

THE NATURAL LAW IN THE HINDU TRADITION

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IT WAS with considerable diffidence that I accepted the invitation of Dean Clarence Manion to participate in this learned men's symposium on Natural Law, and it is with equal diffidence that I stand before you today. I am not a scholar in any of the aspects of Law, and I do not claim to know more than the bare outlines of either Common Law, Canon Law, Constitutional Law or International Law. Further, I am an indifferent student of philosophy and religion; but having been born in the Hindu fold and brought up in the traditions of its religion and philosophy, I should be forgiven for venturing to display something of that religion and philosophy that I have managed to assimilate or understand. May I be forgiven by this learned assembly if I indulge in some personal history? My father, who was a profound scholar of the Hindu scriptures, made not a totally vain attempt throughout my teen-age to instil into me the greatness and glory of the Hindu tradition and philosophy, having been himself an austere follower of the scriptures. He and millions like him, did not know anything about the modern concepts of law or how laws of man were administered by fellow-man. His contemporaries and several of his ancestors before him never had any occasion to go inside a court of Law. They could hardly differentiate between law as symbolized by the policeman on the street crossings and law administered by the highest tribunals of the supreme court. But their ignorance of man-made law did

not in the least detract from their fundamental knowledge of the highest law — the law of God or the Eternal Law or Natural Law — call it by whatever name. They accepted unquestioningly the authority of THE LAW — GOD-GIVEN LAW — because they were convinced that no power on earth can supersede the divine law. Dr. Thomas Arnold, the famous Headmaster of Rugby, is supposed to have said to his valedictory group of students, "If on leaving school, each one of you consciously strives to practice the Ten Commandments for the rest of your lives, it does not matter if you become ignorant of the principle of Archimedes or the Theorem of Pythagoras." There are millions of Hindus today, and there have been many more millions before them, whose only knowledge of law concerned Natural Law.

To the Hindu, the Universe is based on Law. The planetary system and the solar system, light and darkness, the stars in their firmament obey the Eternal Law. The God of the Universe is represented as a divine dancer personified as Shiva who dances to his own created Music of the Spheres in perfect rhythm. The divine dancer is engaged in a non-stop performance, and should he stop, even for an infinitesimal moment, chaos and annihilation will follow. This God of the Universe may be seen in millions of forms — he is Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Protector and Shiva the Destroyer. Origin, Existence, Extinction follow according to His will. The Supreme Being does not have to administer the Law, because, HE is the Law. He keeps eternal vigilance and is eternally at work. A great Indian poet of our own times addressed the worshipper seeking the God in temple or tabernacle, church or mosque as follows:

"Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee!

"He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the pathmaker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil!

"Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation; he is bound with us all for ever.

"Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow."

There is one fundamental difference between Natural Law and all other forms of law. Common Law, Canon Law, Constitutional Law, International Law are all subject to periodical amendments and alterations. Natural Law is eternal and unalterable. A second basic difference is that all other laws of the second group are created, evolved, modified and altered by man; Natural Law is only discovered by man. A third, and most vital difference is that obedience to Natural Law is not enforced by an external agency, while conformity to every other form of law can be brought about by coercion. Great souls whom we call martyrs have refused to be coerced by man-made laws. St. Thomas More and St. Joan spurned coercion and attained beatitude, and in my own country, Gandhi systematically defied the man-made laws of his alien rulers and kept the serenity of his soul undisturbed. On the con-

trary, one will search in vain through the pages of human history for an example of a man who achieved victory by defying Natural Law. Lastly, any form of law that runs contrary to Natural Law may seemingly succeed for a time but it is doomed to fail ultimately. Natural Law has no final written code, no jurisprudence, no jury, no courts, no judges, no precise penalties for offenders, no outward rewards for those who conform to it. Natural Law is promulgated not by legislation, but by teaching. The teachers are those we call seers, sages, prophets, mystics, philosophers, law-givers, saints and sons of God.

Hinduism abounds in such sons of God, many of whom are nameless, ageless, but whose sayings and preachings have been collected through centuries of human endeavor.

Said Lucan:

“Mortal are the things of mortals;
We remain as they decay.
If you doubt this proposition,
Put it just the other way.”

