
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

'No one cometh unto the Father, but by me.' What, then, are we to do with *The Autobiography of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore*? (Macmillan; 7s. 6d. net).

The Autobiography has been edited by one of his sons—not the poet, but Satyendranath TAGORE, with assistance from Indira DEVI. There is no difficulty there. The editing is done with judgment and piety. The book, as an Autobiography, and as the Autobiography of the Founder of an Indian Sect, has all the interest we expect to find in it. The difficulty is with the Introduction.

For in the Introduction, which is written by Miss Evelyn UNDERHILL, it is claimed for TAGORE that he was a true mystic, and for his Autobiography that it is going to take its place among 'the few classic autobiographies bequeathed to us by certain of the mystics and saints.' TAGORE is placed beside Suso, Madame Guyon, 'even the great St. Teresa herself.' And his book is said to be 'essentially of the same class as the *Testament* of Ignatius Loyola, the *Journal* of George Fox.'

Now we are not about to deny this estimate. On the contrary, there seems to be evidence enough within the book to satisfy any reader that TAGORE was a true mystic. No doubt it is very mixed. There are details of private, family, and commercial life which must be regarded as questionable contributions to the history of Mysticism. But these details only serve to throw the genuinely mystical writing into prominence. It is with something like a thrill of joy that we pass out of the history of the liturgy that was planned for the Brahma-Samaj into the twelfth chapter. That chapter is short enough and great enough to be worth complete quotation.

'Formerly when I used to see people worshipping factitious and finite gods in their petty shrines, I thought to myself, When shall I see my own Infinite God face to face in the temple of this universe and adore Him? This desire was then burning in my heart night and day. Waking or asleep, this was my one wish, my only thought. Now, having seen in the heavens this radiant and immortal Being, all my desires were fulfilled, and all my torment was at an end.

'I was satisfied with getting so much, but He was not content with giving so little. Hitherto He had existed beyond and outside myself; now He revealed Himself within me, I saw Him within my soul. The lord of the world-temple became the lord of my heart's shrine, and from thence I began to hear silent and solemn religious teachings. Fortune favoured me beyond all my expectations. I received more than I had ever hoped for, and scaled mountains, cripple though I was. I had

not known how boundless was His mercy. The craving I had felt when seeking for Him increased a hundred-fold now that I had found Him. The little that I now see of Him, the little of His voice that I can hear, is not enough to assuage my hunger and thirst. "The more you feed, the greater the greed."

'"O my Lord! now that I have seen Thee, reveal Thyself to me more vividly. I have been blest by hearing the sound of Thy voice, pour out its sweet strains more and more honeyed. Let Thy beauty appear before me under ever-changing forms. Now Thou appearest to me and disappearest like a flash of lightning; I cannot retain my hold on Thee. Do Thou dwell for ever in my heart." Whilst saying these words the light of His love found its way into my heart like the rays of the morning sun. Without Him I had been as one dead, with a void in my heart, plunged in the darkness of despondency. Now, at the rising of the sun of love, life was infused into my heart, I was awakened from my deep slumber, the gloom of sadness was dispelled. Having found God, the current of my life flowed on swiftly, I gained fresh strength. The tide of my good fortune set in. I became a pilgrim on the path of love. I came to know now that He was the life of my life, the Friend of my heart; that I could not pass a single moment without Him.'

Who doubts the mysticism of that chapter? Who says that TAGORE has not come to the Father? But what do we find when we turn the page?

When we turn the page we find the bitterest hatred expressed for Christianity, and the most malignant device conceived and fulfilled for the express purpose of 'stemming the tide of Christian conversion' and delivering 'a serious blow to the cause of the missionaries.'

The relation of Mysticism to Christ has not yet been faced by Christian Mystics. Its importance has not been realized. Its urgency has not been admitted. The Ritschlians certainly have not allowed it to be overlooked. But even the Ritschlians have been unable to compel the Mystics to see that no one comes to the Father but by Jesus Christ, and no one has communion with the Father who has not communion also with the Son.

