

A SOURCE-BOOK  
OF  
MODERN HINDUISM



*Edited by*  
GLYN RICHARDS

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# A SOURCE-BOOK OF MODERN HINDUISM

*By the same author*  
THE PHILOSOPHY OF GANDHI  
A study of his basic ideas

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*For Hywel, Ann, Geraint and Helen*

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## PREFACE

I have attempted in this volume to compile selections from the works of modern Hindu writers who may be considered to be inheritors of the religious and social traditions of India and who have made an important contribution to the renaissance of Hinduism and the reformation of Indian society. The selection does not claim to be exhaustive in any way but the writers chosen would generally be regarded as leaders of thought in nineteenth and twentieth century India and their views of significance in the development of modern India. The themes which have determined the choice of texts are in the main those relating to religion, social and economic reforms, education and politics. The selection from each writer is preceded by brief biographical details and an assessment of his contribution to Indian society.

I am indebted to the staff of the inter-library loan department of the University of Stirling for their unfailing courtesy and generous help in securing for me a number of the books required for the compilation of this volume; to the staff of the Centre of South Asian Studies at the University of Cambridge for their prompt response to my inquiries and their readiness to photocopy selections from one of the books in their library; to my colleague John Riddy for an extract from one of the letters in the MacNabb archives at Killin, Tayside; and to Mrs Linda Greig for her cheerful co-operation and expert assistance in typing the manuscript. A word of thanks is also due to my students over the years in the course on Modern Hinduism who have shown me the need for a volume of this sort and to my wife for her assistance in preparing the book for the publisher.

I wish to express my appreciation to the following publishers for permission to include in this volume selections from their publications: Oxford University Press for selections from S.Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*; George Allen and Unwin for selections from S.Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, *The Hindu View of Life*, *Religion in a Changing World*, and from Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man*; Macmillan for selections from Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality: Lectures delivered in America*; and *Gitanjali (Song Offerings)*; Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, for selections from Aurobindo Ghose, *The Life Divine*, *On Himself*, *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Unity*, *War and Self-Determination*, and *The Synthesis of Yoga*; Vision Books, New Delhi, for selections from S.Radhakrishnan, *Indian Religions*; Navajivan

Trust, Ahmedabad, for selections from *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, and Nimal Kumar Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*; Sevagram Ashram Pratishtan, Wardha, for selections from Vinoba Bhave, *Democratic Values and the Practice of Citizenship*, and *Thoughts on Education*.

In the extracts which follow, the original spelling and style have been retained. This accounts for occasional variations in rendering the same words and for some inconsistencies in punctuation, even within selections from the same author.

GLYN RICHARDS

# 1

## RĀMMOHAN ROY (1772–1833)

Rammohan Roy has been described as the father of modern India and one of the greatest benefactors of mankind. However difficult the task of making an objective assessment of his role in the renaissance of Hinduism and the modernization of India may be the fact that he made a significant contribution to the reformation of Hindu society and religion is not in question.

He was born in 1772 into an orthodox Hindu family of Brahmins who were engaged in revenue farming under the aegis of the East India Company. Whatever the doubts about his early education at Patna and Benares it is clear that he had a close association with Muslim scholars and under their guidance became well acquainted with Arabic and Persian philosophic literature. At the age of 16 he is reputed to have written a paper questioning the idolatry of the Hindu system and expressing an aversion to British power in India. This aversion, if authentic, must have been overcome during his years of travel throughout India and beyond because on his return home he entered the Bengal Civil Service in the employment of the British. His business acumen and success as an administrator enabled him to accumulate sufficient capital and secure enough income from estates he had purchased to retire. By 1815 he had settled in Calcutta and had begun to devote his time and energy to the task of religious and social reform. He considered religion and politics to be interrelated and believed some change in the Hindu religious system to be necessary if only to secure political and social advantage for the Hindus.