These sons of God were mortals and they lived their day and quit the world. But their spoken words of wisdom have remained imperishable. We do not know the life history of the authors of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas or the gospel which is the quintessence of Hinduism — the Bhagavad Gita. The names of Vyasa, Valmiki, Vishwamitra, Narada, Nagyavalkya, Sanjaya and innumerable others, are only names and the many stories associated with their lives cannot be verified for authenticity.

Yet in a sense these saints and sages of old are primarily law-givers. They expounded Natural Law through

precepts, examples, parables, fables, epics, theories, logic, lyrics and other innumerable forms of expression. These compositions were handed down from generation to generation by the spoken word, committed to memory, and most of it, being in rhythmic poetry or alliterative prose, was surprisingly easy to memorize, and when the art of writing was perfected they were imprinted on palm leaves by dexterous hands that could wield an inscribing sharp-pointed tool. Thus has been handed down to us, the moderns, the wisdom of old.

The oldest epic of India is the Ramayana, attributed to the sage Valmiki. It contains an exposition of the highest ideals of Hindu culture and civilization. It is the story of the ideal man, the god-head that impersonated himself in mortal form to demonstrate to mankind the good life and perfect conduct. The epic begins with an enquiry by one saint of another saint. Narada asks Valmiki: "Who is the happy warrior, who is he that every man in arms should wish to be?" "In this world today, who is the meritorious and heroic man, well-versed in his duties, true in speech and firm in his vows? Who is the man endowed with character, who is kind by nature, wise, capable and prepossessing? Who is he that has mastery over himself and conquers the passions; who is he that is devoid of envy, whom when aroused in righteous anger, do even the gods fear? This I do wish to hear, my eagerness is indeed great."

Valmiki answers thus:

"Many and rare are the virtues enumerated by you: O Sage, I shall speak with knowledge; hear of the man endowed with these. Descended of the line of Ikshvakus, he is known to men as Rama; self-controlled he is, greatly heroic, possessed of brilliance, firmness, restraint. Wise

and just, skilled in speech, endowed with riches, the destroyer of foes, knower of right, true to his promise, devoted to the welfare of his subjects. Famous, rich in knowledge, purity, attractiveness, and intent on the protection of the suppliant, the protector of all life. The upholder of righteousness, the resort of good men at all times as the ocean is of the rivers, noble, impartial and always the one comely person. He is besides endowed with all meritorious qualities, in depth like the ocean and in firmness like the Himalayas. Like Vishnu in valour, pleasant of countenance like the moon, equal in bounty to the God of Wealth, and in truthfulness another Dharma."

This word "Dharma" is in a sense the keynote to the understanding of the Hindu ideal of life. It is a word that is incapable of precise translation into another language. "Dharma" has been called "duty" by some, by others "righteousness," by still others "the performance of virtues." In this symposium, "Dharma" may be called no better than Natural Law. All creation, animate and inanimate, has each its own individual "Dharma" to practice. It is the God-given law of one's own being and no transgression from "Dharma" or Natural Law is permissible without serious consequences to the transgressor.

Another unique word in Hindu thought is the word "Karma." The theory of "Karma" recognizes the rule of law not only in outward nature but also in the world of mind and morals. Every moment of existence we are not only 'being' but 'becoming.' The principle of "Karma" is not a mechanical one, but a spiritual necessity. It is the embodiment of the will and mind of God. God is called "Karmadhyasha" or the supervisor of our actions.

The day of judgment is not in some remote future, but here and now. We carry with us every bit of our past. No man can escape from the consequences of his own thoughts, words and deeds either here or hereafter. There is, no doubt, room for repentance and forgiveness, but forgiveness is not a mitigation of God's justice, but only an expression of it. "Dharma" is right action, and "Karma" is all kinds of action. If you deviate from "Dharma" you take the consequences of your "Karma." The theory of "Karma" has been mis-interpreted by some as meaning a form of fatality from which there is no escape. "Karma" encourages the sinner that it is never too late to mend. It does not shut the gates of hope against despair, guilt and suffering. It produces in the onlooker a sense of great compassion towards the sufferings of others. Every man must carry his cross, and millions of mortals who pass through sorrows are atoning for their "Karma." Suffering is the only way in which one can expiate for one's misdeeds.

