

M. T. S. Heddaeus, J.

Meadville Theological School.

The Present Theistic Movement
In India.

Meadville, 12th June 1884. J. Heddaeus.

The Present Theistic Movement In India.

India has always been considered the land of subjective philosophy.

And yet, even long before the Western mind awoke to the consciousness of the importance of Comparative Theology, we find the Mogul Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) practically carry out a course of inquiry in this direction which for tolerance and breadth has not been surpassed by any of our Western thinkers, and has been approached only by very few Theological Schools of our own day.

Akbar had been brought up in Mahomedanism, but he had outgrown it. As will be the case with anyone

who has learned to distinguish between the externals, the forms, of any special religion, and its inherent spirit, he saw in all the diversity of forms the unity of spirit. Henceforth he sought for the spirit of God in his manifestations. These manifestations he found in the expressions of religious life of all times and of all peoples. He invited fireworshippers, Brahmans and Christian missionaries to his court, and the outcome of their disputations was the *Ilahi* religion, a rational theistic religion.

Akbar's efforts were continued by his successor. And his great-grand-son *Dārā* who lived about a hundred years later, was actuated by the same desire to penetrate through the shell to the meat of religious life. Under their influence the New Testament was translated into Persian, and, as far as could be done, the sacred books of the Brahmans.

Subjective consciousness was thus made to

derive strength and Energy from the objective
Experiences of the Universal manifestation
of God. Consciously or unconsciously - who
can tell? - the thought grew and was energized
that religion is universal and God's spirit
working in all. Strong and stronger grew
the conviction that God had not left without
light any of his children, but that he had revealed
his infinite nature, his all-comprising life to just
that extent, in just that manner, in just that
measure in which men were able to understand
them. To study the phases of such contact
between the Divine and the human spirit
would mean to extend our knowledge of
God - of religious life. In so far as man
makes his own the result of such
inquiries, his religion must, of course, be subjective.

4.

There indeed lies the power of religion, not its weakness.

It would lead us too far to follow the growth of the tendency we have hinted at. (Our object is to draw a sketch of the present theistic movement in India.) But from what has been said it is evident that we too at this present time, have a vital interest in this Expression of soul-life: coming to it with an unprejudiced mind we too cannot but derive help and strength from a consideration and study of this aspect of religious life.

p 5.

The founder of the religious school of thought which afterwards assumed the name of "Bramoh Somaj" (i.e. Society of One God or God Society) and finally crystallized into a church organization was Rajah Rammohun Roy born [redacted] at Bordwan about 1774. He came from a Brahminical family of high respectability and received a superior education. Besides the traditional studies of Vedaic literature he studied Arabic, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and English. Metaphysics and Mathematics being also favorite studies.

He belonged to a family of priests, but more liberal and tolerant than they he devoted his best years to a thorough study of not only the Vedas but of the Koran also, and particularly of the Old and New Testament.

The results of these studies soon became manifest.

In a letter to an English gentleman of his acquaintance Rammahun Roy writes about the year 1817: "The consequence of my long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles and better adapted for the use of rational beings than any other which has come to my knowledge."

This faith in what he considered to be the highest form of revelation found expression in such works as would in themselves have been sufficient to immortalize his name. We allude to his efforts for the embellishment and maintenance of native public schools, to his equally successful efforts for the

7.
Extinction of the practice of burning widows
for the abolishment of Caste and other pernicious
practices.

His eclecticism stood him in good stead.
In his Compendium, Entitled, "The Precepts
Of Jesus, the Guide To Peace and Happiness"
he laid down the spiritual teachings of Jesus
as rules of conduct, passing by the miraculous
portions of the Gospel narratives as less fitted
to influence his countrymen. In the preface
to this book he says: "This simple code of
religion and morality is so admirably
calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and
liberal notions of one God who has equally
subjected all living creatures without
distinction of caste, rank or wealth, to change,
disappointment, pain and death, and has

Equally admitted all to be partakers of the bountiful mercies which he has lavished over nature; and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves and to society; that I cannot but hope the best effects from its promulgation in the present form.

Without making Christianity the ultimate final outcome and consummation of all inspiration and aspiration he thus virtually received the doctrines of Jesus as the highest expression of religious life.