His enthusiasm for reform may be traced in part to Hindu and Islamic thought, including Vedāntic philosophy and Muslim theology, and partly to Western ideas including Unitarian doctrines and eighteenth-century European deism. In the religious sphere his reforming zeal took the form of a rejection of image worship as indicative of prejudice and superstition and contrary to reason and common sense. His *Vedānta grantha*, a Bengali translation of the Vedānta, sought to establish the unity and supremacy of Brahman as Eternal Being and his work on the Upanishads propounded the idea of nirgua Brahman as one without a second. Image worship, in his view, was worship of an inferior kind and Hindus like other people throughout the world should worship without the aid of images. Equally erroneous were the dietary laws of Hinduism violation of which resulted in more severe penalties than theft or murder. While the latter produced judicial

sentences and could be expiated by religious ceremonies and gifts to Brāhmin priests, the former were punished by loss of caste and separation from family and friends.

He rejected also the violation of human rights perpetrated in the name of religion involving sati, the burning of widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands. The violent death to which the unfortunate females of India, particularly Bengal, were being subjected was both inhuman and morally indefensible and could only lead to the moral debasement of those who condoned the practice.

In his attempt to enlighten his fellow countrymen Roy promoted journalism, editing newspapers and periodicals in English, Persian (*Mirat-ul-Ukhbar*) and Bengali (*Sambad Kaumadi*), brought out Bengali translations of the shastras, and supported Bengali versions of English scientific and literary texts. His stress on the importance of the vernacular is contained in his address to the Hindu community contained in the *Sambad Kaumadi* pointing out the need for their children to be instructed in the grammar of their own languages and to this end he published a Bengali grammar of his own (*Gauṛya Vyākara*) in 1833. His earliest Persian work, however, entitled *Tuhfatul-ul-Muwahhiddin* (Gift to Deists), 1803–4, was never translated into Bengali. It claims belief in a creator, the existence of the soul and life after death, to be the basic tenets of all religions and dismisses other beliefs such as belief in miracles, anthropomorphic deities, and salvation through the correct performance of rites as irrational.

The emphasis on logic and reason characteristic of this early radical treatise reappears in his later writings and activities dominating his whole approach to religion. It is to be found in his defence of Hinduism against the attacks of Christian missionaries. While he acknowledged Hindu image worship to be irrational and contrary to Upanishadic teaching, the Christian doctrines of the Trinity, transubstantiation and atonement through Christ were equally illogical and contrary to the precepts of Jesus. Christianity was as much at the mercy of prejudice and superstition as Hinduism in this respect and nothing could be gained from denunciations based on mutual misrepresentation.

His emphasis on rationality is to be found also in the formation of the Brāhmo Samāj, a society founded by him in 1828 to promote a lofty theism and the restoration of religious purity within Hinduism with no image or likeness of the Eternal, Immutable Being who is the author and preserver of the universe. He accomplishes his aim through the worship of the one God of all religions with readings from the Vedas and the Upanishads, hymn singing and expository sermons. Though lacking in popular appeal because of its intellectual bent, the Brāhmo Samāj did succeed in creating an atmosphere of liberalism and rationality and in providing a meeting place for people of similar religious views and a forum for the reinterpretation of the Hindu tradition.

Described as the greatest creative personality of the nineteenth century, Roy sought above all to build a bridge between the old and new worlds through mutual respect and understanding. The spirituality of the East, he believed, ought

to be harmonized with Western science and technology for the benefit of mankind. His contribution in the pursuit of this goal was such that it could not be ignored by the reformers who came after him and in that respect he fully deserves his place of eminence in the history of India.

## RĀMMOHUN ROY

### *Idolatry and the Defence of Hindu Theism*

*From a translation of an abridgement of the Vedānta, a work of Brahmanic theology, establishing the unity of the Supreme Being and entitled 'To the Believers of the only true God.'*

The greater part of Brahmins, as well as of other sects of Hindoos, are quite incapable of justifying that idolatry which they continue to practise. When questioned on the subject, in place of adducing reasonable arguments in support of their conduct, they conceive it fully sufficient to quote their ancestors as positive authorities! And some of them are become very ill-disposed towards me, because I have forsaken idolatry for the worship of the true and eternal God! In order therefore, to vindicate my own faith and that of our early forefathers, I have been endeavouring, for some time past, to convince my countrymen of the true meaning of our sacred books; and to prove, that my aberration deserves not the opprobrium which some unreflecting persons have been so ready to throw upon me...