The Rev. W. M. MACGREGOR, D.D., has much sympathy with the Mystics. He was chosen to deliver the 'Baird Lecture' for 1913, and made *Christian Freedom* its subject. He has now published the lecture under that title (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s.). It was impossible that so scholarly and so Christian a lecturer, urging the necessity of man's individual approach to God, should either fail to appreciate the approach of Mysticism, or should miss the importance of making that approach through Christ. In the middle of the book there occurs a characteristically searching discussion of the attitude of the Mystic to the Christ of the Gospels.

Dr. MACGREGOR does not deny that there has been a Mysticism even in Christianity which has dropped out of sight the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel. Its God is so independent of the human, so anxious to avoid the suspicion of anthropomorphism, that we are reminded of the original chaos, which was without form and void. 'We know not,' says Clement of Alexandria, 'what He is but what He is not. He has absolutely no predicates, no genus, no differentia, no species. He is formless and nameless, and though we sometimes give Him titles, they are not to be taken in the ordinary sense.' A much greater man than Clement exhibits in his *Confessions* the same type of formless apprehension. In one famous passage, Augustine speaks of himself as 'attaining with the flash of one hurried glance to the vision of *That which is*.' Nothing, it seems, could safely be affirmed of God in that moment except His existence; He has no character, no attributes, and those who come to

His presence are conscious of nothing but His infinite Being. Even in the immortal scene at Ostia the same defect appears. He and his mother, hand in hand, 'climbed by the staircase of the spirit, thinking and speaking of Thee,' and as they 'talked and yearned after it, they touched it for an instant with the whole force of their hearts.'

This is a risk that the Mystic has always run. Dr. MACGREGOR discovers the tendency to conceive of God as without form even in the Old Testament. Indefiniteness, he says, is there almost the mark of a vision of God; men's terror would not suffer them to look, and all that they were conscious of was a dazzling Brightness without features. When Jacob at Peniel presses his opponent for his name, he is answered: 'Why askest thou of my name, seeing it is secret?' As soon as Isaiah began to see (6^4), 'the house was filled with smoke,' and the vision was obscured. Ezekiel, in shy ways, would like to push the matter further and give God human affinities (*e.g.* 1^8: so 1^{10}—the forward looking face in the cherubim is the man's face, not the lion's or the eagle's); but again and again the feeling recurs in him that human words are inapplicable, and at his boldest he can only say, 'Upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man' (1^{26}).

But Dr. MACGREGOR is convinced that this is not Christian. In the Old Testament there was no way of combating the ever-insistent anthropomorphism of the popular conception of God than by depriving Him of all that by which He can be known and loved. But when Jesus came as the Word made flesh, and bringing salvation, a new Mysticism became possible. Men gathered boldness in their approach to the Holiest. They reached heights of rapturous devotion never surpassed before. Their highest vision is gained through faith in Christ, and as they mount towards God they never leave behind the Lamb of God.

This is not true, as we have seen, of all those who in the history of the Church have been called Mystics, or it is not true of them always. But it is always true of some. Dean INGE reports of that great mystic — Juliana of Norwich — that 'the crucified Christ is the one object of her devotion. She refused to listen to a voice which said: "Look up to heaven to His Father" . . . "I cared for none other heaven than Jesus, which shall be my bliss when I come there."' Madame PÉRIER, summarizing her brother Pascal's opinion, says: 'The Christian man's God is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, a God of love and consolation. . . . He is not simply God, He is a God who restores (*un Dieu réparateur*).' The accuracy of that summary is established beyond question by the 'Amulet' itself. Like Augustine, in a flash of trembling vision (*ictu trepidantis aspectus*) Pascal had attained to the sight of God, and his life had been transformed; but what he saw was not bare being, it was character, it was mercy, it was individualizing friendship.

When the Christian Mystic forgets to be Christian, Dr. MACGREGOR believes that he is under the influence of Eastern speculation. His Mysticism is Mysticism 'bleached and impoverished by Asiatic influences.' Says Mr. CHESTERTON: 'It was a mark of the old Eastern initiations, as it still is a mark of the grades and planes of our theosophic thinkers, that as a man climbs higher and higher, God becomes to him more and more formless, ethereal, and even thin.' But Christianity, which is neither of East nor West, confronts the Oriental with its resolute assertion of personality; and in the Christian Mysticism of which Paul was the great originator, the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, retains the central place.