There are not a few, East and West, who in this thought heartily sympathize and agree with the Eastern reformer.

9
m As peculiarly characteristic of the man, his
Convictions and his work one or two quotations
will ~~not~~^{be} out of place:

“ Numerous passages, he says, of the Old
and the New Testament which might fill a
volume distinctly promise us that the
forgiveness of God and the favor of his Divine
Majesty may be obtained by sincere repentance,
as required of sinners by the Redeemer.”

“ The Omnipotent God who is the only
proper object of religious veneration is one
and undivided in person.”

Speaking of Jesus, he calls him the Christ
of God, a Being in whom dwelt all
truth and who was sent with a divine
law to guide mankind by his preaching
and his example.

10.

Rammohun Roy was a hard worker. Besides important political work of no mean merit, besides social reforms of the highest importance, his literary works will for ever secure him a prominent place in the hearts of his Countrymen. He wrote a series of Books and Pamphlets which are to this day doing missionary work in the spirit in which their author labored so indefatigably. He was, moreover, constantly employed in giving lectures on the Unity of the Godhead and worship, ~~and~~ spreading his doctrines to a considerable extent. His immediate followers, to the number of about 500, formed a society, binding themselves by certain rules, one of which was the renunciation of idolatry.

41.
His Indian Enemies attempted his life twice, but he succeeded in escaping their poison, if not their hatred. To his Christian Enemies he replied: I regret only that the followers of Jesus, in general, should have paid much greater attention to inquiries after his nature than to the observance of his Commandments when we are all well aware that no human acquirements can ever discover the nature Even of the most common and visible things, and moreover, that such inquiries are not enjoined by the divine revelation?

Rammohun Roy died 27th September 1833 at Bristol (England) where he had gone by invitation from his numerous sympathizers.

But though the great reformer was dead

There were those living who had been led and taught by him and were not only ready, but anxious to take up the work of God where their leader had left it.

From his death to the year 1841 the New Society enjoyed a quiet existence under the protectorship of a rich Hindu, Dwarkanath Tagore of Calcutta. The regular services were continued by him every Wednesday Evening and he seems also to have assisted the church financially in a most liberal manner. Regarding the spiritual growth of the inner church during these 10 years we know only very little.

It seems to have been a developement in intension rather than in extension, in fervor rather than in definiteness.

As the church had thus for a decade been the adopted child of Tagore the father, so did she now in her turn spiritually adopt his own son, Debendranāth. In him we greet the first Energetic organizer of the theistic church who was man of action enough to put into practice the reforms for which his predecessors had been preparing the minds. (As we shall see,) he was, at the same time, a truly spiritual reformer and a deeply religious man.

P 18 "By a variety of Circumstances," says one who knew him personally at that time,* quite unique and singular in their character, he was suddenly impressed, at the age of twenty, with the vanity of all Earthly

* The New Dispensation and the Sādhāran Bramoh Somaj
By Pandit Siva Sastrī M.A. Madras 1881.

114.
pleasures, and began a deep, earnest, and spiritual search into his own being, its wants and aspirations. As a consequence, his steps were led towards the Bramoh Somaj.

His work soon made itself felt by its results. Societies for the extension of religious truths were organized, schools were founded in various places one of which had for its special objects the teaching of the philosophy of the Upanishads (it collapsed however, in 1846 for want of patronage), a monthly journal was started (the Tattwa Bodhini Patrika) which written in the Bengali language, the best vernacular journal of its time, has exercised and is still exercising, a very great and excellent influence.

As is the case with all organizations exhibiting renewed energy, so we see

in the next decade (1841-1851) under Debendranāth's leadership the membership of the church increase from 105 to nearly 500. branches of the Society were moreover established and its leavening influence spread throughout Bengal. It was a period of growth and prosperity.

whatever may be said on the other hand against the still lurking tendency of exchanging courtesies with the old idols, whatever may be said against the Brahmos for still holding to the forms of caste, still it must be confessed that when the time came to declare for or against the source of idol worship and caste system, then the Brahminists at once assumed a decided and unambiguous position.

16.

This source of idolatry, this main stay of cast was the Vedas. They had been universally considered to be the ultimate authority in matters of faith.