Goethe said:

"He who never ate his bread in sorrow,
Who never waked his midnight hours,
Weeping and waiting for the morrow,
He knows ye not, o ye Heavenly powers."

"Dharma" is right action. It is formed from the root *dhr* "to hold" which means that which holds a thing and remains its being. Every form of life has its "Dharma," which is the law of its being. It is conformity with the truth of things. The living philosopher of India, Professor Radhakrishnan, has expounded the principle of "Dharma" in day to day life and its relation to human actions:—

"Desires constitute the springs of human action. The life of man centres in certain basic cravings, each distinct from the other in its object, and each stimulating men to a particular mode of activity in order to satisfy it. If the several desires were independent of one another and never crossed or modified one another, then their different expressions would be separate and uncoordinated. Family life will have little to do with economic pursuits. Industrial relations will be ethically colourless. Religious activities may be indifferent to the secular sides of life. But man is a whole, and so, all his activities have an overarching unity. Each individual has in him the sex and the parental instincts, love of power and wealth, desire for the common good and a hunger for communion with the Unseen. These different activities react upon and modify one another. They function in interdependence in man's life. If life is one, then there is one master science of life which recognizes the four supreme ends of Dharma or righteousness, Artha or wealth, Karma or artistic and cultural life, and Moksha or spiritual freedom. The Hindu code of practice links up the realm of desires with the perspective of the eternal. It binds together the kingdom of earth and Heaven."

To the Hindu, life has a divine purpose, and the supreme goal is "Moksha" or self-realization or self emancipation. The meanest of us have at least once questioned ourselves why we are and whither are we going. The poet summed up the life of man:—

"What is the course of life
Of mortal men on earth?
Most men eddy about
Here and there—eat and drink

Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing: and then they die—
Perish;—and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,
Foamed for a moment and gone.”

But life is meaningless if it is to begin and end as waves on the ocean in interminable repetition. The highest wisdom according to Plato is knowing one's self. Self-realization is the ultimate goal of life according to the Hindu. In the highest stages of spiritual evolution not attained by any but the sages and the rishis of old, man has been able to say “God is within me” or “I am God”. The universality of mystic experience is common to all religions. A western philosopher has said, “The mystics of the world, whether Hindu, Christian or Muslim belong to the same brotherhood and have striking family likenesses. When the love of God is reached, divergencies become impossible, for the soul has passed beyond the manifold and is immersed in the one Reality. St. Augustine and Sankara, St. Paul and Plotinus, are difficult to distinguish in their mystic conception of the Divine. They are not only convinced in themselves but have experienced the inexhaustibility of the nature of God and of the supremacy of Divine Law. Boehme says, “Consider the birds in our forests, they praise God each in his own way in diverse tones and fashions. Think you God is vexed by this diversity and desires

to silence discordant voices? All the forms of being are dear to the Infinite Being himself."

This basic truth underlies Hindu thought and thus Hindus developed a comprehensive charity instead of a fanatic faith and an inflexible dogma. It accepted all believers in God, brought them into one fold and justified them all. The immortality of the soul is applicable to the followers of all religions and the law of Nature pertaining to the soul of man is of universal acceptance. Natural Law, according to the Hindu, is identical in all faiths and is common to all mankind.

In one of the principal Upanishads, known as the Brihadaranyaka, Yagyavalkya the sage tell his wife: "My beloved Maitreyi, I am resolved to renounce the world and begin the life of renunciation. I wish therefore to divide my property between you and my other wife Katyayani." Maitreyi asks: "My lord, if this whole earth belonged to me with all its wealth, should I through its possession attain immortality?" To this the saint answers: "No, your life would be like that of the rich. None can possibly hope to attain immortality through wealth." So Maitreyi says: "Then what need have I of wealth? Please my lord, tell me what you know about the way of Immortality." Then follows a profound discourse on self-realization:

"Dear to me have you always been, Maitreyi, and now you ask to learn of that truth which is nearest to my heart. Come sit by me, I will explain it to you. Meditate on what I say. As when the drum is beaten, its various particular notes are not heard apart from the whole, but in the total sound all its notes are heard, as when the conch-shell is blown, its various particular notes are not heard apart

from the whole, but in the total sound all its notes are heard—so through knowledge of Self, Pure Intelligence, all things and beings are known. There is no existence apart from the Self. As smoke and sparks arise from a lighted fire, even so, Maitreyi, have been breathed forth from the Eternal all knowledge and all wisdom. The Vedas are the breath of the Eternal. As a lump of salt when thrown into water melts away and the lump cannot be taken out, but wherever we taste the water, it is salty, even so, O Maitreyi, the individual self, dissolved, is the eternal—pure consciousness, infinite and transcendent. Where there is consciousness of the self, individuality is no more.”

