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CHRISTIANITY AND EDUCATION
IN INDIA.

A LECTURE

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BY

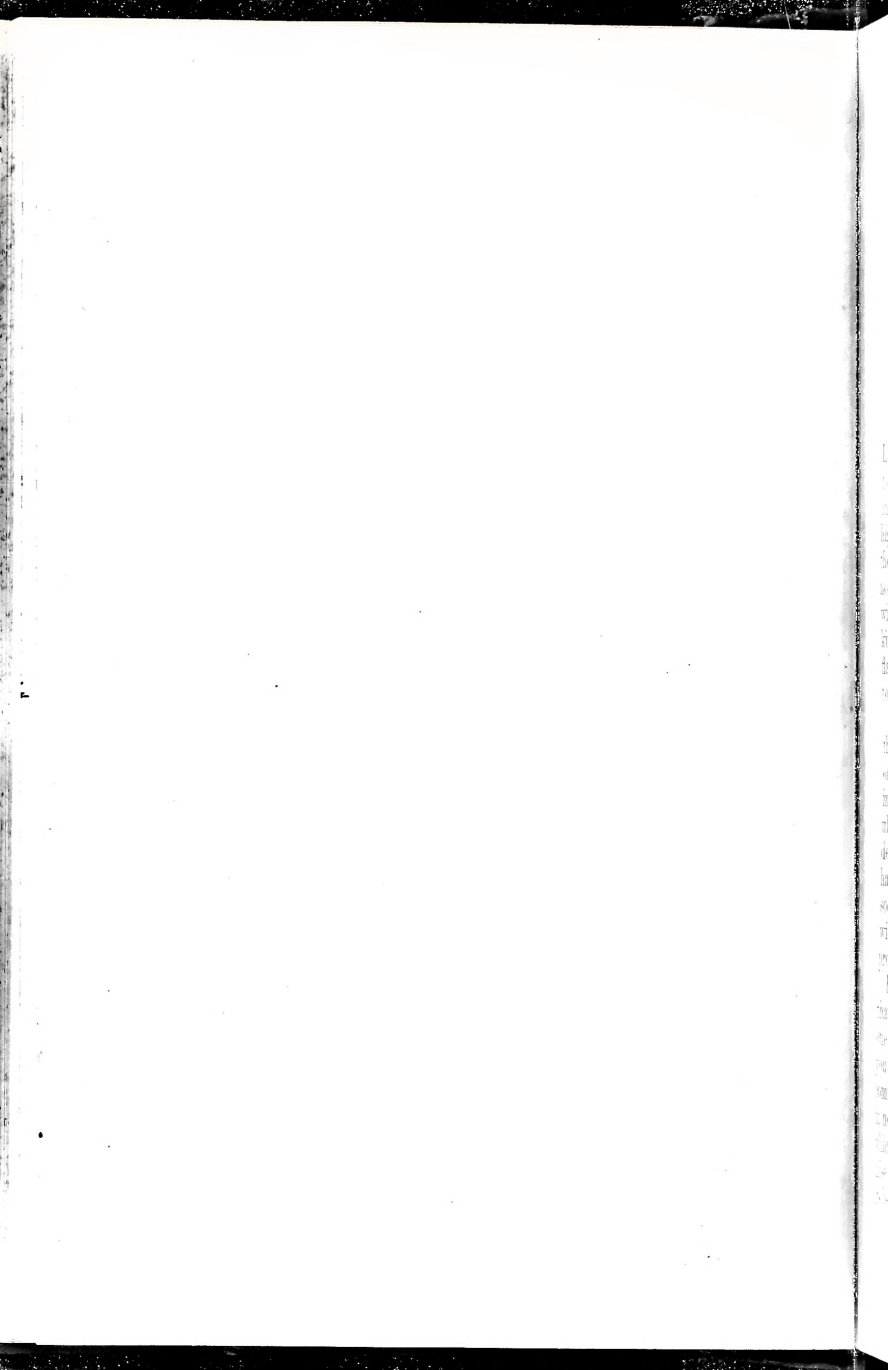
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HINDU EDUCATION.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—The subject we are come together this evening to consider is one, the importance of which it is scarce possible to estimate too highly. Viewed in its integrity—in the vastness of the interests at stake on its proper solution—interests, not simply of a speculative character, but as connected with the destinies of a considerable portion of mankind, I should be more sanguine than wise if I flattered myself that I could do the barest justice to it.

Agitated as is the human mind in our times with thousands of questions, more or less directly bearing on human advancement, I know none more exciting in their immediate interest, more momentous in their ultimate results, in short, more imperative in their demand on our deepest attention, than those which have for their solution the complicated phenomena of social science. Of these, the subject of education, it will be conceded on all hands, must ever stand out prominently as *the* question of questions.

