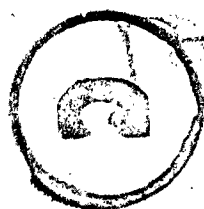
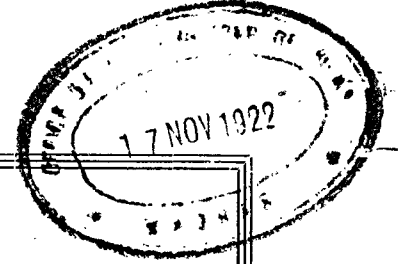


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BHĀRATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHĀRATA SAMĀJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY

EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA-SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I

NOVEMBER, 1922—DUNDUBHI—KARTIKA

No. 1

Bhārata Samāja as such is not responsible for any statement made in this Magazine unless contained in an official document.

OURSELVES

MANY words are not needed to show how very necessary it is for an association like the Bhārata Samāja to have its own periodical for its agandistic purposes. Other periodicals, however sympathetic with the aims and objects of the Samāja and however ready to open their columns for the publication of its notices and literary articles, may not possibly reach all the people who should read them. Neither can we with propriety indent on their hospitable columns as often and as extensively as necessary for that full and often lengthy discussion of questions of a purely religious and philosophical nature which the members of the Samāja as well as the public have a right to expect. So the Bhārata Samāja has ventured to publish a monthly paper with a view to keep its members in touch with the progress in the several lines of its activity. It will be also used as a medium for an exposition of the attitude of the Samāja towards the many important religious and socio-religious problems that are exercising the minds of the people at present, as well as for a mutual exchange of views on those problems among the members of the Samāja itself.

The paper named *Bhārata Dharma*, the Religion of the Hindus, will be issued every full-moon beginning with the Kārtika (4th November, 1922). Every Bhārata knows that this is one of those four full-moon-days in the year which are dedicated to Veda-Vyāsa who is so identified with the Bhārata Dharma and who in fact regulates the course of Dharma or spiritual culture in the whole world. The Bhārata Samāja, in throwing open the doors of Vedic culture to all spiritual aspirants without distinction of race and sex, believes that it is only following the exhortation the Veda-Vyāsa last addressed to His Vedic disciples in these words:

सर्वस्तरु दुर्गाणि सर्वो भद्राणि पश्यतु ॥

श्रावयेत् चतुरो वर्णान् कृत्वा ब्राह्मणमग्रतः ॥

वेदस्याध्ययनं हीदं देवकार्यं महत् स्मृतम् ॥

“Let all cross difficulties and let all see happy days. Let the four Varṇas learn the Vedas through the Brāhmaṇa (as teacher). This study and teaching of the Veda is a paramount duty; it is the work of God.” (Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva, 327, 48-49.)

For the present the monthly issue of the paper will be of the size of this, its first number. Later on, as the financial support from the members and the public may warrant, the size will be increased. Considering how many vital questions of religious and social importance are awaiting discussion and explanation in the columns of this periodical we hope to be able very soon to increase its size. The annual subscription is fixed at one rupee; and even at this small rate it may be possible to go on increasing the size as subscriptions and donations swell in number and amount.

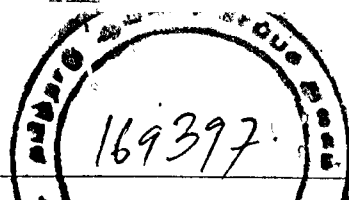
BHĀRATA DHARMA

BHĀRATA DHARMA is the religion of the Bhāratas, the path of spiritual culture laid down in the Veda which a large mass of the Indian Āryans profess to follow. This Dharma is summed up in the words of awakening which a Vedic teacher of old addressed to the Bhāratas. They have a special application to the Hindus of the present day, as they have well-nigh forgotten the basic truths and laws of Vedic Dharma, and have to be awakened to a comprehension of its true nature. The Vedic call of awakening is thus sounded:

उत्तिष्ठ मा स्वप् । अभिमिच्छध्वं भारताः ।

राज्ञः सोमस्य तृप्तासः । सूर्येण सयुजोषतः ॥

“Arise. Do not sleep. Do ye seek Agni, content with the shining Soma, rousing yourselves in unison with Surya.” (Taittiriya-Āranyaka, i, 27.)



These words sum up tersely the Dharma of the Vedic Āryan stated in terms of symbology which are quite familiar to him. *Agni* (Fire), *Soma* (Moon), and *Surya* (Sun) stand for God in His triple aspect, familiar to the modern Hindu as *Siva*, *Viṣṇu*, and *Brahmā* who respectively manifest the three Śaktis or Divine Powers of *Icchā* (Will), *Jñāna* (Wisdom) and *Kriyā* (Activity). To understand the Vedic Religion is to understand these three aspects of God in their relation to the progress of man and the universe, and their symbolic expression in the many ceremonial rites which form part of that religion. And to follow that religion is to wake up and vivify, by appropriate life of devotion and spiritual exercise, this triple power which is inherent in man as in the Divine Lord Himself. All ceremonial processes connected with the generation and maintenance of the sacred Fire, all the great sacrificial rites which involve the preparation, offering and drinking of the sweet beverage of *Soma*, and all the ritual magic which requires the joint services of man and woman are only significant as bearing on the development of the three aspects of God in man. The Vedic culture in all its fulness was originally open to woman as well as to man. In fact, in the eye of Vedic Law, the highest spiritual development attainable on earth, is possible only in married life. As the man and the woman who marry according to Vedic Law should be of equal moral and spiritual culture and lead a life of close union and perfect harmony, their married life surely tends to help each other's spiritual growth. Further, the stringent rule that the man and the woman who are to marry should be of different *gotras* (pedigrees of spiritual culture), their union in life only goes to make their spiritual life all the richer on account of the variety. A proper understanding of the original Vedic Law in this and other aspects will thus lead to the spiritual emancipation of the Hindu women and tend to make the Vedic Religion a cosmopolitan religion.

BHĀRATA SAMĀJA

The genesis of the Bhārata Samāja may be traced to the League of Liberal Brāhmaṇas (Dharmika-Brāhmaṇa-Saṅgha) organised during the Easter South Indian Theosophical Convention of 1916 and affiliated to the T.S. Order of Service. The main object of this latter League was to remove, in the light of the original Vedic Dharma, the very stringent restrictions placed by the existing rules of the Brāhmaṇa caste in the way of interdining, and to lessen the evils of child-marriage, child-parentage and enforced child-widowhood among the Brāhmaṇas. The membership was first open only to the five Drāvīda groups of Brāhmaṇas with whom vegetarianism is a cardinal principle. Later on it was extended to other Brāhmaṇas, who irrespective of their hereditary custom are strictly vegetarian in their life, and still later on to vegetarian Non-Brāhmaṇas, whether Hindus by birth or not, who would pledge themselves to a strict observance of the rules of Brahmanical life. At this stage it was thought desirable to formulate its rules and regulations in a cogent form; but those entrusted with the task recommended the formation of a separate organisation on a broader basis. The result was the foundation of the Bhārata Samāja with a further extension of the objects of the parent League.

The Bhārata Samāja (Children of India League) was incorporated at Madras in December, 1920, and was

formally inaugurated at the end of the same month during the T.S. Annual Convention. The membership is open to all men and women who whether Hindus by birth or not unreservedly accept the declaration of the principles and beliefs which constitute the essence of Hinduism. As an essential condition of physical purity total abstention from the use of meat and intoxicating drinks and drugs is insisted on.

The objects of the League of Liberal Brāhmaṇas and of the Bhārata Samāja being substantially same and the promoters of the two being almost all identical persons, the older league amalgamated itself with the later one, which is a registered body with well-defined aims and objects, rules and regulations. The objects, etc., of the Bhārata Samāja are stated elsewhere in this issue.

The promoters of the Bhārata Samāja believe that this liberalising and internationalising of Hinduism accompanied by a wide dissemination of the essential principles of Hinduism as a socio-religious system of life will act as a remedy to the present terrible confusion all over the world resulting from the great war. True Hinduism, the oldest of living religions and the Root-Religion of the Āryan Race now dominant in the world, is in a way suited to the spirit of the age and will help to spiritualise the Democracy now rapidly springing up.

* * * * *

Having felt the need of a fixed and specially consecrated place for conducting the ceremony of admission and such other rites and ceremonies as may later on be deemed necessary, the Samāja applied to the revered President of the Theosophical Society for a site in the premises of the Theosophical Society's Headquarters at Adyar. She readily granted a suitable plot of ground in Jinarajadasapuram and graciously laid the foundation-stone of a Hindu Temple to be built thereon.

When the basement was built up to the ground level a temporary pavilion was erected thereon for conducting the Upanayana or Vedic initiation ceremony of five Brāhmaṇa boys which was fixed for 26th May, 1921. Just on the eve of the day one Brāhmaṇa girl and two European ladies applied for admission to the initiation ceremony. So there were eight candidates ready for initiation on the appointed day. At 7 in the morning on that day, on the request of the Samāja Mrs. Besant consecrated the pavilion, and the ceremony of Upanayana itself began at 7.30 and ended at 9 a.m. The ceremony was conducted by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri, B.A., Director of the Adyar Library, assisted by the late Pandit Sivaramakrishna Sastri of Malabar, an old Brāhmaṇa priest of the League of Liberal Brāhmaṇas.

Again on 3rd May, 1922, the Upanayana ceremony of one boy and two girls of the Brāhmaṇa caste took place on the same pavilion. An account of this ceremony from the pen of a European lady witness is given below.

THE SACRED THREAD

By H. VHALE

On Wednesday, May 3rd, residents and visitors at Adyar were privileged to witness a ceremony of much beauty and significance. The young son and two daughters of Mr. A. S. Rajagopala Iyengar were to be invested with the Sacred Thread, by the Ancient Vedic rites, under the auspices of the Bhārata Samāja, an organisation recently

formed with the avowed object of liberalising Hinduism by casting away the dead accretions which cramp and deform. With these liberal Hindu sex forms no barrier to the sacred Upanayana Samskāra, or Initiation, so, at eight o'clock, the sound of flutes and drums guides us to the Samāja Temple platform, temporarily covered with a *kadjan* roof, upheld by bamboo pillars and charmingly decorated, where the three young people are seated in the midst of a friendly gathering—perhaps the most catholic that has ever been seen in a Hindu temple! The scene is beautiful in its homely simplicity. There seems no need for hushed solemnity, for a strained reverence that tires while it thrills, all look happy and natural, while at the same time perfectly business-like and earnest; for, indeed, in Hinduism there is no barrier between the commonplace and the holy—all life is sanctified.

Pandit Mahadeva Shastri is the officiating Brahmin, and he sits cross-legged on the floor, with the young candidates on his right-hand, and kindles before them the Sacred Fire, chanting Samskr̥t *ślokas* the while he feeds it with *ghee* and sprinkles drops from sundry vessels with which he is provided. Before each stage of the ceremony another Brāhmaṇa interprets, for the benefit of European visitors, so that the proceedings may be intelligently followed. From this, we learn that the meaning of the first questions and answers that pass between the Hierophant and the candidates is the latter's application for admission into the spiritual life, and the Master's searching examination and consequent resolve to initiate them. Then, after kindling the Sacred Fire, the Divine blessing is invoked, and the candidates urged to be firm in their purpose. Forthwith, they are each given the holy thread and a yellow robe, emblem of the womb within which the spiritual embryo is to take birth. Surely no colour is so distinctively Hindu as the yellow of the *Sādhu*! Now, the twice-born are welcomed by the Master and his other pupils, and bathed in waves of force from the Spiritual Sun. In the name of the *devas* the Hierophant takes each by the hand, passing them on their way round the Sacred Fire, and accepting them as his pupils.

Now follows a long instruction in the mysteries of the soul—its identity with *Prajāpati*, and the One Life in all beings. The neophytes are taught to pray for guidance on the path to the goal; then they follow the Master in making offerings (*Homa*) to the Fire, specially invoking by name the various *devas* in whose gift are the worthy blessings of life. The culmination of this instruction is reached when, to each separately, over clasped hands, the *Gāyatri Mantra* is imparted, containing the essence of Vedic wisdom. Then to each is handed a staff, the bough of a tree, signifying self-control—and the pupils are made, in their turn, to go through the ceremony of kindling the Sacred Fire, on which finally their staffs are laid, an offering symbolical of the lower self, to be purged by the fires of self-control, offered on the altar of the higher. With further exhortations to devotion, the Master now ties a cord round the waist of each—this, we are told, symbolising vitality; perhaps the life of the regenerated lower self, now bound as slave to the higher—and gives final directions for their daily conduct.

Meanwhile, assistants have been carrying round among the spectators some sort of yellow grain, which at this point is thrown towards the neophytes with blessings and good wishes, rather like rice at a Western wedding. All that now remains is distribution of *prasād*—food that has been dedicated—and after this simple

love-feast all disperse; to meet an hour later for a more substantial banquet, a dinner party in the *Bhojanasāla*, given by the father of the young people.

This again is a catholic assembly, without distinction of sex, creed or race; and very pleasant is it to sit under the pillared verandah of an airy, water-splashed courtyard, and to be served with savoury and sweet viands on a green plantain leaf, while ever and anon a brother lifts his voice in song, sonorous and solemn until the end, when unexpectedly and joyously, the closing notes are taken up and prolonged in a melodious call, that reminds a Westerner of the College calls in America, only these are characteristically very different in theme. For so large a party many goblets are needed, and they are quaintly, and surprisingly effectively, made of leaves, pinned together by splinters of wood, and letting no drop of the sweet sherbet escape.

So ends a Hindu sacrament of Universal Brotherhood. All honour to the Bhārata Samāja which has the courage of its convictions.

(From *The Adyar Bulletin*, June, 1922.)

BHĀRATA SAMĀJA

The objects of the Association

(a) To strengthen and broaden the basis of Hinduism (i) by emphasising the essentials of Hindu Religion and Philosophy as a working creed for daily life; (ii) by replacing the complex scheme of rites and ceremonies by a few simple rules and forms of personal discipline, worship and ritual for voluntary observance; and (iii) by providing facilities for the re-admission to Hinduism, through membership of the Association, of persons who may have been converted to other faiths, and for the fresh admission thereto of persons who, though not originally Hindus, are deemed qualified to be admitted by reason of the known purity of their lives.

(b) To promote the welfare and progress of all classes and sections of Hindus by means such as the following: (i) by breaking down social disabilities and restrictions entailed by the mere reason of caste or sex; (ii) by eradicating or reforming injurious customs, in regard particularly to early marriage, immature parentage, enforced widowhood, and the exaction of prices for brides and bridegrooms; (iii) by getting rid of unnecessary and artificial restrictions as to the choice of brides and bridegrooms and by making the field of selection as wide as possible consistently with eugenic and hygienic principles.

(c) To promote tolerance, good feeling, and a spirit of co-operation between Hindus and followers of other faiths.

Declaration of Principles

Any one desirous of being admitted as a member has to accept clearly and unreservedly the following Declaration of Principles:

(i) I declare my belief in the following tenets of Hindu Philosophy and Religion: (a) The Immanence and Transcendence of the One Supreme Being, the Source of all; (b) Continuous evolution towards perfection as within the purpose of Iswara, the Lord of our universe; (c) A Hierarchy of developed beings including *Devas* and *Rishis*, who are working to carry out the Divine Purpose in accordance with laws which are the expressions of the

Divine Nature; (d) Reincarnation and Karma as among the factors regulating human evolution; (e) The Brotherhood of Humanity and the essential solidarity of its interests as a whole.

(ii) I declare that the true ideal of life is Service, meaning thereby the active promotion of the welfare of our fellow-creatures, and that I, for my part, will endeavour to carry out that ideal as far as lies in my power.

(iii) I declare my resolve to observe the utmost purity in regard to my conduct in daily life, including hereunder purity of thought, word and deed, sexual purity, cleanliness of person and surroundings, and the total abstention from the use of meat and intoxicating drinks and drugs.

(iv) I declare my full sympathy with the objects of the Association and my willingness to co-operate in carrying them out as far as lies in my power."

Officers

President: T. Ramachandra Rao, B.A., B.L.

Vice-President: K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, B.A., B.L.

Secretary: C. Subbaramayya.

Headquarters: Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras.

NOTE.—All communications are to be addressed to the Secretary.

APPRECIATION ABROAD

Copies of the prospectus and rules of the Bhārata Samāja were circulated to the Sectional Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in England, Scotland, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, U. S. America, Holland, etc., and almost all of them have published appreciative notices of the objects of the Samāja with special reference to the international aspect of Hinduism on which it has laid so much stress. Some Theosophists in these foreign countries have even contributed to the Temple Fund in token of their appreciation. The Samāja hereby renders its thanks to one and all of them for this recognition of the usefulness of this movement.

FIRST CONFERENCE

The first Conference of the Members of the Bhārata Samāja was held in the city of Mysore on 1st October, 1922. Members from Adyar, Chittoor, Anantapur, Bangalore, and Tumkur assembled for the occasion. Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliar, B.A., B.L., M.L.C., who presided over the Conference sounded its key-note in the words that the Samāja has come to fulfil, not to destroy. The other speakers who followed the President and spoke in the same strain, were Mrs. A. E. Adair, Mr. C. R. Parthasarathi Aiyangar, B.A., B.L., of Chittoor, Mrs. Parvathamma Chandrasekhara Iyer, Mr. K. Shankaranarayana Rao, M.A., B.L., of Bangalore, Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao, B.A., B.L. Among other things it was resolved that the Mysore Conference of the Bhārata Samāja should be held every year along with the Karnātaka Theosophical Federation.

LITERATURE OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA

1. *Daily Practice*.—For the use of the Members of the Bhārata Samāja and others who may seek guidance as to their daily observances in the light of Hinduism, the Samāja has published in English a booklet under the title "Abridged Hindu Daily Practice," giving instructions as to morning and evening prayers (Sandhyā) and the proper attitude to be maintained in the daily life of service. Price As. 2.
2. *Simplified Rituals of Upanayana and Vivāha* in Sanskrit (Devanāgarī). Price As. 12.
3. An English Version of the above. (In preparation.)
4. Simplified rituals of Funeral Ceremonies and Shrāddha. (In preparation.)

†† Copies of the above may be had of the Manager, T.P.H., Adyar.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bhārata Samāja on the 24th October, 1922, was 187. They were thus distributed:

Gentlemen	173	Hindus by birth	185
Ladies	14	Christians by birth	2
	187		187
Madras Presidency	...		139
Mysore Province	...		29
Travancore	...		6
Cochin, Pondichery, Bombay, Rajaputana, U.P., Bengal—Each 1	...		6
Punjab	...		7
			187

TEMPLE FUND

A separate Committee of the Members of the Bhārata Samāja has been formed to collect funds for the erection of a temple designed for the special use of the Samāja already explained. The estimated cost is Rs. 12,000. Rs. 3,871-8-5 has been already collected and Rs. 1,804 more has been promised. The intending donors may remit their donations to Mr. C. Subbaramayya, Secretary, Bhārata Samāja, Adyar, or pay them to Mr. K. Narahari Sastry, who has been specially deputed by the Managing Committee of the Samāja to collect funds for the temple.

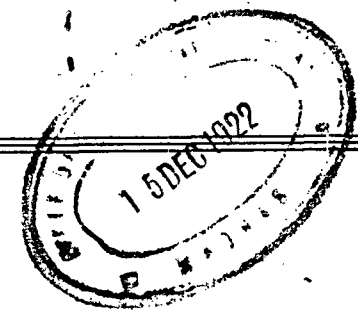
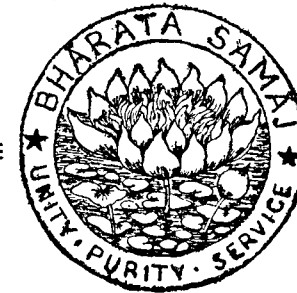
The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	RS.	A.	P.
Mr. K. Narahari Sastry	Adyar	25	0	0
" T. Ramachandra Rao	"	50	0	0
Sir T. Sadasivier	Madras	700	0	0
Miss Motman	Adyar	25	0	0
Mr. T. S. Subramaniya Iyer	Namakkal	10	0	0
Mrs. Adair	Adyar	50	0	0
Mr. D. Gurumurthy	"	25	0	0
" B. S. Ramasubbier	"	4	0	0
" G. B. Varma	"	5	0	0
" O. T. Nanjunda Mudaliar	Bangalore	4	0	0
" H. De Fares	Penang	68	8	5
" C. N. Subramanya Iyer	Adyar	100	0	0
" M. Raghunadha Rao	Coorg	20	0	0
" P. V. Ramachandra Sastry	Adyar	2	0	0
" C. Ramayya	"	60	0	0
" M. Atchayya	Madras	10	0	0
" P. Vijayaratnam Pillai	"	5	0	0
" S. V. Kanakasabai	"	50	0	0
" M. Lourenz	Adyar	5	0	0
" T. Sarvana Chettiar	Madras	10	0	0
" C. Nammalwar Chettiar	"	10	0	0
" W. D. S. Brown	Adyar	50	0	0
" M. Venkayya Chettiar	Kurnool	1,000	0	0
" Juttur Atchayya	"	250	0	0
Mrs. C. Narayanaamma	"	100	0	0
Mr. C. V. Rangareddi	"	50	0	0
Mrs. Singaraju Rukmaniamma	"	50	0	0
Mr. Chidambaranadha Mudaliar	Shiyali	25	0	0
" N. Rangaswamy Iyengar	Kurnool	25	0	0
" N. Ramaswami Iyer	"	25	0	0
" N. Madhwachar	"	25	0	0
" S. Seshadri Iyer	Madras	25	0	0
" K. Sivaswami Vattaram	"	20	0	0
" Tiruvengada Mudaliar	Shiyali	20	0	0
" K. Ramajiah	Kodavassal	20	0	0
" T. S. Ranganadha Pillai	Tirumalaivassal	10	0	0
" T. S. K. Narayanaswami Pillai	"	10	0	0
		Total	2,943	8 5

(To be continued)

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary, Bhārata Samāja.

24th October, 1922



BHĀRATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Rs. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

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EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I

DECEMBER, 1922—DUNDUBHI—MARGA

No. 2

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BHARATA DHARMA PARISHAD

As a movement of Liberal Hinduism, Bharata Samaja stands for certain necessary changes in the existing religious and social regulations and customs of the Hindu Society. It proposes to effect these changes by emphasising the essentials as distinguished from the non-essentials of Hindu Religion and Philosophy.

The fundamental principles of Hindu Philosophy and Religion and the ideals of life are embodied in the "Declaration of Principles" which every member has to accept clearly and unreservedly before becoming a member of the Samaja, and these will be further explained in these columns.

The main changes which the Samaja will endeavour to bring about in the existing religious and socio-religious life of the Hindus are indicated in the statement of the objects of the Association. As broadly set forth therein, they consist in (1) simplifying the existing complex scheme of rituals, (2) providing facilities for the re-admission of converts and the admission of non-Hindus to Hinduism, (3) breaking down social disabilities and restrictions entailed by the mere reason of caste or sex, and (4) removing unnecessary restrictions and eradicating or reforming injurious customs relating to marriage and widowhood.

Bharata Samaja has recently appointed from out of its members a Parishad for expounding to the public the objects of the Samaja by way of formulating the several changes to be effected and explaining the necessity and the reasons for the same. In fulfilling this task, the Parishad will first have to distinguish the several elements in Hindu religious faith and practice according as they fall

within the scope of *Shruti* or *Smriti*, authority or reason, religion or science, law or custom, and appraise their respective ethical and spiritual values.

Then they will proceed to lay bare the basic truths of the several practices and institutions, so that the essentials may be emphasised and the accidental elements may be retained, rejected or reformed as the case may be. Under this category come *Sandhya* (daily meditation), *Yajnas* (sacrificial rites), *Samskaras* (sacramental rites such as Upanayana, Marriage, etc.) *Shraddhas* (post-mortem rites).

The Parishad will also consider the ancient methods of reclamation and lay down conditions consonant with the spirit of those methods for re-admission of converts and admission of non-Hindus to Hinduism through the Samaja.

To break down the existing social disabilities, entailed by the mere reason of caste or sex, the Parishad will trace the origin in each case and show how they may be broken through. The questions under this head, which will claim the Parishad's immediate attention, relate to the restrictions and disabilities concerning inter-dining and intermarriage, to woman's disabilities in regard to marriage, to woman's and Sudra's title to Vedic study and Vedic culture, to the disabilities regarding entry into temples and their *garbhagrihas*.

The Parishad will have to pay special attention to the injurious customs to be eradicated or reformed. These include early marriage of boys and girls, immature parentage, exaction of prices for brides and bridegrooms, enforced widowhood, and widow's tonsure and all inflictions attendant on widow's weeds.

The settlement of these questions will incidentally show how the field of selection of brides and bridegrooms may be widened consistently with eugenic and hygienic principles and will enable the Parishad to lay down definite lines for achieving this object.

The course of the Parishad's deliberations in its several stages will be reported in these columns, so that the readers, whether members of the Samaja or not, may offer their own views and suggestions or raise additional issues for the Parishad's consideration. All communications relating to this subject should be addressed to the editor of this magazine.

UPANAYANA CEREMONY

I

THE distinguishing features of the ceremony as conducted by the Bharata Samaja may here be noted:

(1) The ceremony was based on the ancient regulations of acknowledged authority and was divested of all the present-day observances not laid down in those regulations as well as those which are associated with mere material pomp and show.

(2) The candidates were prepared (for the ceremony) on the previous day by explaining to them as far as they could grasp the spiritual significance of the several steps in the forthcoming ceremony and of the life of Brahman-charya (spiritual devotion) to which the ceremony was to initiate them.

(3) The whole ritual itself in Samskrit and a succinct outline* thereof in English (both printed) were put in the hands of the people assembled there to witness the ceremony that they might intelligently follow the whole course of the ceremony and thereby add to its efficacy; and before commencing the ceremony the officiant in a brief address* invited the attention of the assembly to the significance of the ceremony as a whole.

(4) It was found feasible to take all the eight candidates simultaneously through the ceremony of initiation.

(5) The Vedic initiation of a Brahmana girl is a revival of an ancient custom which has long been out of use owing to a change in the position of Hindu women of higher classes in the social economy of domestic life.

(6) The initiation of the two European ladies who have long been vegetarian theosophists is based on the practice of the old Vedic teachers who, through Upanayana, admitted to Brahma-vidya and Brahmanic culture any one who was prepared to follow the strict discipline of Brahmanical life as regards pure food, sense-control, sexual continence, moral rectitude and spiritual exercise.

II

OUTLINE

1. The Pupil Seeks the Master.

In the midst of general benedictions the pupil presents himself before the master seeking initiation into spiritual life. The master eyes him searchingly.

* The outline and the address follow here.

2. Preparation of Sacred Fire

The master makes up his mind to initiate him. He prepares the sacred fire, and, calling the Divine presence, invokes the Divine blessing on the pupil, and exhorts the pupil to be firm in his proposed life of spiritual aspiration.

3. Investiture

The master invests the pupil with the holy thread and holy vestures, which form the womb of the spiritual embryo.

4. Pupil Committed to Divine Protection

The newly arrived pupil is welcomed by the master and his other pupils and is bathed in the waves of sweet fluid radiating from the Spiritual Sun. In the name of the SAVITAR and other Devas the master seizes the hand of the pupil and gives him over to Their care. He then declares himself his teacher as representing the true Teacher, the Divine Fire.

5. Initiation (Brahma-Upadesa)

Having felt Savitar-Deva's impulse within, the master initiates the pupil into the mysteries of the soul, by teaching him that he is of the same name and nature as Prajapati; that, as a spiritual aspirant, he belongs to Prajapati; and that, in fact, it is the vaguely felt One Being that is in the pupil, in the master, and in Prajapati and other Devas. Exhorted to walk in the path of Brahman, the pupil earnestly prays to the Lord to lead him to the Goal.

6. Invocation Offerings (Homa)

The master and the pupil make offerings into the fire invoking the high Gods to bless the pupil with all worthy objects of desire, especially strength and vigour of spiritual intelligence. The pupil specially prays for strength to keep his vows till their fruition.

7. Teaching Gayatri Mantra

The master teaches the pupil the *Gayatri Mantra*, containing the essence of Vedic wisdom, and gives the pupil a *staff* demanding self-control in all concerns of life, which alone will help him to preserve the fruits of spiritual culture. The master declares his final acceptance of the pupil for further instruction, in the name of Prajapati.

8. The Daily Kindling of Sacred Fire

The pupil goes through the ceremony of the daily kindling of sacred fire generated at initiation.

9. Directions as to Daily Conduct

Exhorting the pupil to be of one mind in devotion to himself (the master) as representing Brihaspati the Divine Teacher, the master ties a cord round the pupil's waist as a symbol of vitality and gives him some directions as regards his daily conduct.

III

PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI'S ADDRESS

TO THE ASSEMBLY

AT THE UPANAYANA CEREMONY ON 26.5.21

We are met here under the auspices of the Bharata Samaja, launched into being about the beginning of this year. Its main object is, as many of those present here

THE OPENING ADDRESS OF MR. A. RANGANADHA MUDALIAR B.A., B.L., M.L.C.

As President of the First Bharata Samaja
Conference at Mysore on 1-10-1922

know, to liberalise and internationalise Hinduism by opening the doors of Hindu culture to all who can fulfil the necessary conditions of that culture, irrespective of race, caste and sex. To-day we go through the ceremony of initiation to Vedic culture, which has been in vogue for thousands of years. Though observed in different forms in these days, a fundamental unity of the main outline is observed in all these forms.

As a study of the essential nature of the ceremony shows, nothing more is expected from a candidate than a capacity to conceive a controlling conscious soul in the human organism distinct from the organism, and an aspiration to work in unison with the vaguely sensed Divine Lord of the Universe. He must be prepared to keep pure the body, senses, and the mind, and to devote his energies to the services of the Lord through his human master. In the main part of the ceremony the master teaches the pupil that he (the pupil) is one with Prajapati (Ka) the vaguely sensed Lord of the Universe, that, as an aspirant of spiritual life, the pupil belongs to Prajapati, that the pupil is under the guidance and protection of the Supreme Lord and His Divine Agents, that in serving his immediate human master the pupil only serves the Lord in the master.