But now Sanskrit Scholars and Christian Missionaries drew the attention of the Bramins to the Pantheistic and inconsistent nature of the sacred writings. Anxious to arrive at a decisive conclusion, Debendranath sent at his own Expense four Pandits to Benares where the original writings are kept, for the purpose of reading, comparing and studying the Vedas.

The result was that both the Pandits and those that had sent them acknowledged publicly that the infallibility of the Vedas could no longer be maintained.

17

With the Vedas were swept away the doctrines of transmigration of souls, of annihilation or absorption into the Deity, and a whole train of speculative thought of a similar nature.

And as at the very outset of his priestly career, Debendranath had bound himself and others to a Covenant of daily prayer and monotheistic worship, so now clearer than ever before were the secrets of prayer and spiritual communion understood by him and taught in the Somaj.

"It was he who taught the Brahmos," says an eyewitness speaking of this time (1860), "to worship God as 'the soul of their souls' and the 'life of their lives' and in his own devout person he showed the way."


 We still vividly recollect the day when we hung with profound respect and fond filial trust upon every word that fell from his venerable lips, and when a single sparkling glance of his Eyes awakened strange emotions in our hearts, and made us feel that God was near. His deeply meditative nature, his Exquisitely-poetic Temperament, and, above all, the saint-like purity of his life, all combined to make his Brahmoism a living reality, and to mark him out, even to this day, as the highest type of a truly devout character amongst us. "

Debendranath has meanwhile left the busy field of his labors and retired to the solitude of the mountains. What were his motives in leaving the field of his great work, we do not know, but after the 10 years we have referred to, a decade

of most Energetic action and prolific reform, there came ten years of even greater activity and more thoroughgoing reform. A colleague of the renowned leader, stood Keshub Chunder Sen by the side of Debendranath Tagore, for a while, to work with him and afterwards to assume an independent line of action by which his name became famous one of the best known among the 250 millions of India, honored ^{alike} at home and abroad.

Keshub Chunder Sen was born about 1832, the second son of Pyari Mohan Sen, a Hindu of Calcutta of the Vaidya Caste. Having lost his father when still an infant, Keshub Chunder was left to the care of his mother, a woman of strong affectionate traits, and of his grandfather, a zealous idolater of the Vaishnava sect.

He received an English education and graduated at the Calcutta University. He had, at his uncle's house, become acquainted with the rites as practised by the Vaishnava sect of Bengal and had been instructed in the teachings of Chaitanya. He was now by his academic career brought into contact with Christianity and Christian literature. As he never had been a Hindu in his heart and as he had from his earliest years cultivated habits of prayer, we are not surprised to find that Christian thought and faith now found a fertile soil in the grave and taciturn student. It did not cost him much effort to reject the errors and prejudices which he could not reconcile with his better knowledge.

By no means a sudden convert, he remained for several years in an attitude of doubt or indifference, till at length a spiritual regeneration was worked in him, as he says, in the mysterious ways of providence. Feeling himself admonished to "the indispensable necessity of cultivating a habit of daily prayer", he found "persevering in that godly habit, in a few weeks there was strength in his heart, and abounding joy, and wisdom, and purity."

Directed by the same influences to study certain books, among which was the Bible, he found in the latter many marvellous truths which tallied exactly with the inner convictions of his heart. His prayers became more earnest & sincere. He felt with the Psalmist, responded to the exhortations of Jesus, and entered into communion with Paul.

For many years he continued thus, praying and communing, faithful in his inward attachment to Christ, a Christian without the name of such. In 1857 he became a member of the Somaj in which he was so soon to play a most prominent part. Naturally Eloquent, full of devotion, zeal and ardour, he now became Debendranāth's most welcome helper. Warm affection and sympathy joined the two men together in their ministry. Sen would deliver lectures and preach in English, Debendranāth in Bengali. But already [] at this time certain doctrines, being emphasized by the one, passively ignored by the other of the two leaders, would seem to have foreshadowed a new development in the Theistic Faith from which they sprang.

