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GURU GOBIND SINGH
(1666-1708)

by

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FOREWORD

I am happy to associate myself with this brief but a most illuminating exposition of Guru Gobind Singh's life and mission by Professor S. K. Chatterji. He looks upon the Guru justly as "one of the greatest men of history" who inculcated in his people an absolute fearlessness in the face of death. The ideal preached by Krishna became the ideal of Guru Gobind Singh whose mission was to protect the good people and to destroy the evil-doers. At the same time he preached the ideal of utmost humility and gentleness.

Professor S. K. Chatterji succeeds in placing Guru Gobind Singh in the context of Indian history to bring out the full significance of his teachings. India's contribution to civilization has been essentially in the realm of intellectual and moral approaches to the problems of existence and in the way of living. Amidst the fundamental unity of Indian thought, a brilliant succession of its exponents appeared to lay varying emphasis on thought and action; and Guru Gobind Singh occupies a pre-eminent place among those heroes of Indian history. His message was meant not only for his own people but also for Humanity at large. With his high ideals of heroism, knowledge and wisdom and his work for the uplift of a whole people, Guru Gobind Singh's life reads

like a grim and terrible romance of an incessant fight against heavy odds. But this romance is also lightened up by the serene and sweet reasonableness of his personality, the glory of his firm faith in God, his solicitude for the down-trodden and the loyalty and devotion of his followers.

Guru Gobind Singh of Professor S. K. Chatterji's presentation can indeed be looked upon as "a special emanation or manifestation of the Glory that is God".

CHANDIGARH
March 31, 1967

Suraj Bhan
VICE-CHANCELLOR
Panjab University

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1. Seers and Saints and Men of Action in India

India, ever since the formation of her culture and the establishment of her distinctive *Weltanschauung*, her View of the World with her Way of Thought and her Way of Life, has acquired her place in the forefront of Civilised Peoples and her "Seniority among the Nations of the World". Her place of Seniority has been given to her because of her services to the nations not so much in their mundane affairs, but rather in the direction of the things of the mind and the spirit—in bringing to Man the sense as well as the need for certain intellectual and moral approaches in the problems of existence and in the way of living. One may say that she has sought to be of help to Humanity in the direction of the *good*

life rather than of *good living*. A Sense of an Unseen Reality as One Single Principle working through the whole of Existence, which urges upon Man to go to the Fundamentals and rise above the Accidentals, with Intellectualism, Universalism and Imaginativeness being looked upon as the only proper ways of guiding our relations among ourselves, and a Spirit of Tolerance and Acceptance, of Integration and not Segregation, of Inclusiveness and Synthesis keeping an eye on the Fundamentals—these are among the characteristic expressions of the Indian View of the World.

This has been sought to be inculcated in their lives and their teachings by the long succession of Indian thinkers and teachers as well as Indian men of action, ever since the formation of the Ancient Indian or Hindu people with its threefold philosophical-cum-religious attitude—the Brahmanical, the Jaina and the Buddhist. Each of these thinkers and men of action in his own way enunciated and promulgated through his disciples or followers some aspect or other of the basic philosophy of India ; and in the midst of the Fundamental Unity of Indian Thought, there developed variations of emphasis on thinking as well as acting. These variations which have their validity because of their inevitability under the force of the circumstances—“the compulsion of events in history” as it has been said—have lent diversity of texture, colour and pattern in the single stuff of Indian experience and expression in thought

and action and in Indian culture as a sum-total. Beginning with the unknown pre-Aryan sages, some of whose lines of thinking undoubtedly survive in later Indian life and thought, and the Aryan seers and poets, the Rishis of the Vedas, and through historical personages—teachers, sages and saints, and kings and leaders of men in ancient and medieval times—the traditions of the Indian Way of Thinking and the Indian Way of Living have been built up and were developed from century to century, and became accepted by a growing population with a mixed origin and with diversities of speech, race and culture ; and these traditions also spread to lands outside of India—to Ceylon, to Burma and Indo-China and Indonesia, to China, Korea and Japan, to Tibet and Mongolia, to the various peoples of Central Asia, and partly also to Iran and the lands of the Near East.

Many of these historical personages of India, leaders in thought and action, have been almost translated into the region of myth and legend ; and their historicity, which is so very vital, palpable and personal in their teachings, has been almost wholly and irrevocably covered up by the masses of floral tributes of deification and adoration which have been heaped upon them. We then have the great leaders of the Indian people in recent centuries, whose memory as great men is still green and fresh. What a long and a precious Roll of Honour India has in this list, leaving aside names

which have been submerged or obscured in the waters and mists of pre-history ! We may mention Krishna, Vyasa, Arishtanemi, the Sages of the Upanishads, Mahavira, Buddha, Panini, Valmiki, Pradyota, Udayana, Mahapadma Nanda, Chandragupta Maurya, Chanakya, Asoka, Charaka, Susruta, Patanjali, Salivahana, Kumara-jiva (of Kucha), Chandragupta Vikramaditya, Harsha-var dhana, Vasubandhu, Dharmakirti, Sankaracharya, Ramanuja, Rajendra Chola, Prithwiraj Chauhan, Jnaneswara, Bukkaraya, Sayanacharya, Krishnadeva Raya, Chaitanya, Sankaradeva, Nanak, Guru Arjun, Akbar, Dara Shikoh, Samartha Ramadas, Sivaji, Tukaram, Zainu-l-Abidin, Guru Gobind Singh, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Mohandas Gandhi, Subhas Chandra Bose, and a number of others, only less eminent. They have all extended the horizon of the experience of men and women of India, and have brought in newer additions to Indian culture or have helped to conserve its elements of universal and permanent value; and in both these ways, they have helped to expand and to strengthen the Indian cultural heritage.

In the Roll of Honour for India mentioned above, we have both Men of Thought and Men of Action, and there are some who were both. Perhaps the most satisfactory definition of Culture is that by Whitehead,

which says that "Culture is Thought in Action, suffused by Humane Sentiments". In Culture, as the finer fruit of Civilisation, there must be in the first instance thought, or intellection, which is to be translated into action, and both this thought and action must have a feeling for and reference to Man in his well-being and his fulfilment. The Bhagavad Gita in its last verse says that for the fullest human achievement in life, there must first be the wise man's thought and guidance, and then there can be the man of action's accomplishment. Krishna (10th century B.C., according to a sober estimate of his date which seems to be acceptable), who stands at the head of the heroes of history in India, was both a thinker and a man of action, and his guidance enabled Arjuna, the Pandava hero, to bring about the final victory over the Kauravas, which was the great purpose of the Mahabharata conflict. We need not take up the case of all the great men of history in India who represent the sum-total of India's contribution to the well-being or happiness of mankind. The name and fame of some of them have already spread to lands outside of India, and they are already recognised as the world's greatest, like Buddha, Chandragupta Maurya, Asoka, Akbar, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishana Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore. With the closer study of Ancient Indian History and Indian Philosophy, others are coming to their own, like e.g., Krishna, whose position in the Indian scene and even for the entire world (as the promulgator of the philosophy of the Gita) is slowly coming

to be realised and recognised. Others, although well-known within the boundaries of India and universally respected among their own people, have also almost a world significance, provided we could form a just and proper estimate of what they did and what they stood for, and how they have left their message not only for their own people but also for Humanity at large.

