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1903.

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.*

GENERAL J. G. HALLIDAY IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The following elections were announced :—

ASSOCIATES :—Rt. Rev. Bishop Mitchinson, D.D., F.G.S. ; Brigade-Surgeon Robert Gray, M.D. ; Richard E. W. Goodridge, Esq., M. Hist. Soc. Manitoba.

The following paper, by Rev. H. D. Griswold, M.A., Ph.D., entitled "The Arya Samaj," was then read by the Secretary, in the absence of the Author :—

THE ARYA SAMAJ. By Rev. H. D. GRISWOLD,
M.A., Ph.D., Missionary, Lahore, India.

I. *Introduction.*

THE Arya Samaj is a Theistic and reforming sect of Modern India. It is the child of Hinduism ; but, unlike the mother, it aims at a universal propaganda. Hinduism, of course, is willing to absorb all the tribes of the earth and enrol them as separate castes, but the Arya Samaj is willing to accept and purify the *individual* and receive him into the Arya brotherhood, be he Mohammedan or Christian.† In this respect the attitude of the Arya Samaj is modern and cosmopolitan. The Arya Samaj has just been called "the child of Hinduism." It would be more correct to call it the joint offspring of Hinduism and Western thought, scientific, religious and philanthropic. The word "Samaj" means society or assembly, and "Arya" is an ancient Indian epithet meaning "noble," a name applied to members of the three

* Monday, January 19th, 1903.

† At the last anniversary of the Vegetarian Section of the Arya Samaj, held in Lahore, November 30th–December 1st, 1902, several Christians were purified and received into the Arya Samaj.

“twice born” castes. The founder of the Arya Samaj thus sought to glorify his society and make it attractive by bestowing on it a name of conspicuous dignity, and one, too, clothed with patriotic associations.

II. *The Founder.*

The Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand Sarasvati, a Gujrati Brahman, who was born in the year 1824, in Kâthiâwâr. He refused to give either his name or his birth-place during his life, lest he should be hindered in his work. After his death in 1883 it came out that his real name was Mul Shankar, son of Amba Shankar, a banker and revenue collector living in a village under the jurisdiction of the Raja of Morvi in Kâthiâwâr. He was brought up in the Shaiva type of doctrine. For his home life and for the account of his early wanderings and studies, we are indebted to his Autobiography first published in the *Theosophist* (October and December, 1879, and November, 1880), and the only important fruit of the temporary union of the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society. There are three moments of religious interest in the home life of Mul Shankar, *alias* Dayanand Sarasvati—first, his revolt from idolatry owing to an experience on the night of his initiation into the mysteries of the Shaiva cult, when he saw mice running over the image of Shiva and defiling it; second, his determination to abandon the world and seek Mukti (salvation), the result of his profound grief on account of the death of his sister; and third, his flight from home at the age of twenty-one, in order to avoid the entanglement of marriage into which his parents were determined he should enter. There is no reason for questioning the essential truthfulness of the account of these early experiences. The sincerity of his revolt from idolatry, however it came about, is proved by the magnificent courage and vigour with which he afterwards attacked idolatry in its chief centres, such as Hardwar and Benares. In fact, in his attitude towards idolatry he was an ally of Christianity rather than a foe. After his flight from home he spent about eighteen years as a Sannyâsi or religious mendicant, wandering from place to place and learning from a great variety of teachers. He first came under Vedantic influences, and for a time was convinced of the identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. Afterwards he became interested in the science of Yoga and deserted the Vedanta standpoint. Later on he studied the Vedas under

the tuition of the blind Swami Virajananda of Mathura. His religious development may be described as a movement from Pauranic Hinduism through Philosophical Hinduism to Vedic Hinduism. He successively deserted Shaivism and Vedantism, but clung to the last to the *Sankhya-Yoga* as the philosophical point of view from which, in his opinion, the Vedas ought to be interpreted.

