

The Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan

Biography, Autobiography, Journal and Anecdotes



Part III - Journal and Anecdotes Journal

Review of Religions

I came from the East with the idea, which every Eastern person has, that the people in the West are all Christians. But after coming, the more I saw the Western world and the more I knew about the general attitude of the people in the West towards religion, the more I found that this idea of the Eastern people was unfounded.

I saw in the West people of three categories: those who believe in God and hereafter, those who do not believe the same, and those who believe in the Christian Church. Among intellectual and lettered people and among the people of scientific trend of mind I found most very materialistic, who are truthful in confessing their disbelief, who consider it falsehood to profess a belief in something one does not know. They found their faith upon things that are within the grasp of their reason. Many of them consider belief in God or the soul or in hereafter as a religious fad. There are others among them who think, there may be something perhaps which we do not know and it is best not to trouble about it. Most of them believe in the phenomenon of science which is the only source on which they depend. Some of them sometimes in their life begin to wonder at life, and show to know something of its source and goal and of its latent power, which remains so far unexplored by science. They take no other method than that of scientific research to explore the phenomena hidden behind life, and as a natural consequence they arrive at no definite result.

There are many in the West who believe that there is some God and perhaps a hereafter and there is a soul somewhere within or without, but they do not follow a particular religion, though some of them may belong to a certain Church for the sake of conventionality. They are more open to go into the truth, for no Church in particular binds them. Among them there are some who are contented with their belief in God and trouble no more about it, and there are others who are open to listen to any point of view on the subject other than their own. It is in that category of people that there are some who go in search of the God-ideal, the soul and the hereafter and religious truth. For neither does materialism hinder their path, nor a particular faith stands in their way as an obstacle. Then there are those who belong to a certain Church. Some among them only belong to a Church for the sake of conventionality. There are State Churches to which officials must go, who belong to that State. Some belong to the Church because their friends or relations belong to it, and some for other social reasons. Some no doubt go devoutly, most of them being not of the intellectual classes.

There are two principal Christian Churches in the West: the Roman Catholic and the Protestant, besides the Greek Church and the Old Christian Church which are little known in most of the civilized parts of the Western world. However, as a Church there seems to be only one, which is the Roman Catholic Church. If some reminiscences of the religious form of the old, of the moral of the ancient, of the manner of the Christians, of the ancient philosophical outlook on life, of the old mystical conception can be found anywhere, it is in this Church. In organization there is no Church in the whole world which could be better founded. Its influence, although gradually being diminished, still is greater than that of any other Church. The Church of Rome is the only one that can be called a Church.

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There has always been a friendship and enmity between politics and religion. It is politics which have helped religion in its spread and existence, and so it is politics which have fought with the religion, breaking its backbone and pulling it down to nothingness. This has been the case with the Church of Rome. It grew and spread by its political power and it broke down and fell also by political reasons, and was made and marred both by the same.

The Catholic Church is a body which was built for the mind of Saint Paul to make use of as its vehicle, the mind which was truly inspired by the Christ spirit. The stronger the body became, the weaker became the heart. The consequence was that the spirit could no longer use the heart which was its tabernacle, which became merely a receptacle of the juice of the body. The real subsistence of the Church which was once the flesh and blood of Christ, then remained only in form.

The adherents of this faith have the greatest discipline, although many belong to this Church only outwardly; inwardly they are indifferent or even opposed to it. Not only among the followers, but even among priests, one finds some opponents of this Church. Politics in the Western world have continually taken a place of greater importance until they have uprooted religion from the surface of the Western world. One thing, the riches of the Roman Church and the other thing, its influence on world politics, have made the opponents inclined to slander the lives of the priests. Celibacy being taught in Christian religion and practiced by the Catholic priests has made the idea of celibacy a virtue in the mind of the people in the West. Even though it is not practiced by the generality still it remains, so to speak, in the subconsciousness of the Western mind as an ideal and it has caused a great confusion in the social morals of the West. Many in the West attack the priesthood and the working of the Roman Church. All the countries in the West which are known as Catholic countries are not necessarily devout Catholics though some among them, backward in civilization, still maintain their faith devoutly.

I once met a Catholic priest who is a well known man in Paris: l'abbe Clain. He asked me if I would tell him some ideas of the Eastern thinkers which they get in their meditation. He listened to what I said attentively. Every word I said seemed not foreign to him, not against his ideas. He was so pleased with all he heard and with all we spoke together and with that which we could not speak in words, but can only be exchanged in silence, and in the end he only said: "What you say is not different from what we believe, except for the difference in terminology."

