

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke George
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Langbein Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Schiller Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Strachwitz Claudius Schilling Kralik Schiller Iffland Sokrates
Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Gerstäcker Raabe Gibbon Tschchow
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Gleim Vulpius
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Morgenstern Goedicke
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Kleist Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke
Nestroy Marie de France
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht Ringelnatz
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka
Sachs Poe Liebermann Kock Korolenko
de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



The publishing house **tredition** has created the series **TREDITION CLASSICS**. It contains classical literature works from over two thousand years. Most of these titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades.

The book series is intended to preserve the cultural legacy and to promote the timeless works of classical literature. As a reader of a **TREDITION CLASSICS** book, the reader supports the mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion.

The symbol of **TREDITION CLASSICS** is Johannes Gutenberg (1400 – 1468), the inventor of movable type printing.

With the series, **tredition** intends to make thousands of international literature classics available in printed format again – worldwide.

All books are available at book retailers worldwide in paperback and in hardcover. For more information please visit: www.tredition.com



tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, **tredition** offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. **tredition** is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

**New Ideas in India During the
Nineteenth Century A Study of
Social, Political, and Religious
Developments**

John Morrison

Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: John Morrison

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8491-5279-6

www.tredition.com

www.tredition.de

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

**NEW IDEAS IN INDIA DURING THE NINE-
TEENTH CENTURY**

*A Study of Social, Political, and Religious De-
velopments*

**BY THE
REV. JOHN MORRISON, M.A., D.D.
LATE PRINCIPAL, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S INSTITU-
TION,
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND MISSION, CALCUTTA, AND
MEMBER OF SENATE OF CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY**

PREFACE

The substance of the following volume was delivered in the form of lectures in the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh during Session 1904-5. As "Alexander Robertson" lecturer in the University of Glasgow, the writer dealt with the new religious ideas that have been impressing themselves upon India during the British period of her history. As "Gunning" lecturer in the University of Edinburgh, the writer dwelt more upon the new social and political ideas. The popular belief of Hindu India is, that there are no new ideas in India, that nought in India suffers change, and that as things are, so they have always been. Even educated Indians are reluctant to admit that things have changed and that their community has had to submit to education and improvement—that suttee, for example, was ever an honoured institution in the province now most advanced. But to the observant student of the Indian people, the *evolution* of India is almost as noteworthy as the more apparent rigidity. There is a flowering plant common in Northern India, and chiefly notable for the marvel of bearing flowers of different colours upon the same root. The Hindus call it "the sport of Krishna"; Mahomedans, "the flower of Abbas"; for the plant is now incorporate with both the great religions of India, and even with their far-back beginnings. Yet it is a comparatively recent importation into India; it is only the flower known in Britain as "the marvel of Peru," and cannot have been introduced into India more than three hundred years ago. It was then that the Portuguese of India and the Spaniards of Peru were first in touch within the home lands in Europe. In our own day may be seen the potato and the cauliflower from Europe establishing themselves upon the dietary of Hindus in defiance of the punctiliously orthodox. *À fortiori*—strange that we should reason thus from the trifling to the fundamental, yet not strange to the Anglo-Indian and the Indian,—*à fortiori*, we shall not be surprised to find novel and alien ideas taking root in Indian soil.

Seeds, we are told, may be transported to a new soil, either wind-borne or water-borne, carried in the stomachs of birds, or clinging by their burs to the fur of animals. In the cocoa-nut, botanists point out, the cocoa-nut palms possess a most serviceable ark wherein the seed may be floated in safety over the sea to other shores. It is thus

that the cocoa-nut palm is one of the first of the larger plants to show themselves upon a new coral reef or a bare volcano-born island. Into India itself, it is declared, the cocoa-nut tree has thus come over-sea, nor is yet found growing freely much farther than seventy miles from the shore. One of the chief interests of the subject before us is that the seeds of the new ideas in India during the past century are so clearly water-borne. They are the outcome of British influence, direct or indirect.

Here are true test and evidence of the character of British influence and effort, if we can distil from modern India some of the new ideas prevailing, particularly in the new middle class. Where shall we find evidence reliable of what British influence has been? Government Reports, largely statistical, of "The Moral and Material Progress of India," are so far serviceable, but only as *crude* material from which the answer is to be distilled. Members of the Indian Civil Service, and others belonging to the British Government of India, may volunteer as expert witnesses regarding British influence, but they are interested parties; they really stand with others at the bar. The testimony of the missionary is not infrequently heard, less exactly informed, perhaps, than the Civil Servant's, but more sympathetic, and affording better testimony where personal acquaintance with the life of the people is needed. But of him too, like the Civil Servant, there is some suspicion that in one sphere he holds a brief. This, indeed, may be said in favour of the missionary's testimony, that while the Anglo-Indian identifies the missionary's standpoint with that of the native, the native identifies him with the Anglo-Indian, so that probably enough he occupies the mean of impartiality and truth. The British merchant in India may also offer as evidence, and indeed is "on the spot," and apparently qualified by reason of his independence. But the interest of his class is professedly limited to India's material progress; and of his general views, we recall what Chaucer said of the politics of his "merchant," "Sowninge alway th' encrees of his winningne."