The last twenty years of his life may be called the period of his public ministry (1863–1883). His history during this period is a history of preaching tours throughout the length and breadth of India, from Bombay and Poona on the south to Calcutta and Lahore on the north, of public discussions with pandits, maulvies and missionaries, and of literary work. In the great centres of idolatry his usual theme was, "Is there idolatry in the Vedas?" He founded the Arya Samaj in Bombay, in the year 1875, and visited the Panjab in 1877. He died in 1883, in the city of Ajmere, Rajputana, under circumstances which gave rise at the time to the suspicion that he had been poisoned. But of this there is no clear proof.

Some account may here be given of the personality and character of the founder of the Arya Samaj. The earliest contemporary sketch known to me of the appearance of Swami Dayanand was drawn by Rev. T. J. Scott, D.D., at the *Kurkora Mela*, on the banks of the Ganges, October 29th, 1868. It was when the Swami had gone into partial "retreat" for "further contemplation and perfection of character," as one of his biographers tells us.*

The description reads as follows:—"In the afternoon I visited a fakeer down on the sand by the water's edge, of whose learning and sanctity I had heard in the crowds of the bazaar. I found him sitting in a little straw booth; and a splendid-looking fellow he was, with his herculean frame and massive limbs, fine oval cranium and really benignant face. He was sitting almost entirely naked, and entered at once into pleasant conversation. I found him to belong to a class of mendicants, who profess to have entirely abandoned the world, and are living in complete contemplation of the Deity. The conversation revealed in him a fine mind and well versed in the ancient lore of the Hindus. He talked only Sanskrit, and our conversation was conducted through an interpreter."†

* *Dayananda Saraswati*, by Arjan Singh, p. 23.

† *Missionary Life among the Villages in India*, p. 162.

Swami Dayanand from all accounts was a man of splendid physique, impressive personality and great strength of will. In a word, he was a born leader of men. His manner was commanding and imperious, but he could also be gracious and suave on occasion. In debate his style is described as of the "sledge-hammer" sort. The epithet *mahāmurkh* (great fool), was often applied by him to the defenders of other faiths. In his criticism of other faiths, he was exceedingly unsympathetic, not to say unfair. There is a general impression that this characteristic of the master has descended to his followers—in other words, that the members of the Arya Samaj are not remarkable for courtesy and fairness in religious discussion. Happily, however, there has been some improvement in this matter. As regards moral character, the Swami in his autobiography is very frank and open in telling the world how he dissembled to his father after his first flight from home, and how he was accustomed to the use of *bhāng*, an intoxicant, during his ascetic life. I do not mention these things by way of reproach. It is far healthier and more ethical to confess these things, than, like some other teachers in India, to claim virtual sinlessness.*

At the same time, it must be admitted, I think, that Swami Dayanand's naïve way of referring to the duplicity which he showed to his father argues a defective sense of the "ugliness of falsehood."† The actual account of his meeting with his father after his first flight from home is as follows:—"No sooner had I met his glance, though then knowing well that there would be no use in trying to resist him, I suddenly made up my mind how to act. Falling at his feet with joined hands and supplicating tones, I entreated him to appease his anger; I had left home through bad advice, I said; I felt miserable, and was just on the point of returning home when he had providentially arrived; and now I was willing to follow him home again" (Autobiography). Swami Dayanand has been charged with pursuing a path of *expediency*, that is, of holding the Jesuitical theory that a good end justifies questionable means. The episode referred to above tends to support this charge.

* For example, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, who claims to be the "Promised Messiah."

† Cf. J. C. Oman, *Indian Life, Religious and Social*, p. 106.

