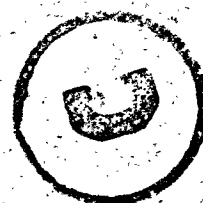


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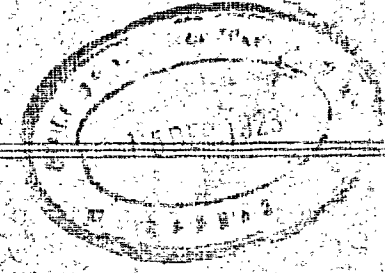
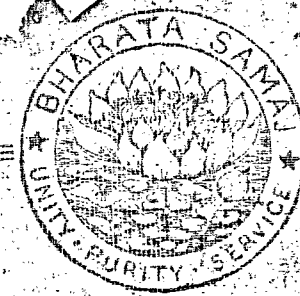
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VEDIC WORSHIP IN ESSENCE

All forms of Vedic worship the daily morning and evening prayer is the most important as giving the whole daily life its tone and key-note. It has come down to us in the ritualistic forms of *Agnihotra* (Fire-worship) and *Sandhya* (morning and evening twilight prayer). Every Hindu who is initiated into Vedic culture is expected to observe *Agnihotra* every morning and evening. The Vedic *Agnihotra* is performed only by a very few who are specially dedicated themselves to Vedic ritualistic life by setting up the three Holy Fires. But every householder is expected to maintain the one sacred Fire set up at his marriage, through which offerings are to be made to Gods in all the domestic ceremonies which pertain to family life. This latter is known as *Smarta*, as having come down through mere tradition, as distinguished from the *Shrauta* which is *Shrauta* as expressly taught in the *Veda*. The ritual of the *Shrauta Agnihotra* is more elaborate than that of the *Smarta Agnihotra*.

Though the main invocation in each of these rituals is easily distinguishable from the accessory parts, its primary significance is grasped by very few. In all these forms of Vedic worship the offering (*Homa*) of oblations or the repetition (*Japa*) of the *Mantra* stands out prominent. In one form of it alone, prescribed in the *Taittiriya-Aranyaka*, meditation of the Divine Lord in the Sun (স্বৰূপদিত্বো ব্রহ্ম) is prescribed in addition to a simple ritual. This does not, however, make up the whole content of the prayer intended. To make it complete some add the formula অহম ব্রহ্মাণি—I am Brahman.

There is a form of *Sandhya* which, bereft of all ritual, touches its very essence. With reference to

the devotee who has finished the student-life the *Apastamba-Dharma-Sutra* enjoins, সন্ধ্যায়োঃ ব্রাহ্মহুতি-রাসনং বাসয়ত—Let him both morning and evening be seated outside the village, restrained in speech (1-30-8). No sort of ritual is prescribed here. The devotee is to go outside the village, avoiding all its bustle, and be seated in a sequestered spot, all the sense-organs being made quiescent. What remains then? The *Upanishad* says অহমে-জ্যোতির্মমতি—The Self alone is his light. (*Briharyanaka-Upanishad*, IV. iii. 6.) When the senses are quiescent and the mind is alert, the light of one's own Self remains. It is this light through which the light of the Divine Lord manifests itself. To remain in this attitude constitutes one essential part of the morning and evening prayer.

To this should be added the invocation of the *Smarta Agnihotra* to make it a complete prayer. The invocation runs thus:

1. সূর্যায় স্বাহা (প্রাতঃ) ; অমবে স্বাহা (সন্ধ্যায়)
2. প্রজাপতয়ে স্বাহা ॥

1. "To the Sun I offer myself (in the morning).
To the Fire I offer myself (in the evening).
2. To Prajapati I offer myself."

The devotee having recognised in *Sandhya* his oneness with the Divine Lord in His aspect of Light (*Jnana-Shakti*) now offers himself in the fire-worship to the Divine Lord as Agni (Fire), and Prajapati (Lord of Creation), in His aspects of Will (*Icchha-Shakti*) and Activity (*Kriya-Shakti*). The full content of the morning and evening prayer is thus made up of a recognition of oneness of the Self with the Divine Lord in His three aspects of

Will, Light or Wisdom and Activity and the surrendering of oneself to His guidance. This full import is conveyed in the *Gayatri-Mantra* तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥ "Let us meditate on the adorable Light of the Divine Creator; and may He impel our volitions."

Here the devotee regards the light of consciousness welling up within him in quiescent moments as one with the Light of the Divine Lord, the Creator of all, and prays that the Divine Lord might so direct his thoughts and volitions that he might achieve all his spiritual aspirations.

Even the elaborate ritual of the *Shrauta-Agnihotra* is based on this central act of prayer. The main invocation reads thus:

1. अग्निर्ज्योतिर्ज्योतिरग्निः स्वाहा (रात्रम्)
सूर्यो ज्योतिर्ज्योतिः सूर्यः स्वाहा (प्रातः)
2. प्रजापतये स्वाहा

1. "Fire is Light and Light is Fire.
I offer myself to Him (in the evening).
Sun is Light and Light is Sun.
I offer myself to Him (in the morning).
2. To Prajapati, the Lord of Creation, I offer myself."

Here the devotee offers himself in entire self-surrender to the Divine Lord in His aspects of Will, Light or Wisdom, and Activity for guidance in his spiritual life.

That this is the central idea of the Vedic worship embodied in the elaborate ritual of the Vedic *Agnihotra* is borne out by the Vedic declaration that the purpose of the daily elaborate ritual of *Agnihotra* is served in the daily life of the *Dikshita* (one who has consecrated his whole day's life to a sacrificial rite) by his dedication expressed in the following words:

ये देवा मनोजता मनयुजः सुदक्षा दक्षवितारः ते नः पान्तु ते नोऽवन्तु देव्यो नमः तेभ्यः स्वाहा ।

"Those Devas who are born in mind and who work in mind, highly efficient themselves and fathers of the efficient—may They guard us. May They protect us. To Them we bow. To Them we offer ourselves."

The *Dikshita* who makes this invocation has, it is said, no need to perform the daily *Agnihotra*. He may dispense with it so long as he maintains this attitude.

We thus see that the Vedic worship in essence consists in watching for the Divine Intelligences welling up within ourselves in the silent hours of the morning and evening and in offering ourselves in entire self-surrender to Them for guidance in the achievement of all our aspirations. This attitude of recognition of unity and self-surrender is the essence of all worship; and all rituals are intended as aids for the attainment of this attitude.

THE LIBERAL HINDU'S PROBLEMS

THERE is a universal feeling among the Hindus, orthodox as well as liberal, that the present attitude of the general mass of the Hindus towards many a social question should undergo a necessary change for a more reasonable one.

1. In the first place a wide gulf separates the actual social and religious life of the Hindus from the rules of *Varnashrama Dharma* as laid down in the *Dharma-shāstras* which they profess to follow; and we are therefore confronted with the problem, whether it is possible to revive the *Varnashrama Dharma* laid down in the *Manu-Smṛiti* and the later codes of the same category, or, if it should be modified, what modifications should be made and on what basis.

2. And then, divergent views are held as to what constitutes *Sanātana Dharma*, the true eternal Vedic religion: one of the questions to be settled being whether the questionable elements such as animal-sacrifice and liquor-drinking form essential parts of *Yajna*, the Vedic Sacrifice.

3. Then there is the question of the exclusion from Vedic religion of the non-Brahmana castes, including modern Kshatriyas and Vaishyas as well as Shudras. It is this religious inequality which lies primarily at the foundation of the division of the Hindu community in two widely separate groups of Brahmanas and non-Brahmanas, the more self-conscious of the latter resent the exclusion and the concomitant social and religious disabilities. In the interests both of social and religious well-being of the Hindu community as a whole, there has to be found for bridging this gulf. Certainly the conventional orthodoxy of the day cannot be of any help in the matter as it has only tended to widen the already existing chasm. Somewhere outside this orthodoxy have to seek a way for removing the arbitrary religious inequalities between the several caste creating a bond of social fellowship between the equal terms.

4. Equally important is the problem of woman: not the Hindu woman entitled to a higher intellectual and spiritual culture than is now allowed to her? Is necessary to deny still to her any of the many opportunities of higher culture which are open to man? The opening of higher culture will enable her to lead a life of self-reliance and of an equal co-partnership in her life with man, whereas now without it she is doomed to life-long dependence on man without scope or opportunities for full self-expression.

5. Reform in respect of woman's education and culture will necessarily lead to reform in the marriageable age of boys and girls, on which again there is a wide difference of opinion. As it is the early marriage of girls that has led to the early marriage of boys, any rise in the marriageable age of girls in view of their educational interests will necessarily lead to a rise in the marriageable age of boys.

6. The problem of the education of the youth presents various difficulties, one of them which might be usefully discussed being how far should the vocational as distinguished from the cultural education follow the principles of *Varna Dharma*; i.e., should follow the lines of individual variation and heredity as indicated by birth in a caste or sub-caste. There is also a very sharp division of opinion

as to the religious education of the youth,—whether it should form an integral part of their education, and if so, how to get out of the difficulty caused by the multiplicity of religious denominations and caste inequalities.

7. As to the problem of sea-voyage of caste Hindus, it is only the orthodox extremists that still remain unreconciled. The Hindu who has returned from a long foreign travel is still subjected by these self-righteous people to social ostracism of a troublesome kind, entailing some serious disabilities and inconveniences. There is still a need for guiding the public opinion on the question to a correct judgment through a proper understanding of the *Shastric* injunctions on the matter and of the basic principles of *Varna Dharma*.

8. Connected with the foregoing problem is that of our social intercourse with the people of alien faiths and races with whom the Hindus have to live in close contact in India and elsewhere in Asia and other continents. This problem involves a consideration of the inter-religious and inter-racial marriages, which the Hindus have often contracted in India and elsewhere. The time has come when the discussion of such marriages has ceased to be of no interest or of a mere academic value. It might be profitably discussed under what conditions, if at all, inter-racial marriages might be of eugenic value and even of true religious sanctity.

9. The most important of all the problems we might discuss is that of the outcastes of the Hindu Society. The question to be considered is, under what conditions these outcastes might be admitted within the Hindu community, and whether a suitable process of reclamation consistent with Vedic religion may be devised as well in the interests of national progress as out of considerations of humanity.

THE LIBERAL HINDU'S SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS

Three Different Ways.—Attempts have been made to solve these problems from several points of view.

1. A vast majority would view them from the standpoint of *Varnashrama Dharma* as laid down in the *Smṛitis* and supplemented by *Sishtacharas*, the time-honoured unwritten customs approved by the social leaders of the several ages. This may be regarded as the strictly orthodox or conservative attitude supporting the conventional Hinduism of the day. This way of solving the socio-religious problems of the day will lead to a policy of drift, for it being found impossible to follow any longer the authoritative *Smṛitis* and *Achāras* of the day to their very letter, the orthodoxy cannot but leave the knotty social problems to solve themselves as best they may under the stress of the ever changing environment, without honestly acknowledging the unsuitability of the worn-out system to which they profess allegiance.

2. There are again people who attempt to solve these problems in the light of their own empirical reason and common sense, owning no allegiance to *Shāstras* and established *Achāras*, which they would ignore as altogether based on class prejudices. They belong to what is called the radical or rational school of reformers, and their procedure would lead the society altogether away from its moorings, leaving it the poorer for the loss of much that is sound in the foundations of our social fabric and of what is considered on all sides the most evolved

and philosophical living religion on earth having its basis in the *Shāstras*.

3. There is a third way of looking at these problems, which consists in following the light of reason within its legitimate province and leaving to the guidance of *Shāstras* such matters as transcend the ordinary man's vision and therefore fall outside the scope of his empirical reason. According to this method, the Hindu socio-religious institutions of the day are tested by the *Shāstras* in those matters which ought to be governed by them, while in other matters which fall within man's experience they are made amenable to the test of reason and conscience. It is to this procedure laid down in the *Shāstras* themselves that the liberal Hindus of the *Bhārata Samāja* would conform in dealing with the social and religious problems under reference, as shown by the measures of social and religious reform to which they have already pledged themselves. Following this procedure we could preserve all that is sound and graceful in our socio-religious system as based on the highest teaching of *Shāstras* and approved by reason and common sense, while we might be prepared to introduce any desirable changes into it in the light of advancing knowledge and developing conscience. By this method we will be enabled to preserve intact the eternal truths and laws relating to our spiritual life and constituting religion proper and at the same time to improve the man-devised institutions by removal of abuses and introduction of new graceful elements.

OLDER AND LATER SHĀSTRAS

In this connection it will be well to bear in mind that the *Shāstras* and the *Achāras* which govern the Hindu society of these days are admittedly the resultant of a long process of adaptation—involving additions, omissions and modifications—to which the original *Shāstras* and *Achāras* have been subjected in the long course of our history, and that they have been changed from time to time so as to be made suitable to the growing degeneracy of the people. It behoves us, therefore, to study the original laws and to see in their light how the society has degenerated and how it may again be regenerated. Those of us who have made a study of the *Shāstras* in their several phases have found that our socio-religious institutions will shine in their pristine light and purity if the encrustations laid on them by ages have been removed. Such encrustations are, in the main, the religious inequalities between the several classes of the community which detract from the Hindu solidarity and obstruct the social progress.

SHĀSTRIC SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS

The *Shāstras*, when studied in their totality and interpreted on the lines of true Vedic exegesis, will enable us to tackle the various problems that are exercising the thinking Hindus of the day.

1. By studying our institutions in the light of the data furnished by the *Shāstras*, we shall gain an insight into what constitutes the real *Sanātana Dharma*—the true Vedic Religion, the eternal Law of spiritual progress, as distinguished from the *Varnashrama Dharma* in its modern phase, the religion of the caste system—shorn of all such abuses as animal-sacrifice and liquor-drinking.

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2. We shall further understand how the originally homogeneous Hindu community became divided into castes and outcastes with the social privileges and disabilities of the higher and the lower castes, how the outcastes might be readmitted into the inner ranks of the community, and how the lower castes might rise first to an equal religious status with the Brāhmana and thereby attain to a level of social equality with him—the true Brāhmana being said to be one who, having a living faith in the Vedic Religion, leads a life of spiritual aspiration and self-sacrifice.

3. The true Vedic ideals of marriage and married life as portrayed in the original Vedic texts will disabuse our minds of the idea that the woman's status of subordination in the modern Hindu society has any foundation in the original Vedic Law. On the contrary the Vedic Law unmistakably assumes that prior to marriage woman has gone through an equal course of intellectual and spiritual culture with man, so that at marriage man and woman meet as friends and live together in married life as equal co-partners, each helping the other in all concerns of life. The statutory denial of education to woman and the enjoining of early marriage for her in the *Manu-Smṛiti* and the later codes would appear to be a mere travesty of the Vedic ideals of woman's status in society, brought about by the changed outlook of the people who had but a vague idea of the true Vedic Dharma and with whom religion became a mass of unmeaning and lifeless rituals.

4. Farther, a study of the history of the Aryan evolution as outlined in our Sacred Tradition represented by the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* will enable us to recognise our true kinship with the peoples whom we now regard as non-Hindus and Mlechhas. When this study is supplemented by a knowledge of the later history and ethnographical records, we might see how merchants and learned scholars of the Hindu community went to foreign lands in pursuit of business and culture, mixing freely with the people there. The study of eugenics and ethnology along with ancient traditions might give us to know under what conditions a reunion might take place between the Hindus and the non-Hindus of racial kinship.

5. Last but not the least important is the value of such a study as enabling us to form an idea of the ancient system of education of the youth, which might suggest in what directions the present system may be improved in its bearing on the physical, moral and spiritual culture.

BHARATA SAMAJA: ITS IMMEDIATE WORK

Addressing the President of the Bharata Samaja, Mr. Fritz Kunz, F.T.S., writes for Bishop Leadbeater as follows, from The Manor, Mosman, Sydney, Australia, on the 25th August, 1923:

DEAR BROTHER,

Bishop Leadbeater desires me to thank you for your letters and circulars of June, 1922, and very much regrets that a reply has hitherto been impossible owing to the tremendous pressure of many duties. He has been

interested for some time in the explanation of the inner side of Hindu ritual; and I have no doubt that the Bharata Samaja will be able to do a good deal of spade work in collecting the necessary material. A comprehensible collection of the important rituals together with the rejection of those which are evidently spurious and in no sense current [correct?] ritual would of course simplify such work if and when he turns to it. It is our Brother Krishnaji's desire that Bishop Leadbeater should do for Hinduism what he has done for the Catholic Church. And of course if he should ever reside in India again, Brother Leadbeater would be quite glad to make an analysis; but you will understand that good work can be done in advance by collecting and purifying the various forms which have come down through the ages so that labour will be spared him when he turns his attention to the problem. Yours most cordially, FRITZ KUNZ.

BHARATA SAMAJA

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 23rd November, 1923, was 281.

TEMPLE FUND

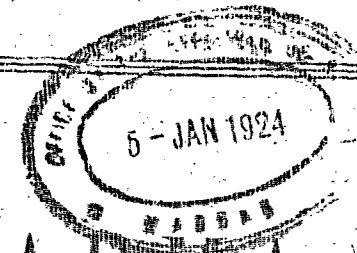
The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	RS.	A.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged		9,600	4	5
Mr. Dinadayala Mudaliar	Madras	10	0	0
" A. Arunachala Mudaliar	Malur	5	0	0
A Sympathizer	Alleppey	5	0	0
Mr. P. G. Govinda Pillai	"	10	0	0
A Sympathizer	"	5	0	0
Mr. Subbayya Iyer	"	10	0	0
" N. A. Krishna Iyengar	"	25	0	0
" N. P. Narisettiwalla	"	25	0	0
" Ratansy Govindji	"	5	0	0
" Dharmisay Wajjio	"	5	0	0
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Mr. P. Krishnaewami Reddiar	"	25	0	0
" N. Sundararaja Iyengar	Trivendram	5	0	0
" R. Krishnaswami Iyer	"	5	0	0
" A. Venkata Rao	"	5	0	0
" A. Gnanasankanda Iyer	"	5	0	0
" A. Raman Pillai	"	75	0	0
" R. Srinivasan	"	15	0	0
Dr. V. N. Narayana Pillai	"	10	0	0
Mr. C. Balakrishna Rao	"	5	0	0
" Krishna Dasu	"	5	0	0
" R. Rajarama Rao	"	5	0	0
" V. Subba Iyer	"	20	0	0
" K. Kesava Pillai	"	5	0	0
Dr. K. Raman Thampi	"	5	0	0
Mr. A. Kristna Iyengar	Nagarcovil	5	0	0
" S. Subramanya Iyer	"	5	0	0
" A. M. Kumar	"	5	0	0
" A. Venkataramayya	"	10	0	0
" S. Kaiyanarama Iyer	"	10	0	0
Donations received through				
Mr. Kalyanasundaram Iyer		17	0	0
Mr. C. Ramanuja	Adyar	15	0	0
Total		9,967	4	5

C. SUBRAMANYA,

23rd November, 1923

Secretary, Bharata Samaja



BHARATA DHARMA

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TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

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ELEVATION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES

ONE of the objects of the Bharata Samaja which brings it into conflict with the Hindu orthodoxy is "to promote the welfare of all classes and sections of Hindus . . . by breaking down social disabilities and restrictions entailed by the mere reason of caste or sex". In working for the attainment of this object the Samaja has to take into account the social disabilities and restrictions to which Hindus of every caste and outcaste and Hindu women as a whole are more or less subject.

The Brahmanas may be said to have no disabilities at all; but as incidental to their high position in society, and mostly self-imposed, there are some restrictions imposed on them which may not be regarded as grievances at all. The Kshatriya and Vaishya castes of the present day suffer from a few irksome restrictions and disabilities of a socio-religious nature which may be regarded as real grievances, but which may be redressed with comparative ease. More serious and irksome are the restrictions and disabilities imposed upon the Shudra caste, and it needs no saying that those from which the outcastes suffer are unexampled and most degrading and painful. These last,

Shudras and outcastes, are the really depressed classes who are born into social environments which under the regime of the Hindu orthodoxy make it impossible for them as a class or as individuals to rise by their own efforts to the higher levels of society, attaining equal status with those born into them.

We may for the present dismiss the consideration of the grievances of women, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas with a few brief observations. The woman's question is one of education. If she be given the intellectual culture, her claim to which is generally recognised, her disabilities will disappear in consequence of her very enlightenment. She will of course demand her original high status and will get it. Our ancient history tells us that in former times she had the same spiritual and intellectual culture in early youth as man and was his equal in all respects.

As to the grievances of Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, their redress is in their own hands. They have simply to demand their spiritual equality with Brahmanas, which is their birthright as the twice-born Hindu, but which has been denied to them by Brahmanas on the basis of a false or fictitious evaluation of the different social occupations followed by the twice-born. The only obstacle in their way is the contention of the orthodox Brahmana that in the Kali-yuga there are no true Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, a contention which may be easily turned round against the Brahmanas of the age.

Not quite so easy is the redress of the grievances of the really depressed classes comprising Shudras and outcastes. From the orthodox Hindu's standpoint of view based on his reading of the sense of the existing Dharma-Shastras, the Shudras and

outcastes must live and die as such without any chance of rising higher in the socio-religious scale. The Bharata Samaja, however, is prepared to admit them to the higher levels through membership in the Samaja which is open to all who fulfil certain conditions. They must have attained a certain degree of purity in physical life and a certain level of intellectual and moral culture and must have a living faith in certain broad and fundamental truths of Hindu Religion.

The Bharata Samaja is not so much concerned about the political, economical and educational elevation of the depressed classes as about their social and religious amelioration. There are ever so many communal and philanthropic associations working strenuously for the needs of the former kind, whereas the Bharata Samaja conceives its mission with reference to the depressed classes to consist mainly in the direction of their socio-religious emancipation. The Samaja believes that their progress in the socio-religious direction will greatly contribute to their progress in the other directions also.

Besides, all Shudras are not depressed in all respects. Among the so-called Shudras there are many who are politically, economically and educationally quite as well off as the higher castes. More of them have chances of rising in these respects by their own efforts as well as by the help of others. But the socio-religious status of these in the orthodox Hindu community is undeservedly low, and it is with the elevation of their socio-religious status to the highest level with which the Bharata Samaja is specially concerned. The Bharata Samaja believes this to be possible, as the result of an enquiry into our scriptures. A careful study of them has thrown new light on the origin of the Shudras and outcastes; and the treatment accorded to them in ancient times is found to be more rational and humane than the one meted out in the hide-bound system of the present day.

AWAY WITH CASTE! A VOICE FROM AFAR

[Note.—This is an article of mine published about ten years ago and is reproduced here for easy reference in my forthcoming notes on the elevation of Hindu depressed classes.—EDITOR.]

A DIALOGUE FROM MAHABHARATA

As our tradition tells us, the anomalous division of the Indo-Aryans into distinct castes separated by the impassable barrier of birth has been in existence for several thousands of years. At one period in the remote past history the spirituality of the people, which had been the basis of their union, was so low and the material interests were so engrossing, that the different professional classes were looked upon as so many distinct species of humanity which ought not to mix with one another. But at times the most thoughtful among the people saw through the anomaly and suggested remedial measures. The *Mahabharata* (Shantiparva, 186-187 Adhyayas) records a dialogue, as between Bhrgu and

Bharadvaja, describing the origin of caste and chalking out the line of reform. As the episode throws a flood of light on the subject, for which one would hardly look to such an antique work of Itihāsa (ancient tradition) I need make no apology for giving an analysis of the dialogue with a few necessary comments. One might wonder how in the midst of light emanating from such a popular work there has so long prevailed that darkness of ignorance which has made people believe in the immutability of the caste regulations such as we find them at the present day.

Bhrgu and Bharadvaja are names held in highest esteem by the Hindus of all denominations. They are great Rishis, known as Gotrakāras, to whom a large number of Vedic Hindu families trace their spiritual pedigree. It is, moreover, Bhrgu who was commissioned by the Manu of our race to teach His law to other Rishis, and who therefore, must have known the true ideal of Varna-Dharma; while Bharadvaja is known to have spent ages in the study of the Vedas and learned the true Vedic law by special Divine Grace. The teaching conveyed in the form of a dialogue between two such personages must therefore carry highest authority with it, especially in matters pertaining to Varna-Dharma.

BRHMA'S CREATION

Bharadvaja seeks enlightenment from Bhrgu on many a deep problem of life and evolution, one of which relates to the distinctions of caste. In answer to Bharadvaja's question Bhrgu says that there was only one varna at first and that the one varna differentiated in course of time into four varnas. Bhrgu begins thus:

"At first Brahmā created brāhmanas only, lords of men (prajāpatis), perfect by their inherent spiritual power, effulgent like the sun and fire. Then there was truth, Dharma (spirituality), one-pointed will, eternal spiritual wisdom, physical and moral purity." And in course of evolution,

"Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Daityas, Asuras, the great Urugas, Yakshas, Rākshasas, Nāgas, Pisāchas, and men of all classes—brāhmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas, and shūdras—and other creatures of different types (varnas)—all these did He create. The brāhmanas are white in varna, the kshatriyas red, the vaishyas yellow, and the shūdras black." (186 Adh., 1-5).

Thus in the course of evolution, under the influence of several mighty forces, the one original type differentiated into four different types. The course of variation ran on healthy lines so long as spirituality was the prime motive factor of life. When, in course of time, spirituality gave way to material greed and selfishness, the general progress deflected and took a devious turn. The different types got mixed up together, all dominated by greed and sensuality.

QUESTION ON CASTE DISTINCTIONS

Referring to this state of society prevalent in his day, Bharadvaja on hearing the last quoted words of Bhrgu, asks:

"If, as you say, the four varnas answer to the four different types of men with distinct natural characteristics, then there exists no single varna which is pure; all seem to be mixed up. All varnas including us (brāhmanas) are alike dominated by lust, anger, fear, greed, grief, care, hunger, and weariness; where is then any distinction

among the varnas? Sweat, urine, excreta, phlegm, bile, and blood course alike through all bodies; where is then any distinction among the varnas? There are innumerable species of moving and unmoving objects; how can we determine the different types among them?" (186 Adh., 6-9.)

