CONCLUSION
Conclusion:

6. India is fortunate to have the most advanced glorious past with immense contributions from every great rishi in the sphere of natural and spiritual laws. Their contributions have saved her from the depth of disunity, untruthfulness, skepticism and every evil in social life. This reminds us of the famous sloka of the Gita ........

Yada yada hi dharmasya glani bhavati Bharata
Adyntthanamadharmsya Tadathanam Srjarmyaham

"Whenever righteousness decline and unrighteousness rises ; I create myself"

To establish righteousness in the midst of unrighteousness is the essential search for every religion. Hence religion and righteousness is always found associated with each other. Righteousness is a principle which can be reflected from within. Similarly religion is an inner experience of human life which can never come from outside.

This inner experience transcends every limitation of human egoism and intellectual superiority. Religion asserts fact like every physical science. Both science and religion seek to see the Reality behind things and their constitutions. But unlike every scientific study of the Reality which is objective, the 'Science of Religion' studies Reality from the subjective standpoint. Religion differs from naturalism, agnosticism and materialism In Religion spiritualism pre-dominates. Spirit is the alpha and the omega of every religious experience. Mind is only the grosser form of the spirit while matter (body) is the grossest. In the present world crisis where matter has elevated the climax of every scientific achievement, it is religion alone which can bridge the gulf of difference between materialism and spiritualism. Material progress is achieved only by cultivating the essentials of humanity and religion. But here religion has to be freed from sectarian postulates, superstitious beliefs and dogmatic arrogance.

The veil of confusion, oppression, exploitation and selfish individualism have swallowed the values and glories of ancient past. Every individual has lost his path in the mad race of so-called comforts of life. Though science and technology have constituted the two pillars of life, yet at many occasions, they have failed to satisfy human mind. Though Western civilization and culture have dominated the life of the east, yet in the midst of material comforts and technical answers to the life's problems, the west is often
in quest of following the spiritual path of the east. There are many different religious and social movements written in the pages of History to highlight this view. The World’s Parliament at Chicago, Sep. 1893 which Vivekananda participated with its glorious impact is the best cited e.g. of such an observation. This clearly indicates that religion plays a vital role in solving the irrespective of every aspect.

6.1. The first phase of modernity is the impact of western education and European culture of Raja Rammohun Roy, Debendranath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen and many others. The movement was more strengthened by Bankim Chandra and Vivekananda with their intention of finding out the best of the indigenous thought and culture. The Derozian met a premature death in spite of their tremendous potentials simply for discarding the best of the East. According to Bankim Chandra the natives have their own contribution in understanding one's culture. The tremendous urge to see God face to face was the impact of Vivekananda’s spiritual enlightenment in religious experiences. Consequently the meeting with the Great Master can be termed as the turning point in the life of Naren.

Vivekananda has embraced ‘Religion of the Upanishad’ as the all-embracing creative genius to rekindled the divinity already existing in Nature. Religion for him is Vedanta. All through out his life he tried to establish that Vedanta Religion is a symposium of all the faiths of the world. The solution of every problem, national and international lie in the awakening of divinity already existing in every soul from within.

Being influenced by the Vedantic temperament Bankim Chandra too harboured earnestly that Dharma must be followed from within. He uses the Sanskrit word ‘Dharma’ as synonym of religion. Dharma is the quality of humanity. Thus the highest development of man in every aspect constitutes religion.

6.1.2. Religion for Vivekananda belongs to the supersensuous plane. Religion is not possible in the sense plane. It is beyond all reasoning. This supernaturalism in Vivekananda, has molded his idea of morality, socialism, practical-vedanta, individual freedom and education in a different way. This is the impact of his deep faith in the ‘direct experience of the Spirit’ as taught by his Guru Ramakrishna. The ‘Monistic’ trend of the Vedanta philosophy has become the means to realise the end of religious pursuit of truth. Religion is a vision and inspiration of the Reality.

Bankim Chandra is against this supernatural trend in religion. He has tried to give
a secular foundation to religion to those people who have objected the supersensible status to every phenomenon. Like Schleiermacher, he too made an endeavour to separate religion from other aspects of understanding. He does not hope to raise the 'Edifice of Religion' on something which does not exist in human mind. Dharma is attained within the sense plane. His approach and the means to achieve dharma differs from Vivekananda.

For Bankim Chandra Dharma is the Natural Law and includes our beliefs. It is the only means of attaining happiness. Like a naturalist, he interprets the world in terms of natural science and not in terms of any supernatural principle. But for Vivekananda religion is realisation of the Spirit in nature.