III. *Doctrine.*

We come now to the doctrine taught by Swami Dayanand. It has already been stated that the Arya Samaj is the joint offspring of Hinduism and Western thought. As Swami Dayanand wandered up and down throughout India, he studied not only the past but also the present, not only the thought of India as embodied in Veda and Upanishad, Sutra and Epic, but also the thought of Europe as embodied especially in the devices of modern science, everywhere manifest in India, such as railroads, telegraphs and other mechanical inventions. He finally arrived at a scheme for reconciling the present with the past, the West with the East. It was something like this. The word "*Veda*" means *knowledge*. It is God's knowledge, and, therefore, pure and perfect. This transcendent and heavenly knowledge embraces the fundamental principles of all the sciences. These principles God revealed in two ways: (1) in the form of the four Vedas, which were taught to four rishis, Agni, Vâyu, Sûraj and Angira, at the beginning of Creation over one hundred billion years ago, and (2) in the form of the world of nature, which was created according to the principles laid down in the Vedas, somewhat as the Tabernacle is said to have been built according to the pattern shown in the mount (Exodus xxv, 40).

Notice the ambiguity in the meaning assigned to the word "*Veda*." It is (1) God's knowledge, the content of the Divine omniscience, which is *one thing*; and (2) it is the collection of Aryan literature known as the Four Vedas, which is *quite a different thing*. One may believe in the Veda in the first sense, without accepting it in the second sense. The Vedas, then, being regarded as "the Scripture of true knowledge," the perfect counterpart of God's knowledge so far as "basic principles" are concerned, and the "pattern" according to which Creation proceeded, it follows that the fundamental principle of Vedic exegesis will be the interpretation of the Vedas in such a way as to find in them the results of natural science. As E. D. Maclagan remarks: "The bases of the Aryan faith are the revelation of God in the Vedas and the revelation of God in nature, and the first practical element in this belief is the interpretation of the Vedas in conformity with the proved results of Natural Science."* In other words, there is involved the assumption that the Vedas as "the

* *Census of India*, 1891, vol. xix, p. 175.

scripture of true knowledge" must contain "the basic principles of all sciences," and accordingly that every scientific discovery and invention of modern times must be taught, germinally at least, in the Vedas. The science of the West, then, is but the realization of the scientific programme intuited by the seers of the East, over 100,000,000,000 years ago. To the ancient East belonged the faculty of seeing; to the modern West belongs the faculty of doing. The programme comes from the East; the realization from the West. Thus the West in realizing the principles laid down in the Vedas is following unconsciously the Vedic religion. A pamphlet has just come to hand, issued by the Arya Samaj, and bearing the title, *The Source of the Christian Religion is Buddhism*. Its fundamental thesis is that all religions have their source in the Vedas, and that diversities in religion are due to the influence of different environments upon the primitive Vedic revelation.*

The principle that all the sciences have their revealed source in the Vedas is here enlarged by the further principle that all religions find their original and inspired source in the same early literature. In this way Swami Dayanand sought to render to the East the things which belong to the East, and to the West the things which belong to the West. It may readily be imagined what kind of interpretation is involved in the attempt to find in the Vedas the results of modern scientific invention such as steam engines and gunpowder, the electric telegraph and X-rays, cannon and ocean steamers. It is a highly subjective and fanciful interpretation, not recognized as legitimate by a single Sanskrit scholar, either Indian or European, outside of the Arya Samaj. It is an interpretation which disregards at will the grammatical distinctions of mood and tense, number and person, active and passive. In a word, it is interpretation in the interests of a theory, the theory, namely, that the Vedas teach a pure monotheism and contain "the basic principles of all the sciences." It is as if one should attempt to find a pure monotheism and a complete programme of scientific inventions in Homer's *Iliad* or Virgil's *Aeneid*. Every historical allusion in the Vedas is carefully explained away on the ground that "the Vedas being Divine revelation, expound the laws of existence in its various

* Compare the doctrine of "primitive revelation" held by some Christians.