Protestantism is a substitute for a faith rather than a religion; it is a protest against the original Christian Church instead of a prophetic Message. One sees that spirit of protest still alive in some countries. Protestantism is the shadow of the outer form of Islam, not necessarily the reflection of its spirit. The Muslim invasion in 1435, which caused a Reformation in the West, is the evidence of this truth. The Western mind which was to some extent revolting against the Roman Church owing to many reasons, chiefly owing to its political influence, was looking for a change and the impression that the invaders from the East left behind in the West, materialized as an outer Islam, not in name, but in sense, and it was still called a Christian Church, but Protestant. What a follower of Islam lacks in the outward show of religion he makes up for it by his faith in God, belief in Quran, and devotion to his Prophet.

Protestantism is a religion which is void both of spirit and form, a flower without color or fragrance. It is a rattle given into the hand of a child to keep him quiet, when he was crying for candy. Their belief is not very different from that of the new sect called among Muslims Ahl-i-Hadith, who stick to the letter exclusive of the spiritual personalities; to them the book is more important than a kindled heart.

I was once traveling and met an intellectual gentleman from Switzerland. We were talking together about the present State of the world in general. I said: "Religion is the foundation of the whole life in the world, and as long as an understanding is not established between the followers of all different religions, it will always be difficult to hope for better conditions." He said: "Yes, you are right. But a better understanding among humanity will not be established as long as the whole world does not accept the Bible as the holy book." I did not argue more with this person, since I was not against the Bible, only I knew the Bible in all its volumes, which are in different names and held in esteem by different people, and besides the living Bible of nature, which is always manifest to my view. I simply asked him to tell me something more about it, that I might be enlightened on the subject. He did so very willingly, and all through the journey he talked to me about it, and I listened.

The Catholics have their saints; in that way they get an ideal of human personality. They have also the pictures and images of Christ's life, which have the effect of melting the heart. This makes the Catholics tuned to a certain pitch. But the Protestant, who has neither anything in his Church to touch his heart, nor saints to hold as an ideal, has only the name of Christ without form and a closed book to hold on to. It would not be an exaggeration if I said that the downfall of the Christian religion was caused, no doubt, by the Catholic Church by the doctrine that Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Ghost, but the Protestants finished it by their belief in the Divinity of Christ, exclusive of manhood, resulting in the materialism which one finds

Divinity of Christ, exclusive of manhood, resulting in the materialism which one finds everywhere in the West.

There is the Anglican Church, which still maintains all form and conventionality of the Roman Church, except the supremacy of the Pope. All forms are kept intact, save the adherence that Christians showed to the recognized Representative of Christ. The members of this Church are numerous; many of them seem devoted to their faith and proud of having overthrown the sovereignty of the Pope.

Among these two Churches, the Protestant and the Catholic, there is a great deal of antagonism, sometimes owing to political reasons, among the intellectual people, and owing to simple differences among the people bigotted in faith. Only the Catholic covers it with his religious dignity and the Protestant shows it without any restraint.

The Christian Bible which consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament has been of great interest to me to study and to look at from all sides. To the Old Testament, which was kept intact by the Jews of ancient times, was later added the New Testament. This was written by Saint Paul, who on hearing the legends which were handed down for about 300 years after the time of Jesus, wrote in the form of his mystical knowledge, giving it a philosophical coloring. Therefore these two Testaments, the Old and the New, are quite different one from the other. And as the center of the Christian Church was formed afterwards in Rome, the New Testament went through a continual changing process, until it has arrived at the state in which it is today, which is much more comprehensible to the mind of the modern European believer in the Christian faith than is the Old Testament. Those who are willing to follow the Christian religion find it easier to believe in the New Testament, as it is just now, than as it was given by Saint Paul. But the legends as they existed before the time of Saint Paul would never have fitted in with modern conception.

The Hindu scriptures, the ideas of which are more philosophical than those of any other scriptures of the world, were long considered as books of heathen religions; until Professor Max Müller translated some of them and other writers, such as Sir Edwin Arnold, who brought out some Oriental scriptures, although the translation can never do justice to the original works. The phraseology of the Quran was not very different from the terminology of the Old Testament although the ideas of the Quran answer the advanced mind of the latter age more than the ideas of the Old Testament, which was a Message given to the simple minds of that age. However the terminology of the Quran as it is cannot quite fit in with the modern expression of thought. Therefore I have always seen that a Western person of good intention who has given up all prejudices against other religions and is trying to overlook all he has heard against Islam, cannot very well comprehend the ideas of the Quran as they are put. For he wants the ideas to fit in with the standard of the day and to be expressed in the language of the present time.

The Greek Church, which had its great time of glory during the Tsarist period, has declined. Yet it has a great religious element in it. The difficulties of Russia certainly mean the downfall of the Greek Church. However, the religious spirit of that Church was not only owing to the priests, but was due to the deep religious feeling of the Russians. Its followers did not have a chance to be civilized enough to destroy their religion until the reign of the Tsar. Now the new wave of reform has swept away not only the Church but also the religious spirit from the hearts of the faithful. Too much suffering turns people against religion.