6.1.3. The best gift which Vivekananda presents to the world is his agreement that Vedanta philosophy consists in realisation. The relevance of such a thought of Vivekananda is an important topic of discussion in contemporary religious thinking because this gives religion its substance. Realisation implies that every truth has to be justified by us with reason. The realisation of the Atman as the Spirit is the secret of his Vedanta Philosophy. But Bankim Chandra has revolutionised the history of Hinduism. For him Hindu religion is established on the natural basis that religion possess. Religion is the rational reflection of Truth. As opposed to revealed theology or God-made religion, natural religion justifies every form of religious practices supported by its rationality.

6.1.4. For Vivekananda Hindu philosophy and religion are so broad and rationally catholic that it can embrace every idea of God and human spirituality. Like the classical thinkers, Vivekananda has reconciled Philosophy with Religion. Here he differs from Hegelian idea of Philosophy and Religion. Hegel concludes that philosophy being a speculative system claims objective validity while religion being self-subsisting (Transcendental) entity underlies all historical manifestation. To Vivekananda the difference between one form of expression of the fact of knowledge and another is not in kind but in degree. Every culture is the struggling expression of the ‘Reality’. But to one point both Hegel and Ramakrishna share the view that religion consists in faith. Ramakrishna has asserted that it is faith alone which can make us to realise God who is very near to us. Again for Hegel, faith has nothing to do with reason of philosophy. Though Kierkegaard asserts that faith is separated from religious knowledge but never contrast within the domain of philosophy as Hegel conceives.
Bankim Chandra admits that in India the relation between theology and philosophy is very peculiar and thus it is hard task to define the words Hindu and Hinduism. Instead of identifying Hinduism and Hindu religion like Vivekananda, he holds that Hinduism is purely secular. It is not at all religion. Bankim Chandra observes that we must take the trouble of studying Hinduism separately as distinct from Hindu religion. The European scholars have misunderstood the essence of Hinduism and wrongly identified everything Hindu in the whirlpool of the Hindu Religion.

6.1.5. Vivekananda with his deep faith in religion propounds that Hinduism is based on the Vedas and the Vedas are the treasure of spiritual laws discovered by different persons. The Rishis of India are the mantra - drastas. Bankim Chandra on the other hand rejects the revealed nature of the Vedas. According to him, the Vedas are the basis of our entire religious and social organisation. He holds that the ‘Vedic Religion’ is like the root of the Hindu Religion ……… it is not just the main tree.

6.1.6. Vivekananda being a spiritualistic thinker comes in conflict with naturalism which proves matter to be the ultimate reality. The materialistic interpretation of nature is inadequate without spiritualistic interpretation. Vivekananda with agony asserts that the greatest blunder of this modern society is to realise the spirit as matter. The Spirit is the cause of all our thoughts and actions. But it is untouched by good or evil.

There may be a point of criticism against Bankim Chandra that his main concern is to interpret religion from the natural standpoint. It may also be said that Bankim Chandra is departing from the classical trend in interpreting religion. But he proves that his naturalism never aimed at the materialistic explanation of life and the world. He culminates both material and spiritual progress from scientific standpoint. It is devotion which determines his Dharma of Anusilan. His naturalism is thus not rigid and dogmatic. Religion establishes elevation in mankind. Perfect harmony in the human faculties is possible only when it is dedicated to God with Bhakti. Being a vedantin he has felt the necessity of an intelligent principle but he claims to explain everything in terms of natural science.

6.1.7. Another merit of both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra is the union between science and religion. For both the thinkers believe that there is no real fight between science and religion. The religious approach of both the thinkers give us an idea of how
religion can be justified by modern science. This view is akin to Radhakrishnan who holds that the spirit of science ‘leads to the refinement of religion’. Even Nehru has acknowledged Vivekananda’s vision of culmination of traditionalism with modernism. Such a view of Nehru can be justified from the observation of Vivekananda regarding Vedanta and modern science.

Vivekananda conceives that the metaphysician’s ‘Being’ and the physicist’s matter are as two non-separate entities of the One …… ‘In Itself’. For the theologian like Vivekananda, Atman is the potency of the universe. Hence forth science is concerned with the ‘Objective’ but religion represents the total ‘Subjective’ Reality. Like Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra identifies science and Dharma. Just like the progress of society is dependent on science similarly world progress is guided and dependent on Dharma. So he concludes that both the scientist and the man of Dharma glorifies the name of Hari itself. Like a religious scientist Bankim Chandra asserts that real progress can be achieved only when the European scientific achievement reconciles with the Nishkam dharma of India.