departments, which precludes the mention of persons and places.”*

Thus the method of interpretation is dogmatic and *a priori*, rather than historical. Indeed, there can be no more vivid commentary on the lack of the historic sense among the Hindus than the fact that the membership of the Arya Samaj embraces a large number of English-educated Indians, many of whom are college-bred, and yet they accept as historical the date 100,960,853,000 years ago as the date of the giving of the Vedas, and regard as scientific that interpretation of the Vedas according to which they constitute a prophetic programme of all the scientific inventions of modern times. One remedy for this state of affairs must surely be along the line of the encouragement in the Indian universities of genuine historical study, *i.e.*, the mastery of the methods and canons of historical research, instead of the passive memorizing of untested statements. Enough has been said to show that the doctrines of the founder of the Arya Samaj are based not on the Vedas themselves, but upon an *uncritical* and *unscientific* interpretation thereof.

So much for the Arya doctrine of the Vedas, and of their interpretation. As in every religion, so in the Arya Samaj, the “doctrine of Holy Scripture” is of fundamental import. But while Swami Dayanand’s doctrine of the Vedas is exceedingly open to criticism, it is only fair to say at the same time that he has shown a sound instinct in excluding the later literature of India, *e.g.*, the Puranas and Tantras, from the canon of Sacred Scripture. If any portion of Indian literature deserves to be called sacred *par excellence*, it is the Upanishads and certain hymns found in the *Rig Veda*, notably those addressed to Varuna.

The theology of the Arya Samaj is the religious philosophy of the *Sankhya-Yoga* read into the Vedas and Upanishads. The fundamental principle of the Sankhya is the dualism of *Prakriti* and *Purusha*, matter and soul. The Yoga, or theistic Sankhya, takes one of the innumerable souls recognized by the non-theistic Sankhya and makes it the Supreme Soul. The result is a kind of trinity consisting of God, Soul (or souls) and Matter, each independent and self-existent. God is eternal, so also is each soul, so also is matter. Pandit Ralla Ram, the theologian of the Vegetarian section of the Arya Samaj, refers to this as “the universal trinity recognized by science and

* *The Arya Patrika*, October 19th, 1901.

religion alike" and as "the most important of the doctrines of the Arya Samaj."*

This doctrine of three separate, eternal, and self-existent entities is of course open to grave objections from the standpoint of philosophy. If God is eternally confronted by souls and matter, of which He is not creator, and for which He is in no way responsible, the absoluteness of His sovereignty must necessarily be very seriously impaired. God becomes logically, on this theory, little more than an umpire to preside over the inexorable processes of Transmigration, and Karma a personified moral order, the apotheosis of the principle of retribution. Karma, or the law of moral causality, was the God of Buddha. This law personified is the God of Swami Dayanand. While making these criticisms, one may cheerfully admit that the realism of the Arya theology has a relative justification as a protest and reaction against the extreme idealism of the Vedanta philosophy, with its exoteric doctrines of emanation and absorption and its esoteric doctrines of illusion and identity. There is also an attempt to do justice to the claims of both science and religion. As regards the freedom of the will, the Arya Samaj holds that "we are not free to will an act, if we were created by some one else. . . . In order to be free we must be believed to be eternally acting as we thought best, or as our previous *karmas* determined the course for us, receiving, according to God's eternal laws, the fruits of our own good or bad deeds, and shaping in accordance therewith, and with our own hands, as it were, our future destiny."†

Thus, as regards the soteriology of the Arya Samaj, the great means of salvation is the effort of the individual, and for this a sufficient sphere is allowed through the doctrine of transmigration, or repeated births. Salvation is conceived as virtually an eternal process. At the last anniversary meeting of the "College" section of the Arya Samaj, held in Lahore, November 30th, 1902, the one sentiment in the address of one speaker which was vigorously applauded was the speaker's conviction that at some time or other, sooner or later, perhaps in some cases after an unspeakable lapse of time, every soul will come to that knowledge of God which constitutes beatitude. In this way, the Arya Samaj is the advocate of the "larger hope."

* "Bearing of Religion and Morality on Final Causes." *The Arya Patrika*, Lahore, December 14th, 1901.

