the industrial, which the Raja did not touch, and he ennobled and elevated to a higher plane whatever he touched. The period in which it was his lot to live has been described by the most learned and distinguished scholar that India has known in these many years as "perhaps the darkest age in modern Indian history, an age in which an old society and polity had crumbled, and no new one had yet been built in its place." To quote from the same authority, "Devastation reigned in the land. All the vital limbs of society were paralysed. Religious institutions and schools, village and home, agriculture, industry and trade, law and administration, were all in a chaotic condition. An all-round reconstruction and renovation were necessary for the continued existence of social life and order." Such was the condition of India when Rammohun Roy appeared on the scene. With the intuition of genius he at once perceived the needs of his country and time, and alone and single-handed, often in the teeth of stubborn opposition from those who had a vested interest in darkness and superstition, he threw himself with almost superhuman energy, and with matchless ability and devotion, into the task of reconstituting and renovating the Indian society of his day. There is hardly a field of national life and activity which escaped his notice, or in which he did not do pioneer work of the highest and most enduring value.

Religion, which in every ancient country, and especially in India, the home and meeting-ground of religions from time immemorial, is the basis of society, was the first to attract the Raja's attention, and the various stages by which he marched from the then current Hinduism to the foundation of the Brahmo Samaj, will for all time remain a memorable chapter of the history of religious reformation. As a social reformer, he will for ever be remembered for his services in connection with the abolition of *Suttee,* but that was by no means his only title to greatness in this sphere. He was against polygamy, against compulsory widowhood, especially in the case of child-widows, and an indefatigable champion of the rights of women. As an educationist, his title to fame rests on the fact that he was among the pioneers of modern Western education in India. His famous letter to the then Governor-General protesting against the tendency, then in the ascendant, to confine the educational activities of the East India Company to the promotion of Oriental education, did not a little to shape the policy of the Government, though the actual fruit of his labours was not visible till two years after his death. In his own province he laid the foundation of Bengali prose, and imparted a great impetus to Bengali literature. Nor did he neglect

that special field of literary activities, which is indispensable for popular education, the newspaper Press. He was among the undoubted pioneers of a popular Press in India, and fought valiantly for its rights. By his protest against the Press Ordinance of 1823, which was intended to suppress the liberty of the Press, he prepared the ground for the liberation of the Press associated with the honoured name of Sir Charles Metcalfe. In the economic sphere Raja Rammohun Roy was a staunch advocate of the rights of tenants. Last, but not least, Raja Rammohun Roy was a firm believer in India's equality and political freedom. Living as he did at a time when his country had undoubtedly fallen from its ancient greatness, he had not an iota of 'inferiority complex' in his composition, and believed that "his people had the same capability of improvement as any other civilised people." He was the founder of political agitation in India, which since his day has become the most powerful of all Indian movements. He missed no opportunity of agitating against official measures which he considered unsound or detrimental to the interests of the country, and when an agitation did not succeed in India, he did not hesitate to carry it to England. His famous visit to England was itself undertaken in pursuance of a campaign of political agitation. In a word, as has been so well said, Raja Rammohun Roy "laid the foundation of almost all the principal modern movements for the elevation of his people," and as such was justly entitled to the proud designation of "the Maker of Modern India."

But this account of the Raja's greatness would be incomplete and, indeed, very inadequate, if no mention was made of the fact that great as Raja Rammohun Roy was as an Indian, he was still greater as a man. In point of fact, he was a great Indian, the greatest that modern India has produced, because he was a great man, one of the glories of mankind. At the bottom of all his activities for the betterment of his country and people there were three commanding impulses or master-motives, his burning love of truth, his great and intense humanity, and his active and unquenchable love of liberty and freedom. It was his love of truth that led him, with the aid of his gigantic intellect, to lay the foundation of that Comparative Religion which since his time has taken its place among the highest subjects of human study. It was his humanity which led him to seek points of agreement where others only saw conflict, and which lay at the root of his ceaseless endeavour to better the condition of his people generally and of women in particular. In the international field it led him to dream that dream of a Court of Arbitration between nations, which, after going through so many varieties of being in so many powerful minds, has finally assumed tangible shape in the League of Nations. As a lover of freedom Raja Rammohun Roy's sympathies were not bounded either by race, religion, clime or country. Four notable incidents in his career show that if ever there was a man who loved freedom for

its own sake, that man was Raja Rammohun Roy. He declined an invitation to a dinner given by a European friend of his, because "intelligence had just reached India that the people of Naples, after extorting a constitution from their despotic kings, were crushed back into servitude by the Austrian troops in obedience to the joint mandates of the crowned heads of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sardinia and Naples." Again, when the news of the establishment of a constitutional government in Spain reached India, he gave a public dinner at the Town Hall. His enthusiasm over the French Revolution was so great that for a time he could think and talk of nothing else, and it is on record that during his voyage to England, he, though suffering from the effects of a nasty accident which had made him partially lame, insisted on visiting two French frigates under the revolutionary flag, the glorious tricolour, which were then lying in Table Bay. Lastly, during the days of the Reform Bill agitation, he publicly avowed that if the Bill were defeated he would renounce his connection with England, and go and settle in America. We are not aware of any other man of that era whose love of freedom was so cosmopolitan and universal as that of Raja Rammohun Roy. When one remembers the age in which the Raja lived and worked, with its defective means of communication, with practically no world Press and no world service of news, and with the means of human intercourse but imperfectly developed, and when India, in particular, was not only a subject country, but was backward in almost every field of human activity, it seems almost a miracle that a man of such towering greatness in so many fields of human activity and of such universal sympathies should have been born in this country. But such has always been the history of the birth and growth of the prophets and pioneers, the great torch-bearers of humanity; and Raja Rammohun Roy will, for all time, have an honoured place among the greatest of these benefactors of our race.

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The Indian Social Reformer, Bombay

EDITED BY K. NATARAJAN

The *Indian Social Reformer* of Bombay, in its issue of 30th September 1933, published a long article on the Life and Work of Rammohun Roy, and made the following observations on the Centenary Celebration:—"The Brahmo Samaj played naturally a leading part in the celebrations in honour of its founder, and preparations were taken early in hand for marking the occasion in a manner befitting its solemnity. The central Centenary Committee of Calcutta had drawn up a programme, providing for the republication of the Raja's writings, and the holding of meetings in the

last week of December, and the response which its appeals met with offer some indication of the veneration in which the Raja's memory is held not only by Indians, but the world over. There is another aspect which makes the Centenary Celebrations a welcome event. It has served to bring once more together Bengal and the rest of India in homage to one who has inspired all the activities of the nation, and has given new meaning to her ancient institutions. In the enthusiasm which attended the celebrations, the sense of isolation which Bengal leaders have increasingly suffered from has been swept away."