The sense of prayer and of imperfection, a consciousness of intuition, not only inherent but continuously renewed, — these were phases of thought which were, perhaps, first originated by outside literary influences, but which soon led to active measures and reforms. One of the first of these was the demand on the part of Sen for the abolishment of Caste pure and simple. Thousands of years of prejudice behind them, the elder members, including Debendranath Tagore, were not yet prepared to go so far. Having left behind them thousands of years of prejudice and wrongs, the young reformer would not wait. He was a man of action, not of speech only; the personal element in him was very strong. In different parts of the

Country branch societies had sprung up, missionaries were travelling in all directions to preach the saving truth of Theism. In the mind of this hero of thought and action it was all important to organize all these different elements, to form them into a body, to reduce their individual and collective labors into a vast, but well-organized system of unity and co-operation.

A schism between the older portion and the younger of the Society was the price paid for the possibility of such union in the first instance. This separation took place in 1865. | The immediate cause of it was the following three propositions put forth by the younger party as fundamental principles to be received and acted upon by the Society:

- 1.) rejection of the external symbol of high class membership, the holy thread,
- 2.) total abstinence from idolatrous rites, public or private,
- 3.) respect for all religions.

The conservatives being in the majority remained in possession of the property of the society and assumed the name of the "Adi Brahmo Samaj (Original B. S.). The younger party organized under the name of the "Brahmo Samaj of India".

Of the conservative society it may here be said that, true to its tendencies, it relapsed into old errors approaching Hinduism.

For the new branch of the Brahministic Society, the progressive party, a new era of activity commenced.

In 1865 a "Brahmika Samaj" was established for the Ladies, in 1866 a selection of Theistic texts was published, Extracts from the Holy writings of the different revealed religions, a Hymn Book was compiled and enlarged, several religious newspapers gave expression to the needs and wants of the church; in 1869 a meeting house was built & opened in Calcutta; a society called "Sangat Sabhá" continued to exercise great influence on the development of the movement. A Mission Office was opened in 1864, and also a Theological School, quite well patronized, helped to prepare young missionaries for their work. Many of them had to undergo great privations in their missionary work; but thanks to their unceasing devotedness and zeal the doctrines of Brahmoism have been spread broadcast over the land.

In 1870 Mr Sen paid a visit to England where he was in all the large cities received by the leading literary and religious men with marks of esteem and respect. The Royal family were not slow in expressing their interest in the Indian reformer by repeated interviews with him. On his return, Mr Sen started a new Society, the Indian Reform Association with its five sections, viz: one for Female Improvement, another for General Education, a third for Cheap Literature, a fourth for Temperance & a fifth for Charitable Purposes. Regular services were conducted by K. Ch. Sen himself in his own house where he had a room specially set aside for the purpose of devotional meetings, a sanctuary, and on Sundays in the Tabernacle. On each

first of January he used to address several thousands at the Town Hall of Calcutta in English and he is said to have been a wonderfully magnetic speaker and one of the most eloquent orators of his time. These annual orations came soon to be looked upon as an institution of general public interest.

30. An Indian writer (Christian Life, London Jan. 12th 1884) speaking of the activity of K. Ch. Sen says: Since the leadership of Mr. Sen which took place about 25 years ago, Brahmoism has been regenerated. It was originally a sort of Vedantism which had retained its character for a long time - until the regeneration. Brahmoism has passed through an entire change, and it has also changed its standpoint from the Vedas to

the ground of intuition... Brahmoism is no longer a religion of any particular man or book, but of God. During these 25 years it has wrought a wonderful change in the state of society, and the general state of progress which is so prominently observed in the East is owing to Brahmoism of which K. Ch. Sen has been the chief instrument."

This testimony is confirmed and was particularly emphasized by prominent men both in England and in India when at the death of this great reformer personal differences of opinion were allowed to disappear before the lasting good he had achieved.

The progress of the cause advocated by the two leaders we have named and their fellow workers is indeed remarkable.

for its rapidity and thoroughness with regard to propagation as well as development.

28/ The influence of these two men, ^{Chandrasekharendra} Dwarkanath Tagore and Keshub Chunder Sen, direct and indirect, was felt all over the vast Empire of India.

Devoted, Earnest men took up the work in a spirit of noble self-sacrifice, Missionaries went preaching over all India from place to place. The results have been most gratifying.