In pursuance of my vindication, I have to the best of my abilities translated this hitherto unknown work, as well as an abridgement thereof, into the Hindoostanee and Bengalee languages, and distributed them, free of cost, among my own countrymen, as widely as circumstances have possibly allowed. The present is an endeavour to render an abridgment of the same into English, by which I expect to prove to my European friends, that the superstitious practices which deform the Hindoo religion have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates!

I have observed that, both in their writings and conversation, many Europeans feel a wish to palliate and soften the features of Hindoo idolatry; and are inclined to inculcate, that all objects of worship are considered by their votaries as emblematical representations of the Supreme Divinity! If this were indeed the case, I might perhaps be led into some examination of the subject: but the truth is, the Hindoos of the present day have no such views of the subject, but firmly believe in the real existence of innumerable gods and goddesses, who possess, in their own departments, full and independent power; and to propitiate them, and not the true God, are temples erected and ceremonies performed. There can be no doubt, however, and it is my whole design to prove, that every rite has its derivation from the allegorical adoration of the true Deity; but at the present day all this is forgotten, and among many it is even heresy to mention it!...

My constant reflections on the inconvenient, or rather injurious rites introduced by the peculiar practice of Hindoo idolatry which more than any other pagan worship, destroys the texture of society, together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to awaken them from their dream of error: and by making them acquainted with their scriptures, enable them to contemplate with true devotion the unity and omnipresence of Nature's God.<sup>1</sup>

*A defence of Hindu theism in reply to Śankara Śastri, head English master at the Madras Government College, attacking Rāmmohun Roy's views and advocating the worship of divine attributes as deities.*

The learned gentleman says that 'Their (the attributes and incarnations) worship under various representations, by means of consecrated objects, is prescribed by the scripture to the human race, by way of mental exercises,' etc. I cannot admit that the worship of these attributes under various representations, by means of consecrated objects, has been prescribed by the Veda to the HUMAN RACE; as this kind of worship of consecrated objects is enjoined by the Sastra to those only who are incapable of raising their minds to the notion of an invisible Supreme Being. I have quoted several authorities for this assertion in my Preface to the Isopanishad, and beg to repeat here one or two of them: 'The vulgar look for their God in water; men of more extended knowledge in celestial bodies; the ignorant in wood, bricks, and stones; but learned men in the Universal Soul.' 'Thus corresponding to the nature of different powers or qualities, numerous figures have been invented for the benefit of those who are not possessed of sufficient understanding.' Permit me in this instance to ask, whether every Mussulman in Turkey and Arabia, from the highest to the lowest, every Protestant Christian at least of Europe, and many followers of Kabir and Nanak, do worship God without the assistance of consecrated objects? If so, how can we suppose that the human race is not capable of adoring the Supreme Being without the puerile practice of having recourse to visible objects?

...The learned gentleman is of opinion that the attributes of God exist distinctly from God and he compares the relation between God and these attributes to that of a king to his ministers, as he says: 'If a person be desirous to visit an earthly prince, he ought to be introduced in the first instance by his ministers', etc; and 'in like manner the grace of God ought to be obtained by the grace through the worship of his attributes.' This opinion, I am extremely sorry to find, is directly contrary to all the Vedanta doctrines interpreted to us by the most revered Sankaracharya, which are real adwaita or non-duality; they affirm that God has no second that may be possessed of eternal existence, either of the same nature with himself or of a different nature from him, nor any second of that nature that might be called either his part or his quality...

The Veda very often calls the Supreme Existence by the epithets of Existence, Wise, and Eternal and assigns as the reason for adopting such epithets, that the

Veda in the first instance speaks of God according to the human idea, which views quality separately from person, in order to facilitate our comprehension of objects. In case these attributes should be supposed, as the learned gentleman asserts, to be separate existences, it necessarily follows, that they must be either eternal or non-eternal. The former case, viz, the existence of a plurality of beings imbued like God himself with the property of eternal duration, strikes immediately at the- root of all the doctrines relative to the unity of the Supreme Being contained in the Vedanta. By the latter sentiment, namely, that the power and attributes of God are not eternal, we are led at once, into the belief that the nature of God is susceptible of change, and consequently that He is not eternal, which makes no inconsiderable step towards atheism itself. These are the obvious and dangerous consequences, resulting from the learned gentleman's doctrine, that the attributes of the Supreme Being are distinct existences.<sup>2</sup>