2. The Place of Guru Gobind Singh among the Heroes of India : An Estimate of his Personality and Achievement

Among such heroes of Indian history, who were pre-eminently men of action and whose lives were a proof of their greatness, two of the most outstanding were Sivaji of Maharashtra and Guru Gobind Singh of Panjab (Madradesa). Both of them were courageous fighters for a noble cause, and both of them were inspired by the highest of ideals both patriotic and humanitarian, and both of them were of the same heroic mould, and we have to honour them equally well. They were contemporaries, both of them flourishing in the 17th century, and had in certain respects parallel careers. Sivaji finally saw success in his life, and he built up a strong and free Hindudom, although it was not exactly what he had been striving for during all his life, namely, to rid his country of Muslim aggression and Muslim tyranny (although this was already some four centuries old in India). Guru Gobind

Singh's life was one of a supreme struggle against odds and it was a life full of most poignant tragedies, and circumstances made it a life of frustration when we think of his mundane achievements. Guru Gobind Singh was nevertheless a *Full Man*—an *Insān al-Kāmil*, as the Sufis say, a *Pūrṇa Mānava*, if we consider his many-sided personality, his wide and varied experience, and the variety and extent of his actions in life. A religious teacher and a philosopher, he was also a soldier and a leader of his people who was to be their saviour against tyranny and destruction ; and besides, he was a poet and a scholar, and a mystic as well as a practical reformer. The many facets of his character and his work in life we cannot all understand, but the glory and grandeur are there. Within the brief span of 42 years of a most eventful life, his achievements in their various aspects will recall those of not only Sivaji but also of Sankaracharya and Vivekananda in India, and of a great Man of Action like Alexander the Great of Ancient Greece who also had an universalised spirit. To quote one of our most erudite present-day historians of India seeking to give a brief estimate of what he stood for and what he did :

It is undeniable that Guru Gobind Singh must be counted among the greatest of Indians of all ages. "The object he attempted was great and laudable. It was the emancipation of his tribe from oppression and persecution ; and the means which he adopted, were such as a comprehensive mind could alone have suggested". To an atmosphere of gloom and degradation he brought a message of hope and deliverance, and a will to

do or to die. He not only brought into being a moral force of an intensely dynamic character but was careful to harness to it as much of material assistance as he possibly could. He was a saint as well as a soldier and his ideal was a brotherhood of soldier-saints. As he himself said, he bore no enmity to any one but he was the eternal enemy of tyranny and oppression, whatever might be their brand or form. He had declared on them a never-ending war and created the Khalsa to carry it on..... Whatever else he might have been, Guru Gobind Singh was first and foremost a great religious leader. None but a person of a saintly disposition, highly spiritual and with a complete resignation to the will of God, could have behaved as he did during the most acute crisis of his life. Leaving his home and everything in the hands of the enemy he bids farewell to Anandpur, and with his ranks depleted and his family dispersed, his wives going in one direction and his mother with his two younger sons he knew not where, he arrives at Chamkaur and is at once surrounded by the Moghals and the Hill Chiefs. After a superhuman fight against the heaviest of odds, in which he sees his two dearest sons and his chosen companions fall one after another before his very eyes, he stealthily leaves the place and for some time is hunted like a wild animal, now escaping in one disguise and now in another, when news arrives of the barbarous and brutal murder of his two younger sons and the no less tragic death of his mother. He faces all this with the most supreme composure and serenely goes on with his work as if nothing has happened. He compiles a new recension of the *Granth Sahib*, adds to it his own compositions, and busies himself in laying strong the

foundations of Sikhism in the Malwa tract. Certainly, no mere politician or soldier could have done it. It is significant that after a very close contact with the Guru for more than a year Bahadur Shah treated him as a *darvesh* and ordered the considerable movable property left by him to be relinquished to the heirs, though, according to rule, it ought to have been confiscated. It is thus clear that the predominant trait in the Guru's character was that he was a man of God, and it is unthinkable that such a man, a man who had preached that—

“the temple and the mosque are the same, the Hindu worship and the Musalman prayer are the same, all men are the same: it is through error they appear different. . . . Musalmans and Hindus adopt the customary dress of their different countries”

could have been the sworn enemy of a community or a class. We would repeat again that there is nothing in the Guru's life and writings to support any such conclusion. The only thing that may be mentioned is the vendetta that he pursued against Wazir Khan of Sarhind, but that was a different matter altogether, for to let Wazir Khan go unpunished would have been to deny the very basis of his creed.

The Guru was thus, first and foremost, a man of religion, but he was also a man of many-sided attainments of which it is difficult to find a parallel. He was a poet of no mean order, and though tradition affirms that a substantial portion of his works was lost in the Sarsa at the time of his retreat from Anandpur to Chamkaur, what survived is enough to establish his claims as a litterateur. It has been said that some of his works “deserve the highest place in the ranks of Hindi poetry

of the narrative and epic kind", but more striking is the fact how thoroughly the Guru had realised what a vital part literature could be made to play in rousing the dormant energies of a vanquished and a degraded people. The stories from the old Sanskrit literature that he popularised in Hindi served as an effective handmaid to his constructive work, and, at the same time, created a demand for literacy and education among his followers.....

That Guru Gobind Singh was a great soldier and a great general would perhaps be denied by none who is even cursorily acquainted with the story of his military adventures. In the *Bachitra Natak* the Guru is rather modest with regard to his own performances, and, as is to be expected, attributes his successes to the will of the Almighty, but from what little he says, it is not difficult to see what an accomplished archer he was and how unperturbed and dauntless he could be even in the midst of raining death.....

He brought a new people into being and realised a new dynamic force into the arena of Indian History. What that force accomplished is a matter of history, but what is not so well-known are the diverse ways in which it sought to uplift the depressed and the down-trodden....