Let me now turn your attention to that book of divine Revelation—The Bhagavad Gita—which I called the quintessence of Hinduism. The Gita is the foremost of Hindu scriptures, read and recited by millions of Hindus. It has been translated into many languages by hundreds of scholars, both ancient and modern. The Gita is a gospel addressed, not to the theologian or hermit, but to the common man, to the ordinary citizen living in society and who is seeking to know his duties in everyday life.

It was in the Epic age, by which is meant the age of the Ramayana and Mahabharata, that the Bhagavad Gita came into existence. No researcher has succeeded in ascertaining its authorship or its date. It might well have been as recent as the second century B. C. according to some, and as old as five thousand years according to others. In the Epic age the Hindu scheme of life was expressed by the formula “Dharmarthakamamoksha” — Dharma (duty), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire), Moksha (liberation). The first three constitute the path to Pravritti

(active life) and have to be gained by man living in society. He has to discharge his duties as a member of his family and as a citizen; he has to acquire wealth, gratify his normal desires, practice virtue and seek salvation. The final stage is one for which the three earlier ones are a preparation. As the first three are known as "Pravritti," the last one is its opposite or Nivritti—or complete surrender—Moksha (liberation). Thus the Hindu conception of life does no violence either to the flesh or to the spirit. Manu the first Hindu writer of laws took into account both Pravritti and Nivritti, both active life and liberation from human bondage, in prescribing his legal code.

In accordance with the scheme of life thus expounded, domestic virtues were glorified and a philosophy of action was prescribed for every man. In the epics, ideal types of character representing all stages of "Dharmarthakamamoksha" were personified in grandeur and set as examples. The ideal father, the devoted husband, the loyal brother, the disciplined student, the perfect wife, the dependable friend, the righteous citizen—all find illustrations among the characters of the Epics. Thus the abstractions of the Upanishads are incarnated in types as well as individuals. In the Ramayana the evolution of the individual is sketched in brief pithy verses.

In one of the sagas called Raghuvamsha, a king is described as having conquered all the world and all its wealth, and finally it dawned on him that wealth is meant not for acquisition but for distribution. The joy of renouncing one's wealth is described as being a million times more exhilarating than the pleasures of acquisition.

To return to the Bhagavad Gita—the Lord of the Uni-

verse, the Isvara as described in it, becomes a personal God who upholds the order of the Universe and responds at all times to his devotees. He assures us that in times of universal decadence He appears as an Avatar or incarnation to protect righteousness and root out unrighteousness.

The Bhagavad Gita is an episode in the didactic epic known as the Mahabharata. The Pandavas and the Kauravas—two rival groups of warriors are arrayed against each other on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Arjuna, one of the five Pandava brothers, sees in front of him his kinsmen, friends and other citizens whom he has to kill, and he is overcome with grief at the very thought of his impending actions. He drops his bow and arrows and turns to his charioteer, who is no less than the Lord Krishna himself and tells him, "O Krishna, draw up my chariot between the two armies; and I will look on these men with whom I must contend." Then saw Arjuna standing there, fathers, grandfathers, teachers, uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons and comrades. He was overcome with great compassion and said these words in sadness: "When I see these men drawn up and eager for fight, O Krishna, my limbs give way, my mouth is parched, my body trembles, my hair stands on end; my bow slips from my hand and my skin burns all over. I am not able to stand, my mind is reeling. I see adverse omens and I do not expect any good in slaying my kinsmen. I desire no victory, O Krishna, nor dominion, nor pleasures. Of what use is the kingdom to me, O Krishna, or enjoyment of pleasure or even life itself?"