But it is not the question of education in *general* that I propose to myself, but the more circumscribed one of Hindu education. I propose to bring before you the present state of education in India, its shortcomings, and the nature of the emendations it stands in need of, if it is to succeed at all in the object for which it has been undertaken. I may further premise that I shall deal with the subject, not only in its bearings on the regeneration of India, but also in

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its wider relations to the advancement of science and the promotion of human welfare in general.

It is well known that in India there are two systems of education working side by side,—the one secular and the other religious,—the one conducted by the Government, the other by Christian Missionaries sent out by this country for the conversion of the Hindus. Now to take the last first.

Far be it from me to ignore the noble spirit that supports this enterprise; and farther still to traduce wantonly, or speak in a spirit of levity of, anything connected with it. So long as these magnificent efforts on your part at self-sacrifice are made under the conviction that we, pagans and heathens, are lost unless brought to embrace your faith, and bend our knees to your idols; so long, I repeat, we cannot be too grateful. But sooner or later the truth must out, and, I am sure, you will bear with me, if my very gratitude for what you are doing for us compels me to speak candidly the bare unvarnished truth on the subject. I can conscientiously state, then, and every one who has any personal knowledge of India will bear me out in this statement, that Christianity, in spite of all the efforts of all its zealous apostles, has not succeeded, and is never likely to succeed, in the land of the Hindus. It is a notorious fact that, notwithstanding the unremitting operation now nearly for a century of a vast machinery, specially designed for this purpose, and worked under the most favourable auspices, Christianity cannot name its proselytes from any part of the more intelligent and educated classes of our community whose total number at any time could not be counted on one's fingers. Not less notorious is the fact that nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of the converted Hindus are from the very dregs, the Parias, of our population. There is scarcely, too, one in a thousand among them who can so much as conceive the simplest points of

divergence between the faith he has abandoned and the faith he has embraced.

The rationale of this inevitable state of things is not very far to seek. The whole of the Hindu community, for our present purpose, may be divided into four classes, not in accordance with the ordinary distinction of castes, but with the mental peculiarities observable among them. Our first division will comprise those who have received no education, either English or Hindu; the second, those who possess an elementary knowledge of English, with a tolerable acquaintance with their own literature; while the third shall hold together those who, not being satisfied with the rudiments of education vouchsafed them by their thrifty Government, have pushed their curiosity into the forbidden precincts of science, as far, at least, as their unassisted efforts might avail them, and have made themselves familiar, if not with the more recondite truths and processes of its various departments, at least with their general results, and the more fundamental methods of inductive investigation. There remains now the fourth class to characterize, which, after the above assignments, must evidently consist of those Hindus who, though devoid of English education, and a knowledge of European science, are yet the repositories of all that is highest and soundest in Hindu philosophy and Hindu science, such as they may be. Now to review each class, in order, in its relations to Christianity and the possible points of contact between them, where alone the latter might exert any influence.

We have seen that the characteristic of our first division is the absence of all education. And hence the presence of ignorance in unmitigated intensity. Now ignorance and superstition must ever go hand in hand. The rampant extravagances of the latter are a necessary consequence of the former. The same faculty of analogical reasoning, which

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under due subordination to wide inductions and subject to continued processes of verification or correction, results in the highest triumphs of science, leads, in the absence of these safeguards, to the grossest fallacies of thought and belief. Fetishism is a natural concomitant of this stage of our mental development. There is no place here for either metaphysical or positive conceptions. There is as little possibility of metaphysical abstractions making impression upon the dim consciousness of ignorance, as of the comprehensive generalisations of positive science being grasped by its narrow faculties. Hence the only religion possible at this stage is the religion of sense. The more sensuous the conceptions, the more tangible the images presented for adoration, the firmer is their hold upon the ignorant mind. The slightest infusion of anything like abstraction is eschewed and thrown out as unassimilable with its simple organisation. Now Christianity, with its medley of dogmas and theories, half fetishistic, half metaphysical, has far less chance of success here than a religion that is purely fetishistic. The one is easy of comprehension to the most untutored mind; while the other bristles up with inconsistencies incapable of reconciliation by the subtlest intellect. Further, if sensuous accessories are at all requisite, stocks and stones, idols and oracles, are far better helps to devotion than the pulpit or the priest—the surplice or the sermon.