Guru Gobind Singh's handiwork, viz. the Khalsa, carved its way to renown and glory and played a noble part in the arena of Indian history. To our mind the Khalsa's greatest contribution to the cause of India was the wresting of the Panjab and the adjoining lands up to the frontier from the clutches of the Afghans. It is not improbable that if they had not done so, some of these tracts might have been lost, even geographically, to India, as some other tracts had been in the past.

The Guru's followers kept the frontier intact, and no service could have been greater. Their political creations have long gone the way of things human and they have passed through many ebbs and tides, but even now, when they constitute roughly only one per cent of the people of India, they hold a position and they wield an influence entirely out of proportion to their numbers. All this they primarily owe to the spirit of rectitude and self-sacrifice, of discipline and God-mindedness, that their Guru had instilled into them ; and their salvation in the future lies, as it lay in the past, in an unfailing adherence to the ideals of their founder.

(The Late Prof. Indu Bhushan Banerji's *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol. II, 2nd Edition, Calcutta 1962, pp. 156-162).

3. Sankaracharya, Vivekananda, Guru Gobind Singh

Guru Gobind Singh, when we consider the shortness of his life, at once brings to our mind two other great heroes of India, heroes of both thought and action who achieved wonders although they did not live long. One was Sankaracharya, who lived only for 32 years (c. 800 A.D.— ? 788-820 A.D.), and the other was Swami Vivekananda, who passed away in 1902 at the age of 39.

Sankaracharya saved for India and the world the basic teaching of the Vedanta, as in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma-Sutras, which formed the most precious heritage of India's thought and spirituality, and he interpreted it from the point of

view of Absolute Monism. He organised Brahmanical Hindu Society, i.e. the Society which certainly formed the main or central stream of ancient Indian life and culture, namely, that which was based on the tradition of the Vedas (including the Upanishads) and the Puranas. There were other streams also, e.g. those of Jainism and Buddhism (both Mahayana and Hinayana), but these were in their basic spirit, as well as in their higher philosophy, not different from Brahmanical Hinduism, although their dialectics were separate and they brought in a more democratic point of view. But it was Sankaracharya who, in addition to his great contribution to the study of the Vedanta, brought about a revival of Hindu life as centred in the Vedas and the Puranas, and who through his establishment of the order of the Vedanta monks (the *Daśa-nāmi Sannyāsis*) did the greatest service in bringing about the ideological, cultural and even political unification of India. This was after the threatened fragmentation of Indian life and ethos by rival philosophical schools and sectarian groups with their centrifugal tendencies, supported by foreign incursions and invasions, political as well as religious, of all sorts—Saka and other Iranian and Hun and Turk. By his institution of the four great Vedantic shrines and monasteries in the four corners of India, with a constant flow of scholarly monks all through the country, and by his peregrinations (aptly called *Saṅkara-vijaya* or “Triumph of Sankara”) throughout the length and breadth of India, in the course of which he re-established the value of

pilgrimage to shrines of all-India sanctity for the spiritual, cultural as well as political unity of India—the four *dhāmas* (Kedaranath and Badarinath in the Himalayas, Puri in Eastern India, Dwaraka in Western India, and Rameswaram in South India), the seven *puris* or sacred cities (Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya or Haridwara, Kasi or Banaras, Kanchi or Conjeevaram, Avantika or Ujjain and Dvaravati or Dwaraka), the seven rivers (Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu or the Indus, and Kaveri), besides other shrines like the five Saiva shrines of South India, embodying the five elements (Kanchipuram, Jambukeswara, Tiruvannamalai, Kalahasti and Madurai), and the eleven *Jyotirlinga* shrines in other parts of India. All these, together with the great pan—Indian fasts, feasts and festivals, which came in the wake of this re-organisation, like *Janmashtami* (or Birthday of Krishna), *Rama-navami* (or the Birthday of Rama), *Siva-chaturdasi*, *Durgashtami*, *Dipavali*, etc. made the people of India conscious more than ever of the fundamental unity of their country in its history, its religion and its culture.

There is no evidence of Sankaracharya interesting himself in economic and other uplift of the masses in the material sphere. Probably, the times being different, the question of exploitation of the agriculturist and other working classes was not then a burning socio-economic question. Forest land and land for cultivation were there in plenty for the needs of the people,

and their needs were not many, and there was elbow-room for a scanty population which wanted expansion. The simple needs of the people were easily supplied by what agriculture was practised, and there were the herds and flocks, and simple village crafts for the people. Sankaracharya's concern was for the complete fulfilment of this simple village life with a sense of philosophy and a sense of romance through mythology and legendary history, strengthened by travel and pilgrimage.

Similarly Swami Vivekananda brought about a revolution in the Hindu and other Indian approach to the historic development of Indian religion in its origins and its subsequent progress. The times were different in 19th century India compared with India of the 8th-9th and India of the 17th-18th centuries. Swami Vivekananda was actuated by two urges—a spiritual urge, due to his not being able for many years to solve for himself the meaning of life ; and a social and humanitarian urge, brought home to him by the appalling poverty of the working classes and the callousness of some of the upper classes with their criminally ignorant neglect of the lower classes. Through the teaching of his master Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda's spiritual problems could be solved through Vedanta with its acceptance of the One in the midst of the Many, and in the inner harmony of the One and the Many. He was thus able, after he was convinced of it himself both in his mind and in his heart, to give an interpretation of his Hindu religion and

faith in a way never attempted before. This interpretation was wholly convincing as something both factually and ideologically correct, and also as something which was borne out by history. By his preaching and writing, with both logic and authority of realisation, he was able to establish this interpretation not only for his own people but also for non-Indians who felt the urge for the deeper things of life and were searching for a logical basis for faith—which would be all-embracing. As a humanitarian, Vivekananda shone equally well as one of the greatest and most warm-hearted champions of the suppressed and down-trodden masses, and he sought to whip up the conscience of the Hindu upper classes to make them feel their responsibilities and take up their fulfilment. Like a Man of both Thought and Action, he in the first instance taught his own people and the world at large Religion at its most inclusive comprehensiveness, removed from the exclusiveness of narrow sectarian ideas, and from myth and dogma which covered the face of Truth. He had acceptance for everything that would conduce to the good life; and in this way, with the background of the ancient Indian Vedānta, he preached *Sanātana Dharma*, the “Perennial Philosophy” as it has been Englished by Aldous Huxley, which is the core of all religion. In the second instance, as a Man of Action, he strove to bring about the uplift of the masses. This work he attempted to do through his organisation of the Ramakrishna Mission, by bringing about quite a revolution in organised monastic life by making social

service one of its basic charges. His life, although circumstances did not make it necessary for him as in the case of Sivaji and Guru Gobind Singh to take to warfare, was equally the life of a Fighter and a Hero, a Reformer and an Organiser as much as that of a Saint, a Sage and Teacher. He did in the course of the 39 years of his fruitful life something comparable to what Sankaracharya did in his own life of the Philosopher and Sage, and Revivalist and Organiser.