From the one congregation organized in 1830 by R. Roy at Calcutta have sprung up about 300 societies in all parts of India.

From the first attempts at reform of laws and customs a missionary spirit was kindled in the hearts of the devoted faithful which would not let them rest, but inspired them to go forth and preach the

31.

truth to their fellowmen, to bring the new light to them of humanity, Enlightenment, justice, charity, practical brotherhood of all men, their sonship to God.

But above all it was the doctrine of "Bhakti" and "Jogha" which spread and kept alive the fire of devotion and Enthusiasm. "Intense Love for God" and "Communion with God" were indeed no new ideas, - all the church of God had at all times had the two ideals before her eyes, - at least symbolically and more or less clearly expressed - but what others had seen and aspired to, these men had felt and beheld, had realized.

Endowed with extraordinary gifts of eloquence M^r. Sen, and later on also his friend and relative, Mozumbdar, with a number of co-workers

presented to others in the beautiful white light of truth the sublime visions revealed to their spiritual sight; and, more than this, taking their hearers by the hand they would lead them through the Vestibule of Self-Surrender into the temple of Oneness with God, oneness with God in thought and feeling and action.

And this was the message they had to send to this Country; this was the message Mr. Muzumdar came to our shores to deliver about a year ago.

¶ 45 — We had need of the Message. We are too apt to forget that Jesus said that we should be one with the Father as he was one with him.

We are too apt to overlook the fact that in all religions there is religion.

52
We have spoken in general terms of the influence exercised by the great leaders of the Calcutta Societies on the provincial churches. We have mentioned the existence of two Sonajis in that City, the 'Original God Society' and the 'God Society of India'. We shall now have to trace the origin, course and developement of a third, the Sadharan Society.

We have referred to the strong trait of personality which caused Mr Ch. K. Sen to impress the stamp of his individuality on all the transactions connected with the developement of the Society of which he was the pastor. Possessed of extraordinary gifts of organization and eloquence, avowedly holding communion with God and

receiving commands from him, it would, indeed, have been strange if he would not have sought to exercise these gifts, if he had not been led to use these special privileges in the combat and conflict with the outward rougher elements of the world. Such action must of necessity seem to infringe on the rights and privileges of others. Hence a disaffected party arose in his church.

His attitude, wavering between an approach towards Christian principles and simplicity on the one hand, and a relapse into Hindu Ceremonies on the other hand, may have been due to the not unfrequent phenomenon of temporary Emphasis in a highly impressionable mind. But it nowise strengthened his position as a leader.

A certain feeling of jealousy had sprung up in the Society, jealousy of independence of thought and opinion and action. At the period of which we are speaking, i. e. in 1878, this spirit of dissatisfaction broke out under the following circumstances.

After having pledged himself and having caused others to pledge themselves against childmarriages, after having with them for 4 years labored for the Marriage Act which passed in 1872, Mr K. Ch. Sen gave his child daughter to a Hindu Prince in marriage and pleaded "divine command" for this breach of principle. In vain he protested that the child remained in his own house for two years longer, that, if any idolatrous rites had been performed at the marriage he knew nothing of it, —



indignation meetings were held, he was censured for this breach of faith committed on the sixth of March 1878, and on the 15th May of the same year a portion of his society seceded.

P

Supported by the official concurrence of 29 provincial Societies, the written declaration of 425 members and the warmly expressed sympathy of the venerable Debendra nāth Tagore, the Ladharan Brahms Sany was inaugurated in 1878.

Thus the progress from the "Calcutta" Society to that of "India" had reached its final developement in the widest term of "Universal" Gov Society.

At the root of the new movement was a desire to return to the free

principles of former times, to the freer, more independent modes of organization.

Among the Societies who remained loyal to their inspired leader ^(Mr. Sen) were Bagalpur, Chittagong, and Dacca (the seat of the actively missionary branch Brahmo Samaj of India), as well as several others and portion of the Calcutta Society.

The new church, "the Sadharan", set to work and framed a truly republican constitution with annual elections of officers both of the Calcutta and the Provincial Societies.