But independently of the intrinsic unfitness of Christianity, the conduct of the missionary is scarce better fitted to ensure success. It is very rarely that he masters the vernaculars sufficiently to make himself easily intelligible to his native audience. Even where this superlative merit is achieved by the grumbling apostle, he scarce forgets the whiteness of his skin, his easy five hundred a year, or his comfortable bungalow, with its pankas and tattees, when he sees the dark masses rolling on before him,

doomed to work under a tropical sun. When he addresses himself to them, perhaps once in a week, and for half an hour in a thoroughfare, he is full as conscious of his superiority as when lolling on cushioned sofas in the luxurious abandonment of a midday repose ; or when driving his beautiful phaeton and pair of an evening through fashionable walks, to enjoy the glories of a setting sun or the grateful breezes of approaching night. It is beneath him to mix with them freely—to talk to them familiarly—and therefore to understand how to influence their minds effectually. Is it a matter of surprise, then, if his hebdomadal harangues, more remarkable for periodic sententiousness and dramatic accompaniments of voice and gesture, than earnestness of purpose or common sense, should fall on careless ears ?

And yet this is the class from which the ranks of Hindu Christianity are oftenest supplied. We have seen there is nothing specially adapted in the new religion, nor anything specially attractive in the behaviour of the missionaries to bring about such a result. Is it then an easy frame of mind in these ignorant Hindus or their indifference that supplies the explanation ? No, they are bigoted enough and tenacious too, like other Hindus, in what they consider to be right, not to succumb to ordinary influences. It is their poverty, or vitiated course of life, that makes them take refuge in a change of social condition. The converted Hindu is always provided for by Christian munificence, if not in every case liberally, at least in a way to satisfy every reasonable demand of nature. Can you wonder, then, if a few unfortunate or unprincipled Hindus would gladly take shelter under a religion that does not leave the poor to starve, nor compel the idle to work. But this same supply which feeds expiring Christianity in India, and gives it for a time a delusive appearance of vitality and growth, carries with it, in reality, in-

evitable seeds of decay and death. The contempt and disgust, which these dissipated and ignorant wretches engender in every mind, are in themselves a sufficient bar to its progress among the better classes.

But enough of this. Let us proceed to our second division—those Hindus, namely, who have received a tolerably good English education, and are therefore in a position to come more directly under the influence of the Missionaries. Do these, at least, profit by the light so considerately proffered them? I am afraid the position of Christianity is more hopeless here than in the last case. I am afraid what is recommended to them as light, is looked upon by them more as an *ignis fatuus*, decoying them to deeper sloughs of error and superstition, than as an unmistakable beacon leading to the calm haven of truth. Whatever defects may have been laid at our door by European opinionists, intelligence at any rate—at least one kind of intelligence—has never been denied us, even by the boldest amongst them. It is nothing strange, therefore, if the same exercise of faculties which leads the inquiring Hindu to question his own beliefs, leads him also to question others recommended in their stead. Once the spirit of Scepticism roused in him, he knows no moderation. In his eyes authority becomes mockery—faith impotence. Free from the magic of superstition, he becomes conscious of his own strength. No dogma is too sacred—no explanation too plausible, to escape his rude challenge. Hence, it is easy to conceive what treatment Christianity, with its manifold defects, has to expect from his tender mercies. He pounces upon the thousand metaphysical difficulties which surround its doctrines and which have puzzled the ingenuity of its highest philosophers, without being brought one step nearer to a satisfactory solution. Nay, he rips open its very fundamental conceptions, dragging to light every

inconsistency, inconsequence, and self-contradiction lurking or enshrined therein; while their helpless champion, trembling with horror but unable to stop this work of vandalism, wonders if heaven's wrath had spent its lightnings. Meantime, the havoc proceeds. The shattered images crowd on every side,—the different attributes of the Godhead, so necessary to Christian Orthodoxy, but so irreconcilable with one another, and, therefore, incapable of predication together; the strange doctrine of prayer, so useless if God be just, so impious, so blasphemous, if it implies his openness to flattery or adulation; the enjoined duty of a simultaneous belief in Predestination and Free-Will, an impossibility both of thought and fact; the necessity of inherited sin, and salvation through the sufferings of an innocent God, a conception more allied to wild caprice or wanton blood-thirstiness, than any notion of justice or equity possible to human intelligence, and yet a conception constituting the essence of a Christian's speciality as respects the other believers in the Unknown and Unknowable: and to crown all, this very salvation, worked through centuries of human suffering and crowned with the sufferings of a God, proving no salvation to the greater part of mankind, who could scarce help wondering if it might not be a deception of the unholy Spirit working in the dark for our ruin: a scheme, in short, so clumsy and unavailing, though brought out in such wanton defiance of every law, natural and moral, and worked with all the tentative skill of Supreme Wisdom, improving upon itself through experience of five thousand years, that it leaves as much sin, suffering, and ignorance now in the world as when it found them; a scheme, in fine, which even *human* pride might blush to own.