Thus this is the distinguished feature of Vivekananda’s transcendental religion and Bankim Chandra’s Empirical Dharma. As a result of this significant difference we can conclude that Vivekananda’s approach towards religion is supernaturalism and Bankim Chandra’s is naturalism. Again Bankim Chandra while doing so takes the pain of establishing that the rise of religion is a scientific fact and study of primitive religion enables us to understand the origin of religion.

6.1.8. Religion is often intimately connected with the sectarian belief. But both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra like Ramakrishna never indulged in encouraging sectarian and orthodox Hindu religion. In the spiritual field, Vivekananda’s greatest message is to overcome the limits of the so called ‘established religion or cultural tradition’. Both the thinkers have conceived that to understand any religion we must study the original sources of knowledge. It is shraddha for Vivekananda and for Bankim Chandra it is loving and reverential study of its doctrines can yield valuable results in religious discourses. The ‘kernel and the Husk’ represents both Vivekananda’s and Bankim Chandra’s significant contributions in this rationalistic method in justifying every religious skepticism. According to Vivekananda every creed is thus the endeavour of humanity to realise the infinity of the self. Sri Aurobindo, Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan, all
laboured earnestly to establish the fact that the essential element of Religion is to become aware of spiritual divinity.

6.1.9. The distinctive contribution of Vivekananda is his comprehensive acknowledgements of every sphere of life. His remarkably universalism in religion could withstand every stroke of distinctions of creed, culture, sex, race and nationality. To such a view of Vivekananda we can cite the life of the Great Master who could successfully put the Vedanta philosophy of ‘Oneness’ into practice. Like an essentialist, he establishes the postulate of ‘Unity in diversity’ as the law of every progress. Mere unity is the death-knell of every development in life. Religion is synonymous with universalism of the spirit Vivekananda’s message of ideal religion is the harmonious balance of four directions. This religion is attained by ‘Yoga’. Thus Vivekananda in a triumphed voice has proclaimed that Advaita is the religion of the future to enlighten humanity.

The central thesis of Bankim Chandra unlike Vivekananda is to reveal the lofty philosophy and aspiration of Vaishnava Dharma. Being a religious philosopher, Vaishnavism for him, is the self-subsisting essence of every sectarian religion. Bankim Chandra has disrespected the sectarian attitude of the classical theologians. The rational theism has made him to assimilate and explore all that is best in the Vaishnava Dharma. The virtue of ‘desire less action’ of Vaishnava Dharma promoted him to assert Vaishnavism as the best and quint essence of all religions. He affirms that after exploring the real core, the cream, the true religiocity of the Hindu Religion we must accept it as real human religion. Thus Vivekananda aimed for an Universal religion while Bankim Chandra attempted for a National religion. Even Keshab Chandra Sen, through his universal religion aimed for one universal anthem. This spirit of nationalism through spiritualism is a tremendous effect of the 19th century renaissance movement of India.

6.1.10. Another important feature in both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra is that both of them discarded the outward observances of religious practices. Both the thinkers aimed to reach the depth of facts than mere external perfection ....... otherwise religious doctrines are mere dead principles. Gandhi also tried to prove the fact that true religion consists in the aspiration to see the universal and all pervading spirit of Truth face to face. It is this deep faith in religion which made him to mould his idea of Socialism, Politics and Economics in a different way. To Vivekananda also every vision of truth is a vision of
God. Like Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan conceives that when religion succeeds in making us spiritual, all our conflicts are resolved. Bankim Chandra declares that a person is a Vaishnava and a Hindu who has known the omniscient and blissful Supreme Intelligent pervading in every creatures as the inner spirit. Thus Bankim Chandra starts from the basis of experience. He transcends the limit of traditional doctrinaire theology and concentrates on conduct which can conduce to lasting happiness.

6.1.11. Bankim Chandra, being an ethnologist, opines that religion in the broadest and most legitimate sense is culture. The most perfect religion supplies the basis for the most complete development of culture. Hinduism observes Bankim Chandra is the product of nature. It has grown with the growth of culture. We can observe thus that when religion becomes the product of nature then worship of gods represents the worship of nature.

6.2. God in Indian philosophy like the biblical writers is understood as beyond all logical categories. But there is a difference of opinion between the rishis and western philosophers. The scientific assertion and the ancient Upanishadic saying in respect to God are quite similar. As for the Scientific teacher, every thing is the creation of one force while the Upanishadic dictum, every existence of this universe is covered with the Lord. It is realisation that has made the Rishis to see God face to face in the words of Vivekananda. The concept of God transcends the meaning of the ‘Personal God’ of the west. This is the central theme of discussion made in Vivekananda’s and Bankim Chandar’s concept of religion. The Absolute of Philosophy is conceived of as the Impersonal Being (Formless) while God of Religion is conceived of as a Personal being (with form).