The Old Christian Church which exists chiefly in Asia Minor has been always in uncivilized hands and has been under the shade, owing to the light of Islam standing next to it. It never had either inner spirit or outer form to really rise in the world and be something. However the steadiness of the belief of the followers of this Church has kept it so long just alive.

The modern civilization which has made Western nations so great and powerful has materialism and commercialism as its basis. Consequently the progress in this direction has been made at the cost of religion. In the West patriotism has taken the place of religion. Nationalism has become as the spiritual ideal of the day. No doubt a great apparent worldly success has been achieved by this, which compared to spiritual ideals, is nothing. There exist people in civilized nations in most civilized parts of the West who have erased even the name of God from the textbooks of children's schools, who cannot bear to hear the name of God uttered. It may be called "great force", or, with a great difficulty "the gods". It is a Spirit of revolt which destroys all good things, while wanting to destroy bad things.

In the revolution, which caused the Reformation in the West, at every rise religion suffered, until now the word religion means something horrible to the mind of many. It does not mean that their soul does not crave for religion or that they are not drawn to it. Only that they try to keep themselves away from it, calling it a temptation. There are many who wonder and would very much like to know if there exists anything behind what we see and perceive and yet the name of God, or religion, or prayer, or Church will frighten them away. It seems they are looking for something and yet not

in the form of religion. They have a kind of repugnance against religion and this one finds as a rule among the intellectual people living in the countries foremost in civilization. There are some who think they are too advanced to believe or do as their ancestors did formerly. They think it is behind the times to pray or to hold any belief as sacred or to follow any particular religion, and it is up-to-date to discard all that is religious. They think religion is only for the masses, not for the intellectual people. There are some who think religion is for women, who have time; men are too busy to sacrifice time, which is precious. Time is money and it is not worthwhile to give it to things that do not bring material benefit. There are others who are afraid of their materialistic surroundings; even if they have any religious sentiment they are afraid to show it in any way, for they think they will be laughed at by those with whom they associate.

There was another substitute for religion. As the Protestant religion was given as a substitute for the Catholic faith to those religiously inclined, so Masonry became a substitute for those disinclined to show outwardly their belief, which they observed in secrecy. This kept them free from the blame of their people, friends and relations, for adhering to another faith, and they had their ritual without a priest imposed upon them from a spiritual hierarchy, having had their worshipful master elected from among themselves. They sought exaltation by the Masonic ritual supported by a long tradition and avoided any disputes on religious ideals by keeping their lips closed and by a vow of secrecy. The origin of this is not much different from the Protestant origin, the Protestant religion came from the orthodox Islam, Masonry from the secret order of Muslim mystics, to whom all meant the same, whether Christian, Muslim or Jew. Those seekers after truth who pursued these contemplative souls while in the battle, were admitted to be initiated by the possessors of this mystery, but were welcomed with unsheathed swords and doors were fast locked after their admission, and every manner of reception was expressive of a process through which the enemy was received into the circle of friends. So the secret of the life of the meditative dervishes, expressed symbolically in the form of ritual, was brought to the Western world as a key to the mystery of life.

Woman was not admitted until A.D. 1893, when Mrs. Annie Besant by the order of the Masons in France opened a new Order and brought into it women and men together in sharing this mystery, which was, however, kept apart and has not been recognized by the Scottish Lodge of Masons until now.

There has been so much spoken of the organization of the Catholic Church being so wonderful, but nothing can equal Masonic organization which today exists in the world, embracing the best intellects and most influential personalities of almost all nations. As Masonry has spread wide, so its social and political influence has become greater every day, and has performed wonders in the social and political world. Yet the main object with which the Masonic initiation was given, still remains to be fulfilled: a drill which is meant for battle. That battle is self-realization, which is the central theme of the Sufi Message.

There are many in the West who are looking for some other religion which gives scope for the rise of all sorts of activities true and false. The religions of the ancient people which exist in the world cannot really answer their purpose. It is natural that what is suitable to Eastern mentality cannot easily agree with the mentality of the Western people. Among the existing religions of the world Islam is the only one which can answer the demand of Western life, but owing to political reasons a prejudice against Islam has existed in the West for a long time. Also the Christian missionaries, knowing that Islam is the only religion which can succeed their faith, have done everything in their power to prejudice minds of the Western people against it. Therefore there is little chance for Islam being accepted in the West. However, those seekers after religious ideals have more or less regard for the religions of the East and those who seek after truth show a desire to investigate Eastern thought.