ANSWER: ONE VARNA AND FOUR VARNAS

In answer Bhrgu seems to admit the fact of the different types being mixed up: but to him the variation and the mixture of types do not seem to signify much. They are only passing phases or by-products of evolution and relate to organic forms which are shaped by the action of the life or the will of the spirit behind. This variation goes on without any fixity defying all attempts at definition, and therefore any fixed rules of life, based on the types of a particular period, for the regulation of the life of the people in that and subsequent ages, defeat their own purpose. What to Bhrgu is of supreme importance is the recognition of the original type, the one brāhmana varna based on the spiritual unity of man, which should be preserved at all times, and towards which the people of the Aryan race should consciously work up, no matter how far soever they might find themselves to have strayed away, at any particular stage of evolution. The pilgrim who resumes his journey and travels through life guided by the ever fixed star of the spiritual ideal passes safely through all phases of variation to the destined goal. Here follow Bhrgu's words in answer:

"There is no inherent distinction among the varnas. The whole humanity is composed of brāhmanas; and it is the brāhmanas who were originally created that differentiated into different varnas by their occupations. Those brāhmanas (dvijas) who became engrossed in lust and sensuality, who were cruel, wrathful and fond of daring deeds, who neglected their proper spiritual life, have become kshatriyas with red-coloured bodies. Those brāhmanas who took to the profession of cattle-breeding, who lived by tilling land, and who neglected their proper spiritual life, became vaishyas with yellow-coloured bodies. Those brāhmanas who were given to cruelty and lying, who were covetous and resorted to all sorts of occupations, who neglected all rules of moral and physical purity, became the dark-coloured shūdras. Divided thus by different occupations, the brāhmanas (Dvijas) developed into different varnas." (186 Adh., 10-11.)

VEDIC LAW IS MEANT FOR ALL VARNAS

Though these have long neglected their spiritual concerns, they are not always to be excluded from spiritual culture. When they see their mistake and give up the greedy pursuit of material possessions and sensual enjoyments, the path of vedic culture should be opened to them as soon as they seek it. Bhrgu says:

"To these, Dharma (spiritual culture) and observance of the vedic sacraments (yajna) are not always forbidden. It is for these who compose the four varnas that the Vedic Law was originally laid down by Brahmā. Only, by greed they have sunk into ignorance." (186 Adh., 14-15.)

CONTINUITY OF BRĀHMANIC TYPE

Though the people in general including the so-called Brāhmanas have thus been immersed in spiritual darkness, there always remain true Brāhmanas answering

more or less to the original type, in order that the progress of humanity may go on unimpeded. So, Bhrgu says:

"There are brāhmanas who remain firm in the path of spiritual culture, ever persevering in the study of the spiritual law and in devotional exercises. Their spiritual fervour never cools. When the race of true Brāhmanas becomes extinct, the great sages (Rishis) bring forth by their own tapas or will-power a new generation of Brāhmanas, duly initiated into the life of spiritual devotion, endued with a determined will to follow their duties. This world has emanated from the Primal Deva; it is rooted in Brahman and is therefore imperishable. Being an act of Divine Will, this world-evolution will go on to its fulfilment on the path of Dharma. Nothing can stop it." (186 Adh., 16, 19-20.)

THE ORIGIN OF OUTCASTES

Besides the four varnas, who though aware of the existence of the Vedic Law have yet not heeded the law, there are others still who like them once formed part of the original varna of Brāhmanas, but who, having lost all touch with the Vedic Law and its tradition, have gone out of the pale of the fourfold division of varna. Of these, Bhrgu says:

"There are some other Dvijas who have lost all touch with the tradition of the one original spiritual community. Of them there are classes settled here and there, known as Pisāchas, Rākshasas, Pretas, and Mlechchhas of various classes; they are lost to all knowledge, sacred and profane, and they act as they please." (186 Adh., 17-18.)

The description of these classes given in the Manusmṛiti is worthy of note:

"The kshatriya classes to be mentioned below, owing to their neglect of vedic rituals and remoteness from the Brāhmanic community, have become Vrishalas (out-castes). Such are the Paundrakas, the Chandras, Dravidas, Kambojas, Yavanas, Shakas, Pāradas, Pahlavas, Chinas, Kirātas, Dāradas, and Khashas. Those of the brāhmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas, and shūdras who have thus gone out of the brāhmanic community, speaking Aryan and non-Aryan tongues, are known as Dasyus." (x, 43-55.)

SPIRITUAL REGENERATION

Since the break-up of the one original varna into the four distinct varnas (castes) and dasyus (out-castes) many a wave of spiritual revival have swept over the community. The kshatriyas and the vaishyas again took to the vedic culture, while the shūdras did not care for it and pursued their unspiritual life. By this revival of vedic culture, the brāhmanas, the kshatriyas and the vaishyas reverted, in theory to the original status of the one brāhmana varna though practically they kept up their former hereditary distinctions. And as the original enthusiasm of the spiritual revival soon died away, the vedic culture became a meaningless formal ceremonialism divorced from true spiritual life and its basis of physical and moral purity. This sort of culture cannot indeed make one a true brāhmana. Yet such has been the life led by the vedic communities of the post-renaissance periods of our history including the present. This lifeless ritualism which now goes by the name of Vedic Religion must be replaced by a life of true spiritual communion based on the groundwork of moral

and physical purity, if the followers of the Vedic Religion of all classes and colours should become united as one people, as true brāhmanas following the true Vedic Law. This is the trend of thought that runs through the sequel of the dialogue. Bharadvāja asks:

"What makes one a brāhmana, what a kshatriya, what a vaishya, and what a shūdra?" (187 Adh., 1.)

Bhrigu answers:

"He who has undergone the birth-ceremony and other sacraments, who is pure and well versed in the Vedas, who is well established in the sixfold duty, regardful of physical and moral purity, eating of what remains after the feeding of guests, devoted to the elders, always engaged in devotional exercises, intent on truth—such a man is said to be a brāhmana. Truth, charity, self-control, abstinence from cruelty and treachery, forgiveness, kindness, and one-pointed will—where these qualities are marked, he is deemed a true brāhmana. He who resorts to fighting, who has studied the Vedas, who earns and spends—such a man is said to be a kshatriya. He who resorts to trade and cattle-breeding, who earns by tilling, who is always clean and who has studied the Vedas—such a man is known to be a vaishya. He who eats all things and engages in all deeds, who is unclean, who has abandoned the Vedas, who does not conduct himself well—such a man is said to be a shūdra." (187 Adh., 2-7.)

REAL BRĀHMANA AND SHŪDRA

Here Bhrigu distinguishes the four varnas by their inherent tendencies and actions, not by birth. Indeed he attaches no importance to the status given by mere birth. Accordingly, classing the first three varnas under the one comprehensive designation of brāhmanas because of their vedic culture, he distinguishes them from the shūdras possessing no such culture, and declares that one is a brāhmana or a shūdra not by birth, but by character and work. To quote his very words:

"When the marks of a brāhmana are found in a shūdra and when they do not exist in a brāhmana, such a shūdra is not a shūdra and such a brāhmana is not a brāhmana." (187 Adh., 8.)

This is surely an outspoken protest against the modern institution of caste. The same protest is made in clearer terms elsewhere in the *Mahābhārata* (Vana-Parva, 180 Adhyāya) where Yudhishtira is made to say that character and conduct alone make one a brāhmana; that when promiscuous sexual intercourse has brought about a mixture in varnas, character and conduct, not birth, should be the marks of a brāhmana and form a passport to vedic culture; and that vedic culture bears fruit only where it is combined with character and conduct. According to Bhrigu, he who is engaged in a true spiritual life, developing the qualities of a true brāhmana, is alone a true brāhmana.

TRUE BRĀHMANIC LIFE

Here are the directions laid down by Bhrigu for the aspirant of a true brāhmanic life:

"Let him by every means control greed and wrath. This is a holy act, so also is self-control. Greed and

wrath should be checked by all means, as they undo all good. To secure prosperity, let him give up wrath; to secure strength of will, let him give up anger; to secure wisdom, let him not mind honour and disgrace; to realise the Self, let him not turn his mind away from it. He shall be free from selfishness in all his undertakings, he shall sacrifice all, renouncing the fruits of his action; then he will be a wise man. He shall not injure any creature; he shall be friendly to all; he shall control the senses by reason. Let him seek That which is beyond grief and fear here and hereafter. Let him have a one-pointed will; let him control the senses and contemplate; let him restrain himself. Seeking to conquer the unconquered, let him be unattached in all attachments. The Manifest is perceived by the senses; the Unmanifest is beyond the senses and can only be inferred. Let him grasp in mind the Certain, and avoid grasping at the Uncertain. With the mind thus held, let it be fixed in prāna or Life within, and let that Life within be then fixed in Brahman, the Spirit behind. There let him abide absorbed, regardless of all objects of attraction, and let him not think of anything else. By this does a brāhmana realise the bliss of Brahman." (187 Adh., 9-17.)

Such is the life which makes one a true brāhmana, and it is open to all. It is this life which all men who seek to attain Divine Bliss should lead. It makes for unity; its first and immediate aim is to kill greed and wrath (*lobha* and *krodha*) which are the sources of all disunion, and which, according to our sacred tradition, have led to the degeneration of the original one varna into the modern institution of caste. Thus Bhrigu, like Shri Krishna, teaches that the life of true spiritual devotion is the panacea for all ills and ensures progress towards the attainment of supreme bliss. Every one should bear in mind his concluding words of exhortation impressing the essential features of brāhmanic life which all should cultivate. These words are:

"Never swerve from the path of purity, always adhere to right conduct, and be compassionate to all creatures. These are the marks of a brāhmana, the twice-born." (187 Adh., 18.)

Purity of life, right conduct, universal compassion—these are the virtues which mark out a brāhmana. May the Aryans of all castes and even outcastes, who are all descended from the one original community of brāhmanas, and for whom the original Vedic law was given, strive to live as true brāhmanas and become brāhmanas, and thus realise the true brotherhood of humanity.

A. M. S.

DHARMA—WHAT IT MEANS

DHARMA, RELIGION PURE AND SIMPLE

The truths of the eternal religion are included in the all-comprehensive term Dharma as used in the original Hindu scriptures, known as the Vedas. So that, by way of explaining all that is implied in the term, I shall be able to show what the eternal verities and laws are which go to constitute religion pure and simple and on which all the religions of the cultured peoples of the day

are built. That word, connoting really all that is best and most essential in all ethical and religious systems, has been explained by many people in many different ways. They have viewed it, each at one single aspect of its manifestation in practical life, which for the time has arrested his or her attention. But when we view it as a whole, that is to say, when we try to know what Dharma in itself means without reference to any particular aspect or aspects of its manifestation as presented by the existing moral codes and religious systems, then it is likely that we will be able to get at its true and full import. I shall try to determine the true import of Dharma, both explicit and implicit, by expounding its literal meaning as well as the texts and the formulas which deal with Dharma in its fundamental nature.

DHARMA, THE DIVINE LAW OF EVOLUTION

Let us first study the literal meaning of the word Dharma. It is derived from the root *Dhrī* to bear, to sustain. Dharma means that which bears or sustains, the Sustainer. The *Mahābhārata* accordingly says:

धारणात् धर्म इत्याहुः धर्मो धारयति प्रजाः ॥

"Dharma is so called because it sustains. Dharma indeed sustains the whole Creation." So, Dharma may be taken to mean the Law of Evolution which sustains the universe, the path of evolutionary progress of the universe. The law of cause and effect which obtains in all realms of nature and in all concerns of our being,—physical, emotional, mental, moral, and spiritual—may be manipulated for the well-being or the reverse of the sentient existence. When this law of cause and effect is understood and utilized for the onward progress of the sentient existence, then it is Dharma; when it is used to retard that progress it forms Adharma. A partial knowledge of some of the secrets of nature is sometimes used for selfish purposes and for the injury of others; it is then an abuse of knowledge and an act of heinous sin. But, happily, a perfect knowledge of this Law on the part of any individual is always associated with his perfect adaptation of the law for the well-being of the whole sentient existence; and this course also secures perfect happiness to that individual. Thus Shri Krishna, representing the Lord of the universe, says of Himself:

महागो हि प्रविशामि भूतस्थायस्य च ॥

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥

"I am verily the abode of Brahman, the Immortal, and the Imperishable; of the eternal Dharma, as also of the unending Bliss." (Gītā, xiv, 27.)

This gives us to understand that the Brahman, the Infinite One, the First Cause from whom the whole universe proceeds, who plans and guides the whole evolution, is the one in whom the Eternal Dharma is embodied. He guides the evolution of the whole universe so as to ensure the progress of the whole sentient existence evolving in that universe, and this eternal activity in the cause of the world-progress constitutes the *Shāshvata-Dharma*, the *Sanātana-Dharma*, the Eternal Law. As an embodiment of this eternal Law, the Brahman enjoys pure and incorruptible Bliss. Dharma and Bliss go together. Perfect Dharma means Perfect Bliss. Perfect Dharma and Perfect Bliss are embodied in the Brahman, the Lord of the Universe

who acts for the progress of the whole universe and the ultimate bliss of the sentient existence in it. As the embodiment of perfect Dharma the Lord of the universe sustains the universe in its progressive evolution.

MAN'S DHARMA

From another passage in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* we learn something as to how the Lord sustains the universe. There, Shri Krishna representing the Lord of the universe says:

भूमिर्वापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ॥

अहङ्कार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे परां ॥

जीवभूतां महाबाहो यथेदं धारयति जगत् ॥

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ॥

अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, reason, and self, thus eightfold is My nature divided.

"This is the inferior. But distinct from this one, know there is My superior nature, forming its very life, O mighty-armed, by means of which this universe is sustained.

"Understand that all beings proceed from these two natures. I am thus the source of the whole universe, as also its end." (VII, 4-6.)

From this passage we understand that every being is twofold in its nature which is rooted in the twofold nature of the Lord of the universe. In the nature of every being there is a material side and a spiritual side. The material side is made up of gross and subtle physical matter and even subtler supersensuous matter. Earth, water, fire and air are all forms of matter perceptible to our senses while ether is imperceptible to our senses though it belongs to the region of physical matter. Our sensations, emotions and thoughts, and even personal self (*āhamkāra*), are all forms of matter which transcend our senses. What we should particularly notice here is the fact that those are material, made up of inert matter, *Jada-Prakriti*. Distinct from this is the spiritual nature which is the ensouling life of the material organism, manifesting itself as consciousness; which expresses itself through the organism, works in it, and gains experience of the outer world through it. It is this latter, the life and consciousness, the Jīva as it is called, that really guides the operations of reason, mind and the physical organs, and also of the personal self or *āhamkāra* which unifies these organs and identifies itself with them. All sentient beings including man are only emanations from the Lord of the universe, as Shri Krishna says in the *Gītā*:

सर्वेवांसो जीवलोकं जीवभूतः सनातनः ॥

मनस्यग्रानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥

The Jīva in every individual sentient being is an emanation of the Lord. The Jīva acts in the individual organism, just as the Lord of the universe acts in the whole universe. The Jīva, the spiritual ego, draws

round himself and appropriates for his use a part of the matter round him and makes the vestures and the organs wherewith to contact the external world and to gain experience. The world-progress is carried on through these spiritual entities. Up to a certain stage of development these creatures are slowly carried on through evolution by the main current of evolutionary force without their active co-operation. When they have attained a certain stage of mental and moral development such as that attained by the average man of to-day—that is to say, when they can think, reason and determine for themselves, when they have developed wills of their own—then they are fit to choose their own line of action. They are free to act in the line of evolution chalked out by the Lord, or to swerve from it to a small or large extent. When they choose to co-operate with the Lord, they hasten their evolution. If on the contrary they choose to swerve from that line, their progress is retarded to the extent they have swerved. So far as they consciously follow the divine plan of the world-progress, they help the evolution of the world as a whole; and to the extent they help that evolution, they further their own evolution. This conscious active co-operation with the Lord of the universe in the cause of the world-progress is what is meant by Dharma. The Scriptures say that at the beginning of a world-period the Lord of creation thinks of what He has to achieve and how to achieve it and then begins His operations connected with the evolutionary progress of the world. The law of this evolutionary progress constitutes the Primary Dharma, as I already explained. So that, when the sentient beings evolving in the universe understand the law of the evolutionary progress and direct their life-activities in consonance with that law, then they are acting according to Dharma. By continuously following Dharma, always to the highest extent of their capacity, they will develop their latent energies further and further and will be better able to follow Dharma. When at last all their latent powers come into full operation, then they attain to the level of divinity; and then they are said to have attained perfection. Having no more to learn here, they need not take birth any more in this world, and are therefore said to be liberated, to have attained *moksha*.

Perfection in Dharma means perfection in the instruments used in the world-service—perfection in physical capacity, in the powers of the senses, in moral and intellectual attainments. He who, therefore, seeks to attain perfection in Dharma must strive to keep his body, senses and mind in perfect health. The mechanism of thought and action must be kept in perfect trim and order so as to be able to readily carry out the behests of their master—the will of the true Self or Spirit behind. All this implies that physical, intellectual and moral culture which makes for highest efficiency in the whole mechanism through which the true Man, the Spirit within, expresses himself in life and proves his inherent divinity.

DHARMA AS SELF-SACRIFICE

There is yet another feature of Dharma which we need to look at, Dharma as self-sacrifice. It marks a distinct stage in the evolution of the soul prepared for the path of Dharma, and it makes Dharma what it is. This feature may be well brought out by looking at Dharma

as *Yajna*. The concluding verse of the famous Vedic Hymn, the *Purusha-Sukta*, says:

यज्ञेन यद्भूमयजन्त देवास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन् ॥

"Devas performed a sacrifice of Him who was the embodiment of sacrifice: and it was the first Dharma."

"In the beginning there was the Great Primal Being alone; and from out of Him Devas and Rishis brought into being all the objects in the world. Though Himself abiding in the region of immortality, He yet sacrificed Himself for the benefit of the souls who had not yet completed their evolution; and for the sake of these, He and His agents (Devas and Rishis) engaged themselves in the creation of the forms which would help their evolution. Devas and Rishis who are said to have sacrificed the Primal Being were the high Intelligences who had passed through a similar evolution in the previous ages and attained unity with the Divine Lord, having become part and parcel of His being. They were, as it were, His vital organs through which He had to work out His plan. Through them His life-currents flow out as our own life-currents flow through our organs—our mind, senses and physical body. Thus Devas and Rishis helped Prajapati, the Lord of creation, to carry out His plan of the world-evolution, acting as efficient instruments of His will. We have to notice one important feature in this great act of the Lord, which constitutes it a sacrifice. The Great Lord, though in the enjoyment of immortal Bliss, yet engaged in world-activities for the further evolution of the souls who had not yet completed their evolution, or who had only passed through the preliminary stages of it. This is an act of self-sacrifice which appears strange from our point of view; but self-sacrifice makes Dharma what it is. I say it is strange from our point of view, because to the Great Being and His agents who were engaged in the world-evolution this self-sacrifice was quite natural, was no act of effort. It is ever a joy to them thus to labour for others. It is in the very nature of the Spirit to pour himself out, with all his beneficent forces of love and wisdom.

A. M. S.

UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE

UNDER the auspices of Sri Satchidananda Sangha, a Universal Religious Conference was held a second time in the Hindu High School Hall, Triplicane, Madras, on the four successive days, beginning with Friday, 28th December, 1923, under the presidency of His Holiness Swami Sharvanandaji, of Sri Ramakrishna Mission, Madras. The Swami was in the Chair throughout the Conference and delivered the opening and concluding addresses. About thirty lectures were delivered by different gentlemen and one lady (a South Indian Brahmo) on various religious subjects, such as Universal Religion, Buddhism, Vedic Religion, Christianity, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Bahaism, Sikhism, Brahmoism, Mahomedanism, Saiva Siddhanta, Virasaivism, Visishtadvaitism, Vaishnavism, Dvaitism, Samarasa Philosophy, Theosophy, Advaitism, Harmony of Religions. On 1st January afternoon,

an informal Conference of the lecturers was held for exchange of views. The lecturers and the audience were all very earnest and the Conference was a great success.

VEDIC RELIGION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF HINDUISM

The lecture on the Vedic Religion at the above Conference was delivered by the Editor of this magazine. The main purpose of the lecture was to help the Hindu socio-religious reconstruction by furnishing a sound basis for it. With this end in view the lecturer explained the true nature of the sources of Dharma, Vedic Worship, Varnashrama-Dharma and caste system, and Woman's original status which was equal to man's. The readers of the first volume of this magazine are familiar with the lecturer's ideas on these matters. The concluding portion of the lecture ran as follows: This review of the original teachings of the Vedic religion and its developments furnishes a groundwork for our social and religious reconstruction. We have now an idea of the eternal truths and laws of Vedic Religion which underlie our modern institutions. These have to be left untouched while man-made socio-religious institutions which are embodied in the *Sutritis* may be changed as we think best.

As to the worship of the Divine Lord, rituals are not necessary for all. Some can do without them. In the case of those who find them helpful, rituals such as those involving animal slaughter must be altogether discarded. Of the rest only those may be retained that are significant of the underlying truths, the worshipper firmly holding in mind the truths and facts which they symbolise. Some of the very complex ones will have to be simplified by omitting the superfluous parts and those which convey no meaning.

Recognising the existence of the one original Veda treating of the One Path from which all the great religions of the world are derived, we must regard all the existing great religions as roads to the One Path suited to people of different religious temperaments. We should not only be tolerant towards other religions than our own but also try to learn many of the valuable teachings that are special to them, and not found in ours.

As the Vedic Law declares that the real *Brāhmana* is the spiritual aspirant who seeks fellowship with the Divine Lord and dedicates his life to His service, we should regard as *Brāhmanas* all spiritual aspirants who believe and act in the same way, to whatever religion they may belong. We should not hesitate to extend our fellowship to such spiritual aspirants, to whatever caste or race they may belong. It is further the duty of a true *Brāhmana* to spread the truths of the true Vedic Religion where they are not known or are misunderstood, and to demonstrate the catholicity of the Vedic Religion. The immediate duty of the Hindu Reformer consists in enlightening Hindu masses, especially women and the depressed classes, by spreading among them the gospel of the pure Vedic Religion.

TIME-SPIRIT

FROM THE OLD ORDER TO THE NEW

I HAD occasion to write on a previous occasion how the Spirit of the Age moves swiftly forward in these days of rapid transition from the old order of things to the new; how the ideals of the *Bhārata Samāja* are already being endorsed and worked out by the others in other fields of human progress. Here is an endeavour on the part of His Holiness Shrimad Vibudha Priya Tirtha Swami of Shri Admar Mutt, Udipi, South Canara, who, having received instructions from Shri Krishna in a dream when he was in holy Badari, is organising a fund called Shri Krishna Leela Nidhi. And, what are the objects? They are:

1. To establish the Udipi Siddhanta Samvardhini Sabha on a permanent basis;
2. Since some are neglecting their daily prayers on account of its elaborate nature, to compile a concise form of prayer for the followers of different Varnashrama Dharmas in consonance with the Dharma Shāstras and to suit the present time;
3. To try to promote mutual toleration among the different castes and creeds;
4. To impart religious instruction to school-going children;
5. To dissuade Hindu boys from attending schools where the teaching of anti-religious principles is enforced;
6. To encourage and impart necessary education for women;
7. To aid the Udipi Prabodhini Samskrit Mahā Pāthashālā and other Samskrit schools;
8. To emphasise to men of different castes the necessity of following their respective Dharmas and the harms resulting from neglecting them;
9. To teach to the so-called untouchables clean habits and thus try to remove gradually the curse of untouchability;
10. To try for the uplift of the country by educating the masses in the service of God, Garu, Country and Crown;
11. To establish a Dharmashālā at Udipi for the use of the pilgrims;
12. To save cows from being slaughtered;
13. To open Gurukulas to suit all castes;
14. To start an independent press.
15. To carry out as far as possible such other matters as may be adopted in future by a majority in the Managing Committee which will be constituted for the purpose.

Compare the object of the *Bhārata Samāja* No. A (ii) with No. 2 above, and see generally the spirit of broad-minded toleration that pervades the whole scheme, specially in relation to social reform in the status of women and the untouchables and the education of the masses. The signs of the times are so clear, and yet we have amidst us good people who will not see, though their eyes are open, and encourage the pioneers who are willing to face the initial difficulties in the yet unfamiliar undertakings.

Centuries ago Shri Shankaracharya spoke of the divinity even in a *Shvapāka* (Chandāla) and realised the Godhead in him. To-day we are still thinking of removing untouchability! Is it not time to wake up and put our holy injunctions into practice without letting us crushed under the advancing strides of the Time-Spirit? Let us cultivate an intelligent understanding of this Moving Spirit and engage ourselves in active co-operation with it, and become true sons of India and of the world.

S. R. R.

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1. Daily Practice. Price Rs. 2.
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OUR FIRST VOLUME

SPARE copies of the First Volume of the BHARATA DHARMA are available for sale at One Rupee per copy. Postage extra. The Volume contains articles on Upanayana, Marriage, Sandhya, Varna, Yarnashrama-Dharma, and the principles of Hindu Socio-religious reform which the readers of the BHARATA DHARMA will be interested to read. Apply to the Editor, BHARATA DHARMA, Adyar.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bharata Samaja on the 22nd December, 1923, was 255.

Distribution			
Gentlemen ...	257	Hindus by birth ...	251
Ladies ...	29	Christians by birth ...	4
	285		285
Madras Presidency ...	...		256
Mysore Province ...	...		29
Tiruvancore ...	...		8
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Cochin, Pondichery, Rajaputana, U.P., Bengal, Pudukkotta, C.P., Nizam's Dominions, Java and Australia—Each 1 ...	...		10
		Total ...	255

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Other collections	"	18	0 0
	Total	10,905	8 5

EXPENDITURE

Of the total collections, a sum of Rs. 5,163-5-4 was spent up to the end of November, 1923, as per details noted below:

	Rs.	A.	P.
Foundations and masonry work	1,253	2	3
Burnt stone-work for the basement	2,576	4	7
Sinking of a well	125	13	0
Mr. Narahari Sastri's Pay and Travelling allowances from July, 1922 to December, 1923	1,150	13	6
Miscellaneous Expenditure	54	4	0
	Total	5,163	5 4

Strong foundations were laid for the basement. Five courses of burnt stone-work for the Garbhagriha and four courses for the Mantapa to the height of 3 feet 3 inches and 2 feet 9 inches respectively have been built. The basement is expected to be completed in about 15 days and arrangements are being made for the superstructure.