In the life of Adèle KAMM, a translation of which has been published with the title *A Living Witness* (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s.), the problem of pain is thrust before our face. It is thrust before our face in such a way that we feel bound to

come to some conclusion about it. We need not rebel. The problem is in the world in any case. We see very little if we do not see that it is the presence of pain in the world that accounts for half of its unbelief. It will be well for us, and it will be well for others through us, if we are driven by such a book as this to seek a solution of the problem that will allow us to keep our faith in God.

Two possible solutions are suggested by this book. One was found by Adèle KAMM herself. The other is the solution of Madame FLOURNOY. 'The sight of the dumb agony of a few shell-fish, left stranded on the shore by the receding tide, and slowly scorching to death in the sunshine, made such a profound impression upon a sensitive, thoughtful woman, Mme. Théodore FLOURNOY, that she began to doubt the all-pervading goodness of that Providence of whom Racine speaks in the following terms:—

> By God's provision new-born birds are fed,
> And o'er all nature is His kindness spread.'

'Why is it?' she mused, 'that this Beneficent Power which broods over Nature is everywhere found lacking? Why does He permit so much cruelty, so many horrors, so much useless suffering?'

Some time later a terrible tragedy occurred at a sanatorium in Leysin. It sometimes happens at the beginning of tubercular trouble that there is so much nervous excitement as to lead to entire lack of self-restraint. One day a physician at Leysin, Henry Burnier, an able and devoted man, was shot by a patient. Dr. Burnier was Madame FLOURNOY'S brother. She could not see the hand of God in the event.

> When in the shadow plots the murderous heart,
> Is Thy pure will at work within his hate?
> When battle-fields are swept and desolate
> And ships return no more, hast Thou a part?

So she sang. It was her sweetest song, and it tells of saddest thought.

What conclusion did she come to? She came to the conclusion that all evil—pain and disease and death—is the doing, not of God but of the Devil. Jesus seemed to her to say so. It was the only solution she could see her way to. God, she concluded, was often present with the world and all went well; but sometimes He was absent from it, and then the Devil had his way with it, and pain and disease and death came.

The *Recollections of Marie Flournoy-Burnier* (1856–1909) were printed for private circulation, and a copy was sent to Adèle KAMM. She did not agree. She too had felt the pressure of the pain of the world. In her own person she had experienced it. For some years she had been slowly dying in suffering, often the most acute that can be endured. She had had the problem of suffering thrust upon her in its most merciless aspect. And she had solved it. The solution that she found was that God is never absent, but always very near and very loving. She concluded once for all that all the suffering that there is in the world is sent by God to make us good.

It certainly made Adèle KAMM good. That one fact the biography establishes. It was said of the Master that He went about doing good. Of Adèle KAMM it could be said that she lay in bed doing good. And she owed her influence for good to her illness. She knew that she owed it to her illness. She said so over and over again. And it was not in spite of the illness, but because of it, that she said, very simply and sincerely, near the end, 'I *have* had a happy life.'

Her suffering made her good. And goodness with her was an active ever-giving thing. 'Invalids,' she said, 'have a much greater influence than people who are well. They have many more ways of helping others; I am sure it is so from my own sweet and happy experience.'

And this not only solved the problem of her own suffering; it solved also the same problem

when the suffering falls on others. Madame FLOURNOY might have been sanctified by suffering and so found that it came from God if it had been her own. When it was the suffering of others, all she could do was to attribute it to the Devil. Adèle KAMM looked upon the suffering of others as if it *were* her own. She suffered in their suffering. She suffered a vicarious suffering on their behalf. And so she was able to believe that 'all is of God who is and is to be, and God is good.'