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The Inquirer, London

The Rammohun Roy Centenary.

Leading Article, September 30, 1933.

The Brahmo Samaj is celebrating at Bristol the Centenary of the death, on September 27, 1833, of its founder, the Raja Rammohun Roy. In India the occasion is being observed by men of all creeds in a prolonged and vastly varied programme extending from the present month to Christmas. In England, from the 22nd to the 27th of the current month, Moslems, Christians and Hindus, as well as Brahmos, have also been uniting in commemoration, for the most part with Unitarians as their hosts.

Why should we remember a man who has been dead this hundred years ? What has he to do with us, or we with him ? The answer is, of course, that there are men who cross the tracks of time and vanish into eternity, making no apparent difference to the world they pass through; while there are others who focus within their beings thoughts and aspirations that at once give life and a new forward impulse to their fellow-men. These are the luminous personalities who are as lights in the world, simplifying complex issues by their grasp of, perhaps, some half-dozen principles which are fundamental. In this company are men like Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel—great formative spirits—and the significance of such men endures. And Rammohun Roy was of their kindred. At a moment in the history of India when spiritual deadness and social prejudice were profound, he arose as the one man in his country who saw the light that could lead men out of the morass into which they had sunk, and who was able to expound the vision that he saw.

Pre-eminently his work was in the interests of the unification of religion. A study of the Koran in its original tongue had convinced him of the unity of God. From that he deduced that behind all forms of religion lay the reality of One Universal Being, and, both to confirm his conviction and the better to expound it, he set himself to acquire a knowledge of the leading

religions and philosophies of the world. That his knowledge might be authoritative, he learned language after language. Besides Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, he mastered Hebrew and Greek for the study of Judaism and Christianity, and English for the study of Western thought and science. It was an outstanding achievement, and illustrative of the thoroughness of his character, and the precision of his mind. His "Letters from Ram Doss" are models of acute, restrained and logical polemic. Having seen the vision of the One God, he renounced idolatry, and with it belief in the exclusive inspiration of any one set of religious scriptures, or any single religious teacher. To Jesus he always accorded a place of signal honour. But for him God spoke through all truth everywhere, and worship was for the glory of the One God, who was found supremely in the best.

But for Rammohun Roy religion meant something more than a mere intellectual universalism; it meant a way of life. And that way of life was not something merely individual; it was individual and social. He could neither lose the individual in the community, nor separate the community from the individual life. Hence his indefatigable labours in behalf of social amelioration; his protest—and effective protest—against *Suttee*, or the burning of widows; his attack on caste; his work for the promotion of popular education among both sexes; his wealth of endeavours to remove the sources of misunderstanding which gave rise to hatred and antagonism between race and race, and class and class, and man and man.

He was a statesman too. He received his title of 'Raja' from the last Mogul Emperor, on the occasion which brought him to England—and so accounted for his death here—where he was entrusted with the task of negotiating the dispute that had arisen between the Mogul Government and the East India Company, whose charter was due to be renewed.

We see him, in the words of Miss Sophia Collet, his English admirer and biographer, as a man of 'majestic' mien, standing nearly six feet high, and 'remarkable' for his 'dignity of manner' and 'grace of bearing'.

But we see him even more intimately in all the vigour of his personal conviction and the inclusiveness of his outlook, in his own words, which incidentally witness to the felicity of his English, and with which he concludes the Preface to his Final Appeal to the Christian Public. (The italics and capitals are his.)—"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 was brought into existence, and by nature, formed to enjoy the comforts of

society and the pleasures of an improved mind, it 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; bearing always in mind that we are the children of ONE FATHER, who is above *all* and through *all* and in us *all*."

In 1816, modestly, and yet with the quiet confidence of the truly great, he wrote, "A day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice, perhaps acknowledged with gratitude."

That day has come.

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The Christian Register, Boston

EDITED BY MILES HANSON, JR.

Dr. F. C. Southworth, D.D., LL.D.

Rammohun Roy : May 22, 1772—September 27, 1833.

Leading Article, September 28, 1933.

Across the interval of a century of time and ten thousand miles of space, *the Register* salutes today on the Centenary of his death, Raja Rammohun Roy, the "Maker of Modern India," and prints with warm approval the glowing tribute of Rabindranath Tagore to his great compatriot.

In the history of religious progress Rammohun Roy occupies a unique place. A native of Asia, the birthplace of world-religions, he was not, like Mohammed, Buddha or Jesus, the founder of a new religion, but was profoundly impressed by the contribution which each of the three great religions, Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam, under whose combined influence he grew to manhood, had made to the totality of religious truth. In order that he might understand this contribution better, he mastered the original languages in which the sacred books of these religions were written,—Sanscrit, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, Aramaic, —and became, as he was described by Sir Monier-Williams, "the first earnest-minded investigator of the science of Comparative Religion that the world has produced."

His investigations taught him that each of these faiths declared that "the love of man was the authentic expression of the love of God." The Brahmo Samaj, of which he was the founder, was open to all "who, by whatever name, would acknowledge some Principle in the Universe, the need of meditation on that Principle as good, and the love and service of man as the guiding principle of the conduct of life." So hospitable were his mind and heart that to Mohammedans he seemed a Mohammedan, to Hindus a Hindu, and to Christians a Christian. But though he liked to speak of

himself as a Unitarian Hindu, he did not look forward to the conversion of the adherents of one of these religions by another, or to their ultimate merger. He believed, instead, that each should be permitted to advance along the line of its own historic continuity toward its own goal, and that by helpful contact and assimilation they should grow toward a common, but ever advancing, ideal. Thus he anticipated by just a hundred years the brilliant report which a company of distinguished Christian laymen have recently given to the world in their epoch-making volume "Rethinking Missions."

Fittingly has it been written by his English biographer: "Rammohun Roy stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. He was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between polytheism and theism. ... He leads the way from the orientalism of the past, not *to* but *through* Western culture, to a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both."

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Meadvile Theological School Quarterly Bulletin

Dr. F. C. Southworth, D. D., LL. D.

Rammohun Roy and Channing.*

There is a striking similarity between the course of liberal religion in India and liberal religion in America in the last hundred years. I would suggest this as the subject on which, for a little while, I should like to claim your attention. In order that I may do this it will be convenient to take as my point of departure the year 1815, when Rammohun Roy began his work in Calcutta, and when the famous Unitarian controversy in America, of which William Ellery Channing was the protagonist, began. At this time both these men were at the full tide of their power; Channing was thirty-five, and his Indian contemporary was thirty-nine years of age.