The hopeless state of affairs which has manifested on the surface as the outcome of this recent war, has made many anticipate the coming of a world-teacher to re-establish the affairs of the world. There are some among those who work for the coming of the world-teacher who are sure that they themselves will never arrive at being that themselves. Therefore, they are quite content to be his forerunners. Unconsciously, these very people keep the teacher away from coming. And there are others who are most eager for him to come, but they make him so enormous, out of their imagination, that God Himself would have great difficulty in creating one.

An old institution which presents some Eastern thought to the West is the Theosophical Society, which was founded principally by Madame Blavatsky, who was from Russia, a visionary and mystically minded person who is said to have worked wonders. It is told that Masters from the Himalaya are the supporters at the back of the Society, and that the spiritual hierarchy of certain Masters whose names seem to be derived from Eastern languages, though they are hardly to be found in any sacred tradition of the world, are so to speak the guardians of the Society, which has an esoteric school of its own under the guidance of Mrs. Annie Besant, who is one of the four chief workers of this Movement. These, namely Colonel Olcott and Mr. Leadbeater

and the two above-mentioned ladies established their headquarters first at Benares and now at Adyar and made the Movement worldwide. If it were not for the Theosophical Society there would not be the tolerance and response to Eastern thought of every kind which is given by people thus inclined in the West. The work of this Society has broken to a great extent the bias of the Christian faith, and the idea that the people in the East are heathens and their religion barbarous, which was prevalent in the West owing to the Christian missionary propaganda.

As the Theosophical Society was the first of its kind in the West, its founders had to withstand no end of opposition. The Movement has splendidly established itself throughout Europe in a comparatively short period of time. It has taken as its principal work to break prejudices of caste, creed or color by the understanding of Truth, and it has placed Truth on the altar as the principal religion. Every exponent of thought from the East who goes to the West, finds the doors of this Society open to welcome him. A warm welcome and a respectful regard is accorded to him on the platform of the Theosophical Society. A great deal of Buddhistic and Hindu literature has been translated into the Western languages by Theosophical writers. Most of the work has been done by Mrs. Annie Besant, who has shown the most wonderful talent as a speaker and as a writer, besides the great power and efficiency she has shown in holding this vast Movement firmly in hand in spite of all difficulties which stood in her way. I personally have not had occasion to converse with Mrs. Besant, although I have heard her speak. There is a book by Mme. Blavatsky, "The Secret Doctrine", which is held as a mystery by some of the followers of Theosophy, which contains mostly her dreams and visions. If it were not for the theory of karma and reincarnation which the Theosophical Society has brought forward as its special doctrine on which the whole Theosophical theory is based, it would have had great difficulty in touching the Western mind, which wants food for its reason first before accepting any faith. The ideal of reincarnation and karma made a great revolution in the West in the religious world. The backbone of religion in the West had already been broken, and this idea broke its legs, letting Eastern thought rise, introduced in the West in the form of Theosophy.

However, the idea of reincarnation and karma, which came from the race of Hindus, never has given the full satisfaction to that race itself. The influence of Islam, the ideas of the Sufis, made a great change in the Hindu outlook for many centuries, and great Hindu poets like Nanak and Kabir, Sundar and Dadu, Ram Das and Tukaram, and religious reformers of India like Swami Narayan and Babu Keshoba Chandra Sen, Dayananda Saraswathi, Devendranath Tagore, all these although they could not entirely erase this idea from the surface of the Indian mentality, upon which it had been engraved for ages, yet modified it to such an extent that hardly anyone speaks about these things. Especially the wise, the Sages, hold as their object in life mukti, liberation from the captivity caused by karma. It is a worn-out doctrine of the East which was revived by the Theosophical Society in the West. In the first place it appealed to the people in the West because it answered immediately the question why one is well off in life and why another suffers.

The idea of reincarnation gave an answer readily justifying it: "Because of the actions of the past," which gave no scope for further argument on the subject. It at once satisfies the intellect, though the answer of Christ was different. When somebody asked him: "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." It always appeals to the hearts whose treasure is on the earth to think that even if we passed from this earth we shall not be taken away for ever, we shall come back again. And those who have not experienced the life of the earth sufficiently and who have not achieved their desire in this life, they are only content to think that next time they will come and accomplish it. Then there are some who find that there is little time left in life and they have not yet improved themselves. They can hope that perhaps at their next visit to the earth they will finish the task. Some become happy at the thought "I am not rich this time, it does not matter, before this time I was a king and after I have paid my debts in this life, in the next life I may become an emperor." For their likes and dislikes in the world some give the reason of reincarnation, past acquaintances or relationship. This gives scope to the play of the imagination, which very often arrives at very funny ideas about it. Once two people thought that they had been husband and wife in the last incarnation, and at this realization their joy was great to have found themselves again on this earth's platform, but at the same time, in the face of this most unfortunate fact, they were most sad, realizing that this time they are not.