Such is a rough sketch of the pugilistic skill of our Hindu controversialist of the second class. If he bares his breast to the fist of his antagonist, he ex-

acts a like courtesy from the opposite side. *He* knows not the meekness that would present you the second cheek to smite, when you have smitten the first. But this would not do. This is contrary to all acknowledged precedents and rules of Missionary warfare in all heathen lands. Give but not receive, is its motto; and it is not our *modern* Missionary that would derogate from his dignity as an infallible mouthpiece of Pure Wisdom so low as to forget this excellent precept. But whether from this motive or from a lurking suspicion in his own breast that "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark," it is a significant fact, the Missionary ever avoids an educated Hindu. Though the conversion of one such would be far more favourable to his cause than that of a thousand ignorant unprincipled wretches, he never attempts to convert *him*. It is almost ludicrous to see the studious solicitude with which the anxious apostle shuns all contact with him as with a dreaded imp of evil. But unfortunately, as ill luck sometimes *would* have it, his care is not always successful. Very often some enterprising Hindu ferrets him out actually to pay off for many a blow and poisoned shaft aimed at him and his beliefs from behind his back. And then, when once they are brought face to face, the former, in whose constitution a love of controversy may almost be said to be hereditary, and now smarting too from a sense of injury, hurls at his antagonist every objection in its most damaging shape with all the ingenuity of a Hindu brain; while the latter, goaded to the quick and surprised out of his usual reserve, but unable to maintain even a show of contest, either flies into a passion, which is worse than defeat, or gets entangled in platitudes, which produce only mischievous merriment in his opponent.

But this is not all. The educated Hindoo, however ignorant of science himself, does not fail to see,—and living as he does in the nineteenth century can he

help seeing?—that the identical faith, which is so strongly recommended for his adoption in India, is exposed to a life-and-death struggle from the rapid advances of science in the very land of its highest triumphs, in the very cradle of its early successes. Under these circumstances, is it not a matter of course that the intelligent Hindoo should not rush forward blindly to embrace what seems to him not only the losing, but the erroneous side?

If then Christianity has no chance, as we have seen, with our first and second classes, how much more unlikely is it that it should succeed with the third, which comprises the most advanced amongst us:—those, that is, who combine, to a knowledge of the English Language, a tolerable acquaintance with the results of modern science and the principal processes of its investigations? It is not those, who have learnt to regard the constancy and uniformity of Nature as the highest dicta of experience and the only foundation of sure knowledge, that would accept your arbitrary interpositions, sudden suspensions, and unnatural intersections of natural laws, as any thing more than the vagaries of a morbid imagination. It is not those, who have learnt to trace the operation of unalterable causes, not only in the progressive development of life, not only in the gradual formation of our globe, nor yet only in the slow emergence of the system to which it belongs, but quite as well in the general evolution of the whole universe in all its details, and from times reaching backwards beyond the power of calculation, that would believe them to have failed or been set aside during one insignificant life-time, on one insignificant spot of earth, for the immediate benefit of one insignificant part of one insignificant race. It is not such, therefore, that would swallow, at the bidding of the missionary, any miracles that it might please *him* or his *book* to propound. It is not down the throats of such that the

missionary may hope to cram his speaking donkeys and suns that stand paralysed in their course. Nay, they would not condescend even to *wonder* at the existence of such beliefs in our times. To them, credulity begot of ignorance and fostered by prejudice supplies the necessary explanation.

But their position does not stop here. Armed with positive knowledge, and commanding every avenue to error, they fear not to charge into the *heart* of the enemies' camp. Their lance is at rest for no ordinary prize. It seeks the heart-blood—the *sine qua non*—of all superstition and error. In other words, they join issue with their opponents on the question of those very beliefs, without which not only Christianity, but every other religion, in the usual meaning of the term, becomes impossible. They contend, in short, that the popular idea, that what we call the soul or mind is an independent entity, a something quite distinct from the body and capable of existence without it; and the supplementary notion, that there is a conscious personal being, who is the creator and ruler of the universe; are, to say the least of it, notions which find support neither in nature nor in reason.

Instead, therefore, of Christianity making any progress among our third class Hindus, *they* are more likely to contribute to its final and general rejection by their countrymen.

But what of the fourth division? With the Hindus belonging to this class at least, it might be imagined, there must be better hope. Neither acquainted with modern science nor blind to the gross superstitions common among their less educated brethren, they must surely be more favourably disposed to receive Christianity if properly presented to them. Unfortunately for the cause of unfounded hopes, the probabilities once more go hard against such fond anticipations. The state of society in India,