And finally, in increasing numbers, natives of India themselves are claiming to pronounce upon the effect of the British connection upon India; and yet again we feel that the proffered evidence must

be regarded with suspicion. That Indian is exceptional indeed whose generalisations about India are based on observations and historical knowledge. If the Civil Servant's honour is bound up with a favourable verdict upon the question at issue, the educated native is as resolved upon the other side. Nay, truth requires one to say that at this time the educated Indian is virtually pledged against acknowledging any indebtedness to Britain. For the reason why, we need not anticipate, but it is foolish to shut one's eyes to the unpleasant fact, or to hide it from the British public.

Where, then, is the testimony that is reliable? Is there nothing else than the disputing, loud and long, of the six blind men of Indostan who went to *see* the Indian elephant and returned,

"Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!"

From preferred testimony of all kinds, from all affidavits, however honestly sworn, we turn again to the ideas now prevailing as they *betray* themselves in the lives of the people and the words that fall from their lips. Carefully studying earlier history, we ask ourselves wherein the new ideas differ from the ideas current in India a century ago. Then as progress appears, or is absent, the forces at work stand approved or condemned. The exact historical comparison we may claim to be a special feature of this book.

The writer is not ignorant of the delicacy of the historical task he has set himself. He claims that during the twenty years he spent in India he was eager to know India and her sons, read the pamphlets and articles they wrote, enjoyed constant intercourse with Indians of all classes and religions, reckoned, as he still reckons, many Indians among his friends. He claims that during these years it was his pleasure, as well as a part of his professional duty, to study the past history of India. Ignorance of Indian history vitiates much of the writing and oratory on Indian subjects. As a member of the staff of an Indian college, with six hundred University students, the writer claims to have had exceptional opportunities of entering into the thoughts of the new middle class, and of cross-questioning upon

Indian problems. In India, students "sit at the feet" of their professors, but let it not be assumed that the Oriental phrase implies a stand-off superior and crouching inferior. Nay, rather it implies the closest touch between teacher and taught. All seated tailor-fashion on the ground, the Indian teacher of former days and his disciples around him were literally as well as metaphorically in touch. The modern professor, successor of the pandit or guru, enjoys intercourse with his students, as full and free, limited in truth only by his time and his temperament.

Judging by the test of the new ideas in India, the writer has no hesitation in declaring that the British regime has been a great blessing to India. Likewise, whether directly inculcated or indirectly, some of the best features of Christian civilisation and of the Christian religion are taking hold in India and becoming naturalised. Called upon as "Alexander Robertson" lecturer in the University of Glasgow to deliver a course of lectures "in defence of the Christian faith," the writer felt that no more effective defence could be offered than this historical survey of the naturalising in India of certain distinctive features of the Christian religion and of the civilisation of western Christian lands.

Of this also the writer is sure, whether he possess the qualifications for the delicate task or lack them—there is a call for some one to interpret Britain and India to each other. In their helpless ignorance, what wonder that Britons' views are often incomplete and distorted? On the Indian side, on the other hand, the terrible anti-British feeling now prevailing in India must surely be based on ignorance and misunderstanding, and in part at least removable.

The Rev. Alexander Robertson, a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland, although never in office, died at Glasgow in 1879, leaving the residue of his estate for the endowment of a lectureship as aforesaid. As trustees he nominated two personal friends—the Rev. J.B. Dalgety, of the Abbey Church, Paisley, and James Lymburn, Esq., the librarian of Glasgow University. These two gentlemen made over the trust to the Glasgow University Court, and the writer had the honour of being appointed the first lecturer.

The Gunning Victoria Jubilee Lectureship in the University of Edinburgh was founded by the late Dr. R.H. Gunning of Edinburgh

and Rio de Janeiro, in the year 1889. The object of the lectureship was "to promote among candidates for the ministry, and to bring out among ministers the fruits of study in Science, Philosophy, Languages, Antiquity, and Sociology."