6.2.1. Vivekananda’s explanation of God is found from within. Each one of us is born to re-discover one’s own God – nature. He claims that we begin as dualist in the relation of God. Consequently God is separated from us. Love comes in between. But when every relation is dissolved as being a monist, ultimately the little self becomes one with the Infinite. Obviously for Vivekananda, being an Advaitin, hypocrisy cannot exist where God is. The God of Infinite Love and the object of Love, sublime and infinite, are painted blue. Hence krishna is painted blue so also Solomon’s God of love. The Natural law determines that blue is associated with sublime and infinite expanse. As for Ramakrishnan it is love which instead of binding man to God, it binds man to man.
In a sense Colling Wood comes very near to the Great Master. As Colling Wood conceives that love of God implies both knowing Him as well as doing His will. To Bankim Chandra devotion comes only when God is with attributes. He comments that the highest achievement of man is to offer everything to God. This will result to overcome all distinctions between man and every other creatures.

6.2.2. Man is the highest being that exists. We can have no conception of God higher than man. Hence our God is man and man is God. The most distinctive feature in Sankara’s Advaita philosophy is that our intellect cannot conceive the totality of God. When every knots of his heart vanishes, man realizes......That thou art (I am Brahman).

Similarly Vivekananda explains that man does not conceptualize God out of his own brain. He can only see God from within in the capacity of his own imagination.

Like Sankara, Vivekananda holds that God dwells in the heart of man ...... ‘the soul of our soul, the Reality in us’. This is the metaphysical explanation of the personal God. Ishvara is thus with form and without form. Vivekananda, hence, like John Stuart Mill, admits that Personal God cannot be demonstrated. Vivekananda conceives Isvara as the Atman as seen by mind. The highest name is thus the ‘Om’. In God we are all one.

Bankim Chandra while refuting the Christian concept of God holds that to love Him one has to expand his faculty of love in a special way just as we do for a temporal king. The Vedantic conception of God pervading as the soul of all creature finds expression in Bankim Chandra’s thought. Being a qualified monist he believes God with attributes. Only an atheist can think of God without any attribute. Hinduism in Bankim Chandra’s philosophy signifies all embracing dharma. The substance of all God, man and every creatures of the world are related to dharma. God is thus the greatest of all the objects which the faculties of men can have.

6.2.3. Spinoza’s God is the source of everything. His Pantheism reveals that God is in the wold and the wold is in Him. Everything is governed by an absolute logical necessity. Spinoza thus identifies Nature with God since there is the only one substance, viz. God or Nature. He concludes that the Individual soul and matter are ‘adjectival’. They are not things but merely aspects of the Divine Being.

But there lies difference of opinion between Bankim Chandra and Spinoza. Bankim Chandra opines that one who cannot unite him with God has the path of devotion.
Spinoza’s doctrine which is more a religion than philosophy and ethical in approach holds that every science must be directed for ‘Supreme human perfection’. But this virtue for Spinoza can be reached only through intellectual certainty. Bankim Chandra’s God who is the ‘Supremely Perfect Personal Being’, unlike Spinoza in this respect reconciles intellectual certainty with devotion. Approaching God through ‘Bhakti’, said he, is the most easiest way. It is love that embrace the whole world. Even for Vivekananda, Bhakti is the highest ideal. To aim our senses to reach God is the science of the Bhakti Yoga.

Bankim Chandra unlike Spinoza never identifies the material world with God. The Personal Being of Bankim Chandra is supremely perfect representation of human possibilities. For him, the material world is distinct like the pearls in a necklace to the thread. Since God is in everyone, He is existing in oneself too. So self love involves God’s love. The moment we realise that the entire world is in us, every difference between the world and ourselves will be dissolved. Thus Bankim Chandra’s individualism touches the horizon of collectivism depending on theistic Dharma. This is the touchstone of his nationalism.

6.2.4. Vivekananda concludes that the very idea of God is love. ‘I am Thine, I am Thine’, exhibits that we can see God everywhere. Self is the eternal truth. When the mind is free, I am free too. The Upanishads thus declared that the Atman, Self, is same as Brahman …… the Lord. It is the mysterious power of the Maya which makes us to see It as different. Thus opines Sankara that the self is prior to the stream of consciousness, reality and illusion. Love for loves sake without any fear is the quint essence of Advait-Philosophy. Thus Vivekananda explains that his religion means expansion and expansion means realisation and perception in the highest sense. Man has to ‘realise’ the divinity which will ultimately lead to an infinite material and spiritual progress.