The ceremony is thus intended for the youth possessed of mature intellect and even a nascent faculty of intuition. When a pupil approaches a master, or a master accepts a pupil, they are said to do so under the intuitively felt impulse coming from the Savitar-Deva (the Divine Source and Inner Ruler of all). We may therefore expect the ceremony to produce the intended effect only when the master and the pupil are able to understand and appreciate the meaning of the ceremony including the *mantras* they respectively utter. On the other hand, where, as in these days, a mere child or an immature youth is taken through the ceremony by his father or other guardian with the help of a professional priest, neither of whom understands the meaning of what is said and done, there can be no appreciable effect except perhaps a vague sense of sacredness; and even this little effect is often marred by the invariable accompaniment of material pomp and show which engrosses the attention of those immediately concerned.

On the present occasion, fortunately, the pupils and others immediately concerned seem to be earnest and spiritually-minded, not caring for any pomp and show. The pupils are found fairly able to understand the general tenor of the ceremony when explained. The officiants, too, on their part try to grasp as clearly as possible the ideas embodied in the ceremonies and the *mantras*, and propose to address all instructions of a mystical nature to the intuitive souls in the young bodies of the pupils.

Even the witnesses of the ceremony may materially add to its efficacy if they dwell during the ceremony on the meaning and purpose of the ritual as a whole, though not of all its details. For this purpose it will be enough to bear in mind that during the ceremony the Great Lord of the Universe (Savitar-Deva), Prajapati and other Devas are invoked to take the pupil in hand. The main outline of the ceremony (in print) that is put in their hands is intended to enable them to follow intelligently the ceremony in its progress through the several stages.

THE President rose amidst loud cheers and delivered his address in his usual, simple and eloquent way. He said that people might well ask where the need was for a new religious society in a country which was already almost over-full of them. But Bharata Samaja differed from other similar movements like Brahmo Samaj, which are a revolt against Hinduism and partake more of the nature of enemies than that of friends of Hinduism. On the other hand, Bharata Samaja believes in Hinduism as essential for the progress of the world and would fain preserve it in the interests of humanity. It approaches Hinduism in a spirit of understanding and sympathy and strives to retain its life rather than merely its form. The moment the form is emphasised at the sacrifice of its spirit, one can be pretty sure that the days of that religion are numbered, and that it is bound to go the way of the old Egyptian, Grecian and other religions. Such a danger does indeed threaten Hinduism at present. There is a gulf between precept and practice on the part of the adherents of the religion. There are so many books on Hindu religion, each claiming the foremost place, that one does not really know which to reject and which to accept as authentic. Each prescribes so many rituals, that it is impossible for any one to do them all, specially under modern conditions. In the old days, it is said that an hour and a half's work per day was enough to keep a family going. It might then have been possible to pay greater attention to the numerous daily sacraments and ceremonies. But such a thing cannot be thought of in these days of increased wants, when all from the highest to the lowest, have to work from morning to evening for their daily bread. So if Hinduism and its rituals are not adapted to the changed conditions and an attempt is not made to discriminate and preserve the essentials, as distinguished from non-essentials, people out of sheer inability to attend to both essentials and non-essentials alike would simply cease to pay attention to any of them. This contingency, the Bharata Samaja tries to avoid by emphasising the essentials of Hinduism like the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Humanity. Were these realised, would there be the present caste hatred, the race antagonism and the sex-tyranny, that are the curse of India? Again a belief in the Hierarchy of Devas and Rishis is one of the fundamental requisites of Hinduism. But "Devas and Rishis" are now relegated to the background, and any faith like Theosophy, which seeks to restore them to their rightful place, is disliked by the orthodox. Karma and reincarnation are misunderstood and have made people fatalistic in their ideas and lethargic in their daily life. Hinduism emphasises Dharma and Sacrifice as the ideal of life, but its modern followers think more of Moksha or personal liberation than of service to others. As regards Samskaras, they were obviously meant to discipline and mould the character of the followers of the religion; and one is told that the Hindu books mention 52 of them. As so many are obviously impossible of being performed under present conditions, even the more important of them have come to be neglected.

(To be continued)

THE OBJECTS OF THE BHARATA

SAMAJA

A Suggestion

THERE has been a feeling in the country that there is much in Hinduism worth preserving as evidenced by the attempts made time after time during the last one hundred years to reform Hinduism in spite of the excrescences and overgrowths that have gone to hide under a heavy mass of undesirable forms the parent religion. The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission are instances in point. The Brahmo Samaj took to Upanishadic philosophy rejecting Vedic ritualism, but actually they have come to instituting mandirs and churches. The Arya Samaj has stuck to the Aryan fire-worship (homa) and Sandhya. The Ramakrishna Mission has developed out of the cosmopolitanism of the prophet of Dakshineswar—Ramakrishna Paramahansa—through the Vedantism of Swami Vivekananda, a new orthodoxy where a new master has thrown the worthies of the Hindu Pantheon into the shade. The Theosophical Society has also done invaluable work in making known to the world at large the wonderful philosophy behind the Hindu religious observances; but its outlook has been far too wide to admit of a new undertaking, viz., revivifying Hinduism in its characteristic forms.

The question is: Does Hinduism deserve to live? If so, what aspect of it? The Bharata Samaj, it appears to the present writer, has to direct its attention primarily to this. The first object of the Bharata Samaj apparently attempts to meet this point; but the phrase 'broadening and strengthening the basis' does not suggest the purification from unhealthy accretions and the wheedling out of unessentials, and that seems to be so urgently needed. Attention should rather be devoted to determine what is essential and worth preserving in Hinduism. This is attempted in the Declaration of Principles, to which every member has to subscribe before becoming a member of the Samaja. But the question again is: Do the principles enumerated constitute the essence of the Hindu Religion? The distinction between the function of Religion and the function of Philosophy has to be borne in mind. The Philosophy of Hinduism consists of the theoretical basis and bearings of the tenets of the Hindu Religion; but a Religion is essentially a body of beliefs involving a code of action for the devotee to follow in his daily life. That the 'Declaration of Principles' states the essentials of the Philosophy of the Hindu Religion can be conceded. But does it fulfill the function of Religion? The 2nd, 3rd and 4th paragraphs in the declaration are evidently meant to cover this. Service as the ideal of life, utmost purity of conduct in daily life, are such vague, general ideas common to all ethical systems and religious philosophies such as those of Christianity, Buddhism, etc., that one fails to see anything distinct about it. If it is contended that Hinduism can scarcely be held responsible if its highest ethics is the same as that of several other religious philosophies, one fails to see the *raison de terre* for the Bharata Samaja. As a fact, the T.S. is giving the same ethical teaching, service as the ideal, purity of conduct, etc.; there is within the T.S. a proportion of its members who are trying to live up to a code of life, drawn from the Theosophical teachings, from such a book as the Path of Discipleship or Practical Occultism.

What is the special work of revivifying that the Bharata Samaj attempts?

The purpose of the above remarks is to suggest that the special work of the Bharata Samaj ought to be not to simplify and widen Hindu Religion, to water it down to such a thin solution, as to make it lose its distinctive quality but to purify it. By analogy the Samaj has to do for Hinduism what the Liberal Catholic Church is doing for the Catholic Religion. A book like Mr. C. W. Leadbeater's *Science of the Sacraments* gives an indication of the work that may be done by the Bharata Samaj. Of the three aspects of Religion, viz., a body of truths, a system of Ethics, and a code of Rites and Ceremonies, the first aspect, as a body of truths, has been very well studied and known. The Bharata Samaj has to work at the third aspect—a code of Rites and Ceremonies—as that is the great need at present. In purifying and revivifying Hinduism, the second aspect has also received more than enough attention. There is much beautiful Symbolism and Ritualism in the Hindu Religion overlaid with centuries of misgrowths; this has to be purified. To the majority of mankind approach towards the Divine or the realisation of the True Self has to be through forms and rituals. To the blessed few who can dispense with forms, there is no need of the Bharata Samaja. Their own conscience is their religion. The function of the Bharata Samaja is to be a propagandist of a reformed and purified Hinduism widening itself to whoever is willing to enter its fold but preserving the forms and rituals expressing the generic principles of Hindu religious observances. The whole question of Rites and Ceremonies has to be studied from the modern point of view and fixed once more in a pure form in order to give the many millions who are eager to give allegiance to Hinduism a chance of being true Hindus.

There are some who believe that a new era of purified forms and ceremonies is coming over the world; it will be the proud privilege of the Samaja if it can be the herald of this New Era as far as Hinduism is concerned. The moment the question of the objects of the Samaja are looked at from this point of view, it will be obvious that a watering down of rituals to suit cosmopolitan tastes is not the proper work; for the value of a ceremony consists in the accuracy and thoroughness with which it is performed and in fulfilling its purpose, viz., providing communication between higher and lower worlds in order that the invisible forces may play on the world. So the present writer calls for a trans-valuation of all values placed in the forefront of the Bharata Samaja.

D. GURUMURTI

[It is hoped that the newly appointed *Parishad* will take the matter into consideration and do their best.—ED., B.D.]

BUSINESS NOTICE

COPIES of this Magazine are sent to all the members of Bharata Samaja and to such others as have evinced their interest in the movement in one form or another. We request all these to remit their annual subscription of 1 Rupee as soon as possible, or to write to us to realise the subscription by V.P.P. Will it be too much to ask them to secure more subscribers also?

THE EDITOR

AS OTHERS SEE US

MR. JOHN WALKER writes thus about BHARATA SAMAJA in *Theosophy in South Africa*, July, 1922:

Everywhere in the world to-day there is a breaking up of old divisions, and both in ideas and social combinations new syntheses are taking place. One of the most interesting social and religious movements in the world to-day, and one fraught with great possibilities in many directions, is that movement which has had its origin among our Hindu brethren to make access to their religious ranks open to the whole world.

At the present time you cannot be admitted to the ranks of the Hindu faith unless you happen to be born into the Hindu nation. That has been felt even by many Hindus to be an anachronism in the present age, and in consequence many Hindus are working for the internationalisation of the Hindu religion. Hinduism, they think, when properly understood, is capable of exerting a wholesome and ennobling influence on the whole of humanity.

Now a movement has arisen within Hinduism itself which aims at throwing open its ranks to members of every nation who feel drawn to the ethical and religious principles advocated by that spiritual faith, because they think that those should no longer be retained for the sole use of a caste or close religious corporation but shared with the whole world.

One of the aims of this new movement is to build a temple in India which shall be the inspiring centre of their work. In this Temple would be performed the rites and ceremonies of the Hindu faith simplified for personal discipline and worship.

It is interesting to note that this movement owes its inception to Theosophy and especially to the influence exerted by our great President, who in her lectures on "Problems of Reconstruction" in 1918 made a strong appeal for the internationalisation of Hinduism. Personally, the writer of this note would like to see Temples representative of every religious faith built at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in India.

I am sure every Theosophist wishes all possible success to this enlightened movement.

* * *

Mrs. Mary Raine writes thus from West Australia to the Secretary of the Samaja, 19-10-1922:

Re your letter and literature, dated from India, 4th September, 1922, I was so pleased to receive and thank you most sincerely. In my heart I rejoice to think that you are going to have this glorious temple of the Living God in the near future, and dare I hope to see it some day with my physical eyes. I may tell you that I have been practising it (Daily Practice) for a long time without knowing why, with just a little difference in some of the words. If you will kindly let me know the safest and most economical way to send money to India, I will forward a small donation in answer to the appeal for the Temple. I love India. I know I am Hindu. In His Service.

[This lady has since become a member of the Samaja.—ED., B.D.]

* * *

Mr. Wm. R. Gray, General Secretary, Theosophical Society in Ireland, writes thus to the President of the Bharata Samaja 3-11-1922:

Kindly excuse my tardy reply to yours, dated 18th May last, re Bharata Samaja (Children of India League) which has my best wishes and I sincerely trust that such a laudable object may be a great success. Reference has been made in our little magazine to the League and I am sincerely sorry that the appeal here has not crystallised into something definite, but as you know the conditions prevailing in this country do not make for arousing great interest in things international, as the nation is passing

through a very critical stage in its history, and its eyes are inward turned. Trusting that the Temple may materialise soon and that the membership may keep on growing, I remain, etc.

BHARATA SAMAJA

OFFICERS

President: T. Ramachandra Rao, B.A., B.L.

Vice-President: K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, B.A., B.L.

Secretary: C. Subbaramayya.

Headquarters: Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras.

NOTE.—All communications are to be addressed to the Secretary.

Bangalore City Group:—Secretary, K. Venkataramaiah, c/o Theosophical Society, Bangalore City.

LITERATURE OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA

1. *Daily Practice*. Price As. 2.
2. *Abridged Daily Practice*. Price 1 Anna.
3. *Simplified Rituals of Upanayana and Vivaha in Sanskrit* (Devanagari). Price As. 12.
4. An English Version of the above. (In preparation.)
5. Simplified rituals of Funeral Ceremonies and Shraddha. (In preparation.)

Copies of the above can be had of the Manager, T.P.H., Adyar.

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The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 24th November, 1922, was 195. They were thus distributed:

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Ladies	17	Christians by birth	3
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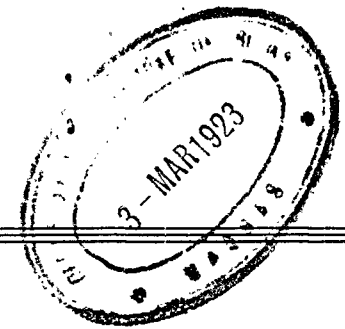
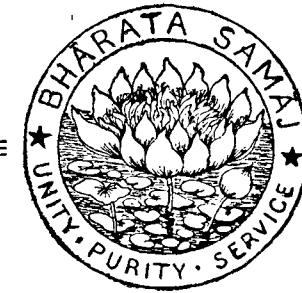
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24th November, 1922

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

Secretary, Bharata Samaja.

Printed by J. R. Aria at the Vasantha Press, Adyar, and Published by Bhārata Samāja Adyar, Madras.



BHĀRATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHĀRATA SAMAJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY

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VOL. I JAN. & FEB., 1923—DUNDUBHI—PAUSHA & MAKHA Nos. 3—4

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NOTE:—The Editor regrets that owing to illness from which he has just recovered, the Magazine has to issue this time in a double number.

SHRUTI AND SMRITI:

Variable and Invariable Elements in Hinduism

BHARATA SAMAJA has shown itself ready to adopt remedial measures in regard to the existing socio-religious customs and observances which are found to be futile or injurious, hampering the true moral and spiritual progress of the community. In admitting European ladies to Hinduism and membership in Bharata Samaja through the Vedic ceremony of Upanayana, and in administering the same sacrament to Hindu girls, the Samaja has manifested a commendable courage of conviction. The Samaja is convinced that the time has come for introducing wholesome changes in the existing customs and observances of Hinduism and that if the present opportunity be not availed of it will be soon too late to think of any reform. The Samaja, moreover, wishes it to be understood that in introducing such reforms as the above it is convinced that they are consistent with the true spirit of Hinduism and conducive to its true progress.

In the minds of many observers, Hindu and Non-Hindu, the question arises, is it possible to introduce any change in Hinduism, governed as it is by strict and rigid rules laid down in Shastras, scriptures of inviolable authority, which are expressions as it were of divine commands? Bharata Samaja has by its action answered the question in the affirmative. To prove the validity of this answer, one has to study with some care the nature of the foundations

on which Hinduism as it rests. This study will show that changes may be made, nay must be made, whenever necessary, whenever occasions arise for them. We have only to distinguish the region where changes may be made and the region where changes may not be made.

The Hindu religious and socio-religious institutions are governed by what are called Shastras or scriptures, which may be broadly classified into Shruti and Smriti. The former deals with what is strictly known as *Dharma*, comprising laws of progress which are based on supersensuous knowledge, on knowledge which is beyond the power of sensuous perception and inference possessed by ordinary humanity of the present day: they are laws to be learnt only through revelation, by hearing them taught by those who can know them, such as Rishis, Devas, etc. On the other hand Smriti comprises laws based on ordinary human knowledge. Smriti means memory or thought. It records Dharma proper as remembered by a person who originally learnt it from another who knew Dharma or from Shruti. Then its primary source is Shruti; but it may have become modified by defects in the man's memory. More often, as is its special function, Smriti records rules of socio-religious life, framed by an individual or group of persons assembled in council (*parishad*) versed in Dharma proper, on the basis of their own knowledge of things relating to the ordinary concerns of society. These rules are as it were adaptations of Dharma proper to the ordinary concerns of life: They are often entirely based on the secular knowledge of their framers. Such rules of life constitute the primary subject-matter of Smritis as contrasted with Shruti which lays down laws based entirely on superhuman knowledge. The laws laid down

in the Smritis are meant for the guidance of the community in the affairs which fall within the ken of its leading members who are also versed in the sacred law. These rules have for their basis the personal knowledge of their framers which varies with their intellectual advance and with the community's general culture of the day. It is such rules as these, written and unwritten, that govern our socio-religious institutions. They must be changed at the different stages of our social progress. There have been different codes (Smritis) for different ages (Yugas). In the same age, they have been subject to variations as communities and localities have differed. There now exists a necessity for many changes in our institutions, as called for by the changes in our general outlook of life brought about by our contact with new environments and new currents of life. The primary transcendental Dharma which has come down to us through genuine uncorrupted Shruti should be preserved intact, while the rules laid down by individual persons or councils may be modified or rescinded according as the wisdom of the modern leaders of society may determine.

The distinction between *revelation* and *human convention* as the two sources of Hindu sacred law is well brought out by the early matter-of-fact practical compilers of sacred laws, as the following extracts will show:

Gautama: The Veda is the source of the sacred law (Dharma), and the *tradition* and *practice* (Smriti and Sila) of those who know the Veda. (I, 1-2.)

Apastamba: Now then we will declare rules of life which are based on Conventions (Samaya) and Customs (Achara). The authority is the convention of those who know Dharma, as the Vedas are (Dharmasutra, I, i, 1-2).

Vasishtha: Dharma has been settled by Revelation (Shruti) and Tradition (Smriti). On failure of these, the Custom (Achara) of the wise (Sishtha). The wise man (Sishtha) is he whose heart is free from desire. Dharma is the act for which no motive (worldly cause) is perceptible. (I, 4-7.)

Baudhayana: Dharma is taught in each Veda. We will explain what follows it. What is taught in Smriti is the second, and the practice (achara) of the wise (sishthas) is the third.

The wise are those who are free from envy, free from pride, content with a store of grain sufficient for ten days, free from covetousness, and free from hypocrisy, arrogance and greed, perplexity and anger. Those are called *Sishthas*, who, in accordance with the sacred law, have studied the Veda together with its appendages, know how to draw inferences from that, and are able to know directly the meaning of Shruti. Now they quote also the following:

'Four men who know one of the four Vedas, a *Mimamsaka*, one who knows the *Angas*, one who recites the sacred law, and three Brahmanas

belonging to three different orders (*Ashramas*), constitute an assembly (*parishad*) consisting at least of ten members.'

'There may be five, or there may be three, or there may be one blameless man who decides the sacred law. But a thousand fools cannot do it.' (I, i, 1-9.)

UPANAYANA IN ITS EARLY FORM

THE *Upanayana-Samskara* (the Vedic ceremony of initiation into spiritual life) in one of its early and simplest forms is described in the *Satapatha-Brahmana*, and its study will give us an idea of the essential parts of the ceremony which has since grown somewhat complex and elaborate by later additions. This simple ceremony as gathered from the section of the Veda referred to may be stated as follows:

1. The pupil approaches the master and says:

I have come for Brahmacharya (spiritual life):
I shall be a Brahmacharin (spiritual devotee).

2. The master begins by telling the pupil that he is one with the Divine Lord and that he should look up to Him for inspiration, and for direct instruction to the master:

Prajapati (Ka) indeed art thou. As a spiritual devotee thou belongest to the Lord (Indra). Fire (Agni) is thy teacher. I am thy teacher.

3. Next the master invokes protection of Gods on the pupil:

To Prajapati I give thee over (for protection).

To Savitar-Deva (Divine Lord of Creation) I give thee over.

To Waters and Plants I give thee over.
To Heaven and Earth I give thee over.

4. Then the master instructs the pupil as to his daily life:

Thou hast become a spiritual devotee. Drink water. Be active. Kindle the fire. Sleep not.

5. When the pupil has lived this life of spiritual devotion for a period of time (extending from three days to one whole year) and the master is satisfied that the pupil has attained sufficient purity, then the master teaches the pupil the *Mantra* of Savitar-Deva.

There ends the ceremony. It is, however, said that the *Mantra* shall be imparted at once—i.e., without the intervening period of purification—to the pupil if he be a Brahmana, i.e., one who has been brought up in a family leading a life of spiritual devotion and is therefore sufficiently clean. The intervening period of purification is evidently intended only in the case of those who have not been leading the clean life of the Brahmanas, the length of the period being determined by the nature of the life the pupil had been leading before seeking instruction in spiritual life from the master of his choice. The maximum length of the period never went beyond a year, which was held long enough to purify the least qualified candidate.

SANDHYA AND ITS ORIGINAL

MEANING

SANDHYA, as referring to the morning and the evening prayer of the Hindus, is understood in various ways. Some understand it as the prayer to be offered at the meeting point of day and night. It is also taken to mean the Devata or Divine Form to be worshipped at those points of time. Some take it to mean the two particular points of time at which day and night meet. Let us now determine its true and proper meaning.

The word means an act; it is an act that the Shastra enjoins. What that particular act is has to be learnt from the *Mantra* associated with the act. It is laid down by the Vedic exegetists that the *Mantra* associated with an act is intended to direct the mind of the performer to the exact nature of the act to be performed by him. The *Mantra* shows that the act to be done is the meditating on the Light of the Divine Lord of Creation (Savitar-Deva) which shines within man and impels his thought and will. Sandhya therefore means right thought, right meditation. It consists in meditating on the never-failing Light within—which illumines all, which shines even when all the ordinary external avenues of light are closed.

An early form of Sandhya consisted in going outside the village morning and evening and being seated in a retired spot, restraining all senses from their outward activities. उभयोः संध्ययोः ग्रामात् बहिःसदनं वायतस्थ. (*Apastamba-Dharmasutra*.) All external lights being thus closed, the only light that ever shines within then becomes manifest. This light shines undimmed as long as the outgoing senses are restrained; and by steady practice the process becomes more and more effective, and the true light within is grasped and held in mind even when engaged in the daily routine of life.

A still earlier form of Sandhya or right meditation is the one enjoined in the case of a *Yuga-Dikshita*, one who has taken the Vedic Vow of Sacrifice. He is asked to meditate on the Divine Lord and His Agents when retiring to sleep and on awakening. The effect of this meditation is said to be to protect the mind during sleep from the onslaught of vile thoughts spoken of as Asuras and Rakshasas; so that there is a continuity of thoughts of spiritual devotion kept up through the period of sleep as well as through the waking state when the mind is alert. Meditation, again, on awakening takes up the thread of thoughts of spiritual devotion and carries it on through the waking life.

Meditation on the Divine Lord is, according to some, prescribed at the meeting point of waking state and sleep because the true light of Atman or the Self within can be grasped in that intervening state when that light is not yet shrouded by the darkness of sleep and owing to the inactivity of the sense-organs is not scattered. If this true meaning and the original purpose of Sandhya be understood, it will be easy to understand how the ritual of Sandhya in its present form has developed. We will next study Sandhya as a ritual in its simplest form.

VEDIC RELIGION

THE Editor of this magazine has given a course of six lectures on the essentials of Vedic Religion to the students of *Brahmavidyāshrama* recently instituted at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society. As the members of the Bharata Samaja and the readers of Bharata Dharma are deeply interested in the Vedic Religion which lies at the root of Hinduism, they will be glad to know the main thesis of these lectures. Accordingly, a synopsis of the whole course of these lectures is given below. It will afford to the readers a broad view of the principles which lie at the foundation of Hinduism; and there is no doubt that a knowledge of these principles will enable them to distinguish the true original Hinduism from its modern developments, and to bring into relief the firm solid spiritual basis whereon the heavy superstructure of modern Hinduism rests.

LECTURE I—VEDIC RELIGION, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

1. Vedic religion or *Vaidika-Dharma* means the course of life leading to a realisation of the divinity of one's own Self.

2. To understand the true Vedic religion and its place in spiritual culture, it should be studied from all points of view, and in the light of sacred tradition—*Purāna* and *Itihāsa*.

3. The sacred tradition tells us:

(a) That there exists one Root-Veda embodying the one eternal and primary *dharma*, as all but briefly outlined in the "Bhagavad-Gita," which constitutes the One Path to union with the Supreme Lord, accessible only to pure and awakened souls;

(b) That for the benefit of other spiritual aspirants not quite so pure and awakened, other subsidiary paths of spiritual culture are laid down, with a view to leading them ultimately to the one Path;

(c) That the Vedas of the present day, teaching one of these subsidiary paths of spiritual culture, are only secondary Vedas, derived from the one Root-Veda, like the other great Scriptures of the world, and adapted for people of a particular religious temperament;

(d) That these subsidiary paths undergo changes from time to time, being subject to vicissitudes in the moral condition of the people concerned.

LECTURE II—VEDIC RELIGION PROPER

1. The (secondary) Vedic line of spiritual culture aims at the realisation of the divinity of the soul through development of its activity or creative power in unison with the Supreme Lord in His creative aspect.

2. Its place among the several lines of spiritual culture may be set forth as follows:

(1) The *Sāmkhya* culture aims at a realisation of one's own Self as pure Spirit as distinguished from matter, through hard philosophical and metaphysical thinking (*Sāmkhyā*).

(2) The *Yoga* culture aims at the same through concentration and meditation (*dhyāna*) on the higher planes of matter in succession.

(3) The *Vedic* culture aims at a realisation of the divinity of the soul by developing the soul's creative power through devotion to Brahman (The Supreme Lord as Creator) and His Agents.

(4) The *Vaishnava* culture aims at the same by developing the love aspect of the soul through devotion to Vishnu (the Supreme Lord in His Love aspect) and His Agents.

(5) The *Saiva* culture aims at the same by developing the will-aspect of the soul through devotion to Siva (the Supreme Lord in His Will aspect) and His Agents.

3. The general aim of each is the removal of limitations in a particular aspect of the inherent nature of one's true Self.

4. For any of these lines of spiritual culture to lead to the One Path, the devotee on each line should try to harmonise his own with other lines, as proceeding all alike from the same source and leading to the same goal, so as to approximate to the Path outlined in the Bhagavad-Gita.

LECTURE III—VEDIC LAW OF SACRIFICE AND THE PATH OF SERVICE

1. The first step on the path of the Vedic culture is *Yajna*, or sacrifice to the Divine Lord and His Agents, leading to the fulfilment of higher aspirations.

2. The Vedic Law of Sacrifice is embodied in the formula—"Let every mortal seek fellowship with the Divine Lord. Every one wants power; let him seek to increase the Divine Glory"—enjoining the seeker of immortality to realise his oneness with the Divine Lord by acting in tune with Him.

3. As a necessary condition of this life of sacrifice the aspirant should have his organs of thought and action well-disciplined and brought under control for use in the life of service and self-surrender dedicated to the Divine Lord and His agents.

4. It is this life of sacrifice (*Yāga-dīkshā*) which makes one a true Brahmana, whatever be one's birth.

5. Every Brahmana is bound to lead a life of service first in this world, co-operating with (1) Pitris, (2) Devas, and (3) Rishis in their work, (1) by rearing a virile progeny, (2) by contributing to their organic growth, and (3) by teaching them the ways of spiritual progress.

LECTURE IV—THE VEDIC IDEAL OF SACRAMENTAL LIFE

1. The Brahmana of Vedic Culture when he enters the path of service is already thrice consecrated:

मातुरग्रेऽधिजननं द्वितीयं मौञ्जिबन्धने ।

तृतीयं यज्ञदीक्षायां द्विजस्य श्रुतिशसनात् ॥—*Manu* II.

(1) In childhood the parents take care that the organism is nourished on pure and healthy food and grows up amidst benign influences, visible and invisible.

(2) In youth the soul is awakened by a spiritual teacher and under his guidance grows strong and learns to express itself in its true nature, while exercising and controlling the body, senses and mind.

(3) The adult takes a vow of sacrifice dedicating all his powers to the well-being of the world in the service of the Divine Lord.

2. For an efficient discharge of the duties involved in the service of the Lord in this world, he marries a woman who has had a similar culture and has likewise dedicated herself to the service of the Divine Lord.

3. The man and the woman thus united live a life of mutual co-operation in all concerns of life, discharging their duties to the Rishis, Devas, and Pitris, and reaching thereby the spiritual heights attainable in earth-life.

LECTURE V—VEDIC RELIGION IN ITS SOCIAL ASPECT. VARNA-DHARMA

1. Regarded in their social aspect, the duties to Pitris, Devas and Rishis may be explained respectively as

(1) activities concerned with the promotion of the organic purity and virility of the race;

(2) activities necessary for securing, with the aid of Devas, suitable materials for the healthy growth and development of all living beings;

(3) activities concerned with the advancement of spiritual knowledge and spiritual culture of the race.

2. These duties are as it were debts which must be discharged fully before working for liberation from this world: ऋणानि त्रीण्यपाकृत्य मनो मोक्षे निवेशयेत्. After discharging the three debts, one may seek for liberation (*Manu* VI).

3. As the civilised community is now constituted, one life is too short for an individual to attain perfection in all lines of service; and an aspirant can attain a tolerable degree of perfection in one line of service. With reference to this, people are divisible into four classes, according as they are fit for one or another of the three lines of service or for the fourth path of liberation.

4. Accordingly marriages based on such spiritual considerations as these are of four kinds: *Prājāpatya*, *Daiva*, *Ārsha*, *Brāhma*.

5. In the eye of Vedic Religion married life is the normal state even for spiritual aspirants who wish to lead a life of renunciation, and whose marriage comes under the 'Brāhma' class.