*A second defence of Hindu theism and the monotheistic system of the Vedas in reply to the attack of an advocate for idolatry reputed to be the work of a learned Brahmin from Calcutta.*

As to the custom or practice to which the learned Braham so often refers in defence of idolatry, I have already, I presume, explained in the Preface of the *Isopanishad*, the accidental circumstances which have caused idol-worship to flourish throughout the greater part of India; but, as the learned Brahman has not condescended to notice any of my remarks on this subject, I beg leave to repeat here a part of them.

‘Many learned Brahmins are perfectly aware of the absurdity of idolatry, and are well informed of the nature of the pure mode of divine worship; but as in the rites, ceremonies, and festivals of idolatry, they find the source of their comforts and fortune, they not only never fail to protect idol-worship from all attacks, but even advance and encourage it to the utmost of their power, by keeping the knowledge of their scriptures concealed from the rest of the people.’ And again: ‘It is, however, evident to every one possessed of common sense, that custom or fashion is quite different from divine faith; the latter proceeding from spiritual authorities and correct reasoning, and the former being merely the fruit of vulgar caprice. What can justify a man, who believes in the inspiration of his religious books, in neglecting the direct authorities of the same works, and subjecting himself entirely to custom and fashion, which are liable to perpetual changes, and depend upon popular whim? But it cannot be passed unnoticed, that those who practise idolatry, and defend it under the shield of custom, have been violating their customs almost every twenty years, for the sake of a little convenience, or to promote their worldly advantages.’...

The learned Brahman attempts to prove the impossibility of an adoration of the Deity, saying...‘That which cannot be considered, cannot be worshipped.’ Should the learned Brahman consider a full conception of the nature, essence, or qualities of the Supreme Being, or a physical picture truly representing the

Almighty power, with offerings of flowers, leaves, and viands, as essential to adoration, I agree with the learned Brahman with respect to the impossibility of the worship of God. But, should adoration imply only the elevation of the mind to the conviction of the existence of the Omnipresent Deity, as testified by His wise and wonderful works, and continual contemplation of His power as so displayed, together with a constant sense of the gratitude which we naturally owe Him, for our existence, sensation, and comfort—I never will hesitate to assert, that His adoration is not only possible, and practicable, but even incumbent upon every rational creature.<sup>3</sup>

*Christianity and Hinduism*

*The superiority of Christianity and the precepts of Christ compared with the idolatrous nature of Hinduism and its caste distinctions is the topic of the following extracts from the letters of Rāmmohun Roy.*

*Rāmmohun Roy to Mr John Digby, England, 1816–7*

I take this opportunity of giving you a summary account of my proceedings since the period of your departure from India.

The consequence of my long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles, and better adapted for the use of rational beings, than any others which have come to my knowledge; and have also found Hindus in general more superstitious and miserable, both in performance of their religious rites, and in their domestic concerns, than the rest of the known nations of the earth. I, therefore, with a view of making them happy and comfortable both here and hereafter, not only employed verbal arguments against the absurdities of the idolatry practised by them, but also translated their most revered theological work, namely, Vedant, into Bengali and Hindustani and also several chapters of the Ved, in order to convince them that the Unity of God, and absurdity of idolatry are evidently pointed out by their own scriptures. I, however, in the beginning of my pursuits met with the greatest opposition from their self-interested leaders, the Brahmins, and was deserted by my nearest relations; I consequently felt extremely melancholy; in that critical situation, the only comfort that I had was the consoling and rational conversation of my European friends; especially those of Scotland and England.

I now, with the greatest pleasure, inform you that several of my countrymen have risen superior to their prejudices; many are inclined to seek for the truth, and a great number of those who dissented from me have now coincided with me in opinion.