in respect of beliefs and principles of action is, and has been for a long time, very much like what that of Greece and Rome used to be in their palmyest days. In Rome and Greece, we know, the beliefs of the higher and more educated classes—of their so-called philosophers—had very little in common with the superstitions of their less advanced countrymen. If they tolerated them, or rather if they seemed themselves to share in them, it was only from prudential, self-interested considerations. They knew, too, that all men could not be philosophers, nor was it desirable that all should be. Something very similar to this obtains now in Hindu Society. The Philosophers or Pundits of India are not what they seem. If they encourage the popular beliefs, it is purely from motives of policy and self-interest. Their philosophy is too subtle for the mass, nor is it their interest to popularize it. They are the priests of the nation; and you know how everywhere the priests are jealous of knowledge among any but themselves. Their power everywhere is in a direct ratio to the ignorance around them. Accordingly the Brahmin has two schools—the esoteric and the exoteric, the one full of ceremonies, prayers, penances, with all the remaining paraphernalia of religious denomination, the other, of philosophic discussions relative to the explanation of the phenomena of the universe. The former is meant to satisfy the wild cravings of untutored imagination and utilize the emotional energies of aboriginal nature for purposes of social economy; while the latter furnishes gratifications to choicer spirits seeking intellectual luxuries and contemplative repose.

Now of all the systems of philosophy I have any knowledge of—whether the systems of ancient Greece and Rome, the Peripatetic, the Sceptic, or the Epicurean; their later developments in those of the schools; or still later forms—the modern systems of Kant, Cousin, and Hamilton—I have no hesitation in pro-

nouncing the Vadantic philosophy of the Hindus the most logical and profound. It makes the nearest approach, I know of any, to the strict requirements of modern scientific thought. In its fundamental aspects, it is enough to add here, it resembles the system of Mill and Bain.

It is a well-known fact that Buddhism, in its original purity, was an offshoot of Hindu philosophy. Buddha, who was familiar with its deepest mysteries, but who endeavoured to organize them into a religion, was obliged, evidently to meet the grosser apprehension of the masses, to make a compromise between the requirements of logical precision and the necessities of a practical reduction. It was accordingly an abortion between philosophy and religion; an unsuccessful attempt to reconcile the rational and emotional natures of man. It would neither satisfy the conditions of pure reason, nor give scope to the full play of feeling. And yet this system, abortive as it manifestly is, has been pronounced, even by European critics, the most rational religion in the world. How much greater must be the superiority, then, of that philosophy over all religions, of which Buddhism is but an offshoot, and an inferior offshoot too!

There is one circumstance connected with this philosophy which at first has a very misleading effect: I mean the peculiarly difficult and almost mystical phraseology in which its doctrines are couched. But this, far from being a demerit, ought to constitute a recommendation in its favour, since it enabled the enunciation of the subtlest and profoundest truths in a language singularly consistent, accurate, and powerful. Anything more than a hasty glance at some of its principal features would be not only out of place, but would demand far more space and time than can be afforded in a lecture like this. I shall select, therefore, a few salient points for comparison.

The Berkleyan theory of what is improperly called

Idealism, which reduces both the objective and subjective worlds to Permanent Possibilities of Sensation, and which is beyond doubt the most logical theory yet conceived by the European intellect, is distinctly stated, and enforced by powerful reasoning in this Philosophy of the Hindus, now so many centuries old. When it enunciates the grand truth that the internal and external worlds are merely the varying manifestations of one and the same principle 'Maya,' the ignorant dabbler in Hindu philosophy translates the word in its ordinary acceptation, and pronounces the doctrine absurd. If he had only the patience to master the language in which it is closed before jumping to a conclusion, he would find that, as in English or any other language, the popular and philosophic significations of words are different, and sometimes almost contradictory. The ordinary meaning of 'Maya' is certainly delusion, but the philosophic value of it is as certainly—the system of phenomena in contradistinction to noumena—the totality of existence, real and potential, regarded as possible or actual groups of sensations. So that the theory of 'Maya,' as it is generally called, is far from being what it is ignorantly taken for. On the contrary, it is the enunciation of the doctrines of the school of Mill and Bain in strict philosophical language.

The modern theory of evolution, again, is plainly shadowed forth in this philosophy, where it resolves the first cause, not into an unmeaning change of expression—"a guiding and controlling intelligence"—but into a principle, unconscious, self-existent, and ever-changing—a principle of which concrete existence in all its varieties is only an expression of varying aspects. Thus the only First Cause that this philosophy recognizes, is the first cause also of modern science—matter with its properties.

One more point worthy of notice here is the theory of necessity or fate. The first cause itself is subject to

it; rather necessity is itself one of its properties. Hence it followed also that everything in the universe, being but a manifestation of the first principle, is equally necessary in respect of its co-existence or sequence. This doctrine, it will be seen, is nothing more nor less than the general uniformity and constancy of nature which forms the ground-work of science. It is true this doctrine, under the name of Asiatic Fatalism, has been ridiculed by persons who neither understood its unassailable foundation in fact, nor could distinguish between its legitimate consequences, awful enough to confuse their narrow apprehension, and the illegitimate or unnecessary ones imported into the question by their own incapable reasonings. But however ignorantly ridiculed, or whatever preposterous effects have been ascribed to it, the doctrine itself stands up a sublime monument of Hindu thought at a time when even the bulk of educated intellects of Europe are not prepared for its intelligent reception.