(To be concluded)

THE OPENING ADDRESS OF MR. A. RANGANADHA MUDALIAR B.A., B.L., M.L.C.

As President of the First Bharata Samaja
Conference at Mysore on 1-10-1922

(Continued from p. 7)

THE President next turned to the question of castes and explained how according to some, they were of divine origin, and how according to others, they were to be traced to the professions taken up in the beginning, which gradually crystallised into castes. There were

others who explained the caste-system as due to an attempt to preserve the purity of race, and prevent admixture of one with the other. So there were many more theories to account for the caste-system. But whatever the cause of these castes, the system as it existed at present was utterly indefensible. In the old days, at least, an attempt was made to make quality go with birth, and deserving people of one caste were admitted into another, and the bad and the unworthy were ostracised from the caste they no longer deserved to be in. But, now-a-days, the castes have attained an undreamt-of rigidity, which should simply disappear. There was no question of Brahmin *versus* non-Brahmin in this matter and both were alike sinners in this respect.

There were other pernicious customs like child-marriage and dowry system which were the cause of untold misery and should be got rid of as early as possible. From the Census Report of 1911 it appeared that as many as 16,791 girls were married before they were 5 years old. Between the ages of 5 and 10, there were 144,837 girls, who were married, and between 10 and 15 years 583,245 girls, who were married. Naturally, there were widows for each age limit—738 between 0 and 5 years, 4,332 between 5 and 10 years and 19,337 between 10 and 15 years. Among boys, there were 6,158, who were husbands in name between 0 and 5. There were 187 of the same age who had married and lost their wives and therefore had earned the right of being returned as widowers! Between the ages of 5 and 10, there were 24,875 married boys and 842 widowers; and between 10 and 15 years, 94,160 and 2,382 respectively. The President left it to picture for themselves the chances of a happy conjugal life in the case of such early marriages and the misery of the perpetual widowhood to which baby girls were condemned by our cruel customs. How could the children of such immature fathers and mothers grow into strong and healthy lads and girls? "Infant mortality is several times as high as in England, and it cannot be said that early child-marriage and early consummation have no connection with the appalling mortality." The dowry system is another pernicious custom, which has ruined and is ruining many families. Unable to secure bride-grooms for their daughters, parents curse the day in which daughters were born to them, and not infrequently, cruelly hurt the feelings of the innocent children, as if they were the cause of all their misery. No wonder, therefore, that some girls, unable to witness the agony of their parents or to submit to the humiliation in the house, relieve their parents of the burden of their existence. In the northern parts of India, there is strong evidence to indicate that female infants are not allowed to thrive at all. I have read of some villages there, in which there are no girls, and of others where the proportion of girls to boys varied from 1 to 10 per 100. And yet, when births were compelled to be registered, the proportion began to show a rapid increase!!

It was the duty and province of Bharata Samaja to discourage and end these social evils, which were sapping the foundation of Hindu Society. For the short time it had been in existence, the progress made by the Samaja was commendable. But there were certain points to be remembered, if the Society was to do any real good. The membership was mostly confined to men. Among them, there were no doubt many, who risked nothing by joining a Society such as Bharata Samaja. The Samaja wanted

people who would face ridicule and not flinch from any sacrifice that it might be necessary to make in the cause of the Society. Above all, the sympathy of women should be enlisted in larger numbers. The facts need only be placed before them and the President was confident that there would be a ready response from the ladies of the land. Gopis of old made good the neglect of their husbands and fed the hungry "Shri Krishna," and their sisters would do no less for His Motherland.

A PUBLIC MEETING

TAKING advantage of the large gathering at Adyar of delegates from all parts of India and abroad for the Convention of the Theosophical Society in December last, the Bharata Samaja convened a public meeting on the morning of the 29th for an exposition of the objects of the association. Sir T. Sadasivier was in the chair. He first called on

PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI

to speak. The Pandit referred to the mistaken notion prevalent among a large section of Hindus and Non-Hindus that Hinduism governed as it was by rigid injunctions of Shastras admitted of no change. He pointed out on the authority of Apasthamba, that Hinduism spoken of as Varnashrama-Dharma primarily rested on the conventions (*samaya*) and customs (*achara*) originated by some leader or leaders of society supposed to be versed in the Vedic (revealed) Laws on transcendental matters. These conventions and customs based as they were on the knowledge and culture of those leaders should keep pace with the progressive ideas of the community, though the Vedic Laws might remain the same. As a matter of fact the social regulations did change from time to time. The Smritis said that once girls had the privilege of undergoing Upanayana and studying Vedas, whereas it was denied to them later on. From Puranas or Sacred Tradition—a study of which was laid down as a necessary equipment for a proper understanding of the Vedic Law—it would be learnt that socio-religious systems were different in different *Yugas*. There was in *Krita-Yuga* only one Varna, one Dharma and one Veda for all the people, while the Varnashrama-Dharma regulations were instituted in the succeeding age of *Treta*. These last were, as the Puranas said, subjected to many changes in the course of ages. Even the Vedas did not remain the same, as the custodians (*Rishi-putras*) went on adding in later ages new texts according to their personal predilections. According to Ramayana one Varna after another would rise to the highest level as the *yugas* went on, till in the Kali or modern age all classes (Varnas) alike would be capable of attaining the highest level possible in the age for any class. If Hinduism would not change its socio-religious system with the progress of the time and would merely stagnate, it would only lead to its decay. Bharata Samaja had just instituted a Council (Parishad) from among its members for determining what changes were necessary in the Hinduism of the present day, and how they should be worked out. The results of its deliberations would appear from time to time in the Samaja's Magazine, BHARATA DHARMA. The next speaker was

MR. JUSTICE RAMESAM.

He emphasised the necessity for minimising and simplifying the too many ceremonies which engrossed the time and

energy of the average religious Hindu whose life here and even after death was subject to one long round of daily and occasional ceremonies. Bharata-Samaja introduced a commendable simplification in the Upanayana and Vivaha rituals without omitting the essentials, so that they could be performed in an hour or two, with a proper understanding of their meaning and purpose. The time-honoured permission to follow simplified rituals in holy places like Tirupati might be extended to other places with equal show of reason, so that all unnecessary pomp and show and waste of time and money might be avoided. Referring to the insistence by Bharata Samaja on belief in a Hierarchy of developed beings such as Devas, Rishis, etc., he said that such a belief was not new to the Hindu, that it was endorsed by modern scientists like Sir Oliver Lodge, that the idea of the existence of spiritual worlds ran through the advanced thought of the day, and that therefore no would-be member of the Bharata Samaja should be scared away by the insinuation of some persons that this insistence was an attempt to slyly instil Theosophy into the minds of the members by the promoters of the Samaja who happened to be members of the Theosophical Society. In standing for the brotherhood of humanity and solidarity of its interests, Bharata Samaja arrayed itself against the caste system of the present day Hinduism. In the old days of our community, one could change one's Varna as in the case of Visvamitra; but modern Hinduism allowed no change of Varna. He pointed out by quoting passages from Mahabharata and other sacred books that real Varna depended not on birth but on character. In the Gita also the duties of the four Varnas were assigned according to *gunas* and not according to birth. As to the explanation of the often quoted text in the Gita that at first God created the four Varnas according to their *gunas* and that thereafter Varna followed birth and not *gunas*, he said that it was a silly explanation, and then referred also to the silly explanations of other authoritative statements found in the sacred books which went against the rigid system of caste. He concluded by saying that true Hinduism could exist and even flourish without the caste system of the present day.

MR. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIAR, B.A., B.L. (M.L.C.)

spoke in Telugu and made a pathetic appeal for remedying the social evils of early girl-marriage and early widowhood. He spoke of the earnest desire of the Hindu women for spiritual culture and to the failure on the part of men to satisfy the craving. He said that women were unjustly blamed as standing in the way of reform whereas the weak-hearted men were the real obstacles. He wanted that best efforts should be put forth for the education of women, and that a seminary for women should be built side by side with every temple. He concluded by exhorting the non-brahmans to think of the many improvements and reforms needed among themselves and not to end by finding fault with brahmins.

MR. G. S. ARUNDALE

who was then called on to speak expressed his sympathy with the objects of the Samaja which were of utmost value to Hinduism. He would however sympathetically criticise one or two points. He hoped that by internationalising Hinduism the Samaja only meant to allow anybody to join Hinduism who liked to subscribe to the conditions, but not to pursue a policy of proselytising. He was interested in rites and ceremonies and appreciated

them and needed them for his growth. He did not mind rites and ceremonies being complex and elaborate: but they should be reconstructed where their original purity was lost. It should by no means be the policy of Bharata Samaja to reduce the existing rites and ceremonies such as those mentioned in the text-book of Sanathana-Dharma. By all means let those have the complex rites who wanted them. Bharata Samaja should be to Hinduism what the *Liberal Catholic Church* was to Christianity. Ceremonials had their important place in religion and were of vital importance to any community; and they were becoming more and more important.

A few more speakers followed with short speeches. Among them was a lady speaker, Mrs. Krishna Rao of Cuddalore, who referred to a few instances in her experience of Hindu women being prepared for some practical measures of reform while their husbands stood in the way.

THE CHAIRMAN

endorsed the view of the previous speakers that Hinduism of the present day stood in need of vital changes which could not be any longer put off. He quoted a passage from the Taittiriya Upanishad to show that the necessary changes should be brought about through the agency of Parishads composed of the wise men of the community. He was glad that Bharata Samaja came into being when reform in Hinduism could no longer be put off, especially with reference to the problem of untouchability. He had high hopes in the progress of reform as so many Hindu ladies assembled there, who above all possess the virtue of perseverance, began to take interest in the cause. The ladies were like the proverbial Tiruvalur car which it was very difficult to start, but equally difficult to stop when once set going.

Lines of Hindu Social Reform

THE moral and the material conditions of modern Indian Society are, in many respects, very different from those of the ancient and medieval India, which gave birth to the written and the unwritten rules and regulations that are supposed to govern the social life of the Hindus of the present day. Nowadays the Hindus who profess to follow these old rules and regulations find them very irksome and some of them most impracticable, so that they are honoured more often in the breach than in the observance.

The changed environment of the modern Hindu has led to a very perceptible change in his general outlook of life and to many changes in his social and domestic habits and customs. The change is most palpable in the civic concerns of his life. The modern educated Hindu cherishes ideals of civic life, quite different from those of his ancestors of not a very remote period.

Not less extensive, though perhaps not equally well recognised, are the changes which have taken place in the Hindu's ideals of domestic and social life in its religious and socio-religious side. These changes of ideals, in their extreme form, have found expression in the movements of social and religious reform known as the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj. The members of these Samajas stand quite apart from the main body of the Hindu Society and constitute a very small minority of the Hindu population.

In the main body, again, there are two broad divisions of people, one comprising those educated on the lines of modern western culture, and the other made up of those brought up under the indigenous system of culture quite untouched by the influences of modern culture. Of the educated classes who have been brought up mainly under the influences of modern culture, a vast majority feel a necessity for changes in the existing social and socio-religious institutions, and have devised schemes of social reform on various lines. They are classed as Hindu Social Reformers as distinguished from the other classes of Hindus whose training in life has all along proceeded on the lines of indigenous culture or who, themselves not highly educated, follow the lead of those who constitute the learned orthodoxy of the Hindu society. These last desire no change in the existing religious and socio-religious regulations, believing that these regulations are sound in themselves and that their strict enforcement is all that is necessary for the maintenance of Hinduism in all its unique excellence and for the removal of the evils, if any, that the Hindu society may be suffering from. Their general outlook of life and their attitude towards modern Hindu social problems are embodied in the recent orthodox Hindu movements such as Bharata Dharma Maha Mandal and Varnashrama Dharma Samrakshana Sabha.

There is, as may be expected, among the several movements of social reform, a difference of opinion as to the scope of reform and as to the methods and principles that ought to govern all measures of reform. The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and other allied movements have combined religions with social reform and have recast their religious as well as social institutions, the one on the basis of cultured conscience, the other on the basis of the teaching of the Vedas, and the writings regarded as purely Vedic.

The Hindu Social reformers, on the other hand, have concerned themselves with what they regard as purely social institutions. Some of them are deeply religious, while others are indifferent to all matters that pertain to religion proper. They all alike, however, seek the aid of Shastras whenever possible, though there is among these a very small number who deprecate all consideration of the Shastras or of the religious basis of the Hindu social institutions in devising schemes of social reform.

It is a fact worth noticing that even of those who have faith in the Shastras all do not pay same reverence and regard to the Shastras, which the so-called orthodox section hold as authoritative in matters of religion and in regard to socio-religious institutions. But the Hindu social life is so thoroughly permeated with religion that any change in social regulations cannot but be regarded by the average Hindu as a change in religious life and cannot be easily accepted.

The most popular and effective method of social reform would, therefore, be one based on a due consideration of the whole body of the Hindu scriptures which now govern the religious and social life of the orthodox Hindu. A due consideration of the Shastras, interpreted on the rational lines of Vedic exegesis (interpretation), will show that there is ample scope for social reform, and that some of our existing social institutions stand in need of radical changes such as those advocated by the social reformers of the several schools, if they should serve their intended purpose, namely, a proper co-ordination of material, moral and spiritual interests of life. To show

that such is the case it will be necessary to determine what Hinduism—designated as Varnashrama-Dharma—as a socio-religious scheme of life truly means, so that the full scope for social reform in that scheme of life as at present understood and practised may be duly recognised and appreciated.

A. M. S.

FRATERNAL GREETINGS FROM THE ANTIPODES

MR. A. ZANELLI, General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Chile (S. America), writes to the President of Bharata Samaja as follows:

My dear Brother: I have duly received your note, dated 18th May current year, containing your appeal on behalf of the Bharata Samaja. Owing to an absence of two months at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where I had the pleasure to meet in the flesh, many of the Theosophists of that beautiful country, I have been unable to acknowledge receipt of your communication at an early opportunity as it should have been my wish. During the months of November and December we are running through the Society a subscription list on behalf of our Russian brothers, and as soon as it will have gone to all Lodges, I shall, with much pleasure, start a new one for the work which you hope to bring to be very soon, a beautiful realisation. I have to thank you, dear Brother, for the opportunity you offer to the Chilean Theosophists, to co-operate in the building of a new Centre of Worship of God and source of Brotherhood. Wishing you complete success in your work, I beg to offer to you my fraternal and heartfelt greetings. Yours very truly, etc.

BHARATA SAMAJA OFFICERS

President: T. Ramachandra Rao, B.A., B.L.
Vice-President: K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, B.A., B.L.
Secretary: C. Subbaramayya.
Headquarters: Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras.
NOTE.—All communications are to be addressed to the Secretary, Bangalore City Group:—Secretary, K. Venkataramaiah, c/o Theosophical Society, Bangalore City.

LITERATURE OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA

1. *Daily Practice*. Price As. 2.
 2. *Abridged Daily Practice*. Price 1 Anna.
 3. *Simplified Rituals of Upanayana and Vivaha* in Sanskrit (Devanagari). Price As. 12.
 4. An English Version of the above. (In preparation.)
 5. Simplified rituals of Funeral Ceremonies and Shraddha. (In preparation.)
- 27 Copies of the above can be had of the Manager, T.P.H., Adyar.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 30th January, 1923 was 234. They were thus distributed:

Gentlemen	213	Hindus by birth	230
Ladies	21	Christians by birth	4
	234		234

Madras Presidency ...	184
Mysore Province ...	29
Travancore ...	6
Cochin, Pondichery, Bombay, Rajaputana, U.P., Bengal—Each 1 ...	6
Punjab ...	7
Australia ...	1
Java ...	1
	234

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

The attention of the members of the Samaja is drawn to Rule II (i), which runs as follows :

Any member at large of not less than 2 years standing, who has attained the age of twenty-one and who is recommended in writing by not less than five other members as a person fitted by character, conduct, capacity, experience and discretion, to take part in the administration of the Association, may be elected by the Managing Body, or by ballot by the General Body of Associate members as hereafter defined in meeting assembled, as an Associate member, subject to payment of an initial registration fee of three rupees.

Members qualified under the Rules are requested to apply to the Secretary for forms of admission.

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary.

TEMPLE FUND

The following payments are acknowledged with thanks :

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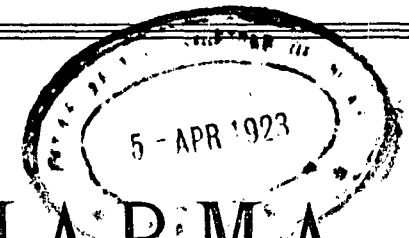
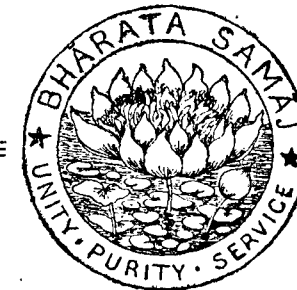
30th January, 1923

A CORRECTION

KINDLY read "Mr. P. M. Raja Badar" instead of "Mr. P. M. Raga Nadar" which is a mistake in print on page 10 of December issue of BHARATA DHARMA.

K. NARAHARI SASTRY

Printed by J. R. Aria at the Vasantha Press, Adyar, and Published by Bhārata Samāja Adyar, Madras.



BHĀRATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHĀRATA SAMĀJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY

EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I

MARCH, 1923—DUNDUBHI—PHALGUNA

No. 5

Bhārata Samāja as such is not responsible for any statement made in this Magazine unless contained in an official document.

THE SIMPLEST RITUAL OF SANDHYA

THE ritual of Sandhya in its simplest form is treated of in the Taittiriya-Aranyaka II. 2 in the following words:

"In the far-off time Rakshasas performed a fierce penance. Prajapati persuaded them to ask a boon. They asked this boon: 'let the sun battle with us.' The Prajapati told them: 'do ye fight.' Hence the Rakshasas battle with the sun as he rises, till he sets.

"These Rakshasas are subdued by Gayatri-hallowed water. Hence it is that these Brahmanavadins (devotees of Brahman) turning eastward in Sandhya (the morning) sprinkle upward the water which has been hallowed by Gayatri. These drops of water, becoming adamant weapons, scatter those Rakshasas away into the ruddy isle of the Mandehas (Rakshasas of slow effort).

"As they (Brahmavadins) turn right round, they shake off their sin. The Brahmana who does so, meditating on the rising and the setting sun in the thought that the yonder sun is Brahman Himself, attains all good. He who realises thus, being already Brahman Himself, enters into Brahman."

This passage contains three paragraphs. The first refers to the constant fight between the rising sun and the powers of darkness—between the rising spiritual aspirations and endeavours of the devotee of Brahman and his self-regarding impulses and slothfulness. This is evidently the God-appointed path of spiritual progress, as the battle takes place with the approval of Prajapati.

The second paragraph points out the means of subduing these powers of darkness and sloth which

thwart the progress of the sun. The devotees of Brahman consecrate water,—their material environment, their bodies, their organs of knowledge and action,—by meditating on the Divine Light within as the source of their life-activities, as shown in the Vedic verse (in Gayatri Metre). By opposing these to the onslaught of the powers of darkness all forces of selfishness and sloth are dispelled from them. This is represented by the act of sprinkling up water hallowed by Gayatri.

The third paragraph speaks of the act of turning right round oneself. This act represents the devotee's resolve to move with the sun, as the Shruti says elsewhere. That is to say, the devotee employs his life-activities in furthering the will and the purpose of the Divine Lord. By so doing, the sin of separation gradually wears away and the devotee senses his oneness with the Divine Lord. Continuing thus from day to day, tuning his mind to this attitude morning and evening, the devotee at last realises his oneness with Brahman while still alive and on his death enters into His very being.

Thus, the right attitude of the devotee of Brahman (spoken of as *Brahmavadin* and *Brahmana*) is represented by the two acts of ritual:

(1) Scattering up water hallowed by Gayatri.

(2) Turning right round oneself thinking of the oneness of the rising spiritual sun with the Divine Lord of the universe.

Elsewhere (Shadvimsabrahmana IV. 5) the Shruti says that by this act of worship the devotee gains the permanent position of a *Vira*, a hero who, fighting in the strength of the Lord, overpowers all, and wins all.

UPANAYANA OR VEDIC INITIATION CEREMONY

[English version by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri, of the Sanskrit ritual compiled by him from the original sources.]

RECEPTION OF THE PUPIL

1. The master draws near to himself the pupil who is ready and quite fit, having had breakfast, with the head properly dressed. While the benedictive verses are being chanted (*Vide* Appendix 1) the master looks the pupil straight in the face.

2. The pupil is made to say :

I have come for *brahmacharya* (to lead spiritual life) impelled by Deva Savitar, the Divine Lord of Creation. Please initiate me. I wish to be a *brahmacharin* (spiritual devotee).

The master asks the pupil :

Who art thou by name ?

The pupil gives his own name (shewing his Nakshatra or Devatā or Gotra).

3. Having regulated his breath, the master refers to the time and the place of performance (*Vide* Appendix 2) and states his purpose in the words :

I will perform the ceremony of Initiation (*Upanayana*) in order that this youth may become the twice-born.

4. The master prepares the sacrificial fire (*Vide* Appendix 3) and arranges the materials to be used in the course of the ceremony.

INVESTITURE

5. The master chants the following mantra with a palāsa fuel in hand and asks the pupil to put it on the fire :

O God Agni, giver of life, glorious in front and above, do thou, accepting this our praise and drinking the immortal fluid got from the cow, lead this youth to old age, as a father the son.

6. The master makes the pupil tread by his right foot the stone placed to the north of the fire, with the following words :

Stand on this stone : like the stone be firm. Face the enemies and dare them.

7. The master and the pupil stand facing the east on the north of the fire.

8. The master causes the pupil to wear an unwashed (new) white cloth (which serves as the womb of pupil in this second birth) in the following words :

Do ye Gods stand round him ; be his vesture in this cloth and lengthen his life to quite a hundred years. This raiment hath Brihaspati given for King Soma to wear.

9. Then the master makes the pupil wear a holy thread as a symbol of his second birth, with the following mantra :

This sacrificial thread, supremely holy, born with Prajāpati of yore, conducive to long life, and excellent, do thou wear this pure sacrificial thread : may it conduce to strength and vigour.

10. The master covers the pupil with a second white cloth (or a deer-skin) saying :

This raiment, the eye of Mitra, bearing strong vigour and of high fame, ancient and glorious, unreachable to the wicked, such a nourishing protective vesture do I now wear.

Then the pupil is made to sip water.

11. The master stands on the north of the fire facing the east. The pupil passes between the master and the fire and stands facing the master.

UPANAYANA (ACCEPTANCE)

12. Darbha grass is spread north of the fire and the pupil is made to stand thereon with the words :

Let us join the coming youth and let us sever death from us all. Unharmd shall we all get on : may happiness prevail here : may happiness be to us all till we go to our homes.

13. The master pours water with his *añjali* (hollowed palms of the hands joined together) into the *añjali* of the pupil and sprinkles the water on the pupil three times, chanting the following verse :

A sweet radiating wave is coming up to us and it will surely give us freedom from death. These, verily, are thy rays, O Sūrya (Sun), which led our fathers to thy company.

14. Then the master, self-restrained, feeling unity with Sūrya (Sun) and Pāvaka (Fire, the Purifier) fills the pupil's *añjali* with water, while his own *añjali* is filled with water by another. The master pours the water of his *añjali* into the pupil's *añjali* and causes the whole water pour down through the pupil's *añjali*, chanting the following verse :

From God Savitar whom we adore, we seek that excellent power which is the source of happiness, which speedily yields all and wins all.

15. Then to establish pupilship the master with his right hand seizes the pupil's right hand along with the thumb, with the following *mantra* :

By the Savitar-Deva's impulse, with the Asvins' arms and Pūshan's hands, I seize thy hand (O.N.)

[Calling the pupil by his formal name, adding "S rman" to it.]

16. The master pours water and so on as in 13 and 14, and then seizes the pupil's hand a second time, (addressing him as before) with these words :

Agni has seized thy hand, Soma has seized thy hand ; Savitar . . . ; Sarasvati . . . ; Pushan . . . ; Aryaman . . . ; Amsu . . . ; Bhaga . . . ; Mitra has seized thy hand.

17. Once again the master pours water, and so on as in 13 and 14, and then seizes the pupil's hand (addressing him as before) with these words :

Agni is thy Master : I am thy Master.

18. Cherishing in mind the thought that he is going to give over the pupil to the Sun the lord of vows for protection, he goes out to the open place with the pupil and asks him to see the Sun after addressing the following words to the Sun :

God Savitar, this is thy Brahmacharin, protect him ; may he not die ! This, O Sūrya, is thy son. May he be very long-lived ; may he not die. That well-being in which Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya, and Chandramas and the Waters move on—in the same well-being do thou move on, (O. N.)

19. Then they both stand facing each other as before to the north of the fire.

20. Then the master holding the pupil in his right hand draws him near to himself with these words :

By the impulse of Savitar-Deva I accept thee (O.N.)

21. Then the master utters in the pupil's ear :

May you be blest with fine progeny, with manly heroes, with radiant lustre, and with good nourishing food.

22. Then the master addresses to the pupil the following exhortation :

By Dharma (spiritual life) thou art Mitra : By name thou art Ka the vaguely sensed blissful Lord of the Universe, Prajāpati. Devoted as thou art to spiritual life, thou art specially related to Ka the blissful Lord, to Prāṇa the life-principle in all, to Indra the Ruler of all. Ka (in the master) initiates Ka in thee, and to Ka I give thee over.

Giving over the pupil to Prajāpati in thought, the master says :

I give thee over for protection from all harm to Prajāpati, to Agni, to Soma, to Sarasvati, to Mrityu, to Yama, to Gada, to Antaka, to the Waters, to Plants, to Heaven and Earth, to Visve-devas, to all Bhūtas, to Ahura, to Krisana.

23. Then the master turns the pupil round to the right so as to stand facing the east, exhorting him :

Do thou follow the Sun's course.

Then the master places his hands on the pupil's shoulders ; and to make the pupil his own he touches once the heart-region with the following mantra :

Well-robed and enveloped the youth has come ; having had his (new) birth he grows more glorious. Such a one do the sages uplift, who ever in thought dwell on God and adore Him.

24. The pupil is made to say :

May I, O Lord of Paths, attain the goal of this highest Path of all paths.

(To be continued)

VEDIC RELIGION

(Concluded from p. 14)

LECTURE VI—VEDIC RELIGION IN ITS ASPECT OF PERSONAL CULTURE (ĀSHRAMA-DHARMA)

1. Service to the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy often degenerates into a life of mechanical rituals (Samskaras). A full observance of all such rituals does not conduce to spiritual union with the Lord, when not accompanied by spiritual qualities (Atma-gunas) such as compassion, forgiveness, freedom from jealousy, purity, avoidance of worry, beneficent activity, freedom from meanness, freedom from greed. (*Gautama-Dharmasūtra*.)

2. It is also said that the observance of a few *only* of the rituals in true spirit of service and right comprehension, accompanied by the exercise of all the eight spiritual qualities, conduces to union with Brahman. (*Gautama-Dharmasūtra*.)

3. This union is attained through the realisation that all the success, illumination and bliss which accrue to the devotee in life pertain to Brahman, to the Divine Lord who dwells in all, not to himself as a separate being (*Kena-Upanishad*.)

4. To make this realisation his abiding attitude the devotee should strive to cultivate to a high degree of perfection the following virtues :

- (1) Scrupulous regard for truth (Satya).
- (2) Knowledge of spiritual truths and laws (Veda).
- (3) Action in accordance with ascertained truths (Karma).
- (4) Self-control (Dama).

(5) Ardent one-pointed devotion (Tapas).—(*Kena Upanishad*.)

The last four qualities form respectively the objects of special culture in what are known as the four *Ashramas*.

THE SMRITI INJUNCTIONS

In the opening article of the last issue, attention has been drawn to the essential distinction between *Shruti* and *Smriti* as treating respectively of matters which lie beyond ordinary man's vision and those which lie within it. But the works of *Smriti* now extant, without confining themselves to their legitimate province, treat also of matters which fall primarily within the province of *Shruti* proper. It is necessary for the purposes of Liberal Hinduism to distinguish between the two categories of the contents of the *Smriti* and also to determine what class of injunctions of the *Smritis* can be improved upon in the light of advanced knowledge and culture.

(1) RULES BASED ON SCIENCE

There are injunctions which primarily rest on ascertained facts and laws of science. The *Smriti*, for instance, enjoins that no man shall marry a girl who is a *Sapindu*, who is closely related to him by flesh and blood. The *Smriti* also indicates the prohibited degree of consanguinity for purposes of marriage, saying that a man should not marry a girl whose descent from a common ancestor can be traced within seven generations on his father's side or five generations on the mother's side. No man shall therefore marry the daughter of his maternal uncle or of the paternal aunt, since such a girl is third in descent from the maternal grandfather or from the paternal grandfather and therefore within the prohibited degree of consanguinity. Thus, we see that the prohibition of marriage between cousins, based as it is on a consciousness of the injurious effects of marriages between those who are very closely related by flesh and blood, rests on scientific considerations and cannot therefore be transgressed with impunity, any more than other rules of conduct and life based on laws and facts of science. This wholesome rule has long been violated by some South Indian Brāhmanic communities, and the violation has been defended by South Indian exegetists like Mādhyama on the authority of Vedic passages of very doubtful sense. This defence has been summarily rejected as absurd by other great exegetists like Kamalākara (*Vide* my "Social Reform on *Shastric Lines*").