Rammohun Roy was born when the productive age in Hindu literature and Hindu religion lay far away in the past. The authors of the Vedas and the Upanishads had slumbered for centuries in their graves. An age of ritualism and formalism had been succeeded by an age of reformation. Gautama Buddha in the sixth century B. C. founded a religion which seemed likely for a time to dominate not only India, but the world. But it was banished

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* This article, although written for an earlier occasion, (mentioned at the end), and appearing in the *Bulletin* for April 1929, is included here in consideration of its intrinsic interest.—EDITOR.

from India by a form of Hinduism which had resulted from a process of religious amalgamation. The religion which succeeded it, known as Jainism, though it possessed many followers, had developed no great moral strength. The permanent influence of Mohammedanism in India began with the eleventh century, and continued beyond the middle of the eighteenth. In wave after wave the invaders swept over India until they had won the larger part of it, and were turned back only after nearly eight centuries of successful conquest.

During this long period India had not, indeed, been destitute of religious leaders. Sankaracharya, one of her foremost teachers, had, at the beginning of the ninth century, taught a pure Monism; and Ramanuja, in Southern India, had advocated Monism in a modified form. Later, there had arisen the leaders of the sects, one of whom was Ramananda, and another Kabir, who flourished in the middle of the fifteenth century. Still another was Nanak, the first great leader of the Sikhs, who trace their origin to Kabir. Nanak went about preaching brotherhood and the oneness of God, and opposing caste. Another great saint of India, born a generation later, was Chaitanya, leader of the Bhakti movement in Bengal, not responsible for its excesses. He became an ascetic at the age of twenty-four, and went up and down the land seeking to relate the mystic devotion which he was able to enkindle in his followers to a life of contemplation and good deed. We shall be quite unable to understand either Rammohun Roy or the Brahmo Samaj, unless we remember that he was the product of all these forces of Hindu thought and religion, affected and modified by two world-forces of inestimable magnitude, namely, Christianity and Islam.

In this land in which so many diverse religious faiths had had their birth, Rammohun Roy was born. There was little that was inspiring in the social, political or religious conditions of the time. The voices of the great poets and philosophers, of Rishis and Gurus, had long been silent. The government of the country had passed, or was passing, into the hands of the East India Company. Upon half of the population—the feminine half—had been imposed burdens and restrictions which it is difficult for occidentals of the twentieth century to comprehend. In some parts of the country a girl child was exposed to death at birth. Polygamy was commonly practised even by Brahmins of the highest repute. The father of Rammohun Roy married him at an early age to three child wives. But for a woman a single husband must suffice, and a woman, even a child widow, if she did not ascend her husband's funeral pyre and suffer immolation with him, must remain a widow for the remainder of her life. The undemocratic and highly anti-social effects of the caste system were everywhere in evidence. The evils attending the worship of idols—some of which have survived to the present time—were an incubus on the life of the people. India, as a nation, did not yet exist.

Such were some of the conditions under which, about one hundred years ago, in this land of divergent faiths and of warring ideals, Rammohun Roy founded, on the 20th day of August 1828, the Brahmo Samaj, a Society of Theists whose faith was based on reason, and also on the various ethnical scriptures of the world.

It was not the first attempt of its kind in India. As far back as the seventh century we find a historical novel which portrays King Harsha as presiding over a Religious Conference attended by Buddhists, Jains and the members of other sects; and nine centuries later, the great Emperor Akbar, a man of wide tolerance, proposed not only a Conference but an actual New Religion made up out of Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity. Magnificent as was the Emperor's attempt, it had no permanent result. The effort of Rammohun Roy, however, brought forth not only a movement, but also an actual organization, which, among all the seething changes of the Indian Empire, may already record a beneficent and influential existence of over one hundred years.

The spirit which animated the group of people whom Rammohun Roy drew about him to constitute the Brahmo Samaj was admirably indicated by the words of its Trust Deed. It was a charter of religious freedom such as has been rarely formulated, if ever, in the history of the world. It marks an epoch in the record of religious toleration. I will quote only a single sentence :—"That no sermons shall be delivered in public worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence and virtue, and the strengthening of the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds."

When we read the record of the tragic persecutions and the burnings of heretics which have stained the pages of both Christianity and Islam, we may well thank God that a man once lived in India who formulated this principle as the basis of a religious organization. His act met with quick response even in far-off America.

"When a deed is done for freedom,
Through the wide earth's heaving breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic,
Surging on from East to West."

This document, moreover, has additional importance for us because it represented the steadfast belief in which the life of the founder of the Brahmo Samaj was passed. To establish the worship of the one true God and to put an end to idolatry of every form was the consuming passion of his life. It made for him many enemies, even some of those in his own household. But he went serenely upon his reforming way, refusing to be frightened or embittered or diverted until he had filled the eventful sixteen years of residence in Calcutta so full of religious, social and political activities, that he is acclaimed today as the Father of Modern India.

A thrilling tale might be told, if there were time, of these activities that would seem to me amply to justify this title. India owes to him, for example, more than to any other man, the establishment of the Hindu College at Calcutta. Later, he founded the Anglo-Hindu School for the free education in English of Hindu boys—a school in which was educated Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, Rammohun Roy's illustrious successor as leader of the Brahmo Samaj. He founded and edited at least two newspapers, and did more than any other man to make Bengali, the language of his province, an instrument of literary precision and beauty, rendering for it the same kind of service that Wyclif rendered for the English, and Luther for the German tongue. He became the father of constitutional agitation in India, assailing single-handed the government censorship of the Press, and composing a Memorial, signed by five of his friends, to the Supreme Court of Calcutta against the ordinance of the Governor-General "that hereafter a license should be required from the Governor-General in Council before a paper could be published," This Memorial has been called "the Areopagitica of Indian history," and Miss Collet, the English biographer of the reformer, says concerning it:—"Alike in diction and argument it forms a noble landmark in the progress of English culture in the East." A similar service, not only to his countrymen but also to the lovers of religious liberty of everywhere, was his protest, signed by both Hindus and Mohammedans, against the Jury Bill for India and sent to both Houses of Parliament in 1828.