Even the common version of the Hindu Trinity is a fallacy of misconception. The popular notion of the three deities—Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva—is merely a flesh-and-blood personification of the three fundamental generalisations of our philosophy of the universe. These are respectively the constructive, the restorative, and the degenerative or destructive principles in nature. They were no doubt suggested by a careful observation of the operations of natural agencies around us. Their truth is now acknowledged by all, and requires no special amplification. Only it deserves to be remarked how even such a simple belief of the uneducated Hindu as that in the three gods, turns out to be merely a stultification of the wisdom of his philosophers, who centuries ago recognised principles of nature but recently discovered by modern science.

If we had time we might dig deeper into this wonderful philosophy, and bring to light richer ores of

truth and reasoning ; but we must stop. Nor will such work be necessary for our present object, if what we have seen of it, slight as it is, has given us some idea of the rich stores of wisdom that are the birth-right and pride of the Hindu Pundit. Is it this Pundit, then, that would renounce such a legacy of sublime conceptions for the no-philosophy and bad science of the missionary ?

Thus the chances of Christianity in India are small indeed, after every allowance,—bad enough with the first class, but worse with the second, and worst of all with the third and fourth. Hence is its present unsatisfactory condition. Hence, too, its no better future.

As for the good which the missionaries are doing in India in the way of imparting elementary English education to the people, I gladly bear testimony to their comparative success. But here, again, to show our true gratitude to our benefactors, we, Hindus, can do nothing better than try to convince them, as early as we may, how absolutely unnecessary are these vast sacrifices on their part for this purpose. India has never been known to be a poor country. We can stand perfectly well upon our own resources. Only like the magic gate in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, the portals of our hidden energies open to no sound but that of wisdom. Let but a little more discretion and wit be infused into our administrative element, and we shall never hear again the irrational clang of debts and deficits. What we want is not alms from others' riches, but only wise direction to develop our own. Our revenue, wisely expended, would not only defray all governmental expenses, but would leave a surplus more than enough for the construction and working of the most efficient educational machinery ever known.

Under these circumstances can we do better than remind our simple well-wishers, that charity had better begin at home. Looking on the condition of the

working-classes in this country, can any body doubt for a second that they need every farthing, that the superfluous wealth of their more favoured countrymen could ever spare? Neither need I insist that they alone deserve these good offices—at least deserve them with far greater right than *we* may ever pretend to do.

Having thus completed our survey of the position of Christianity in India, let us now turn to the other system of education, which is being conducted by the Government in a purely secular spirit. It may be desirable, however, to dispose of a preliminary difficulty in our way, relative to the supposed duties of a Government. It may be, and it has been, asked if the Government of India is under any obligations to do more for its people in the way of their education than the Governments of other countries, such as those of Europe, for instance. To this question I must reply, Yes. India is now in a phase of its existence, in which it is weak enough to require a guiding hand, but is strong withal to prove recalcitrant whenever its sense of justice is outraged—a phase, in consequence, in which its destinies are trembling in the balance, in which the highest delicacy and foresight are requisite in those who have its management to bring about results in any degree conducive to the promotion of human welfare and progress.

Such considerations, I admit, are of no higher validity than those which have for their basis the good of mankind. But unless dreamy transcendentalism and empty inanities are to sway our notions, I know no considerations more sacred or more binding in any code of morality than these. If, therefore, our Government be upright in its intentions, and not mercenary—if its highest object be the advancement of our race in mental and material prosperity, and not the squeezing out the means of luxurious subsis-

tence for its officials from an enraged people, alike to the detriment of its own stability and the welfare of a whole nation :—if, I say, our Government be what it ought to be, and my happy experience of seven and twenty years justifies me in asserting that it has been such in every essential element ; then it will do for the attainment of this noble object whatever will conduce to it. Unflinching discussion and free ventilation of the opinions of every one interested in the issue are necessary, not so much to cavil with what has been done, as to show how best may be done what yet remains to be done.

I shall proceed, therefore, to express my views boldly on this much neglected subject, under the conviction that they will meet with that amount of consideration which, if not their intrinsic worth, at least their sincerity will demand from every thoughtful person.