At this dramatic moment begins a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, between the charioteer and the war-

rior, between Narayana (God) and Nara (Man). The theme of the dialogue is knowledge as applied to action. Arjuna is the hero of the Epic and the chosen instrument of divine justice. At the critical moment when he has to be the instrument of divine justice in wiping out evil and unrighteousness, he falters and hesitates to obey the stern call of duty. The message of the Gita is an epitome of the Upanishads. "He from whom all beings proceed and by whom all this is pervaded—by worshipping Him throughout the performance of his own duty, does man attain perfection." The emphasis is on the performance of one's duty as the only means to spiritual vision and inner happiness. The Gita compares spiritual joy to a hill-top of serene contemplation, but the pilgrim can reach the top only through an active life of service beginning at the base. Throughout the Gita there is frequent use of the word "Yoga" which has been variously interpreted and often misinterpreted. Yoga in simple words means "spiritual life." Yoga is none other than fellowship with God through service, devotion and contemplation. In the 700 verses of the Gita, the word yoga is frequently used. The gospel is called "Yogasastra." The God of the Gita is known as "Yogeshwara" and the perfect man it describes is called a "Yogin."

The Gita is addressed essentially to the layman, and man in quest of the Divine Law has followed rituals, performed sacrifices, adopted popular forms of worship, undertaken severe penances and sought asceticism. The divine law-giver takes each one by the hand and leads him gently towards understanding all these ways. Rituals may be performed but they should serve to purify the heart. Sacrifices should be of the spirit and not merely of physi-

cal objects. Popular deities may be worshipped but the worshipper should know that they are only partial aids to the understanding of the transcendental Being. Spiritual concentration should not demand torture of the body. All these different approaches are only means to an end which is fellowship with God. "Yagya" or sacrifice cannot be obtained through mere sacrifice of material objects. A life of self-control is a sacrifice; a life of disinterested scholarship is also a sacrifice; a life of action or contemplation may be turned into a sacrifice. The ideal yogin does not have to cease to be a man of the world. He becomes a man of God. To the man of action who conducts himself according to the spirit, there is no such thing as failure in life. The yogin does not have to aspire towards reaching heaven; he creates his own heaven. The philosophy of detachment from pleasures and pains of life is only the negative side of the yogin's outlook, the positive side is attachment to God. Equanimity before the pairs of opposites—pleasure and pain, heat and cold, success and failure, gain and loss, joy and sorrow may make a stoic philosopher capable of looking at life as being all vanity, but the yogin of the Gita attains something greater—illumination by Divine Grace.

Again, the Gita is not a mere gospel of humanitarian work or social service. Service to mankind cannot take the place of God. The yogin must first be a servant of God before he becomes a servant of his fellow-man. At the same time mere renunciation of the world will not make a man of God. So the central theme of the Gita is that we should learn to live in the world without becoming worldly as a lotus leaf lives in the water without becoming wet.

Each of the eighteen chapters of the Gita is called "Yo-

ga-Sastra" which means the Gospel of Spiritual Life. According to this Gospel, real happiness is to be gained through consciousness of God through service, love and knowledge. A modern interpreter has summed up the Natural Law of the Gita thus: "When a man eradicates his desires based on the delusive notion of a separate self and trains his heart to flow out in love and sympathy towards all beings, and looks upon the faithful discharge of his desires as the highest form of the worship of God, he treads the path of light which leads him to his true home. On the other hand, if he cherishes his desires and hugs the delusion that he is a separate individual with interests of his own, always in opposition to those of others, and looks upon his duties as only means of self-assertion, and self-aggrandisement, he treads the path of darkness and wanders aimlessly in the world of change and mutability."

In India the problems of religion and philosophy have occupied for centuries a vital place in national life. Religious teachers of all times have attempted to solve the riddle of existence. The greatness of India's thinkers is that the religious teachers struggled persistently, often successfully, to discover fundamental truths which enlarge the mind and add beauty to life.