The services at the Capital are said to be attended by an average congregation of about 500 persons. In regard to the general work of the new organization we may mention the following institutions:

- 1.) Weekly Experience Meetings.
- 2.) Weekly Students' Services instituted
to stimulate religious inquiry,
to induce thoughtfulness and earnestness of character,
to create interest in questions of religious and social
reform amongst young men.
- 3.) The Students Prayer Meeting for younger students
with a little fortnightly journal, "Friend of Religion".
- 4.) The Theological Institution for lectures & discussion.
- 5.) The Brahminical Samaj, a Society for Ladies, ^{literary} & religious.
- 6.) The City College for boys opened under their
auspices in 1879.
- 7.) A Sunday School for boys at the City Schoolhouse.
- 8.) Sunday Gatherings of little children in the
Prayer Hall.
- 9.) A Theistic Library and Reading Room.
- 10.) Several Journals and Periodicals.

11) A Mission Committee which has to provide the means of education and to appoint missionaries.

The "Sadharan" Embraces about 30 Provincial Societies and has its missionaries and adherents also in Southern India, tho' only few Societies have been definitely organized there.

Nearly all of these Southern Churches form what is known as the Brahmo Samaj of Southern India.

From 1863 to the present day the following churches have been founded there:

Lahore (1863), Madras (1864), Tanjore (1868), Coimbatore (1868), Salem (1868), Bangalore (1868), and a few others.

In the first place it was Mr. Sen who during a visit to Madras in February 1864 gave the first energetic impulse to

40

Brahmoism in the South. His followers in the work were two members of the Madras bar, V. Rajagopal Chander and P. Subramanyam Chetty who both died in 1868.

In connection with the history of the Theistic Movement in Southern India we cannot forbear mentioning the name of a man who, for the sake of the faith he professed, lived like a nazarene, worked like a prophet, and died like a martyr. The Southern Brahmo Somaj owe much indeed to K. Sriharalan Aiyar of Cuddalore (Madras). For it was he who, having been appointed Secretary of the Veda Somaj, succeeded in converting it finally (in 1871) into the Brahmo Somaj, a half idolatrous into a pure theistic Church.

41

Thus leading the way to a fiercer, nobler, more spiritual faith he strengthened the movement considerably.

As in all reforms he took a zealous part also in favor of the Marriage Act of 1872. He translated and wrote Brahminic works and conducted a monthly religious paper. Though very poor and having an old mother and a wife to take care of he made missionary tours to Bangalore, Mangalore, Tanjore, Trichinapoly and other places in some of which his zealous efforts resulted in the establishment of permanent societies. He died on the bloodless field of honor, right in the midst of his labors, leaving nothing behind him but his work, his family which he entrusted to the care of 12 of his

most intimate friends and the testament of a faithful believer: "I die a devoted Brahmo".

There are in all 8 Societies in The South, 30 members of which belong to the Sādharaṇ Society, the others not being, as a rule, connected with any one of the three Calcutta Centres.

There are seven periodicals published by the Southern Societies.

At Madras there is also a small Sādharaṇ Church whose secretary is very highly spoken of (Mr. Butchiah Pantulu). They hold regular services on Sunday evenings conducted in Tamil, Telugu or English.

A monthly journal in the three languages, pamphlets, a Ragged School, a Theistic Library, are among the indications of the genuine spirit of religious earnestness pervading their work.

43

A word with respect to the Prarthana
Somaj at Bombay completes the account
we intended to give of the Present Theistic
Movement In India.

This Society was organized in March 1867
under the auspices of a physician Dr. Atmaram
Pandurang, a man generally respected and
esteemed for his philanthropy.

Without showing any of the spasmodic
symptoms of the Calcutta societies, the Bombay
society has steadily increased since its first
coming into existence. The same may
be said of the sister societies in the presidency
of Bombay of which there are a good many.

The Orphan Homes established at
Panclapur and Ahmedabad, the night schools
for working people at Bombay, the society



for prison-visiting at Hyderabad, the literary activity and the general work of education - these are some of the outward signs of a healthy inner life of the Puna Prarthana Samaj.