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

Secretary, Bharata Samaja.

22nd December, 1923



BHARATA DHARMA

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SHUDRAS AND VEDIC CULTURE

WHEN studied in the light of the ancient tradition, the problem of socio-religious elevation of Shudras admits of a more satisfactory solution than when regarded merely in relation to the current notions and practices. From such a study we get indeed a very clear conception of their origin and early treatment which will go far to enable us to improve their present socio-religious position.

From the dialogue between Bhṛigu and Bharadvaja quoted from Mahabharata and explained at length in the last number of this magazine (see pp. 6-8) we learn that those whom we call Shudras were originally Brahmanas, Dvijas, who, owing to greed, having swerved from their high standards of spiritual life, were completely engrossed in their bread-earning occupations of manual labour, and violated all regulations of clean living, physical and moral. Such a materialistic turn of mind was not confined to the class of manual labourers; it pervaded the whole community including Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, who equally swerved from the high spiritual standards of life and became engrossed in their bread-earning occupations. But these three classes did not so grossly violate the regulations of external life as Shudras. The Brahmanas especially, as priests and teachers, had to conform to the regulations of outer life and were distinguished so far from the rest in point of physical and ceremonial cleanliness.

From the same dialogue we further learn that the Shudras, who have neglected even the outer forms of spiritual life, should, if they choose, be admitted to the path of Vedic culture and to their

original status as Dvijas, because the Veda is meant for all the four Varnas. What makes a *Dvija* or *Brahmana* is spiritual life, not any particular profession in social life.

As *Dvijas*, all people are spiritually of one class and of equal status though they follow different professions. In the beginning, as said in *Vishnu-purana* (vide the extracts quoted below in this number), all the four Aryan occupational classes were spiritually of one status. And in the Bhagavad-Gita (XVIII, 40-45) it is said—with reference to the four Varnas whose nature-born activities lie on different lines—that a man attains perfection when he rightly pursues his own nature-born occupation. Where spiritual considerations rule the life, people feel their unity, though following different professions which are chosen according to their inner tendencies.

In the early history of our society there were two classes of people, men initiated into the path of real spiritual culture and those who had not yet been initiated. They were respectively known as Brahmanas and Shudras, though this difference did not divide them into two distinct classes or castes barring all social intercourse such as inter-dining and intermarriage. This early aspect of our social life is reflected in the story of Janashruti and Raikva we read in the Chhandogya-Upanishad. Raikva was leading a life of spiritual culture and was therefore spoken of as a Brahmana. He addressed Janashruti—who was a rich and benevolent prince—as Shudra, as having had no regular spiritual culture. The story ends with Raikva's proposal to marry the Prince's daughter and to initiate him into Brahmanavidya, or spiritual culture. So in our early history, the difference in

culture between Brahmanas and Shudras did not place any barrier in the way of their social intercourse such as intermarriage, simply because they were all regarded as one people, as one class.

There was a stage in our history when initiation into Vedic study and culture within the prescribed limits of age was regarded as an essential condition of Brahmanic status. When a member of a Dvija family failed to be initiated in the prescribed time, he was debarred from all social intercourse such as interdining and intermarriage. According to Apastamba, whose rules on the question are quoted elsewhere in this number, he might, if he chose, be initiated into Vedic culture after undergoing a prescribed process of purification, and thereby restored to his original status. A person might belong to a family in which Vedic culture was not known for four or more past generations: such a man was known as the *burial ground*, *spiritual corpse*, that is, as a Shudra, who was so described. If he chose, he might be initiated into a partial Vedic culture, after a purificatory process of twelve years, and full Vedic culture could be gained only by his son. It should be borne in mind that this procedure of readmission of the so-called Shudras to Vedic culture belongs to a period when spiritual culture took a purely ceremonial turn and consisted largely in maintaining a kind of physical purity and in the observing of austerities accompanied by Vedic chants and magical rites. This perhaps represents the latest stage of our history when the so-called Shudras were admitted to Vedic culture and restored to their original status as Dvijas.

Between the two extremes of immediate admission of Shudras to Vedic culture and of admission preceded by twelve years of purification, there is an intervening stage worthy of notice. In the chapter on Upanayana the *Shatapatha-Brahmana* lays down the rule that a Brahmana candidate should be taught the Vedic Mantra at once, while in the case of others a purificatory process extending over a few days or months, but never exceeding a year, should be demanded as a preliminary condition. This gives us to understand that Shudras such as those referred to by Apastamba would not be subjected to a process of purification extending beyond a year.

Thus our study of the subject in its historical development reveals the fact that when spiritual life is more real, the division between Brahmanas and Shudras is less emphasised and the conditions of admission of Shudras to the Vedic spiritual culture are intelligible. As spiritual life became more and more identified with ceremonies and rituals mechanically gone through, the process of admission of Shudras to Vedic culture became very stringent and almost unintelligible. The culminating point of this development was reached when Shudras were unconditionally excluded from Vedic culture, as is the case at present.

The matter is complicated by the fact that there are Aryan Shudras and Non-Aryan Shudras. The

Shudras proper, Shudras strictly so-called, are Non-Aryan because they are really *Shudra* or *Kshudra*, low in racial evolution. They lead a physically unclean life, without any moral culture, subsisting by manual labour of a low grade. Such people whom the early Aryans found around them were called Shudras by them. They were not fit for any spiritual culture. The epithets 'burning grounds' and 'corpses' were applied to them because spirit was dead in them and they were 'walking corpses'. An Aryan was called a Shudra and these epithets were applied to him when he swerved from the path of spiritual culture; but he was re-admitted to the Vedic culture without much ado. Such a delinquent Aryan was called a Shudra because he did not observe the rules of spiritual life. When he began to lead a spiritual life, he was no longer a Shudra. It is to these Aryan Shudras that the rules of admission to Vedic culture as laid down in the Sacred Laws refer. And these rules varied, as we have seen, from time to time according to the prevailing conception of spiritual life.

The different classes of people spoken of as Shudras are as follows:

I. *Non-Aryan*: These were the low class of people whom the Aryans found around them, subsisting by manual labour, physically unclean, possessing no moral or intellectual culture of any kind, and therefore unfit for spiritual culture. They were Shudras strictly so-called, being *Kshudra*, low in civilisation.

II. *Aryan*:

(1) One of the four Aryan Varnas or classes of spiritual aspirants was engaged in manual occupations and was therefore called *Shudra*. In spiritual culture these Shudras were of equal status with the other Varnas, as witness the ideals set forth in *Vishnu-Purana* and the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

(2) Persons who were not yet initiated into spiritual culture though following the rules of civilised life in society were called Shudras as distinguished from those who were leading a spiritual life and were called Brahmanas. But such Shudras and Brahmanas were not regarded as two distinct classes of people. There were no barriers in social intercourse between them; and these Shudras were readily admitted to Vedic culture.

(3) The members of families in which Vedic culture was not known for four or more generations were called Shudras. They were admitted to Vedic culture after undergoing a process of purification.

The rules regarding admission of Shudras to Vedic culture seem to apply to the Aryan Shudras who were not really Shudras, but who were called Shudras only on account of their profession or because of their neglect of spiritual life. Certainly the Aryans have the advantage of a peculiarly fine physical and psychical organism which makes it possible for them to acquire the physical and

psychical culture of the kind which is necessary for the Vedic spiritual culture. The rules laid down in our Sacred Laws for the admission of Shudras to Vedic culture at different periods of our history indicate the conditions on which the Aryan Shudras of the present day may be admitted to Vedic culture. Those conditions are embodied in the rules for admission of members into the Bharata Samaja which has thrown open the Vedic culture to all on fulfilment of those conditions. Purity of food and physical cleanliness are insisted on, as well as a high morality and an intellectual recognition of certain fundamental truths of Vedic Religion. Where the prescribed conditions are fulfilled, even the racial differences may perhaps count for nothing.

READMISSION TO VEDIC CULTURE FROM THE ĀPASTAMBA-DHARMA-SŪTRA

(I, i, 28—I, ii, 10)

AFTER stating that the time for Upanayana (initiation into Vedic study) does not elapse till 16 years of age in the case of a Brahmana, till 22 in the case of a Kshatriya, and till 24 in the case of a Vaisya—the boy being initiated into the Vedic study whenever before these ages he observe the prescribed rules of discipline—Apastamba proceeds to deal with defaulters. They are of three grades:

अतिक्रान्ते सावित्र्याः कालं ऋतुं त्रैविद्यकं ब्रह्मचर्यं चरेत् ॥
अथोपनयनम् ॥ ततः संवत्सरमुदकोपस्पर्शनम् ॥ अथाध्याप्यः ॥
अथ यस्य पिता पितामह इत्यनुपेतौ स्यातां ते ब्रह्महंसस्तुताः ॥
तेषामभ्यागमनं भोजनं विवाहमिति च वर्जयेत् ॥ तेषामिच्छतां
प्रायश्चित्तम् ॥ यथा प्रथमेऽतिक्रमः ऋतुरेव संवत्सरः ॥ अथोपनयनं
तत उदकोपस्पर्शनम् ॥ प्रतिपूर्वसंस्काराय संवत्सरान् यावन्तोऽ-
नुपेताः स्युः ॥ सप्तभिः पावमानीभिर्यदन्ति यच्च दूरक इत्येता-
मिष्युः पवित्रेण सामपवित्रेणाङ्गिरसेनेति ॥ अपि वा न्याहृतीभिरिव ॥
अथाध्याप्यः ॥

अथ यस्य प्रपितामहादि नानुस्मर्यत उपनयनं ते इमं शानसं-
स्तुताः ॥ तेषामभ्यागमनं भोजनं विवाहमिति वर्जयेत् तेषामिच्छतां
प्रायश्चित्तं द्वादशवर्षाणि त्रैविद्यकं ब्रह्मचर्यं चरेदथोपनयनं तत
उदकोपस्पर्शनं पावमान्यादिभिः ॥ अथ गृहमेधोपदेशनम् ॥
नाध्यापनम् ॥ ततो यो निवर्तते तस्य संस्कारो यथा प्रथमेऽति-
क्रमे ॥ तत ऊर्ध्वं प्रकृतिवत् ॥

(1) "If the proper time for Savitri has elapsed the pupil shall observe for two months the *Brahmacharya* (spiritual or ceremonial life) of the student of the triple Veda. Then follows initiation; then water-bath for a year; and then he may be taught the Veda.

(2) "And if the candidate be one whose father and grandfather also were both uninitiated—such candidates are known as *Brahmahans*, slayers of Brahman (Spirit) or Brahmana. Nobody shall visit them, dine or marry with them. If they choose expiation, here it is: Instead of two months as in the case of the first delinquent, a year's *Brahmacharya* shall be observed. Then *Upanayana* (initiation) follows and then waterbaths. Reckoning each uninitiated person, the bath shall be for as many years as there were uninitiated ancestors. The bath shall be accompanied by the chanting of mantras (stated in the text). Then he shall be taught the Veda.

(3) "If the delinquent be one whose ancestors beginning with the great grandfather are not known to have been initiated into the Vedic study—such are called *Shmashanas* (burning grounds). Intercourse with them, eating and marrying with them should be avoided. If they wish, the expiation is as follows: For twelve years such a man shall observe the *Brahmacharya* prescribed for a student of the triple Veda. Then follows initiation (*Upanayana*); then water-bath with the chanting of mantras; then he may be taught the householder's rituals, but not the whole Veda. His son shall be admitted to Vedic sacrament as in the case of the first delinquent. Thenceforward as in the regular course."

Here *Shmashana* means *Shudra*. The epithets *Shmashana* (burning ground) and *Shava* (corpse) are specially applied to Shudras in the *Vasishtha-Dharma-Sastra* (XVIII, 9—15)—

श्रद्धाणां पारशवः ॥ पारशवमेव जीयन्नेव शवो भवतीत्याहुः ॥
एके वा एतच्छमशानं ये श्रद्धाः ॥ तस्माच्छ्रद्धसमीपे नोध्येतव्यम् ॥
अथापि यमगीतान् श्लोकानुदाहरन्ति ।

श्मशानमेतत्प्रत्यक्षं ये श्रद्धाः पापचारिणः ।
तस्माच्छ्रद्धसमीपे तु नाध्येतव्यं कदाचन ॥
न श्रद्धाय मति दद्यान्नोच्छिद्ये न हविष्कृतम् ।
न चास्योपदिशेद्गर्भं न चास्य व्रतमादिशेत् ॥
यथास्योपदिशेद्गर्भं यथास्य व्रतमादिशेत् ।
सोऽसंवृतं तमो घोरं सह तेन प्रपद्यत इति ॥

"The offspring of the Shudra is called *Parashava*. They say he is so-called because he is a corpse (*shava*) though alive. Others say that the Shudras are verily *Shmashana* (burning ground) and that therefore no Veda should be chanted near the Shudra. They quote also the verses sung by Yama to this effect.

"The Shudras who are of sinful life are burning grounds forsooth. Therefore the Veda should never be chanted near the Shudra.

"To a Shudra no knowledge shall be given, no remnant of food, nor part of offerings. No Dharma shall be taught to him, nor any penance.

"If any teaches him Dharma or any penance, he shall go to the region of fierce darkness along with the one taught."

SPIRITUAL EQUALITY OF THE FOUR VARNAS

यज्ञनिष्पत्तये सर्वमेतद्ब्रह्मा चकार वै ।
चातुर्वर्ण्यं महाभाग यज्ञसाधनमुत्तमम् ॥
यज्ञैताप्यायिता देवा बृष्टवृत्सर्गेण ताः प्रजाः ।
आप्याययन्ते धर्मज्ञ यज्ञाः कर्त्तव्याणहेतवः ॥
निष्पाद्यन्ते नरैस्त्वैस्तु स्वधर्माभिरतैस्सदा ।
विशुद्धाचरणोपेतैस्सद्विस्तन्मार्गगमिभिः ॥
स्वर्गापवर्गौ मानुष्यात्प्राप्नुवन्ति महामुने ।
यथाऽभिरुचिं स्थानं तथान्ति मनुजा द्विज ॥
प्रजास्ता ब्रह्मणा सृष्टाश्चातुर्वर्ण्यव्यवस्थिताः ।
सम्यक्च्छास्त्रासमाचारप्रवणा मुनिसत्तम ॥
यथेच्छावासनिरतास्सर्वबाधाविवर्जिताः ।
शुद्धान्तःकर्णाश्शुद्धास्सर्वानुष्ठाननिमलाः ॥
शुद्धे च तासां मनसि शुद्धेऽन्तस्संस्थिते हरो ।
शुद्धान् प्रपश्यन्ति विष्णवाख्यं येन तत्पदम् ॥

Brahmā formed this *Chaturvarṇya* (the fourfold institution of people) for the accomplishment of Yajna; it is most conducive to Yajna. Nourished by Yajnas, the Devas nourish mankind by discharging rain. Yajnas, the causes of prosperity, were constantly performed by the people, always righteous and devoted to their respective duties, pure in their deeds, walking in the right path. Men departing from the world of men, went to Svarga and Moksha or to whatever place they liked. These people, created by Brahman, and divided into four Varnas, were strongly inclined to faith and righteousness, dwelling where they liked, free from all sufferings, pure in heart, themselves pure, and spotless in all observances. Their mind being pure, Hari dwelt within in all His purity; and then they saw the Para Knowledge, that Goal which is called Vishnu.—(*Vishnu Purāna*, I, vi, 7-18.)

ब्राह्मणाः क्षत्रिया वैश्याः शूद्राश्च कृतलक्षणाः ।
कृते युगे समभवन् स्वकर्मेनिताः प्रजाः ॥
समाश्रयं समाचारं समज्ञानं च केवलम् ।
तदा हि समकर्माणो वर्णा धर्मान्वाप्नुवन् ॥
एकदेवस्ययुक्ता एकमन्त्रविधित्रियाः ।
पृथग्धर्मास्त्वैकवेदा धर्ममेकमनुव्रताः ॥
चातुराश्रम्ययुक्तेन कर्मणा कांक्ष्योमिता ।
अकामफलसंयोगात् प्राप्नुवन्ति परां गतिम् ॥
आत्मयोगसमायुक्तो धर्मोऽयं कृतलक्षणः ॥

Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shūdras were perfect in Kṛita-Yuga, the people being devoted to their respective works. They were quite alike in the object of their trust, in their observances and in their knowledge. At the period the Varnas, alike in their rites, resorted to the Dharmas. They were unceasingly devoted, all to one Deity, and used *one mantra*, one mode, and one ritual. Though they had different duties, they all followed one Veda, and one Dharma. By works done

in time according to the four Āshramas, by dissociation from the fruits, they attained the Supreme Goal. Dharma, thus associated with communion with the Ātman, is the mark of the Kṛita-Yuga. (*Vana-Parva*, Adhy. 149, verses 18-23.)

VEDIC RELIGION AND HINDU REFORM

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[A lecture delivered on 28th December, 1923, at the Universal Religious Conference held in Madras.]

PART I—SOURCES OF LAW

Hindu Reform

1. New forces are at work everywhere both in the East and in the West and have brought about a change in the outlook of the thoughtful people everywhere. The leaders of society in all civilised countries are seeking to reconstruct their institutions on a basis which, while preserving the gains of the older civilisation that is passing away, will make for further progress in the future. India has not escaped the onslaught of these new forces. Having come in contact with alien civilisations of various kinds, the leaders of Indian society are as it were compelled to review their existing religious and social institutions with a view to remodelling them on a new basis or on the old basis adapted to the new conditions of life. As the inheritors of an immemorial socio-religious system which has passed through so many vicissitudes and has stood the test of time, it is natural for the Indians, for the Hindus especially, to try and find out how far that system may be remodelled on the basis of the eternal principles underlying it so as to make for further progress.

Knowledge of True Vedic Religion Necessary

2. Hinduism claims the Veda for its basis and is known as Vedic Religion, *Vaidika Dharma*. We Hindus, who wish to remodel our socio-religious institutions on the basis of Vedic teaching, should therefore have a firm grasp of the basic principles of Vedic Religion, which is to be our guiding star. It is certainly not possible in the short time now at my disposal to formulate all these principles exhaustively and review them in all their bearings on our socio-religious system. All I propose to do here is only to treat of those fundamental principles which bear upon the solution of the most insistent of our problems of the day: such as the sources of our law, true worship, sacraments, Varnāshrama-Dharma, and the status of woman.

Study of Ancient Tradition Necessary

3. The sources of Hindu Dharma are called *Shāstras*, scriptures which teach the highest spiritual truths and laws of spiritual progress. Of these the Veda is regarded of supreme authority as embodying absolute truths and unalterable laws of spiritual progress as realised by highest Rishis and Devas. It is said that the true scope and value of the Vedic teaching can be made out only when it is studied in the light of the Sacred Tradition embodied in Itihāsa and Purāna:

इतिहासपुराणस्यो वेदं सुस्पृहयेत् ।

अल्पश्रुताद्विभेदेषु मासयं प्रतर्ष्यति ॥

"Veda should be supplemented by Itihāsa and Purāna. The Veda is afraid of a man of little learning lest he may mislead it."

Primary and Derivative Vedas

4. According to this Sacred Tradition, there is one Veda which is eternal, which is the source of all the great religions in the world. The Veda we now have is not that original Veda which is strictly so called. It is only a secondary Veda, derived from the One Primary, or Root-Veda, and has no more claim to the title 'Veda' than the original scriptures of any other great religion in the world. Unlike the Primary Veda which is impersonal, eternal, unalterable and incorruptible, this derivative Veda is said to have been promulgated by a high personage called *Apāntaratama*. It has a history of its own; and in its transmission through generations of its custodians, it is said to have undergone many changes, by additions, omissions and modifications and to have become very corrupt in the course of ages.

Purpose of Derivative Vedas

5. While the teaching of the One Root-Veda can be comprehended and practised by those alone who are quite pure in mind and heart, the religion of the derivative Veda is intended for those who are not quite so pure in mind and heart, for such of the devotees especially as are of active temperament. It enables them to attain purification, to rise gradually above the limitations in their active power of creation, to realise their oneness first with the Supreme Lord in His creative aspect and ultimately with the One Reality that lies at the basis of all manifestation. This secondary Vedic Religion may be called Karma-Yoga which leads the devotee through several stages to a perception of the absolute oneness of his true self with the Divine Lord.

Five Subsidiary Paths

6. Four other paths of spiritual culture are mentioned as intended for the devotees of other temperaments. Sāṅkhya and Yoga, which are two aspects of Jñāna-Yoga, are the two paths intended for the devotees of philosophical and meditative temperaments respectively; while Pancharātra (Vaishnava) and Pashupata (Shaiva) paths are intended for the aspirants of Bhakti or devotional temperament, one characterised by *prema*, love or attachment, the other by *vairāgya*, or detachment. All these five paths of culture are said to be subsidiary paths leading the devotees in due course through purification and illumination to the one Path of the Primary Veda.

Primary Veda universally Recognised

7. The Primary Veda which treats of the One Path of undefiled Dharma is looked up to by all the other great religions of the world (such as Islam) as their fountain source. When Buddhism, Jainism and other so-called non-Vedic religions repudiate the Veda, they refer to the derivative Veda which is current among the Hindus under the name, but not to the original root-Veda which is the fountain source of all the great religions; and which they all alike recognise, some perhaps more explicitly than others. A comprehension of this truth will surely breed a sense of brotherhood among the followers of different religions, as all alike derived from the same source and leading their followers to one common goal, the One Path of pure and undefiled Dharma. It is only when this comprehension is attained that the follower of

any particular religion is prepared to learn new truths, or new aspects of the old truths, taught by other religions. Thus enriched, his spiritual life becomes fuller and even approaches the One Path which makes for an all-round perfection.

Primary Dharma Embodied in the Bhagavad-Gita

8. The One Primary Veda is not, our Ancient Tradition says, accessible to the ordinary people in the world. It is said to be in the custody of the great hierarchy of the mighty Devas and Rishis who are the guardians of the world. And it is accessible to those only who have attained a high degree of purity in mind and heart. The Sacred Tradition, however, tells us that the essential truths of this One Veda so far as can be grasped by the people of ordinary enlightenment are outlined in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which is consequently and rightly regarded by the Hindus as the highest of their Scriptures. There, in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the path of spiritual culture in its various aspects is reviewed in the light of the pure and true Vedic Dharma, and some of the serious misconceptions of the current systems are pointed out and corrected. Indeed the teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* may be taken at present as the standard by which to test the soundness and efficacy of the existing socio-religious institutions.

Hinduism, Comprehensive and Restricted

9. Hinduism may be understood in a comprehensive or a restricted sense. In its comprehensive sense it embraces all the religious systems of Indian origin, including even Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. In its restricted sense, it is applicable to that religion which is intimately associated with *Varnāshrama-Dharma* and the caste system of the present day. It has for its basis the derivative Vedas we now call by that name and the allied scriptures such as *Dharmashāstras*, *Itihāsas* and *Purānas*. This is the dominant religion of India and has the largest following in the country. It is this path of spiritual culture which has been worked out through an elaborate system of socio-religious institutions. While the other systems have had mainly to deal with thoughts and emotions and religious worship, the Vedic system of culture lays down also regulations for guiding the social active life of the people. As the religion of the dominant section of the people it has largely influenced the other systems also which, though in theory repudiating the *Varnāshrama-Dharma* and the caste system, have yet succumbed in practice to the social forces of *Varnāshrama-Dharma* and the caste system uncongenial to their spirit; so that the social system of the Hindus as a whole may be said to rest on the basis of *Varnāshrama-Dharma*.

Sources of Hinduism

10. The specific Hindu system of spiritual culture associated with *Varnāshrama-Dharma* is based on the teaching of the derivative Veda and the allied scriptures known as *Dharma-Shāstras*. The Sacred Tradition tells us that the original teaching of this Veda given to our race by the Rishis and of the *Dharma-shāstra* given by the Manu have undergone many changes in the long lapse of time owing to the ever changing environments and mentality of the people. It is said that owing to the changes made since then by less enlightened and less scrupulous custodians of rival schools, these scriptures have on the whole become very corrupt—so corrupt that it is difficult to distinguish the genuine from the spurious

teaching except by profound thinking and meditation. Indeed these scriptures, as they have come down to us, bear the stamp of such corruption. And it is these corrupt texts which govern the Varnāshrama-Dharma in its present form. To understand therefore this system in its purity we have to discriminate its basic principles which are of eternal application from the man-made rules which are only of temporary use.

Shruti defined

11. In this discrimination it will be of some help to distinguish the true scope of the Veda and the Dharma-Shāstras, as the designations *Shruti* and *Smriti* applied to them respectively indicate. The Veda as *Shruti* is meant to teach such truths and laws as cannot be made out by man with his present limited powers of mind. He has to learn them by *Shruti*, by *Shravana*, by hearing from highly developed beings such as Rishis and to accept them without question. It is to the Veda that one should look up for a knowledge of the ultimate realities, laws of spiritual progress, the nature of Devas and the method of invoking them. Such truths and laws as are taught in the derivative Veda are comparatively eternal, holding good for the whole cycle.

Smriti defined

12. On the other hand, the Dharma-Shāstras or *Smritis* embody the scientific and philosophic truths made out by man with his ordinary powers of mind, and the rules of life devised by himself to work out the Vedic law of spiritual progress in every day life. The man-made rules of life are further distinguished as *Sāmāyachārika-Dharma*, rules relating to social life based on human convention set up by *Parishads* or local councils of social leaders. The truths and laws thus made out by man himself are subject to changes along with the growth and development of his intellect and conscience. What changes have taken place and how they have come about can be made out by a study of the *Smritis* and customs of the different periods of our history in the light of our Sacred Tradition embodied in the *Itihāsas*, *Purānas* and other such writings. The same study will also enable us to make out what changes are necessary at present and in the near future. The scope of the Veda and the Dharma-Shāstra being thus distinguished, it will be easy to distinguish the genuine from the spurious elements in the subject-matter of the Vedas that have come down to us.

Itihāsa and Purāna defined

13. It has also to be stated here that the true scope of *Purānas* and *Itihāsas* is an account of the progress of Dharma through the different stages of our history, the *Purānas* dealing with the history from earliest times down to the modern period, while the *Itihāsas* tell us how Dharma worked at a certain particular period, or in a particular family, or in the life of a particular person. The scripture of each kind is of primary authority in matters falling within its legitimate scope, but of secondary or even doubtful authority in matters it may treat of outside its proper scope.