CONTENTS

I. THE NEW ERA – SOME LEADING WITNESSES

II. INDIAN CONSERVATISM

III. NEW SOCIAL IDEAS

IV. THE CHIEF SOLVENT OF THE OLD IDEAS

V. WOMAN'S PLACE

VI. THE TERMS WE EMPLOY

VII. NEW POLITICAL IDEAS – A UNITING INDIA

VIII. NEW POLITICAL IDEAS – FALSE PATRIOTISM

IX. NEW RELIGIOUS IDEAS – ARE THERE ANY?

X. THE NEW RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS OF INDIA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY – INDIAN CHRISTIANS AND BRAHMAS

XI. NEW RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS – ĀRYAS AND THEOSOPHISTS

XII. THE NEW MAHOMEDANS

XIII. HINDU DOCTRINES – HOW THEY CHANGE

XIV. THE NEW THEISM

XV. JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF

XVI. JESUS CHRIST THE LODESTONE

XVII. INDIAN PESSIMISM – ITS BEARING ON BELIEF IN THE

HERE AND HEREAFTER

XVIII. INDIAN TRANSMIGRATION AND THE CHRISTIAN
HERE AND HEREAFTER

XIX. THE IDEAS OF SIN AND SALVATION

XX. THE IDEA OF SALVATION

XXI. CONCLUSION

NEW IDEAS IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

THE NEW ERA – SOME LEADING WITNESSES

"The epoch ends, the world is still,
The age has talked and worked its fill;

The famous men of war have fought,
The famous speculators thought.

See on the cumbered plain,
Clearing a stage,
Scattering the past about,
Comes the New Age.
Bards make new poems;
Thinkers, new schools;
Statesmen, new systems;
Critics, new rules."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

India is a land of manifold interest. For the visitors who crowd thither every cold season, and for the still larger number who will never see India, but have felt the glamour of the ancient land whose destiny is now so strangely linked to that of our far-off and latter-day islands, India has not one but many interests. There is the interest of the architectural glories of the Moghul emperors, in whose grand halls of audience, now deserted and merely places of show, a solitary British soldier stands sentry over a visitors' book. For the great capitals of India have moved from Delhi and Agra, the old strategic points in the centre of the great northern plain, to Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and Rangoon, new cities on the sea, to suit the

later over-sea rulers of India. There is the interest of the grand organisation of the British Government, holding in its strong paternal grasp that vast continent of three hundred million souls. Sometimes the sight of the letters V.R.I, or E.R.I. (Edwardus Rex Imperator) makes one think of the imperial S.P.Q.R. [1] once not unfamiliar in Britain. But this interest rather I would emphasise—the penetration into the remotest jungle of the great organisation of the British Government is a wonderful thing. By the coinage, the post-office, the railways, the administration of justice, the encouragement of education, the relief of famine,—by such ways the great organisation has penetrated everywhere,—in spite of faults, the greatest blessing that has come to India in her long history. Travelling by rail from Calcutta to Benares, the metropolis of Hinduism, situated upon the north bank of the sacred Ganges, we see the British rule, in symbol, in the great railway bridge spanning the river. By it old India, self-centred, exclusive, introspective, was brought into the modern world; compelled, one might say, by these great spans to admit the modern world and its conveniences, in spite of protest that the railway bridge would pollute the sacred stream. Crossing the bridge, our eyes are fixed on the outstanding feature of Benares—city of hundreds of Hindu temples. What is it? Not a Hindu temple, but a splendid Mahomedan mosque whose minarets overlook the Hindu city, calling the city of Hindus to the worship of Allah. For the site of that mosque, the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb ruthlessly cleared away a magnificent temple most sacred to the Hindus. Concerning another famous Hindu temple in the same city, listen to the Autobiography of another earlier Moghul emperor, Jahangir. "It was the belief of these people of hell [the Hindus] that a dead Hindu laid before the idol would be restored to life, if in his life he had been a worshipper there.... I employed a confidential person to ascertain the truth, and as I justly supposed, the whole was detected to be an impudent imposture.... Throwing down the temple which was the scene of this imposture, with the very same materials I erected on the spot the great mosque, because the very name of Islam was proscribed at Benares, and with God's blessing it is my desire ... to fill it full of true believers." These things I write, not to hold up to condemnation these Moghul rulers, but to point out by contrast the voluntary character of the influence during the British and Christian period. For there is in India a grander interest still than that of the

British political organisation, namely, the peaceful gradual transformation of the thoughts and feelings, the hopes and fears, of each individual of the millions of India.