† *The Arya Patrika*, *loc. cit.*

Ethically, there is one doctrine taught by Swami Dayanand, and accepted by the Arya Samaj, which is most objectionable. This is the doctrine of *Niyoga*, which may be described as a virtual recognition of the principle of free love, sanctified by a temporary arrangement. At the very best it can only be characterized as temporary marriage.

IV. *The Order.*

Under this head will be given some information concerning the history, organization, government, worship, methods of work and statistics of the Arya Samaj. The history during the last decade is a history of *disunion*, the Arya Samaj having split up into two sections. The ostensible grounds of the split are two-fold: (1) differences of practice with reference to the use of flesh for food, and (2) differences in theory concerning the proper policy to be pursued in higher education. From the point of view of the first difference the two sections are called respectively the "meat-eating" party and the "vegetarian" party; and from the point of view of the second, the "college" party and the *Mahâtma*, or old-fashioned party. Both differences run back into a still more fundamental difference of opinion, namely, concerning the degree of inspiration and authority to be assigned to the teachings of Swami Dayanand. In this matter, the position of the College party, as the party of light and culture, is liberal, while the attitude of the *Mahâtma* party is conservative. The educational work of each section is carried on in harmony with its special theory. The "Cultured" party has a college at Lahore, the *Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College*, which it administers on modern lines and with a considerable degree of efficiency. The *Mahâtma* party, on the other hand, has an institution at Hardwar known as the *Gurukula*, in which ancient ideals of education receive the emphasis. The past decade has also been fruitful in biographies of the founder of the Arya Samaj, no less than four having been written within this period, and one of them a very voluminous work.

The organization of the Arya Samaj embraces the local samaj or congregation, the provincial assembly, and (under contemplation) a national assembly for all India. The conditions of membership in a local samaj are (1) implicit faith in the Arya "Decalogue" or Ten Principles, and (2) belief in the canons of Vedic interpretation laid down by Swami Dayanand. The candidate for membership must have reached the age of

eighteen. There is no special ceremony of initiation for members of the "twice-born" castes, but outsiders such as Christians and Mohammedans must undergo a ceremony of purification. The members of a local samaj are of two kinds, probationers or non-voting and approved or voting members. The period of probation is one year. The officers of a local Samaj consist of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and librarian, elected by the voting members. It will be observed that the officers are those of an ordinary secular association. The Provincial assembly is a representative body composed of delegates appointed by the local congregations. Each affiliated samaj has the right to send one delegate for every twenty members. Delegates are elected for three years, and there is an annual meeting of the Provincial assembly, which has the oversight of all the congregations situated within a particular province, *e.g.*, the united Provinces or the Punjab. Thus the form of government of the Arya Samaj is clearly representative. It is not quite clear, however, whether its special type is Congregational or Presbyterian; in other words, whether the Provincial assembly is the analogue of a Presbyterian Synod or of a Congregational Union.

The weekly religious service of the Arya Samaj is held on Sunday morning, since the Government offices are closed on that day. As it is the only religious service of the week, it is a long one, lasting three or four hours. Religious worship consists of the burning of incense (the *Homa* sacrifice), accompanied by the chanting of Vedic mantras, exposition of the writings of Swami Dayanand, prayer, hymns, sermon and lecture. With the exception of the use of incense, the constituents of worship are those of an ordinary Protestant service. Thus the worship is non-ritualistic and Puritan in its simplicity. Long sermons are apparently enjoyed.