An effort made to bring all the Provincial Societies into closer contact with each other and the mother Society is a hopeful sign. Such Co-operation would be likely to strengthen the movement and lead the weaker societies out of their old inclinations and tendencies for Hindu Ceremonies & rituals into a purer faith. This ^{well} lurking love for Hindu rites is the main point of separation between the Bombay Society and the others.

Only one church, that of Hyderabad, has so far assumed the name of Brahmo Samaj (God Society.)

Surveying the whole field of action of the Indian Theistic Societies, we may add that all over India there are leavening elements to be met with, as yet too thinly scattered for organization, but sure to crystallize into bodies as soon as and wherever sufficient numbers aggregate.

Generalizing on the internal worth and work of the whole movement, it may be said that in its negations it is peculiarly Indian, but in its affirmations it is universal.

It is opposed to all the cruelties and superstitions of the Hindu faith and cultus, but it supports with all the power of its influence the cause of education, morality, temperance and humanity, of reforms philanthropic and political; it seeks a union of all

religious bodies on earth in one common bond of faith in God; it advocates a personal, immediate, direct consecration to a religious life and enjoins daily habits of devotion and prayer as leading to the Higher Life in God and with God.

Such are the principles all the branches of the Indian Theistic Movement hold more or less consciously. The progressive wing (the B. Somaj of India, the South I. and the Universal Somaj) have so far been true to these principles and led the way under most adverse circumstances; The conservative wing is gradually coming under the influence of the freer thought and their tendency may in general be said to be for a purer faith.

Their devotion, their zeal, their earnestness has been acknowledged with admiration by all who had the privilege of knowing them; their ^{philanthropic} good works - which are neither few nor far between - speak for themselves and might serve as an encouraging example to any Christian church.

51
1 With such evidences of the soundness of religious life, we cannot help feeling confident of the future of the movement. And seeing its grand principles resting on eternal truths, we have no doubt the new faith will be a most powerful and lasting agency in the re-generation of this great country of India.

We even hope that the West will be benefited by its spirit of solidarity which is manifest notwithstanding outward signs to the contrary.

48.

(As we have seen there are 3 Brahmic Centres at Calcutta, the "Original", the "Indian" and the "Universal", to which we have to add the "Southern" with its point of gravitation at Madras, and the "Puna" with its Centre at Bombay .)

Apparently, the differences of opinions and the schisms spoken of seem to indicate a source of weakness. Yet in reality we find that the different Societies are gradually drawing in the circle of their influence all the intellectual aristocracy of their respective surroundings. Each division seems to have increased their vitality.

The very principle on which they were first founded is still their uniting life principle: the God revealing himself to all at all times is still working with them. They have

heard his voice in Christianity and most of them have harkened to it. They believe in intuition and inspiration, in a never-ending revelation of God in the spirit of man.

This is indeed ~~the~~ strong bond which unites them all, not only among themselves, consciously, but [redacted] with all those who worship one God and Father, though they may not all have risen to the consciousness of such oneness uniting all worshippers.

Religious emotions*, infinite as is their object, the supreme infinite God, will ever be infinite in [redacted] kind and degree - in so far, then, there will always be diversity of vision and faith.

But religious emotions* and their expressions, in so far as they rest on
* and conceptions.

on the human finite capacity and capability of seeing and understanding the Godhead, will always have in common certain grand features - for all men fundamentally valid traits and analogically harmonious truths conditioned by the very nature of man.

(Will the race ever learn that) it is just in these essentials that historically men have been steadily growing? (that) it is just in the eternal realities of God and prayer, aspiration and inspiration, repentance and consecration, self-surrender and oneness with God that all ages and races have found, are finding their kinship of spirit manifested?

(Will the race ^{let us} ~~not~~ learn from history to rise above the transitory

Expressions, the dividing intellectual forms of faith and worship and become at one with (their) God in spirit, a —
God Society?

47/ If Ever there was a period in the world's history that seemed favorable to the birth of such a movement, it is this present age of universal intercourse, of railroads and steamboats, of telegraphs and telephones, of science and literature, of general Culture and Enlightenment.

May the day not be far ^{distant} when passive tolerance will be turned into active search for religious truths, may the day not be far when self-sufficiency will learn to appreciate —

and appropriate all that can be
found of Eternal Life in Nature,
Man and God.