Here lies the most remarkable difference between Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra. Unlike Vivekananda, for Bankim Chandra, the ‘knowledge’ of the inner self is the major part of the Hindu religion. This intellectual elevation helps in the process of refinement of matter allowing the real self to manifest itself. Unlike Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra states that it is the knowledge of the external world which come first then there arises the possibility of acquiring self-knowledge. But for Vivekananda it is the realisation of the self which governs the eternal world since he unifies every difference between
matter, mind and spirit (Self). It is the Spirit which moves nature. Religion is touching God. It is realising that ‘I am a spirit’ in manifestations. Evolution of nature and manifestation of self comes from within. This is the one great doctrine which Vivekananda declares in a triumphant voice: ‘the world is waiting to learn from India’.

6.2.5. Bankim Chandra conceives that it is in the union of Soul with nature strikes at the very root of religion. In this union of the soul with nature lies the source of all beauty, truth and love. The Sankhya Philosophy of ‘the Great Duality’ Nature and Soul pervades over all as the basis of worship. Their union is the ‘love for all that exists’ constitute Hindu’s religion. This philosophy of Bankim Chandra leads him to encourage God as Personal Pantheism. Man thus worships it with a truer insight then the philosophers. Thus Vaishnavism and Tantras, representing the ‘Religion of Love and Discipline’ respectively, to Bankim Chandra is the Religion of Culture.

While vehemently criticising the Europeans and their followers for condemning the Puranas as stupidity and hypocrisy, Bankim Chandra illustrates finally that the Puranic Religion is superior to the Vedic religion. It is just as a tree to a sprout. He is convinced with the fact that the Puranic religion is actually monotheism in nature. His theism is always justified by reason and hence liberal.

Like Bankim Chandra even Vivekananda has accepted the importance of Puranas but within certain restrictions. Vivekananda has made a significant point in saying that the Veda does not implement the injunctions. It is only our Puranas that do so. Whenever the Smritis, Puranas, Tantras, are found contradictory to the Vedas they are to be rejected as unreliable. He awaits for the day when the Veda will be worshipped together with Shalagrama the household Deity. Here lies the point of Vivekananda’s deviation from the Classical Vedantic trend. His Advaita Philosophy thus culminates the intellect of Sankara and the heart of Buddha. Thus Vivekananda concludes that he is an atheist who does not believe in himself contradicting the classical theological conception that he is an atheist who does not believe in God.

6.2.6 For Sankara, God is only an appearance of the Absolute which exists only within Maya. Like Sankara, Vivekananda too holds that within the impersonal exists all various persons beginning with the lowest atom up to the Personal God, whom we kneel down to pray. Vivekananda’s God is a necessity for the common mass since one can conceive the
Impersonal only within concrete forms. This is the essential necessity of every religion from the dualistic standpoint.

It is only in advaitism 'I and my Father' become one. Here Radhakrishnan is more emphatic in asserting that God preserves its necessity till the end of the cosmic process. God is not 'higher reality' but the 'highest reality' in every relation to the cosmos and the finite being. As to the relation between God and Absolute, Vivekananda states that God is a circle with its circumference nowhere and centre everywhere. When we talk of God we speak of Him though this universe. When we speak of Him beyond every empirical limitations, He is the Impersonal Being. Thus God is only the cosmic aspect of the same Impersonal Being. God is an infinitized human being.

6.2.7. Bankim Chandra believes in qualified monism. He did not feel contend in the worship of the attribute less God. He observes that God must be conceived as having attributes. Lord of the Vedantas, who is without attributes cannot be our Ideal. Here perhaps Bankim Chandra is referring to the Unconditional Absolute of the Vedanta philosophy. It is only in the Puranic Religion, (those free from interpolations) Bankim Chandra remarked that there is much worship of Sat, Chit and Ananda. The legends which contain the subjects of the Puranas are inferior to philosophy. But in its depths lies the solid foundation for modern Hinduism. But Vivekananda’s philosophy totally differs from Bankim Chandra in this respect. In Vivekananda, the Vedantic notion of Brahman as Sat-Cit-Ananda is echoed as God ...... the pure spirit. As for him if man wants to be both rational and religious, Advaita is the best system in the world.