The nineteenth century in India — a conflict of ideas

The real history of the past century in India has been the conflict and commingling of ideas, a Homeric struggle, renewed in the nineteenth century, between the gods of Asia and Europe. Sometimes the shock of collision has been heard, as when by Act of Legislature, in 1829, Suttee or widow-burning was put down, and, in 1891, the marriage of girls under twelve; or when by order of the Executive, the sacred privacy of Indian houses was violated in well-meant endeavours to stay the plague [1895-], great riots ensuing; or when an Indian of social standing has joined the Christian Church. At other times, like the tumbling in, unnoticed, of slice upon slice of the bank of a great Indian river flowing through an alluvial plain, opinion has silently altered, and only later observers discover that the old idea has changed. Not a hundred years ago, students of Kayasth (clerk) caste were excluded from the Sanscrit College in Calcutta. Now, without any new ordinance, they are admitted, as among the privileged castes, and the idea of the brotherhood of man has thus made way. The silent invasion is strikingly illustrated in the official *Report on Female Education in India, 1892 to 1897*. On a map of India within the *Report*, the places where female education was most advanced were coloured greener according to the degree of advance — surely most inappropriate colouring, though that is not our business. The map showed a strip of the greenest green all round the sea-coast. There the unobserved new influence came in. The *Census Report* for 1901 showed the same silently obtruding influence from over the sea in the case of the education of males. Many such silent changes might be noted. And yet again, the most diverse ideas may be observed side by side in a strange chequer. In the closing years of the nineteenth century, the University of Calcutta accepted an endowment of a lectureship "to promote Sanscrit learning and Vedantic studies," any Hindus without distinction of caste being eligible as lecturers; and then, shortly after, agreed to the request of the first lecturer that none but Hindus be admitted to the exposition of the sacred texts, thus excluding the European heads of the university from a university lecture. Perhaps the lecturer

thought himself liberal, for to men like him at the beginning of the century it would have been an offence to read the sacred texts with Sudras or Hindus of humble castes. According to strict Hindu rule, only brahmans can read the sacred books. [2]

Indian ideas.

For in all three spheres, social, political, and religious, the advent of the new age implied more or less of a conflict. India has still of her own a social system, political ideas, and religious ideas and ideals. In the Indian social system, caste and the social inferiority of women stand opposed to the freedom of the individual and the equality of the sexes that prevail in Great Britain, at least in greater degree. In the sphere of politics, the absolutism, long familiar to the Indian mind, is the antithesis of the life of a citizen under a limited monarchy, with party government and unfettered political criticism. In the sphere of religion, the hereditary priesthood of India stands over against the British ideal of a clergy trained for their duties and proved in character. The Hindu conception of a religious life as a life of sacrificial offerings and penances, or of ecstasies, or of asceticism, or of sacred study, stands over against the British ideal of religion in daily life and in practical philanthropies. To the Hindu, the religious mood is that of ecstatic whole-hearted devotion; the Briton reverences as the religious mood a quiet staying intensity in noble endurance or effort.

Testimony to the change in ideas

The nineteenth century has witnessed a great transition in ideas and a great alteration in the social and political and religious stand-points. It is easy to find manifold witness to the fact from all parts of India. The biographer of the modern in ideas. Indian reformer, Malabari, a Parsee [3] writing of a Parsee, and representing Western India, is impressed by the singular fate that has destined the far-away British to affect India and her ideals so profoundly. Crossing to the east side of India, we seek a trustworthy witness. The well-known reformer, Keshub Chunder Sen, a Bengali, and representative therefore of Eastern India, declares in a lecture published in 1883: "Ever since the introduction of British power into India there has been going on a constant upheaval and development of the native mind,... whether we look at the mighty political changes

which have been wrought by that ... wonderful administrative machinery which the British Government has set in motion, or whether we analyse those deep national movements of *social* and *moral* reform which are being carried on by native reformers and patriots." All Indian current opinion is unanimous with the Parsee and the Bengali that a great movement is in progress. The drift from the old moorings is a constant theme of discourse. Let Sir Alfred Lyall, once head of the United Provinces, speak for the most competent European observers. "There may be grounds for anticipating," he says, "that a solid universal peace and the impetus given by Europe must together cause such rapid intellectual expansion that India will now be carried swiftly through phases which have occupied long stages in the lifetime of other nations." [4] In another essay, in a more positive mood, he writes of British responsibility for "great non-Christian populations [in India] whose religious ideas and institutions are being rapidly transformed by English law and morality." [5] In a third passage he even prophesies rashly: "The end of simple paganism is not far distant in India."

Sir George Bird wood has also had a long Indian career, and no one suspects him of pro-British bias—rather the reverse. Yet we find him writing to the *Times* in 1895 about one of the Indian provinces, as follows: "The new Bengali language and literature," he says, "are the direct products of our Law Courts, particularly the High Court at Calcutta, of Mission schools and newspaper presses and Education Departments, the agents which are everywhere, not in Bengal only, giving if not absolute unity yet community in diversity to the peoples of British India." The modern literature of Bengal, he goes on to say, is Christian in its teaching; if not the Christianity of creed and dogma, yet of the mind of Christ.

It is that transition in ideas, that alteration in social, political, and religious standpoint which we are going to trace and illustrate.