In its methods of work the Arya Samaj follows the methods current among the various missionary societies working in India. It uses preaching, education, tract distribution, newspapers, etc., etc. Its methods of raising money are as follows: (1) Voting members must pay $\frac{1}{100}$ of their monthly income. (2) Special appeals are made at the anniversary meetings. Much is made of such meetings as occasions for stirring up zeal and creating a spirit of self-sacrifice. At the last anniversary of the "cultured" section of the Arya Samaj held in Lahore at the end of November, 1902, there were "two remarkable incidents. The one was the surrender of a life policy for Rs. 10,000 to the samaj by one gentleman in the heat of the enthusiasm created

by the appeal for subscriptions that was made, and which brought forth donations to the amount of about Rs. 10,000 besides this one offer. But the other was a much more remarkable incident, viz., the resolution declared by Lala Mehr Chand, B.A., to devote himself to the interests of the D.A.V. College and to work on bare subsistence, taking a vow of poverty. . . . A notable start in this direction was made by the example set by Lala Hans Raj, B.A., Principal D.A.V. College."—*Panjab Observer*.

There are two classes of preachers, honorary and paid. The honorary preachers are local, the paid are itinerant. The first class consists of men in regular employment as clerks, pleaders, teachers, physicians and other business men, mostly English-educated and many of them college-bred. On the other hand, the paid preachers give all their time to the work of preaching, and are, as a rule, educated only in the vernacular. The salary of a paid preacher ranges from Rs. 12 to Rs. 60. It is interesting to note that the "cultured" party emphasizes *education*, while the *mahâtma* party emphasizes *preaching*. Each section of the Arya Samaj maintains a number of high schools and orphanages, and also several newspapers both in English and in the vernacular.

We come finally to the statistics and future prospects of the Arya Samaj. According to the census of 1891, there were in India ten years ago 39,952 Aryas, including men, women and children, the United Provinces returning 22,053 and the Panjab 16,275. For 1901 the census for the United Provinces returned 65,282 Aryas, an increase of 43,229 during the decade. This is a remarkable advance. The numerical increase has not been so great in the Panjab, the census for 1901 returning 9,105 males over fifteen, not counting women and children. Thus the numbers of the followers of Swami Dayanand, including men, women and children, must at present amount for all India to 80,000 or 90,000. Such is the result of the first quarter of a century of work on the part of the Arya Samaj. Such is the monument which Swami Dayanand has secured for himself through his disciples.

As regards the future of the Arya Samaj it is difficult to play the prophet. It is undoubtedly the most popular theistic and reforming movement in India to-day. In the matter of female education, emancipation of women, temperance and other reforms, it is in the line of progress. It also ministers to the patriotic spirit through its insistence that the Vedas are the original source of all the religion and

science of the world. It accordingly appeals strongly to "Young India" as the party of patriotism and progress. It contains many earnest and good men who sincerely desire the welfare of their country. It keeps in close touch with orthodox Hinduism through the fact that comparatively few members of the Arya Samaj have broken caste. Will it ultimately be reabsorbed into the abyss of Hinduism or will it advance to a more rational and enlightened position? The future alone can answer these questions.

V. *Select Literature on the Arya Samaj.*

Veda Bhāshya. (Commentary on the Vedas.)

Veda Bhāshya Bhāṣmikā. (Introduction to the above Commentary on the Vedas.)

Satyārtha Prakāśha. (Exposition of the Vedic religion and refutation of all the modern faiths.) The three above-mentioned works (in Hindi) are all from the pen of Swami Dayanand Sarasvati, and constitute the authoritative literature of the Arya Samaj.

Dayananda Sarasvati, pp. 167-182 of Professor Max Mueller's "Biographical Essays," vol. ii, Reissue, 1898.

The Arya Samaj and its Founder, chap. iv of "Indian Life, Religious and Social." By J. C. Oman, London, 1889.

The Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj. By F. Lillingston, London, 1901.

The Arya Samaj: an Outline Study. By Wilbert W. White.

The Arya Samaj, its Teaching and an estimate of it. By Rev. Henry Forman, Allahabad, 1889.

The Principles and Teaching of the Arya Samaj. Six lectures by Pandit Kharak Singh and Dr. Martyn Clark, 2nd edition, Lahore, 1887.

Exposure of Dayanand Sarasvati's Deliberate Falsification of the Rig Veda. By Rev. T. Williams, Rewari, 1893.