In the Government system of education, then, the one feature that stands out most glaringly is the utter absence of what we understand by scientific education from first to last in general instruction. Nay, even what is taught is taught in an exceedingly unscientific way. It is not only in respect of the sort of instruction vouchsafed, but also in respect of the manner in which it is imparted, that we have to complain of being left strangely behind the times. In fact, such a state of things is inevitable so long as the character of the staff of educational officers there employed continues to be what it has been hitherto. Throughout the whole educational staff in the Madras Presidency, I cannot now recollect one name known to science or philosophy. Beginning from the Provincial School Head-Master up to the Director of Public Instruction inclusive, the reign of ignorance is supreme—ignorance in everything that constitutes the real essence of knowledge. One might almost stagger with dismay, if it did not border on unmiti-

gated contempt, to see the sublime innocence displayed by these bearers of western light for the illumination of the east :—innocence, sublime indeed, since it is innocence in respect of those very sciences and systems of belief, engendered thereby, which constitute the highest triumphs of modern western civilisation.

Now to refer for a few seconds to the immense disadvantages which a want of scientific education entails upon a nation. In the present day this reference need not detain us long. It is enough to recollect that every step forward in civilisation has been due to some advance in science. In the world in which we live we are surrounded by powers, conservative as well as destructive, a knowledge of which, to some extent at least, is necessary for our continued existence ; while life, with any degree of comfort and success, is possible only when we have mastered them to considerable detail, and can utilize them for our own purposes. Further, Nature is an inexorable mistress. The slightest infringement of her laws, whether through ignorance or perversity, is alike avenged with the severest penalties. In the reign of natural law reparation is impossible. It is a deduction from the persistence of force that if we make a single false step, we must be content to carry its consequences with us to the grave. Hence the inadequacy, the disadvantage of any system of education which does not include a knowledge of nature.

There is yet another aspect of the question, which might bear a little further handling. I allude to the rapid increase of population, particularly in civilised countries, whose pent-up energies, under accumulating pressure, must, in longer or shorter periods, find a vent, as they have found already so often even under less imminent circumstances, in acts of aggression or wars of extermination against one another, or against less favoured races. How helpless must be the con-

dition of a people, then, who, from want of requisite culture, are unable either to avert or withstand these destructive irruptions! I know the time is yet far off, thank our stars, when these volcanic outbursts of human energy will become general. But is it the less certain on that account, or should we be justified in enjoying the delicious repose of the present in the fancied security of a distant future? No, we shall not be a second too soon in urging upon our government the necessity of making us the best return for our money in their power—of starting us with a fair chance for the imminent struggle for existence looming before us—for the threatening future so pregnant with mysterious fates.

There is yet another consideration we might urge with less selfish motives. The sooner an equilibrium is established between the different civilised nations in respect of power of self-maintenance or strength of resistance, the better will it be for all parties concerned. The hurricanes of human violence that have swept so often over the globe with such destructive fury would have lost much of their vehemence if inequalities in the distribution of power and the consequent tendency to a convective rearrangement had been less pronounced.

But irrespective of negative considerations, are there no positive benefits in the course I recommend to accrue to mankind in general? I answer unhesitatingly, yes! The process of natural selection, founded as it is upon the fixation of favourable proclivities through inheritance, and the elimination of unfavourable tendencies in the struggle for existence, is a process not less operative in the evolution of organic functions than in that of organic forms. Further, there is no reason why a process, through which such high results have already been achieved, should not continue to bring about results higher still. In point of fact, it is not only man that has

been evolved from lower forms, but higher races of men are being developed from lower ones. It is true, in this latter process, the operation of the principle is far from being unobstructed as hitherto. But though at several points along its line of action, its force is being deflected for a time or even retarded by antagonistic contact with the peculiar agency of man's psychological nature, which itself has brought about ; still its ultimate triumph is not for a moment to be doubted. We have only to look into the past history of mankind, imperfect as it is, and then project ourselves in imagination into the future a few centuries hence, when the conditions of existence shall wax more stringent, and the struggle for survival more violent, to be satisfied of the truth of what I contend for.

Such being the case, does it not follow that the better the materials presented for this law to work upon—when the time should come for its unrestricted, at any rate, more steady operation, the higher will be the results attained ? Is it not evident, too, that the sooner we set about improving the general condition of mankind in order that, when the day shall come, there may be always enough of the best and highest type available to cover the whole ground of survival without adulteration, the more effectually shall we have assisted nature in its progress to a glorious destiny ? Now with such views as these before us, both as to the present and the future, can it be doubted for a moment that India, with its already two hundred millions of people, covering in extent no inconsiderable part of the habitable globe, and endowed with powers of vitality and resistance by no means contemptible, is destined to play a significant part in the future history of mankind, or that every step in human progress will be influenced by the state of preparation and reach of antecedent advancement, with which it shall enter the contest ?

Hence, even from a cosmopolitan point of view is the course I recommend rendered a crying necessity.

But, independently of remote advantages, which, however real, lose half their importance to the ordinary mind from their distance, are there no considerations of less equivocal significance and of a more *immediate* bearing upon our collective interests? The answer once more must be in the affirmative. We have seen already that true progress consists in nothing so much as in a successful cultivation of science—a deepening insight into nature and her operations. No amount of mere literary accomplishments—no amount of mere analytical skill, if employed only in the manipulation of a few abstract mathematical ideas—can avail us amidst the rigid and unbending phenomena of concrete existence.