*Extract from a letter dated 18 January 1828*

I agree with you that in point of vices the Hindus are not worse than the generality of Christians in Europe and America; but I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise... It is, I think necessary that some changes should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort. I fully agree with you that there is nothing so sublime as the precepts taught by Christ, and that there is nothing equal to the simple doctrine he inculcated.<sup>4</sup>

*Conversion*

*From a letter addressed to the Reverend Henry Ware of Cambridge (U.S.A.) 2 February 1824, on the prospects of Christianity and the means of promoting its reception in India.*

I have now prepared such replies to those questions as my knowledge authorises and my conscience permits; and now submit them to your judgment. There is one question at the concluding part of your letter, (to wit, ‘Whether it be desirable that the inhabitants of India should be converted to Christianity, in what degree desirable, and for what reasons?’) which I pause to answer, as I am led to believe, from reason, what is set forth in the scripture, that ‘in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him,’ in whatever form of worship he may have been taught to glorify God. Nevertheless, I presume to think, that Christianity, if properly inculcated, has a greater tendency to improve the moral, and political state of mankind, than any other known religious system. It is impossible for me to describe the happiness I feel at the idea that so great a body of free, enlightened, and powerful people, like your countrymen, have engaged in purifying the religion of Christ from those absurd, idolatrous doctrines and practices, with which the Greek, Roman, and Barbarian converts to Christianity have mingled it from time to time.<sup>5</sup>

*Extract from a letter addressed by Raja Rāmmohun Roy to a gentleman of Baltimore, dated Calcutta, 27 October 1822.*

I have now every reason to hope, that the truths of Christianity will not be much longer kept hidden under the veil of heathen doctrines and practices, gradually introduced among the followers of Christ since many lovers of truth are zealously engaged in rendering the religion of Jesus clear from corruption.

I admire the zeal of the Missionaries sent to this country, but disapprove of the means they have adopted. In the performance of their duty, they always begin with such obscure doctrines as are calculated to excite ridicule instead of respect, towards the religion which they wish to promulgate. The accompanying pamphlets, called 'The Brahmunicipal Magazine,' and published by a Brahmun, are a proof of my assertion. The last number of this publication has remained unanswered for twelve months.

If a body of men attempt to upset a system of doctrines generally established in a country, and to introduce another system, they are, in my humble opinion, in duty bound to prove the truth, or, at least, the superiority of their own.

It is, however, a great satisfaction to my conscience to find, that the doctrines inculcated by Jesus and his apostles, are quite different from those human inventions, which the Missionaries are persuaded to profess, and entirely consistent with reason, and the revelation delivered by Moses and the prophets. I am, therefore, anxious to support them, even at the risk of my own life. I rely much on the force of truth, which will, I am sure, ultimately prevail. Our number is comparatively small, but I am glad to inform you, that none of them can be justly charged with the want of zeal and prudence.

I wish to add, in order that you may set me right, if you find me mistaken, — my view of Christianity is, that in representing all mankind as the children of one eternal father, it enjoins them to love one another, without making any distinction of country, caste, colour, or creed; notwithstanding they may be justified in the sight of the Creator in manifesting their respect towards each other, according to the property of their actions, and the reasonableness of their religious opinions and observance.<sup>6</sup>

### *The Precepts of Jesus*

*From the introduction to 'The Precepts of Jesus', (Calcutta, 1820),  
compiled by Rāmmohun Roy with translations into Sanskrit and  
Bengali.*

Voluminous works, written by learned men of particular sects for the purpose of establishing the truth, consistency, rationality, and priority of their own peculiar doctrines, contain such variety of arguments, that I cannot hope to be able to adduce here any new reasonings of sufficient novelty and force to attract the notice of my readers. Besides, in matters of religion particularly men in general, through prejudice and partiality to the opinions which they once form, pay little or no attention to opposite sentiments (however reasonable they may be) and often turn a deaf ear to what is most consistent with the laws of nature, and conformable to the dictates of human reason and divine revelation. At the same time, to those who are not biased by prejudice, and who are, by the grace of God, open to conviction, a simple enumeration and statement of the respective tenets

of different sects may be a sufficient guide to direct their inquiries in ascertaining which of them is most consistent with the sacred traditions, and most acceptable to common sense. For these reasons, I decline entering into any discussion on those points, and confine my attention at present to the task of laying before my fellow-creatures the words of Christ, with a translation from the English into Sanscrit, and the language of Bengal. I feel persuaded that by separating from the other matters contained in the New Testament, the moral precepts found in that book, these will be more likely to produce the desirable effect of improving the hearts and minds of men of different persuasions and degrees of understanding.<sup>7</sup>