4. Guru Gobind Singh's Life and Work

Guru Gobind Singh was a spiritual hero of the same type as Sankaracharya and Vivekananda, but his was certainly a fuller and a more crowded life. And how much did he achieve during these 42 eventful years ! Undoubtedly he succeeded in transforming a supine and a frustrated people who had resigned themselves to a defeatist mentality and had accepted the despicable role of fatalists who dared not stand up and exert themselves into a race of fighters and heroes who became conscious of the great destiny which their religion, if only they understood it properly and followed its great teaching sincerely, held before them. But the ideology of their Faith became, through Guru Gobind Singh's teachings, like the lightening from the Heaven, which infused into a race of people almost dead a new life and new spirit of standing up and fighting. Sister Nivedita, the great Irish disciple of Swami Vivekananda and the carrier of his banner after his demise, had declared that Vivekananda had

brought in an *Aggressive Hinduism* in place of the Hinduism as it was before his time—merely a religion which appeared to be as complex in its Ideology as it was weak in its Social Organisation, and was a religion on the retreat. Guru Gobind Singh, during the second half of the 17th century, found that through the merciless onslaughts of the kind of Islam which was believed in, preached and practised by Aurangzeb and his followers, and through inner disorder and decay in Hindu life which was sought to be stemmed by the great Indian Saints and Teachers from after the coming of Islam in India, particularly by Guru Nanak and the great teachers of the Sikh faith, the Hindus as a people had almost lost heart and were mostly on the defensive. They were slowly and inevitably being reduced to the position of helots, always at the mercy of arrogant and intolerant bigots. To rouse them up and to put heart in them, and to make them men of steel through a knowledge of the Truth, was Guru Gobind's heaven-appointed task. And he succeeded in this, and worked a miracle. From a people who were just peaceful, harmless and innocent *Bairāgis* or mendicants who had abandoned the love of life and who would be inclined only to retire before intolerance and tyranny with as much grace as they could, who were just *Sikhs* or “disciples” of a spiritual teacher—“the people who were taught” (*Saikshya—Sekkha—Sikkh, Sikh*)—from a people who in their helplessness were like cattle or sheep, Guru Gobind Singh created a race of *Singhs* or “Lions”, men who

were of an iron will and who gave resistance and stood up for their elementary rights as men and women, which religious fanaticism was determined to destroy.

This was his first great achievement, and his life gives us the story of how he did it. The scion of a house of peaceful and peace-loving religious teachers, he realised from his childhood that he was living in troublesome times, where civilised life in the spiritual plane was being made impossible through ideological bigotry and through a savagery of ways brought about by the pack-instinct of wolves which characterised foreign conquest at the outset and subsequent rule in succeeding generations. And his determination to hold his head high and to fight the evil was manifest from his boyhood. There is the story how in Patna when his mother and grand-mother feared that he might be made the victim of the wrath of a vindictive Muslim officer, he blurted out, *Kyā, main Turukan-te dar pāūn ?* "What, am I afraid of the Turks ?" His father, Guru Tegh Bahadur (who was martyred in Delhi in 1675 by being beheaded under the orders of Aurangzeb) went in 1665 to Eastern India, to Bihar, Bengal and Assam, in the company of Ram Singh, Ruler of Jaipur who respected him and wanted to protect him. Ram Singh was commissioned by his master the emperor Aurangzeb to effect the subjugation of Assam, still an independent Hindu state, where his great general Mir Jumla had failed. Guru Tegh Bahadur himself also wished to visit Assam where

there were some Nanak-Panthis, whose ancestors were disciples of Guru Nanak when the latter had come to Kamrup or Assam in the course of his peregrinations. Possibly also Ram Singh wanted to keep him out of the harm's way and mischief from Aurangzeb's hostility. Guru Tegh Bahadur left his family at Patna with some of his followers, as he did not wish to take his mother and his wife in the hazardous journey with a campaigning army. At Patna was born in 1666 his son Gobind Rai, later Guru Gobind Singh, the founder of the *Khalsa*, who revolutionised the peaceful Nanak-Panthi or Sikh religious organisation founded by Guru Nanak into that of the fighting Sikhs who henceforth all bore the surname of *Singh* or "Lion".

5. Aspects of Guru Gobind's Personality, Character and Ideals

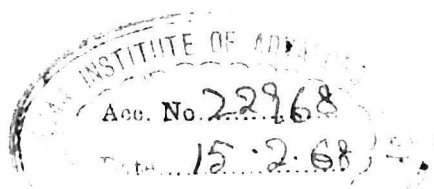
Guru Gobind Singh's life reads like a romance, but it was a grim and terrible romance of continuous fight to preserve a high ideal against heavy odds, lightened up only by the serenity and sweet reasonableness of his personality and the glory of his faith in God and by his solicitude for the down-trodden, as well as by the loyalty and devotion of his family and his followers. One of the greatest obstacles was from the Hindu Rajas of the Panjab Hills, who out of ignorance, jealousy and petty selfishness perpetually fought with him and would not let him rest in peace and do his constructive work in rehabilitating the suppressed

and down-trodden Hindu people. They were humbled on many an occasion by the superior wisdom and fighting trim of Guru Gobind Singh. But these Rajas proved to be traitors to their own people by invoking the aid of the Moguls to crush Guru Gobind. The Guru had built Anandpur as a great centre of his organisation, but ultimately he had to leave his home and every thing when completely surrounded by heavy odds, after he saw killed in battle before his eyes two of his four sons, Ajit Singh aged 18 and Zorawar Singh aged 15, besides some of his bravest Sikhs, who all died a hero's death fighting the enemy until they were cut down. His mother and two youngest sons, who had to seek refuge when he had himself to make his escape in disguise, were betrayed into the hands of the inimical Moguls. These two sons of the Guru, wonderfully brave and spirited boys worthy of their great father and their ancestors, spurned the offer to change their religion, and they stood firm in the midst of inhuman tortures before their being killed with the sword of a Pathan executioner. The names of these two boy martyrs, Jujhar Singh aged 9 and his brother Fateh Singh aged 7, like that of another Hindu (Sikh) boy martyr of the Panjab, Hakikat Rai of Sialkot, who was walled up alive in 1734, will forever remain most glorious in India's Roll of Honour, along with thousands of other Hindu and Sikh martyrs some of whose names are known but who have mostly remained unnamed.