For the cause of social reform he accomplished more than any man or any group of men in India in his time. More eloquently than that of any other man was his voice raised in defense of the rights of the defenseless: among these the oppressed agricultural classes and the so-called weaker sex. He spoke effectively against polygamy, against child marriage, and above all, against the monstrous custom of *Suttee.*

But the primary interest of his life was not reform, but religion. His zeal for reform grew out of his profound faith in the Unity of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

The career of this great reformer was brought to a close in England in 1833. He was the first high-caste Indian to make the long journey. He came ostensibly as the representative of the Emperor of Delhi, who was appealing to the Court of Directors at London for an augmentation of his income. Actually he was a representative, as has already been pointed out by others, from the new India to the new England, from the India newly conscious of herself as a political and social entity to the England of the Reform Bill, enacted into law while Rammohun Roy was in the country. For two special reasons, also, he had wished to be in England at this time. He knew that a petition, with numerous signatures, was to be presented in London from a section of orthodox Brahmanism for the restoration of the immolation of widows, and also that a new Charter to the East India Company

was to be granted by Parliament; and on both of these important issues he desired, as the most representative Indian of his time, to secure a hearing. He frequented the Houses of Parliament, spoke often in public in Liverpool, London and elsewhere, pleaded earnestly for the Reform Bill, and made everywhere a profound impression.

After three years of strenuous activity he fell a victim to inflammation of the brain in a climate he seems to have found uncongenial.

It is a far cry from Rammohun Roy to William Ellery Channing. But they came, after all, from the same Aryan stock, were both gifted with the rarest qualities of mind and heart, were devout worshippers of the same God, and passionately resolved, each in his own way, to devote themselves to the welfare of their fellowmen.

Like Rammohun Roy Channing became the founder of a new religious body, based (1) upon the right of the human reason to interpret the scriptures; (2) upon the unity and indivisibility of God; and (3) upon the perfectibility of human nature. These principles he proclaimed with eloquence and power.

The faith of Channing was as revolutionary for orthodox Christianity as that of Raja Rammohun Roy for orthodox Hinduism. The fact that Channing had a strong church behind him gave him a leverage, of course, that the Raja did not possess. The latter had no church except one that he, a layman, had created with the help of personal friends.

And so these two religious movements, on opposite sides of the globe, their representatives rarely seeing one another in the flesh, have now for a century pursued their separate ways in the same spirit and with strikingly similar results. The external advantages, of course, were nearly all with the Americans. They inherited a group of vigorous churches already organized. They inherited also traditions of church attendance, organized schools for the religious instruction of the young, and resourceful 'Women's Societies' which had learned to work effectively together in the interests of the churches. And, more important still, they inherited the tradition of employing ministers, missionaries, administrative officers, and, more recently, teachers in church schools, on salaries which would enable them to give their full time to the work. Without effective organization of the children and young people as well as the men and women from the time the various churches were established, many of our most flourishing liberal churches in America would not now be in existence. When I observe the high character of the work that is carried on in many of your Samajes, with only volunteer workers, and the hold they have upon their communities, I wonder what would have happened if they had provided themselves from the beginning with a force of preachers, teachers and organizers, insuring them an adequate support. I am convinced that they would have more than quadrupled their effectiveness.

If I were to suggest a single word to describe the services which the Brahmo Samaj has rendered during the last century to India and the world, that word would be Emancipation. It has taken various forms, chiefly that of the emancipation of the Indian mind from the ignorance that has prevailed concerning the origin of irrational religious beliefs and degrading religious customs.

There are some indications that neither the founder of the Brahmo Samaj nor the founder of American Unitarianism had divested himself entirely of the belief that the sacred books of the past are a final authority for the present. For Channing, the Bible was still an authority when its teachings did not contravene those of his own reason and conscience. The Vedas seem to have possessed, in his earlier days at least, a similar authority for Rammohun Roy. It was Debendra Nath Tagore, himself a reverent admirer of the Vedas, who abrogated for his followers the idea of their infallibility, and it was Theodore Parker who rendered a similar service to liberal Christians respecting the Bible ; and the history of religious thought during the last century in America is the history of the gradual acceptance of Parker's position.

I have no time to go into greater detail concerning Rammohun Roy's great work of emancipation. In many ways his visit to England was the culmination of his career. He was able to witness the triumph of the principles for which he had been working, when he was present in the halls of Parliament in 1832. A fitting prelude had been the decree of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, and an appropriate sequel was the abolition of slavery throughout the British colonies in 1833. Those were glorious days for England. They had been heralded by Burke and Fox, and had been predicted in France by men like Voltaire and Rousseau and Diderot. Wordsworth and Coleridge had celebrated the dawn of the new day in verse that dared to discard the fetters by which English poetry had been up to this time restrained, and Wordsworth had declared—

"Bliss was it in that day to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven."

Such were the days in which Rammohun Roy proclaimed the coming of a new India, and Channing pleaded eloquently for the emancipation of the world from war and slavery and intemperance and ignorance and greed. It is true that Rammohun Roy did not, single-handed, emancipate women any more than Channing abolished slavery. But the part he played in women's emancipation was second to none, and contributed to that emancipation throughout the world.

In another and perhaps even more vital respect are Unitarianism and the Brahmo Samaj akin. Both have produced mysticism, the sense of communion with God, which have been embodied in hymns that are, in essence, prayers. Neither polytheism nor Calvinism is capable of being sung. But the religion of aspiration, faith and love, the sense of communion with the highest, character-

istic of both the faiths which I have been comparing, is of a kind that needs to be sung as well as preached. We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that Rammohun Roy was a writer of admirable hymns, or that Trailokyanath Sanyal should have given musical expression to the thoughts of Keshub, or that the hymns of Rabindranath Tagore should be sung throughout the length and breadth of India. For we recall also in America the men who have voiced the simple Unitarian faith in sacred song : Samuel Longfellow, brother of the poet; Samuel Johnson, herald of a religion broad as the human race; William Channing Gannett, son of Dr. Channing's successor, author not of many hymns but of a few that are exquisite in form and penetrating in their spiritual insight; and finally, not to make the list too long, Frederick Hosmer, still living at the age of upwards of four score, whose numerous contributions have enriched the literature of hymnody, and whose name is becoming a household word among all those who worship God in English song.

Two utterances illustrate better than any phrases I can invent the catholicity with which these two religious movements have been carried on. Said Keshub: "I believe in the Church Universal, which is the depository of all ancient wisdom and the receptacle of all modern science; which recognises in all prophets and saints a harmony, in all scriptures a unity, and through all dispensations a continuity; which abjures all that separates and divides, and always magnifies unity and peace; which harmonises reason and faith, Yoga and Bhakti, asceticism and social duty in their highest forms, and which shall make of all nations and sects one kingdom and one family in the fulness of time."

Said Channing: "I believe in one grand, all-comprehending Church, and no man can shut me out of it. A pure mind is free of the universe. It belongs to the church, the family, of the pure in all worlds! Virtue is no local thing. It is honorable for its own independent, everlasting beauty. This is the bond of the Universal Church. No man can be excommunicated from it but by himself, by the death of goodness in his own breast."