At no time in the history of man is a rediscovery and re-statement of Natural Law more urgent than it is today. Schopenhauer in one of his bitter moments of disillusion wrote: "The wise men of all ages have always said the same things; and the fools of all ages have always done the same things—that is, the opposite of what the wise men have said—and we shall perhaps leave this world just as stupid and as bad as we found it when we came here." There is both despair and defeatism in such a pronounce-

ment. Man cannot exist with spiritual gloom surrounding him. There is, therefore, an imperative need for a re-emphasis of the Hindu ideal of "Dharmarthakamamoksha" in a world torn by tyranny, class war, intolerance, regimentation, greed and power-consciousness. In the ultimate reality, the individual soul is greater than all the groups, organizations, states and communities of men. If the laws of men corrupt the soul of man besides dominating his body, man has the righteous duty to rebel against such laws and reassert the natural laws of his Maker. The story of man is filled with many illustrious examples of great souls who lived in accordance with the principles of Natural Law. The history of Hinduism is no exception to this. In our own times the lives of the great Hindu thinkers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Ram Thirtha, Swami Vivekananda, Mrs. Annie Besant of the Theosophical Society, Sri Arambindo Gosh, Rabindranath Tagore and lastly, the greatest of them all, Mahatma Gandhi, are immortal examples of persons who preached and practiced Natural Law.

It may not be inappropriate to say here that what is generally called "Gandhism" in India was nothing more than adherence to Natural Law in every respect. Gandhi campaigned all his life not only against the injustices perpetrated by alien rule over his people, but he carried on a ceaseless war against all forms of man's inhumanity to man. He attacked the institution of untouchability which had crept into Hinduism through centuries of false practices and he named the untouchable, "Harijan." Here is what he said: "I am delighted to adopt that word which is sanctified by such a great Saint, but it has for me a deeper meaning than you may imagine. The 'untouch-

able' to me is, compared to us, really a 'Harijan'—a man of God and we are 'Durjan,' men of evil. For whilst the untouchable has toiled and worked and dirtied his hands so that we may live in comfort and cleanliness, we have delighted in suppressing him."

If today 40 million so called untouchables of yesterday could talk with dignity with their heads erect and obtain equal rights and opportunities with their fellowmen in their country, it is entirely due to this one man's untiring devotion to Natural Law—his adherence to the dignity of the soul of man.

Gandhi propounded two simple principles of conduct for every man of God—Truth and Non-violence—"Satya" and "Ahimsa." He wrote in his weekly paper, *Young India*: "My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh; I have no desire for the perishable Kingdom of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven, which is Moksha. To attain my end, it is not necessary for me to seek the shelter of the cave. I carry one about me if I would but know it. My patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the eternal land of freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death trap, because they kill the soul."

In another memorable passage on the theme of Ahimsa: "Non-violence is a perfect state. It is a goal towards which all mankind moves naturally though unconsciously. Man does not become divine when he personifies innocence in himself. Only then does he become truly man. In our present state we are partly men and partly beasts, and in our ignorance and even arrogance say that we truly fulfill the purpose of our species, when we deliver blow for

blow and develop the measure of anger required for the purpose. We pretend to believe that retaliation is the law of our being, whereas in every scripture we find that retaliation is nowhere obligatory but only permissible. It is restraint that is obligatory. Retaliation is indulgence requiring elaborate regulating. Restraint is the law of our being. For highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint. Suffering is thus the badge of the human tribe."

I have digressed somewhat on the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi with a view to illustrating that Hinduism has continued to be a dynamic force through the centuries, and has survived as one of the greatest schools of thought because of its highest moral laws and ethical codes. Gandhi would have been inconceivable except through Hinduism.

To the millions of my countrymen today the three lines of the immemorial Upanishads serve yet as a living guide to all their actions and bring solace to all their thoughts. They are constantly repeated by the wise and the ignorant, the educated and the illiterate:—

"Lead me from falsehood unto Truth!
Lead me from Evil unto the Good!
Lead me from Death unto Immortality!"

The poet of our times, Rabindranath Tagore, only paraphrases this simple thought in his prayerful song as follows:

"Life of my life, I shall ever try to
keep my body pure, knowing that thy
living touch is upon all my limbs.

"I shall ever try to keep all untruths
out from my thoughts, knowing
that thou art that truth which has
kindled the light of reason in my mind.

"I shall ever try to drive all evils
away from my heart and keep my love in
flower, knowing that thou hast thy seat
in the inmost shrine of my heart.

"And it shall be my endeavor to reveal
thee in my actions, knowing it is
thy power gives me strength to act."