After a number of hair-breadth escapes which

recall the similar episode in the life of Sivaji when he escaped from Agra from house-imprisonment under the orders of Aurangzeb (who had given him safe conduct for coming from the South to visit him), the Guru found himself in the Deccan. In his ways and his mental make-up a most devout Hindu whose spiritual illumination was primarily from the monotheistic creed of the Upanishads, the Guru showed his great mental sanity in not making a fetish of certain Hindu usages which also form part of Sikh life as being within the Hindu orbit—namely, the acceptance of the taboo against beef-eating. While escaping from the Moguls in disguise as a Muslim *Pir* or Religious Teacher, he with some of his Sikh followers was faced with eating beef offered him as a Muslim by the Moguls, and he made a virtue of necessity, and enjoined his followers to eat the forbidden food as he did himself. This incident speaks volumes about the mental clarity and the spirit of understanding as well as the power to distinguish essentials in religion from accidentals. Guru Gobind's great follower Banda Bahadur also emulated his master, and carried on the fight against the enemies of his people by eating beef which was thrown in derision to the besieged Sikhs in their fortress in which they were beleaguered before their final sortie and capture and wholesale martyrdom in cold blood.

Guru Gobind's letter to Aurangzeb, in 135 couplets in Persian, forming one of his most



passionate yet reasoned compositions, the *Zafar-nāma*, is a document which shows a most acute and intelligent mind, and stands out like two similar letters written also to Aurangzeb, one by Sivaji (also in Persian verse, addressed to Aurangzeb through Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur, the Mogul emperor's trusted Rajput General), and two other in Hindawi or Urdu prose by Maharana Raj Singh of Mewar. They form a charter of demands for liberty of conscience and of the right to get rid of religious and political bigotry and oppression. This letter reached Aurangzeb a year before his death. Its effect might be seen in some kind of change in Aurangzeb's inner consciousness, and his profound sense of frustration at the failure of his religious fanaticism and political policy which is expressed in one of his last and most intimate letters to his sons.

Guru Gobind's heroic action, and his faith and his great qualities as a man and as a religious leader, impressed Aurangzeb's son and successor (1707) Bahadur Shah, who sought to make some atonement for his father's treatment of the Hindus by receiving with utmost respect and kindness the Guru when they met, and by helping him to be established in the Deccan. But this was a short-lived respite, and soon after, in 1708, the Guru was fatally attacked by a Muslim assassain who had a personal vendetta for the death of his father in fights with the Sikhs. And so passed away, at the age of 42, one of the greatest men of history, when we consider his high ideals, his

wisdom and knowledge, his heroism, his sacrifices and his work for the uplift of a whole people,—all on the background of the high philosophy of life that is in the Vedanta of India.

As said before, his first great service was to organise his own people to close up their ranks, to prepare themselves and in the first instance to give resistance to the chronic oppression to which the Hindus were subjected by religious fanaticism and intolerance. *Nāyam ātmā bala-hinena labhyaḥ*—"one cannot realise his self if he is without strength"; and thus the Guru's first concern was to make the Hindu people strong in mind and will, and strong in body and in social organisation. To resist tyranny was a sacred duty. The duty of man living in a world suffering from the forces of oppression and tyranny was to offer resistance by force of arms—to use the sword when all other means failed, and not to look on helplessly and continue to suffer and even be annihilated. This was a travesty of the strong doctrine of *Ahimsa* as it was preached by the sages and saints and as it was practised by the heroes and men of action in Ancient India. The ideal preached by Krishna became emphatically the Guru's ideal: "God ever manifests himself to protect the good people, and to destroy the evil-doers" (*paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām, vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām*). God also calls upon man to do this as a duty: "Remember me, and fight" (*mām anusmara, yudhya ca*); and the Gita clearly declares that one must fight even one's dear and respected relations and

liquidate them if they are *ātatāyins*, i.e. if they are bent upon taking a person's life, seizing his land and possessions and molesting his women. It was the greatest evil of the age for his people which he must put an end to. The Guru spoke admiringly about his father for his martyrdom to save the Hindus : "He protected the frontal marks and the sacrificial threads of the Hindus and displayed great bravery in the Kali Age : he put an end to his life for the sake of holy men ; he suffered martyrdom for the sake of his religion". And Guru Gobind Singh succeeded in doing this, although he could not wholly attain to all his objectives. In spite of terrible persecutions and massacres, the people got back their spirit. And for the future also, the *Khalsa* became a guarantee for the revival of the mental and spiritual strength of the Hindus, and a strong bulwark against the oppression of tyranny and bigotry. Bhushan, the North Indian Hindi Poet, had written about Sivaji in the following terms : "If Sivaji did not come, then all the people would have been forced to be converted to Islam" (*Sivājī na hota, to sunnati hoti saba-kī*), and he praised Sivaji in this way: "You have preserved for the Hindus their top-knot (i.e. their religion), their daughters (the honour of their women) and their bread (economic life and wealth) : you have preserved the honour of the warriors" (*hinduana-kī coṭī beṭī roṭī rākhi, rākhi sipāhina-kī lāja*). The same encomium can be equally paid to Guru Gobind Singh.

Guru Gobind Singh was a soldier, he was also a poet of rare sensibility and talent. He wrote in a kind of Early Western Hindi mixed with his native dialect of

Panjabi, and this Early Hindi was the accepted speech of both wandering religious preachers and of warlike bards who accompanied Rajput rulers. His compositions form a sort of a supplement to the Sikh scriptures, the *Guru Granth* or the *Ādi Granth*, which was compiled in 1604 by the fifth Sikh Guru Arjan (Arjuna). Arjan collected devotional hymns, poems and distichs composed by all the Sikh Gurus from Nanak to himself, together with a mass of other similar religious poetry which was the work of earlier saints and teachers like Jayadeva, Ramananda, Namadeva, Kabir and others. After Arjan's compilation, verses by the other Gurus who came after him were also incorporated. But Guru Gobind Singh, who was a thorough democrat and believed implicitly in representative rule by the people, abolished the office of a hereditary or even an elected personal Guru in the Sikh set-up, and declared that after him there would be no living Guru for the Sikhs—the great book, the *Guru Granth* was to be their Guru or Teacher. His own position as the 10th and last Guru was recognised, and that is why he is called the *Dasam Pādshāh* or “the Tenth King”. The eleven works of poetry which emanated from Guru Gobind Singh, which to avoid the “cult of personality” he took care not to incorporate in the *Guru Granth*, has a separate place, not exactly as a supplement to the *Guru Granth*, and it is known as the *Dasam Pādshāh-kā Granth* “the Book of the Tenth King”.