*An appeal to the Christian public in defence of 'The Precepts of Jesus' by a Friend of the Truth (1820). Rāmmohun Roy defends his work under this pseudonym against disapproving critics.*

The editor of the 'Friend of India', and the respective Reviewer, both not only disapprove absolutely the plan adopted by the Compiler in separating the moral doctrines of the Books of the New Testament ascribed to the four Evangelists from the mysteries and historical matters therein contained, but even blame him as an injurer of the cause of truth.

The Reviewer charges the compiler with inconsistency, (p. 27) because he has termed the Precepts collected by him, a code of Religion and Morality, while, as the Reviewer supposes, they form only a code of morality and not of religion. It is already explained in paragraph 2nd that the Compiler has introduced those Precepts of Jesus under the denomination of the moral sayings of the New Testament, taking the word moral in its wide sense, as including our conduct to God, to each other and to ourselves; and to avoid the least possibility of misunderstanding the term, he has carefully particularised the sense in which he accepted that word by the latter sentence, 'This simple code of Religion and Morality, (meaning by the former, those precepts which treat of our duty to God, and by the latter, such as relate to our duties to mankind, and to ourselves), is so admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of one God, &c.,' ... 'and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves, and to society, &c.' In conformity to the design thus expressed, he has collected all the sayings that have a tendency to those ends. The Compiler, however, observes with regret, that neither this language nor this fact, has afforded to the Reviewer satisfactory evidence of his intention nor sufficed to save him from the unexpected imputation of inconsistency.<sup>8</sup>

*A second appeal to the Christian public by Rāmmohun Roy in defence of 'The Precepts of Jesus'.*

The contents of the following Treatise are included under these two propositions:—1st, That the Precepts of Jesus, which teach that love to God is manifested in

beneficence towards our fellow-creatures, are a sufficient Guide to Peace and Happiness; and 2ndly, That the omnipresent God, who is the only proper object of religious veneration, is one and undivided in person...

The Reverend Editor labours in his Review to establish two points—the truth and excellency of the miraculous relations and of the dogmas found in the scriptural writings; and, 2ndly, the insufficiency of the compiled Precepts of Jesus alone to lead to salvation, unless accompanied with the important doctrines of the Godhead of Jesus and his atonement.

As the Compiler neither in his Introduction to the Precepts of Jesus, nor in his defence of those Precepts, has expressed the least doubt as to the truth of any part of the Gospels, the arguments adduced by the learned Editor to demonstrate the truth and excellence of the authority on which they rest, are, I am inclined to think, quite superfluous, and foreign to the matter in question.

The only reason assigned by the Compiler, (in the Introduction), for separating the Precepts from the abstruse doctrines and miraculous relations of the New Testament, are, that the former 'are liable to the doubts and disputes of Freethinkers and Anti-christians, and the latter are capable at best of carrying little weight with the natives of this part of the globe, the fabricated tales handed down to them being of a more wonderful nature.'<sup>9</sup>

### *Defence of Hinduism*

*Objections to Hinduism were contained in a Bengali Weekly newspaper called 'Samachar Darpan' produced by Christian missionaries at Serampore on 14 July 1821. Doubts were expressed concerning Vedāntic teaching about māyā; the teaching of the Nyāya Sāstra about God and creation; the dualism of the Sākhya system; and the interpretation of sacrificial rites in the Mimāsā Sāstra. Rāmmohun Roy's reply was denied publication in the 'Samachar Darpan' and hence published in his own 'Brahmunical Magazine' prefaced with an explanation of the origin of the controversy of which the following is an extract:*

It is well-known to the whole world, that no people on earth are more tolerant than the Hindoos, who believe all men to be equally within the reach of Divine beneficence, which embraces the good of every religious sect and denomination; therefore it cannot be imagined that my object in publishing this Magazine was to oppose Christianity; but I was influenced by the conviction that persons who travel to a distant country for the purpose of over-turning the opinions of its inhabitants and introducing their own, ought to be prepared to demonstrate that the latter are more reasonable than the former.