Such rules of life and conduct as are thus based on facts and laws of science form the subject-matter of *Smriti* as distinguished from *Shruti* ; for they fall within the ken of ordinary human knowledge (*Smriti*) and do not stand in need of revelation (*Shruti*). All rules of health and sanitation based on science, i.e., on facts and laws which can be ascertained by ordinary human intellect and senses, come under this class, and derive their authority from the validity of the facts and laws on which they are based. The rules regarding the marriageable persons as laid down by the Rishis in the several *Smritis* are, it may be presumed, based on the facts and laws of nature which they observed, and we may be allowed to assume that those who could evolve the systems of philosophy and thought which go by the names of Sāṅkhya, Nyāya and Vedānta, and the system of medicine represented by the works of Charaka and Sushruta, were able to observe facts of nature and deduce laws from them and frame the rules of life and

conduct which are laid down for our guidance in the Smritis. The authority of such rules varies, therefore, with the keenness of the faculties of scientific observation, so that, with the advance of science, as marked by better equipment of scientific apparatus and improved methods of observation and experiment, the rules of life and conduct may be improved upon so as to bring our modes of life more into line with the laws of nature and the true laws of spiritual progress as laid down in the *Shruti*. All rules of life and conduct laid down in the *Smritis* being primarily intended to aid our spiritual progress, such rules and precepts and such habits and customs as do not serve the purpose or are directly opposed to what is prescribed in the recognised *Smritis*, or to the laws of spiritual progress laid down in the *Shruti*, should be regarded as spurious, as having no foundation in true science.

(2) RULES OF LIFE BASED ON REVELATION

It is not alone such rules of life and conduct as are based on science which are laid down in the *Smritis*. There are also rules laid down in them, which, properly speaking, should appear in the *Shruti*, as they cannot be derived from the observable facts of nature. In the case of such rules, we are asked to presume that they were originally laid down in the *Shruti*, only the exact passages of the *Shruti* on which they are based being now lost to us. They form the subject-matter of what is called the *Smriti* because they were based originally on Vedic texts which the authors of the *Smriti* are supposed to have learned and remembered, though to us they have been lost. It may not be that all such rules were originally laid down in the *Shruti* as we now find them in the *Smritis*. Some rules, it is said, are framed on the presumption that they are necessarily implied in the rules expressly laid down in the *Shruti*, while others are formulated on the strength of the statements casually made in the *Shruti* in connection with the rules which form its main subject-matter. All these rules which are said to be based on the *Shruti* may be held valid so long as they are not opposed to the teaching of the Vedic texts now extant. It is to this class of rules found in the *Smriti* that the following dicta of Jaimini refer :

अपि वा कर्तृसामान्यात् प्रमाणमनुमानं स्यात् ॥

विरोधे त्वन्येषां स्यात्, असति ह्यनुमानम् ॥

Or, the agent being the same, the authority may be inferred—I, iii, 2.

But if there be opposition, it should be disregarded ; for, only in the absence (of opposition) can there be such inference.—I, iii, 3.

The first aphorism has been explained as follows : A rule regarding a transcendental matter laid down in the *Smriti*, though not expressly taught in the *Veda*, is valid, because it must be founded on a Vedic text. The rules of life laid down in the *Smriti* were those practised and recorded by the very persons, such as Manu, who followed scrupulously the rules laid down in the *Veda*. Such persons could not have practised, nor recorded in their *Smritis* for our guidance, rules which had no basis of authority in the *Veda*. We are therefore to infer that a rule of life laid down in the *Smriti*, which cannot be traced to any known law or fact of science, was originally taught in the *Veda* and that the Vedic text which lays down such a rule has been lost to us. This general rule is subject to a modification as explained in the next aphorism. This latter says that we should reject a rule

of *Smriti* if it be opposed to an express Vedic injunction. It is only in the absence of such opposition that we may accept a rule of *Smriti*, presuming that the author of the *Smriti* must have had a knowledge of the original Vedic text in which the rule was taught and had it in his mind when he wrote down the rule in his *Smriti*.

(To be continued)

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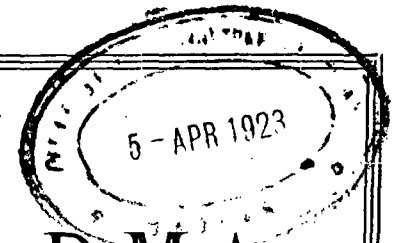
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Secretary, Bharata Samaja

20th February, 1923



BHARATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY

EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I

APRIL 1ST, 1923—RUDHIRODGARI—CHAITRA

No. 6

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SANDHYA RITUAL IN A LATER FORM

THE Manava-Grihya-Sutra of the Black Yajur-Veda lays down the Sandhya Ritual in a more developed form than the one referred to in our last issue. It may be said to form the basis of the modern Sandhya Ritual. It is a more elaborate form of the one act of ritual which consists in pouring water, turning right round oneself, while meditating on the Divine Being who shines within every person impelling his higher thoughts and feelings. The only difference lies in Gayatri, the metre of the mantra, being, in the later form, personified into a Goddess, in recognition of the mystic power of Sound or Word. Gayatri is here regarded as coextensive with Brahman, as His Creative Energy, standing in the same relation as Shakti and Shiva. This idea of the double aspect of the One is rather a later conception which has arisen from the original conception of Absolute Oneness, leading to the worship of the One as Divine Mother.

The ritual runs as follows:

1. Then the student worships Sandhya.

2. Before sunset he goes out to the north or to the east of the village and sits down in a clean spot. He sips water and filling his *anjali* (hollowed palms of the hand joined together) with water turns right round himself and invokes Gayatri in the following words:

आयहि विरजे देव्यक्षरे ब्रह्मसंमि ते ।

गायत्रि छन्दसां मातः इदं ब्रह्म जुषस्व मे ॥

"Come, O Goddess Gayatri, Mother of Metres, taintless, undecaying, coextensive with Brahman, be pleased with this my praise."

3. (a) He then offers the following prayer:

ओजोऽसि सहोऽसि बलमसि भ्राजोऽसि देवानां धाम
नामासि विश्वमसि विश्वायुः सर्वमसि सर्वायुरभिभूः ॥

"Thou art virility, Thou art vigour, Thou art strength, Thou art radiance; of Devas Thou art the abode and name. Thou art the world, and the life of the world. Thou art the all and the life of all. Come up to me."

(b) Then he holds Her on in the words:

Prajapati holds Thee on.

(c) He repeats eight times the Gayatri preceded by the words *Om Bhur, Bhuvah, Suwah*. (The Kshatriya has to use a verse in Trishtubh metre and the Vaishya a verse in Jagati metre.)

4. (a) Then he utters the two following Mantras:

(1) His bright rays bear aloft the Surya
Deva who knows all creatures, that
all may look upon him.

(2) The arrayed brilliance of the Devas is
on high, the eye of Mitra, Varuna,
and Agni; the soul of the moving
and the unmoving; Surya has filled
heaven and earth and the midregion.

(b) He then discharges Her in the words:

Prajapati releases Thee.

And he pours down the *anjali* of water.

The whole ritual is intended to impart a high potency to the water, which is held in the *anjali* while Gayatri the Divine Energy is invoked and held on all the while, the worshipper concentrating his mind on Her as the object of His devotion.

UPANAYANA OR VEDIC INITIATION CEREMONY

[English version by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri, of the Sanskrit ritual compiled by him from the original sources.]

(Continued from p. 21)

INVOCATION OFFERINGS

25. The master holds the pupil by the hand and causes him to make offerings with the following mantras:

- (1) Agni, Thou purifiest all lives; do thou send upon us food and vigour; drive thou the evil far away.—This is an offering to Agni-Pavamāna.
- (2) Agni, the sage, the purifier, the chief priest of the five races, to Him of high adoration we pray.—This is an offering to Agni-Pavamāna.
- (3) O Agni, of good deeds, send down to us splendour coupled with fine strength, granting me nourishing wealth.—This is an offering to Agni-Pavamāna.
- (4) O Prajāpati, none beside Thee doth all these created things comprehend. Grant us that which seeking we invoke Thee. May we become masters of all riches.—This is an offering to Prajāpati.
- (5) Quick as He is to help in all our endeavours, we in all our struggles invoke our friend Indra for succour.—This is an offering to Indra.
- (6) This one, O Agni, bless with life and vigour; with a dear son bless him Varuna, and King Soma. Like a mother, O Aditi, give him joy, and grant Ye, O Visve-Devas, that he may live to an old age.—This is an offering to Agni, Varuna, Soma, Aditi and Visve-Devas.
- (7) The hundred autumns are short indeed, O Devas, wherein you make our bodies old, wherein sons become fathers. Let not our life be cut short in the middle before reaching the end.—This is an offering to Devas.
- (8) May Agni bestow long life on thee; may Agni promote thy growth. May Indra with Maruts make thee advance by seasons, and with Adityas and Vāsus may He establish thee all round.—This is an offering to Agni, Indra, Maruts and Adityas.
- (9) Intelligence to me may the Angirases give, as also the Seven Rishis. May Prajāpati give me intelligence, and Agni also.—This is an offering to the Angirases, the Seven Rishis, Prajāpati and Agni.
- (10) What intelligence (Medhā) there is in the Apsarases, and what fame there is in the Gandharvas, whatever intelligence is found in Devas and men, may that enter me here.—This is an offering to Medhā.
- (11) To this my call listen, O Varuna, and bless me now. Seeking protection I adore Thee.—This is an offering to Varuna.
- (12) That I ask of Thee, O Varuna, praising Thee with hymns, what every worshipper seeks with his offerings. Without disregarding, O Varuna, know my prayer here. Do not, O much-adored one, take away our life.—This is an offering to Varuna.

- (13) O Agni, who knowest all, try and work away Varuna Deva's slight from us. The most worshipful, the best conveyer, the most resplendent as Thou art, do Thou take away all hatred from us.—This is an offering to Agni and Varuna.
- (14) O Agni, nearest of Gods, be Thou closest to us with succour, now at the break of this dawn. Do thou put down our enemy, be bounteous, eat this delicious offering; and easy to invoke, do Thou cherish us.—This is an offering to Agni and Varuna.
- (15) Thou, O Agni, art responsive; as responsive, we hold Thee in mind. Responding to our call, Thou conveyest our invocation; thus responding do Thou work for our cure.—This is an offering to Ayās Agni.
- (16) O Agni, Lord of vows, I will enter on a life of vow. That I declare to Thee. May I be equal to it; may that vow of mine succeed. Now do I leaving untruth embrace the truth.—This is an offering to Agni.
- (17) O Vāyu, Lord of vows . . . truth.—This is an offering to Vāyu.
- (18) O Sūrya Lord of Vows, . . . truth.—This is an offering to Sūrya.
- (19) O Chandra, Lord of vows . . . truth.—This is an offering to Chandra.
- (20) O Lord of all vows . . . truth.—This is an offering to Vratānam Vratapati, the Lord of all vows.

26. The master then goes through the ritual beginning with the Jaya (Victory) offerings, and ending with the sprinkling of water around the fire. (Vide Appendix 4.)

THE SMṚITI INJUNCTIONS

(Continued from p. 22)

(3) RULES OF LIFE BASED ON CONVENTION

THERE is again another set of rules which do not come under either of the heads described above; that is to say, rules which are founded neither on *Science* nor on *Shruti*. The basis of these rules is convention (*samaya*); but it is *धर्मज्ञसमयः*, the *convention of the wise who know the true law of Dharma*. The wise, now and then, change the existing rules of life, or frame new rules, so as to suit the exigencies of the time. But the modifications so introduced should not be opposed to the findings of true science or to the Vedic Laws. Their scope is restricted to limiting the operation of the rules and laws laid down in the Shruti and the Smṛiti, in consideration of the special character of the place and time or of the moral tone and the intellectual level of the people concerned, and to the affairs of life which have a temporal and temporary value. Such limitations being demanded, if at all, only by the special exigencies of a particular time and place, they must be removed so soon as the need for them has passed away, thus leaving free the people to follow the dictates of true science and the laws of Shruti. As falling under this class may be mentioned the rules regulating the external life of men with reference to their caste, making certain concessions as to the professions open to different castes and certain restrictions as to intermarriage and interdining; rules prescribing the marriageable age

of girls, permitting or prohibiting widow-remarriage, and so on. As a more telling example of the rules which are of a purely conventional value, may be instanced those laid down in Smṛitis regarding the tonsure of Vedic students as stated in the following passage:

यथर्वि शिक्षा निदधाति, यथा वैषां कुलधर्मस्स्यात् । दक्षिणतः कुमुजा वसिष्ठानां, उभयतः शिक्षा काश्यपानां, मुण्डा भृगवः, पञ्चचूडा आङ्गिरसाः, शिक्षावाजिमैके मङ्गलार्थं, शिखिनोऽन्ये यथाकुलधर्मं च ॥

"Let the tufts be as many as Rishis (in the *Pravara*). Or, let them follow their respective family customs: a tuft on the right side in the case of the Vasishthas, tufts on both sides in the case of the Kāshyapas, clean-shaven heads in the case of the Bhṛigus, five tufts in the case of the Angirases, a row of tufts being auspicious according to some, or tufts of other kinds according to other family customs."—*Vaidika-Sārvabhauma's Dasavīrnayī*, p. 75.

These rules, which are of a purely conventional authority and value, form so large a part of the subject-matter of the Smṛiti, that Āpastamba introduces his Dharma-Sūtra with the following words:

अथातः सामयाचारिकान् धर्मान् व्याख्यास्यामः ।

धर्मज्ञसमयः प्रमाणं वेदाश्च ॥

"Let us then now expound the rules relating to conventional practices. The convention of those who know the Dharma is an authority, as well as the Vedas."—I, i, 1—2.

In these words, Āpastamba proposes to treat in his Dharma-Sūtra,—which covers the same field as the Smṛitis of Manu and Yājñavalkya,—mostly of such rules of life as have a basis in the convention of the wise who know the Sacred Law (Dharma). A doubt may naturally arise as to how a purely conventional rule can be binding. In answer, Āpastamba lays down that the *convention of the wise who know Dharma* or Sacred Law must be held authoritative. Thus the authority of those rules rests on the wisdom of the leaders of society who, as knowing the Sacred Law, are held competent to frame such rules; so that, when we find in the Smṛiti a rule which is quite opposed to the teaching of the Veda, it must be held as spurious, having found its way into the Smṛiti through interpolation or some other cause. In fact we find Āpastamba condemning as un-*śāstric* (opposed to Law) some practices which were current in his day and taught by the Smṛitis of quite orthodox communities. It behoves us therefore to distinguish between conventional rules which positively help our moral and spiritual progress, those which do not affect our progress one way or another, and those which do us positive harm, and to modify the rules which threaten our true progress.

Speaking of these rules, Shabaraswāmin, the great Mimāṃsaka (Exegetist), says in his Bhāṣya (Commentary) on the Jaimini-Sūtra, I, iii, 2, as follows:

तथा प्रत्युपस्थितनियमानामाचारानां दृष्टार्थत्वादेव प्रामाण्यम् ।
पुरोस्तुगमात् प्रीतो गुरुः अध्यापयिष्यति, ग्रन्थग्रन्थिभेदिनश्च न्यायान्
परितुष्टो वक्ष्यतीति । तथा च दर्शयति—“तस्मान्छ्रेयांसं (पूर्वं यन्तं)
पापीयान् पश्चादन्वेति” इति । प्रपास्तटाकानि च परोपकाराय, न धर्माय,
इत्येवावगम्यते । तथा च दर्शनम्—“धन्वन्निव प्रपा असि,” तथा
“स्थलयोदकं परिगृह्णन्ति” इति च । गोत्रचिह्नं शिक्षाकर्म । दर्शनं
च—“यत्र बाणाः संपतन्ति कुमारा विशिखा इव” इति । तेन ये
दृष्टार्थाः ते तत एव प्रमाख्यम् । ये त्वदृष्टार्थाः तेषु वैदिकशब्दानुमानम् ॥

"Then as to the rules laid down (in the Smṛiti) regarding the details of our every day social life, they are imperative because they serve distinct purposes which are quite visible to us. The teacher, for instance, when duly served, will be pleased with the pupil, and he will then teach him the subject well and explain to him all the knotty points in the text and the fundamental principles of the subject of his study. Accordingly the Shruti says, "Hence the inferior follows the superior." We know very well that to put up water-sheds and to construct tanks are acts which, visibly, go to relieve the sufferings of others and do not therefore constitute Dharma. Hence the Vedic passages which read as follows: "Thou art like the water-shed put up in the desert." "They collect water in the ground." Tonsure is the sign of family (*gotra*), and so a passage reads, "Where (in battle) arrows fall in clusters like boys with tonsured heads." Thus, whatever rule is intended to serve a visible purpose of its own, it is valid for that very reason. It is only with regard to those rules whose purposes are invisible, that we have to imagine a basis in the Vedic text."

We see from this passage that the observance of conventional rules does not, in the opinion of Shabaraswāmin, produce Dharma, an invisible or spiritual merit. People observe these rules because they gain some visible results. It may be that such results are desired by all people in the community and the rules are therefore universally followed like the Vedic Laws of spiritual progress.

OLDER VERSUS LATER MIMĀMSAKAS

The later Mimāṃsakas hold that these purely conventional rules serve invisible as well as visible purposes and should therefore be observed according to the letter of the command as if they were Vedic injunctions. Bhatta-Kumārila, the chief representative of this class, says that he cannot agree with the Bhāṣyakāra for fear that, if the latter's view be accepted, the imperativeness of many rules of life and conduct laid down in the *Śāstras* will be seriously impaired, as they can be easily reduced to the rank of mere social rules of temporal value on the ground that the acts enjoined serve some visible purpose or other. This fear is a sure mark of the very degenerate state of the Hindu society of the day, inasmuch as it is a plain confession that the people are so morally and intellectually weak, so ignorant of their own interests, so wanting in a sense of responsibility and earnestness of purpose, that to make them observe ordinary rules of health, social decorum and etiquette, the *śhishtas* or leaders of society think it necessary to stamp as sacred laws of Revelation those rules of life and conduct which, to any man of ordinary thinking, will appear to be based on science and mere social convention. This difference, moreover, between the older and the later Mimāṃsakas in their attitude towards the origin and purpose of these rules based on ordinary human knowledge and convention indicates how the early flexible man-made social rules of convention have later on, passed into the rigid unalterable institutes of the Sacred Law.

(To be concluded)

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Ladies ...	22	Christians by birth ...	4
	244		244
Madras Presidency ...	195		
Mysore Province ...	29		
Travancore ...	6		
Cochin, Pondichery, Bombay, Rajaputana, U.P., Bengal—Each 1 ...	6		
Punjab ...	6		
Australia ...	1		
Java ...	1		
	244		

SYMPATHY FROM ABROAD

Mr. J. Cordes, General Secretary, T.S. in Austria, writes (dated Vienna, January 22nd, 1923) to the President of the Bharata Samaja:—MY DEAR BROTHER: Thanking you most heartily for your kind letter of May 18th, 1922, and for enclosures, I am very sorry to say that though I have great sympathy with the Bhārata Samāja, I am at the present moment unable to help (except by kindly thoughts) having here such a very bad exchange. When conditions will be better, I hope to be able to return again to this subject. With all my best wishes for your noble work, I am, Ever Yours fraternally, etc.

STUDENTS OF HINDU RITES

A group of students has been formed at Adyar for the study of Hindu rites and ceremonies with a view to learn how to conduct them when necessary. The students meet every day in the morning and regular instruction is given by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri. Those who wish to know more about the matter are requested to communicate with Mr. S. Raja Rama Iyer, Chit Sabha, Adyar.

TEMPLE FUND

The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	Rs. A. P.
Amount already acknowledged ...	...	6,627 8 5
Mr. A. Doraswami Iyer ...	Conjeevaram ...	5 0 0
" A. Kristnamurti Rao ...	" ...	5 0 0
" P. S. Kodandaswami Sa ...	" ...	25 0 0
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" K. S. Rajagopala Iyengar ...	" ...	5 0 0
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" Rangappa Reddi ...	" ...	10 0 0
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" Venkataramana Pillai ...	Velappundi ...	5 0 0
" V. S. Manickam Pillai ...	Vridhachalam ...	5 0 0
" Kumaraswami Pillai ...	Rajendrapuram ...	5 0 0
" C. T. K. Vaidyanadhaswami ...	" ...	25 0 0
" Padayachi ...	Nakkarandangudi ...	11 0 0
" K. Sreenivasa Iyengar ...	Trichinopoly ...	20 0 0
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" K. Venkata Rao ...	Mayavaram ...	10 0 0
" C. R. Naidu ...	" ...	5 0 0
" C. Vijayarangam Naidu ...	" ...	5 0 0
Total ...		6,953 8 5

NOTICE

Past experience has shown that some members are not found in the places mentioned in the addresses originally given by them. All members are therefore requested to intimate to the undersigned changes of their addresses, when they leave their places permanently.

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

Secretary, Bharata Samaja.

25th March, 1923

Printed by J. R. Aria at the Vasantha Press, Adyar, and Published by Bhārata Samāja, Adyar, Madras.



BHARATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY.

EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I

APRIL 30TH, 1923—RUDHIRODGARI—VAISAKHA

No. 7

Bhārata Samāja as such is not responsible for any statement made in this Magazine unless contained in an official document

BHARATA SAMAJA AND SAMSKARAS

THE value of Hindu *Samskaras* (Sacraments) is variously estimated. The belief of one orthodox Hindu section is thus expressed: "By birth man is a Shudra; and by *Samskara* (Karma) he becomes a Brahmana." Another section states the value thus: "*Samskaras* conduce to the unfoldment of man's spiritual nature (*brahmanatva*) just as in a drawing the picture is gradually unfolded by adding the limbs one after another."

The rationalists have been at a loss to see how *Samskaras* such as they are, apparently bereft of all meaning—so perfunctorily performed, often by people of such ignorance and moral weakness—can make one a Brahmana so superior to a Shudra in all respects. In this view they are supported by the Mahabharata and Buddhistic scriptures, which declare that one is a Brahmana, not by birth or *Samskara*, but by *Shila* or character.

Gautama in his Dharmasutra (VIII, 13—23) enumerates forty *Samskaras* (sacramental rituals) and eight spiritual qualities (*Atma-gunas*) or moral virtues and says that all the forty *Samskaras* put together without the eight moral virtues cannot avail a man in attaining union with God (Brahman), whereas with the eight moral virtues and only one *Samskara* man can attain union with God (Brahman). Thus *Samskara* is of little value in comparison with character or moral virtues.

Now, one may ask, what is the attitude of Bharata Samaja towards *Samskaras*? Evidently the Samaja attaches much value to them, as it takes so much trouble about them.

By way of answering this question, let us try to find the true significance of *Samskaras*, as originally

understood. Two *Samskaras* are mentioned (Manu II, 169), in the name of Vedic Law, as marking two spiritual births of man taking place after his physical birth from the mother, and necessary for the unfoldment of his spiritual nature. They are Upanayana and Yajna-Diksha. In the former, the divine nature of the soul is recognised by man and the soul is enabled to get control over the body and the senses to be used as instruments. In the latter, the aspirant pledges himself to the service of the Lord and to a life of co-operation with the Hierarchy of Rishis, Devas and Pitris carrying on the world-evolution under the direction of the Supreme Lord; and to that end he marries a woman of similar spiritual ideals and aspirations. All the other *Samskaras* are subsidiary to these two and branch off from them.

Thus in their genuine form *Samskaras* embody a recognition of the spiritual unity of souls and of the Divine Lord and a readiness to work in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy for the general good of the world. As such, they necessarily include all the moral virtues comprehensively spoken of as *Shila* or character. It is in this original sense that *Samskaras* such as Upanayana and Yajna-Diksha make one a Brahmana, as conducing to the unfoldment of one's spiritual nature and moral virtues.

As in course of time the *Samskaras* have ceased to be embodiments of spiritual ideals and aspirations and have degenerated into mere mechanical observances, they have become divorced from the moral virtues which accompanied them in their original form and ceased to be marks of true spiritual culture. In this degenerated form, they are rightly regarded as incapable of making one a Brahmana by themselves.

Bharata Samaja is trying to bring out the true significance of the important *Samskaras* by emphasising and explaining their original and essential features, in the light of which the several parts of the complex rituals of the present day may be estimated at their true value. Even the simplified rituals are offered to its members for voluntary observance, seeing that among them there might be some who could do without them. The Vedic Religion does not insist on the observance of external rituals by all persons indiscriminately. It recognises that mere mental observance of rituals are more efficacious; while in the case of those who understand the functions of Higher Intelligences in evolution and guide their life-activities in consonance with them, rituals in any form are held to be quite unnecessary, their whole life being one continuous act of sacrament. Between these last and those who stand in absolute need of external rituals, there are several grades of spiritual aspirants for whom severally *Samskaras* in their intermediate forms may do much good. Bharata Samaja has therefore to exercise discrimination in prescribing rituals for its members, who may be of different temperaments and require different kinds of spiritual culture.

UPANAYANA OR VEDIC INITIATION CEREMONY

[English version by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri, of the Sanskrit ritual compiled by him from the original sources.]

(Continued from p. 24)

TEACHING GAYATRI MANTRA

27. To the west of the fire the master puts down a bunch of northward-pointed grass, and thereon he (as initiator) seats himself addressing it with the following prose formula :

Thou art the bearer of dominion, the Teacher's Seat. May I not part from thee.

28. The boy goes to the north of the fire, faces the master, kneels down, touches his own right and left ears with his right and left hands respectively, touches the master's right and left legs from the knees to the feet with his right and left hands respectively, salutes the master with the head bent down saying "Sir, I of such and such gotra, of such and such name, salute thee." The master returning the salute with the words, "Be long-lived, gentle sir," the boy desiring instruction in *Sāvitrī* verse, asks in due reverence :

Teach, O revered Sir ; the verse of *Savitar* : tell it to me, revered Sir.

Then, raising the left palm upwards and turning the right palm downwards, the boy joins them together, holds tightly the back of the hands, fingers and thumbs together,—puts down this *brahmānjali* on the right thigh and sits by the side of the master.

29. The master covers the *anjali* with the boy's dress, holds the boy's hands with his own hands, and makes the boy repeat after him the *Pranava*, *Vyāhritis* and the *Sāvitrī* verse, first each foot of it separately, then, each half separately, then the whole. If the boy be unable

to follow, let the master make the boy say it in smaller parts according to his ability.

30. The boy then washes the upper lip with the words :
I have grown, O Life, the Inner Self. Do thou guard this my treasure.

And then sips water.

31. The boy touches the ears, saying :

Of this spiritual wealth, be ye the wedges.

32. The boy takes the *palāsa* staff, saying :

O good hearer, make me a good-hearer. Just as thou, O good-hearer, art a good-hearer, so also may I, O good-hearer, be a good-hearer. Just as thou, O good-hearer, art the guardian of the Gods' treasure, so also may I be the guardian of the *Brāhmanas'* spiritual treasure.

33. The boy is made to say :

My thinking and my not thinking, both of them are my vow. My censuring and my not censuring, both of them are my vow. My believing and my not believing, both of them are my vow. My knowledge and my ignorance, both of them are my vow. My hearing and my not hearing, both of them are my vow. My truth and my untruth, both of them are my vow. My devotion and my non-devotion, both of them are my vow. My austerity and my non-austerity, both of them are my vow. My devotion and my non-devotion, both of them are my vow. Whatever spiritual vow is of the *brāhmanas*, of *Agni* with *Indra*, with *Prajāpati*, with *Devas* and with *Lords of Devas*, with men and lords of men, with *Pitris* and lords of *Pitris*, with *Gandharvas* and *Apsarases*, whatever vow is cherished by the self towards the Self, may I be endued with all these vows.

34. The boy presents a gift to the master saying "I give this gift to thee, O Guru."

And the master accepts the gift with the following formula :

By the *Savitar-Deva's* impulse, with the *Asvins'* arms and *Pūshan's* hands I receive (this gift).

35. The boy is made to rise up with the following formula :

I rise up after the immortal gods,—bearing long life and vitality, bearing the essence of Plants, bearing the vigour of *Parjanya*.

36. The boy prays to the Sun :

That Eye, placed by God, the pure Light rising up in the east, may we see a hundred autumns. May we live a hundred autumns. May we rejoice a hundred autumns. May we enjoy a hundred autumns. May we prosper a hundred autumns. May we hear a hundred autumns. May we teach a hundred autumns. May we remain unharmed a hundred autumns, to see the Sun for long years.

37. The master holds the boy by his right hand :

He in whom the past and the future and all the worlds are comprehended,—by Him I take thee : for me I take thee ; by *Prajāpati* I take thee for me (O.N.)

THE SMRITI INJUNCTIONS

(Concluded from p. 25)

DIVISION OF THE SMRITI'S SUBJECT-MATTER

The following passage from *Vīramitrōdaya* will show that the subject-matter of the *Smṛiti* is of different classes as explained above :

इयं च स्मृतिः पञ्चविधा । तथा च भविष्यपुराणे—

दृष्टार्था तु स्मृतिः कचिददृष्टार्था तथाऽपरा ।

दृष्टार्थार्थरूपाऽन्या न्यायमूला तथाऽपरा ॥

अनुवादस्मृतिस्त्वन्या शिष्टैर्दृष्टा तु पञ्चमी ।

सर्वा एता वेदमूला दृष्टार्थाः परिहृत्य तु ॥

एतासां लक्षणानि तत्रैव—

पङ्गुणस्य प्रयोज्यस्य प्रयोगः कार्यगौरवात् ।

सामादीनामुपायानां योगो व्याससमासतः ॥

अध्यक्षाणां च निक्षेपः कण्टकानां निरूपणम् ।

दृष्टार्थेयं स्मृतिः प्रोक्ता ऋषिभिर्महात्मज ॥

संध्योपास्तिः सदा कार्या जुनो मांसं न भक्षयेत् ।

अदृष्टार्था स्मृतिः प्रोक्ता ऋषिभिर्महात्मजैः ॥

पाकाशं धारयेद्दण्डमुभयार्था विदुर्बुधाः ।

विरोधे तु विकल्पः स्यात् जपहोमश्रुतौ यथा ॥

श्रुतौ दृष्टं यथा कार्यं स्मृतौ तत्तादृशं यदि ।

अनुक्त्वादिनी सा तु पारिव्राज्यं यथा गृहात् ॥ इति ॥

The *Smṛiti* is *fivefold*, as the *Bhaviṣya-Purāṇa* says : "One kind of *Smṛiti* relates to visible purposes, a *second* relates to invisible purposes, a *third* to both visible and invisible purposes; a *fourth* is an application of an established principle, while the *fifth* is a mere repetition of what is taught elsewhere. All these have their bases in the *Veda*, except those *Smṛiti* texts which relate to visible purposes."