Here we have a full insight into the mind of the

Guru. But still some matters, as sought to be explained by some of the present-day Sikh interpreters, remains obscure. This is my own personal conviction (after the slight reading I can claim of the writings of the Sikh Gurus, Guru Gobind Singh included,—reading mostly through English translations)—that, *pace* some present-day scholars, the basic point of view regarding the Hindu religion which the Gurus had was practically the same as taught and preached by Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. This point of view has been expressed in one line in the Rigveda *Ekam Sat, Viprā bahudhā vadanti* “That Which is, is One; Sages describe It in many ways”. There is the Unity of Monism or Monotheism which transcends the Many. But the One and the Many are the same, and the One can be approached through the Many. But the preference for the One, instead of being distracted (in the case of weaker intellects) by the Many, is a great personal factor, and it was also conditioned by circumstances of environment. The insistence on the One, and One only, was needed in India to meet the challenge of Islam. The faith in the Many became an error when it prevented higher understanding and degenerated into the practices both superstitious and corrupt, leading to the exploitation of the ignorant.

Hence the Sikh Gurus laid the greatest stress on the One, as they were faced with a life-and-death ideological fight with Islam. But they were mystics as well, and they understood that there may be

varieties of approach. Sufiistic Islam was liberal in the same way, and Sufiistic Islam mitigated to a great deal the exclusiveness and intolerance of Orthodox or Quranic Islam. But we are not sure to what extent there was toleration or permission allowed to the *Saguṇa* method of worship, the preliminary and temporary acceptance of the Many, as a preparation for the exclusively *Nirguṇa* approach. Hindu and Sikh tradition based on Guru Gobind's own composition the *Chaṇḍī-di-Vār* or "Praise of Chandi" (*i.e.* the Supreme Mother Goddess as Durga or the Goddess who destroys evil) would suggest that he permitted himself even as an experimentation in spiritual progress, at one time in his life at least, the *Saguṇa* worship, like orthodox Hindus. His implication was that he received from the Godhead conceived as the Destroyer of Evil the sword for defending his people against religious bigots and tyrants. Most Sikhs appear to have believed in this story : (cf. in this connexion the late Professor Indu Bhushan Banerji's *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol. II, pp. 97-108, "The Alleged Worship of Durga").

When he organised his *Khalsa*, as a Militant Body always ready to stand up against those who had been cruelly persecuting the people, and to fight with Evil, Guru Gobind Singh instituted the significant rite of *Pāhul* or Initiation. The story, a remarkably beautiful one with its symbolism, is well known. The double-edged Sword as a gift from Durga, Chandika Nayana Devi, or from God Almighty Himself, was

put in water in an iron vessel, and this changed the mere cold water into an elixir of power, which, when drunk by two sparrows, made them relentless fighters up to death attacking each other. Then before Guru Gobind could administer this miracle-working water to his initiates, his wife Mata Jitoji came with some *batasas* (sugar-plums), which the Guru took as a good omen, mixed them with the water, and declared that the strength and courage and spirit of dauntless fight which the holy water, as it was stirred by the divine sword, ensured, would now be sweetened by kindness and charity and all humane virtues. This, he declared, should be the character of his Sikhs, his disciples: Strength and Gentleness, Courage and Graciousness combined. And this was as great an ideal as we could imagine—the true spirit of the Kshatriya, the Knight with the spirit of Service. We may recall here one of Guru Gobind's own verses as to what he wanted from his disciples—

*pahile maraṇ kabūl, choṛo jīwan-dī ās:
ho sagalān-dī reṇukā, to āo hamāre pās:*

“First, accept death, and leave all hope of life; be like the dust (at the feet) of all ; and then come to me.” The Guru wanted both absolute fearlessness in the face of death, and at the same time the utmost humility and gentleness.

As a poet, and as a mystic as well as a scholar of philosophy who studied some of the basic works

of Hindudom, Guru Gobind brought out his own edition of the *Guru Granth*, and that shows his interest in giving to the followers of the *Panth* or the Sikh Way an authoritative edition of their basic scriptures which were for ever to act as their teacher in all matters of faith and life. But his own poetry is equally great, and shining. I shall give two examples (from the very fine work *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, compiled and translated by the Sikh scholars Dr. Trilochan Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh, Sri Kapur Singh, Bawa Harkishan Singh and Sri Khushwant Singh, and published under the auspices of the UNESCO, 1960) :

Page 269 : *jaise ek āg te kanukā koṭ āg uṭhai*

As out of a single fire
Millions of sparks arise ;
Arise in separation
But come together again
When they fall back in the fire.

As from a heap of dust
Grains of dust swept up
Fill the air, and filling it
Fall in a heap of dust.
As out of a single stream
Countless waves rise up
And, being water, fall
Back in water again.

So from God's form emerge
Alive and inanimate things
And since they arise from Him
They shall fall in Him again.

Page 270 : *khag khaṇḍ bihaṇḍan khal-dal-khaṇḍan*

Sword, that smiteth in a flash,
That scatters the armies of the wicked
In the great battlefield ;
O thou symbol of the brave.
Thine arm is irresistible, thy
brightness shineth forth,
The blaze of the splendour dazzling
like the sun.

Sword, thou art the protector of saints,
Thou art the scourge of the wicked ;
Scatterer of sinners I take refuge in
Thee.

Hail to the Creator, Saviour and
Sustainer,
Hail to Thee, Sword supreme.

7. Conclusion

The perusal of such a great life will be for any one an inspiration—a great spiritual experience which certainly will have an abiding influence in life. And this year, 1966, which witnesses the Third Birth Centenary of Sri Guru Gobind Singh, India is celebrating the greatness of his spirit as a grateful people, and all

right-thinking men and women who have faith in God as the God of all Men will admire his personality and his character. Some of the incidents in his life as a Soldier and as a Religious Man are well-known over a good part of India. His actual writings form a veritable continuation of the *Guru Granth*. The *Guru Granth* (*Ādi Granth*, or *Granth Sāhib*) can truly be described as a new *Rig-Veda Samhitā* for India, with the Gurus and some of the saints of medieval India as the *Rishis* who composed the songs and hymns in them, and with Guru Arjan as the Veda-Vyasa of the 16th-17th century who compiled them into a great book. Like the Veda, this book also is deeply and widely venerated. But Guru Gobind Singh's compositions should be better known, and it should be brought out in convenient editions in the Gurmukhi and in Nagari (or Roman) characters, with English translations, for all and sundry to read. The personality of the Guru, like that of the other great heroes in the fight for the spiritual, cultural and political emancipation and uplift of Hindudom and India (and through that, of all Suppressed Humanity), attracted most intensely the great Guru of Modern Times, the Poet and Thinker and Worker for the Social and Economic Uplift of the people, Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore. Rabindranath's stirring poems on the Sikh upsurge and on Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Bahadur, as much as those on Sivaji and the Maharashtrian heroes, are among the most remarkable and integrating compositions in Modern Indian literature, although Rabindra Nath's appraisal of the political

and military achievements of Sivaji and Guru Gobind Singh (given out in an essay) will not be wholly acceptable. I am indeed very happy to hear that in connexion with the Third Birth-Centenary of Guru Gobind Singh, these poems by Tagore, in the original Bengali in Gurmukhi characters, are going to be published with both Panjabi and English translations by Sikh scholars who know Bengali. The publication of the *Dasam Pādshāh-kā Granth* as suggested above will also be a desideratum, as a most fitting homage to the greatness of the Guru.