In spite of subtle differences between these two Vedantic thinkers, both agree to monotheism. According to Vivekananda, like Gandhi, the greatest name man has given to God is truth. Theism and Atheism are superficial in the intellectual level. On the other hand Bankim Chandra calls Jaganath Vishnu as the only God representing the name by which man pleases to call Him. It is Vishnu who is perfect since he has developed all the faculties in every respect. This is Bankim Chandra's spiritual Naturalism. While Vivekananda’s supernaturalism upholds the natural and harmonious development of the latent force in man. This latent force is the Impersonal God manifested in and through nature in the form of Divinity.

6.2.8. In Bankim Chandra’s writing we do not find any separation between God and
the Absolute. He opines that since we cannot see God so we cannot imitate his manners. We can only think of Him. This is the meaning of worshipping him. So Bankim Chandra equates ‘Perfect man’ with God. Religious history which reveals fact is necessary. God the infinite cannot be the ideal of worship. Only God in human form can be our ideals. Dharma promoting ideal found in the Hindu Sastras is the best. He cites here the ideal Krishna who is the embodiment of all virtues. To re-establish the Dharma, there comes the Mahapurushas. This is the result of Bankim Chandra’s logical thinking and not supernatural mysticism.

Tagore from his aesthetic standpoint finds no distinction between the Absolute and God. While realising that he is one with God, he becomes the highest human being. Hegel too identifies his Absolute with God. The Absolute is spiritual. There is just one all inclusive and self-consistent Reality.

Vivekananda and Bradley like Sankara hold that God cannot be identified with the Absolute. The Absolute for Bradley is timeless, eternal and has no progress in itself. To him God is a finite object standing alone and apart from man. Spinoza’s God on the other hand is one all inclusive influencing substance. Vivekananda here differs from Bradley because he conceives that so long we are human, we must have a humanised God. This is the unique feature in agreement to both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra in conceptualizing religion as a living principle.

6.2.9. Many critics hold that what Bankim Chandra understood to be God, is not the God of the Hindu religion or the Brahman of the followers of the Vedanta. His God is an ideal person and however he may be convinced of the historicity.

To such a critical observation, we can conclude that theism has its own place where as history has its own demarcation. To unite the two principles perhaps created every problem in analysing Bankim Chandra’s ‘Krishna as an ideal’, who is otherwise regard as the God. In his ‘Krishna Charitra’, he opined that his fundamental intention of establishing the historicity of krishna is to prove him as an ideal man, an incarnation of God but never as God the infinite. Moreover in Dharmatattva, we find that his God is Vishnu …….. who is possessed of infinite virtues. Since we cannot worship such a God so men resembling God can be our ideal of worships as we can imitate their manners. This is the reason of his regard for religious history. With such logical analysis Bankim
Chandra equates perfect man with God. Being the part of God every incarnations can be worshipped. He equates thus ‘Perfect Man’ with God from the standpoint of resemblance of possessing vast number of virtues which the ordinary man lacks in cultivated through anusilan. Here we can hold that Bankim Chandra has never identified God with Perfect Man. The essential element of his religion of humanity consists that following God by all the faculties is devotion. This devotion is the basic ingredient of humanity.

6.2.10. Sankara tried to maintain the orthodoxy of the Vedas. Both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra have tried to free it from the clutches of a section of the privileged. Again Vivekananda’s view is akin to Bankim Chandra while emphasizing that text torturing will not benefit a religious man. For Vivekananda, worship is talking to God. This is the practical aspect of all worship. The real want of worship is in the pure heart for both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra. These external practices have value to develop our internal purity. Worshipping is not trading. Everything that is desired for personal benefit is transitory. Hence both the thinkers have rejected vedic worship as it encouraged fulfillment of personal desire. There must be a constant strive to control the lower nature until the material victory is achieved. So for Vivekananda, Reality in every man must become the object of worship.

To this view of Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan asserts that Truth is not truth until the seeker personally appropriates it. This is ‘Subjectivity’ of truth.

The trend of ethnological approach in Bankim Chandra’s Dharma assumed that worship enables us to develop culture. Religion entitles both our love and worship Nature. Nature is God Himself so to worship Nature is to worship God. Worshipping God, helps in promoting our culture. Bankim Chandra’s such illustration through this ‘Spiritual Naturalism’, represents the view of modern environmental science advocating ‘Ecological balance in Nature’. But his method has a spiritual effect because of identifying Nature with God, the indwelling Spirit. To him, achievement of God is happiness itself because God Himself is great joy and bliss.