I have been comparing a liberal religious movement in India with a similar movement in America. In the providence of God these movements have proceeded for a century along similar paths, though widely separated, towards a common good. The utterances I have just quoted indicate the spirit in which both are moving. Numerically both are small. But they rejoice more in what they can do for the promotion of the Kingdom of God and the influence for good they can exert upon those outside of their own ranks than in increasing their own numbers. Above all do they wish to preserve an attitude of cordial appreciation toward all men everywhere who are seeking to bring into this troubled world the reign of righteousness and peace.—*Abridged from the Presidential Address at the Theistic Conference, Calcutta, 27th December, 1928.*

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The Unity, Chicago

EDITED BY JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

Charles R. Joy

The Father of Modern India

October 16, 1933.

The mists lie on the fields of the English countryside like filmy silver gauze in the autumn moonlight. A stately country house stands out distinctly against the dark elms. The air is fragrant and calm, full of the sweet mystery of the night. Inside the house an extraordinary man lies dying. His skin is dark. Proud Britons have called him a 'black man' and a 'nigger', but his blood is of the noblest Aryan strain. Over the left shoulder and under the right arm passes something that looks like a skein of common brown thread. It is the mark of the highest Hindu caste. He is a Brahman. Far from the sacred waters of his own Ganges, he lies here beneath these northern skies. An adopted son holds his hand, a few friends of an alien race sit beside his bed. The night wears on. His breathing becomes more difficult, his pulse inperceptible. He murmurs the sacred syllable 'Aum'. A little later, early in the morning, he breathes his last. From the peace of that moonlight night his spirit passes on into the Eternal Calm.

The suburb of Bristol, England, September 27, 1833. A hundred years ago! And this autumn all over India, in England and America, the Centenary of that death is remembered in commemorative celebrations.

We in America have not known much of Rammohun Roy. A few in liberal circles have heard his name, strange name, as the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, and have promptly forgotten it again. That name ought not to be forgotten, for it is the name of the Father of Modern India, the man who was to the religious life of India what Channing was to the religious life of America, the man who was to the cause of freedom in his country what Lincoln was in ours. He was to the early 19th century in India what Gandhi is to the early 20th. In the words of his English biographer, he "stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future, who leads the way, not *to*, but *through* Western culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both."

Says Rabindranath Tagore: "Rammohun was the only person in his time in the whole world of man to realize completely the significance of the Modern Age. He knew that the ideal of human civilization does not lie in the isolation of independence, but in the brotherhood of interdependence, of individuals as well as of nations, in all spheres of thought and activity." We thought we had learned that lesson. The sentiment had become a commonplace on our lips, but today when self-centered and self-contained nationalism is rampant again, we need to remind ourselves of this ideal.

We now live in a world where the principle of international interdependence is forgotten or flouted or denied. We have only to think of Russia defiantly pursuing her great experiment in the face of the world's hostility; of Italy embarked upon her course of proud nationalism; of Japan forfeiting the esteem of the nations and successfully emerging from her adventure in militarism; of Germany recklessly scorning disapproval, and surrounded by a ring of enemies; of the United States seriously considering today the wisdom of living for itself and unto itself alone. In such a time as this, religion has a work of crying importance to undertake. It must see to it that, no matter what happens on the low levels of commodities and exchange, the bonds that tie us together on the higher levels of racial and national understanding, of ethical and spiritual idealism, shall not be sundered, so far as it is within its power to prevent. We may well remember Rammohun Roy the great Unifier who paved the path for the brotherhood of man.

Rammohun was born in a moment of darkness and decay. Following the brilliant creative days of early Indian history, the days of the Vedas and the Upanishads, the epics and the philosophers, there came a long period of decline, of stagnation, of superstition, of degradation. No single great voice was heard for centuries. The fountain of inspiration was clogged and sterile. Social degeneration and blind idolatry were prevalent. It was a day of scribes and pharisees, when the letter was supreme over the spirit, when outward ceremonials had taken the place of inner righteousness. Justice was dead. Personal purity in men was not necessary. Men could marry any number of wives at once or in succession, but women were not allowed to marry again, if their husbands should die. Even little girls of five or six, losing the husband of their child marriage, had to drag out a miserable life, or be burned alive on their husbands' funeral pyres. In some places the female children were killed. In others the first born were thrown into the rivers to propitiate the gods.

Into this dark period Rammohun was born. When he died, he had inaugurated a new age. I can do no more than suggest a few of the ways in which the new age was the product of his vision and his indomitable and sacrificial energy. For his contribution to it he paid a high price. He won the enmity of the orthodox, both Hindu and Christian. The champions of the ancient customs fought him bitterly. He was early estranged from his own family.

The young lad was sent away to study Persian and Arabic, the passports of preferment in those days. He became acquainted with the writings of the most enlightened Mohammedan philosophers, and his eyes were opened to the errors of Hindu idolatry. He returned to his home, still but a boy of sixteen. His father observed that he spent much time day after day writing something. Secretly the father read the writing, a treatise on the superstitions

and idolatries of his ancestral faith. The result was that the father ordered the boy from his home. Thereupon the boy travelled by foot several thousands of miles, crossed the Himalayas and went to Tibet for the purpose of studying Buddhism. There again he incurred the displeasure of the Lama-worshippers by his protests against their idolatry. Only the kindness of some Tibetan women saved his life.

Upon his return he settled down at Benares to study Sanskrit and the sacred literature of the Hindus. His father died, then his elder brother, and Rammohun inherited the paternal estates.

He was by this time well embarked upon his career as a religious teacher and reformer. He founded a society for the promotion of free discussion on religious subjects and for the dissemination of truth. He translated the Upanishads from the Sanskrit into the Bengalee, because he believed that the pure monotheism of these writings would go far to correct the popular religion of his day. The publication of the Upanishads brought down upon him a torrent of abuse. Many of his followers deserted him, and he was left almost alone. But his courage never failed him.

Then in the year 1820 he surprised friends and foes alike by translating and publishing a little book which he called "The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness." He believed that the doctrines of Christ were more conducive to moral principles and more adapted for the use of rational beings than any other which had come to his knowledge.

It is a remarkable coincidence that just at this time Thomas Jefferson was also compiling his little book called "The Morals of Jesus." Each man was impelled by the same motives, and each used the same methods. Each of them was desirous of avoiding controversy. Each cut away everything that he regarded as extraneous and a later addition. Each omitted all the legendary and miraculous material.

It might have been expected that the Christian missionaries would have welcomed this unexpected assistance from an influential Hindu. But, no! Most of the missionaries of that day in India belonged to the narrowest school of Calvinism, to whom the Atonement was the whole of the Gospel. Instead of commending Rammohun for introducing the moral teachings of Jesus to his countrymen, they attacked him for being a heathen, and expressed the fear that the 'Precepts of Jesus' might "greatly injure the cause of truth."