I close with a few verses in Sanskrit (given below in Roman as well as Nagari characters, with English translation) as an expression of my profound reverence for Guru Gobind Singh, who, because of his great powers (*vibhūti*), his beauty and grace (*śrī*), and his grandeur of temperament (*ūrjas*), in the words of the Gita, can be looked upon as a special emanation or manifestation of the Glory that is God (*tejo'mśa-sambhava*).

“Śrīmad-Guru-Govinda-Siṃha-Sloka-Ṣoḍaśī”

॥ श्रीमद्-गुरु-गोविन्द-सिंह-श्लोक-षोडशी ॥

(Sixteen Slokas in praise of His Holiness Guru Gobind Singh).

1. kṣātra-vīryāvatārāya Gītā-dharmaika-Mūrtaye/
prāṇa-saṅcārīṇe tebhyo ye'bhavan prāṇa-
varjitāḥ//

क्षत्र-वीर्यावताराय गीता-धर्मैक-मूर्तये ।
प्राण-संचारिणे तेभ्यो येऽभवन् प्राण-वर्जिताः ॥

To him who was the incarnation of heroic and
knightly prowess,
who was the very form of the ideals of the Gita ;
To him who infused life in those
who had become lifeless ;

2. gurave kavaye caiva jñāna-bhakti-prakāśine/
ṛṣaye hi navīnāya loka-dharma-vighoṣiṇe//
गुरवे कवये चैव ज्ञान-भक्ति-प्रकाशिने ।
ऋषये हि नवीनाय लोक-धर्म-विघोषिणे ॥

To the Master, and the Poet, who shed light on
knowledge and faith ;
To the Seer of the new age, who announced to the
World the path of righteousness ;

3. duṣṭa-damana-karmaṇi nirjitātma-sukhāya ca/
śrīmad-govinda-simhāya navya-śaikṣya-pravartine//
दुष्ट-दमन-कर्मणि निर्जितात्म-सुखाय च ।
श्रीमद्-गोविन्द-सिंहाय नव्य-शैक्ष्य-प्रवर्तिने ॥

To him who had risen above his own happiness
in the work of punishing evil-doers ;
To Sri Gobind Singh, who had initiated the new form
of the Sikh discipline—

4. sva-dharma-siddhaye yena putra-bhāgyam dhanam
sukham/
helayā vai parityaktam, tasmai sadā namo namaḥ//

स्व-धर्म-सिद्धये येन पुत्रभाग्यं धनं सुखम् ।

हेलया वै परित्यक्तं तस्मै सदा नमो नमः ॥

To him who, to attain the fulfilment of his own duties,
had given up without hesitancy the joy with
his sons, his wealth as well as his happiness—
Our salutations go to him ever and ever.

5. “Guru-grantha” iti Vedo dharma-vaktā yuge
kalau/
Nānakādi-muni-prokto, Vyāso yasyā’rjuno Guruḥ//
“गुरुग्रन्थ” इति वेदो धर्म-वक्ता युगे कलौ ।
नानकादि-मुनि-प्रोक्तो व्यासो यस्यार्जुनो गुरुः ॥

For this Iron Age, the *Guru-grantha* is the inspired
Scripture (Veda), announcing the Law of
Righteousness;

This Veda was declared by Seers like Nānaka; and like
Vyāsa for the Veda, Guru Arjun was its
Compiler.

6. navyasyaitasya Vedasya śodhanam kṛtavān asau/
sa jñānī bhakta-śreṣṭhaś ca jayati yoga-nirmalaḥ//
नव्यस्यैतस्य वेदस्य शोधनं कृतवानसौ ।
स ज्ञानी भक्तश्रेष्ठश्च जयति योग-निर्मलः ॥

He made a redaction of this New Veda-book ;
a learned man with divine wisdom, and the
best of Men of Faith,
purified by Yoga practices, may he triumph
for ever.

7. sa āsīd Bhāratiyeṣu mahn hi netr-saṭtamaḥ/
pūnar ātma-pratiṣṭhāyai sva-dharma-rakṣaṇāya ca//

स आसीद् भारतीयेषु महान् हि नेतृ-सत्तमः ।
पुनरात्म-प्रतिष्ठायै स्व-धर्म-रक्षणाय च ॥

Among the people of India he was great, and the best of leaders, for their self-rehabilitation and for protecting their religion.

8. *Arabeṣu purābhūd vai dharma-saṁsthapāko Guruḥ/
Muhammada iti khyāto, ya āsīd yogināṁ varaḥ//*

अरवेषु पुराभूद् वै धर्म-संस्थापको गुरुः ।
मुहम्मद इति ख्याते य आसीद् योगिनां वरः ॥

Formerly there was born among the Arabs a Teacher who established *dharma* or Religion among them : he was famous as Muhammad, and he was a great *Yogi* (who sought union with God).

9. *eka-tame pare deve bhaktis tasyācala dṛḍhā/
Īśa-niṣṭhā jvalantīva, janānāñca hitaiṣaṇā//*

एकतमे परे देवे भक्तिस्तस्याचला दृढा ।
ईश-निष्ठा ज्वलन्तीव, जनानां च हितैषणा ॥

He had an unbending and strong faith in the One and Unique God, and he had a burning attachment to God, and also a desire to do good to Men.

10. *dharma-balena baliyān sadāsīd Īśa-sevakaḥ/
dharma-rājya-pratiṣṭhārthaṁ svātmā yena
niveditaḥ//*

धर्मबलेन बलीयान् सदासीद् ईश-सेवकः ।
धर्म-राज्या-प्रतिष्ठार्थं स्वात्मा येन निवेदितः ॥

Strong with the strength of his Faith, he was always
close to God in service;

And he dedicated his self for setting up a kingdom of
Righteousness.