These five kinds of *Smṛiti* are explained and illustrated in the same work as follows : "(1) The employment of the six means of success in our dealings with others either severally or conjointly according to the magnitude of the undertaking, the appointment of superintendents, the ascertainment of the enemies to Government,—all this is deemed by the Sages as the *Smṛiti* relating to visible purposes. (2) Such rules as, 'The worship of *Sandhyā* should always be done,' 'None shall eat dog-flesh,' are classed by the Sages full of wisdom under the *Smṛitis* which relate to purely invisible purposes. (3) The wise regard the rules like 'Let him hold the *palāsa* stick,' as the *Smṛitis* serving both visible and invisible purposes. (4) In case of mutual opposition, the *Smṛitis* must be taken as enjoining alternative courses just as it is the case in the two mutually opposed passages of the *Shruti* relating to *japa* and *homa*. (5) If what is enjoined in the *Shruti* is also enjoined in the *Smṛiti*, it is a mere repetition; as for instance the rule allowing a *Grihasthā* to become a *Sannyāsin*."

Of the five classes of the *Smṛiti* here mentioned, the *first* includes all rules based on science, and man-made laws of social polity and etiquette. The *second* and

fifth embrace precepts relating to spiritual matters; while the *third* comprise such rules of society as have been in lapse of time raised to the rank of unalterable sacred laws. The *fourth* class comprises rules which are derivable, as necessary implications, from the Vedic injunctions by an application of the recognised principles of interpretation. The examples given under each do not seem quite to tally with my explanation of the three heads of the subject-matter of the *Smṛiti*, because the author of the *Purāṇa* under reference is evidently influenced by the comparatively recent ideas as to what constitutes *Shruti* or revealed truth and Vedic commandment and what matters of knowledge and practice fall within the scope of the *Smṛiti* proper, i.e., of science and convention. It will certainly be more scientific to divide our scriptural texts into the *Shruti* and the *Smṛiti* according to the subject-matter, than to divide the subject-matter according to the popular classification of the texts into the *Shruti* and the *Smṛiti*. In fact, there are passages in the Vedic texts, in *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas*, in which mention is made of the several classes of scriptures such as *Shruti*, *Smṛiti*, *Itihāsa*, *Purāṇa*, *Sūtra*, and so on; and the commentators like *Shankarāchārya* bring under *Smṛiti*, *Itihāsa*, etc., passages which form part of what is now commonly known as *Shruti*. Considered from the view-point of subject-matter, the rule (placed in the *second* class by the *Purāṇa*) prohibiting the eating of dog's flesh, and the rule (placed in the *fifth* class) permitting a householder (*grihasthā*) to enter *direct* the order of *Sannyāsins*, without passing through the intermediate stage of *Vānaprasthā*, should be brought under the *first* class, as they respectively pertain to the region of science or sentiment and of conventional social polity.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE UNION AMONG THE HINDUS

It is more and more realised at the present time that the Hindus should first make the union among themselves before they can expect to make the union with other races or other nations. I understand that the "Hindu Sabha" is making a plan for bringing the Hindus to a common platform on which they may unite among themselves. I, therefore, venture to make a few suggestions which I request that the Bharat Samaj may work out in detail and submit them to the Hindu Samaj for consideration in consultation with the Arya Samaj and other Hindu communities. These suggestions are :

First : There ought to be a common text book of Hindu Religion which all the Hindu communities including the *Brahma Samaj*, *Arya Samaj*, *Sikhs*, *Jains*, *Buddhists* may use as a text book for the education of their children. If it is not possible for the present to include all these various sects of the Hindus, then at least all the sects having the *Vedas* as their common basis of religious faith should be consulted to prepare such a book. I understand that the *Sanatan Dharma Mahamandal* is revising the "Sanatan Dharma Series" of books now used in the Central Hindu College, Benares. I hope that the *Mahamandal* will consult the *Arya Samaj* and other Hindu bodies in revising these books, so that when they are printed they may be used as text books by all the sects. When they are ready, we can approach

the members of the Municipal and District Boards to sanction their adoption in the Municipal and District Board schools, and I hope there will be no difficulty in their way to sanction the adoption of these books in those schools.

Second: There ought to be common rituals for Sandhya, Yagnopavit, Vivah, and Maran. The Bharat Samaj has prepared these rituals, but will it submit them for criticism, etc., to the Sanatan Dharma Mahamandal and Arya Samaj, etc., so that in consultation with those bodies a book of common rituals may be prepared. In this connection only those bodies will be consulted who believe the Vedas as the common basis of their religion. The various sects will add the details if they like, but the main rituals should be made common. When such a book is prepared, the Sanatan Dharma Sabhas, Arya Samaja and Bhārat Samaj, etc., should try to induce their followers to act according to them—of course the various Hindu communities should be left free to fill in the details according to their own likes or customs. The various castes can then be approached to adopt those rituals.

Third: The value of the festivals in retaining the Hindus as a nation is undisputed. Common festivals should be searched out, and they may be so reformed that all the Hindu communities may meet on those occasions either in one place or in some centres that may be fixed by the citizens themselves. At present some of the festivals, instead of tending to unity, lead to strife, such as the holi festival in these parts. The Holi festival should be made an occasion of a general Yagna or Havan on which all the Hindus should assemble to pour out their Ahuti; and thereafter they should greet each other in a fraternal way. Similarly the other festivals should be reformed like Vijaya Dasami (or Dasehra), Dip Malika, and Raksha Bandhan, etc., etc.

There are other points which also need to be considered if the unity among the Hindus is to be attained. But as there is much prejudice on these points these need not be emphasised at present. They are:

(1) *Interdining.* It is not necessary that all should eat in the same plate. But the present untouchability in eating even among the higher castes should be done away with.

(2) *Intermarriages.* The sub-divisions of the main castes at least should be induced to marry among themselves. And the marriages with other castes should not be looked down with contempt.

(3) *Conversion.* Our policy should not be to proselytise the members of other faiths in Hinduism, but we should give every facility to those who wish to be converted into Hinduism.

Thansi SHIVA NARAYAN BHARGAVA

BHARATA SAMAJA

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 27th April, 1923, was 258.

A PUBLIC MEETING

A public meeting of the Bharata Samaja was held on 31st March, 4.45 afternoon, at the Theosophical Headquarters Hall, the Hon. Justice Ramesam presiding.

The Chairman spoke on the noble ideals of the Samaja in rescuing Hinduism from the depressing social trammels.

Mr. C. Jinarajadasa was then requested to speak, and he hailed the movement in its endeavour to liberalise Hinduism by removing its superstitious encrustations overlaid for centuries, so that the universal aspect of the religion may become truly international, and thus help India to form the spiritualising centre of the world.

Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao in speaking of the Passing away of the Caste System pointed out, that those who speak of it, declare that the Caste system by birth is dead in that, for instance, there are not sufficient number of Brahmana families fit, however well-trained, to receive only Brahmana souls, and able by inter-marriage between themselves to perpetuate the Brahmana caste by birth. The Bharata Samaja is, therefore, endeavouring to take up the qualities of each individual and train him up for the work he is fit for. They do not stand in the way of those who want to revive the system in their own way.

Sir T. Sadasiva Iyer spoke in Tamil generally corroborating what Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao said and instanced the cases of Kshatriyas having become Brahmanas in the old days by virtue of their qualities.

Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri was next called on and spoke on the attitude of Bharata Samaja towards Hindu Samsharas, as explained in the opening article in this issue.

The Chairman then closed the meeting with a few words.

UPANAYANA CEREMONY

It is proposed to perform, under the auspices of Bharata Samaja, the Upanayana Ceremony of the President Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao's grandson (daughter's son), *Sriram*, on the morning of Wednesday, 2nd May, 1923. The boy is being prepared for the ceremony under the guidance of Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri.

TEMPLE FUND

The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

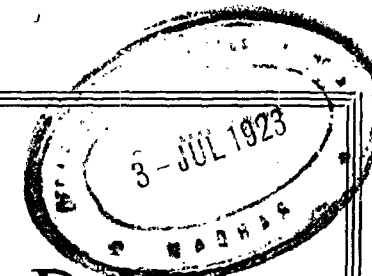
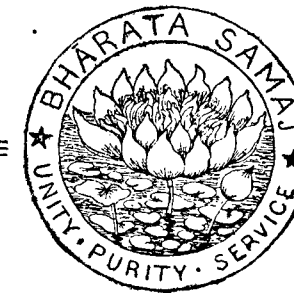
NAME	PLACE	RS. A. P.
Amount already acknowledged ...	...	6,953 8 5
Mrs. Delgorgo (3rd instalment) ...	Adyar	10 0 0
Mr. Mahdi Hussain Sahib ...	...	50 0 0
" T. N. Ramakristna Reddi ...	Chittore	5 0 0
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Mr. S. Varada Chetti ...	Tirupattur	5 0 0
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" N. Srinivasulu Naidu ...	Vaideswarankoil	5 0 0
" A. V. Mouttayan ...	Pondichery	10 0 0
" K. Ramaswami Pillai ...	Kallapuram	10 0 0
" M. Sabhapathi Iyya ...	"	5 0 0
Mrs. Cannan ...	Adyar	100 0 0
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(£1-13-0) ...		24 12 0
Total ...		7,228 4 5

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

27th April, 1923

Secretary, Bharata Samaja.

Printed by J. R. Aria at the Vasanta Press, Adyar, and Published by Bhārata Samāja, Adyar, Madras.



BHĀRATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

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VOL. I MAY 30TH, 1923—RUDHIRODGARI—JYESHTHA (ADHIKA) No. 8

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MARRIAGE AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

VEDIC Religion assigns to marriage and married life a most important place in the path of Dharma or Spiritual Culture. Some early teachers of Vedic Law go so far as to regard married life, *Grihastha-ashrama*, as the only normal and proper state for man and woman. We will be able to understand the meaning of this attitude if we consider the exact place assigned to marriage and married life in the path of Dharma.

2. The beginnings of spiritual life lie in the realisation of the perishability and misery of the average human physical existence, accompanied by a longing for an immortal life of unmixed bliss. In his quest for a way to this goal, the aspirant is impelled to seek the aid of a teacher who knows Dharma, the Divine Law of Evolution, and who has been treading the path of Dharma and made some progress thereon.

3. The pupil when accepted by the teacher is taught the first great truth that the true man is the immortal Spirit, not the perishable body; that the true man as such is one with the supreme Spirit that dwells alike in the pupil, in the teacher, and in the Lord of Creation who rules the world. He is also taught to look up, for protection and guidance, to the Supreme Lord as represented by the teacher.

4. The pupil is then placed under an appropriate physical and moral discipline which purifies and refines the body, senses and the mind and strengthens the will enabling it to exercise control over them. He is taught also Dharma, the Divine Law of Evolution, and the Mantras by which to invoke the aid and co-operation of the Higher Intelligences who carry on the Law. This constitutes

Brahmacharya, a life of spiritual discipline, in which by daily exercise of meditation and worship the pupil develops spiritual energy.

5. Thus equipped with knowledge and power, the aspirant dedicates his life to the service of the Divine Lord, to a life of co-operation with Him and His Agents in the cause of world-progress. Now he has become a full *Brahmana*, a devotee of Brahman the Creator and the Lord of the Universe.

6. Every Brahmana or pledged devotee of the Divine Lord is bound, according to Vedic religion, to work in co-operation with the Divine Agents, Pitris, Rishis, and Devas in their respective lines of activity in connection with humanity. Those lines are concerned with the promotion of humanity's racial progress and virility, its spiritual culture, and its material and moral progress. Without an adequate discharge of these duties, no individual will be in a position to realise the Spirit's oneness with the Supreme Lord, Brahman.

7. For discharging the duty to Pitris by way of bringing forth a virile progeny, married life is indeed necessary. In the eye of Vedic Law, married life is essential also for the discharge of the duties to Rishis and Devas. No man can perform *Yagas* without the wife. Accordingly, each pledged devotee (Brahmana), man or woman, seeks a partner of the other sex on the path of Dharma. The pledged union of man and woman for a life of perfect love and harmony and mutual co-operation on the path of Dharma and all concerns of life constitutes what we call Marriage. Such a married life conduces to the realisation of one's own true Self as one with the Divine Lord.

UPANAYANA OR VEDIC INITIATION CEREMONY

[English version by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri, of the Sanskrit ritual compiled by him from the original sources.]

(Concluded from p. 28)

THE DAILY KINDLING OF SACRED FIRE

38. Then as before the master leads the pupil between himself and the fire, himself sits to the west of the fire and seats the pupil to his right.

39. Then he makes the pupil cleanse the place all round the fire, with the following words :

All round Thee, O Fire, I cleanse the place praying for life and wealth. May I be endowed with good progeny, endowed with good and virile sons, well endowed with power, endowed with good articles of nourishment, endowed with fine houses, led by a good master, endowed with fine (spiritual) intelligence, endowed with spiritual wealth and spiritual devotees.

40. He makes the pupil put fuel into the fire with the following mantras :

- (1) To the Fire, mighty and wisdom-born, I have brought the fuel. Just as, O Fire, thou art brightened by this fuel, so also do thou brighten me with life, power, gain, intelligence, progeny, cattle, spiritual strength, food and the eatable.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (2) Growing Thou art: May we grow too.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (3) Bright Thou art. May we also be bright.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (4) Splendour Thou art. Bestow splendour on me.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (5) I have, to-day, duly worshipped with waters. May I be united with the Essence. I have approached Thee, O Fire, with offerings; do Thou, endow me with strength.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (6) O Fire, do Thou endow me with strength, with progeny, and also with wealth.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (7) May Devas know me thus worshipping; may Indra know, as well Rishis.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (8) To the Mighty Fire, the heavenly one, I make this offering.
- (9) To Heaven and Earth, I make this offering.
- (10) This fuel, O Fire, is for Thee. Grow by it and become full by it. May I too grow and become full.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (11) Whoso seeks to rob me of my part when I am entitled to it, do Thou, O Fire, make him partless and make me, O Fire, possessed of the part.—Thus do I make this offering.
- (12) Having put the fuel, O Fire, may I have fulfilled all vows.—Thus do I make this offering.

41. Then the pupil touches the Fire with his hand, and wipes down the mouth, with both lips closed, uttering the following mantra :

With this splendour, do I smear me.

He repeats this act twice again with the same mantra, and washes the hand.

42. Then he stands up and, with the gesture of salutation, prays to Agni in the following six mantras :

May Agni bestow on me intelligence, progeny and splendour.

May Indra bestow on me intelligence, progeny and force.

May Sūrya bestow on me intelligence, progeny and radiance.

What light is of Thee O Fire, by that may I become brilliant.

What power is of Thee, O Fire, by that may I become powerful.

What radiance is of Thee, O Fire, by that may I become radiant.

RULES OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

43. Then the master places his right hand with upward turned fingers in the heart-region of the pupil saying :

Into my will I take thy heart. May thy mind follow my mind; my speech shalt thou follow with sole devotion. May Brihaspati join thee to me.

44. The master ties a girdle thrice round the pupil's loins for protection and purity; making the pupil chant the following mantra :

This girdle, removing all evil utterances, has come to us, purifying our blessed home. Infusing strength into our Prāna and Apāna (upward and downward breaths) and dear to Devas, this girdle brings us good fortune.

And he consecrates the girdle thus tied with the following mantra :

Guardian of righteousness and preserver of austerity, slayer of demons, and conqueror of enemies, may such (girdle) wind all round us. By thee protecting us, O girdle, may we who wear thee remain unharmed.

Let the master make three knots at the navel making the pupil say :

The knot of Prānas art thou. May it not become loosened.

The pupil shall think of himself as enveloped with the three Vedas and their auxiliary sciences and secret doctrines.

45. The master teaches the pupil the rules of spiritual discipline :

Thou art now a spiritual devotee. Drink water. Do work. Sleep not in the day time. Govern thy speech. Study the Veda under thy Master. Beg for food morning and evening. Kindle the fire morning and evening. Go through this spiritual discipline twelve years or till you have completed the study of the Veda.

Let the master so instruct the pupil that he understands the spirit of these several commandments.

SCOPE FOR REFORM IN HINDUISM

THE Hindu scheme of life known as Varnāshrama-Dharma is, as that term signifies, of a socio-religious character. It is the path of Dharma or spiritual progress cut out in *varna* and *āshrama*, in communal and personal life. It combines thus two elements, the one, the spiritual, informing and dominating the other, the temporal. Spiritual progress and attainment is the end which the regulated temporal life is intended to subserve. They form, respectively, the invariable and the variable features of the scheme: the one is made up of the primary laws of spiritual progress constituting Dharma proper laid down in the *Veda*, while the other is made up of derivative or secondary rules and regulations of social life, written and unwritten, based primarily on Dharma proper, and embodied in the *Smritis* and *Acharas* (customs) having their origin in the cultured conscience of the community as a whole or of the leading men and women of that community.

The invariable laws of spiritual progress constitute what is called *Sanātana Dharma*, the Eternal Religion. Of this, again, two aspects have to be distinguished: the one presented to persons of *śuddha-sattva*, of pure enlightened understanding and well-balanced mind, devoted to perfect truth, and the other presented to persons of impure minds; the latter being adaptations of the former to the varying needs and idiosyncracies of people. These adaptations are various, and of them five different systems are mentioned in the Mahabharata, namely, *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Pāñcharātra*, *Pāshupata* and *Vedic*.

Sāṅkhya and *Yoga*, two paths of spiritual culture through speculation and meditation, are suited to the people of philosophic temperament and may be comprehended in what is generally known as *Jñāna-mārga*, leading to a realisation of one's own true Self.

Pāñcharātra and *Pāshupata* are two separate paths of spiritual culture, dominated by *Bhakti* (devotion) or love of a personal God in the form of Vishnu or Shiva, leading to a realisation of unity of one's own true Self with the Universal Soul in His aspect as Protector, or Destroyer and Regenerator.

The *Vedic* path of spiritual culture through action leads its devotee to a realisation of his unity with the Universal Soul in His Creative aspect as *Brahmā*.

All these paths are intended as stepping stones to the One Path of Holiness leading to spiritual perfection, which is one for all, constituting the Primary Dharma taught in the one Primary Veda, glimpses of which, according to our Sacred Tradition, have been vouchsafed to us in the Bhagavad-Gita. Of this Primary Dharma the Vedic Religion embodied in the Vedas (*Trayi*, the three Vedas) we now have and allied writings such as *Smritis* is an adaptation suited to a particular class of people, namely, those of active temperament.

Varnāshrama-Dharma is the developed form of this secondary Vedic path of spiritual culture through action, and it is thus only one of the five schemes of life or preparatory paths of spiritual culture leading to the Path of Holiness, of Dharma proper; and its latest development, the modern caste system, is, therefore, not universally applicable to all Hindus. It has, of course, been regarded always as outside the other four schemes of life, represented nowadays by Jains, Buddhists, Gosains, Bairagis, and the many reformed Shaiva and Vaishnava

sects, though, by proximity to the predominant Vedic communities, these schemes become affected by caste influences as soon as the zeal of religious reform has cooled itself. So, as a matter of fact, caste system pervades the social life of almost the whole Hindu population; and to us this is not quite inexplicable, seeing that out of the five paths of spiritual culture Varnāshrama-Dharma alone regulates the social, external, activities of the people, while the other four have concerned themselves mainly with the regulation of the inner life of thought and emotion.

Even a superficial study of Hindu social history will show that the detailed regulations of Varnāshrama-Dharma have not been the same at all times. Every one knows that no modern Hindu of any class or caste strictly follows in practice the regulations laid down in *Smritis*,—that the statutory restrictions and limitations have become in practice more rigorous in some cases and attenuated in some others. *Smritis* themselves state that different *Smritis* severally apply to different ages (*yugas*) and communities, and that some practices which were in vogue in former ages are forbidden specially for the modern age of Kali. Among such practices may be mentioned Vedic culture and adult marriage for women, widow re-marriage, intercaste marriages, admission of non-Brāhmana communities and individuals to Brāhmana culture and status. It is quite pertinent to enquire into the origin of such prohibitions and to determine whether the old practices may not be revived in the cause of humanity and in the interests of true moral and material progress.

Again, the Vedas, Purānas and Itihāsas declare that there was only one *varna* at first, out of which the fourfold scheme was gradually evolved for social efficiency, and that this scheme has degenerated in the long lapse of time into the modern system of warring castes and classes under the influence of greed for material wealth and pleasure. This makes us think whether it is necessary to maintain the present system in any form at all. Above all, we have to enquire into and determine that essential basic truth underlying Varnāshrama-Dharma, the realisation of which in life the scheme in all its phases is intended to subserve, and which constitutes the spiritual or religious basis of the Hindu social life. It will at once serve as the standard by which to test the efficacy of our existing social institutions and will also indicate the line on which social reform should proceed. An investigation, on these lines, of the existing system of Varnāshrama-Dharma, so far carried on, has shown that there is a vast scope for reform as well as an urgent need for it.

A. M. S.

THE SPIRITUAL MISSION OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA

I JUST glanced through the pages of the *Vedic Magazine* and found the following on page 617 on "Who is a Hindu"? It is an extract from the *Servant* of the proceedings of the Hindu People's Association.

"The 3rd meeting of the above Association took place on the 25th March in Kibe Wada, Poona, under the conductorship of Dr. Navale. The meeting was attended by some Brahmin representatives including one well-known Sastri, and representatives of the Mali, Jain, Maratha,

Mang and Mahar communities. The subject-matter of the day was the necessity of re-conversion or conversion to Hinduism, and a very lively discussion took place. The definition of a Hindu was suggested as follows: Those who acknowledge the Vedas or any other religious book based on the Vedas, should be called Hindus. Knowledge of and action according to these religious books is of course necessary; but mere reverence, too, for these sacred books would be considered as a sufficient attribute. A Mahar gentleman was willing to accept this definition on the condition that their right to read and learn the Vedas was acknowledged by the three upper classes, namely the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas. To this the Brahmin gentleman gave no satisfactory answer. However, the above definition of Hinduism was generally supported by all."

The question apparently relates to the admission into Hinduism mainly of those who originally were born Hindus and subsequently converted to other religions. An anxiety is seen in the movement to preserve Hinduism such as it is, anyhow. The Bharata Samaja, it is well to remember, has a higher ideal and a loftier aim in that, being international, it lays no restriction based on birth, and demands a higher life and conduct than the average by its fundamental tenets of vegetarian and teetotal life, not to speak of the necessary belief in Hindu basic truths. While it does not aim obviously at having and cannot, therefore, have a large number in its fold, it is expected to form a spiritual class of liberal Hindus conscious of the eternal principles of the spiritual life of Hinduism, and pledged to practise them in daily conduct.

S. RAJA RAM

UPANAYANA CEREMONY

THE event of the new year of the Samaja was the celebration this morning of the Upanayana of the grandson of Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao, Retired Sub-Judge, and President of the Samaja. The ceremony was performed by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri, B.A., at Chit Sabha (Theosophical Society, Adyar) at 7.30 a.m., assisted by some members who have been taking instruction (by Adhyayana) from him for some time past. This time it was possible to achieve great perfection in the solemnity of performance. The whole ceremony including *Jayādi Homa* was completed within an hour. The invited guests, including Dr. Besant, and European and Indian ladies and gentlemen members of the Bhārata Samāja were deeply impressed with the performance of this sacrament. The boy himself, an intelligent and bright young lad of 14 who was prepared for the occasion by a week's previous instruction under Pandit Mahadeva Sastri, responded clearly and with understanding to all the items of the initiation ceremony. With the distribution of sugar-candy, fruits and roses, the ceremony closed.—*New India*.

BHARATA SAMAJA

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Vice-President: K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, B.A., B.L.
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Coimbatore Group: Secretary, T. B. Bhashyacharya, B.A., B.L., Vakil, Coimbatore.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 30th May, 1923, was 266.

Distribution			
Gentlemen ...	240	Hindus by birth ...	262
Ladies ...	26	Christians by birth ...	4
	266		266
Madras Presidency ...	...	...	212
Mysore Province ...	...	...	29
Travancore ...	...	...	6
Cochin, Pondichery, Rajaputana, U.P., Bengal and	...	...	...
Pudukkotta—Each 1 ...	...	...	6
Sind ...	...	...	6
Bombay ...	...	...	5
Australia ...	...	...	1
Java ...	...	...	1
			266

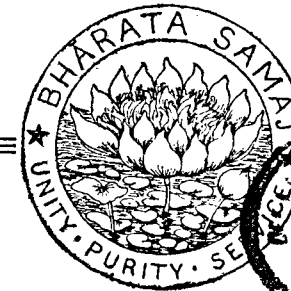
TEMPLE FUND

The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	RS.	A.	P.
Amount already acknowledged ...	...	7,228	4	5
Mr. T. K. Ramachandra Iyer ...	Kumbakonam	5	0	0
" B. Munuswamy Naidu ...	Chittore	25	0	0
" G. Aravamadu Iyengar ...	Bangalore	50	0	0
" K. H. Ramiah ...	"	25	0	0
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" V. Mudduveeranna Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
" R. Venkatarama Gowndar ...	"	5	0	0
" C. M. Ramachandra Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
" B. Bheemiah Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
" C. V. Venkatafama Iyengar ...	"	25	0	0
Mrs. Akkamma ...	"	5	0	0
Mr. Puttayya Gowndar ...	"	5	0	0
Mrs. Lakshamma ...	"	5	0	0
The Vasanta Ladies Lodge ...	"	40	0	0
Mr. P. Range Gowndar ...	"	5	0	0
" K. A. Palaniaswami Chettiar ...	"	25	0	0
" S. V. Sangiah Chettiar ...	"	5	0	0
" T. R. K. Ramaswami Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
" K. Range Gowndar ...	"	10	0	0
" N. N. Marudachelam Chettiar ...	"	5	0	0
" M. Range Gowndar ...	"	5	0	0
" K. Range Gowndar ...	"	10	0	0
" C. Natesha Pillai ...	"	10	0	0
" R. Swaminadha Pillai ...	"	40	0	0
" S. K. Lakshminarayana Naidu ...	"	10	0	0
" V. Veeravada Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
" V. Vellingeri Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
The Vasanta Ladies Lodge (2nd instalment) ...	"	20	0	0
Mr. T. S. Sivasubramanya Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
" N. Subbiah Chettiar ...	"	10	0	0
" C. K. Krishna Boyer ...	"	10	0	0
Total ...		7,773	4	5

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary, Bharata Samaja.

30th May, 1923



BHARATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY

EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I JUNE 28TH, 1923—RUDHIRODGARI—JYESHTHA (NIJA) No. 9

Bhārata Samāja as such is not responsible for any statement made in this Magazine unless contained in an official document

MARRIAGE SACRAMENT

IT is the high purpose and the holy nature of married life as governed by Vedic Law that gives marriage its sacramental value and its important place in the Vedic scheme of spiritual culture. The marriage ceremony consecrates the union of a man and a woman who propose to tread together the path of Dharma or spiritual culture in mutual co-operation. From the day of marriage onward the couple are ordained to discharge the duties of married life as laid down by Vedic Law. In discharging these duties, the inherent powers of one's true Self as one with Brahman, the Divine Lord, are developed from day to day. As this development goes on, the oneness of the Self with Brahman becomes more and more manifest.

2. According to Vedic Law, married life is a life of strenuous activity in conscious and self-directed co-operation with Brahman the Divine Lord, who governs the activities connected with the progress of the world as a whole. So far as concerned with humanity, three lines of activity are distinguished as relating to the physical organic development, to the moral and material progress, and to the spiritual culture of the race. Brahman carries on these activities through His Agents named, respectively, *Pitris*, *Devas* and *Rishis*. By taking part in these three lines of activity in co-operation with Brahman and His Agents, man and woman in their married life feel the growth of their inherent spiritual powers, and thereby realise in life their oneness with Brahman.

3. Thus in the married life governed by Vedic Law four aspects are distinguishable. One relates to the aspiration to realise the inherent oneness of one's true Self with Brahman unaffected by any kind

of distinction; and this lies at the background of all spiritual culture. The other three aspects relate to the three lines of external activities mentioned above, in which this oneness manifests itself. In these four departments of life-activities, the man and the woman who have taken the vow of marriage should so conduct themselves as to be in complete harmony with each other and with the will and purpose of Brahman who is primarily engaged in these activities for the advance of the world-progress. According to the Vedic Law the purpose and will of Brahman are furthered by the married couple by preserving the pure, virile and noble human race started by Prajapati and Pitris, by contributing to the moral and material progress of the race with the help and co-operation of Devas, and by maintaining the path of spiritual culture as handed on by the Rishis.

4. Such is the scope of the married life of the Vedic Law. In the course of racial evolution, different individuals have developed different tendencies in different degrees. People are found to be of different religious tendencies, so that they are classified according as they are active, devotional or philosophical in their temperaments. They also differ as to the capacities for the three lines of outward activity: some being inclined more to one kind of activity than to others. Differences in religious temperament mark the differences of *Gotra* or spiritual pedigree, while differences in the aptitudes and capacities for outer work mark the differences of *Varna*. For the married life to be fruitful, the Vedic Law lays down that the man and the woman who marry should be of different *Gotras* and of the same *Varna*.

5. The fundamental type of marriage is the one in which the aspiration to realise the essential

oneness of the Self with Brahman is the dominant factor and rules the whole active life. It is designated *Brahma-vivaha* and is regarded spiritually the highest. There are marriages in which the parties cannot rise to that level and therefore choose to work together along one of the three lines of activity. Such marriages are designated *Prajapatya*, *Daiva* or *Arsha* according to the special line of activity chosen.

6. These are the true definitions of the four kinds of righteous marriage. The definitions of these given in the extant Dharma-shastras betray complete ignorance of their true spiritual significance. The *Brahma* marriage is defined as the one in which the father gives away his well-decked daughter to a worthy way-farer who is also to be well-decked. In the *Daiva* marriage the father gives away his daughter to an officiating priest. In the *Prajapatya* marriage, the father gives away the girl asking them to follow Dharma together. In the *Arsha* the father gives away the girl and receives a pair of cows from the bridegroom. How grotesque are these definitions! More of this anon.