PART II—THE PATH OF KARMA

The Two Sections of Karma and Vidya

14. The scriptures of the modern Hinduism of Varnāshrama-Dharma comprise the Vedic Texts in four sections,—*Samhitā*, *Brāhmana*, *Āraṇyaka* and *Upanishads*,

—Dharma-Shāstras, *Itihāsa* and *Purāna*. According to their subject-matter, the Vedic texts may be divided into the two sections of Karma and Vidya. The Karma section embraces *Mantras* and *Brāhmanas* ordinarily so called: *Mantra* meaning prayers and formulas relating to sacrificial rituals, and *Brāhmana* meaning dogmatic explanations of the mantras. The Vidya section consists mainly of the *Upanishads* and treats of *Upāsana* or contemplation and *Jñāna* or philosophy. The Vidya section in the present Veda stands apart by itself. It remained a secret teaching for a long time and was embodied in the published Vedas at a comparatively recent date. The Vedas of Shri Krishna's day must have consisted of the ritualistic section only, as they were condemned as *त्रैलोक्यविषयाः* applicable to men of mixed motives,—a description hardly applicable to *Upanishads*. The Dharma-Shāstras known as *Smritis* are subsidiary rules made by men for regulating the observance of Vedic Dharma in actual life according to the social condition of the people—these rules constituting what is known as Varnāshrama-Dharma. It is only a very careful study of these scriptures that will enable us to distinguish the original teachings from the later developments of the secondary Vedic Religion.

Karma-Yoga includes Vidya

15. The Karma-Yoga, the path of spiritual culture laid down by even the secondary Vedic religion, was originally not quite so purely ritualistic as we find it developed in the modern Vedas and *Smritis*. The original Karma-Yoga of Yajña, the Vedic Dharma in its original form, was a life of active service visibly conducive to the welfare of humanity and the whole sentient existence. The real Karma-Yogin is one who has taken Yāga-dikshā, a vow of service. He seeks to realise the true nature of his own Self as one with the Divine Lord, by acting with Him for the progress of the whole creation, especially the sentient existence. He acts in the firm faith that the Self in all is one with the Supreme Being.

Varna means Devotion to Brahman

16. This seeking of fellowship with the Divine Lord is the original meaning of *Varna* which is derived from *Vr*=to seek. The highest formula of Yāga-dikshā runs as follows:

विश्वो देवस्य नेतुमर्तो वृत्तं सख्यम् ।

विश्वो राय इष्टयति युजं कर्मात् युयसे ॥

"Let every mortal seek the fellowship of the Divine Lord. Every one wants power; let him seek to increase the Divine glory." (*Vaj. Samhitā*.)

The word *Varna* thus means spiritual devotion, like its cognate *Vrata*. In some Vedic passages—such as "Let the wife of the sacrificer go forth and be seated on the seat with *Varna* (spiritual devotion)"—and in the word *Varnin* (= *Brāhmachārin*) the word *Varna* can have no other sense. So then in its original sense *Varna-Dharma* is the life of spiritual devotion led by the seekers of union with the Divine Lord.

True Brahmanahood

17. It is such a seeker of fellowship with the Divine Lord who is said to be a *Brāhmana* in reality. The Veda says that he who takes Yāga-dikshā, a vow of Divine Service, is alone a true *Brāhmana*, irrespective of his

caste. So that in the eye of Vedic Religion a true *Brāhmana* is the spiritual aspirant who consciously and whole-heartedly dedicates all his activity to the service of the Divine Lord and works for the welfare of God's creation. Such a *Brāhmana* may be found of any nation or community, of any colour, caste or sex.

Brāhmana's Life—Varna-Dharma

18. A true *Brāhmana's* life opens with a life of service to the community. When a person becomes a *Brāhmana* by Yāga-dikshā, by taking a vow of service, three lines of duty to the community lie before him. The Veda says: "A *Brāhmana*, as soon as one becomes such by Yāga-dikshā, has to discharge what are known as the three debts, debts due to Pitris, Devas and Rishis." These three groups of superhuman Intelligences are the Supreme Lord's Agents through whom the world-progress is carried on. As the *Brāhmana* owes his present status to Their work, he has become indebted to Them. He owes his present physical organism to the age-long action of Pitris and is therefore indebted to Them. Similarly he is indebted to the Devas for his psychic vigour and to the Rishis for his spiritual awakening. According to Vedas no spiritual aspirant can be released from his obligations in this world till he has discharged these three debts. The *Brāhmana* is free from debts when he has co-operated in the work of the three Divine Agencies; that is to say, when he has reared a virile and noble offspring; when he has mastered the higher forces in nature and operated upon them for the growth of the psychic organism of sentient beings, and when he has contributed his share to the spiritual awakening and culture of the community. When he has thus discharged these debts to the requisite degree of perfection, then alone he may think of liberation from service in this world, and pass on to the higher world beyond. If he would try to pass beyond without discharging the three debts, he will have a fall even from his present status as declared in the *Mann-Smriti*:

ऋणानि त्रीण्यापाकृत्य मनो मोक्षे निवेशयेत् ।

अनपाकृत्य मोक्षं तु सेवमानो ब्रजत्ययः ॥

"After discharging the three debts, let a man turn his thought to liberation. If he works for liberation without discharging them, he falls down."

The discharge of this triple duty constitutes the *Brāhmana's* Dharma, the *Varna-Dharma* in its original sense.

PART III—DIVISION OF VARNA

Differentiation according to three debts

19. It will be readily seen that the demands of this triple line of service vary with the social condition of the community in which the spiritual aspirant has to work. So long as the needs of the society are simple a simultaneous discharge of the triple duty may be possible for each individual. As the social organism develops and its needs become varied and more and more complex the individual members find themselves unequal to a simultaneous discharge of all the functions. Then takes place the division of labour, and each individual is found better equipped for the discharge of one of the several social functions in special than for the others. So in a developed state of society there would be men and women each of whom is by nature and culture found better fitted and equipped for one function than for any other. At a certain stage of development men and women in a community may be

divided according to their natural tendencies and aptitudes into four Varnas, according as they are qualified for work on the line of Pitris, or of Devas, or of Rishis, or on a line which is purely spiritual unconnected with the affairs of this world. Such is the fourfold division of *Varna* looked at from the side of our duties to the superhuman Intelligences.

Differentiation according to Occupations

20. The later fourfold division of *Varna* as *Brāhmanas*, etc., rests on the same principle of variation of individuals in natural tendencies and aptitudes with reference to their social functions as laid down in *Bhagavad-Gītā*. But the *Varna-Dharma* in essence looked at from either point of view consists in devoting to the service of the Divine Lord one's whole active life for which one is fitted by one's temperament and culture. It may, however, be noted that the conception of the triple debt is based on a more comprehensive view of man's relation to the Supreme Lord and his duty to society.

One Varna

21. Whether the community is of one *Varna* or of many *Varnas*, the spiritual aspirant's *Varna-Dharma* is in essence the same, namely, the dedication of one's active life to the service of the Divine Lord. This is the spiritual side of *Varna-Dharma*. This attitude of dedication being the same in all spiritual aspirants, they are all of one *Varna* and their division into different *Varnas* rests on variation in their capacities for different social functions. When the spiritual side predominates and the worldly concerns occupy a subordinate place the people would regard themselves as one *Varna*. When on the other hand worldly interests predominate they will consider themselves divided into classes and castes. So says *Bhrigu* to *Bharadvāja*:

"There is no distinction among *Varnas*. This whole world is made up of *Brāhmanas*. People created originally as *Brāhmanas* became different *Varnas* by occupations."

(*Mahābhārata*.)

It is thus clear that in its original sense *Varna-Dharma* has no reference to the colour of the skin and has therefore nothing to do with the race or the caste of a person.

Varna and Colour

22. It may be asked how *Varna* which originally meant spiritual devotion has come to mean the colour of the skin. The question may be answered thus. Spiritual devotion (*Varna*) manifests itself as spiritual lustre (*Brāhmarachas*) in the devotee's countenance. This lustre shines the same in all spiritual aspirants whatever be the colour of the skin. In the absence of spiritual devotion only the colour of the skin is visible in the place of spiritual lustre. So when spiritual devotion is submerged or entirely absent in a people, only colour of the skin is found in the place of *Varna* or spiritual lustre, so that such people divide themselves into several groups according to the different colours of the body which vary according to their social occupations or racial admixture. The *Mahābhārata* says that when the *Āryans* who were originally of one *Varna* neglected their spiritual concerns and became engrossed in their professional activities as *Brāhmanas*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas*, and *Shūdras*, they developed different colours of skin. As the common bond of spiritual devotion became looser and looser the sense of solidarity and unity grew weaker and weaker.

Varna-Dharma not to be limited by Caste-distinctions

23. Because the Varna-Dharma of true Vedic religion is unaffected by the distinctions of race, colour, caste and sex, therefore if we would serve the interests of true Vedic Religion we should try to remove all obstacles to its wide-spread extension caused by those distinctions. Many are the obstacles in the way of true Hinduism which are now made to rest on the distinctions of colour and sex; and the sooner those obstacles are removed the better. A proper understanding of the fundamental truths of Vedic Religion will certainly help us in improving our inter-caste and inter-racial relations.

(To be continued)

A QUERY

MR. S. SHIVAPADASUNDARAM, B.A., Parameshvara College, Jaffna, writes on 4th December, 1923, as follows:

DEAR SIR,—I read in your esteemed journal the significance of the marriage ceremony. I shall be very much obliged if you will kindly let me know with shāstric authority the meaning of the bridegroom laying a foot of the bride on a stone after taking the seven steps and what your authority is for saying that the seven steps symbolise the seven activities of married life. I shall be very grateful if you will also let me know why Navadhanya are made to sprout before many ceremonies and why some tree is planted in the Vivāha Mandapam.

ANSWER

The Vedic interpreters have a dictum that the *mantra* accompanying an act of ritual indicates the nature of the act to be done. When the bridegroom lays the bride's foot on the stone he utters the *mantra* which means:

"Tread thou this stone. Like the stone be thou firm. Brave thou thy enemies and subdue thy assailants."

So the act means that the bride is asked, and has resolved, to be firm in her love for the husband, in her devotion to the Divine Lord, and in her vow of spiritual life, and to fight and overcome all obstacles in the way. The same firmness is expected of a pupil by his teacher in the course of Upanayana, where the same *mantra* is addressed by the teacher to the pupil.

In pursuance of the same dictum, the meaning of the seven steps is made out from the *mantra* accompanying the act. The *mantra* associates a distinct purpose with each step and says that the seven steps make the couple perfect friends, united in all their purposeful acts, united in perfect love, united in mind and heart, united in all their spiritual aspirations. The lexicographer Amara says "friendship should embrace seven *padas*" (*sakhyaṁ sapta-pādinam syāt*). Seven steps alone cannot by themselves lead to friendship. According to Amara *pad* also means *vyavasita*, life-concern; so that typical friendship is perfect union in the seven life-activities and is symbolised by the bride-groom taking seven steps with the bride.

As regards the sprouting of Navadhanya, it is a symbolic act meaning that the new step taken in life should grow and fructify like the grains. Every fresh step should be taken when Nature's life is in growth. The Dharma-Shāstras ordain that the Vedic study should begin every year with the season when plant-life grows and flourishes.

The planting of the tree in the marriage pavilion may have the same meaning. It is not, however, a universal custom. I am not aware of any such act in connection with the marriage ceremonies as laid down in the Grihya-Sūtras.

A. M. S.

BHARATA SAMAJA NOTICE

The attention of the members of the Bhārata Samāja is invited to Rule II (1) and to the notification published in the Bhārata Dharma for January-February, 1923 on the subject of Associate Members.

Members qualified under the Rule are once more requested to enroll themselves as Associate members and thus become qualified to take part in the administration of the Samāja.

Printed forms of application can be had from the undersigned.

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bhārata Samāja on the 20th February, 1924, was 288.

TEMPLE FUND

The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	RS.	A.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged		10,905	8	5
Srimati Yogambal	Trivandram	5	0	0
Shri Darbari Vajsurwallah	Adyar	10	0	0
Mr. A. S. Rajagopala Iyengar	Bhimavaram	25	0	0
Lady Emily Lutvans	Adyar	15	0	0
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T. P. K. Ram Mudaliar	"	5	0	0
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" V. R. Kowsik	Sivasamudram	5	0	0
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" N. Rama Rao	"	5	0	0
" A. S. Rajagopala Iyengar	Bhimavaram	25	0	0
Donations less than Rs. 5	"	9	0	0
Total		11,304	8	5

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary, Bhārata Samāja.

20th February, 1924

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

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THE OUTCASTE PROBLEM

THE question of the elevation of the Hindu outcastes—or, in other words, the removal of their untouchability—is one of the most vexed questions of the day, and the social as well as the political reformer finds it a hard problem for solution. But, when studied in the light of the ancient Hindu tradition, which deals with the origin and status of these depressed classes and relates to a period when the whole community was still in a plastic condition admitting of an easy adjustment of dislocated parts of the social organism, the problem seems to admit of some satisfactory solution.

The Mahabharata throws some light as to the origin of the Hindu outcastes. In the dialogue between Bhṛigu and Bharadvaja (Vide ante, p. 7), after stating how the four Varnas arose out of the original one Varna of *Dvijas* or Brahmanas, Bhṛigu proceeds to say:

"There are some other *Dvijas* who have lost all touch with the tradition of the one original spiritual community. Of them there are several classes settled here and there, known as Pisachas, Rakshasas, Pretas, and Mlechhas of various classes; they are lost to all knowledge, sacred and profane, and they act as they please."

This gives us to understand that the Hindu outcastes of various classes now known as Chandalas, Pariahs, etc., were all originally Aryans,—*Dvijas*, Brahmanas,—who by continued neglect of spiritual culture were put out of the main community and debarred from all social intercourse with it.

When first put out of the main community the delinquents were known as *Vratyas*, i.e., those who could be associated with only after purification. Of these the Manusmṛiti says:

"After those periods, men of these three castes who have not received the sacrament at the proper time become *Vratyas* (outcastes); excluded from the *Savitri* (Initiation) and despised by the Aryan. With such men, if they have not been purified according to the rule, let no Brahmana ever, even in times of distress, form a connection either through the Veda or by marriage." (II, 39-40.)

By continuing to remain outside the pale of the Aryan or Brahmanic culture for a long time without purification the *Vratyas* became irreligious and altogether so degraded as to give up all habits of civilised life, agricultural and commercial, and took to nomadic ways:

हीना वा एते हीयन्ते ये वात्स्या प्रवसन्ति न हि ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति
न कृषिं न वणिज्वाप्सु ॥

These who take to the ways of *Vratyas* become degraded. They know no religious life, no agriculture, no commercial life. (*Tandya Brahmana*, 17-1, 2.)

These outcastes, including even such of them as were leading an irreligious and uncivilised life, were readmitted to the Aryan Vedic culture after performing a sacrificial ritual specially intended for their purification (*Vratya-Stoma*) on the condition that they should thereafter refrain from their

nomadic life and take to the path of Brahmanic culture;

ब्राह्मस्तोमेनेषु ब्राह्मभावाद्विमेयुः, व्यवहार्य भवन्ति ॥

ब्राह्मस्तोमैरिषु त्रैविद्यवृत्तं समाप्तिषुः तत ऊर्ध्वं भुङ्जीतापि चैनान् कामं याजयेयुः ॥

"After worshipping by *Vratya-stoma*, they shall refrain from *Vratya* life. They are then fit for all intercourse." (*Katyayana Shrauta Sutra*, XXII—4—27, 28.)

"After worshipping by *Vratya-stomas*, they shall follow the life of the triple Vedic culture. Thereafter one may freely eat with them and help them to sacrifice." (*Katyayana Shr. Sutra*, 8—3—29, 30.)

In the long lapse of time since the period when such processes of reclamation of the outcastes were in vogue, the Hindu society has lost its plasticity so that the outcastes have now to remain outcastes without any chance of reclamation. But our recognition of their Aryan Brahmanical origin and of the easy processes of reclamation which were in vogue in ancient days must now open new avenues of their social amelioration which may lead them from untouchability to Brahmanical status either directly or through intermediate stages, according to their individual efforts and achievements.

Our Sacred Tradition as embodied in the Mahabharata enjoins on the rulers of states and the leaders of society the duty of spreading Brahmanic culture among the outcastes, comprehensively termed *Dasyus*. When the great Emperor Mandhata wanted to retire from sovereignty to the hermit-life in the usual course after doing his life-work as the ruler of an established empire, he was exhorted by God Vishnu to stay on and to attend to the still unaccomplished work of spreading Vedic culture among the known *Dasyus* or outcastes of various classes, as well as those who remained concealed within the four *Varnas*. (*Shantiparva*, Adhyaya 65). The outcaste also is exhorted not to despise himself as low and unredemptible, but to respect his human birth and to raise himself in the scale of humanity by Vedic culture. Addressing Janaka, Parashara says (*Shantiparva*, Adhyaya 297):

उपमेमिरेपि त्यक्तं नात्मानं साधयेन्नरः ।
चाण्डालत्वेऽपि मानुष्यं सर्वथा तात शोभनम् ॥
इयं हि योनिः प्रथमा यां प्राप्य जगतीयते ।
आत्मा वै शक्यते ब्रह्म कर्मभिः शुभलक्षणैः ॥
कथं न विप्रमदयेम योनिर्लोडय्या इति प्रभो ।
कुर्वन्ति धर्मं मनुजाः श्रुतिप्रामाण्यदर्शनात् ॥
यो दुर्लभतरं प्राप्य मानुष्यं द्विपते नरः ।
धर्मवन्मता कामात्मा भवेत् स खलु वञ्च्यते ॥

"Let no man, however unhappy his lot, despise himself. Man as such, though a Chandala, is a noble creature in every way.

"For, this (humanity) is the first birth and noblest, on passing into which alone, O Lord of the earth, can the soul be saved by righteous works.

"Lest they may perish and sink below humanity, O Lord, men resort to Dharma as taught in the Veda.

"That man truly deceiveth himself who, having come to man's estate very hard to attain, heeds it not, and falling a prey to lust, neglects Dharma."

Any system of culture that may be devised for the regeneration of the Hindu outcastes or others in the analogous position should aim at the securing of that physical purity, that moral culture, and that intellectual comprehension of spiritual truths, which are embodied in the rules of the Bharata Samaja. They comprehend the basis of Brahmanic culture which is known as *Yogadiksha*, a life of dedication and service, and which makes one a true Brahmana irrespective of one's birth.

VEDIC RELIGION AND HINDU REFORM

By PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI, B.A.

(Continued from p. 20)

PART IV—ASHRAMA-DHARMA

What are the Ashrama-Dharmas?

24. Having determined *Varna-Dharma* in its true original sense we may pass on to a consideration of *Ashrama-Dharma* which is intimately associated with *Varna-Dharma*. While *Varna-Dharma* consists in regulating the spiritual aspirant's life-activity in its relation to other beings, *Ashrama-Dharma* consists in qualifying one-self for an efficient discharge of *Varna-Dharma*. This relation between the two Dharmas is well set forth in the *Kena-Upanishad*. This Upanishad first teaches the *Varna-Dharma* which consists in recognising Brahman as the source of all our activity and that all our success is truly His success, and further on it teaches that the way to that realisation lies in the cultivation of truthfulness (*satya*), knowledge of spiritual truths through Vedas, active service (*seva*), self-control (*dama*), and one-pointedness (*tapas*). Of these five attributes, truthfulness is a necessary qualification as forming a passport to a life of Self-realisation. No man who does not seek truth and does not follow it when found has any place in the path of spiritual culture. The other four attributes may be cultivated simultaneously or one after another. In the *Dharma-shastras* which recommend the latter course the life of man is divided into four periods, each period being devoted to the acquisition of one special qualification and called an *ashrama*, a period of strenuous endeavour. Youth is allotted to the acquisition of the knowledge of spiritual truths through Vedas. The next period of middle age is

devoted to a life of active service to the community in the spirit of Vedic Law. The third stage of life is devoted to the cultivation of self-control by living the life of a hermit; and in the fourth and last stage of life one-pointedness of mind is cultivated. These different stages are called *Ashramas* because they are periods in each of which the aspirant makes a strenuous endeavour, (*अश्रम a-shram*) and strives to acquire one special qualification.

Ashrama Division is Conventional

25. It may be noticed that as in the case of *Varna-Dharma* so also in the case of *Ashrama-Dharma* there was originally no trace of the fourfold differentiation that we find in the *Dharma-shastras*. This differentiation seems to be, as in the case of *Varna-Dharma*, of a later origin. There is indeed nothing to prevent a simultaneous cultivation of all the *Ashrama-dharmas*. The institution of *Varnashrama-Dharma* as worked through fourfold *varna* and fourfold *ashrama* is a man-made institution, a *Smarta-Dharma* as distinguished from *Shrauta-Dharma* or *Sanatana-Dharma*. Its regulations have varied from time to time and with different communities, and with different places. There is no reason why its existing regulations should not be changed in the light of reason without detriment to the true foundations of *Varna-Dharma* and *Ashrama-Dharma*.

Different Schools of Ashrama Division

26. The working of the fourfold differentiation of *Ashrama* is not uniform in all schools of Vedic Religion. According to the school represented by the *Manusmriti* the four different *Ashrama-Dharmas* are to be worked at in the four successive stages of one life. With another school one *Ashrama* for one whole life is the rule. A third school represented by *Acharyas* or early Vedic teachers referred to by *Apastamba*, *Bandhavana* and *Gautama* regards that married life (*Grihastha-Ashrama*) alone is, in the eye of Vedic Law, recognised as the normal life for the practice of Vedic Religion. They condemn the celibate orders—which have to give up the observance of Vedic rituals—as leading to a lopsided growth and tending to the development of will and intellect by study and austerities (*Tapas*) without the moral balance which the householder's life supplies.

PART V—SPIRITUAL EMINENCE OF THE HOUSEHOLDER LIFE

The Householder Life is Necessary

27. To the ordinary student of Vedic Religion the view of the earlier exponents of Vedic Law that married life is alone legitimate may require some explanation. The necessary explanation will be forthcoming if we study the Vedic ideals of married life cherished by men and women of old and the high status occupied by woman in it. It is in married life that the spiritual aspirants, men and women who took a vow of service (*Dikshitas*), Brahmanas in the true sense, can work out their ideals by way of discharging their debts to *Pitris*, *Devas* and *Rshis*. The discharging of the debt to *Pitris* by rearing a virile noble progeny is possible only in married life. For *Deva-Yajna* or rituals for invoking *Devas*—Intelligences working in psychical forces in nature and in man,—the co-operation of man and woman in married life is held

necessary by the exponents of the existing laws of Vedic Religion. According to the existing rules of Vedic rituals no sacred fire can be set up and no sacrificial ritual can be performed by a man without his wife. We can also readily understand why in discharging the debt due to the *Rshis* by undertaking the early spiritual training of the youth woman's co-operation is demanded.

Marriages and Three Debts

28. When a man and a woman marry mainly with a view to the discharging of the duty to *Pitris*, the marriage is known as *Prajapitya*, *Prajapati* standing at the head of the *Pitris*, the creators of our physical bodies. When they marry mainly with a view to discharging the debt to *Devas*, the marriage is known as *Daiva*. When they marry mainly for the purpose of discharging their debt to *Rshis* by training the youth in the early steps on the path of spiritual culture, the marriage is known as *Arsha*. There is the fourth and highest kind of marriage called *Brähma*. What may be the purpose of this marriage?

Brahma Marriage

29. The *Manu-smriti* speaks of three debts the discharging of which forms respectively the main purpose of the *Prajapitya*, *Daiva* and *Arsha* marriages, and mentions the fourth aim of life as *Moksha*, liberation from this world. So, this aim, namely *Moksha*, forms the purpose of *Brähma* marriage. Thus when a man and a woman marry mainly for liberation—for leading a life of spiritual aspiration unassociated with any of the worldly concerns—the marriage is known as *Brähma* devoted to a pure spiritual life untainted by any earthly concern. It is therefore deservedly considered the highest marriage.

The Spiritual Life of the Householder

30. The intimate association between a man and a woman of spiritual aspirations such as the married life involves is deemed helpful in the realisation of those aspirations. It surely helps to enrich their spiritual life, since a man and a woman who marry should be of different *gotras*. That is to say, they should be of two distinct religious temperaments devoted to two distinct lines of spiritual culture, so that they supplement each other. Seven modes of worshipping the Supreme Lord are referred to in the Vedas and they mark the seven *gotras* headed by the seven *Rshis*:

सप्त ते अग्ने समिधः सप्त जिह्वाः सप्त ऋषयः सप्त धाम प्रियाणि ।
सप्त होत्राः सप्त यो त्वा यजन्ति सप्त योनोरापुणस्वा घृतेन ॥

"Sevenfold, O Agni, is Thy fuel, seven thy tongues, seven the *Rshis*, seven thy beloved abodes, seven the sacrificers, seven the ways of Thy worship, seven thy Wombs,—fill them with this oblation I pour."

(*Taittiriya-Samhitā*.)

Equality of Man and Woman

31. In these four kinds of marriage man and woman meet on equal terms, as friends, as equal partners in their joint life, having had equal education and culture. Our *Shāstras* say that in a former age women had a good training in Vedic culture in early youth, and men and

women of spiritual aspirations inclined to the same Varna-Dharma (line of service in social life) married in the natural course. They were both Brāhmanas in the true sense of the term. They were both aware of the kind of life which they were to lead as householders. They both believed in the spiritual oneness of their true Self as one with the Divine Lord and looked at everything from that standpoint of view. As Dikshitas both strove to align their wills, their thoughts, emotions and life-activities with those of the Divine Lord; they were both bent upon spreading the Divine Glory on earth.

Married Life Conduces to An All-round Progress

32. In the married life of such a man and a woman, all virtues would be found embodied. No virtue which has to be cultivated in any of the four Ashramas (orders of holy life) would remain uncultivated. And such a married life is surely conducive to the spiritual progress aimed at in the four Ashramas, including the Samnyāsa-āshrama.