We can justify such theistic explanation of Bankim Chandra because for him Philosophy has a co-extensive meaning with the knowledge of Nature. Philosophy is often included in science. The religious scientist has also recognised ‘Law’ as Supreme in all the advanced system of Indian Philosophy. Both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra have
emphasized for a healthy body as it is the best instrument for the observances of any religious austerities. The self has to be realised like a fruit on the palms of one’s hand thus opined Vivekananda.

6.3. Vivekananda’s religious illumination can be well supported from the ‘Edifice of Religion’ which Bankim Chandra has tried to establish in his treatise Dharmatattwa. Both have tried for a religion which can be better understood in normal life experiences than the life of seclusion. They actually intended to enlighten the essence of humanity as present in Hinduism. But the religious depth in Vivekananda’s religious philosophy is much more in significance than Bankim Chandra. Religion for Vivekananda is the experience of life and personal illumination is attained through service to mankind. The impersonal religion is identical with strength and selfless activity.

Bankim Chandra on the contrary never aimed for moksa as a path for religious conscience. Moksa interprets he, is the process of achieving the nature of God as ideal. He asserts that action preached in the Gita is the ‘Law of Life’. The essence of Anusilan dharma constitutes humanity for Bankim Chandra. Vivekananda’s humanism is based on the principle of Advaita philosophy. But Bankim Chandra’s conviction of rational faith, made him to encourage service of humanity as enunciated in the selfless action as preached in the Gita. Thus both the thinkers ultimately converge at single point in principle i.e. service of mankind.

6.3.1 The positivistic humanism of Bankim Chandra differs from the spiritualistic humanism of Vivekananda. Vivekananda’s spiritualistic humanism is determined by the Upanisadic dictum So Ham! ........ I am Brahman, I am Brahman. Bankim Chandra has derived his idea from Pantheism ........ ‘Love for all that exists’ since God pervades in everything. Humanity for Vivekananda is immortality. We are all immortal as parts of the whole. In Radhakrishnan true humanism revels the fact that ordinary condition of man is not his ultimate being. He has in him a deeper Self.

6.3.2. Vivekananda shares his view with Bankim Chandra regarding the real meaning of the injunctions given in the shastras. To Vivekananda the self – sacrifice given in shastras can only lead us to the state of Jivan – muktि ...... ‘Freedom while living’. Every knowledge thus has to be aided by practice without any emblems of ‘ .......ism’. Thus he has dedicated his life for a man-making religion, man-making theories and the like.
living principle has dominated his social order. To Bankim Chandra on the other hand, anything which is untruth is irreligious even if it is found in the Shastras. He thus holds that the worship of Prahlada is superior than Dhruva. Prahlada’s devotion to Vishnu is nothing but a vow to do good to others. The implication of vedanta made Bankim Chandra to assert like Debendra Nath that we have to bear the responsibilities of life with devotion. This is true humanity.

This was perhaps Bankim Chandra’s life long search to find out the real meaning of life. It can be said that Vivekananda is departing from the essence of Classical Advaita Philosophy. Through his Practical Vedanta he could bring down the Brahman through Isvara to Mankind. To him the real practical side of Vedanta does not destroy the world. But it explains in showing the real individuality. Romain Rolland observes that Vivekananda, like his master conceives a religion of today. On the top stands the prophet of the period declaring that Maya is an intermediate form between the equally absolute Being and non-Being. His clarion call for mankind is to awaken the lost individuality which lies inherent as eternal spirituality. Thus Vivekananda, being a Karma-Yogi, has actualized the feeling of Brahman in the sphere of his desire-less actions unlike Sankara, who has conceived Brahman by the intellect alone in his Advaita Philosophy.

6.3.3. Vivekananda’s another significant contribution in the field of spirituality is that he has reconciled excessive spirituality of the East with the material progress of the West. With this principle he has tried to revolutionise the Indian society along with the European. It was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s religious enthusiasm which inspired Vivekananda to preach the ‘Practical Vedanta. Consequently the service of the ‘millions of oppressed Narayanas’ has become his life motto than the direct experience of Brahman in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi because in Advaitism the Jivatma is only a manifestation. Hence it is only a delusion. Within our consciousness we are all dualist. Beyond that we are all Advaitist. Thus the brother monks of Ramakrishna mission too have taken two vows (I) to liberate oneself and (II) to help the world. Tagore too in trumpet call for Humanity has explained that our higher nature is the constant strive for Practical Vedanta.