VEDIC MARRIAGE RITUAL

THE Vedic ritual of marriage is clothed in an archaic language and imagery whose meaning may not be quite clear to the modern minds not versed in Vedic symbolism. By explaining their meaning the parties and witnesses to the marriage will be enabled to intelligently follow the course of the ritual and thereby add to its efficacy by raising their thought to the high spiritual ideals symbolised in it. Marriage, briefly, is the pledged union of a man and a woman who propose to tread together the path of Dharma or spiritual culture leading to a realisation of the oneness of the Self with Brahman. The Vedic marriage ritual is only a symbolic representation of this high spiritual ideal of marriage and married life, which the couple ought to cherish throughout their career as householders. *Ashvalāyana* lays down a short ritual which represents the irreducible minimum and forms the common factor of the several forms of Vedic ritual now in vogue. Though short it is complete in itself. The meaning of the several parts of this ritual will now be explained.

1. *The Preparation of Sacred Fire and Materials.*—In the Vedic nomenclature, the recognition of the divine nature of one's Self and the determination to lead a life of spiritual devotion is said to be the generation of the sacred fire, and that fire is tended by an ever-watchful direction of life-activities in the service of the Divine Lord. This sacred spiritual fire is given three or five names according to the specific centres in human constitution in which it is generated and the specific directions in which it is used in life-work. The placing of fire on five vertical lines resting on a horizontal sixth means that the one spiritual fire is generated in five centres of activity and is used in as many directions, such as desire, thought, understanding, speech and sympathy. This spiritual fire is in the scheme now in vogue generated at the initiation (*Upanayana*) ceremony done in early youth and is tended through the years of *Brahmacharya* (spiritual discipline) which precede marriage. It is

freshly enkindled now at the time of marriage by pouring ghee (clarified butter), that is, by directing once more the purified mind and heart towards God.

2. *The Main Sacrifice.*—God is here invoked as *Aryaman*, the Lord of Love, who as the ruler of the finer affections has brought about the union of the couple in marriage, in response to their earnest prayers for a suitable life-partner.

3. *The Seizing of the Hand.*—Then the bridegroom takes hold of the bride's hand as his God-given life-partner and mistress of the household.

4. *Walking round the Fire.*—Then the couple walk three times round the fire, the bride being made to tread on the stone each time. On these three occasions the Divine Lord of bride's special devotion is addressed severally as *Aryaman*, the Lord of Love, as *Varuna*, the Lord of spiritual aspiration and wisdom, as *Pūshan*, the Lord of vital power; and His blessing is invoked each time for her prosperity in her new home, for her unflinching success in the concerns of the other world, and for constant fidelity unassailable under all circumstances. By walking round the fire with their right side turned towards it, the couple, as the Veda explains, pledge themselves to follow the Sun's course, that is, to lead a life of co-operation with the Divine Will in Evolution, devoting all their love, knowledge and life-energy in the Lord's service in all concerns of life.

5. *The Oblation of Fried Grains.*—Accompanying each invocation, it means readiness of the couple to direct to the service of the Lord all the possessions and enjoyments they come by in the exercise of their ever-growing powers.

6. *The Offering to the Prajapati* of the remnant of the fried grains in the fire towards themselves means that the immediate aim of their life-work as house-holders is the attainment of the stature of *Prajapati* or *Manu*.

7. *The Seven Steps.*—The bride is led by the bridegroom through seven steps on the seven heaps of rice. By this the couple pledge themselves to a life of co-operation as equal co-partners in all activities, concerned respectively with acquisition of nourishment, strength, wealth, health, progeny, gifts of the seasons, and spiritual merits. Harmonious union in these seven concerns, which exhaust the earth-life, forms what we may call typical human friendship.

8. *Conclusion of Marriage Sacrifice.*—Now the couple have become husband and wife in the full Vedic sense of the terms. The bathing of their joined heads with the sanctified water indicates their full immersion in the spiritual life as house-holders. The marriage fire thus set up should be maintained unquenched from this time onward and tended every morning and evening.

9. *Journey Home.*—The couple start for their new home which is set up with the joint chattels brought by the couple as their portions from their respective family properties. It may take a few minutes or even a few days to reach the home.

10. *Entering the New Home.*—On approaching the new home the bride is accosted as the queen of the new household having to direct all its temporal and spiritual affairs so as to conduce to the well-being of the family and all dependants including animals.

11. *Entry-Sacrifice and Heart-union.*—Prayers are offered to Gods invoking them to bless the couple with progeny and a strong and abiding love.

12. *Consummation.*—Prior to consummation of marriage by honeymoon, the couple shall observe celibacy for three days at least while living in close association. According to Vedic Law, the longer this period of self-restraint the more virile and spiritual will be the offspring.

ONE VARNA

MOST of the social evils the Hindu community suffers from proceed directly or indirectly from the existing system of caste; and our Sacred Tradition, *Purāna* and *Itihāsa*, concerning the development of the system only confirms this view. To estimate the true nature of these evils and to devise proper remedies for them, we have to know the true original nature of the system itself and to distinguish its sound spiritual basis from the superstructure that has risen on it in the course of ages.

The caste system is governed by the rules and regulations laid down in the Dharma-Shāstras, where the castes are spoken of as *Varnas*. To understand, therefore, the origin and growth of caste, we have to make out the original meaning of *Varna* and trace the course of its development through several stages. The original meaning of *Varna*, as used in Shāstras in association with Dharma or spiritual culture, can be made out from the etymological sense of the word as derived from *Vr* to seek. It means the same thing as its cognate *Vrata*, which is familiar to us in the sense of *spiritual devotion*. *Varna* has the same meaning in the word *Varnin*, which is synonymous with *Brahmachārin*; it means *Brahmacharya* or spiritual life.

Varna means seeking. What is it which an Aryan seeks or should seek in his moments of supreme illumination? In *Sundhyā*, the holiest act of prayer in the Hindu's daily life, he seeks communion with the resplendent Light of the Divine Lord within, shining in his heart and impelling him in all his actions. So, *Varna* means the seeking of the all-impelling Divine Light within.

There is another very sacred formulā or *Mantra*, not in very common use now, but more ancient than the *Gāyatri*, and even more comprehensive in its meaning as embodying the whole essence of Vedic Religion in a nutshell; and that *Mantra* tells us what to seek. It says:

विश्वो देवस्य नेतुर्मतो वुरित सख्यम् ।

विश्वो राय इषुच्यति युम्नं वृगीत पुच्यसे ॥

"Let every mortal seek (*Vr*) fellowship (*Sakhya*) with the Divine Lord: every man desires power; let him seek to increase the Divine Glory." (*Vājasaneyi-Samhitā*.)

This is the primary Law of the Vedic Religion. It teaches that the seeker of immortality should seek fellowship with the Divine Lord: that he should know the Divine Will and follow It. And recognising man's aspiration for more and more power, it bids him devote all his power for increasing the glory of the Divine Lord as manifested in the world, by way of helping the growth of the world towards perfection, making the world more and more happy. This is the seeking meant by *Varna* in the Vedic nomenclature. It means man's seeking the Divine Light within him, to know the Divine Will and follow It, to acquire more power and use it for the world's progress and well-being. It means, in short, an active life

of spiritual devotion. *Varna* means also a community of persons who lead such life.

When a man takes a vow to lead such life, he is said to have put on *Dikshā*. The formula quoted above is said to be a full expression of *Yaga-Dikshā*, the vow of the spiritual aspirant, the vow of divine service, which makes one a real *Brāhmana*. अदीक्षित्यं ब्राह्मणः—“He has taken the vow: he has become a *Brāhmana*” (*Tittiriya-Samhitā*). The Veda distinguishes such a *Brāhmana* from one who is so called by his mere birth, of which one cannot be quite sure; whereas a *Brāhmana* who is such by his vow, by his life and character, is a *Brāhmana* in reality, beyond all question. Any person, whatever his birth, may take such a vow; and then he or she becomes a true *Brāhmana*, according to the Vedic Law:

अथावादा जायते यो ब्रह्मणो यो यज्ञाजायते तस्मादपि राजन्यं वा नैश्यं वा ब्राह्मण इत्येव ब्रूयात् ब्रह्मणो हि जायते यो यज्ञाजायते ॥

“Now he is born a *Brāhmana*, he who is born by *Yajna-Dikshā* from Brahman. Hence it is that a *Kshatriya* or a *Vaishya* (*Dikshita*) should be called a *Brāhmana*, for he who is born of *Yajna* is born of Brahman.” (*Shatapatha Brāhmana*.)

In this sense there was only one *Varna* at first. All people formed one community made up of those who had taken the vow of spiritual devotion and of those who would take the vow in good time. According to our Sacred Tradition, in the golden age of our racial history—that is to say in the *Krita-Yuga*—there was only one *Varna*; then all people lived their spiritual life in one and the same way, whatever their external occupations, which did not divide them into distinct groups. Spirituality always unites while materiality always divides. Even now, according to the same tradition, no distinctions can be made out among the different *varnas* when regarded from the spiritual point of view. In the *Mahābhārata* the Great Sage *Bhṛigu* says:

न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वं ब्राह्ममिदं जगत् ।

ब्राह्मणाः पूर्ववृष्टा हि कर्मनिर्वर्ततां गताः ॥

“There is no distinction among *Varnas*. All this world is made up of *Brāhmanas*. Originally created *Brāhmanas*, they have become different *Varnas* by occupations.”

Divisions in *Varna* arise from engrossment in the outward life, which blinds the mind to the true spiritual interests and magnifies the importance of the material concerns of life, as we will see in the history of caste.

A. M. S.

HINDUISM AND THE BRAHMANA

In his beautiful “A Vision of India's History,” appearing in the *Visva-bharati Quarterly* for April, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore has revealed an interesting evolution of Hinduism. His interpretation of Indian history is too magnificent to describe in a short compass. I call out only a small piece.

After dealing with the alternating ascendancy of *Brahmana* and *Kshatriya*, the ‘resulting synthesis had its unity of Aryan character’. Subsequently strong under-currents of race-mingling gave birth to mixed

racess and peoples, shaking the Aryan forces of self-preservation. Dr. Tagore writes:

"Let no one imagine, however, that the non-Aryan contributions were taken in by sheer force of circumstances only, and that they had no value of their own. As a matter of fact, the old Dravidian culture was by no means despised, and the result of its combination with the Aryan, which formed the Hindu civilisation, acquired both richness and depth under the influence of its Dravidian component. Dravidians might not be introspective or metaphysical, but they were artists, and they could sing, design and construct. The transcendental thought of the Aryan, by its marriage with the emotional and creative art of the Dravidians, gave birth to an off-spring, which was neither fully Aryan, nor Dravidian, but Hindu."

"With its Hindu civilisation India attained the gift of being able to realise in the commonplaceness of life, the infinity of the Universal."

Coming to the role that Brahmanas played in the preservation of the ancient civilisation and culture, Dr. Tagore says:

"India's problem has been far more complex than that of the West, and I admit that our rigid system of social regulations has not solved it. For, to bring order and peace at the cost of life, is terribly wasteful, whether in the policy of government, or of society. But all the same, I believe that we have cause to be proud of the fact, that for a long series of centuries, beset with vicissitudes of stupendous proportion, crowded with things that are incongruous and facts that are irrelevant, India still keeps alive the inner principle of her own civilisation against the cyclonic fury of contradictions and the gravitational pull of the dust."

"This has been the great function of the Brahmins of this land, to keep the lamp lighted when the storm has been raging on all sides. It has been their endeavour gradually to permeate the tremendous mass of obstructive material with some quickening ideal of their own that would transmute it into the life-stuff of a composite civilisation: to discover some ultimate meaning in the inarticulate, primitive forms struggling for expression, and to give it a voice. In a word, it was the mission of the Brahmin to comprehend by the light of his own mature understanding the undeveloped minds of the people."

Only the other day, in her message to a Madras Public Meeting Dr. Besant, the great servant of humanity, emphasising the need for retaining British connection even under most provocative conditions, said, "The union of India and England is of vital importance for the future of humanity. India has in trust a civilisation, unique and incomparable."

The Bharata Samaja in its international outlook is an endeavour to retain the excellence of this culture for the benefit of the whole world. In the words of Tagore, again, "We still believe that the world has a deeper meaning than what is apparent, and that therein the human soul finds its ultimate harmony and peace. We still know that only in the spiritual wealth and welfare does civilisation attain its end."

That the Samaja has not come in a day too soon is seen in the earnest welcome it has received in foreign lands. It is hoped that its high aspirations will be

realised in the not very distant future, seeing that the Time-Spirit is moving very fast indeed.

S. R.

AN APPRECIATION FROM ABROAD

MR. DAVID W. MILLER writes from Tokomaru Bay, New Zealand, on April 29, 1923:

DEAR SIR & BROTHER: Please receive per Mr. C. Jinarajadasa the sum of 10/-towards the Bharata Samaj in which I am specially interested. I should be obliged for fuller detail than in the December, 1922 *Theosophist*, and should like a specimen of BHARATA DHARMA. With earnest wishes for the success of the movement, and with fraternal greetings, I am, etc.

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The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 27th June, 1923, was 268.

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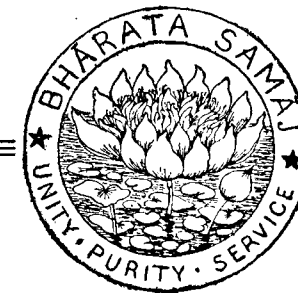
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C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

Secretary, Bharata Samaja.

27th June, 1923



BHARATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHARATA SAMAJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY

EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I

JULY 27TH, 1923—RUDHIRODGARI—ASHADHA

No. 10

Bharata Samaja as such is not responsible for any statement made in this Magazine unless contained in an official document.

IDEALS OF MARRIAGE

POST-VEDIC

THE Sacred Laws (Dharma-Shastras) which govern the modern Hindu socio-religious institutions speak of eight forms of marriage. Four of them, regarded *righteous* as making for Dharma or spiritual progress, are termed as follows: (1) *Brahma*, in which the father gives away his well-decked daughter to a learned man of good conduct, whom he himself invites; (2) *Daiva*, in which she is given away to an officiating priest during the performance of a sacrifice; (3) *Prajapatya*, in which the father gives away the girl addressing the couple, 'May you follow Dharma together'; (4) *Arsha*, in which the girl is given away by the father after receiving a bull and a cow from the bridegroom.

2. The other four forms of marriage, regarded *unrighteous* as opposed to Dharma or spiritual progress, are thus mentioned: (5) *Gandharva*, the voluntary union of a maiden and her lover for the purpose of sexual intercourse; (6) *Asura*, in which the father gives away the girl in consideration of the wealth received from the bridegroom; (7) *Rakshasa*, in which the girl is secured by forcible abduction from her home; and (8) *Paishacha*, in which she is carried away by stealth.

3. These eight forms of marriage differ from one another as to the ways of getting a marriageable girl from her parents or other guardians. The righteousness of the first four would seem to consist in the absence of sensuality or any gross worldly considerations on the part of the bridegroom or the father; while the other four are justly held unrighteous because they are brought about by lust, greed, violence and deception. It is not, however, easy to make out the respective relations of

the first four with *Brahma*, *Devas*, *Prajapati* and *Rishis*; and the commentators, too, do not seem to be quite sure of them. But it is certain that the other four are named after *Gandharvas*, *Asuras*, *Rakshasas* and *Pishachas*, because the guiding motives of life-activities are same.

4. It may be further noticed that in what are termed righteous marriages the maiden's will or choice does not enter as a determining factor. Being only between eight and twelve years old without education and culture, she is too young to be credited with any will or choice in such a serious matter. On the other hand, the bridegroom is supposed to be between twenty-four and thirty years old, having completed the discipline of student-life, and well versed in the Sacred Law. Consistently with this disparity of status between the husband and the wife at marriage, it is ordained in the Sacred Law that the young child-wife is to be as a pupil under the husband, undergoing spiritual discipline by passively joining him in the mechanical performance of Vedic rituals. Her main responsible duty in life consists in looking after the household work and in ministering to the husband's comforts. In his later life of retirement from the busy world (*Vanaprastha*) the wife is generally left behind with the son, as of no more help in his spiritual career, while later on (in *Samnyasa*) her association is regarded even as an impediment to his spiritual progress.

VEDIC

5. This is by no means consonant with the true Vedic ideal of married life. According to the original Vedic Law, which was in vogue in a former age, girls are to be quite as well educated as boys. By the time of marriage the cultured members of both sexes in the community have passed through two

distinct stages of spiritual culture known as *Brahmacharya*, the spiritual discipline of student-life, and *Yajna-diksha*, a formal dedication of life-activities to the service of Brahman, the Divine Lord (*Vide Manusmriti*, II. 169). In the eye of Vedic Law such alone are true *Brahmanas*, because they recognise their oneness with Brahman and strive to realise it by living like Him, by co-operating with Him in His work for the world-progress. The Vedic Law teaches that for such Brahmanas the first steps on this path of co-operation lie along the lines of the world-activity carried on through the Divine Agents known as *Rishis*, *Devas*, and *Pitris*, concerned respectively with the furthering of humanity's spiritual culture by *Brahmacharya*, of its material and moral progress by *Yajna*, and of its racial development by worthy offspring (*Praja*). It is further learned that, for carrying on this co-operation and attaining the realisation of oneness with Brahman, married life affords all necessary facilities and conditions.

6. In the married life governed by this Vedic Law four aspects are distinguishable. The primary aspect consists in the recognition of spiritual unity with Brahman and the endeavour to realise it in life. The other three aspects are concerned with co-operation in the work of *Rishis*, *Devas* and *Pitris* respectively. Very rare indeed are men and women able to fulfil simultaneously and adequately the demands of this married life in all its four aspects. The demands of one aspect of the life are alone more than a man or a woman can fully cope with; and different men and women are found by nature and culture to be more competent for the activities connected with one aspect of life than with others. It is enjoined that those men and women should marry whose natural tendencies and capacities incline them to the same line of life-activities; and such marriages are named *Brahma*, *Daiva*, *Prajapatya* or *Arsha* according as the chosen line of activity is connected exclusively with the endeavour to realise spiritual unity with Brahman, or with the work of *Devas*, or with the work of *Pitris*, or with the work of *Rishis*.

Thus the *Brahma* marriage of Vedic Law means the union of a man and a woman who seek and work for the realisation of their spiritual oneness with Brahman, to the exclusion of the other activities. They have no natural inclination and attraction for the other lines of work because in the course of their spiritual development they have outgrown them. The intimate association of such a man and a woman—who are to be of different *gotras* or lines of spiritual pedigree—cannot but be of mutual advantage, one supplying what the other lacks. On the contrary, the association of a cultured man with an uncultured woman is surely detrimental to the man's spiritual progress in its later stages. Hence the Sacred Law which excludes women from student-life and Vedic study excludes her also from association with man in the advanced stages of spiritual culture. But the primary Vedic Law which enjoins Vedic culture for both men and women alike discountenances celibate orders and

holds out the married life as the normal path in which men and women as they are now constituted can work up to the highest spiritual level attainable by humanity.

EARLY VEDIC MARRIAGE RITUAL

ONE immediate result of an understanding of the true tenor of the Vedic ideals of marriage and married life will be a discrimination of the essential and the non-essential portions of our elaborate marriage ritual. The ceremonies now extending over five days are made up of sundry acts of ritual of various degrees of importance in relation to what may be called marriage proper. Out of all those acts of ritual, the seizing of the hand (पाणिग्रहणं) with the treading of seven steps (सप्तपदी) constitutes, as Manu says (VIII. 227), the essential part, the marriage proper, in which the bridegroom and the bride take the pledges and vows which knit them together by indissoluble ties of marriage. None of the acts of ritual antecedent to this can make them husband and wife; and whether the ceremonies following it take place or not, they do not cease to be husband and wife. The antecedent ceremonies are intended for the preparation of the maiden for marriage by way of purifying her body, while the later ones relate to the couple's departure for the place of their future residence. There they begin their married life with a life of *brahmacharya* or sexual continence of at least three days' duration as a preparation for the *Garbhādhāna* (impregnation) ceremony, which is altogether independent of the marriage ceremony. Thus marriage in its simplest form may be reduced to *Pāni-grahana* with *Sapta-padī*.

To judge, however, from the recorded rituals, the ceremony has never been so simple. The simplest form that seems to have ever been in practice may be the one found in the *Rik-Samhitā*. There is in it a wedding hymn (X. 85) known as *Sūryā-Sūkta* which first in a few verses impresses the sacredness of marriage and then gives the *Mantras* (verses) used in the marriage ceremony as current at the time of the compilation of the *Rig-Veda* in its present form. In speaking of the marriage of *Sūryā* and *Soma*—the heavenly prototype of the earthly marriage—in the terms of *Soma-Yāga*, the hymn confirms my belief that our marriage ceremony has developed out of *Soma-Yāga*, the Indo-Eranian ritual which initiated the *Āryan* man and woman into the duties of sacred married life. It gives us clearly to know that the main object of married life is the helping of human souls in the realisation of their oneness with *Soma* or *Vishnu*, the all-sustaining Divine Lord of the world.

The wedding hymn is complete in itself. It first describes the nature of *Soma* as the all-sustaining Essence of the world; and then it speaks of *Sūryā*—the *Vach*, the human soul aspiring with prayers for attaining union with *Soma*—as being led in a wedding procession to marry *Soma*. Then follow the verses used in the marriage ceremony according to the order of the several events in the programme. The order of the events is as follows:

(1) The bride mounts the car which is to take her to the bridegroom's place of residence accompanied by prayers asking the guardian angel of maidenhood to release her from his charge, by prayers for her safe

journey, and by solemn declarations releasing the bride from her duty to her parents' home and family.

(2) The bride is welcomed to her new home.

(3) Prayers for casting off all evil from the bride.

(4) *Pāni-grahana*—the marriage proper, with prayers to Gods in relation to it.

(5) Prayers for the couple's happy life.

(6) Installation of the bride as the mistress of the new home with prayers for the couple's complete felicity.

(7) Final prayers of the couple to Gods to keep their hearts ever united.

The course of the ritual as arranged here is complete in itself, including the most important parts of the ceremony now in vogue. It exhibits one peculiar feature which we will do well to notice. The whole marriage ceremony is to take place, not in the house of the bride's father as is now the case, but in the bridegroom's place of residence, or as was probably the original scheme, in the house newly set apart as the future residence of the couple to be married. In all subsequent changes there has been a tendency to make the ceremony more complex and transfer the whole of it to the house of the bride's father, evidently because the bride, instead of being grown up and of a mature age as she used to be, has been too young at the time of marriage to live with the husband away from her parents and to take charge of a whole household.

Speaking of the Vedic *Āryan* woman's status as revealed in this *Wedding Hymn*, Z. A. Ragozin in his 'Vedic India' (the *Story of the Nations Series*) makes a few remarks which are worth reproducing:

"... it (the wedding hymn) is quite sufficient to show that the position held by the *Āryan* woman in Vedic Panjab was a most honorable, nay, exalted one, which later influences and developments changed, by no means for the better, but rather, and very much, for the worse. . . . She appears to have been on a footing of perfect equality with her husband, subject absolutely to no one in his house, not even to his parents, let alone his brothers and sisters. What is more, she was a willing bride; and though it was customary to make the official demand through third persons, it is more than probable that her consent was made sure of first, and indeed that she was frequently awarded the privilege of choosing out of many suitors. . . ." (pp. 367—368).

Again, adverting to the position of the future housewife, he says: "How absolute the wife's and mother's supremacy as here proclaimed and consecrated by the husband! And what a terrible falling off from this high standard is presented by the condition of woman, as modified in later Brahmanism, and especially Hinduism, by all sorts of foreign deteriorating influences and of speculative incubations, the condition which endures to this day and makes of the bulk of Hindu women one of the most deeply oppressed, pitiable fractions of humanity. Even the popular life of modern nations—especially the Slavs and Germans, where the son's bride enters her husband's family in an avowedly subordinate capacity and becomes almost the bond slave of his parents, his sisters' servant and scapegoat—falls far short of the ideal of domestic life set up by our so-called 'barbarous' early ancestors. That such an idea implies monogamy is self-evident." (pp. 372—373.)

TRUE VARNĀSHRAMA-DHARMA

THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF HINDUISM

In Vedic nomenclature *Varna* means the seeking of fellowship with the Divine Lord,—the seeking to know and follow His will as expressed in the law of evolution. *Varna* means also the seeker himself or a community of such seekers. Let us try and understand how such seeking expresses itself in life, or, in other words, what *Varna-Dharma* primarily is.

A study of the meaning of *Dharma*, as used in this connection, will prove very illuminative in our enquiry. Derived from *dhr* to uphold, to maintain, *Dharma* means that which upholds or maintains. The upholding of the universe, and the force by which it is upheld, both rest in the Divine Lord. Sri Krishna says: "I am the mainstay of the immortal and imperishable Brahman (the cause), of the Eternal Law (*Dharma*) and of the unfailing bliss." (Bh.-Gita, xiv, 27.) The Divine Lord holds (*dhr*) His inferior material nature (*Aparā Prakṛti*) by His superior spiritual nature (*Parā Prakṛti*) which constitutes the life (*jīva*) of the universe (*Ibid.*, vii, 5). It is the Divine Lord that in this way keeps the world going on the path of progress towards supreme bliss. *Varna-Dharma*, therefore, means the line of action which the seeker of immortality adopts in fulfilment of his vow of co-operation with the Divine Will, dedicating all his power to the service and glory of the Divine Lord.

Every efficient member of the *Āryan* community is a *Brāhmana*, a devotee of Brahman the Lord of Creation. To become a full-fledged *Brāhmana*, according to Vedic Law, one must have had, besides his physical birth from the mother, two more births of a spiritual nature symbolised by *Upanayana* and *Yajna-dikshā* (Manu, ii, 169). That is to say, he must have attained by *Brahmacharya* some realisation of his true Self as distinct from the body, followed by a free conscious dedication of his life-purposes and activities to the service of the Divine Lord.

For such a *Brāhmana* three lines of service in this earthly life are marked out, constituting threefold divine service. The Divine Lord has under him three classes of superhuman Intelligences—*Rishis*, *Devas* and *Pitris*—who carry on the processes of world-progress according to the Divine plan; and the *Brāhmana's* threefold divine service consists in co-operating with them in that plan. His co-operation with *Rishis* consists in *Brahmacharya*; in studying the Vedic Law (*Dharma*)—under strict disciplinary conditions conducive to physical vigour, moral purity and spiritual strength—and then teaching the Law to the younger generation. He has to co-operate with *Devas* by *Yajna*, by understanding the finer forces in man and nature and manipulating them for the good of the world. He co-operates with *Pitris* by leading a pure physical life and thereby preserving and improving the purity and the efficiency of the race, and by raising a noble and worthy progeny. This threefold service constitutes *Varna-Dharma*.

Without attaining perfection in this threefold divine service, no *Brāhmana* can hope to attain liberation from the earthly bondage. The threefold service is regarded as a way of discharging the triple debt due to *Rishis*, *Devas* and *Pitris* for their share in the individual's evolution. To view it from another point, perfection in this triple service means a complete realisation of the devotee's oneness with the Divine Lord and His Hierarchy in the earthly concerns; and without attaining this

realisation it is not possible for any man to realise his oneness on higher regions.

A man may discharge these debts one after another, devoting one whole life to the discharge of each debt, or he may work at them all simultaneously, birth after birth, till he attains perfection in all of them. Where the former course is adopted, the Brāhmanas may be divided into three Varnas according as they choose one or another of the three lines of divine service, as determined by their respective special aptitudes. There is room for a fourth Varna made up of those who, having attained perfection in the triple service, are engaged in purely spiritual concerns. Such a fourfold division cannot breed separative tendencies such as we find working in the caste system; for, predominance of spirituality, such as the triple service implies, makes for union amidst variety.

This fourfold division of the Āryan community based on the ideal of service to the Divine Lord through co-operation with the threefold Hierarchy has in time given place to the division of those people, according to their natural tendencies for social occupations as teachers, rulers, producers and distributors of wealth, and manual labourers. *Varna-Dharma* is then explained as pursuit of one's natural occupation in the service of the Lord and for the benefit of the whole community. With the development of greed and dissociation of the ideal of service, the different occupational Varnas have become hereditary warring castes and classes.

For an efficient discharge of *Varna-Dharma* a Brāhmana has to cultivate the five virtues of (1) *satya*, truthfulness; (2) *veda*, knowledge of Dharma; (3) *karma*, pursuit of Dharma in life; (4) *dama*, control of the body and the sense; and (5) *tapas* one-pointed devotion (*Kena-Upanishad*). These constitute the *Ashrama-Dharma*, the accomplishments which a Brāhmana has to strenuously work at (*ā-shram*) in his personal life.

Of these *truthfulness* is the primary virtue without which any spiritual progress is impossible, and should, therefore, be a constant object of endeavour. The others may be worked at simultaneously or one after another. Some Vedic teachers, recommending the latter course, have divided the life-period into four stages, each stage being devoted to the cultivation of one accomplishment and called an *Ashrama*. Though this is a convenient division, it has by no means commanded universal acceptance. There have been some Vedic teachers who have laid down that one whole life should be devoted to one accomplishment as determined by the individual's special aptitude. A few go so far as to say that the householder-life—as the embodiment of Vedic sacramental law—is the only legitimate *Ashrama*, in opposition to others who insist on celibacy as the only way to liberation. It is thus evident that *Ashramā-vibhāga* is an arrangement based on convenience, not necessitated by Dharma.

Ashrama-Dharma is the *sine qua non* of *Varna-Dharma*; it is the inner expression of Dharma, which becomes more effective there as operating in the region of finer forces, while the other is an expression of Dharma in outer life. When, later on, Dharma in outer life has taken the form of *Samskāras* or symbolic sacramental rituals, we find the value of the inner virtues of the soul (known as *Ātmagunas*, as distinguished from those rituals) duly recognised. It is said (*Gautama-Dharma sūtras*) that without *Ātmagunas* all *Samskāras* put together avail little in spiritual upliftment, while one *Samskāra*, duly

performed, and accompanied by *Ātmagunas*, will lead the devotee to the region of Brahman.