'I fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.' So said St. Paul. Adèle KAMM took 'the Church' in the widest sense. It covered for her the whole of regenerate humanity, and, writing to a friend, she said, 'For a long time now I have cherished, deep down in my heart, a certain conviction, which, though at first somewhat vague and elusive, has become clearer during the last two years, and is really the source of all the joy which I experience in my affliction. I believe that suffering, accepted with submission, may be a means of great blessing to us; but I also believe that we may go a step further, and that by the voluntary acceptance of our cross in the Spirit of Christ (that is, in union with the Will of God) we may help, in some measure, to bring about the final victory of good over evil. This ultimate triumph of Goodness, foretold in the New Testament, and confirmed by all the highest aspirations of our spiritual nature, is an aim so beautiful and sublime that the thought that we may hasten the final destruction of sin by the glad and willing uniting of our sufferings with those of the Master is an incredibly powerful motive and inspiration, as I am finding out, to my great joy, every day I live.'

Perhaps the most striking thing in this remarkable experience is the fact that she found it necessary to take in Christ. Throughout her illness, and even after she saw that she too was filling up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ, her thoughts were not of Christ but of God, and the love she gave so lavishly was given to God, and not to Christ. 'You do not know,' she said to one of the most intimate of her friends, 'you do not know how much you have helped me. I knew very well that your spiritual life centred in God rather than in Christ before you told me so. It is this inward attitude of yours which makes me love you better than others, and I used to have the same feeling about Lily Schlumberger; whereas, in spite of everything, I do not feel the same sense of fellowship with those who see Christ *only*, and who so easily become narrow-minded.'

Her fellowship was with the Father, and with the Father only. But she found that the problem of suffering cannot be solved apart from Christ. 'During these last few months I have been in constant communion with God, receiving from Him all the strength and wisdom I need for my work, but I had insensibly drifted away from Christ. That did not, however, disturb me at all, for I remembered the words, "I and the Father are One." Then it seemed as though a veil were being drawn around my spirit, dimming the spiritual brightness in which I lived. I found that I had lost something of the sweetness of inward peace, something of the luminous radiance of vision which I used to possess, and I vaguely wondered why it was! But when I was writing the letter to the prisoners, which, as I told you, brought me into such close touch with Christ, I was astonished to find that everything grew bright again. The mists were dispelled, and now I am once more on the mountain-top, daily rejoicing in the clear sunshine of His Love and Peace. So I have discovered that the blessings and influence which flow from God and from Christ are different in character, and that we need to pray to both sides of God, if I may put it so, if our spiritual hunger is to be satisfied. I am glad to have made this discovery for myself, for I like to found my faith on actual experience rather than on any kind of dogma.'

Maurice MAETERLINCK'S new book, *The Unknown Guest* (Methuen; 5s. net), contains five essays. One is on 'Phantasms of the Living and the Dead,' one on 'Psychometry,' one on 'The Knowledge of the Future,' one on 'The Unknown Guest,' and one on 'The Elberfeld Horses.'

One essay is on 'The Elberfeld Horses.' MAETERLINCK believes in the Elberfeld Horses. He went to Elberfeld and put them to all the tests he could invent, and came away without the shadow of a doubt. And yet the more he tested them the greater was his astonishment. In his presence they added, they subtracted, they multiplied, they extracted roots, they heard questions and answered them, all with the beat of the hoof and by using an alphabet of which each letter was represented by so many beats. And all this they did more quickly and more accurately than he, Maurice MAETERLINCK, a man and an educated one, was able to do. There was no doubt that they did it. The question was, How did they do it?

There was no doubt that they did it. 'Must we once more repeat, in connection with these startling performances, that those who speak of audible or visible signals, of telepathy and wireless telegraphy, of expedients, trickery or deceit, are speaking of what they do not know and of what they have not seen? There is but one reply to be made to any one who honestly refuses to believe.'

What is that reply? 'Go to Elberfeld—the problem is sufficiently important, sufficiently big with consequences to make the journey worth while—and, behind closed doors, alone with the horse, in the absolute solitude and silence of the stable, set Muhamed to extract half-a-dozen roots which, like that which I have mentioned, require thirty-one operations. You must yourself be ignorant of the solutions, so as to do away with any transmission of unconscious thought. If he then gives you, one after the other, five or six correct solutions, as he did to me and many others, you will not go away with the conviction that the animal is able by its intelligence to extract those roots, because that conviction would upset too thoroughly the greater part of the certainties on which your life is based; but you will at any rate be persuaded that you have been for a few minutes in the presence of one of the greatest and strangest riddles that can disturb the mind of man; and it is always a good and salutary thing to come into contact with emotions of this order.'