Though I have always had a great response from the members of the Theosophical Society, who love the Eastern thought and readily respond to it, still my position became very difficult when people brought me to the question of karma and reincarnation. The doctrine that interested them the most, had the least interest for me, and I have always tried not to encourage people in that idea, and yet not to oppose their belief, which has been a very hard task for me. Hafiz says: "Sing, O Singer, the new song of the new life every moment." For a Sufi to think, "What was I and what shall I be?" takes him away from the vision of the everspringing stream of life. Many members of the Theosophical Society have taken interest in my work, since

Theosophy prepares them to appreciate the deeper knowledge; although it has made the authorities of the Theosophical Society afraid of losing their members and for some time they have taken precautions so as to close their ears to my call.

It is the lack of personal mystical influence and the absence of a prophetic Message that necessitated the Society bringing forward the belief in Masters, that there might be something for the believers to hold on to. Not only belief, but even imaginary pictures of these Masters are given to the adherents for worship. The esoteric school has existed for some time in the Theosophical Society, in which they have tried to introduce Raja Yoga, the philosophy of the Hindus. But the lack of personal guidance has always proved it to be like a clinic without a surgeon. The various demands of the Western mind kept the Society for all these years busy answering the needs of those working for the Movement. When the members of the Theosophical Society thought that it was only intellectual and there was nothing spiritual there, they introduced as a separate activity, the Liberal Catholic Church, and connected it with the Roman Church by tracing some missing link in the tradition. But since no religion which is not divinely inspired will take root in this world long enough, it is a question if this Movement will really meet with success. When there is a difficulty even for something real to take root in this world, what chance is there for imitation?

Another activity was started by the members of the Society which is called "The Order of the Star", to prepare the way for the coming Teacher. But he must rise only from within the horizon of this institution introduced to the world by the high authority of the Theosophical Society, or else he must descend directly from the sky performing miracles. Such a thing has never been possible nor will it ever be. As the communities in the past have waited until he came and went, and they are still waiting, the same old course is followed in the present generation by the most enthusiastic followers of the Order of the Star.

There has always been a struggle between a living Church and a dead Church; it was the coming of a prophet of God with a Divine Message from time to time at the need of humanity who represented the living Church; but the previously existing Church which struggled for existence being threatened by the influence of the newly coming prophet, proved to be a dead Church. It is most interesting to watch the struggle that has taken place in the past, how the Jewish religious authorities tried to avoid the influence of Jesus Christ being felt among their Churches and communities. They said to their people, "The promised Messiah of the Kabbala tradition will come, but at the end of the world", so that all the time between might be theirs; the Roman Church afterwards, by virtue of the new life brought by the prophet of Nazareth, evolved and spread its influence throughout the world. But the conception that was given to the people in answer to the question, as to the promise of Christ to come again, was that the promise was fulfilled by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the twelve Apostles, and that there was nothing afterwards to look forward to. Then came the influence of Islam rushing with its material and spiritual force into the Western world; the existing Church was able to resist its material power by putting out the invaders from their territories, nevertheless, the Spirit remained, bursting out later in the form of the Reformation which became the Protestant Church. No doubt this was a building made upon another foundation, and there was always a desire in the minds of the followers of this newly formed Church, an expectation of seeing their long adhered-to Master, and the authorities of the Church have always tried to give an answer, which satisfied but for a moment.

I once met a Swiss Protestant in a train, and in conversation asked him, "Do you expect the Master to come again?" In answer to this he said, "Yes, certainly we do!" I said, "When?" He replied, "We know not when." I said "How will you recognize him, if he ever comes on earth?" He said, "It will not be difficult to recognize him, for he will follow the coming of the Anti-Christ." I asked, "How would you recognize the Anti-Christ?" He said, "He will be almost as great as to be taken for Christ, but it is not he who will be the real Master; the Master will follow him." I was very amused at the cleverness of this idea, that one who would not be able to show himself to be as great in glory as the Master of the past, he naturally would not be accepted, but one who succeeded in proving in some way or other almost as great, he will be considered the Anti-Christ, so that in both cases he may not have a chance to enter their Church.

Muslims have closed the doors of the mosque by saying that Muhammad was the seal of Rissalat which they interpret as the last of the prophets. They do not seem to realize that it does not mean at all that he was the last prophet to come, it only means that he was the last of claimants of prophecy; and that according to the nature and character of humanity after his time it would not be advisable for his successor to make an open claim, for it would be against the rule of the time. There is no seal that cannot be opened, though it must not be opened by everyone, but only by the one who has the right to open it.