PART VI—DETERIORATION IN MARRIED LIFE

Vedic Religion becoming Ritualistic

33. The value of the householder's life (Grihastha-Ashrama) has deteriorated as the original Vedic Religion of active self-sacrifice and service has become ritualistic and gradually divorced from the aspiration to realise the oneness of the Self with the Divine Lord. The Vedic Religion in its pristine purity as practised in *Kṛita-Yuga*, (the Age of Perfection) is characterised as *Ātma-yoga-samanyukta*, as conjoined with contemplation of Ātman. It was of the nature of the Karma-Yoga described in the first section of Bhagavad-Gītā; as a combination of Yoga-buddhi and Sakhyā-buddhi, tersely put in the words of the mantra of *Yaga-Dikṣā* (Vide ante, § 16). It is this life of self-sacrifice and service to the Divine Lord, enjoined on the aspirant of immortality, that has taken a ritualistic form of elaborate proportions, inclusive of the great sacrificial rituals involving animal-sacrifices and the drinking of Soma beverage. The rituals were first simple and significant carrying with them the ideas of the truths and facts they represented symbolically. But as the rituals became more and more elaborate the underlying truths and facts were lost sight of and their observance became more and more mechanical.

The Daily Fire-worship

34. To illustrate: The Dikshita or spiritual aspirant is enjoined to focus all his thoughts, purposes and life-activities on the Divine Lord, regarding his true Self as one with Him. By this focussing, spiritual power is generated, and like fire it burns away all dross from the man. This spiritual fire is to be kept up and developed by constant meditation, or by daily meditation at stated times such as morning and evening. The generation of the external fire *Āgni-Adhva* and the daily fire-worship or *Agnihotra* by offerings of fuel and other oblations are symbolic representations of this generation and this development of spiritual fire. We all know how little this underlying truth is present in the mind of the ordinary Hindu householder who mechanically goes through the elaborate rituals made up of sundry mechanical operations and offerings of oblations accompanied by the chanting of mantras.

Self-sacrifice and Animal-sacrifice

35. To give another illustration of symbolic acts. The *Dikṣita* is enjoined, in view of his oneness with the Divine Lord, to sacrifice his limited personal interests and to work for the well-being of the whole creation. He who cannot lead such a life of self-sacrifice and service to God thinks of redeeming himself by substituting an animal he owns, such as a cow, to do duty for him. This is one kind of animal-sacrifice, and it consisted in pouring the cow's milk as an oblation into the sacred fire. Those who held this view of vicarious redemption would not kill and eat the animal lest they should go unredeemed. The Taittirīya Samhitā, 6.1.11, says:

पुरा खलु वावैष मेधायात्मानमारभ्य चरति यो दीक्षितो यदग्नी-
पोमीयं पशुमलभत आत्मनिष्क्रयण एवास्य स तस्मात्तस्य नाशयं
पुरुषनिष्क्रयण इव हि ॥

"At first, indeed, the devotee lives a holy life of self-sacrifice. When he offers the animal to Agni and Soma, thereby he redeems himself. Hence the animal is not to be eaten, being the man's ransom as it were."

There were others who would slaughter the animal and eat of its flesh, looking upon the act as the killing of Vritra, the demon of darkness.

अथो खल्वहुरग्नीषोमान्या वा इन्द्रो वृत्रमहन्ति यदग्नीषोमीयं
पशुमलभत वावैष एवास्य स तस्माद्वायस्य ॥

"But others say: With the aid of Agni and Soma, Indra killed Vritra; the animal-offering is the killing of Vritra. Hence it is quite fit to be eaten."

And it is with this latter view that the elaborate Vedic ritual of animal-sacrifice is associated.

Sandhya Worship

36. Take the morning and evening worship, *Sandhya*. It primarily consists in sitting in a sequestered spot with all the outgoing activities of the mind and the senses restrained, and meditating on the Light of the True Self which shines within in those moments of silence. This light is one with the Divine Light, and it is through this Light that the aspirant offers himself to the Divine Lord for guidance on the Path of Holiness. This original *Sandhyā* has since developed into a ritual involving various subsidiary acts of ritual and repetition of mantras—one of which in *Gāyatri* metre has itself been regarded as the embodiment of a Devatā, and the repetition of the mantra itself has come to mean *Sandhyā*. The same consciousness of unity with the Divine Lord and the same act of self-surrender to Him for guidance form the central idea of the daily ritual of *Agnihotra* as the main invocation clearly shows:

सूर्यो ज्योतिर्ज्योतिः सूर्यः स्वाहा ।

"The Sun (without) is the Light (within) and the Light is the Sun. I offer myself to Him."

अग्निर्ज्योतिर्ज्योतिरग्निः स्वाहा ।

"The Fire (without) is the Light (within) and the Light is the Fire. I offer myself to Him."

Karma divorced from Vidya

37. Thus the Vedic Religion, which was originally an active life of service conjoined with the meditation of Ātman the True Divine Self, has become divorced from it and has become a mere mechanical observance of rituals. Karma has become divorced from *Vidyā* and has become much less efficacious on account of this severance. The Shruti says:

यदेव विद्यया करोति तदेव वीर्यवत्तरं भवति (Chhand.-Up.)

"What one does with knowledge that alone is highly powerful."

The Veda itself was originally one not divided into sections, and consisted of a few significant mantras, the mastery of which gave the devotee control over the forces of nature through attainment of intimate association and union with the Superhuman Intelligences embodied in those mantras. It has now been divided into the two sections of Karma-kānda and Jñāna-kānda owing to the separation of Karma and *Vidyā*. The first treats of rituals with various prayers addressed to gods, the second treating of the spiritual truths underlying those rituals which are to be realised by study and contemplation.

Rituals and Spiritual Virtues

38. The rituals and the sacraments (Samskāras) divorced from *Vidyā* became also divorced from the moral and spiritual virtues (Ātma-gunas) based on *Vidyā*. Thus Gautama in his Dharma-sūtra first mentions forty Samskāras or sacramental rituals and then separately from them the eight Ātma-gunas (moral and spiritual virtues) such as mercy (दया), forgiveness (क्षतिः), freedom from envy (अनृता), purity (शौचं), freedom from worry (अनायासः), doing good (साहचर्यं), freedom from meanness (अक्रावर्ष्यं), freedom from covetousness (अस्पृहा).

As to their spiritual values he says that without the eight moral and spiritual virtues the full performance of all the forty Samskāras can avail the devotee very little in attaining unity with Brahman, the Divine Lord, whereas by the observance of one ritual associated with the attainment of the eight Ātma-gunas the devotee will surely attain unity with Brahman.

Necessity for Celibate Orders

39. As the householder's life governed by the existing Dharma-Shāstras consists in a mechanical observance of many and very elaborate rituals, there is very little occasion or opportunity for study and contemplation. The period of youth in which the devotee prepares himself for this kind of householder's life is spent in learning a vast quantity of the Vedic texts by heart without any attempt at studying the meaning of those texts or of the rituals to which they relate. Those who want to study and contemplate the truths of Vedic Religion have to enter the celibate orders such as Samnyāsa by formally renouncing the rituals of the householder-life.

Woman's Status Deteriorates

40. Along with this ritualism, and because of it, deterioration has gone on in the status of woman. With

ritualism grew and developed a morbid sense of ceremonial purity which prevented the master-ritualists from associating freely with less ritualistic classes. The higher classes such as Brāhmanas ceased to employ the labouring classes for domestic services as freely as before, and the whole domestic drudgery has in consequence fallen to the lot of the woman. The rituals connected with the householder-life became highly elaborate and required special study. The two chief concerns of the family life had to be divided between man and woman. Man's concern was to prepare himself for the rituals of religion while the woman had to prepare herself for the household drudgery which was originally done by Shūdras or labouring classes. As the student-life was not necessary as a preparation for her future work it was denied to her; and it was ordained that she was to be married at the age when the boy begins his studies, and to learn the household work in the husband's home. Such a wife would not be of any use as a companion and help-mate to an educated man who would lead a life of spiritual contemplation and study. Her very presence is avoided as inimical to his spiritual progress. Thus the development of ritualism and the consequent deterioration in woman's education and spiritual culture have brought down married life from its high Vedic level and necessitated the institution of celibate orders such as Samnyāsa. But in its high Vedic level, married life was rightly regarded as the only normal and legitimate life for man and woman as securing an all-round spiritual progress. It is not, therefore, surprising that the early Vedic teachers recommended married life and condemned the celibate orders.

PART VII—CONCLUSION

Eternal Laws and Man-made Laws

41. This review of the original teachings of the Vedic Religion and the later developments furnishes a groundwork for our social and religious reconstruction. We have now an idea of the eternal truths and laws of Vedic Religion which underlie our modern institutions. These eternal truths and laws have to be left untouched while the man-made socio-religious institutions which are embodied in the Smritis may be changed as we think best.

Rituals to be Simplified

42. As to the worship of the Divine Lord, rituals are not absolutely necessary for all. Some can do without them. In the case, however, of those of us who find rituals helpful we may discard altogether the rituals such as those involving animal-slaughter. Of the rest we may retain those rituals that are significant of the underlying truths, firmly holding in mind the truths and facts which they symbolise. Some of the very complex rituals will have to be simplified, by omitting the superfluous parts and those which convey no meaning.

Right Attitude to Other Religions

43. Recognising the existence of the one original Veda from which all the great religions of the world are derived, we must regard all religions as roads to the One Path, each being suited to a people of distinct religious temperament. We must not only be tolerant towards other religions than our own, but also try to learn many

of the valuable teachings that are special to them, and not found in ours.

Catholicity of Vedic Religion

44. As the Vedic Law declares that the real Brāhmana is the spiritual aspirant who seeks fellowship with the Divine Lord and dedicates his life to His service, we should regard as Brāhmanas all spiritual aspirants who believe and act in the same way, to whatever religion they may belong. We should not hesitate to extend fellowship in our community to such spiritual aspirants, to whatever caste or race they may belong. It is further the duty of a true Brāhmana to spread the truths of the true Vedic Religion where they are not known or are misunderstood and demonstrate the catholicity of the Vedic Religion. The immediate duty of the Hindu Reformer consists in enlightening his fellow-countrymen, including depressed classes, by spreading the gospel of the pure Vedic Religion.

OM TAT SAT

EVENTS OF SOCIAL INTEREST

FROM "NEW INDIA"

Upanayanam at Adyar

On the 5th May, Mr. M. S. Sundara Sarma, B.A., Artist, of Madurai, celebrated the Upanayanam (Thread Ceremony) of his two sons here, under the auspices of the Bhārata Samāja. The ceremony was conducted in the usual simple style with the shorter ritual framed by the Samāja. Pandit Mahadeva Shastri conducted the ceremony, which was as usual impressive and effective, and the whole ceremony was completed in an hour.

A Noteworthy Marriage

On Friday, the 9th May, Pandit A. Mahadeva Shastri gave away his second daughter Sowbhagyavati Padma in marriage to Mr. K. Natarajan, B.Com. (Mysore), a nephew of Rajadharma Pravina Dewan Bahadur K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, Chief Judge of Mysore. The ceremony took place in the spacious hall of the Bhojanashala, Theosophical Society, Adyar, in the presence of a large number of guests and relations and was quite in the orthodox style. The atmosphere and surroundings of Adyar made the celebration particularly attractive and impressive. In the evening, there was an excellent musical performance on the flute with suitable accompaniments.

On Saturday afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Mahadeva Sastri, and Mr. and Mrs. Chandrasekhara Aiyar were "At Home," under the famous Banyan Tree to the residents of Adyar and other friends in order to enable them to meet and wish well to the bride and bridegroom. There was a distinguished gathering of ladies and gentlemen of all castes and religions, and of different Nationalities. In the absence of Dr. Annie Besant, P.T.S., Dr. G. S. Arundale expressed the best wishes of all present to the newly married couple and added a few words of apt advice and exhortation as to their future life as householders.

The welcome features of this marriage are: (1) That the bride has completed her girlhood, having just passed her sixteenth year; (2) that the marriage celebrations were confined to three days, and unnecessary extravagances reduced to a minimum; and (3) that the parties belong to different sections of the Brihacharanam community.

Pandit Mahadeva Shastri and Mr. Chandrasekhara Aiyar should be congratulated on the practical application by them of the principles of liberal Hinduism in regard to marriage. Special credit is due to Mrs. Chandrasekhara Aiyar and Mrs. Mahadeva Shastri for the enlightened views held by them, and still more for the readiness with which they have translated those views into practice. Marriages such as these will surely bring the day of India's social emancipation nearer than mere preaching. May the blessings of India's Guardians be upon all concerned.

A PUBLIC MEETING

TAKING advantage of the large number of delegates assembled at Adyar for the Easter South Indian Theosophical Conference, the Bhārata Samāja convened a public meeting in the Adyar T.S. Headquarters Hall on Saturday, the 19th April, 1924, at 4.30 p.m. Dewan Bahadur K. S. Chandrasekhara Iyer, Chief Judge of Mysore, and the Vice-President of the Samāja, presided. Short speeches were made by some prominent members of the Samāja touching its objects and various aspects of its work. Pandit A. Mahadeva Shastri, who was the first speaker, said that the object of the Samāja was to proclaim that Shāstras placed no barrier in the way of any Hindu of whatever birth barring free access to Vedic culture, and to spread a knowledge of true Hinduism. Mr. V. K. Nair saw in the work of the Bhārata Samāja the process of Arganising the Dravidian non-Brahmanas of Southern India. In the eye of Mr. Justice Ramasam the whole life of the Hindu is affected by the work of the Samāja and the abolition of the numberless caste-divisions was necessary for the future social and religious progress of India. Mr. Manjeri Rama Aiyar traced the origin of the Samāja to the famous lectures of Dr. Besant on Social Reform including that on the passing away of caste and showed how the work of the movement tended to level up the different classes and to safeguard the principles of true progress or Dharma. Mrs. Adair appreciated the work the Samāja was doing in breaking down barriers in the way of free social intercourse and expected the Samāja to do for Hinduism what the Liberal Catholic Church was doing for Christianity. Sir T. Sadasivier dwelt on the necessity for simplifying the ceremonies and making them more significant of the truths underlying them, and for throwing true Hinduism open to Tiyyas and others who are now excluded from it. Srimati Parvati Ammal (Mrs. Chandrasekhara Iyer) condemned the present system of ceremonies which were like rubber tyres with no air within. She wanted more vitality put into them so that they might act as wheels of true progress. The Chairman then made his concluding speech, in the course of which he said:

The Bhārata Samāja has only been in existence now for about three years. Already it has done a certain

amount of noteworthy spade work as will be found set forth in annual reports. It has 285 members on its rolls and has also so far organised two mofassil groups, and many more will be sure to arise as the membership increases. It publishes a journal, the *Bhārata Dharma*, which is most ably conducted by Pandit A. Mahadeva Shastri, whose articles on religious rites and ceremonies and their rationale will materially assist in the simplification of rituals. Practical work is also being done to ameliorate the condition of our depressed brothers and to promote a feeling of tolerance and co-operation among all classes. If the Samāja has not done more work, it is because like all young lives it needs time for full development. In several ways it is an advantage that its growth should not be unduly forced but should be measured and steady. It would indeed be a serious misfortune if this Samāja of ours should turn out to be merely an addition to the numerous sects and subdivisions into which India is already split up. Its real aim and purpose is far different, and that is to strengthen and broaden the basis of Hinduism, by offering a simple and sufficient common measure of belief, which while affording to every true son of the Motherland a firm foothold on which to rest himself without necessitating his giving up any tenet or practice which he finds useful or important to himself, provides also a broad and common platform on which all true and tolerant Hindus can meet in unity and brotherhood. All that is required for membership is the acceptance of a declaration of very few principles, four in number, which may all be shortly summed up in the words Unity, Purity, and Service. It ought therefore to be easy, as it is desirable, for every Hindu, to whatever caste or sect he may belong, to join also an organisation which stands for liberty of conscience, freedom of thought and action, true brotherhood and the spirit of active service. Our hope in fact is that one day the Bhārata Samāja will be the means by which the existing diversities and antagonisms will be resolved and harmonised and a United India formed in place of the existing chaos of conflicting interests. Let us go forth from this meeting, resolved to do, each of us, such work as may bring that consummation perceptibly nearer at the end of the coming year.

BHARATA SAMAJA

EXTRACTS FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1923

Members: Number of members on 1st April, 1923.	244
Admissions during the year	42
Total	286
Removal by death	1
Number on rolls at the end of the year	285

Associate Members.—Of the 285 members, only 4 applied for and have been admitted as associate members, although no less than 209 members are eligible under rules to become associates. The attention of the members was also invited to this fact in the monthly journal of the Samāja.

Groups.—During the year, a Group was formed at Coimbatore with Mr. T. B. Bhashyacharya as Secretary;

and a Charter was issued. Thus there are two Groups, the other being at Bangalore.

Managing Body.—There have been no changes in the personnel of the Managing Body.

Meetings.—Sixteen meetings of the Managing Body were held during the period, 12 for the admission of new members, 3 for the disposal of routine matter and one for solving the question, as to how best to render help to the members of the depressed class "Adi-Andhras" of Malagavalli in the Bellary District, on whom pressure was brought to bear by the Christian Missionaries and to the Tiyyas of Malabar who were seriously thinking of leaving the Hindu fold on account of the oppression of the High Caste people.

Bhārata Dharma.—The Journal is ably conducted by Pandit A. Mahadeva Shastri, with his usual insight into Vedic lore, and his articles on various religious rites and ceremonies expounding them with shastric authorities, really help and facilitate the introduction of much desired reforms and thus liberalise Hinduism, one of the main objects of the Samāja. The number of subscribers is unfortunately very low being about 300, especially considering the much valuable matter published therein, the result of deep insight into and sound study of several authoritative books on Vedic religion. Those members who are not already subscribers will, it is hoped, feel their way to register their names as early as possible and help in the wide circulation of this useful periodical.

Finance (General).—The Samāja has a closing balance of Rs. 165-12-11, which includes a sum of Rs. 69-4-9 earmarked by the late Dharmika Brāhmana Sabha for the publication of books on Hindu Rituals. For propaganda and other purposes there is thus a balance of only Rs. 96-8-2. Lack of funds stand in the way of propaganda, and lack of propaganda stands in the way of arousing the enthusiasm among the members.

Activities.—A special class was held to train some members to help Hindu families in celebrating Upanayanam Ceremony in the simplified way. The Thread Ceremony of the grandson of the President Mr. T. Ramchandra Rau was celebrated on 2nd May, 1923, under the auspices of the Samāja and the Panditjee with his assistants, officiated as the Priest. From the report of the Secretary, Coimbatore Group, it is seen that the work of ameliorating the condition of the Adi-Dravidas has been taken up in earnest by the Group. It is highly gratifying to note that so far one hundred and ten families of two villages in the neighbourhood went through a purificatory ceremony and that vows have been taken that they would give up meat-eating and drink. A dinner was given to 200 panchamas in the house of Mr. O. T. Tiruvenkataswami Naidu, one of our members. This is a very commendable piece of work to the credit of the Group during the very short period of its existence.

Temple.—The Temple work was taken up in right earnest only in June last and is progressing satisfactorily under the supervision of Rao Sahib S. V. Kanakasabhai Pillai. So far the platform has been completed, except the flooring. The carving on the pillars for the Mantapam is in progress. The raising of the walls of the Garbhagriham and other sundry work will be taken up before the rains set in. The progress is all due to good

response made by the public to the appeal of the Samāja for funds and to the untiring work of Mr. K. Narahari Sbastry who has been deputed for the collection of funds.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Amount expended up to 31-12-23	4,253	11	4
From 1st January to 31st March	1,956	3	0
Total	6,209	14	4
Balance on hand available for future work	4,907	0	11
Amount of promises to be realised	1,400	0	0
Total	6,300	0	0

Further amount that would be required for the completion of the work is about Rs. 3,000. It is earnestly hoped that, with the help of the generous-hearted members, and the public, the money required will be forthcoming without difficulty.

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary, Bhārata Samāja.

BHARATA SAMAJA

NOTICE

All members are once more requested to intimate to the undersigned the changes in their addresses, when they leave their places permanently. Some covers recently issued to members have been returned through the Dead Letter Office.

Members are also requested to kindly intimate to the undersigned any deaths known to them that had taken place among the members of the Samāja as there is no likelihood of getting the information by any other means.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Members in the Bhārata Samāja on 18th May, 1924, was 289.

PROGRESS OF TEMPLE WORK

	Rs.	A.	P.
Amount of Donations received as noted below	13,597	8	5
Miscellaneous Receipts (Bank interest, etc.)	430	1	7
Total	14,027	10	0

Of this a sum of Rs. 9,171-12-4 has been spent as detailed below leaving a balance of Rs. 4,855-13-8.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Foundations	1,253	2	3
Basement in burnt-stone	2,988	1	7
Well	128	13	0
Superstructure	2,990	14	6
Pay and allowances of Mr. K. Narahari Sastry	1,621	9	0
Printing charges	92	2	0
Stamps	11	13	0
Miscellaneous	85	5	0
Total	9,171	12	4

The progress of work under "Superstructure" is shown in the subjoined statement.

Item of Work	No. required	No. received	No. for which dressing is complete	No. incomplete	Remarks
Mantapam Pillars	12	11	4	7	*Touching up required here and there.
Window Pillars	6	6	6	0	
Corbels	12	11	9	2	Touching up required here and there.
Window Sills	6	6	6	0	
Windows	9	8	0	8	Work begun a few days back.

6,000 stock bricks have been applied for and are expected in 4 or 5 days and arrangements are being made to start the Masonry work in about 10 days.

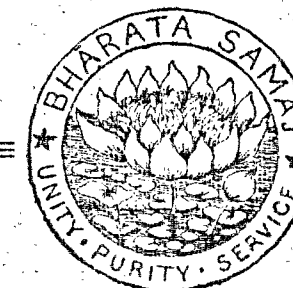
TEMPLE FUND

The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	Rs.	A.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged		11,394	8	5
Well-wishers	Korukollu	100	0	0
Sympathisers	Yendegardi	118	0	0
Dr. C. Ramakamath for Srimati Sundaribai	Tellichery	260	0	0
Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyer	Madura	100	0	0
Anonymous Donations		178	0	0
Mr. A. S. Rajagopala Iyengar	Bhimavaram	25	0	0
Anonymous Donations		105	0	0
Dr. C. Ramakamath for Srimati Sundaribai	Tellichery	200	0	0
Mr. A. N. Seshia Iyer	Calicut	5	0	0
P. Damodaram Pillai	Bangalore	20	0	0
Anonymous Donations		442	0	0
Mr. Ananthanarayana Iyer		50	0	0
T. Venkataratnamiah		50	0	0
J. Subba Rao	Narasapur	25	0	0
Ch. Rajaji Dhareji		10	0	0
G. Arabadas	Palacote	10	0	0
V. Narasimhadas Naidu	Narasapur	10	0	0
A. Venkataratnam		10	0	0
P. Rama Rao		10	0	0
A Friend	Sivasamudram	10	0	0
Mr. B. Srinivasa Iyengar		10	0	0
J. A. Fernandez		5	0	0
D. Kristnamachar		5	0	0
Anonymous Donations		152	0	0
Mr. M. N. Ramaswami Iyer	Trichinopoly	100	0	0
Srimati Chellammal (Mrs. M. N. Ramaswami Iyer)		100	0	0
Anonymous Donations		100	0	0
Mr. S. Balasankar	Maruturu	50	0	0
P. M. Chakrapani Chettiar	Colimatores	5	0	0
		13,597	8	5

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary, Bhārata Samāja

18th May, 1924



BHARATA DHARMA

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A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

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

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

NOTE: The Editor regrets that owing to his illness and absence from Adyar there has been a delay in the issue of the Magazine.

DEDICATED LIFE

IN our study of the ancient process of spiritual reclamation of the unregenerate and the fallen, known as *Shudras* and *Vratyas*, we have seen that that process consisted in initiating them into the path of regular spiritual culture. In the earlier ages when the spiritual culture was more real than in later ages, the process consisted in initiating the aspirant into the real life of *Diksha* or self-dedication. Later on this life of *Diksha* took a ceremonial turn and lost touch with the real basic life. The place of *Diksha* was then taken by processes of ablution and physical austerities of a severe type which kept away the aspirants, so that in these modern days, Hinduism has ceased to reclaim the unregenerate and the fallen. We who wish to revive the ancient process of reclamation will do well to get at the basic realities underlying the life of *Diksha* or self-dedication.

These basic truths of the life of *Diksha* may be derived from the invocation offerings of the Vedic ritual of *Yaga-Diksha*. They run as follows:

- (1) The fire of well-focussed will, I offer to Thee.
- (2) The fire of well-focussed mind and memory, I offer to Thee.
- (3) The fire of well-focussed thought and understanding, I offer to Thee.
- (4) The fire of well-governed speech, I offer to Thee.

- (5) To the Prajapati-Manu I offer these.
- (6) To Agni Vaishvanara, I offer these.

- (7) Let every mortal seek the fellowship of the Divine Lord. Every one wants power; let him seek to increase the Lord's glory.—Thus I make this offering.

Of these seven invocation offerings, the seventh, the last one, embodies the ultimate aim and purpose of the life of *Diksha* or dedication. The other six form only the way to that final goal. Let us now study the full meaning of the seventh invocation. It comprehends the following ideas:

- (1) The aspirant is one who, having realised the mortality of the physical existence yearns to attain a state of immortality, which is his true being.
- (2) Such an aspirant is taught to seek the fellowship of the Divine Lord. He is made to know that he is of one nature with the Divine Lord and is therefore capable of being His *sakha* or fellow-worker.
- (3) That the aspirant is one with the Divine Lord and possesses all the Divine potentialities is indicated by the wish every one has to attain more power than he has. This indicates that every soul possesses the power of infinite progress and to rise to the Divine level.
- (4) The way for attaining this infinite progress lies along the line of work for the increase of the Divine Glory. That is to say, the aspirant should study the Divine plan of evolution and try to further the working of the plan by co-operating in the plan.

These are the basic truths of the life of *Diksha* or dedication. To attain success in this life of dedication the aspirant should fulfil the conditions embodied in the first six invocations. He should turn away his will, his mind and intelligence, his thought and understanding from the temporary concerns of mundane life and fix them on the Divine Lord and His plan. He should dedicate his whole being to the service of the Divine Lord as manifested on the physical plane of being as Prajapati and Manu, and on the subtle plane of being as Agni-Vaishvanara. That is to say, he should carry the spirit of dedication to all the realms of being within his reach.