The *Varna-Ashrama-Dharma* thus made out from the original Vedic teaching constitutes *Sanātana Dharma*, the Eternal Religion, the basic truth of Hinduism. It is our duty to test the existing institutions by this touchstone and modify them where necessary. In all that we conscientiously do for the furtherance of *Sanātana Dharma* in the light of the highest Shāstra, we shall have the blessing of the Divine Lord, whose will as revealed in that Shāstra and in nature is the Law for us.

BHARATA SAMAJA MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 27th July, 1923, was 274.

Distribution			
Gentlemen ...	247	Hindus by birth ...	270
Ladies ...	27	Christians by birth ...	4
	274		274
Madras Presidency ...	...		217
Mysore Province ...	...		29
Travancore ...	...		6
Cochin, Pondichery, Rajaputana, U.P., Bengal and Pudukkotta—Each 1 ...	...		6
Sind ...	...		7
Bombay ...	...		5
Central Provinces ...	...		1
Australia ...	...		1
Java ...	...		1
Nizam's Dominions ...	...		1
Total ...	274		

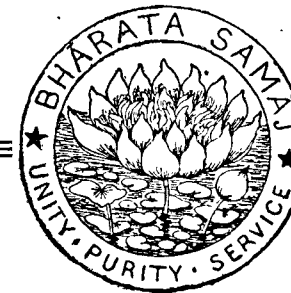
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The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	RS.	A.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged ...	...	8,193	4	5
Mr. S. Venkatrama Naidu ...	Alleppey	50	0	0
" Oscar Kellar ...	Tuticorin	20	0	0
" K. A. R. Mahalinga Nadar ...	Kadambur	20	0	0
" A. Doraswamy Chetty ...	Satur	5	0	0
" V. Venkatasubramanya Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" A. R. Rangaswami Iyer ...	Sivaganga	10	0	0
" A. Srinivasa Iyengar ...	"	5	0	0
" S. Saminayana Iyengar ...	"	5	0	0
" S. M. Narayana Iyengar ...	"	5	0	0
" P. A. Subramania Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" T. J. Vedanarayana Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" A. Ganapati Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" S. K. Dharinaraja Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" V. Sundram Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" A. Rangaswami Iyengar ...	"	5	0	0
" M. S. Ganesa Iyer ...	"	10	0	0
" G. Sivaramakrishna Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" G. Ramachandrier ...	"	5	0	0
" A. Mahadeviah ...	"	5	0	0
" M. Hariharier ...	"	5	0	0
" (V.) Viswanadhier ...	Madura	25	0	0
" M. Narayanaswami Iyer ...	"	100	0	0
Total ...		8,503	4	5

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary, Bharata Samaja.

27th July, 1923



BHĀRATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BHĀRATA SAMAJA, PUBLISHED EVERY FULL-MOON DAY

EDITOR: PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

VOL. I AUGUST 26TH, 1923—RUDHIRODGARI—SHRAVANA No. 11

Bhārata Samāja as such is not responsible for any statement made in this Magazine unless contained in an official document.

GOTRA IN MARRIAGE

THE Sacred Laws of the Hindus lay down the rule that the man and the woman who are to marry should be of different *gotras*; and their *gotras* are named after those of their respective fathers. This rule is strictly observed and its violation even invalidates marriage. In spite of this important bearing, its real meaning is hardly glimpsed by even the most learned orthodox Hindu. To him it does not convey any idea unconnected with physical heredity, and it is traced to the remotest Rishi. In reality *gotra* can have nothing to do with physical heredity, because people of different *gotras* are related by very close physical heredity while among some of the people of the same *gotra* no physical relation can be at all traced.

A clue to the real meaning of *gotra* is furnished by the fact that the seven primary *gotras* are named after the seven great Rishis, who are distinguished by the different ways of invoking the Sacred Fire. One spiritual aspirant addresses the Sacred Fire in these words: "Like Aurva, like Bhṛigu, like Apnavana, I summon the Pure Agni" (*Taittiriya-Samhita*, III, i, 11). So the seven *gotras* are the seven different ways of generating and tending the Sacred Fire,—the seven primary lines of spiritual culture, to one or another of which every spiritual devotee belongs.

There is one significant Vedic formula of marriage which is worth special notice in this connection. It runs as follows:

"Let us be united, be in harmony, in affection, radiant with kindly thought; clothed in food and strength, united have we made our minds, our vows, our hearts."

In this Mantra, the bride and the bridegroom address to themselves the same words which are addressed (*Taittiriya Samhita*, IV, ii, 5) when two sacred fires are united in *Agni-chayana* (the gathering of the sacred fires). Thus they regard their union at marriage as a union of two sacred fires. They are indeed two spiritual fires. In the language of the Vedic Ritual, the recognition of the divinity of one's spiritual soul and the conscious direction of the soul's one-pointed life-activity in co-operation with the Will of the Divine Lord is regarded as the generation and the tending of the sacred fire. It is as spiritual fires, thus generated and developed in the years of Brahmacharya (spiritual discipline) preparatory to marriage and married life, that a man and a woman are to meet at marriage. The line of culture adopted under the guidance of a teacher for generating and tending this spiritual fire constitutes the individual's *gotra* or spiritual pedigree. Therefore the rule that the marrying couple should at marriage be of two different *gotras* means that they should have been trained on two different lines of spiritual culture—of which there are seven, named after the seven Rishis who started the present cycle of human evolution.

The union of two such spiritually trained souls, of two different religious temperaments, for a life of co-operation as householders makes marriage a sacrament, and the married life a life of a spiritual progress. Thus for a healthy spiritual growth in married life diversity in spiritual pedigree between the man and the woman is essential, just as diversity in physical pedigree is essential for the physical vigour and health both according to the Eastern and the advanced Western conceptions of eugenics. This diversity in religious temperament and culture makes for spiritual enrichment of the man and the woman, each supplying what the other lacks.

As the real spiritual culture associated with Sacred Fire has long ceased to influence the life of the Hindus, it is natural that *gotra* as spiritual pedigree has ceased to be distinguished from the physical pedigree, though some of the rules of life based on the original conception are adhered to without understanding and in ludicrous ways.

HINDUISM

BESIDES the course of lectures on *Vedic Religion*—a synopsis of which was published in Nos. 3—5 of this magazine—the Editor of this magazine delivered a course of six lectures on *Hinduism* to the students of *Brahmavidyāshrama*, Adyar, in December, January and February last. A synopsis of these lectures is given below for the benefit of our readers, who are interested in the liberalisation of Hinduism.

LECTURE I—HINDUISM: ITS SCOPE AND DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

1. Hinduism or *Sanātana-Dharma* is the historical development of the one comprehensive Vedic Religion, and has like the latter its primary aspect as well as its secondary aspects.

2. In its primary aspect, Hinduism is the religion aiming at the realisation of one's eternal self as one with the Divine Lord. Its secondary aspects are represented by the different sects, which, while feeling self-sufficient in their own scriptures, recognise the Veda as teaching the highest truth and law. Failure in this recognition has led to the exclusion of such sects as Buddhism from the pale of Hinduism.

3. The Modern Hindu sects have all grown out of the older five subsidiary paths leading to the One Path:

(a) *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga*, the paths of philosophy and meditation, have given rise to the sects of asceticism, the casteless *Sādhus* and *Vairāgis*, professing to lead a life of celibacy and practising meditation, *Hatha Yoga*, and other austerities.

(b) The old *secondary* Vedic Religion has given rise to *Brahmanism*—the religion of *Varnāshrama-Dharma*—now associated with the rigid system of caste.

(c) The old *Pāṇcharātra* and *Pāsupata* paths—religions of *Love* and *Detachment*, are now represented by the several *Vaiṣṇava* and *Saiva* sects who have discarded Vedic sacrificial rites and the system of caste.

LECTURE II—HINDUISM: ITS DOMINANT ASPECT, VARNĀSHRAMA-DHARMA

1. The first steps towards the primary goal of Hinduism—the realisation of one's own Eternal Divine Self—lie on one or another of the five paths—*Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Brāhmanic*, *Vaiṣṇava*, *Saiva*—according as the devotee is by temperament inclined to philosophical study, or to meditation, or to physical activity, or to emotional attachment in love, or to detachment in dispassion.

2. The majority of the Hindus have not risen to the pure intellectual or emotional levels represented by

the *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Saiva* and *Vaiṣṇava* paths, and they are therefore found on the path of *Brāhmanism* which consists in the purposeful discipline of *physical* activities known as *Varnāshrama-Dharma*.

3. *Varna-Dharma* is the line of one's social duty as determined by one's *Guna* and *Karma* (inner tendencies leading to outward actions), and consists in serving the Lord by doing one's best in one's own nature-appointed work.

4. Originally all *Varnas* were equal. Distinctions as higher and lower arose when as the ruling factor in life material greed and self-interest took the place of spiritual aspirations and common good. Division according to reputed heredity has led to *Varna-Sankara* (Caste-confusion).

5. *Ashrama-Dharma* consists in the cultivation of the four qualifications of spiritual progress,—namely, spiritual knowledge, social service and charity, self-control, spiritual one-pointedness—in the four successive periods of man's life on earth. It has developed into symbolic rituals and mechanical observances whose meaning has for the most part been lost sight of.

LECTURE III—SACRIFICE AND SACRAMENT

1. The original Vedic sacramental life of self-discipline and dedicated service has developed into elaborate rituals, comprehensively termed *Samskāras*.

2. Gautama (in his *Dharma-Sūtras*) mentions *forty* *Samskāras* comprising *seven* relating to the embryonic and child body, *five* to the student-life, *two* to marriage, *five* to daily service, and *twenty-one* occasional sacrifices great and small. The main object of their observance is union with the Brahman.

3. The observance of the rituals having become mechanical, divorced from true spirit of the sacramental life of discipline and service and from the attendant moral and spiritual virtues, it is expressly laid down by Gautama that without *Atma-gunas* (moral and spiritual virtues of the Soul) even a full performance of all the rituals will be of little avail in leading towards union with Brahman.

4. As the rituals are symbolic representations of real facts and processes of the divine plan in nature, they are said to be more efficacious when performed with a full knowledge and recognition of the underlying realities than when done without it. Hence the recognised superiority of *Mānasa-yajna* over mere physical observance.

5. Animal offerings in the Vedic system are traceable to (1) an idea of redemption from servitude by substitution, (2) an idea of the symbolic destruction of the demon of darkness, (3) an avidity for rich food following the extreme asceticism of *Diksha*, (4) a desire to entertain the officiating priests, (5) a desire to propitiate blood-thirsty nature-spirits.

6. A deep study of these rituals and the *mantras* connected with them might help one in reconstructing them in their true significance and original purity and in ordering one's personal life in accordance with their true spirit.

(To be continued)

THE OBJECTS OF THE BHĀRATA SAMĀJA

A JUSTIFICATION FROM LEADING THOUGHTS OF THE DAY

IN his introductory remarks of the Prospectus of our *Samāja* our respected President wrote:

"The essential doctrines of Hinduism are such as can justify the heads and hearts of enlightened men and women of all classes and creeds, and they have to be enunciated and emphasised. We have also to sift to the bottom the fundamental principles underlying the Hindu scheme of life and the Hindu Social System which have stood the ravages of time, and apply them to the solution of problems which have everywhere arisen and are still arising."

To carry this out, the objects of the Association were put down as

(a) To strengthen and broaden the basis of Hinduism

(1) by emphasising the essentials of Hindu Religion and Philosophy as a working creed for daily life;

(2) by replacing the complex scheme of rites and ceremonies by a few simple rules and forms of personal discipline, worship and ritual for voluntary observance, etc.

The reason for the above was clearly pointed out:

"One reason why Hinduism does not wield a real influence on too many of its enlightened votaries and is not the potent factor that it ought to be, is that the rules of discipline and ritual are so complex and cumbersome, that, where observed at all, they have become almost empty forms. The basic principles have to be deduced and a simple code, suited to the times, has to be drawn up for voluntary adoption."

Now compare what our contemporary thought says on the point. Our great poet, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore writing on the *Way to Unity* in the *Visvabhārati Quarterly* significantly describes the present state of Hindu society thus:

"... Surrounded in his personal life by prohibitions of all kinds about the most insignificant details of his daily career, an orthodox Hindu lives insulated in the confinement of his conventional solitary cell. His is a world which has its one gate of entrance, the gate of birth, though those of departure are innumerable. The strict code of Hinduism is, in every way, inhospitable to the world at large, which cannot but react upon the mind of the orthodox Hindu by narrowing and deadening his human interest, detracting from his power of forming great combinations."

Again, he says:

"Civilisation is that which gives individuals the best facility to deal with the greatest number of human beings in the noblest spirit of truth. Unfortunately for

India, the latter development of Hinduism has been the product of a history of reaction. It represents the most powerfully organised effort of a people, not only to withdraw itself from contact with the larger world, but also to separate its own component parts so that they become out of touch with each other."

Again:

"And we have thus come to imagine a picture of the Hindu *Samāj* continually bathing, fasting and telling beads, emaciated with doing penance, shrinking into a corner away from the rest of the world. We forget that Hindu civilization was once very much alive, crossing the seas, planting colonies, giving to and taking from all the world. It had its arts, its commerce, its vast and strenuous field of work. In its history, new ideas had their scope, social and religious revolutions their opportunity. Its women also had their learning, their bravery, their place in the civic life. In every page of the *Mahābhārata* we shall find proofs that it was not rigid, cast iron type of civilization. The men of those days did not, like marionettes, play the same set piece over and over again. They progressed through mistakes, made discoveries through experiment, and gained truth through striving. They belonged to a varied *Samāj*, quick with life, driven into ever new enterprise by its active vigour."

"This, however, was a society which orthodoxy to-day would hardly recognise as Hindu, because it was living and had a growth which was revealing its inner unity through outer changes. So the Dharma of life which thinks and doubts, accepts and rejects, progresses, changes and evolves, cannot according to orthodoxy, be a part of the Hindu Dharma. Man shows his mental feebleness when he loses his faith in life because it is difficult to govern, and is only willing to take the responsibility of the dead because they are content to lie still under an elaborately decorated tomb-stone of his own make. We must know that life carries its own weight, while the burden of the dead is heavy to bear, an intolerable burden which has been pressing upon our country for ages. Can we really believe that with this incubus of social inertness on our bowed back we can cross the pathless wilderness and succeed in reaching the hill-top of political independence?"

What is our duty then?

"We must use our social strength, not to guard ourselves against the touch of others, considering it as contamination, but generously to extend hospitality to the world, taking all its risks however numerous and grave. We must manfully accept the responsibility of moral freedom, which disdains to barricade itself within dead formulæ of external regulation, timidly seeking its security in utter stagnation. For, men who live in dread of the spirit of enquiry and lack courage to launch out in the adventure of truth, can never achieve freedom in any department of life. Freedom is not for those who are not lovers of freedom and who only allow it standing space in the porter's vestibule for the sake of some temporary purpose, while worshipping, in the inner shrine of their life, the spirit of blind obedience."

What is our hope?

"We have often seen in human history that at the very time and place where facts appear overwhelming in their congregated attack against the dignity of man, there appears the prophet who discovers some sovereign truth which raises its head above the rebellious turmoil. And because in India the heterogeneity of races is a most overbearing fact that has produced such incoherence of mind, such divisions in life, making our present problems seem well-nigh insoluble, there is a strong hope that in the India of to-day will be evolved some great spiritual guidance which will lead her to an enlightened future across irrational dogmas, or nationalistic cults. For obstacles are like blocks of marble with which those who are artists amongst men fashion the best living images of truth."

* * *

We have the added hope that the great spiritual guidance will be for the whole humanity.

In the words of the Poet, let us conclude:

"Let us announce to the world that the light of the morning has come, not for entrenching ourselves behind barriers, but for meeting in mutual understanding and trust on the common field of co-operation; never for nourishing a spirit of rejection, but for that glad acceptance which constantly carries in itself the giving out of the best that we have."

S. R. R.

RE-ADMISSION OF CONVERTS

It is a matter of the happiest augury to note that the Hindu Mahā Sabhā at Benares has resolved to admit converts back to Hinduism—with special reference to Malkhana Rajputs; and also—this is the most important of all—"expressed its intention of forming a society of Hindu Leaders and pandits or scholars for opening the door of Hinduism to let in Non-Hindus wishing to become Hindus". The Bhārata Samāja may congratulate itself on its pioneer work in this direction, preparing the atmosphere and the way for the easy acceptance of the above idea. If the proposed Society would seek the services of the learned Pandit, the Editor of this paper, or read his writings, they will see much of their labours already discharged.

S. R. R.

CHILD-MARRIAGE

MR. S. P. RANGASWAMI AIYANGAR writes to us from Vilathikulam, on May 27, 1923:

Here, I came across a widow by name S. . . . of 84 summers. It is heart-rending to hear from her that she was married to her uncle's son while she was a baby of 3 years old. She says that her mother had to do the marriage rituals and ceremonies with her (the baby-bride) crying in her arms. And before the baby attained 12 years, she lost her husband. In spite of her old age, she is quite healthy, and was cheerful while she talked to me. Really, her narration of her auto-biography,

and especially of her cradle-marriage, is heart-moving. Thanks to the founders of the "Bhārata Samāj" and other kindred movements; which stand to abolish such heinous system wherever it may exist. Will many realise and co-operate with these movements to stop child-marriage and the like?

BHARATA SAMAJA

TEMPLE FUND

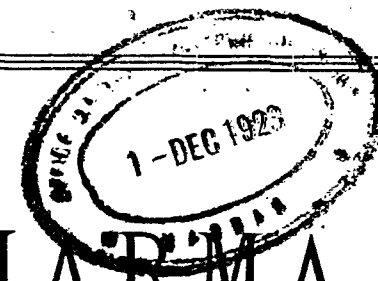
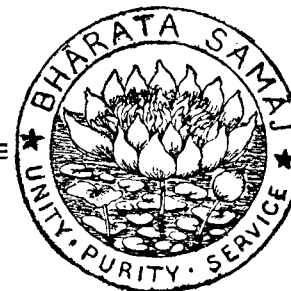
The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	Rs.	A.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged	...	8,503	4	5
Mr. N. Ramaswami Iyer	Madura	10	0	0
" T. Venkatramier	Kadambur	5	0	0
" T. S. Kantimadinadha Pillai	Tinnevely	5	0	0
" Paramananda Sahu	"	5	0	0
" M. V. Nelliappa Pillai	"	5	0	0
" Sadhu Ganapati Pantulu	"	25	0	0
" A. Palamalaiadha Pillai	"	5	0	0
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" S. V. Kanagasabai	Triplicane, Madras	25	0	0
" A. Janakirama Chetty	Tuticorin	20	0	0
" C. V. Kristnaswami	"	5	0	0
" M. Fakkiam Pillai	Kadambur	10	0	0
" Kanaka Govindarajulu Naidu	"	5	0	0
" P. S. China Venkataraja	Rajapalayam	5	0	0
" P. S. Kumaraswami Raja	"	20	0	0
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" R. Venkatachellam Iyer	"	5	0	0
" V. Venkatasubbier	"	5	0	0
" K. Somasundaram Iyer	Melur	10	0	0
" P. S. Ramaswami Iyer	"	5	0	0
" K. Narayanaswami Iyer	"	10	0	0
" M. V. Ramaswami	"	5	0	0
" B. S. Ramaswami	"	10	0	0
" M. L. Narayanier	"	5	0	0
" K. S. Venkatramier	"	5	0	0
" R. Seturamakristnaier	"	5	0	0
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" P. Sundaram Iyer	"	5	0	0
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" Chidambaram Chetty	"	5	0	0
" N. Kristnaswami Iyer	Dindigal	5	0	0
" K. Kuppuswami Iyer	"	10	0	0
" P. Rajagopalachariar	"	5	0	0
Total	...	8,995	4	5

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

Secretary, Bhārata Samāja.

26th August, 1923



BHARATA DHARMA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: India—Re. 1. Foreign—2s. SINGLE NUMBER: India—As. 2. Foreign—3d. Post Free.

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VOL. I SEPT. & OCT. 24TH, 1923—RUDHIRODGARI—BHADRA. & ASV. NOS. 12-13

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OUR NEXT VOLUME

THE first volume of this magazine began with the full-moon day of *Kartika* month, and so the second volume is to begin with the next *Kartika* full-moon day. There have been thirteen full-moons in the year covered by the first volume and it is therefore made up of thirteen numbers and ends with this double number.

The magazine has been well received wherever it has gone except of course in the circles of the extreme orthodox. It is a matter for particular satisfaction that our magazine as the organ of Liberal Hinduism has been sought in exchange by various Journals, notably by the publishers of the official organ of the Liberal Catholic Church at Sydney (Australia).

We have continuously striven to throw light on the basic ideals of true Hinduism and its socio-religious institutions, including our holy scriptures, the most important sacraments such as Upanayana (Initiation) and Marriage, and particularly the institution of caste.

In our next volume we shall continue to deal with these and other institutions in their several aspects. Our main object is to keep before the minds of our readers the socio-religious problems that are exercising the minds of the earnest students of Hinduism and to explain them in the light of the original authorities on the subjects; and we have reason to believe that our endeavour has been appreciated by all discerning readers.

We conclude by requesting our subscribers to continue their support by remitting their subscriptions before the issue of the first number of the second volume or asking us to recover them by V.P.P.

THE ESSENTIALS OF MARRIAGE

IN connection with the Hindu institution of marriage and the ceremonies relating thereto, we are confronted with the question, what is the essential constituent of marriage? Is there any special ideal of life laid down in the scriptures or embodied in the marriage ceremony, the recognition and adoption of which in life constitutes marriage? The meeting of two individuals of opposite sexes for procreation cannot by itself constitute marriage; it is common to the whole animal creation. Indeed, our study of original Vedic ideals has shown that the idea of begetting offspring is altogether absent in some forms of marriage and married life.

Our study of the Vedic law of human spiritual progress has enabled us to make out that man and woman who seek to realise their inherent divine nature should lead a life of union and co-operation in this world working strenuously with a view to advancing human progress in every direction and thereby serving the Lord of the world. This constitutes the primary Vedic ideal of married life. It is of course, too high an ideal for the ordinary run of humanity. It is not present in the mind of the ordinary Hindu man and woman who go through the ceremony of marriage and live the married life. Certainly, in the regulations laid down in the Smritis or Dharma-Shāstras in regard to marriage, it is very difficult to make out clearly the ideal set forth above. The nearest approach to it is to be sought in the marriage rituals and the *mantras* used in them.

The marriage ceremony now in vogue lasts five days. Its several constituent parts extend from the despatch of friends by the bridegroom for wooing the hand of the maiden held eligible for marriage, up to the ceremony of physical sexual union on the fifth day. Some of the later Smritis, having lost sight of the high spiritual ideals of marriage and married life, hold that no marriage is complete without this act. But the authors of earlier Smritis, who were not altogether out of touch with the original

ideals, hold otherwise. For instance the Manusmriti (VIII, 227) says:

"The *mantras* of *pāni-grahana* constitute the essential mark of a wife. Let the wise know that their culmination lies in the seventh step."

That is to say the recognition and acceptance of the ideal of life embodied in the *mantras* of *pāni-grahana* (handseizing) and *Saptapadi* (treading of seven steps) makes a man and a woman, husband and wife. Let us study what these *mantras* tell us of the ideal of marriage.

(1) When the bridegroom's offer of marriage has been accepted by the bride's party and the couple meet for the first time, the bridegroom takes hold of the bride's hand and says:

"I pray thou mayst live long with me and that we may have a fine offspring. The Gods—Bhaga, Aryaman, and Savitar—have brought about our union; let us tread the path of married life instituted by those Gods in the beginning. Let us sing the praise of Sarasvati (the Divine Mother) before all. May she bless this union. May Vāyu (the Divine Impeller) make thee bestow thy thought on me."

Here the bridegroom gives expression to the idea that this union in marriage was brought about by Gods in response to the prayers of the bride and the bridegroom severally for a worthy life-companion, and invokes the blessing of the Gods on the married life of the couple.

(2) The bridegroom leads the bride through seven steps along with him, each step being a symbol of life-activity relating to one of the seven main concerns of life, namely, acquisition of food and vigour, spiritual discipline, health, wealth, seasons' benefits, and sacrificial worship of Gods. While taking these steps the bridegroom prays that Vishnu, the Supreme Lord, may accompany her. By this he reminds her that their joint life-activities in the seven concerns of life should be carried on in consonance with His will and dedicated to His service.

(3) After treading the seventh step the bridegroom says that the bride has become his friend and prays that this friendship might never fail. He proposes that they should remain one in will, thought and deed, united by unflinching mutual affection and attraction. He prays that she should be one with him in devotion.

(4) In response to this address of the bridegroom, the bride assents and invokes the blessings of the Gods of her worship, praying for the bridegroom's long life. She is prepared to leave her parent's home to live with him for ever, to remain firm in the path of her duty as householder and future mother. She is prepared to dare and brave all the inimical forces in the way with the strength she has acquired by her devotion to Agni,—during her life of Brahmacharya.

Thus ends the *Panigrahana* ceremony, and the couple have become husband and wife. The later ceremonies represent the initial stages of their life-career as husband and wife.

The marriage proper is thus made up of (1) the bridegroom's address to the bride as to the kind of life the couple should lead, and (2) the bride's assent to it. The address declares that the marriage is brought about by Gods and is therefore a very holy event in their life, and that the joint life of the couple should be devoted to the service of the Supreme Lord. It is to this demand of the bridegroom that the bride assents, and the marriage

thereby becomes their pledged union for a life of service to the Supreme Lord. The begetting of offspring is only a partial fulfilment of their duty as husband and wife.

Such is the ideal condition of marriage revealed by a study of the *mantras* even as they are found in connection with the ritual in vogue at the present day. The original ritual must have been different, having a more direct connection with the ideal made out from a study of Yāga-dikshā and other ancient rituals.

HINDUISM

(Continued from p. 44)

LECTURE IV—CASTE

1. The most striking feature of the modern Hindu Caste system is the gradation of the different classes of the community as higher and lower by birth, with social and religious privileges and disabilities.

2. There are four main castes (Varnas), and many intermediate castes due to their intermixture, each being assigned a distinct social occupation. The Panchamas are outcastes, but not a separate caste.

3. According to Hindu Sacred Tradition the Hindu Aryans are all of one Varna; and they all at first lived as one Varna, as Brāhmanas (spiritual aspirants), spiritual aspiration dominating their life.

4. According to the same tradition, the one Varna became many *varnas*—when temporal interests became the predominant factor in life. The different *varnas* were called after their respective social occupations, which in course of time became hereditary, each *varna* being further marked by a distinct colour of its own. Those who went abroad and lost touch with the Vedic culture altogether became *Chandālas*, *Mlechhas*, etc.

5. It is also laid down that the three upper *varnas* are entitled by birth to Vedic Culture, while the fourth *varna* (Sudra), though not entitled to it by birth, should be admitted to it when prepared to lead the spiritual life. The practical ignoring of this last provision has led to many inequalities.

LECTURE V—THE POSITION OF WOMAN

1. Woman's position in Hinduism has varied,—the present from the past, the actual from the ideal. Some of the chief points of deterioration may be noted here.

2. In the past,

(a) Girls had the same education and culture as boys, and women were therefore as independent as men.

(b) Marriage was optional for woman. She led by choice an independent life of higher culture and devotion.

(c) She had leisure for higher culture, since people of the labouring class were employed for household work including cooking.

(d) As mother she had a recognised place in the education and culture of the youth.

3. Woman's ideal position may be further determined from the Vedic Law of Marriage.

(a) Woman chooses her own life-partner, of proper Varna and Gotra (social occupation and religious temperament).

(b) At marriage, man and woman meet as friends on equal footing and continue as such till the end.

(c) The wife is the husband's equal co-partner in all spiritual and temporal concerns of their united life.

(d) In the separate household set up at the time of marriage, the wife is the lady regnant from the day of marriage onward, able to direct its temporal and spiritual concerns.

4. Hindu woman's present position falls far short of the past and the ideal in these and other respects; and her true emancipation may be brought about by working up to the Vedic ideal, which is calculated to advance the true material and spiritual progress of the community.

LECTURE VI—REFORM, ANCIENT AND MODERN

1. The study of modern Hinduism in the light of its prototype, Vedic Religion, shows that it needs reform on its religious, social and domestic sides, on the basis of original ideals.

2. On its religious side, the religious rites and ceremonies should be reconstructed and explained so as to prominently bring out the underlying ideal of service to the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy, aiming at man's realisation of his inherent divinity.

3. On its Social side, the spiritual unity of Varna and the spiritual significance of its fourfold division should be emphasised, and equal opportunities and facilities of spiritual culture should be afforded to all classes.

4. On the domestic side, woman should be restored to her legitimate status of independence through education and culture and reassertion of the Vedic ideals of marriage and married life.

5. Measures of social and religious reform succeed or fail according as they approach or deviate from the spiritual ideals on which the whole superstructure is based, as may be seen by a comparison of the ancient and modern methods among the Hindus.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

I

ONE VARNA

IN my exposition of the original meaning of the word 'Varna,' I have stated that in the early Vedic texts the Aryans as one homogeneous community are described as Varna as contrasted with *Dasyus*, the barbarians, and that the Aryans were also termed Brāhmanas, devotees of Brahman. Having been asked to cite a few Vedic passages in support of these statements, I submit that my statement is based on the following passages of the Rig-Veda Samhita:

"Indra bestowed horses, He bestowed the sun, He bestowed the many nourishing cows, He bestowed golden

wealth; having slain the *Dasyus*, he protected the Arya Varna." (III, 34-9.)

"Indra who is the Lord of all that moves and breathes, who first found the cows for Brahman (the Brāhmanas), who hurled down the *Dasyus*, Him girt by Maruts we invoke to be our friend." (I, 101-5.)