Now, of these concrete phenomena, which cannot be evolved deductively from a few comprehensive first principles, no class of them is of more vital importance to us than that whose explanation we term sociology or social science. Though there is scarcely a department of natural knowledge which does not in the long run, either directly or indirectly, contribute to our advancement, it must still be granted that some are more useful to us in their immediate results than others. A large proportion of our knowledge is purely speculative, and has no bearing upon our practical interests; while every additional correlation of its various factors tends more to the equilibrium of thought than utility in the ordinary acceptance of the term. Hence those correlations which result in useful applications naturally excite greater interest in us, and are of more immediate importance, than those which are purely of a theoretical character.

From this point of view, it is needless to remark, the correlations of social science must evidently take the precedence. But, unfortunately, in proportion to their usefulness is also their difficulty. Their satis-

factory establishment can be accomplished only by those who combine to a knowledge of the other sciences a familiar acquaintance with the different methods of investigation applicable to different groups of phenomena. The truth of this statement will become manifest when we recollect the position which sociology assumes in the classification of the sciences founded upon the principle of progressive complexity. The social philosopher has to lay under contribution, for the elucidation of his subject, not only the agencies peculiar to itself, but also those regulating the conditions of other phenomenal sequences. But furthermore, not to speak of correct generalisations to be achieved in this difficult science—even for a careful sifting and selection of proper materials for arriving at such—a preliminary knowledge of the kind we have characterised is indispensable. To know what order of facts may be eschewed as having no bearing upon any particular question in hand, and what order are to be seized upon and tabulated for purposes of further elaboration, is in itself a process possible only under a previous scientific culture.

Now for a satisfactory settlement of many a contested point in social science, I know no country better calculated to supply the necessary data than Hindustan. The very fact that India contains such a large population, broken up into so many races, each speaking a different language and each presenting different peculiarities, physical, social, intellectual and moral; while yet a thread of broad community in several respects runs through them all; must in itself be a sufficient argument in its favour. Even a careful observation and intelligent tabulation of these interesting differences, with a running commentary on the obvious causes thereof, placed alongside of the results of a similar process applied to points of resemblance, must I conceive inevitably lead to no ordinary consequences. I feel convinced that as a

knowledge of the classic language of India first led to the creation of a science already rich in results, but richer far in the results it has yet in store for us, so it is only a thorough knowledge of social institutions, religious beliefs and other characteristic circumstances connected with the Hindus that will place social science on a sure scientific basis. We may almost predict the various lines along which such a knowledge is likely to extend its influence, after what we know of the growth of philology and geology within the last few years. In fact there are several points of close resemblance between geology and sociology. The customs, habits, beliefs, languages, &c. of the different nations are as it were the different stratal systems of social geology; while those preserved in their literatures are the entombed fossils of anterior states, which taken with the present are capable of affording as consistent and satisfactory an explanation of social evolution as geology does of organic development. The countries of Europe, as seen within the historical period, are in one sense enough to elucidate the later steps in this evolution; in the same way as the latest or tertiary rocks are sufficient to explain the comparatively recent passage of man through the three stages of flint, bronze, and iron. But just as for the comprehension of the far deeper and more searching question of his origin, a careful study of the earlier systems—the mesozoic and the palyzoic—was found necessary; so a discriminating knowledge of the more aboriginal institutions and literatures of the eastern nations is indispensable for the explanation of the more important problem of the genesis of society. But of all eastern countries, no land presents, within such a comparatively small area, a larger or a more varied field for research than India. No country, too, comprises within itself such varied systems of living and dead forms of social life, reaching to the remotest past, as India once more. Hence it is manifest the

study of India from a sociological point of view must be of the last importance.

This, however, can be done with any approach to efficiency only by those who are most intimately familiar with the phenomena concerned; and are capable at the same time of such intelligent work. It must be evident therefore that it is only Hindus that can successfully undertake this all important task. But Hindus, though Hindus they be, would be worse than useless if they had not the requisite preliminary training. As for strangers attempting to accomplish this end without native agency, they might as soon attempt the merest impossibilities for aught one cares about the result. So long as Europeans and Hindus are what they are, no matter whose fault it is that they cannot understand and do not sympathise with one another, such must continue to be the case. Hence an additional reason, the last but not the least weighty I have herein adduced, why the Hindus should receive a scientific education.

And now having thus brought these few reflections on Hindu education to a close, it only remains for me to thank you sincerely for the kind and indulgent hearing you have accorded to my unequal attempt to handle a subject full of the deepest interest and importance.