Why are we not allowed to believe that the horses can do these things by their intelligence? Apparently because of the effects of such a belief on our conscience. 'The theory of intelligence in the animal would be so extraordinary as to be almost untenable.' That is to say, we should have to remember what it means to believe that horses can understand us, can think, can work out complicated problems, and that they have had this intelligence throughout all the centuries in which they have been the servants of man. For it is not the stallions at Elberfeld only that can do these things. There is evidence enough that of horses as of men, some are stupid and some are clever; but as many horses are clever as you will find among an equal number of men or boys.

Now it is simply incredible to MAETERLINCK that all through the centuries horses should have been possessed of this degree of intelligence. His conscience will not allow him to believe it. For then we should be guilty of having prevented the horse from making progress and attaining to its own independent civilization. His fear also prevents it. For again it would be our duty to give the horse this opportunity in the future, with what results for good or evil it is too awful to prophesy.

MAETERLINCK relieves his conscience and puts his fears to rest in this way. First of all he points out that the handling of numbers is no sure sign of real intelligence. There have been men and boys of very moderate understanding who could do as wonderful things with figures as these horses

at Elberfeld can do—mathematical prodigies with less than average intelligence in all other ways. And secondly he suggests that their intelligence is not conscious intelligence, but only subconscious or subliminal.

We need not therefore be so ashamed of the past or so afraid of the future. If the intelligence of the horse is merely subconscious, it could not at any time in the past have made progress or risen to any degree of civilization. Nor can it at any time in the future work out an independent culture for good or ill. Progress is possible only to conscious reflexion and co-operation.

The Name of Jesus.

By the Rev. H. R. Mackintosh, D.Phil., D.D., Professor of Systematic Theology in New College, Edinburgh.

'Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.'—Mt 1^{21}.

In every home the naming of a little child is an event of peculiarly deep interest, wakening memories and prayers and hopes of an unusual kind. It is the first acknowledgment that a new personality has begun to live. But in a pious Jewish household the occurrence was more impressive still, for this reason amongst others, that names bestowed in Bible times were more by a great deal than simply distinguishing labels. The name was meant to tell you something of the person. It stood very frequently either for memorable facts connected with his birth, or for a purpose he should yet fulfil in God's plan. Moses is an example of this; another is John the Baptist, and there are many others. Personal appellations in Scripture are not just so many chance syllables, but rather condensed definitions, or, as it has been put, 'summary descriptions of people by their more prominent characteristics.'

Take that well-known phrase of the Old Testament, caught up by prophet after prophet, 'the name of the Lord.' Any one can see how it signifies very much more than the mere vocal sounds employed in designating Jehovah. The name of God is the equivalent of His revealed character; it is a compendious representation of His manifested nature, and thus, in many places, really synonymous with very God Himself. That comes out clearly in the verses: 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe,' and 'The name of the God of Jacob defend thee.' Obviously something is meant here quite other than an arbitrary collocation of sounds which in itself implies nothing. So far from that, it implies everything that matters. When I know God's name, I know His heart; when I trust His name, I trust His very self. Cross over to the New Testament, and before you have gone far it appears that the same depth of meaning and the same supreme authority and power have begun to cluster round the name of Jesus Christ, so that after the resurrection St. Peter can turn to the crowd, open-eyed and half-incredulous, swarming round the healed cripple, and give them an explanation of the occurrence which startled almost as much as the miracle had done—'His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong.' And twenty years after, St. Paul concludes a sublime picture of the love of Jesus, and its great sacrificial act, with the words of adoring praise: 'Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him the name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.'

So let us think of the first bestowal of that name which has long become, by its mere sound, a symbol and epitome of redeeming love. That could be no external label: rather it must always have been an implicit prophecy and characterization, and its meaning and occasion ought to reward our study.

There is, *first*, the name itself—Jesus. Dictionaries will tell you that this, as a proper name, was by no means unusual. It gives many people a kind of shock to find that it belonged to others than our Lord, that it was borne by scores of