The bitter controversy that followed turned mainly upon the question of the unity of God, and since this was the main passion of Rammohun's life, he threw himself into the fray with his whole heart. He became acquainted at just this time in a friendlier way with a certain missionary, Rev. William Adam, and to the consternation of his opponents converted him to Unitarianism. The news of the conversion of a Christian missionary by an intelligent heathen

travelled round the world. The convert was dubbed "the second fallen Adam." But the Unitarians in England and America were stirred to missionary enthusiasm.

In 1821 a Unitarian Mission was established, and Mr. Adam placed over it as minister. But the Mission did not succeed. It neither attracted the European residents nor the educated Indians. Congregations melted away, and finally Mr. Adam retired, a heart-broken man, in 1828. It was on the ruins of his work, however, that the new Theistic Church was built. Convinced at last that only an indigenous movement, not imported, not exotic, would succeed, Rammohun organized the Brahmo Samaj, the Church of God, formed for the worship of one God on the basis of the old Vedas. ...

Let it not be thought that the pre-eminence of Rammohun was due solely to his successful efforts to establish the worship of the one God. His work as a social reformer was of extraordinary significance. To him, more than to any other, India owes the abolition of *Suttee* or the immolation of widows on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands. In the year 1828, when the first step towards the organization of the Brahmo Samaj was taken, as many as 309 widows were burnt alive within the bounds of Calcutta alone. Of this atrocious custom Rammohun Roy was the avowed enemy.

According to Hindu custom, a widow had only three courses open to her, since she could neither re-marry nor inherit any of her husband's wealth. She must live in misery dependent upon the charity of others, she must become a prostitute, or she must consent to be burned alive with her husband's body. When Rammohun's eldest brother died, his widow became a *Suttee*. When, however, she felt the flames. she endeavoured to escape in her terror, but the priests and her orthodox relations forced her back on the pile with bamboo poles, and held her there until she died, her shrieks drowned by the loud beating of drums and brazen instruments. Rammohun, filled with horror and indignation, vowed to eradicate this atrocious custom.

He wrote articles proving by the ancient Hindu scriptures that *Suttee* was not a religious duty. He went to the burning-grounds in Calcutta and tried to dissuade the widows from their determination. He appealed to the slow, official mind of the Government, afraid to interfere with the religious convictions of the people. In the end he won, and in December 1839 *Suttee* was declared to be illegal.

The modernizing of India was due primarily to the substitution of the English education for the oriental one. In this work Rammohun was pre-eminent. He was himself a master of the ancient learning of his people, but he knew that India could be saved only through a knowledge of the Western sciences. He started and maintained an English school, he helped Dr. Alexander Duff to found another, he assisted in promoting the Hindu College. He

continued tirelessly in his work until his death. Just after his death the Government formally inaugurated the policy of English education which in the succeeding century was to re-make India.

His service to the cause of literature is no less distinctive. He departed from the established custom of carrying on discussions in the ancient languages, and laid the foundation of Bengalee prose. He wrote a grammar, he enriched the language, and gave to it a prose literature.

Rammohun was likewise the father of native journalism in India. He founded and published the first weekly paper. When, a little later, the government attempted to suppress the native papers by licensing regulations, Rammohun protested, and wrote a plea which is the Areopagitica of Indian literature. "I would be free", said he, "or not be at all."

So his life of amazing versatility drew to its close. He resolved to visit England, an unofficial ambassador of the Indian peoples. He had iterpreted England to India, he was now to interpret India to England. He set sail, the first Brahman to cross the seas and to break the spell that the ocean had long cast over India. He was received by the King. The East India Company gave him a dinner. His dignity, his culture, his deep religious fervor, were a revelation to the English of the kind of people they had conquered. He assisted in defeating the appeal of the orthodox Hindus against the abolition of *Suttee*. He helped in liberalizing the Charter of the East India Company. He watched with keen interest the fight over the Reform Bill in Parliament, and asserted publicly that if it were defeated he would renounce his allegiance to England, and settle in America. But he lived to see the Reform Bill pass.

All this while his health was becoming more precarious. He went to Bristol to rest with some friends before his return to India, and there he died.

It is significant that the last word on his lips was that sacred word of Hindus 'Aum'. Religion was the deepest impulse of his life. His spiritual sympathies were indeed so broad, that he once said that after his death the followers of every religion would reckon him as one of them. The Mohammedans would call him a Mohammedan, the Hindus would call him a Vedantic Hindu, the Christians a Unitarian Christian. But a friend observed that he really belonged to no sect. His religion was Universal Theism.

Rammohun Roy, says one of his biographers, "was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and a conservative progress, between a bewildering polytheism and a pure theism." That is what he means to India. What does he mean to us? To us he is, I believe, a luminous example of what religion must be to us and to our day, if it is to survive and to serve humanity. "The true way of serving God is to do good to man." That is it: in the

depths of our being a passionate conviction of the reality of the spiritual order, and then a selfless devotion to the world about us. And to us may be said, as it was said by Tagore to his own countrymen: "If we fail him in this day of our nation-building, if we do not observe perfect equity of human relationship, offering uncompromising fight to all forms and conventions, however ancient they may be in usage, which separate man and man, we shall be pitiful in our failure, and shamed for ever in the history of man. Our futility will be in the measure of the greatness of Rammohun Roy."

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The Manifesto of the Centenary Committee, Bassein, Burma

BY MR. SUHRIT KUMAR MUKHERJI

We are living in an age when we cannot remain indifferent to what is going on in other parts of the globe. The time has come when people of different nationalities should know and come into better understanding with each other, and develop a bond of universal brotherhood.

Those who are familiar with the history of India of the 19th century, must have come across the name of RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY as a great religious and social reformer. He was born in 1772 in Bengal, and died in England in 1833. The Centenary of his death is being celebrated throughout the length and breadth of the Indian Empire, and in other parts of the world where there are men of advanced and cosmopolitan views.

Rammohun Roy is looked upon as the greatest religious genius of the 19th century. He was the pioneer of the whole world-movement towards mutual understanding between the East and the West, dedicating his life in the cause of humanity in order to lay the foundation stone of human brotherhood on a true religious basis.

On the other hand he is called the Architect of Modern India, who laid the foundation of a great national edifice which stood on the rock of freedom,—freedom for man, freedom for woman. The keynote of his greatness seems to lie in his irrepressible passion for freedom for man, not freedom of action merely, but freedom of the mind, which is far more comprehensive and radical. That was the acknowledged fountain-head of his inspiration for all reforms, juristic, political, social and religious.