This, in essence, is the life of dedication. It is said that a Dikshita, one who leads such a dedicated life, should not eat meat, should avoid all stimulating food such as pungent things, salt, sugar and wine, कारदण्डमद्यञ्च, should abstain from sexual indulgences, and should eschew all untruthfulness.

He who leads such a life of *Diksha* is said to be a true Brahmana, whatever his caste; and his immediate duties in this world are summed up in the three debts due to Pitris, Rishis, and Devas. How these debts are to be discharged has been fully explained in the pages of this magazine. Briefly it consists in rearing and bringing up a virile progeny, in awakening and advancing the spiritual life of the community and in manipulating the forces of nature so as to conduce to the organic growth of men and fellow-creatures.

It is the duty of every spiritual aspirant to conform to this line of dedicated life as far as possible. No effort in this direction, however small, is ever lost.

THE TRUE VEDIC BASIS OF HINDUISM

A LECTURE

BY PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI

[In dealing with the one Primary Veda as distinguished from the many derivative Vedas, this lecture cites the texts relating to the subject which in my lecture on "Vedic Religion and Hindu Reform" published in the last two issues was not supported by such texts. Reference to these texts will also be made in dealing with the question raised by a member of the Bhārata Samāj as to why in the rules of the Samāj the Veda is not mentioned as the supreme authority.]

VEDIC RELIGION AND HINDU INSTITUTIONS

1. If Hinduism should be what it professes to be, namely, a true embodiment of Dharma or Vedic Religion, all Hindu institutions must be based directly or indirectly on the Vedic Law, or must be in consonance with it, but never directly or indirectly opposed to it. Let us take, for instance, the institution of caste. Most of the orthodox Hindus believe that the institution, even in its present form, is based on the teaching of the Veda, nay that it is primarily taught in the Veda and is a cardinal

doctrine of the Vedic Religion. It is indeed a vital factor of modern Hinduism and plays a very important part in the life of the Hindus. In one sense it is co-extensive with Hinduism, because Hinduism is made up of rules and regulations of *Varna* and *Āshrama*, and the institution of caste embraces all these rules and regulations. In spite of the many apparently invidious distinctions involved in the institution, its adherents including even the sufferers under its regulations look upon it as a divinely ordered institution based on the authority of the Vedas and other *śāstras*. But now and again this view has been questioned by Hindu philosophers and religious teachers themselves. We all know that Gautama Buddha and not a few of the later religious reformers have raised their voice against the anomalies of the institution as found in their days and have founded religious sects in which distinctions of caste are entirely ignored. Some modern critics have attributed to the caste system all the evils from which the Hindu society now suffers. It is therefore well worth our while to study the true relation between the institution of caste and the Vedic Religion on which it is said to be based, and to ascertain the underlying truth of the institution.

WHAT IS VEDIC RELIGION?

2. I may first of all define what is really meant by Vedic Religion. It is the universal religion which lies at the foundation of all religions. In my lecture on Dharma (*Vide Dharma Pracher*, Vol. I, pp. 125—143) I set forth the main truths of universal religion, by way of explaining what Dharma is in itself. And Dharma is defined as *चैतान्द्रक्षणीयं धर्मः*, as the law laid down in the Veda,—the law of progress taught to us in the form of a command; and therefore the true Vedic Religion is the same as Dharma, what may be called universal religion. So that, in this context, the term Veda must be understood in a wider sense than it has in the ordinary usage. The Veda cannot here mean only or all the Sanskrit writings that have come down to us under that name. The term includes all the original teachings on which the great religions of the world are built up. If we look at the literal meaning of the word, we may form some idea of what its wider sense is. The word Veda comes from the root *vid* which means to *know* and also to *attain*; and the word means that knowledge which conveys with it the attainment of the thing it relates to. Primarily, therefore, Veda means the knowledge of the Self, for to know the Self is to attain the Self. The Original Veda is knowledge *par excellence*, the knowledge of the Supreme Self and the way to realise that Self. It would embrace the whole body of knowledge concerning the divine scheme of evolution and the path of supreme attainment. This knowledge is reached by those who have by a long discipline and culture realised their highest Self and the facts and laws of the world-evolution; and such a knowledge is full or partial according as the individual's attainment is full or partial. The highest and fullest Veda would embody the Divine Mind itself which embraces within its scope the whole universe. In this wider sense of the term the Veda comprehends all the genuine scriptures of the world-religions dealing with the laws of world-evolution, with the laws concerning the future course of human evolution, and with the path of holiness leading to the supreme goal of evolution. This knowledge cannot at present be reached by us by immediate

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perception or inference from our present and past experience. It comes to us by revelation. We have to learn it from those who have by a long course of discipline and culture attained the power to read the divine mind in nature, or from the Divine Lord of the world Himself who deigns sometimes to come down to our level to teach us truths which we cannot know by ourselves at the time. We have received such high teachings from time to time either from the divine sages (Rishis) or from the Divine Lord Himself; and different people have received them at different times, each time just as much as has been necessary for their immediate advance and in the form best suited for the time and the people concerned. The truths so taught constitute true Vedic Religion.

THE VEDIC BASIS OF RELIGIONS

There is only one true Veda, one original body of wisdom from which its custodians, those whom we call Rishis, give out to the people now and then such truths as might be found necessary for their immediate spiritual advance. These truths, having passed through the minds of the people not quite so enlightened as the Rishis, have assumed different forms in the long lapse of time since they were originally taught. With us Indo-Aryans, one form which these original teachings have assumed is that formulated in our Vedas and Smritis; the other-forms which they have assumed are the systems known under the names of Sankhya, Yoga, Agama, Tantra, and so on. When the teachings are first given out to a people, their attention is directed to the fundamental truths of religion clothed in forms which may appeal best to the people concerned; but in course of time those basic truths retreat into background or disappear; and then the outward forms with many subsequent additions and distortions in the shape of rituals and socio-religious institutions become predominant features in religion. When the religion of a people is thus reduced to the observance of some outer lifeless and even abominable forms, a great spiritual teacher appears on the scene and restores once more the true spiritual religion. He condemns the current corrupt practices which have crept into the national life in the guise of religious institutions. He explains the underlying truths of the practices and institutions which are worth preserving and thus pours a new life into them. The great teacher who did this work for Hinduism at a time when it became a mass of lifeless forms was Lord Shri Krishna. His teaching embodied in the Bhagavad-Gita was a protest against some of the religious practices and socio-religious institutions of the day, and that teaching poured a new life into the Hinduism of the day. All religions are subject to such changes in the long lapse of time; only, the process of change can be traced more clearly in the long history of Hinduism.

THE ONE VEDA AND DHARMA: AND THE MANY

4. According to our sacred tradition there exists one true Veda of which the extant so-called Vedas are only more or less corrupt representatives. This may seem to be a very astounding statement as coming from a believer in the Veda. Certainly it runs counter to the orthodox belief that the Vedas we now have are the original word of God Himself. I feel therefore bound to prove my statement by satisfactory evidence. It is a recognised rule of interpretation that the teaching of this Veda

should be fully determined by reference to the teaching of the *Sacred Tradition*, the *Itihāsa* and the *Purāṇa*; इतिहासपुराणभ्यां वेदं समुपवृद्धयेत्. In accordance with this rule I proceed to make some quotations from *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* in support of my statement—as to what the real *Veda* is—which may apply to all the received scriptures of the world. Our sacred tradition speaks of the one primary genuine *Veda* and of the many derivative *Vedas* which have grown out of that one original *Veda*. Nārada, the well-known sage, speaking of the one original *Veda* and the many derivative *Vedas* to an assembly of sages which once gathered round him, describes the origin and the purpose of the many *Vedas* and *Śāstras* arising from the one original *Veda*. I shall now cite a passage from an Āgamic work recording his address to the sages and his answers to their questions bearing on this point. The passage runs as follows :

शृणुष्व मुनयः सर्वे वेदमेकायनाभिम् ।
 मोक्षायनाय वै पन्था एतदन्यो न विद्यते ।
 तस्मादेकायनं नाम प्रवदन्ति मुनीपिणः ।
 मूलभूतस्तु महतो वेदब्रह्मस्य यो महान् ।
 सद्ब्रह्मवासुदेवाख्यपरतत्त्वैकसंश्रयं ।
 दिव्यैर्वैद्यादिकैर्मनैः साक्षात्स्वतिपादकैः ।
 अलंकृतमसंदिग्धमविधातिनिरापदं ।
 इत्युक्त्वाऽध्याप्य योगीन्द्रान् संजगादास्य वैभवं ।
 एष प्रकृतिधर्माख्यो वासुदेवैकगोचरः ।
 प्रवर्त्यते कृतयुगे तत्तत्क्षेतायुगादिषु ।
 विकारवेदाः सर्वत्र देवतान्तरगोचराः ।
 महतो वेदब्रह्मस्य मूलभूतो महानयं ।
 स्कंधभूता ऋगाद्यास्ते शाखाभूताश्च योगिनः ।
 जगन्मूलस्य देवस्य वासुदेवस्य मुख्यतः ।
 प्रतिपादकतासिद्धा मूलवेदाख्यता द्विजाः ।
 आद्यं भागवतं धर्म आदिभूते कृते युगे ।
 मानवा योग्यभूतास्ते अनुतिष्ठन्ति नित्यशः ।
 तत्तत्क्षेतायुगे सर्वे नानाकामसमन्विताः ।
 व्यामिश्रयाजिनो भूत्वा त्यजन्त्याद्यं संनातनं ।
 अन्तर्दधाति सर्वेषां वासुदेवसमाहृतं ।
 ततो योग्याय भगवान् प्रादुर्भावयति स्वयं ।
 एवं गया पुराऽधीतः श्वेतद्वीपे मुनीश्वराः ।
 सनः सनत्सुजातश्च सनकश्च सनन्दनः ।
 सनत्कुमारः कपिलः सप्तमश्च सनव्रतनः ।
 एते एकान्विधर्मस्य आचार्याश्च प्रवर्तकाः ।
 मरीचिरज्यगिरसौ पुलस्त्यः पुलहः क्रतुः ।

वसिष्ठश्च महातेजाः एते चित्रशिखंडिनः ।
 मनुः स्वयंभुवश्चापि समाराध्य जगत्पति ।
 महता तपसा चैव देवं नारायणं प्रभु ।
 दिव्यं वर्षसहस्रं तु तदन्ते समधीत्य च ।
 मूलश्रुतिं यथावच्च ऋषयोऽध्यापितास्तु ते ।
 ततस्ते ऋषयस्त्वष्टौ लोकानां हितकाम्यया ।
 श्लोकानां शतसाहस्रैः मूलवेदं निरीक्ष्य च ।
 तथा दिव्यानि शास्त्राणि सात्वतादीनि चादरात् ।
 निरीक्ष्यान्यतु तन्त्राख्यं शास्त्रं विदधिरे द्विजाः ।
 एवं मूलश्रुतेरर्थान् ज्ञात्वा मन्वादयोपि च ।
 धर्मशास्त्राण्यनेकानि करिष्यन्ति यथातथ ।
 अन्येषामपि शास्त्राणां योनिरेतद्भविष्यति ।
 अस्मिन् धर्मश्च कामश्च अर्थश्चोक्तः सविस्तरः ।
 मोक्षश्च सूचितः पश्चात् तस्मात् सारतमोक्ष्यं ॥

* * * *

मुनयः—

भगवन् सर्वशास्त्रज्ञ शरणागतवत्सल ।
 त्वत्प्रसादेन संप्राप्तो मूलवेदो महानयं ।
 त्वत्प्रभावश्च विदितः सर्वलोकेषु पूजितः ।
 प्रतियुज्यैर्निपेक्ष्योयं मूलवेदः सनातनः ।
 कथमप्रतियुज्यैस्तैर्ममैर्भवमाहुर्बुधैः ।
 प्राप्यते भगवन् धर्मः एकान्तिभिरनुष्ठितः ॥

नारदः—

श्रूयतामभिधास्यामि सर्वलोकहितैषिणः ।
 पुरैवं भगवानेव समालोच्य हरिः स्वयं ।
 परित्यज्य परं धर्मं मिश्रधर्मेमुपेयुषां ।
 भूयस्तत्पदकाङ्क्षाणां श्रद्धाभक्ती उपेयुषां ।
 अनुग्रहायै वर्णानां योग्यतापादनाय च ।
 तथा जनानां सर्वेषां अभीष्टफलसिद्धये ।
 मूलवेदानुसारेण छन्दसानुष्ठुमेन च ।
 सावतं पीष्करं चैव जयात्येत्येवमादिकं ।
 दिव्यं सच्छास्त्रजालं तत् उक्त्वा संकर्षणादिभिः ।
 प्रवर्तयामास भुवि सर्वलोकहितैषिभिः ॥

Hear ye all, O sages, the Veda called the One Path ; for the attainment of liberation there exists, indeed, no other Path than this. Hence the wise speak of this under the name "The One Path". This verily is the Great Root of the mighty tree of the Veda, abiding in the Supreme Being, the eternal Brahman known as Vāsudeva. It is embellished with superb invigorating mantras descriptive of that Supreme Being, admitting of no doubt, dispelling the darkness of ignorance. Thus saying, Nārada taught the Veda to the mighty Yogins and told them of its glory. This is the Root Dharma concerning itself solely with the Vāsudeva. It is started in the Kṛita-Yuga. In the Tretā and the following Yugas come into existence everywhere derivative Vedas (विकारवेदाः) relating to other Devatas. This Veda is the Great Root of the Mighty Vedic Tree of which the Rīg-Veda and other Vedas constitute the trunk and the branches, O Yogins. This Veda, O Dvijas, forms the Root Veda because it mainly treats of the one all-present God (Vāsudeva) who is the Root of the Universe. This Primary Divine Law worthy men steadily follow in the first epoch, the Kṛita-Yuga. Then in the Tretā-Yuga people cherishing desires of various kinds, and being devoted to mixed ideals, all abandon the Original Eternal Law. Then the whole eternal Law disappears, being withdrawn by the Lord Vāsudeva, who then in due time reveals it Himself to a worthy person. Thus was it learned by me of yore, O sages, in the White Island (Shvetadvīpa).

Sane, Sanat-sujāta, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat-kumāra, Kapila, and Sanātana the seventh, these are the teachers and followers of the Ekānti-Dharma, the Path of single-minded Devotion. Marichi, Atri, and Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Vasistha of mighty power, these of variegated crests, and also the Svāyambhuva Manu, worshipped Nārāyana, the Lord of the world, by a mighty *tapas* for a thousand divine years, and at the end all these eight sages were duly taught the Root-Veda. And for the benefit of the worlds, these Rishis, having seen the Root-Veda and other spiritual sciences such as Sātvata, compiled the śāstra called Tantra. Similarly, having learned the teachings of the Root-Veda, Manu and others will compile many Dharma-śāstras according to these teachings. Even of other śāstras, this will form the source. In this Veda, Dharma, Kāma, and Artha are treated at great length, and liberation also is indicated thereafter. This is therefore the greatest essence of all the śāstras.

Then the sages asked—

"O Lord, versed in all śāstras, kind to the refugees, by Thy grace have we learned this mighty Root-Veda and have known Thy glory too, extolled in all worlds. The eternal Root-Veda is accessible only to the highly enlightened ones. How can, O Lord, this Dharma, which is practised by the Ekāntins, be reached by the unenlightened, who are immersed in the great ocean of mundane life?"

Nārada answers :

"Listen, O sages who seek the welfare of all the worlds ; Lord Hari Himself thought of this at first. For the benefit of those who, abandoning the supreme Dharma, resort to mixed Dharma and then again seek with faith and devotion to rise to the original status, and with a

view to enabling the different *varnas* or classes of devotees to qualify themselves for the supreme Dharma and to attain their objects of desire, the Lord gave out the spiritual śāstras, such as Sātvata, Pāushkara and Jaya and propagated them through Samkarshana and others who sought the well-being of all worlds."

This has been said by way of introduction to *Iśvara-Samhitā*, a work belonging to the Pāñcharātra school of Āgama śāstra, which is specially concerned with one system of temple worship. But this applies to all systems of religion current among the Hindus. Five of these systems are most prominent, as will be seen later on.

THE FIVE HINDU SYSTEMS OF DISCIPLINE

5. To refer briefly to the salient points worthy of notice in the above quotation so far as they relate to our theme. There is only one eternal Veda, the Root-Veda (मूलवेद) as it is called, and it treats of the Supreme Being and the one Path of Liberation, whence the Veda itself is called the one Path (एकान्त्य). It lays down the original or Root Dharma (प्रकृतिधर्म), the path leading to the realisation of Vāsudeva, the Immanent Divine Lord of the universe. The scriptures treating of other gods are only derivative or modified Vedas (विकारवेदाः), treating only of bye-paths leading to temporary bliss. The Rīg-Veda and other scriptural writings constitute the trunk and branches of the mighty tree which has grown out of the Root-Veda. The one original Path (प्रकृतिधर्म) was meant for the wise and enlightened (प्रतिबुद्ध) devotees and was duly trodden by the people of the golden age of Kṛita-Yuga who were pure in mind and body. In the ages that followed, mind and body became impure and spiritual life got mixed up with material and worldly longings. The five systems of discipline and culture known as Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Vedas and Smritis, Pāsupata, and Pāñcharātra; as well as other religious systems of the world, are meant for people of impure minds, teaching them how to qualify themselves for entrance on the one Supreme Path. As to the value of these systems of discipline and culture, the Mahābhārata says :

साङ्ख्यं योगः पाश्चात्तं वेदाः पाशुपतं तथा ।
 ज्ञानान्वेतानि राजपे विद्धि नानामतानि वै ॥

सर्वेषु च नृपश्रेष्ठ ज्ञानेप्येतेषु दृश्यते ।

यथागमं यथाज्ञानं निष्ठा नारायणः प्रभुः ।

न चैनमेवं जानन्ति तमोभूता विशांपते ॥

तमेव शास्त्रकर्तारं प्रवदन्ति मनीषिणः ।

निष्ठां नारायणमूर्तिं नान्योस्तीति च वादिनः ।

निस्तंशयेषु सर्वेषु नित्यं वसति वै हरिः ।

सत्संशयात् हेतुबलात् नाध्यावसति माधवः ॥

(शा. 359 अ., 64-71.)

"Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Pāñcharātra, Vedas and Pāsupata,—know these, O royal sage, as different systems of wisdom and culture. . . . In all these systems Lord Nārāyana is recognised as the goal, in the light of their respective philosophies and scriptures. The deluded, verily, do not thus recognise Nārāyana as the goal of all culture. The wise ones speak of Nārāyana-Rishi as the author and the goal of the Śāstra and declare that there is no other author or goal. Surely, Hari dwells in the undoubting : Mādhava dwelleth not in the sceptic and the hypercritical."

That is to say, the Vedic, the Āgamic, and the Sāṅkhya methods of discipline and culture, corresponding to the Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna mārgas, prove efficacious, i.e., produce their intended effects, only when people follow them in the right spirit. It is only when the devotees of these disciplines look upon them as reflections of the one original Path, ultimately leading to it, that their minds will be prepared to receive the Divine Light which illumines the one Path. The bigot (तमोभूत) blinded by prejudice regards his own method as the true and the only path, while the sceptic and the hypercritical believe in none of these methods, doubting their efficacy; such people only build a wall round their minds keeping out the Divine Light from illumining them.

THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ EMBODIES THE ORIGINAL DHARMA

6. An insight into the one main Path taught in the one Root-Veda may be obtained from the Bhagavad-Gītā, in which the Divine Teacher has revealed the Path to the world through Arjuna. For, the Yoga taught in the Gītā is identical with the original Law (मूलधर्मः), the One Path taught in the Root-Veda, as the following passages will shew :

वैशंपायनः—

नारदेन तु संप्राप्तः सरहस्यः ससंग्रहः ।

एष धर्मो जगन्नाथात् साक्षान्नारायणान्तरुप ।

एवमेव महान् धर्मः स ते पूर्वं नृपोत्तम ।

कथितो हरिगीतासु समासविधिकल्पितः ।

कृष्णद्वैपायनं व्यासं विद्धि नारायणं प्रभु ।

को ह्यन्यः पुंडरीकाक्षान् महाभारतकृद्भवेत् ॥

(शान्ति. 356 अ., श्लो. 9-11.)

जनमेजयः—

केनैष धर्मः कथितो देवेन ऋषिणापि वा ।

एकान्तिनां च का चर्चा कदा चोत्पादितः विभो ।

* * * *

वैशंपायनः—

समुपोदेष्मन्तीकृषु कुरुपाण्डवयोर्मह ।
अर्जुने विगनस्के च गीता भगवता स्वयं ।
आगतिश्च गतिश्चैव पूर्व ते कथितो मया ।
गहनो ह्येष धर्मो वै दुर्विज्ञेयोऽकृतात्मभिः ।
सम्मितः साम (सर्व) वेदेन पुरैसाद्रियुगे कृतः ।
धायते स्वयमीशेन राजत्तरायणेन ह ॥

(शान्तिपर्व 358 श्लो. 6-10.)

यदिदं सप्तमं जन्म पद्मजं ब्रह्मणो नृप ।
तत्रैष धर्मः कथितः स्वयं नारायणेन ह ।
पितामहाय शुद्धाय युगादौ लोकधारिणे ।
पितामह्या दक्षाय धर्मेते पुरा वदौ ।
ततो ज्येष्ठे तु दौहित्रे प्रादादक्षो नृपोत्तम ।
आदित्ये सवितुर्ज्येष्ठे विवस्वान् जगृहे तत्र ।
त्रेतायुगादौ च ततो विवस्वान् मनवे वदौ ।
मनुश्च लोकभूत्यर्थं सुतायश्वाकवे वदौ ।
इक्ष्वाकुणा च कथितो व्यास्य लोकानवस्थितः ।
गमिष्यति क्षत्रे च पुनर्नारायणं नृप ॥
यतीनां चापि यो धर्मः स ते पूर्व नृपोत्तम ।
कथितो हरिगीतासु समासविधिकल्पितः ।
नारदेन सुसंप्राप्तः सरहस्यः ससंग्रहः ।
एष धर्मो जगन्नाथात् साक्षान्नारायणान्नृप ।
एवमेष महान् धर्म आद्यो राजन् सनातनः ।
दुर्विज्ञेयो दुष्करश्च सास्वतैर्धार्यते सदा ।
धर्मेज्ञानेन चैतेन सुप्रयुक्तेन कर्मणा ।
अहिंसाधर्मयुक्तेन प्रीयते हरिरीश्वरः ॥

(तत्रैव 48-56.)

एकान्तिनो हि पुरुषाः दुर्लभा बहवो नृप ।
यद्येकान्तिभिराकीर्णं जगत्स्यात् कुरुनन्दन ।
अहिंसकैरात्मविद्धिः सर्वभूतहिते रतैः ।
भवेत् दृढयुगप्राप्तिः आशीः कर्मविवर्जिता ॥

(तत्रैव 42-63.)

(To be continued)

VEDAS AS THE BASIS OF BHARATA SAMAJA

[Mr. Shiva Narayana Bhargava of Jhansi has addressed two letters to the Secretary of the Bharata Samaja on some of its constitutional points. We shall be very much obliged if any of our readers interested in the question express their views on the matter. We reserve our own comments to a future issue.]

The first letter—Dated 31st March, 1924

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of 11th March, 1924, with the six papers or booklets mentioned therein were received by me in time. But owing to the death of my brother's wife and also my absence from Jhansi, I could not reply in time. Price 5 as. of the booklets and leaflets is enclosed in stamps. Rs. 3 admission fee and Re. 1 annual subscription will be sent on receipt of answers to my following queries; on receipt of which application for associate membership will be forwarded. The queries are:

1. On page 16, Vol. II of BHARATA DHARMA (for February and March, 1924) it is said: "Hinduism claims the Veda for its basis and is known as Vedic religion, Vaidika Dharma." But in the objects of the Bharat Samaj there is no mention of Veda or Vedas at all, and thus the very basis of Hindu religion has been omitted. Would it not be therefore wise to enjoin the belief in the Vedas and incorporate that belief in the objects of the Bharat Samaj?

2. Arya Samaja has done much work in propounding Vaidika Dharma, and to simplify the complicated Hindu rituals. The Founder of the Arya Samaja has left behind him "Panch Yagna Vidhi" (including Havana and Sandhya) and "Sanskara Vidhi" (including Upnayan, Vivah and funeral, etc., etc.) based on Vaidika Dharma. Bharat Samaj also aims in purifying and simplifying these rituals. Would it not therefore, be better for the Bharat Samaj to take up the simplified rituals of Arya Samaj, and modify them where (if) they are found contradictory to Vedic religion?

3. The motto of the Bharat Samaj is, "Unity, Purity, Service". I think the word unity implies that it is intended to unite the Hindus. Would it not tend to unity if the simplified rituals of Arya Samaj, are adopted with certain modifications where necessary and explained in a liberal and Theosophical spirit?

If you please, the questions may kindly be answered in the next issue of the BHARATA DHARMA provided there is no objection in doing it. If there is any objection, they may be answered by letter.

I put these questions, because I am a member of Arya Samaja (as also of T.S. and B.S.), and as such an advocate of Vaidika Dharma. But I want an exposition of that Vedic Dharma from a Theosophical point of view. Besides, these questions will enable me to know the difference between the Bharat Samaja and the Arya Samaja, and also the fact that if the ideals of the two are contradictory I shall have to resign the one or the other. Hence I solicit an early reply.

The second letter—Dated . . . th April, 1924

DEAR SIR,—Thanks for your letter of the 12th April, 1924, which has created some misunderstanding in my mind. Hence I take leave to write to you again in detail. My point was not the personal views of the Editor of the BHARATA DHARMA, but that I, being a member of the Theosophical Society for over twenty years, and being a student of the Vedic Religion (which I believe to be the pure Hindu religion—i.e., free from the later interpolations), welcomed this movement of the Bharat Samaj, originating from the Theosophical Society, under a belief that under its auspices I shall be able to get the Theosophical and occult explanations of the Hindu religion as laid down in the Vedas and the books based on them. The Arya Samaj gives intellectual side of the Vedic Religion, as judged from the so-called Higher Criticism. Naturally I feel the want of the occult side of the Hindu religious rites, ceremonies, rituals including Sandhya, Havana, etc., etc.; and I believe that if occult side could be added to the Vedic Religion as purified by the intellect or the higher criticism, truly a great service will be done to Hinduism—which will make it the Universal Religion which in fact it already is.