The Theosophical Society tried to supply to the students of Theosophy the conception of different Masters which gave satisfaction to some for a time and yet did not answer the continual longing of the souls to see the Master in the flesh walking on earth, sympathizing in their pain and trouble, casting upon them his glance of compassion,

stretching over their heads his hands in blessing, telling them in words that may be audible to their physical ears, of the life here and in the hereafter, inspiring them with the conviction – if not all at least some – to know and to believe in something and someone who is real. This need necessitated a Movement such as "The Star in the East", to comfort the hopeful and maintain their belief; everything has been done, is being done and will be done, and yet who can answer this demand? He alone who is sent from above, who is appointed by God to deliver His Message, who is empowered by the Almighty to stand by them in their struggles, and who is made compassionate by the most Merciful to heal their wounds. Man wants something he cannot get, man wishes to believe in something he cannot understand, man wishes to touch something he cannot reach. It is the continual struggle for the unattainable that blinds man, and he forms such high ideas even of the prophet who is only a Messenger, a human being, one like everyone else, and who is subject to death and destruction and all the limitations of life, that the prophet does not seem to come up to man's ideal until he has left the world, leaving behind the memory which again rises as a resurrection of the prophet, spreading the influence of all he brought to the world and pouring from above that blessing which arose as vapor and came back from above as a rainfall.

Anthroposophy is another offshoot of Theosophy, which has sprung up in the West as a result of a conflict between two great workers of the Theosophical Movement: Mrs. Besant and Dr. Steiner. In order to distinguish this Movement as different from the Theosophical Society the founder had to build another building on the same foundation, leaving out all Eastern colors and designs which exist in Theosophy. Every effort has been made by its founder to impress his followers with the idea that Eastern wisdom is different from the Western, and the way of the West is different from the way of the East, and what is called in Buddhism "Nirvana", annihilation, is not the thought of Christ; Christ's teaching is the eternal and ever-progressing individuality, by which he means to say that it is not God alone Who lives for ever, but every individual entity as a distinct and separate entity is eternal and is gradually progressing to the fullness of its own individuality. In this way he divides one truth into two thoughts opposing each other, the oneness of the whole being on the part of the Eastern thought and individuality of every being as the Western thought. It is a pity if a thinker in order to distinguish one special doctrine which is his own conception goes as far as cutting into two parts the truth which in reality is one. No doubt, this idea answers the Western mentality for to many the idea of annihilation as expressed in Eastern terminology is awful, although it is a transitory state. The day is not far off when, if not through religion then by science, the people in the West will realize the oneness of the whole being, and that individuals are nothing more than bubbles in the sea.

Some followers of the Protestant religion, realizing the truth of the Theosophical ideas and startled by its rapid spread in the world, loosened a little the strict bonds of simple belief and called the old thought which always existed a new thought. Some of them went a step further, and called it a new life, the life which is always the same and everlasting, contrary to the words of Solomon, who says there is nothing new under the sun. There sprung another branch in the same Movement, they named themselves "Higher Thought", which suggests that, compared to theirs, every other thought is a lower thought.

If there has been any religious Movement which has really done some good, it is the Christian Science Movement, which has fought against materialism which is productive of pessimism and is destructive in all forms according to the psychical point of view. If there is a Sufi idea in the realm of a Western religion, it is in Christian Science. I was surprised to read in the Christian Science books so much which is known to the Sufis and believed by the people of the East. And on making further inquiry I came to learn that there had been a simple man who had got the Sufi thought from the Persian source, and this came into the hands of Mrs. Eddy Baker, who was gifted enough to interpret it in Biblical terms, by which she was able to give a new coat of color to Christianity, which had been fading away for many years. However, the conception of Christian Science is directed only to one side of religion, that is to combat illness which is evil, and it denies the existence of matter, which is mocked at especially by the materialistic world and very often at the death of different patients the practitioner of Christian Science is taken to the police court. Since the development of material science in the West the number of diseases has increased and it is to the credit of Christian Science that many have been kept back from going to the clinics, which in the lives of many become as slaughter-houses. Many whom the physician gives up, the Christian Scientist takes up, and many are cured who have been disappointed by medicine. No doubt, the followers of this faith are taught to find the truth only in their own Churches, also some refuse medicine in all cases and prefer death to medical treatment, whereas a Sufi uses the same faith, in believing that God heals through the air, through the food or drink, drug or herb, through all things, since God is All and All is God.