He was a true lover of human freedom. When the news of the inauguration of self-government in Spain reached India, he held a public dinner in Calcutta to celebrate the event. Similarly on his way to England, even though he was ill, he insisted on going over to a French frigate to salute the flag of the French Republic.

Rammohun Roy's political and religious outlook knew no bounds of race and clime. He had studied the scriptures of all religions, and had the highest respect for all of them. At the same time, he had staunch faith in Hinduism. What he was opposed to was blind superstition and unreasoning prejudice.

He was also opposed to the idolatrous form of worship and started a Friendly Gathering for worshipping the Eternal Being, who is One, and without any form, and omnipresent. He believed in the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man, and addressed every man as Brother. He was a Unitarian, and preached sermons in their chapels while in England. Though he never embraced Christianity, yet he was a true Christian in the strictest sense of the word.

The small group of worshippers which he started, gradually grew in 100 years into one of the most influential and progressive religious and social movements in India during the 19th century. It is now known all over the world as the Brahmo Samaj, a group of monotheists with the most advanced religious and social ideas.

Among the social reforms for which Rammohun Roy's name is associated with that of Lord William Bentinck, the abolition of *Suttee* is the most well-known and important. Many a widow was burnt alive with her dead husband,—such was the barbarous custom of the country at that time! Rammohun Roy at the risk of his own life, stood against his countrymen, and fought his great battle against it,—and he was successful in the end, when Lord William Bentinck, the then Governor-General, passed a Regulation in 1829 abolishing the ghastly practice.

There was never perhaps a greater champion for female emancipation and the safeguarding of the rights and privileges of women than Raja Rammohun Roy. He had great respect for womenfolk in general, and lost no opportunity of upholding their cause, whether in social, legal or religious matters.

Rammohun Roy was also responsible for the introduction of English and scientific education into the country. While his own countrymen clamoured for Sanskrit, Arabic and other oriental studies,—Rammohun Roy knew it very well that unless western education was introduced into the country, we would have no chance of being recognized as a civilized country for centuries to come.

His manifold activities cannot be enumerated in the course of a short article like this. Only a few of the most important points have been put down here. It is hoped that those who will feel inclined to know further about the Father of Modern India and the Superman of Modern Times will find it profitable to read about him, and to attend the public meeting that is going to be held to celebrate the Centenary of his death at Bassein.—(*Vide* Part I, p. 76.)

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The India and the World, Calcutta

Dr. Kalidas Nag

Rammohun Roy,—a Study in Nationalism and Internationalism.

Special Centenary Number, December 1933.

In dedicating this special number to Rajah Rammohun Roy on the occasion of his death centenary, we simply bring the sincere homage of Renascent India. That India, towards the last quarter of the 18th century, when Rammohun appeared, was neither purely Hindu nor Muhammadan nor Christian, but a composite order slowly evolving out of the weltering chaos of religious and racial, economic and political, elements and interests. Amidst that baffling diversity, Rammohun for the first time discovered and enunciated the principle of Unity, not the abstract unity of a metaphysician, but the faith-inspired conviction of a man who believed in the personality of 'One Being', the eternal reconciler of all conflicts. In his Introduction to *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* (1803-4), his earliest recorded thought traced as yet, we read: "I travelled in the remotest parts of the world, in plains as well as in hilly lands, and found the inhabitants thereof agreeing generally in believing in the personality of One Being who is the source of all that exists."

A young man of thirty, Rammohun was already pleading with prophetic earnestness for an impartial and just enquiry into the nature and principle of the religious doctrines of different nations, with the hope of distinguishing 'truth from untruth,' and of freeing ourselves from the useless restraints of religion which sometimes became the source of prejudice of one against another; and finally, Rammohun was attending to the 'good of Society' with the aspiration to realise "The One Being who is the fountain of the harmonious organisation of the Universe."

This capacity to go deep to the fundamentals of human society and existence, makes Rammohun not only a precursor of the Modern Age in India and the Orient, but the inaugurator of a new epoch of intellectual and spiritual co-operation. This aspect of Rammohun's life has been emphasised by our Poet-Seer Rabindranath Tagore in his Inaugural Address before the Centenary Committee: "Rammohun belongs to the lineage of India's great seers, who age after age have appeared in the arena of our history with the message of the Eternal Man. India's special genius has been to acknowledge the divine in human affairs, to offer hospitality to all that is imperishable in human civilisation, regardless of racial and national divergences."

From the publication of "A Present to the Believers in One God," *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, (1803) to the day of his passing away in Bristol, 27th September, 1833, Rammohun has shown a rare record of service to the cause of the uplift of the unfortunate men and women of his country, as well as of the sympathetic appreciation of the struggling nations and human groups abroad. His pioneer attempt as a scholar to reconcile the dogmatic contradictions of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, his endeavour to build a Church Universal, his noble championing of the cause of Indian womanhood, vindicating their economic and legal rights over a century ago, his advocacy of intimate intellectual collaboration between the East and the West maintaining the dignity and individuality of the Orientals, his bold initiative in securing the political, economic and constitutional progress of his people—princes and peasants alike—to march forward with a liberal education, equitable economic settlement, freedom of the Press, responsible executive and impartial judiciary,—each one of his ideas and activities along the above lines is significant beyond measure.

But his passion for unity took his nationality beyond the limits of his own country and foreshadowed a new line of research for unity on the international plane. Hebrew culture and the ethics of Christianity reflected in the Precepts of Jesus, Persian mystic poetry and Arabic monotheism, Chinese philosophy no less than the agonies of Turkey, called forth a ready response from his Oriental soul. But with equal force and sympathy he pursued the progressive movements of the Occident. His sympathetic mention of the national aspirations of Ireland, his advocacy of the English liberalism of the Reform Bill age, his ardent sympathy for the cause of Italian independence, his passionate admiration of the Republican tradition of France and of the ordered march of the United States of America and Canada,—all prove, beyond doubt, the burning passion for international fellowship which inspires every page of his writing.

This fact has been attested accidentally by an English friend of Rammohun, who communicated the following to the *Edinburgh Magazine* for September 1823 :—"On the occasion of the South American emancipation, the Rajah is reported to have said : 'Ought I to be insensible to the sufferings of my fellow-creatures, wherever they are, or however unconnected by interests, religion or language?'" Very naturally, therefore, the greatest living philosopher of Modern India, Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, has characterised in his inimitable language Rammohun Roy as a prophet of coming humanity. "By the lines of convergence he laid down, as well as by the type of personality he developed in and through his own experiences, he pointed the way to the solution of the larger problem of International culture and civilization in human history, and became a precursor, an archetype, a prophet of coming Humanity. He laid the foundation of the true League of Nations in a League of National Cultures."