The Dayanandi Interpretation of the word "Deva" in the Rig Veda. By H. D. Griswold, Lodiāna, 1897.

Pandit Dayanand Unveiled. By Pandit S. N. Agnihotri of the Deva Dharma.

The Niyoga Doctrine of the Arya Samaj. By Ruchi Ram Sahni, M.A., Lahore, 1897.

The Problem of the Arya Samaj. By H. D. Griswold in the *Indian Evangelical Review*, January, 1902.

The Arya Samaj: its History, Progress, and Methods. By Rev. B. A. Nag, in the *Indian Evangelical Review*, October, 1901.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—We have had an interesting paper ; but, unfortunately, the writer of it not being present, it a little takes off from the point of the discussion that may follow. However, although he is not here, I suppose we can thank him for it and the Secretary for reading it and Mr. Rouse, who assisted him.

In the meantime should there be any remarks to be made on the paper by any present we shall be glad to hear them.

The SECRETARY.—I am sure we are all indebted to the Rev. Mr. Griswold for drawing up this paper for us. He has had great opportunities of noticing the rise and advance of this newest sect in India, and after the account he has given us of its rise and advance, I think we may, on the whole, feel thankful for the Arya Samaj and for the good it is doing in helping to enlighten the Hindu population, chiefly in bringing them more under the influence of western ideas for the emancipation of the women and the spread of culture. Of course we should all have rejoiced if this movement had really been more towards Christianity ; but it is evidently a step in that direction. Mr. Griswold, very properly, does not venture to take the *rôle* of a prophet ; still I think we may go so far as to say that it appears to contain the seeds of dissolution within itself.

You will see that this movement depends on two factors—it resolves itself into two divisions. The view that the Vedas date back a billion years is a statement that the educated classes in India will ultimately realize to be absolutely absurd ; and then the attempt to show that the great advance in art and science of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have had their “ basic ” foundation in the Vedas will also, in time, appear to the educated classes to be absolutely without foundation in fact. They will see that the Vedas, however admirable they are in some respects, moral and social, yet the demand upon the view of the cultivated classes that they contain the seeds and basis of all modern invention is that which cannot hold water for a moment and must, ultimately, be disproved.

These reasons, and others also that I might add, such as that the movement itself, within a quarter of a century, has been split up into two divisions, not absolutely opposed, but divergent sub-

sects, seem to show that this movement, however popular it may be at the present day among the classes who are not prepared to accept Christianity as placed before them by the missionaries of India, has been adopted by them as a sort of half-way house which they think will bring them into a sort of concord with the progress of western civilization, and yet enable them to retain a good deal of the faith of their fathers.

This seems to me to be the lesson which the paper places before us.

General ROBINSON.—Perhaps I might say a few words on this subject, having lived in India.

I am afraid what the Secretary has just said is not what we should wish. I am afraid there is a great tendency in reforming Hindus to avoid Christianity. The Brahm Samaj was a good thing which brought India much nearer to Christianity; but Arya Samaj is an attempt to bring Hinduism into line with modern science. Its adherents are very bitter against Christians and Christianity, and it is a great trouble to our missionaries in India.

The Indian has learnt to despise his own religion, Brahmanism, and he sees that it is not a scientific religion. He wants, therefore, to make his religion a scientific religion. We see by this lecture how miserably he has failed, and we must trust that the result of this attempt will not in the end be a lasting one. Fortunately he is so very unscientific in his proposals that he will be left out by the modern Hindu who gains his teaching at Cambridge and Oxford and knows better. Therefore I trust something better will arise in India than the Arya Samaj. (Hear, hear.)

Professor ORCHARD.—I am afraid I should be disposed to say that this faith shows no advance whatever in a religious or philosophical point of view at least.