The greatest curse of the age today is the rapid spread of what is called Spiritualism. It is the lack of the spiritual ideal in the Protestant religion which has given rise to this Movement. The war which has caused so many to moan over their dear ones has helped the furtherance of this Movement. Also the Spiritualist says his Movement is in

conflict with the materialism of the day, which he rightly says has caused the recent great war. But his reason is wrongly founded; by combat materialism is strengthened. No-one in this world wishes to feel that he is wrong, and by telling him so, one makes him still firmer in his idea. They think spiritual phenomena will make man believe in the soul and in the hereafter, which today is not believed in by many. But this love of phenomena gives scope to many who wish to deceive the world by a spiritualistic fad, and once a person knows its falsehood even the believer would turn into an unbeliever. Nothing can give belief in God, the soul, or the hereafter; it must grow in the child with the growth of his body and develop in him with the development of his mind. Belief in God is in a person and it comes by itself when the moment arrives, one need not force it. What one can do is to make a way for it to rise.

Spirit phenomena, wonderworking, only stimulate curiosity and strengthen antagonism in ones nature. How can the Movement of Spiritualism ever be useful to humanity and successful in the world, since after a thorough examination most of the spiritualistic activities prove not to be genuine? It is a pity that well-known men like Sir Oliver Lodge, the great scientist, and Sir Conan Doyle, by taking interest in such objects, give reason for the simple ones to grope in superstitions. Love of Spiritualism begins by a little play, which is getting spirit messages in automatic writing. Then it grows to spirit-communication, this develops one naturally to mediumship. In order to communicate with the dead one must become practically as dead, one must become absent to the world around one in order to touch the world of the dead. Furthermore one finds those inclined to mediumship lack health or balance, and most of those who continue in the spiritualistic practices grow more and more nervous and unbalanced, until they arrive at a state in which both their mind and body become unsound. Besides, most of the Spiritualists seem to be simple-minded believers in superstitions and after spirit-communication rather than in the pursuit of God or Truth. Spiritualism cannot be a religion, although it professes to be so, for the main object of religion is to lead to unity by the God-ideal, not to variety by trying to communicate with all those passed from this earth.

Seeing the different Movements awakened in the educational world of the Occident a revolution came, and the idea of modern psychology was brought forward which every day is being developed and is coming to the fore. Yet compared to the ancient psychology this is quite an infant idea although the educational world of this day takes to it more readily than to anything ancient. For it is simple and easy to grasp, and given in the form of scientific terminology; it becomes enormously useful in medical science, and it is now being used as hypnotism, mesmerism, and psycho-analysis. However, the mental cult can be most dangerous when morals are not cultivated, and it is a question if without moral culture the modern psychology will really prove beneficial. The tendency of the modern science is to attribute most of the mental disorders to sex and to see in sex the cause of all natural faculties. This idea, no doubt, mars the morals and drowns the spiritual ideal. Material science has led the mind of the world mostly to destruction. Now when mental science and modern psychology will lead humanity further yet in the pursuit of matter instead of spirit, what could be the result? The most valuable saying of Christ seems to be the only right way to follow: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all things will be added unto you."

In the spirit of democracy which is to be found in the Western world, I saw more of the socialistic spirit, to complete it. There are two sides to socialism, a wrong side and a right side. The right side is its practice as consideration to others, and the wrong side is its practice owing to self-pity, as it produces envy, jealousy, rivalry, competition and all manner of bitterness. In the constitutional system, which is becoming every day more the foundation of every activity in the modern world, in spite of all the advantages of self-expression that it gives to many, there is something missing and that lack is caused by the one-sidedness of the system. There will come a day when humanity will come to realize that aristocracy and democracy develop one from the other as a natural course of evolution and yet one is incomplete without the other. This whole manifestation has in it both aristocracy working from above and democracy from below. And when, according to this natural scheme of life humanity will build its reconstruction, that will be the ideal civilization.

For some time there have been Eastern missions working in the West, among them Babism, which began in America and changed in time into Bahaism. Bahaism is an offspring of Sufism, its object being the bringing of nations and followers of different religions into closer touch, void of inner cult. Baha Ullah, after whom this sect has been named, had been kept a prisoner in the East because of his proclamation of prophethip. After him his son, Abdul Baha, carried on his mission. I had the pleasure of meeting Abdul Baha when he was in Paris, who showed great interest in my music and with whom I had an interesting talk about our experiences in the Western world. During the conversation we had, he exclaimed, "There should be no secret, you must speak; either you know or you do not know." I answered, "The whole nature of things and beings has a secret; each thing and each being has a secret which reveals its nature and character and the life itself has its secret and it is the uncovering of its secret which is the purpose of life. Speaking out aloud does not prove a person to be the knower of the secret. Neither every occasion is a suitable occasion, nor is every

person a person fitted for the truth to be spoken to." "You are also preaching the brotherhood of nations?" I said, "I am not preaching brotherhood, but sowing the seed of Tawhid, the unity of God, that from the plant of Sufism may spring up fruits and flowers of brotherhood."