Now with the inauguration of the Bharat Samaj, it was natural for me to expect (since it was meant to liberalise and broaden Hinduism and since it sprang from amidst the Theosophical Society) that Theosophical and Occult light will be thrown on our Hindu Religion including the Vedic literature, but I was astonished to find no mention of the Vedas in the principles of the Bharat Samaj. It was for this fact that I wrote the former letter to you, for my idea is that a religion (as against THE RELIGION which is based on the personal knowledge gained through Yoga Vidya as symbolised in the Theosophical Society, Gnostics, Sufis and Yogis, etc.) should be or rather is based on the Teachings of Its Founder, or on the Book as in case of Hinduism. For every one cannot be a Seer, and he has to accept the teachings as given by the Seer. Even in the Theosophical Society, we accept the truths which we ourselves cannot see, on the statements made by a certain seer—not that we are compelled to accept those statements, but because we accept a certain person to be a Seer. Should we not then as Hindus accept the authority of our scriptures. Bharat Samaj has ignored (if not actually denied) the Vedas, as is shown by the omission of the mention of the Vedas in the principles of the Samaj. It was for this fact that I enquired the reason of such an omission and quoted the views of the Editor in which he said that Hinduism is based on the Vedas.

Your explanation concerning the omission of the mention of the Vedas appears to be due to the fact (as you say) that Arya Samaj (which accepts the Vedas) is restricted to Hindus and Indians alone, while the Bharat Samaj (which ignores the Vedas) is international and is prepared to admit persons of any religion or nationality. Yes, Arya Samaj is certainly restricted to Hindus, but not to Indians. It admits men of any nationality into its fold, but only after converting or rather admitting them into Hinduism. Does Bharat Samaj propose to admit Non-Hindus into its fold without admitting them into Hinduism, i.e., while they still remain Christians or Muhammadans, etc.? Is it for their sake that the very basis of Hinduism—the Vedas (which the Editor of the BHARATA DHARMA admits to be the basis of Hinduism)—has

been thrown aside? If it is the fact—which I do not believe to be so—was not Theosophical Society enough to deal with all religions? I hope to be enlightened on this point.

On the answer to these questions, depend other questions, viz., those of Daily Practice including Sandhya and Havana, and the Sanskaras—for all these are to be performed with Veda Mantras. But if we ignore Vedas, then Veda Mantras no longer remain essential for the performance of the rites and sacraments. If this is so, I am puzzled in thinking out how would you be able to prepare rituals which may be acceptable to any Hindu community—for marriage (for instance) performed without Vedic rituals cannot be accepted as valid. Vedas are the common bond of Union among the Hindus and form the Common Religion among all the Hindus—for if we purge Hinduism of all later additions (Puranas, etc.), then only pure Vedic Religion remains to which no Hindu can or ought to object, for is it not said that Puranas, etc., are acceptable only so far as they do not contradict the Vedas. But if the Vedas are omitted, then I fear there remains no basis for Hinduism (which is based on the Vedas), and it is gone.

Now here I beg leave to touch another question—Does Bharat Samaj lay importance on the joint worship? Yoga is individual, but religion is communal. Does not therefore Bharat Samaj propose to have all Hindus to sit jointly in Sandhya or Havana, and to jointly recite Veda Mantras? Is this not considered essential for the sake of 'Unity' among the Hindus? If so, the work will be twofold, viz., (1) First to purify and simplify all the rituals necessary in the life of a Hindu, and (2) to test them in the light of occult knowledge and explain them Theosophically. For the first it would save time and labour if we would take up the rituals as already purified and simplified by the Arya Samaj, and so made to conform to the Vedic authority. The Bharat Samaj need not accept them on their authority, but examine them how far they are acceptable and how far they require modifications. For the second test—the occult—we in the Bharat Samaj lack the Seer as much as the Arya Samajists, and have to wait for one who may be spared by the Theosophical Society. But if we reject many of the essential parts of the rituals in the purification we are doing without the help of the Seer, I fear, we may omit many parts which might be essential but which will not come up before the Seer for test when he finds time to turn his attention in this direction. Hence I for myself am not in favour of further simplification of the rituals than what the Arya Samaj has already done. The Veda Mantras used by the Sanatan Dharma and the Arya Samajists are mostly common, and there should be no difficulty in this.

I am an advocate of Union among the Hindus, and I wish to take advantage of any movement that tends to Unity among them; for I feel that the drawback in the progress of the Hindus is due to the want of this Union—as will be seen from a short note of mine "Some suggestions for Union among the Hindus" which has appeared in the BHARATA DHARMA for April, 1923. I am therefore strongly in favour of a system of Sandhya and Havana and other rituals in which all the Hindus may combine in a joint performance—as in church service. It was with this idea that I referred the first word of the motto of the Bharat Samaj 'Unity' to guide us in the

framing of the rituals. To this your reply is that "the unity mentioned in the motto of the Samāj not only refers to the Unity of the Hindus, but of all people in the world". I admit this, but can we realise this without showing examples of Unity among ourselves, i.e., among the members of the Samāj in particular and among the Hindus in general, and then among the people in the world. I might here refer you to the chapter "Loving Kindness of the Star" in *Starlight* by Bishop Leadbeater—which would show that our love cannot be equal to all, it must be deeper towards those who are nearer and dearer to us than to others. For the same reasons the Bhārat Samāj can also work for the Unity among the Hindus without fear of marring the unity among 'the people in the world'.

I would also like to know how the Bhārat Samāj propose to work for the 'Unity' for the people in the world, i.e., what lines it proposes to adopt to reach that end of 'unity' as also of 'Purity' and 'Service'. The principles of the Samāj do not specify the lines on which it will work for these three objects for the world. These three points 'Unity', 'Purity' and 'Service' require some explanation, so that no doubt may be left in the mind of a person willing to join the Samāj or in the mind of the person who has already joined it under some wrong notion.

Lastly I would request you to please publish either in whole or in part (after omitting such portions as you think proper) this letter of mine in the BHĀRATA DHARMA of the next issue, so that I may be able to gather the views of the members of the Bhārat Samāj on the points raised by me. I may assure you that these are the points which have been raised by some other members of the Theosophical Society with whom I had the opportunity to talk regarding the Bhārat Samāj.

THE BHĀRATA SAMĀJA

(From *New India*, 21-6-1924)

Two more Upanayanams were performed last Sunday under the auspices of the Samāja at the Guindy National High School Central Hall. The candidates this time were the sons of Messrs. P. R. Sundararajam Aiyar, T.S. Lodge Organiser, and of M. S. Venngopal Rao of the Indian Book Shop, Benares. Pandit A. Mahadeva Shastri, B.A., kindly officiated and initiated the boys into the Gayatri Mantra at a solemn celebration of the ceremony. It was an impressive one, free from the careless noise and pompous circumstance which generally mar the spiritual significance of the occasion.

S. R. R.

TEMPLE AND

The following payments are acknowledged with thanks:

NAME	PLACE	Rs.	A.	P.
Amounts previously acknowledged		13,597	8	5
Mr. K. S. Lakshminarasimha Chetty	Chennapatna	10	0	0
" S. D. Srinivasiah	"	15	0	0
To be carried		13,622	8	5

NAME	PLACE	Rs.	A.	P.
Mr. Putta Narasimha Chetty	Carried forward	13,622	8	5
" L. C. Srinivasiah	Chennapatna	23	4	0
" Y. V. Srinivasiah	"	10	0	0
" L. Subba Rao	"	15	0	0
" M. Sanjeevarayappa	"	5	0	0
" R. T. Narasimhaiah	"	10	0	0
" Rama Sanjiviah Reddy	"	15	0	0
" R. Sanjeevarayappa	"	5	0	0
" Elekeri Dasagowda	"	5	0	0
" D. Srinivasa Iyengar	Bangalore	50	0	0
" T. Nanjundappa	Dodballapur	10	0	0
" A. Nanjundayya	"	5	0	0
Messrs. T. Siddappa and Bros.	"	5	0	0
Through Mr. Siddalingiah	"	15	12	0
Collections less than Rs. 5	"	4	0	0
Mr. M. Perumal Naidu	Shervey	5	0	0
" G. P. Mallappa	Kallegal	10	0	0
" and Mrs. A. Venkatakrishna Chetty	"	25	0	0
" R. Manganna Gowda	"	5	0	0
" M. Ramiah	"	5	0	0
Messrs. G. Jyotappa & Madappa	"	16	4	0
Mr. P. C. Chinna-swami	"	20	0	0
" C. K. Nagiah	"	10	0	0
Mrs. Govramma	"	5	0	0
Mr. A. S. Venkatakrishna Chetty	"	5	0	0
" Palepalli Srinivasa Chetty	"	5	0	0
" S. Basappa	Mudugunda	5	0	0
" S. Chinna Mallappa Devuru	"	10	0	0
Collections less than Rs. 5	"	4	0	0
Madhuvanchalli T. S.	Madhuvanahalli	20	0	0
Mr. B. Seshiah Chetty	Kallegal	5	0	0
" A. Appaji Chetty	"	5	0	0
" B. Cheluvu Ranga Chetty	"	5	0	0
Messrs. A. Rudrappa & Nangappa	"	5	0	0
Mr. A. Chengalraya Chetty	"	10	0	0
" L. Venugopala Chetty	"	5	0	0
" A. B. Chinnavira Chetty	"	10	0	0
Collections through Srimati Govramma & A. Parvatamma	"	41	10	0
Collections less than Rs. 5	"	13	6	0
Srimati Jayalakshminamma	Kallegal	5	0	0
Collections through P. C. Chinna-swami	"	15	4	0
Mr. Vengiah Chetty	Zedatore	10	0	0
" B. Krishnaswami Iyengar	"	25	0	0
" K. V. Subramanya Sastry	"	15	0	0
" N. Sureshhoja	Krishnarayasagar	25	0	0
" N. Krishna Iyengar	"	10	0	0
" A. Ramaswami Iyer	"	5	0	0
" K. Gangaraju	Tadepalligudem	100	0	0
" V. V. Patankar	Krishnarayasagar	5	0	0
" K. V. Korvi	"	10	0	0
" M. Hayagriva Rao	"	10	0	0
" K. Venkataswami Iyer	Nanjungod	25	0	0
Amount less than Rs. 5	"	2	0	0
Mr. K. Venkataraniiah	Krishnarayasagar	10	0	0
" R. S. Purniah	Nanjungod	10	0	0
" P. Papanna	"	15	0	0
" M. Narasimhaiah	"	5	0	0
A Widow	"	5	0	0
Mr. N. Tippiah	"	5	0	0
" K. Lakshmana Iyengar	"	5	0	0
Bhagini Sava Samaja through Mrs. Amrta Bai	Mysore	10	0	0
Collections in Mandya through Mr. S. Krishnamurti	Mandya	26	8	0
Mr. M. N. Ramaswamy Iyer (Marriage contribution)	"	5	0	0
Miscellaneous receipts	"	2	0	0
Total		14,416	8	5

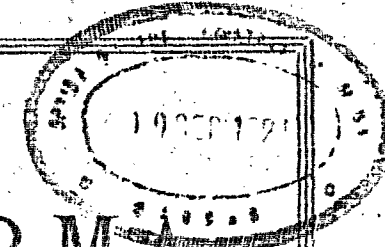
C. SUBBARAMAYYA,

Secretary, Bhārat Samāja.

16th July, 1924



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BHĀRATA DHARMA

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

VOL. II

AUGUST, 1924—RAKTAKSHI—SHRAVANA

No. 10

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RESUSCITATION OF DHARMA

RESUSCITATE Dharma—this seems to be the clarion call of the Bharata Samaja to the Hindus of the present day. When we lay stress on the necessity of propagating the truth that Diksha or the life of dedication to the Service of the Lord marks the true spiritual aspirant—the true *Brahmana*—we are making an attempt at the resuscitation of Dharma or true religion. It is not that there is no Dharma in any form at present. For the matter of that, there is in a sense more Dharma than needed. We mean that in elaborate rituals and ceremonies and other forms of worship we have enough of Dharma and more. But this kind of Dharma is not the one we seek to resuscitate at present. It is that long lost Yoga—which Lord Shri Krishna revived by way of teaching it to Arjuna (as in the early chapters of the Bhagavad-Gita) on the battle-field of Kurukshetra—that needs resuscitation. As to the existing rituals and other forms of worship, they have to be restored to their original essential forms which present to view in a graphic form the fundamental truths of Dharma which ought to be clearly grasped and cherished by every spiritual aspirant.

We will now do well to refer to what are those vital truths which go to constitute the Yoga or Dharma, as the Lord Shri Krishna taught it to Arjuna. There are two important aspects of Dharma or Yoga to which the Lord draws special attention as having been long lost sight of. Dharma involves two distinct attitudes spoken of as *Sankhya-buddhi* and *Yoga-buddhi*. *Sankhya-buddhi* means the right idea of one's own true Self. The spiritual aspirant should bear in mind that the Self is

Eternal, of the same nature as God, changeless, not subject to birth and death, not subject to pleasures and pains. He should look upon these changes as moods of the bodily organism and must try to rise above the illusion which has hitherto led him to identify himself with these changing moods of the bodily organism. The second aspect of Dharma is the right attitude towards one's life-activities. Consistently with the right idea of the Self, the spiritual aspirant should use the activities of his organism not for securing sensual pleasures and personal gratifications, but for the achievement of the high Divine purposes of the world-progress. He should regard himself as a servant of the Lord using his organism and its activities in the service of the Master.

This Yoga or Dharma is intended to lead the aspirant to the realisation of his oneness with the Divine Lord, through several stages. At every stage the two aspects of Yoga will stand out prominent, namely, the right view of the Self and the right attitude towards life-activities. The first stage of activities of the spiritual aspirant is spoken of as Deva-Yajna. This exactly corresponds to the discharge of the threefold debt—due to Rishis, Pitris and Devas—of which the Veda speaks as incumbent upon every one who becomes a Brahmana, that is to say, upon every one who has dedicated himself to the service of the Lord. The Deva-Yajna, or service through co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy, constitutes, as we have explained more than once, the spiritual aspirant's first steps on the path of service. Thereby he serves the Divine Lord through serving his fellow-creatures in this world of the Lord's creation. As he goes on he feels an ever increasing satisfaction in thus serving the Lord.

regarding himself as one with the Lord. He feels he has nothing to do or avoid in his own interests. As he grows in this attitude of identification with the Divine Lord he approaches the realisation of his own Divinity.

For every man his special line of action is marked out by his nature-born tendencies; and every spiritual aspirant can find out these tendencies by watching them with some care. Whatever the special line of activity, he should be careful not to be led away by personal likes and dislikes. It is easy to do so where the line of one's own duty is clear. But where it is not quite clear he should judge it from the standpoint of the true Self who sits above the senses, mind and reason. When he places himself on that level, the view becomes clearer and spiritual power accrues to the aspirant. With the accession of the strength of the true Self thus gained, the aspirant can successfully fight his battle with *Kama* the arch-enemy of all spiritual devotees.

Such are the main ideas imparted in the Lord's discourse on Yoga to Arjuna. It is these truths which we find embodied in the ritual of Diksha or Dedication. And these principles of life are also worked out in Hinduism and its principal *Samskaras* or sacraments such as *Upanayana* (Initiation) and *Vivaha* (marriage). In administering the ceremony of *Upanayana* in a simple form the Bharata Samaja has attempted to show to the students how it is the first step on the path of spiritual culture.

THE TRUE VEDIC BASIS OF HINDUISM

A LECTURE

By PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI

(Continued from p. 34)

Vaisampāyana said:

"This Dharma was learnt by Nārada in its essence and with all its secrets directly from Nārāyana, the Lord of the world, O King. So this is the mighty Dharma, and it was related, O best of Kings, in the Hari-Gītā (the Bhagavad-Gītā) in a compressed form. Know Krishna-Dvaipāyana-Vyāsa as Lord Nārāyana Himself: who else but Pundarikāksha can compose the Mahā-bhārata?"

Janamejaya asked:

"By whom was this Dharma related,—by what Deva or by what Rishi? What is the Path of the ekāntins, the single-minded devotees, and when did it originate?"

Vaisampāyana answered:

"When the rival armies of the Kurus and Pāndavas were marshalled in battle-array, when Arjuna was despondent, this Dharma was declared by the Lord Himself. The coming and the going of the universe has been taught to thee already. This Dharma is indeed very obscure and hard for the uncultured to understand.

This, which is the essence of all the Vedas, had its origin in the very beginning, in the Kṛita-Yuga itself, and it is preserved by Lord Nārāyana Himself."

"In this seventh incarnation of Brahmā out of the Lotus (Padma), the Dharma was taught in the beginning of this Yuga by Nārāyana Himself to the Grandsire (Brahmā) the Purest One, who held the whole world in Himself. The Grandsire taught this Dharma to Dakṣha, and Dakṣha gave it to the eldest son of his daughter, Aditya the elder brother of Savitar. From Him did Vivasvat receive the Dharma; and in the beginning of the Tretā-Yuga Vivasvat gave it to Manu, who gave it to Ikṣvāku for the further progress of the world. Taught by Ikṣvāku, it pervaded the whole world. It shall recede again to Nārāyana at the end of the cycle. And the Dharma of yatis (devotees) also was related to you before in a compressed form in the Hari-Gītā. This Dharma was duly learnt with all its secrets and in all its essence by Nārada from Nārāyana, the Lord of the world. Thus this great Dharma was the primary, eternal Law, hard to understand and hard to practise. It is steadily practised by the Sātvatas. By this knowledge of Dharma, by well-directed action, accompanied with the virtue of *ahimsa* (harmlessness), Lord Hari will be pleased."

"It is hard to find many single-minded devotees (Ekāntins). If the world could be pervaded by the ekāntins who have developed the virtue of *ahimsa*, who have realised Ātman, who are ever concerned in the well-being of all creatures, then will dawn the golden age Kṛita-Yuga, devoid of all selfish action."

From these passages it is clear that the teaching of the Gītā represents the Prakṛiti-Dharma, the Primary Law taught in the original Veda. There the Lord Shri Krishna teaches the true law which had long been lost sight of, condemning some of the then existing religious practices and institutions as detrimental to spiritual progress. He had a very low opinion of the Vedas of his day and their teachings, which were surely in keeping with the unspiritual condition of the people of that age, who were sensuous, greedy and militant. He promulgated once more the true teachings of the original Veda, the true philosophy and religion, the true path of Dharma, of Yoga as He called it. The following verses from the Gītā will shew in what esteem He held the teachings of the Vedas of His day:

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।

वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥

कामात्मानः स्वर्गपराः जन्मकर्मफलप्रदां ।

क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यमतिं प्रति ॥

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयाऽपहतचेतसां ।

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदाः निश्चैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।

निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥

(II, 42-45.)

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापाः

यज्ञैरिष्टा स्वर्गंति प्रार्थयन्ते ।

ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-

मश्नन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान् ॥

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं

क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।

एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्नाः

गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥

(IX, 20-21.)

"No conviction of a resolute nature is formed in the mind of those who are attached to pleasure and power, and whose minds are drawn away by that flowery speech which the unwise—enamoured of Vedic utterances, declaring there is nothing else, full of desire, having *svarga* (heaven) as their goal—utter, (a speech) which promises birth as the reward of actions, and which abounds in specific acts for the attainment of pleasure and power, O son of Prithā.

"The Vedas treat of the triad of Gunas. Be, O Arjuna, free from the triad of Gunas, free from pairs, free from acquisition and preservation, ever remaining in the *sattva* (purity, goodness), and self-possessed."

"Men of the three Vedas, the Soma-drinkers, purified from sin, worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the goal of heaven: they reach the holy world of the Lord of Devas and enjoy in heaven the heavenly pleasures of Devas.

"They, having enjoyed that spacious world of *svarga*,—their merit (*punya*) exhausted,—enter the world of mortals: thus following the Dharma of the three Vedas and seeking objects of desire, theirs is the lot of going and coming."

(To be continued)

LIBERAL HINDUISM

By SHIVA NARAYAN BHARGAVA

It has been a puzzle to oriental scholars, Census Superintendents and other European writers to define "Hinduism". They are bewildered to search out a criterion on which to base the definition of "Hindu". Various persons attach various meanings to the word "Hindu". Some in foreign countries apply the word to all the residents of India, and include therein Parsis, Indian Christians and Indian Muhammadans also. Others apply it to all persons who profess any of the religions originating in India, and thereby include Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Brahmo, Ārya and Brāhmanic religion. Yet others confine the word to Brahmo, Ārya and Brāhmanic religion. But there are some who restrict it to only Brāhmanic religion. Thus various persons attach various notions to the use of the word "Hindu," and thus make it difficult to define it.

To derive the word 'Hindu' from 'Sindhu'—a river in the Punjab—and thus to deduce its meaning, has proved to be a failure, a hopeless task; for Sindhu (Indus) is neither a sacred basis of Hindu religion, nor

is a modern Hindu a resident on the banks of Sindhu. To derive it from "Hindusthan (Hindu-sthan or India)" is also not possible; as it is to derive a word from its compound. Therefore some like to derive the word "Hindu" from "Indra" who was the forefather of the race, called "Indra-baushi" (or Chandra-baushi), who ruled the land named after him, as Indria (or India); and the capital of India was also named after him as "Indra Prasth". I do not know how far this interpretation is correct, but even if correct it in no way helps us to frame a definition of 'Hinduism' as a religion, though it may help to define 'Hindu' as a race, or 'Hindusthan' as a country. Hindusthan is a comparatively modern word for the country, known in ancient times as 'Ārya Varta' or 'Bhārat Varsha,' and Hindu as a race is inhabitant of that country; just as Englishman, Irishman, etc., are inhabitants of England, Ireland, etc.

It is the assertion of many people that religion was national, or confined to a country, in ancient times. Hence the religion of the country was also named after it: Egyptians, Kelts, Parsis are not only various races inhabiting certain countries but also different religions. In that sense Hindu is also a religion. In the same sense, some prefer to name the religion of the Hindus as "Ārya Dharma" and "Bhārat Dharma"—whence also "Ārya Samāj" and "Bhārat Samāj". But that does not help us much in defining "Hinduism".

All existing religions derive their basis from their respective Founders: Buddhism from Buddha, Deva, Christianity from Jesus Christ, Mahamadanism from Muhammad, and so on. But Hinduism has no such founder, and is not based on the teachings of any person however great. It is based on the teachings of the sacred Vedas which are believed to be inspired books. They were submerged under the mass of superstition in the long course of ages, that even their existence was forgotten. It was Swāmi Dayānand Saraswati of Ārya Samāj, who brought them again in prominence in modern times, and named the religion of Hindus as 'Vaidika Dharma'. This defines Hinduism as the religion based on the four Vedas, and gives the much longed for criteria and definition for it. Pandit A. Mahadeva Shastri, B.A., rightly admits when he says "Hinduism claims the Veda for its basis and is known as Vedic Religion or Vaidika Dharma" (BHARATA DHARMA, Vol. II, p. 16).

Some may object that all the Hindus do not believe in the Vedas, or all the four Vedas, and that therefore their authority can neither be binding on all the Hindus, nor can they be common basis of the common religion for all the Hindus. If it is so, it is due to indifference to religion and attachment to superstition, as a result of the general downfall of the nation. But that does not rid Hinduism of Vedas as its basis. On the other hand it increases the responsibility of those who know, to emphasise that basis. It is therefore a surprise to see that in framing the objects of the Bhārat Samāj, no attempt has been made to define Hinduism, or to mention the name of 'Vedas' as a basis of Hinduism. This has been a puzzle to me for some time.

Vedas are believed to be the inspired books, and are held in highest esteem by the Hindus. They are the source of all the great religions of the world, as Pandit A. Mahadeva Shastri has also admitted to a certain extent; and are the oldest scriptures now existent.

THE TRUE VEDIC BASIS OF HINDUISM

A LECTURE

By PANDIT A. MAHADEVA SASTRI

(Continued from p. 39)

In these words did the Divine Teacher, Shri Krishna, condemn the Vedas of His day, as not teaching the way to liberation, as binding the souls to a transmigratory life in the region of samsāra. The seeker of liberation was exhorted to give up those Vedas. It would appear that the Vedas of the day did not include the Upanishad, which is entirely devoted to Brahmayidya, and which therefore cannot be said to relate to *traigunya*, to a life of material concerns. The Upanishad's teachings were then evidently kept in the back-ground and must have been given out to the world since the time of Lord Shri Krishna. The writings which passed for Vedas in those days treated only of the sacrificial rites of an elaborate kind and countenanced the institutions which imposed social and religious disabilities on women and lower classes. The Divine Teacher had also to correct the wrong notions of the people about Sannyāsa and Karm-Yoga. He had to declare that the path of devotion was open to all, to women, to Vaishyas, to Shūdras, and even to outcastes, who by social prejudice were altogether shut out from the conventional path of Vedic Religion. Having condemned these religious and socio-religious conventions based on ignorance, vanity, pride of birth, and bigotry, the Divine Teacher clearly, though very briefly, taught the essential truths of the primary Vedic Religion and the true path of liberation.