Dr. Griswold has brought before us a very remarkable man—a man whose mind was ethical rather than religious and practical rather than philosophical. This sage was undoubtedly a man of great natural shrewdness, sagacity, acuteness, and natural foresight. He no doubt thought when he brought western ideas into enlistment in his protest against idolatry, that by the simplicity of the worship he enjoined on his fellows, he was doing service to his country; but this sect that he founded—this Arya Samaj—will, I think, not be remembered on the ground of any philosophical or

religious excellence. It is, no doubt, an interesting historical experiment to see how far you can introduce western civilization without introducing western religion.

I cannot regard Mul Shankar as, in the highest sense, a great reformer. His idea that "the bases of the Aryan faith are the revelation of God in the Vedas and the revelation of God in nature, and the first practical element in this belief is the interpretation of the Vedas in conformity with the proved results of natural science," is not, I think, so very absurd from his particular point of view. He regarded the Vedas as the divine revelation. If they had been the divine revelation it is quite evident that the proved results of science must agree with that divine revelation; but where his argument fails is in his enormous assumption that the Vedas are the divine revelation—that they are the Word of God, and when he searched these Vedas and found, as one would think he must have found, that they were not in accord with science, it is, perhaps, surprising that he did not begin to doubt whether these Vedas might not be rather the reverse of knowledge.

With regard to the visionary character of his doctrine, I read, "As regards the freedom of the will, the Arya Samaj holds that we are not free to will an act if we were created by some one else. . . . In order to be free we must be believed to be eternally acting as we thought best." So he holds that man was not created if he has free will. If he has been created, argues Mul Shankar, he cannot be free in his will; but that he is free in his will and, therefore, eternal—that there was no time when he did not exist. Having affirmed that he is free, that is contradictory.

As to whether the system will survive long, I apprehend that is much a question whether in fact the missionary effort in spreading the religion of Jesus Christ the Lord does, or does not, keep pace with mere secular civilization.

Mr. MARTIN ROUSE.—I should like to ask General Robinson what has become of the Brahm Samaj. When I was a boy I heard something of it, and I heard of a certain Chunder Sund being received here in a very friendly way by Dean Stanley. He appeared to be a kind of Unitarian who had given up idolatry in his worship, and the Dean hoped he would be led on into Christianity. Whether it has faded away I do not know, but I have not heard of it since.

General ROBINSON.—It is a long time since I was in India; but I am afraid that the Brahm Samaj is not advancing. I do not know that I ought to say “afraid,” for it has missed its mark. Round Calcutta and the lower part of Bengal is where you find the Brahm Samaj. As the last speaker said, it seemed to approach the truth, and it very nearly did so, and it got all its teaching from Jesus Christ. It accepts our Saviour as the Great Teacher, and it seemed very nearly as if its leader was going to accept Jesus Christ altogether as the Son of God; but just at last he failed. It takes the moral code of the New Testament as its code of morals, and it is hoped that through the teaching of our missionaries some of the Brahm Samaj may be led to accept Christianity, but at present, as I say, it has just missed its mark. So it has not advanced. I do not think it is dying out altogether, but it hangs about the neighbourhood of Calcutta and Bengal.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am afraid my knowledge of India has led me first to this conclusion—that the Brahm Samaj, the Arya Samaj, and such-like doctrines, are all of them struggles against the advance of light and truth. I do not believe there is much vitality in any of them as far as I have been able to see; but it is a curious thing how the human mind will attach itself to what pleases it and will bring itself to believe it. What they make up their minds to believe (and let us take care that it is not the same, in some little measure with ourselves) they adhere to somehow. I think the root and offspring of them all has been the advance of western science and western religion, and a struggle against that advance. “Let us stop it and invent something else. We will take the emancipation of women, in theory at all events, but not much in practice. These westerns come and press these ideas on us; but we will hold tight to Hinduism somehow,” and they thus struggle against the light and knowledge of the voice of God and His Christ. As far as they can they will struggle against all advance of western knowledge and light, which is a great misfortune.

The Meeting then adjourned.