Rammohun's sustained activities for the preservation and enlightened interpretation of the eternal truths enshrined in the Hindu scriptures, his advocacy of the cause of vernacular studies, his publication of the Bengali Grammar, his appeal for the introduction of scientific education in the country in intimate collaboration with European educationists, are landmarks in the history of Modern India. Our future generations striving to defend our rights and liberties, our cultural individuality and national self-respect, will ever meditate with gratitude on the early unaided efforts of the great Pioneer.

The rest of the Orient, no less than the progressive sections of the Occident will, we hope, read with increased interest and appreciation the thoughts and activities of the first great leader of Modern India, who offered the hand of fellowship to the occidental people, appealing to them "to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner by removing as far as possible all impediments to it in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race." (*Vide* letter to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dec. 28, 1830). Even when the chances of collaboration between the East and the West were few and far between, and the disadvantages of contact with occidental nations were aggressively patent, Rammohun Roy in practically his last communication, ("On Settlement of India by Europeans", July 14, 1832) was dreaming of the harmonious collaboration of the East and the West which "would succeed sooner or later in enlightening and civilising the surrounding nations of Asia."

No wonder then that this great nationalist and convinced internationalist *avant la lettre* was hailed by the prophetic voice of Jeremy Bentham as his "intensely admired and dearly beloved *collaborator in the service of mankind.*"

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Rammohun Roy Centenary Volume, Lahore

(i) Diwan Bahadur Raja Narendra Nath, M.L.C.

The Aryan race is noted for its spirituality. India has produced more religious teachers than any other country in the world. Tracing back our thoughts to the time of the Upanishads and of the authors of Yoga and Sankhya philosophy, we are unable to discover any extraneous influence under which the religious acumen of the great Indian seers was developed. Christianity owed much to Judaism, and Muhammadanism both to Christianity and Judaism. But it is not yet known whether the religious speculations of Yoga and Sankhya philosophy are borrowed from outside.

The history of religious *reform*, however, shows that the idea of a change in religious thought and social system is usually stimulated by change in environments. Buddha may be counted as an exception. He was a religious reformer, but the reform emanated solely from his mind; he meditated on what he saw, and evolved a set of ideas which laid stress on human conduct rather than on devotion to Deity. But the spiritual impulse for which the Hindu is noted has produced a series of religious reformers, in whom the idea of a change was stimulated by a change in the external conditions by which they were surrounded. Under Muhammadan rule Chaitanya was the most marked personality in Bengal. Raja Rammohun Roy, however, was the first religious reformer after India came under European influence. In the eighteenth century, owing to foreign domination, the valuable gems of religious thought contained in the religious literature of Hindus had been lost to them. What was left was a mythology encumbered with many things which appeal to the popular but not to the thoughtful mind. Raja Rammohun Roy was the first Hindu, not only in Bengal, but in the whole of India, who, after the establishment of British supremacy, brought out from the limbo of oblivion those great truths which were contained in the Vedas and Upanishads. He was a great linguist, a great traveller, and observer of human nature and human institutions. He was a scholar of Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit and English. He found that neither Islam nor Christianity contained anything in the way of higher truths than what was to be found in the religious books of Hindus, from which popular attention had been diverted to myths and allegories. He also laid stress on the essential unity of all religions.

Social systems are closely connected with religion. Reform movements, once begun, eventually cover all spheres of human activity. Raja Rammohun Roy was not only a religious reformer, but also a social reformer, and stood for all those liberal ideas which form the nucleus of political reform. He condemned the practice of *Suttee*, and stood for the independence of the Press. He was therefore the forerunner of reforms in all directions. He was the first Hindu who crossed the seas and undertook a journey to England *via* the Cape of Good Hope, as there was no Suez Canal at that time.

(ii) The Hon'ble Malik Sir Firoz Khan Noon

Rammohun, the Pioneer of Educational Renaissance

As one of the great seers of the last century, as a staunch supporter and preacher, by word as well as example, of the brotherhood of man, Rammohun Roy's memory will ever remain fresh in the minds of all true Indians.

Much is likely to be written on the multifarious activities of the Raja, of the prophetic purity of his vision, of his indomitable

courage and inexhaustible energy ; but I wish mainly to confine the remarks I have to make to the educational contribution of the great man to the modern age.

Luckily for Rammohun Roy, all the earliest formative influences on his life were conducive to a definite breadth of vision, magnanimity of character, and abandonment—in fact a clear repugnance and detestation—of class and caste isolation. The foundations of his educational superstructure were laid in his village under the tutelage of a Pandit with extra coaching in Persian under a Maulavi. He was later sent to Patna to master the Persian and Arabic languages. Here he made his first acquaintance with the Quran. This led to an abrupt disintegration of his original beliefs. Such close contact with Muslim literature and culture, widened Roy's vision. In private life, his habits, form of speech, manner of dress, were tinged with Muslim influences, so much so that he began to be known to the public ar a *zabardast Muslim* wise with the wisdom of Al-Quran, learned in Muhammadan Law and Jurisprudence, and versed in the polemics of all the principal schools of Muhammadan theology. His free thought, catholic outlook, rationalistic and unitarian views can all be traced to Muslim influence. He was also a careful student of the Hindu and Christian literatures.

All these cultures, ancient as well as modern, and the personal contact with their adherents, were the formative influences which made Rammohun Roy the broadminded man that he was with liberal and cosmopolitan views on all matters. In all his activities, therefore, Rammohun Roy brought a fresh and large-minded outlook and interpretation.

It was primarily through Rammohun Roy's strenuous efforts and staunch support that we are today deriving the benefits of Western education. Rammohun Roy's role as a pioneer of Western culture is unparalleled. The report of the Education Commission appointed in 1882 pays the following well-deserved tribute to Rammohun Roy :—"It took twelve years of controversy, the advocacy of Macaulay, and the decisive action of a new Governor-General, before the Committee could, as a body, acquiesce in the policy urged by Rammohun Roy."

Rammohun Roy was an uncompromising supporter of English education in India ; but he was of the opinion that religious and moral instruction is also a vital part of general education.

Very close to the heart of Rammohun Roy was, therefore, the educational uplift of his countrymen. To him intellectual isolation was, as is aloofness in other matters, a baneful symptom of national seclusion. He aimed at acquiring the best from other nationalities, and creating in India the basis for international brotherhood and interdependence. The idea of Rammohun Roy is fructifying today after a hundred years of his death. We of the present generation can repay him the debt of gratitude under which

he has placed us by following his example and by keeping his ideal before our mind. Today more than at any other period of our progress, we have to remember that Rammohun Roy aimed at the social and spiritual unification of our motherland. May his spirit work among our youth !

THE FATHER OF MODERN INDIA

Rammohun Roy Centenary Celebrations of 1933

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