6.3.4. There is a point of criticism against Bankim Chandra that he is following Comte’s Humanism. But in reply to the critics we can hold that the 19th century positivism in India has preached that faith in a God of whom we are certain, is worship of humanity.
Humanism is one's virtue. Bankim Chandra too being influenced with the uprising trend followed Comte's 'Religion of Humanity'. But he has not followed Comte in totality. He has never, like Comte, encouraged atheism. According to Bankim Chandra, Comte has accepted that the universe exists and beyond the laws which govern it one knows nothing, reveals strict atheism. But when we believe that God which is in nature and all phenomena is His manifestation, it is none less than pantheism. Thus pleasure lies in one's own self. It is not dependent on anything external. The person who does not understand this essential teaching of the Gita, accepts it as an ascetic philosophy. This is the alpha and the omega of Bankim Chandra's conception of Dharma.

6.3.5. It is also opined by the observers that Bankim Chandra has depicted the central theme of Seely's 'Ecce Homo' in his great work on Krishna-Charitra. As he depicts there that Krishna is not a deity but as a man. Bankim Chandra has very profoundly tried to establish that the Hindu scriptures which speak of Krishna is none else than 'manavadharmavalsam'. The religion propounded by Krishna is a man-made religion, a religion directed with selfless desire. To this view, as accepting Krishna as man is actually reflecting the characteristic of Vedanta Philosophy. The Divinity is already existing in man, as said in the Upanishads. Like a religious philosopher he has tried to exhibit the fact that it is man who can actualise every potentialities through actions. In his opinion people believing in Vaishnava Dharma must understand this essence of the Gita. They must free themselves from the limitations of the Vedic worship which is constituted of the three gunas ....... Sattva, Rajas and Tamas and ultimately guided by desires.

6.3.6. We also find that Bankim Chandra has presented a similar view like Mathew Arnold. But unlike the western culturist, his culture of harmony is explained in the Bhagavadgita .... 'Dharma rests under the laws of God'. This harmony in wisdom, devotion, love and work cannot be the result of mere intellecction or meditation. Bankim Chandra strives to grasp it as a concrete reality firmly rooted in actual life. Through proper culture or effort all can become a man of dharma. Vivekananda too glorifies the perfect character of Krishna. In the crisis of the present world situation we need Sri Krishna uttering the Gita instead of the Krishna of Vrindavan.

6.4. Morality as explained by Vivekananda is not the goal of man but the means through which freedom is attained. Through yoga, we can realise this divinity from within. Love cannot come from fear. All religion is based on morality. Personal purity is to be counted superior to Dharma. The fear of the whip, of the dualist, makes us more
immoral. Religion touches the whole individuality. Self-abnegation is the centre of all morality.

Vivekananda thus declares that even for attaining pleasure religion is necessary for man. From the Utilitarian ground one must cultivate religious thought for it is the highest pleasure that exists. Advaitism thus seeks after greatest happiness. With the dawn of religion morality starts. Moral obligation depends on realisation of the Divine Oneness.

Bankim Chandra on the other hand holds that utilitarianism is only a mathematical formula in relation to the doctrine of culture. Since Virtue consists in doing good to others as well as to our own self for 'I' am included in all creatures. Thus a heart felt recognition of devotion leads to universal love. In Bankim Chandra's thought like Spencer the 'Category of Safety' predominates. Unlike Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra has tried to separate pure ethics from religion. For the basis of normal life the moral code given in the Gita form the social morality. This social ethics is founded on the Vaishnava tradition.

6.5 Profound mysteries of life can be known only through Vairagyam i.e. renunciation. Both the thinkers have discarded the classical interpretation of renunciation. They hold that giving up action is not the real meaning of Sannyasa. Life becomes meaningful not by renouncing but by actively participating through renunciation and Shraddha in social life. This is the best application of the Vedantic Creed. Religion is thus being and becoming. In Bankim Chandra's Manava - Dharma, asceticism has no room. He does not regard asceticism as a complete dharma.

Both Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra observe that unless there is true devotion, firmness and Shraddha, our mind can never turn to God. For Vivekananda, this is true to both Sannyasins and householders. Unlike Bankim Chandra, Vivekananda concludes that heroes renounce the world guided by the senses. To Bankim Chandra, on the other hand anusilan belongs to desire. While Sannyas to denial. So it cannot be practiced as a Prabriti - marga. This is the vital difference in the opinions of Vivekananda and Bankim Chandra. Bankim Chandra thus comments that in Hinduism, devotion, love and kindness are strung together by the same thread. The consequence of the culture of Love is culture of Kindness. The gospel of Gita teaches that renunciation combined with action, permeated with devotion, is true renunciation.