11. Pārasikās tathā cānye Paktha-Turuṣka-
Maṅgalāḥ/
Sritva Mauhammadam dharmaṁ Bhāratim
bhūmim aṁśan//

पारसीकास्तथा चान्ये पक्थ-तुरुष्क-मंगलाः ।

श्रित्वा मौहम्मदं धर्मं भारतीम् भूमिमाविशन् ॥

The Persians, and then other like the Pakthas (Pathans
or Afghans), Turks and Moguls,
after adopting the religion of Muhammad, entered the
country of India.

12. āgatya Bhārate Varṣe Muhammada-
mataśritāḥ/
nyāya-dharmaṁ vihāya vai prajā-vidhvaṁsino'
bhavan//

आगत्य भारते वर्षे मुहम्मद-मताश्रिताः ।

न्याय-धर्मं विहाय वै प्रजाविध्वंसिनोऽभवन् ॥

Having come to the land of India, these people,
following the teaching of Muhammad,

Abandoned justice and righteousness, and became
destroyers of the people.

13. haranto vai striyo vittaṁ dharmañca Veda-
deśitam/
bahuśas te prajānāṁ hi sañjātā ātatāyinaḥ//

हरन्तो वै स्त्रियो वित्तं धर्मं च वेद-देशितम् ।

बहुशस्ते प्रजानां हि संजाता आततायिनः ॥

Seizing women, and wealth, and attacking the
Religion as directed by the Veda,
Very largely these people became the greatest enemies
of the people of the land.

14. ujjivanāya duḥsthānām duṣṭānām damanāya ca/
Madre'bhūd Guru-govindaḥ Sivo Rājeva Dakṣiṇe//

उज्जीवनाय दुःस्थानां दुष्टानां दमनाय च ।
मद्रेऽभूद् गुरुगोविन्दः शिवो राजेव दक्षिणे ॥

To bring back to life those who were laid low, and to
punish the evil-doers,

Guru Gobind appeared in the land of Madra (Northern
Panjab), like Siva Raja (Sivaji) in the Deccan.

15. rājarṣir dharma-pālako virah śatru-vimardanaḥ/
dvi-catvāriṃśa-vayaḥ-stho'yaṃ prāptavān parāṃ
gatim//

catvāro'sya sutāḥ śurāḥ divaṃ gatā yathā pitā//

राजर्षिर्धर्मपालको वीरः शत्रुविमर्दनः ।
द्विचत्वारिंश-वयःस्थोऽयम् प्राप्तवान् परां गतिम् ॥
चत्वारोऽस्य सुताः शूरा दिवं गता यथा पिता ॥

A King and a Seer in one, Protector of righteousness,
a Hero who destroyed his enemies,

When he was 42 years of age he found the
supreme end of life ;

And all his four sons, equally heroes, passed on
to Heaven like their Father.

16. *kāruṇyam raṇa-śauryaṅca sadā yena*
pradarśitam/

yogīndram taṁ Gurum naumi Govindam
loka-tāraṇam//

कारुण्यं रणशौर्यञ्च सदा येन प्रदर्शितम् ।

योगीन्द्रं तं गुरुं नौमि गोविन्दं लोकतारणम् ॥

He who always manifested both Mercy and Prowess
in War,

I make my obeisance to that Prince among *Yogis*, the
Guru, Gobind, the saviour of the people.

8. A Brief Bibliography

In the preparation of the above article, I have
to make a grateful reference to the following works :

(1) *Guru Gobind Singh* by Tinkori Banerji,
pp. 462, 2nd edition, Bengali year 1325 (=1918 A.D.),
Sanskrit Press Depository, Calcutta.

This is a very fine book in Bengali giving a full
history of the Sikh Gurus and a detailed life of Guru
Gobind Singh, with suitable quotations in the original
with Bengali translations from authoritative works
like the *Sūraj Prakāś*, and the *Dasam Pādshāh-kā*
Granth, besides the *Guru Granth*. The point of view
is that of a Sanātani or orthodox Hindu with a pro-
found respect for the Sikh Gurus as Sages and Saints

and heroes of Hinduism. (This book I had read with the greatest benefit, in its first edition, during my days at school, some sixty years ago.)

(2) Max Arthur Macauliffe's monumental work, in six volumes, on the *Sikh Religion*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1909; an indispensable authority—although it gives (and rightly enough) the traditional Sikh point of view.

(3) *Evolution of the Khalsa*, in two volumes: by the late Professor Dr. Indu Bhushan Banerji, Calcutta University: First published, Volume I in 1936, and Volume II in 1947; Second Edition, Calcutta, A. Mukerjee & Co. Private Ltd.—Volume I, pp. 203, 1963, Volume II, pp. 311, 1963. One of the best works on Sikh history, based on original sources with full references, and with a sane and clear as well as realistic view of history with a profound appreciation of the personality and achievement of Guru Gobind Singh.

(4) *Transformation of Sikhism*: by Sir Gokul Chand Narang, Kt. First published, 1912, Fifth Edition, 1960, pp. 268, New Book Society of India, New Delhi, Full of information, well-written, with an extensive Bibliography.

(5) *Guru Govind Singh* by Dr. Gopal Singh, pp. 124 : National Book Trust, India, New Delhi, 1966. A brief and a most convenient introductory work.

(6) *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*; as mentioned above, a UNESCO and Sahitya Academy publication:

pp. 288: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London 1960. A representative selection beautifully rendered into English.

(7) *Outlines of Sikh Thought* : by Dr. Surindar Singh Kohli, pp. 164, Panjabi Prakashak, Karol Bagh, New Delhi: 1966. A very informative and readable compilation, with references and quotations in Gurmukhi.

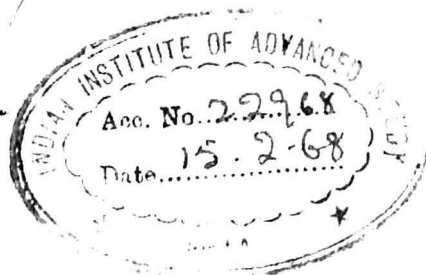
(8) *Japjee* by Dharma-Siromani Sir Surindar Singh Majithia, Kt., and Y. B. Krishnamurti: Lady Parsan Kaur Charitable Trust (Educational Society), P. O. Sardarnagar, District Gorakhpur, U. P., India, 1966.

(9) *Hind ka Pir* : A sketch of Guru Gobind Singh: by the author of (6), and same publishers: 1966.

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16 Hindusthan Park, Calcutta-29:
Karttiki-Purnima (Rasa-Purnima)
(Birth-day of Sri Guru Nanak)
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