At the world-exhibition of Chicago in 1893 where people of different religions had gathered, Vedanta philosophy was represented in America by Swami Vivekananda, the delegate who was sent to the West from the Ramakrishna mission, the mission which had been organized by Swami Ramakrishna, who had visited the West. However for Swami Vivekananda it was the best opportunity to represent Vedanta at the world fair. It was something strikingly new and interesting to the intellectual minds of the West, something to appeal to their reasoning faculty which had been whetted by modern progress and had been starved by the lack of a religion of intellect. A simple religion of faith was not sufficient for the minds so rapidly progressing in all directions of life. The voice of Swami Vivekananda echoed throughout the States. As he was the pioneer of Yoga, the first to represent it to the people of the West, he made a great impression upon all who met him. Later in America everybody knew the name of Yoga and began to search for it as one does for every drug or herb, seeking if they can buy it somewhere. There were many equipped with business faculties who soon after Swami Vivekananda's departure from America founded institutions for teaching Yoga philosophy and books were published of which it was said that by reading them Yoga could be learned in ten days.

After Swami Vivekananda various exponents of Vedanta philosophy came from India, among them Baba Bharati, who preached the love of Krishna, and after fifteen years good trial went to the East and never returned. I had met him in America; he was sorry for me, for the work I had undertaken to accomplish. Yet nothing could discourage me or move me from my firm determination.

Swami Abhedananda, who is told to be a pupil of Vivekananda, came and established a Vedanta Society in New York and an ashrama, a place for retreat, was made for the members of the Society to go into retirement for a certain period. This Society is still existing, having been through a great many floods and storms, which is astonishing to many. It always becomes convenient for the opponents of the Eastern cult to demolish the character of its exponent, however self-sacrificing the person may be.

I saw to my great surprise in San Francisco a Hindu temple built in the Indian style, founded by Swami Trigunatita. He struck a note in me, a thought which I have had all my life, that East and West both have their particularities; either need the other and both together make the work complete. And it is not the political or commercial interest which will unite them for their mutual benefit so much as a marriage between them, for a true marriage means unity between souls. The Swami was very gentle and tenderhearted, but to keep on his work was a constant struggle. If it had not been for his constant enthusiasm he would long ago have left San Francisco. I heard to my great distress that the Swami had been assassinated while giving a public lecture.

I have also heard of a Vedanta Society existing in Boston, established by Swami Paramananda, a young exponent of Hindu philosophy, and many talk about his gentle personality. He has held his institution firm against winds which came to sweep it away. However, to think that Vedanta philosophy will become a religion of the Occident is absurd. In the first place Vedanta is not a religion, it is a philosophy, and it will only appeal to those interested in the wisdom of the East from an intellectual point of view, and care little for religion. Yes, Yogism has a great attraction for many, but the renunciation, sacrifice, patience and perseverance which Yoga demands, make it almost impossible for a person whose life is absorbed in a thousand responsibilities of life, and the surroundings that he has to live in in the West to undertake and to accomplish it satisfactorily.

A good many years past the Brahmo Samaj of India, the Movement which was founded by Devendranath Tagore, was introduced in England by its exponent Keshoba Chandra Sen. After a lapse of time, some little fragment of it is still to be found, kept alive by his son and has been for some time in England. Mr. Gupta started in England a side issue of this Movement, "East and West", which kept dimly lit like a lamp without oil.

Rabindranath Tagore's tour through the West has been the one which met with great success. His command of English and his poetry saturated with the Eastern fluid, has no doubt made a great impression upon the Western mind. His ideas on the present problem have been liked by some, and some call them pacifism by which is meant peace at any cost, which many are not eager to hear of just now. There is no doubt, the works of Tagore have brought real credit to India. Some people think his poetry is weak. No doubt, it is those who are not accustomed to fineness.

I also have read the three works of Kahlil Gibran, "The Madman", "The Forerunner", and "The Prophet". In this he has shown the great wit of the East, proving his to be a dancing soul. He writes with a great command of English and with deep insight in life. He seems to be a complete artist who draws beautiful pictures of life, in lines and in words.

An Islamic mission has been started some time ago in England by Khwaja Kamaluddin, the Imam of the mosque at Woking, which is under the control of the India Office. It is supposed to have made a great many converts to Islam, among them Lord Headly. The Imam made a pilgrimage to Mecca, just before the Sherif changed his policy. There is little tendency seen among people in the West to follow Islam, especially among the intellectual classes, on account of the wrong impression spread in the West by political and religious sources. There is another Muslim Mission called Ahmadia, which is working in England, seeming to stand apart from this main Mission of Khwaja Kamaluddin, working hard to make up a good long list of converts every year, upon which solely depends their success. These Missions could not exist in the West were they not provided for by the hopeful Muslims of Islam, who out of their good faith in the furtherance of Islam try to give a part of the only loaf of bread they have.

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