CORRUPTION OF SHRUTI AND SMRITI

7. The above traditional account of the vicissitudes of Vedic Religion must give pause to those of us who blindly believe that the conventional rules and regulations laid down in what now pass for Shrutis and Smritis are unalterable and inviolable Divine commands. If they only know what changes and interpolations our scriptures have been subjected to in the long lapse of ages, they will surely change their opinion. The Purānas give a clear account of the corruptions which crept into the Vedas and Smritis in the Dvāpara Yuga—in the age that has passed away, the age of agnosticism and doubt that precedes the age of Kali, of rationalism, of philosophic materialism and nihilism, of spiritual darkness, of a practically complete repudiation in life of true Vedic Religion. I let the Purāna give, in its own words, an account of the process of corruption which the Shruti and the Smriti underwent in Dvāpara and Kali:

द्वापरादौ प्रजानां तु सिद्धिस्तथायुगे तु या ।
परिवृत्ते युगे तस्मिन् ततः सा संप्रणश्यति ॥
ततः प्रवर्तिते तासां प्रजानां द्वापरे पुनः ।
लोभोऽधृतिर्वणिग्युद्धं तत्त्वानामविनिश्चयः ॥
संभेदश्चैव वर्णानां कर्मणां तु विपर्ययः ।
याचना वधः पशोर्दण्डो मदी दम्भोऽक्षमाऽवलम् ।
तथा रजस्तमोभूयः प्रवृत्ते द्वापरे पुनः ॥

आद्ये कृते न धर्मोऽस्ति स त्रेतायां प्रवर्तितः ।
द्वापरे व्याकुलो भूत्वा प्रणश्यति कलौ पुनः ॥
वर्णानां द्वापरे धर्माः संकीर्यन्ते तथाऽश्रमाः ।
द्वैधमुत्पद्यते चैव युगे तस्मिन् श्रुतौ स्मृतौ ॥
द्वैधात् श्रुतेः स्मृतेश्चैव निश्चयो नाभिगम्यते ।
अनिश्चयावगमनात् धर्मतत्त्वं न विद्यते ॥
धर्मतत्त्वे ह्यविज्ञाते मतिभेदस्तु जायते ।
परस्परविभिन्नास्ते दृष्टीनां विभ्रमेण तु ॥
अयं धर्मो ह्ययं नेति निश्चयो नाभिगम्यते ।
करणानां च वैकल्यात् कारणस्याप्यनिश्चयात् ॥
मतिभेदे च तेषां वै दृष्टीनां विभ्रमो भवेत् ।
ततो दृष्टिविभिन्नैस्तैः कृतमत्याकुलं त्विदम् ॥
एको वेदश्चतुष्पादः संहत्य तु पुनः पुनः ।
संक्षेपादायुषश्चैव व्यस्यते द्वापरेऽपि ॥
वेदश्चैकश्चतुर्धा तु व्यस्यते द्वापरादिषु ।
ऋषिपुत्रैः पुनर्वेदा मिश्रन्ते दृष्टिविभ्रमैः ॥
मन्त्रब्राह्मणविन्यासैः स्वरकमविपर्ययैः ।
संहिता ऋग्यजुस्सामां संहन्यन्ते श्रुतिभिः ॥
सामान्याद्वैकृताच्चैव दृष्टिभिर्नैः कचित् कचित् ।
ब्राह्मणं कल्पसूत्राणि मन्त्रप्रवचनानि च ॥
अन्ये तु प्रस्थितास्तान् वै केचित्तान् प्रत्यवस्थिताः ॥
द्वापरेषु प्रवर्तन्ते भिन्नार्थैस्तैः स्वदर्शनैः ॥
एकमाध्वर्यवं पूर्वमासीत् द्वैधं तु तत्र पुनः ।
सामान्यविपरीतार्थैः कृतं शास्त्रकुलं त्विदम् ॥
आध्वर्यवं च प्रस्थानैर्बहुधा व्याकुलीकृतम् ।
तथैवाथर्वकं क्सात्रां विकल्पैश्चाप्यसंक्षयैः ॥
व्याकुलो द्वापरेऽप्यर्थः क्रियते भिन्नदर्शनैः ।
द्वापरे संनिवृत्ते ते वेदा नश्यन्ति वै कलौ ॥
तेषां विपर्ययोत्पन्ना भवन्ति द्वापरे पुनः ।
अवृष्टिर्मरणं चैव तथैव व्याधुपद्रवाः ॥
वाङ्मनःकर्मजैर्दुःखैर्निर्वेदो जायते ततः ।
निर्वेदाज्जायते तेषां दुःखमोक्षविचारणा ॥
विचारणायां वैराग्यं वैराग्यादोषदर्शनम् ।
दोषाणां दर्शनाच्चैव द्वापरे ज्ञानसंभवः ॥

Moral turpitude.—At the commencement of the Dvāpara the powers which the people possessed in the Tretā-Yuga

disappear as the cyclic age changes. Then again, when the Dvāpara age is in full swing, among the people arise greed, fickleness, struggle for wealth, uncertain knowledge of things, mixture of *Varnas* and interchange of their duties, mendicancy, slaughter of animals, retribution, pride, ostentation, want of endurance, want of strength. Then the *rajas* (principle of activity) becomes dominated by *tamas* (darkness) as the Dvāpara progresses further on. In the first age, the *Krita-Yuga*, there is no Dharma or external law; it starts into being in the Tretā; it gets confused in Dvāpara and then disappears in Kali.

Reason beclouded.—In Dvāpara, the duties of *Varnas* as well as *ashramas* become mixed up, and in that age divergence arises in *Shruti* and *Smriti*. Owing to this divergence in *Shruti* and *Smriti*, no certitude is attained; and because of this want of certitude, none knows Dharma in truth. When the truth of Dharma is unknown, there arises difference in opinions. People being divided in opinion owing to their illusory visions, they never arrive at certain knowledge as to what is Dharma and what is not. Owing to imperfection in their organs of perception, and for want of certain knowledge of the cause, differences of opinion arise among them, and their theories are warped by illusion.

Vedas tampered with.—Holding divergent views, they make a confused mass of this whole (body of knowledge). The one fourfold Veda is again and again abridged in Dvāpara-Yuga and divided into parts, owing to the shortness of life. The one Veda is divided into four parts in ages like Dvāpara. The Vedas are subjected to further changes in the hands of the *Rishi-putras*, descendants of the original sages, owing to differences in their views. Then the *Shrutarshis*, scholars by learning, combine and abridge in various ways the detached *Riks*, *Sāmans*, and *Yajus*, adding new mantras and *brāhmanas*, and introducing changes in accent and order of texts, sometimes agreeing with one another, and sometimes differing according to their divergent views. A few scholars start with new *brāhmanas*, with new *Kalpa-sūtras*, with new texts of *mantras*, while others oppose them with their own texts. Thus do they go on multiplying texts in Dvāpara with their own texts of conflicting doctrines, each school adhering to its own peculiar view. The text of the *Adhvaryu* priest was at first only one; and it has become twofold, the two *shāstras* agreeing in some respects and differing in others. The text of the *Adhvaryu* priest has thus in the end become full of very divergent and confusing views. Similarly, the doctrines of the *Rig-Veda*, *Sāma-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda* become greatly confused in endless variety owing to the divergent views of the different schools. When Dvāpara has ended, these Vedas disappear in Kali.

Purified Reason.—The results of this distorted vision in Dvāpara are seen in want of rain, premature death, disease, and other troubles. People suffer misery as the result of their unrighteous speech, thought, and deed. This gives rise to disgust, and disgust leads them to seek liberation from misery. When they begin to investigate, dispassion (*Vairāgya*) springs up, and in their dispassion they perceive faults; and with the perception of faults, true knowledge dawns in Dvāpara.—*Matsya-Purāna*, Adh. 144, verses 2-20; *Vāyu-Purāna*, Adh. 58, verse 2-21.

THOROUGH SIFTING IS NECESSARY AND FRUITFUL

8. I am afraid I have tired your patience by these rather long quotations, and my only excuse for making

them is that I have to make good my position against the extreme views about the authority of the Vedas and the Smritis we now have. If, on the authority of the writings which the orthodox hold sacred, I could prove that the Shrutis and the Smritis we now have are not really quite so genuine as they are supposed to be, I have almost won my case. The passages cited above from the *Agama*, the *Purāna*, and the *Mahābhārata* lead to the inevitable conclusion that the Vedas and the Smritis we now have contain a modicum of the original Vedic teaching which in the hands of its not overscrupulous custodians has gone through a long process of addition, omission and alteration. We have therefore to make a thorough investigation in order to get at the truth underlying the institutions based on the Shrutis and the Smritis of our day. When, in the light of the true Vedic teaching adumbrated in the *Gītā* and the *Upanishads*, we study the institution of caste as described in our *shāstras*, we will be able to know on what basis of truth it rests, through what stages of development it has passed in the course of its history, what are the uses and the abuses of the system, and what remedial measures we will have to adopt in the present state of our society to ensure further advance. Such a study will surely suggest the measures by which to bring about a harmonious blending of different castes, to improve the status of women, to reform the marriage regulations, to remove the social and religious disabilities of caste and sex, to elevate the depressed or untouchable classes, and to effectively deal with such other social problems as sea-voyage. It will, on the whole, lead to a purification of all our religious and social institutions. This clearing of ground is found necessary for a fruitful investigation of our religious and socio-religious regulations as laid down in our Shrutis and Smritis. This done we may proceed to study the origin of caste at our next meeting.

BHARATA SAMAJ AND ĀRYA SAMAJ

ON the Vedic Basis of Hinduism and the necessity of incorporating belief in the Vedas in the chief objects of the Bhārata Samāja, two letters were addressed to the Secretary of the Bhārata Samāja by Mr. Shiva Nārāyana Bhārgava of Jhansi. These letters as well as an article on Liberal Hinduism by the same author were published in the June, July and August issues of BHARATA DHARMA with an invitation to the readers of the magazine interested in the question to express their views on the points at issue. So far I have not received any communications from the readers of the magazine. Nor am I aware if Mr. Bhārgava has gathered the views of any of the members of the Bhārata Samāja on the points raised by him, as he hoped to be able to do if his letters were published in the BHARATA DHARMA. I now proceed to make a few brief comments on some of the points raised by Mr. Bhārgava in his letters and the article referred to. These comments are offered in my individual capacity and should not therefore be taken as the official pronouncements of the Samāja. But they may have a value of their own as proceeding from the Editor of the official organ of the Bhārata Samāja, who has had to study the several points at issue in the course of his editorial work.

BHARATA SAMAJA AND THE VEDA

The main question raised by Mr. Bhārgava may be put in his own words thus: Hinduism being rightly

defined as 'Vaidika-Dharma,' "would it not be wise to enjoin the belief in the Vedas and incorporate that belief in the objects of the Bhārata Samāja?" He requests each member of the Bhārata Samāja to consider the necessity of defining Liberal Hindūism as a religion based on Vedas. But the Bhārata Samāja has a difficulty in giving an unqualified assent to this proposition. The terms *Hindūism* and *Vedas* have no definite connotations. They have at least two connotations. Each of them has a wider and a narrower sense. In its narrower sense, Hindūism means that special religion of the Hindūs which nowadays is intimately associated with the system of caste, while in its wider sense it comprehends several other forms of Hindū faith which in a way repudiate the system of caste. Among these last may be mentioned, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Jainism and Sikhism. Likewise the term Veda has a wider and a narrower sense. In its narrower sense it means the body of literature known nowadays to the people as Vedas, which comprise *Mantras* and *Brāhmaṇas* relating to great sacrificial rituals and *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads* embodying the theology and the philosophy which mark the further developments of the Vedic worship, of sacrificial rituals. In the wider sense the Veda is the body of teaching setting forth fundamental truths and eternal verities as well as the laws of spiritual progress which can be comprehended and followed by highly enlightened souls of perfect purity. According to our Sacred Tradition it is from this body of teaching, called the Root-Veda, that the great Rshis promulgated from time to time a body of truths and laws of life presented in a form which could be comprehended and followed by the ordinary people of the day. Such is the origin of all the great religions of the world including Hindūism proper. The Veda we now have, called a derivative Veda as distinguished from the Root-Veda, is the basis of Karma-Yoga, the religion of action which is suited to the people who are of active temperament. It is this form of Hindūism which is associated with the system of culture known as Varāṣāstrama Dharma and which has degenerated into the modern system of caste. As distinguished from these there are among Hindūs people of other temperaments—devotional and philosophical—to whom Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Saiva and Vaishnava forms of religion are best suited; and these systems are based each on its own original scriptures other than the Vedas we now have. Their followers repudiate the Vedic system of sacrificial rituals involving animal slaughter though they believe in the Eternal Root-Veda teaching fundamental truths and ultimate realities,—the common fountain-source of all great religions. The Bhārata Samāja, as standing for an all-comprehensive Hindūism, cannot reasonably enjoin on its members belief in the Vedas we now have, or incorporate that belief in the declared objects.

I do not think that this question was discussed when the constitution of the Bhārata Samāja was drafted. In view, however, of the teaching of our Sacred Tradition that the Veda we now have is only the basis of one particular form of Hindūism, it would seem inadvisable now to raise the question of imposing belief in the Veda on any other scripture as an article of faith on the members of the Bhārata Samāja. Insistence on the inviolable authority of any scripture or scriptures may lead to splits according to various interpretations of the texts, and the Samāja is perhaps wise in demanding from its members a declaration of belief in such truths and principles only

as can be stated in clear terms and about which there cannot probably be any misunderstanding.

The Bhārata Samāja cannot, however, be said to have ignored the Veda which all the Hindūs may believe in. As I have stated above there exists a Veda which is the basis of all forms of Hindūism, nay, of all the great religions of the world. But that Veda, as our Sacred Tradition says, is inaccessible to the ordinary people, though it is said that its teachings, as far as they can be comprehended by ordinary men, are very briefly outlined in the Bhagavad-Gītā. Faith in such a Veda may only amount to faith in the existence of a body of high teachings in the custody of Great Beings who form the hierarchy of Maharshis, and in the possibility for spiritual aspirants of attaining through ordinary religion to a level of spiritual progress where perfect knowledge and perfect devotion embodied in the Root-Veda will be possible. This attainment may be presented as the ideal goal of all spiritual progress; but it may not be imposed as an article of faith on the members of the Bhārata Samāja. The Samāja has, however, to discharge the duty of showing how Hindūism in its narrower as well as its wider aspect is ultimately based on the Root-Veda and even to emphasise the common Vedic origin of all the great religions of the world and their brotherhood based on that origin. The Samāja has been doing this work through its magazine *Bhārata Dharma*, and it may well think also of other means, if any, of spreading these ideas.

BHARATA SAMAJA AND VEDIC RITUALS

Though no declaration of faith in the Veda has been demanded by Bhārata Samāja on the part of its members, Vedic rituals have not been neglected. It has taken much trouble to formulate and explain the meaning of the Vedic rituals in their original pure forms. For instance, the rituals of *Sandhya*, *Upanayana* and *Vivāha* (marriage) have been traced through the several stages of their development to the earliest forms; and the spiritual ideals underlying them in their pristine purity have been clearly brought out. For the use of those who want to observe rituals—and they form a large majority among the members of the Samāja as well as outside—the rituals have been published in their simplified forms without omitting any of the essential parts. The underlying ideas and the meaning of the several parts of the ceremonies have been clearly explained, so that even those who do not understand the Vedic Mantras,—such as foreigners and many even among educated Hindūs,—may be able to follow the general trend of the ceremonies and take an intelligent part in them. In this way the Bhārata Samāja is doing much to make the Vedic rituals intelligible and attractive, and to impress the high spiritual value of the genuine forms of Vedic worship upon its members and the people at large.

It is mainly by thus popularising the spiritual ideals underlying Vedic worship and rituals and making them permeate the whole life of the intelligentsia that the Samāja seeks to promote *unity, purity and service*. In the articles appearing from time to time in the *BHARATA DHARMA* we have tried to show how Vedic Religion and its rituals embody the highest ideals of *unity, purity and service* that can be conceived by man in his present stage of evolution. Much emphasis has been laid on the idea underlying all *yajna*,—that man is of the same nature as the Divine Lord, that he should realise this inherent

unity of all men and the Lord by *yajna* or a life of self-sacrifice and service, and that this service consists in serving the whole sentient existence by way of discharging the triple debt due to *Devas, Rshis* and *Pitris*, the divine agents carrying on the world-evolution. It is this idea of service which underlies the rituals known as the five Mahā-yajnas, the great daily sacrificial rites, the true significance of which is so little understood by the average Hindū. The rituals are mainly symbolical; and whatever be their inherent value, their performance or omission would matter very little in the case of a devotee who is engaged in the due performance of the acts of service symbolised by those rituals. Hence it is that Bhārata Samāja has made the observance of rituals optional with its members.

While the Bhārata Samāja relies ultimately for the achievement of unity, purity and service on a comprehension of the highest ideals of Hindūism, it is prepared to adopt any other methods calculated to advance the realisation of those ends in view on however small a scale, provided those methods do not prove reprehensible to any section of the Samāja. It would also welcome all forms of congregational religious service and joint worship, calculated to engender and promote a spirit of unity among its members and the people at large. This is in fact one of the objects of the temple which the Samāja is erecting at its Headquarters in Adyar.

THE COMMON IDEAL

As a member of the Arya Samāj advocating Vaidika Dharma, Mr. Bhargava would very much like that the Bhārata Samāja which stands for Liberal Hindūism based on the Vedas should have the same ideals as the Arya Samāja, if he should continue to be a member of both the Samājas. He says he shall have to resign his membership in the one or the other if the ideals of the two are contradictory.

My answer to this is as follows. The two Samājas cherish the same ideal,—that of purifying and liberating the modern Hindūism. Though in the main their ideal is thus identical, yet there appear to be a few divergences between the view-points of some individual members of the two Samājas as regards certain details in the matter of procedure. Despite these differences, their methods do not seem quite so conflicting that one may not be a member of both at the same time. A few points of difference may be noted here.

DIFFERENT VIEW-POINTS

First as to rituals: The Arya Samajist seems to hold some rituals as necessary and must be made obligatory on all the fellow-members; whereas the Bhārata Samajist, though recognising the value of rituals in themselves, would leave their observance to the option of the individual members. He holds that rituals are not necessary for all, and they are not attractive to a few at least who would eschew all rituals and external worship while recognising the high spiritual ideals embodied in those rituals and acts of worship.

Secondly: There is a slight difference in the attitude of the two Samajists towards Vedas. Neither is prepared to accept the inviolable authority accorded by the orthodox Hindūs to the whole of the Veda now so called, composed of the *Mantras* and *Brāhmaṇas*. The Arya Samajist looks upon the Mantra portion alone as true and inspired Veda and regards the Brāhmaṇa portions

as made up of comments and explanations supplied by ordinary men. The Bhārata Samajist, on the other hand, looks upon the existing Veda as made up of a nucleus of original genuine texts of both Mantras and Brāhmaṇas, furnished by great Rshis, to which their custodians have later on added much that was of their own composition, thus enlarging the body of scriptures and making them corrupt. The genuine original teaching can be distinguished from the spurious teaching only by what is called higher criticism aided by intuition and by the light of our Sacred Tradition embodied in the Purāṇas and Itihāsas.

Thirdly: The Arya Samajist again demurs to the authority of the Purāṇa which tells us through what vicissitudes the Vedic Doctrine has passed in the course of ages and how it has become very corrupt by mutilations, modifications and additions. The Bhārata Samajist, on the other hand, regards the Purāṇa in its genuine portions as of supreme authority in its special province of the history of world-evolution, just as the Veda is held of supreme authority in the matter of Dharma, the ultimate realities and laws of spiritual life. The original genuine Purāṇa was promulgated by the Rshis of unerring wisdom like the Veda itself. And it is rightly laid down in our śāstras that for a proper understanding of the Vedic Dharma in its relation to the different stages of evolution, knowledge of the Sacred Tradition embodied in the Itihāsa and Purāṇa is essential.

Fourthly: There seems to be a distinction in the attitude of the two Samajists as regards the interpretation of the Vedic texts. The Arya Samajist would ignore or disregard the apparent or traditional interpretation of the Vedic Mantra-texts and put on them his own etymological interpretation irrespective of their ritualistic contexts. In this way he makes out that the Vedas never lay down animal sacrifices. The Bhārata Samajist, on the other hand, would take into account the apparent and traditional interpretation of the Vedic Mantras and try to explain the origin of those mantras and the rituals with which they are associated. Thus, for instance, in the case of animal sacrifices he makes out in the light of the Sacred Tradition and the Vedic texts themselves that such sacrifices are un-vedic and that they originated in an unholy desire of the worshipper to redeem himself from a pledged life of service and self-sacrifice, and in the instigation of some blood-thirsty devas who are prepared to reward their worshippers in some ways in return for animal offerings.

THE METHODS COMPLEMENTARY

Such differences in the view-points of the two Samajists do not affect their main ideal. They rather go to strengthen the main position. Both agree that there is much in the Vedic ritual which is of value to the generality of Hindūs, that the accepted Hindū scriptures including Vedas, Smṛtis and Purāṇas contain much that is foreign and even opposed to the true and genuine teaching of the Rshis, that such abominations as animal sacrifices are only perversions of the true Vedic Law. They agree as to the necessity of simplifying the existing Vedic rituals and making them more significant of the underlying truths of high spiritual value. In this process of simplifying rituals both deprecate the omission of any essential portions of the rituals. Any differences that are observable in their procedures only go

to make them complementary to each other. For instance, as Mr. Bhārgava himself observes, while the Ārya-Samāja emphasises the intellectual side of Hindū Religion, the other tries to bring into prominence its spiritual or theosophical side. From this point of view it would seem desirable to allow the two Samājas to work at the existing rituals each in its own way. The Ārya Samāja has long had a collection of simplified rituals; and the Bhārata Samāja also has simplified a few rituals. When the Bhārata Samāja has done its work of simplifying and explaining the Vedic rituals in its own way, then they may be put side by side with the Ārya Samāja's rituals and a good combination may be produced.

INTERNATIONALISM

A word about the internationalist attitude of the Liberal Hindūism advocated by the two Samājas. Both are in a way international inasmuch as they are prepared to admit foreigners to Hindūism. The Ārya Samāja, while admitting a foreigner to the Hindū Vedic culture, thereby professes to make a Hindū of the foreigner. The Bhārata Samāja, too, admits a foreigner to the Vedic culture of Liberal Hindūism; but there seems to be a doubt whether thereby he can become a Hindū in the ordinary acceptance of the term. The problem whether a liberal Christian or a liberal Muhammadan when admitted to the Vedic culture of Liberal Hindūism can cease to be a Christian or Muhammadan and become a Hindū for all practical purposes, involves legal points which have to be tackled by the eminent jurists among our fellow-members. But so far as the spiritual side is concerned, it does not seem to be inconsistent for a liberal Christian or Muhammadan to follow the discipline of Hindū spiritual culture and to remain a Christian or Muhammadan in other respects. Do we not now find Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, Śāktas and the like among the Hindūs, all professing to follow the discipline of Vedic culture, while worshipping the Supreme Being in different forms? All difficulties of the kind vanish when the essential spiritual unity recognised in all religions is emphasised and the different forms of its manifestation are duly comprehended and rightly appraised. Such seems to me to be the tacit internationalist attitude of the Bhārata Samāja, and I quote the following words of Aaron Wirpel, an American 'Progressive Religionist' as fairly indicating the position:

"I believe in the special mission of every man, nation and race. The experiences that we are being put through will prepare us for the work we can and will do.

"One whose life is consecrated to God loses the feeling of race distinction. I feel myself a Jew, yet my understanding of Truth makes me in perfect sympathy with Catholic and Protestant Christianity, Christian Science, Buddhism, Muhammadanism, Bahaism, Zoroastrianism, Theosophy, and New Thought, for at the altitude of truth all are the same. At lower levels of thought I must of necessity disagree with their conceptions, yet I feel the tie of brotherhood with their adherents."

A. MAHADEVA SASTRI

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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. 8.
 4. *Vedic Religion and Hindu Reform*, by A. Mahadeva Sastri, Price As. 2.
 5. *Bharata Dharma*, Vols. I and II, Rs. 1 each.
- Copies of the above can be had of the Manager, BHARATA DHARMA, Adyar.

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REVISION OF RULES

RULE II (i) of the Bhārata Samāja printed on page 6 of the Rules has been amended as under at a meeting of the General Body of the Samāja held at Adyar on 19-4-25.

"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 5 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 a payment of an initial Registration Fee of Three Rupees, which fee may be reduced or wholly remitted at the discretion of the Managing Body."

Any members-at-large of not less than 2 years standing, who is willing, may apply to the Secretary for a form of "Application for Associate Membership".

The number of Associate members on the rolls at present is only 30 while more than 200 are eligible to be enrolled as "Associates".

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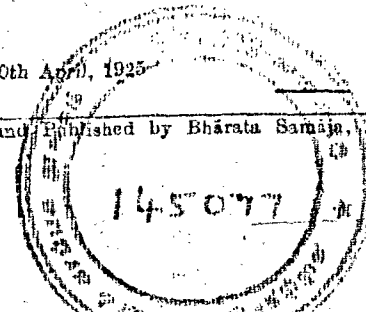
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" S. Venkatasubba Rao	Guntur	20	0	0	" D. Krishnaswami Naidu	Sambomahadevi	20	0	0
" C. Atmaram	Rajahmundry	5	0	0	Palakurichi Lodge, T.S.		31	0	0
Anonymous		2	0	0	Messrs. Subba Mudaliyar and				
Mr. V. Bhogappa Sastri		10	0	0	Sivasankara Mudaliyar	Madapuram	6	0	0
" A. Rama Rao		10	0	0	Mr. S. Ponnuswami Mudaliyar	Valakklatal	5	0	0
" C. Venkatachalam Pantulu		10	0	0	Miscellaneous receipts		4	0	0
" B. N. Swami	Aska	10	0	0	Zamindar of Pappanad	Tanjore	50	0	0
" C. D. Shores	Cocanada	5	0	0	Dr. P. Nagasami Iyer	Vedaranyam	5	0	0
" S. R. Narayanaswami Iyer	Pudukkotta	2	0	0	Mr. V. V. Ramana Sastry		10	0	0
" P. R. Ramachandra Rao		1	0	0	" K. Shankaranarayana Rao	Bangalore	25	0	0
" S. Visvanatha Aiyer		1	0	0	" P. S. Ramaswami Iyer	Tanjore	5	0	0
" S. Venkatarama Aiyer		1	0	0	" T. A. Gopalaswamy Naidu in memory of his parents		100	0	0
A Brahmin		5	0	0					
Mr. N. Tyagarajier		2	0	0					
" P. V. Raghunathiah		5	0	0					
A Friend		5	0	0					
Mr. P. S. Sivajana Mudaliar		10	0	0					
" V. Ramachandra Aiyer		5	0	0					
" S. Subrahmanya Aiyer		5	0	0					
" A. Padmanabha Sastri		5	0	0					

To be carried ... 17,907 8 5

10th April, 1925

C. SUBBARAMAYYA,
Secretary, Bharata Samaja.R4m, N3380
1723

தமிழ்நாடு ஆவணக்காப்பக நூலகம்,
எழும்பூர், சென்னை-600 008.

தவணைத்தாள்.

சே. எண் : 145077

ப. எண் :

வழங்கிய நாள். (1)	திரும்பிய நாள். (2)	வழங்கிய நாள். (1)	திரும்பிய நாள். (2)

S.F. 259A-6-1,00,000-30-1-84.