In the first passage the Arya is contrasted with *Dasyus* and is spoken of as Varna (in the singular). This means that the Aryans form one homogeneous group, one Varna, and are as such to be distinguished from *Dasyus*, the non-Aryans, the enemies of the Aryans. In the second passage cited above, *Dasyus* are contrasted with Brahman (neuter), a class name meaning the Brāhmanas. Putting these two passages together we cannot but conclude that the Aryans of the Vedic age were all of one community, one Varna, and were known as Brāhmanas.

Accordingly in the *Bṛihadāranyaka-Upanishad* (1-4-11) and in the *Mahābhārata-Santiparva* (186 Adhyaya, verses 1, 2; 351 Adh., 21) it is stated that at first there was one community, that of Brāhmanas, and that out of this one community, others such as Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shūdras were organised in course of time to meet some social exigencies. In *Matsya-Purana* (144, 7-8) also, it is said that at first in the Krita-Yuga, the people were all of one Varna, and that at the end of the Kali-Yuga likewise the people will all be of one Varna only, of the Shūdra class.

II

THE MEANING OF VARNA

In connection with the same subject I have been asked on what authority I interpret the word Varna (in Vedic nomenclature) as a community that seek fellowship with the Divine Lord.

Answer: In the Vedic texts quoted above we find *Dasyus* contrasted with the Arya Varna, or the Brāhmanas. The chief point of contrast between the two peoples is brought out in the following passage of the *Rig-Veda Samhitā*:

"Thou, a hero, a benefactor, hast impelled the chariot of the Manus (devotee, contemplator); victorious thou hast burnt up the undevout (avratā) *Dasyu*, as a vessel is consumed by a blaze." (I, 175-3):

Here the *Dasyu* as *avratā* (undevout), is contrasted with the Manus the devotee, the devout Aryan who contemplates on the Divine Lord. It is clear from this contrast of the Arya Varna with *Avratā* (devoid of devotion) *Dasyu* that Varna means *Sa-vratā* (with devotion) or devout. In the abstract Varna means devotion, and in the concrete—used as the designation of the Aryan community—it means a community of devout people as distinguished from the undevout *Dasyus*.

Thus we see Varna means the same thing as *Vratā*. Both are derived from the same root *Vr* to seek. The one Varna of Aryans—of Brāhmanas as they are also called—has devotion as its distinguishing feature: they are all people who seek something higher than what the barbarians generally aim at, who cherish a high aspiration. Their very designation, Brāhmanas, shows that the people of the Aryan community seek Brahman, the Great One, the Infinite as contrasted with the body which is limited; that they seek the One Eternal Reality whereof the whole universe is an expression within the limits of time and space. It is this aspiration to realise Brahman,

the Divine Lord of Creation, that makes one a Brāhmana, an Aryan. In the ritualistic parlance, one becomes a Brāhmana by *Yāgadīkshā*, by a formal vow of sacramental life, no matter to what class or caste one belongs. In the *Āitareya-Brāhmana*, VII, 33, it is said: "He (the Kshattriya) when consecrated (*dīkshamāna*) attains Brāhmanhood." And the Mantra which expresses this vow of *Yāgadīkshā* runs as follows:

"Let every mortal seek (*vr*) fellowship (*sakhya*) of the Divine Lord . . ." (*Taittiriya Samhita*.)

Thus, the one community of Brāhmanas, the one Arya Varna, is made up of people who, following the Vedic Law, which is universal, seek fellowship with the Divine Lord of Creation, with Brahman. In this sense of the word, Brāhmanas include all classes of people—Brāhmanas (so-called), Kshattriyas, Vaishyas, Shūdras, and others also who seek communion with the Divine Lord—all those who, recognising their own inherent divinity as Spirit aspire to attain union with the Divine Lord. In this sense of spiritual aspiration, *Varna* is used in the following Vedic formula: "May it please the sacrificer's consort to go forth and occupy the appointed set in *Varna* (spiritual devotion)." (*Tai. Samhita*.) In the word *Varnin* of common use, meaning *Brahmacharin* (*Vide Amara*), the word can have no other meaning than *Brahmacharya*, a life of spiritual aspiration, of spiritual communion with Brahman, the Divine Lord of creation.

III

IS MARRIAGE COMPULSORY?

In connection with the Vedic ideal of marriage expounded in the pages of this magazine the following questions are raised:

1. (a) Is marriage a necessary *Samskara* or Sacrament like Upanayana (Initiation)?

(b) Does it find place in the Veda itself?

(c) If so what are the essentials of a Vedic marriage?

2. Is it correct to assume that the different kinds of marriage in the Hindu society trace their origin to the *Smritis* only and not to the Veda? If the assumption be correct will they come under non-essentials that may be ignored?

3. What is *Yāgadīkshā*? Is it necessary that every Brāhmana should undergo that *Samskara*?

Answer: These questions are interdependent, and in answering them I have to follow a line of exposition which, though dealing with all the points at issue, may not in its several stages follow the exact order of the questions.

IS MARRIAGE OBLIGATORY?

The two questions 1 (a) and 3 put together amount to asking whether marriage and *yāgadīkshā* (whatever it may mean) as *Samskaras* are quite as necessary for a Brāhmana as Upanayana? According to the rules which govern the orthodox practice of the present day, Upanayana is considered an obligatory *Samskara*, or Sacrament, to be performed in the case of boys of the Brāhmana caste before the age of sixteen, and in the case of the Kshattriya and Vaishya castes before twenty-two and twenty-four respectively, while with regard to girls, no Upanayana being allowed to them, marriage takes the place of Upanayana, and is therefore regarded compulsory

to be performed before the age of puberty in the case of Brāhmanas and Vaishyas, and before or after puberty in the case of the Kshattriyas. Men of the Brāhmana caste may and in rare cases, either by choice or by the force of circumstances, do remain bachelors throughout life, while women of the Brāhmana and Vaishya castes must be married before the age of puberty. Thus marriage is obligatory for women to whom Upanayana is denied, and is not obligatory for men as Upanayana is.

OBLIGATORY FOR ALL

2. But it is said in the *Manu-Smṛiti* (II, 169)—"According to the Law of *Shruti*, a *Dviya* or Brāhmana has his first birth from the mother's womb, a second at the wearing of *Maunji* or Upanayana, and a third at *Yajna-dikshā*". It being a well-known rule that no man can take *Yāgadīkshā* without a wife, we have to understand the Vedic Law (quoted above in the words of *Manu-Smṛiti*) to mean that the *Samskara* of marriage is quite as necessary as Upanayana for one become a full Brāhmana.

YĀGADĪKSHĀ AND MARRIAGE

3. It may then be asked why the second of the two spiritual births is referred to as taking place at *Yāgadīkshā* and not at marriage. In answer to this question let me explain the meaning of *Yāgadīkshā*. A study of the main invocations forming the essential part of the *Yāgadīkshā* ceremony will show that it consists in the generating of five spiritual fires by way of withdrawing our life-energies from the self-regarding concerns of the ordinary world and focussing them all on the true Divine Self, and then turning those energies in the direction of the Divine Will manifested in the evolutionary process of the world; in short, as the primary Vedic Law of sacrificial life declares, it consists in rising above the limited personal concerns of mortal life and seeking fellowship with the Divine Lord of the world by way of using all one's powers to heighten the Divine Glory in the world. Thus the Vedic *Yāgadīkshā* comprehends two factors: (1) generation of the spiritual fire, and (2) devoting oneself to the service of the Divine Lord. These two factors have later on come to be represented by Upanayana and Marriage. The *Yāgadīkshā*, as giving rise to a new outlook, is rightly regarded a new birth and is said to make a true Brāhmana of any person, to whatever caste or class he or she may belong. In fulfilment of the vow of *Yāgadīkshā*, which has made them devotees of Brahman, the Divine Lord, men and women have to serve God in the world by co-operating with His Agents in the three well-marked lines of active social work: namely (1) the raising and rearing of noble progeny; (2) education of the youth with special reference to their spiritual upbringing, discipline and culture; and (3) the development of the natural resources of wealth with the aid of higher Intelligences (*Devas*) so as to conduce to the nourishment and healthy growth of the human organism in its physical, psychical and spiritual aspects. It is said that by this co-operation the duties which a cultured Aryan has owed to *Pitris*, *Rishis* and *Devas*—to the Divine Hierarchy, at evolutionary work—are discharged, and he or she may then proceed further on the path of Dharma. It is for the fulfilment of the life-purposes conceived in these terms that the Aryan man and woman seek to knit their lives in marriage, the

Vedic Law teaching that in married life alone all the three debts can be fully and efficiently discharged.

FOUR VEDIC FORMS OF MARRIAGE

4. A man or a woman duly trained in spiritual discipline may be attracted towards one more than to others among these three lines of service; and it may be readily understood that for as harmonious and efficient working it is better that a man and a woman of like tendencies should marry. Marriages so arranged are distinguished as *Prajāpatya*, *Arsha* and *Daiva* according to the specific purpose involved in the chosen lines of service. There may be some men and women who do not feel inclined towards any one of these lines of service especially, but who, while ever ready to discharge their threefold duty as need arises, are more bent on what may be called purely spiritual pursuits as unconnected with the concerns of social life of the community. The marriage of men and women of this type is known as *Brāhma*, concerned mainly with *Brahma* or spirit, as distinguished from the mundane life.

MARRIED LIFE THE ONLY NORMAL LIFE

5. Marriage being thus a necessary sequel to the *Yāgadīkshā* which brings about a material change in the general outlook of life, the Vedic Law quoted by *Manu* refers to *Yāgadīkshā* as the third birth. As going to make one a full Brāhmana, marriage and *Yāgadīkshā* are as necessary as Upanayana for men and women according to Vedic Law. It will also be observed that in the Vedic ideal of marriage and married life as above set forth, men and women are held of equal status at marriage in point of intellectual and spiritual culture. Their married life, as consisting in the discharge of the threefold duty in the service of the Divine Lord, affords opportunities for spiritual progress of the highest kind. If we fully realise the meaning and purpose of marriage and married life as enjoined by the Vedic Law, we will not be surprised at the emphatic statements in the earlier codes of *Varnāshrama-Dharma* (of *Baudhāyana*, *Āpastamba* and *Gautama*) that married life associated with service to the Lord in society is the only normal life for the followers of the Vedic Law.

NECESSITY FOR THE CELIBATE ORDERS:

(1) RITUALISM

6. From the study of the Vedic Law of marriage we will also see why married life has later on come to take a less important place in the Hindu scheme of spiritual life. Two factors will be found to have contributed to the change. One is the gradual growth of sensuality and greed, which accompanied by growing spiritual darkness led to spiritual degeneration manifesting itself in the want of a proper comprehension of the true meaning of the simple Vedic rituals, which originally gave expression to the devotee's knowledge of spiritual verities and his high spiritual aspirations. As this degeneration proceeded the rituals became more and more elaborate in the hands of the priests who, as shown by the gradual growth of rituals, with a view to impress the ignorant devotees with the importance of Vedic Religion, added more and more to the original simple but significant rituals. The practical Vedic religion which thus grew into a vast mass of rituals has roused no sense of its real spiritual purpose, and has not conveyed the profound meaning underlying

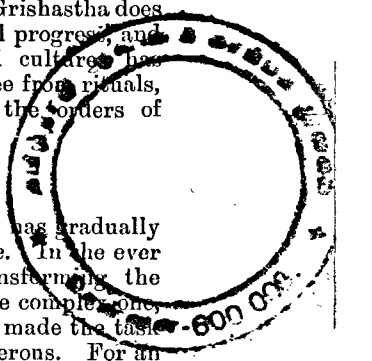
it. Such rituals, of course, do not demand any high intelligence and culture. A religion of this kind of ritualism which nowadays fills the life of a *Grīhastha* does not certainly conduce to any real spiritual progress, and a true devotee of spiritual wisdom and culture has therefore felt the necessity for a life free from rituals, and the result is the institution of the orders of *Vānaprasthas* and *Samnyāsins*.

(2) WOMAN'S LOWER STATUS

7. The second factor is the one which has gradually led to a lower status of woman in social life. In the ever increasing materiality of this age, transforming the original simple living into a more and more complex one, the domestic concerns has multiplied and made the life of home-staying woman more and more onerous. For an efficient management of these concerns which fall to the lot of woman, no high intellectual culture is necessary. The orthodox spiritual life of the householder does not demand it either, as it mainly consists in the performance of rituals of a purely mechanical kind. These demands are met by ability to go through the mechanical ritualistic process accompanied by the chanting of *mantras* without any idea of their meaning. As the labour required for mastery in the domestic and ritualistic concerns became too much for one person, a necessary division has taken place, the study of Vedic rituals falling to the lot of the man and the department of the domestic concerns to the lot of the woman. This division of labour has led in due course to an utter exclusion of women from Vedic culture and all intellectual education. The woman being thus debarred from Vedic studies and the intellectual, and spiritual discipline and culture of the student-life, she has come to be married at an age when she had under the old regime to begin her studies with a teacher. The spiritual life of a *Grīhastha* having degenerated into a mere ritualistic process, and the woman being not at all educated and associated generally with sensual life and a life of domestic concerns, true and pure spiritual life has to be sought outside married life, in the celibate orders (*Āshramas*), the very sight of a woman being held to be inimical to man's spiritual progress.

THE EIGHT FORMS OF MARRIAGE

8. In the light of the foregoing account of the transformation of the original Vedic ideal of married life into its modern semblance, we clearly see the meaning and purpose of the existing regulations of marriage. The girl, who is precluded from student-life, is to be married to an educated adult man who will be her spiritual guide throughout life and an object of adoration as spiritual teacher. Being very young, the girl cannot choose her husband. She has to be given away in marriage by her father or guardian to a worthy man. The affectionate father, who would naturally keep her unmarried as long as possible, is persuaded to give her away as soon as possible between eight and ten with promises of reward in the future world. To prevent the greedy father from keeping the girl with him with a view to obtaining a largest consideration, marriage for pecuniary considerations is condemned in severe terms. Absence of all consideration, or the cherishing of a desire for spiritual merit and progeny, is held the only legitimate condition of giving away a girl in marriage. The giving away of a girl in marriage to a worthy man for no consideration



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whatever, or as a largest to a priest officiating at a sacrificial rite, or to a devout man with a view to being benefited by the offspring, or to a worthy person who offers in return a pair of cattle—these are termed in the Smritis *Brāhma Daiva*, *Prājāpatya* and *Arsha* forms of marriage respectively. How low are the ideals of marriage set forth in these definitions of the terms, as contrasted with the ideals conveyed by the same terms when interpreted in the light of the original Vedic Law! To such a pass has spiritual degeneracy brought the high Vedic ideals of marriage and married life! The *smṛiti* which regards these four forms of marriage as spiritual condemns as unspiritual, the four other forms of marriage which consist in the acquisition by a man of a girl for marriage through mere sexual attraction, or by purchase, or by forcible capture, or by stealth. All these eight forms of marriage are spoken of only in the *smṛiti* and are not mentioned in the Veda or countenanced in any way. The only marriage recognised by the Vedic Law is the one entered into by grown-up men and women by their own choice for spiritual growth and mutual help through a life of intimate union and co-operation in all concerns of life.

ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS IN MARRIAGE

9. In the marriage ceremony of the present day will be found many elements which were not originally there and several others which originally had a meaning but which have now become meaningless. For instance, the formal giving away of the bride, associated as it is mainly with child-marriage, did not form part of the original ceremony, as witness its absence in the rituals laid down in the *Grihya Sūtras*. The consummation of marriage, which according to the order of the ritual is to take place on the fourth night of the marriage ceremony, does not take place now owing to the bride's childhood and immaturity, though some go through a farce of that ceremony also. The bridegroom's address to the bride at the *Panigrahana* and their mutual addresses on the eve of the consummation in the fourth night's ceremony are altogether meaningless now, though the words are repeated without any idea of what they mean. Two alternatives are now left to us: either to revert to the ancient practice of marrying grown-up people with the original rituals, or to omit the addresses and the ritual parts which have no meaning in connection with the modern system of early marriage of immature boys and girls. A true follower of the Vedic Law will certainly choose the former alternative, however difficult it may be to revive the ancient Vedic system, and however far short of the ideal his immediate practice may appear. The Vedic ideal in its full significance is certainly worth following at all costs and hazards.

BHĀRATA SAMĀJA UPANAYANAS

(Communicated)

UNDER the auspices of the Samāja, the Hindu Samskāra of Upanayana has been performed with a simplified ritual in the case of about 12 persons consisting of Brāhmaṇa boys, 2 Brāhmaṇa girls and 2 European ladies. Whispers have been now and again heard whether it was right to administer the *samskāra* for girls and women,

regarding the age at which the *samskāra* should be given, and the significance of the *Yajnopavita* (the sacred thread). The origin of *Yajnopavita* and its use have also claimed a good deal of attention. We have heard the learned Pandit and Editor of this paper on the points clearly setting forth his ideas. It is interesting to study similar opinions from other learned sources, and it is with that view that I extract below what Pandit Vidhushekhara Battacharya writes on the Sacred Thread of the Hindus in the Visvabhārati Quarterly for July, 1923:

UPANAYANA FOR GIRLS

"In the Hindu community, the use of *Upavita* and *Mekhala* by women has for long been discontinued; but there is no doubt that for them, too, these ceremonial ropes were once customary, amongst the Aryans. According to Haritasmr̥iti, XX, 23 (quoted by Sayana in his commentary on the Parasara-samhitā, Bombay S. S. Vol. I, Part II, p. 82) girls are divided into two classes: Brahṃavādinis, or those who read, or discourse on, the Brāhmaṇas or the Vedas; and Sadyovadhū, or those who are presently to become wives, that is to say, for whom marriage is duly in contemplation. Maidens of both the classes were entitled, like boys, to Upanayana, and hence also had to wear the *Upavita*."

"Brahṃavādinis were required to perform all the duties prescribed for a Brahmacārīn, such as, to study the Vedas (Swādhyāya), to offer fuel to the sacred fire (samid-ādāna) and to secure food by begging (Bhikṣā-charya). Unlike the boys, however, the girls were allowed to beg only from their dwelling places. The Brahṃavādinis lived till their death an unmarried life, devoting themselves to higher religious studies and sometimes leading a strict ascetic life. The celebrated Gārgi in the Brihadāranyaka Upaniṣad, Sulabā in the Mahābhārata, Subārī in the Rāmāyana, and Aitreyī in Bhavabhūti's Uttara-Ramacharita—are all Brahṃavādinis. They are also termed Naishthika-Brahma-chārīnī and Kaumāra Brahmacārīnī."

"As regards the Sadyovadhū, the Upanayana ceremony being over, they were given some instruction in the Vedas, but were more especially taught secular subjects, by their fathers, or their brothers, but not by outsiders. Thereafter they were given away in marriage. It should be mentioned that they too were to practise Brahmacarya. To this class I believe, belonged the renowned Maitreyī, the beloved wife of Yājñavalkya, in the Brihadāranyaka Upaniṣad, and many other women whose duty it was to repeat accurately the Vedic mantras in the different sacrificial ceremonies to be performed jointly with their husbands."

"The use of *Upavita* by Āryan women in former times may also be shown from the following: In giving details of rituals in a marriage ceremony, Gobhila (II, 1. 19) lays down as follows: "Leading on (from the house to the sacred fire) the bride, who is wrapped in a *Yajnopavita* (Prāvritā Yajnopavitinīm,) he (the husband) utters the following: 'Soma . . . etc.' Here it is clear enough that the bride should be wearing a *Yajnopavita*."

"It cannot be denied that the above Sūtra of Gobhila is positive evidence as to the use of *Yajnopavita* by Indo-Āryan women in ancient times."

AGE OF UPANAYANA

"Among the Brāhmaṇas the Upanayana ceremony, at which time the pupil first wears an *Upavita*, must be performed before the sixteenth year (Baudhāyana Grihyasūtra, II, 5. 2. 3; Manu, II, 36-40). If the age is counted beginning from the time of conception by the mother, the sixteenth year becomes the fifteenth. For the purpose of Upanayana such counting of age from the time of conception is well-known (Grihyasūtras, Baudhāyana, II, 5. 2. Manu, II, 36)."

YAJNOPAVITA—THE SACRED THREAD

"So we see that the *Upavita*, in former days, was nothing but an upper garment, in which it was considered proper to robe oneself on auspicious occasions. Thus, when a boy is going through his Upanayana (or initiation) ceremony, he is enjoined to be thus properly clad. Wearing the *Yajnopavita*, he should sit to the south of the teacher (Hiranyakesi-Grihyasūtra, I, i, 2. 6). Not only on the occasion of the Upanayana, but also during other auspicious, sacred, or solemn functions such as, says Apastamba in his Dharmasūtra (I, 5. 15. 1), 'when one formally presents himself before superiors, or elders, or guests, or has to recite mantras, or to read the sacred texts, or to take food, or to sip water,' one should put on *Yajnopavita*. To perform any of such acts without being in proper costume, is naturally looked upon as indecorous."

"In the majority of the Grihyasūtras there is nothing laid down about it in the rites. Nor is there any mention of it in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (XI, 5. 3. 11, ff.) where the rites of Upanayana are first described. The only mention of it, in connection with the rituals is in the Grihyasūtras of Sāṃkhāyana (II, 2. 3) and Baudhāyana (II, 5. 7). Mr. Tilak (The Orion, p. 145) appears to add to the above Pārashara-Grihyasūtra, II, 2. 11. But on the authority of the commentators themselves—Karka, Jayarama, Harihara and Gadadhara,—this sūtra (beginning with *Yajnopavitam paramam pavitram . . .*) is not a genuine one, and is apparently an interpolation made by a later hand, in conformity with what the commentators have explained."

S. R. R.

SRI SATCHIDANANDA SANGHA

We beg to acknowledge with thanks receipt of the Fourth Annual Report (for 1922-23) of this Sangha (Religious Association) and make the following extracts from it for the information of our readers.

Origin:

The Sangha was established in September, 1919, in loving memory of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda for the uplift of down-trodden humanity. Silent work went on with a few members during the first year. Religious lectures were conducted occasionally till 6th November, 1921. After that date public weekly religious classes were organised, besides periodical lectures.

Objects:

The objects of the Sangha are:

- (a) to stimulate the study of Vedānta, in its universal aspect;
- (b) to propagate the ideal of Shānti to all, irrespective of caste, creed or colour;
- and (c) to cultivate the practices of Karma, Bhakti, Yoga, and Gnāna among its members.

These objects are being carried out:

- (a) by holding discussions and devotional classes and conducting Vedāntic lectures;
 - (b) by celebrating the anniversaries of great saints and sages;
 - (c) by feeding the poor;
 - (d) by providing the Sangha with a library and reading-room.
- and (e) by such other means as may from time to time be devised by the Executive Committee.

Membership:

The Sangha shall consist of four classes of members, viz.,

- (a) Life members who pay each Rupees Fifty (Rs. 50) or upwards in a lump sum, any further contributions monthly or otherwise being optional;
- (b) Honorary Members who contribute their mite occasionally towards the funds of the Sangha;
- (c) Special members who pay each subscription of Rupee One (Rs. 1) or above per month;
- and (d) Ordinary members who pay each four annas, the minimum subscription or above per month.

Strength:

There were 37 members last year and the Sangha has at present 92 members on the rolls including 36 Honorary Members.

Prayer and Pooja:

Prayers have been performed on Fridays, Full-moon days and other important occasions with the distribution of Prasadam.

Religious Lectures:

The Sangha has the hearty and active co-operation of Srimath Swami Sharvanandaji, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, and Srimath Swami Vidyanandaji, Founder, Abhinava Arsha Math, who have been kindly holding weekly classes on Gnāna Yoga in English (from 6th November, 1921) and Bhagavad-Gita in Tamil (from 14th May, 1921) respectively. The Gnāna Yoga classes during the year under review had unavoidably to be suspended for a short period during which Swami Akhilanandaji was kind enough to hold classes on Karma Yoga in English and Brahma Sri K. Subbiah Sastrigal was commenting on Dhyana Yoga of Sri Sankara in Tamil till the Swamiji resumed his Gnāna Yoga classes. The Gnāna Yoga classes having come to a close, weekly lectures will be delivered by the Swamiji on Vivekachudamani and some of the principal Upaniṣads. The Gita classes may prolong for a few years more. Further, periodical lectures on different subjects were also delivered by great Swamis and Scholars. The Sangha is greatly indebted to the religious instructors for their disinterested labour of Love. The Committee hope that they will kindly continue to evince the same interest in coming years.

Birthday Celebration:

The 60th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda was celebrated by the Sangha for the fourth time on Sunday the 14th January, 1923, at the Corporation Model School Hall, Tiruvateeswaranpet. The Bhajana lasted till noon and a large number of the poor were fed. After 3 p.m., Srimath Swami Vidyandadaji took the chair, when Mr. V. Narayanan, M.A., M.L., Advocate, spoke on "Swami Vivekananda, the Disciple" and Srimath Guruswamigal of Vyasarpaudi Mutt on "Mukti". Srimath Swami Sharvanandaji occupied the chair for the English lectures. After an interesting dialogue by the pupils of the Sangha, Professor P. N. Srinivasachariar, M.A., of the Pachaiyappa's College, delivered an interesting lecture on "The Contribution of Swami Vivekananda to Hindu Philosophy" and Mr. P. A. Subramania Aiyar, B.A., L.T., Headmaster of the Hindu High School, gave out "The Message of the Swamiji to the Man of the World," in the course of an impressive lecture.

The Birthday Celebration of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna began at 7 in the morning on Sunday, the 25th February, 1923, at the Corporation Model School Hall, with a procession of the Master, his photo enlargement drawn by a devotee, followed by about a dozen Bhajana parties, through the Mada Streets. More than a thousand of the poor, irrespective of caste and creed along with the devotees, were fed in the forenoon. Srimath Sivaramalinga Swamigal delivered a lecture on "The Greatness of Sages" under the presidency of Srimath Vedanta Bhaskara Nyaya Chandra Veerasakam Subbayya Gnana Desikar Swamigal of Sri Anandashrama Sadhu Maha Sangham, Choolai. Then Srimath Swami Sharvanandaji took the chair. Two pupils of the Sangha treated the audience to an interesting dialogue and a third one sang an English song on the "Emptiness of the World". Then Mr. T. M. Krishnaswamy Aiyar, B.A., B.L., addressed the gathering on "Ramakrishna and Modern Spiritualism". The Chairman concluded the proceedings with an eloquent speech.

The Universal Religious Conference:

Under the auspices of the Sangha a religious Conference designated as the "Universal Religious Conference," was held for the first time at Madras on the 29th, 30th, 31st March and the 1st April, 1923, at the Soundarya Mahal, G. T., Madras, where the great religions of the world were represented by eminent scholars during its seven sessions. Sir T. Sadasiva Aiyar, President of the Sangha, opened the Conference. Admission was by complimentary tickets, which were sent to more than a thousand persons on application. The successful carrying out of the Conference was due to the enthusiastic work of the members and the co-operation of the public. The chief object of the Conference was to secure a broad platform on which a Parsee, a Muhammadan, a Hindu, a Christian, a Buddhist and a Tao can stand and embrace one another, thus realising the unity underlying the diverse faiths in the world. A summary of all the lectures were published regularly in the local dailies.

* * *

We have made these copious extracts from the report to show what amount of useful work is done by the Sangha, which may be profitably taken up in other parts of the country in the several lines marked above.

We heartily wish that the Sangha may advance and spread rapidly in the city and beyond.

It is really a very refreshing spectacle that the members of the Sangha, highly enlightened as they are, made up of Brahmans and non-Brahmans, have been able to meet on equal terms on a purely religious platform. True religion, verily, sees no distinctions of class, caste or sex as this Sangha has practically shown.

BHARATA SAMAJA**MEMBERSHIP**

The number of Members in the Bhārata Samāja on the 24th October, 1923, was 280.

Distribution

Gentlemen ...	252	Hindus by birth ...	276
Ladies ...	28	Christians by birth ...	4
	280		280
Madras Presidency ...	...		221
Mysore Province ...	...		29
Travancore ...	...		8
Sind ...	...		7
Bombay ...	...		5
Coastal, Ceylon, Rajaputana, U.P., Bengal, ...	...		...
Andamans, Australia, Java and Nizam's ...	...		10
Dominions—India ...	...		...
		Total ...	280

TEMPLE FUND

The following payments have been acknowledged with thanks:

	PLACE	Rs.	A.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged ...		8,995	4	5
Mr. V. Subbaramier ...	Periakulam,	10	0	0
" T. P. Nagasubramanier ...	"	15	0	0
" M. Muthukristna Iyer ...	"	10	0	0
" Nallaswami Naidu, Rao Bahadur ...	"	10	0	0
" L. Dharmarajier ...	"	10	0	0
" S. Narasinga Rao ...	"	10	0	0
" P. R. Subramania Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" S. Ramamurti Iyer ...	"	10	0	0
" S. Kamachi Naidu ...	"	5	0	0
" T. Santanakristna Reddi ...	"	5	0	0
" T. A. Annamalai Chetty ...	"	5	0	0
" Y. S. Sundaresa Iyer ...	"	5	0	0
" S. Syed Mahammad ...	Kernur	50	0	0
" V. Viswanadhier ...	Madura	25	0	0
" C. Srinivasa Rao Sahib ...	"	20	0	0
" A. Lakshminarayana Iyer ...	"	10	0	0
" A. Rangaswamier ...	"	200	0	0
Lord Gowringa ...	Madras	5	0	0
Mr. K. C. Muthuswami Chetty ...	"	5	0	0
" T. Varadarajulu Naidu ...	"	5	0	0
" T. Kristnaswami Naidu ...	"	10	0	0
" Anonymous ...	Adyar	15	0	0
" T. V. Gopalaswamy Iyer ...	"	25	0	0
		Total ...	9,600	4 5

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

24th October, 1923

Secretary, Bhārata Samāja.

தமிழ்நாடு ஆவணக்காப்பக நூலகம்,
எழும்பூர், சென்னை-600 008. 74

தவணைத்தாள் ௨௨,௪௨௨

சே எண் : 169397. ப. எண் : N22-01

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