



THE BHARATA DHARMA

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Pictures and Parables

BY SADHU T. L. VASWANI

Our lives are like rivers flowing only to be finally mingled in the mighty sea.

A poor man was on the verge of starvation. He was offered fifty thousand dollars if he would only supply a rich American a photograph of a pretty lady who hated publicity. The man accepted starvation but would not hurt the feelings of the lady by "exposing a snapshot of her face to the gaze of a vulgar-minded public". This man had wisdom of the heart.

See that shadow: It posits a substance: Your life: Is it not a shadow of the Higher Self? Cling to That, not the shadows of pleasure power, pride:

Prahlad was only a boy. But he was prepared to give up his life in witness of his faith. Bhaktas are heroes. Blessed is the land where heroes, too, become *bhaktas*:

Behold the lilies of the field:—said Jesus. He would have us meditate on God, the Great Artist. The Spirit is the master—creator of Beauty.

How mystical! The doctrine of the Triune God may be seen in different scriptures. The triangle is a theme which constantly recurs in Euclid:

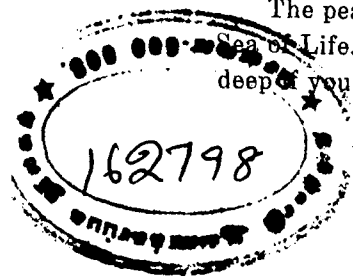
The mountain: How lonely! How strong! Strength is developed in loneliness. Get away from these props and supports and stand

alone: from time to time alone in the Great Silence—to commune with the Silent Master. You will grow in wisdom and strength.

How lovely was Jesus on His Cross! How lovely! How strong: And not a hero of Humanity but has climbed his Cross in loneliness and there attained to the full measure of his strength.

There came to a village a traveller from afar. And to the simple village-folk he gave many strange stories of lands and peoples. And he said to them:—"There is a stone that grows in the depths of the sea". And they wonderingly asked:—"Which stone?". And he said:—"The pearl".

The pearl of great price is Love. It grows in the depths of the Sea of Life. Dive deep into it like the pearl-divers of Ceylon. Dive deep: you would pluck the pearl.



Raja Ram Mohan Roy

"Forerunner of Indian Freedom"

In the course of a message to the Raja Ram Mohan Roy memorial meeting recently held at Dehra Dun, Sadhu Vaswani regretting his inability to address the meeting (as he had to leave for Sukkur), pays tribute to Ram Mohan Roy in the following words:—

My humble homage to the Great One whose memory you are celebrating on the 27th. The true proportions of his greatness are not yet seen, as it seems to me, by the present generation. He was a Forerunner of Indian Freedom. Passionate was his love of liberty. He expressed it in his social, political and religious views. He expressed it in his actions. An Englishman of his day rightly said of Ram Mohan:—"He would be free or not be at all". Love of freedom was, perhaps, the strongest passion of his soul, freedom not of action merely but of thought". Ram Mohan stood on the warrior's path to fight for truth and right. A soldier of the Spirit, he also was a seer. In his own heart he saw a new India strong in the strength of her Ancient Wisdom blended with modern science and culture. But actual India,—how different that from his vision. He saw that there were customs, conventions, creeds which had stifled for centuries the life of the Indian people. These, he felt, must go if India was to march on with the strength and freedom of a vigorous nation. Truth above tradition! Religion above creeds! Service above sectarianism! This, to my mind, is the message of Ram Mohan Roy. It is a message for India. It is a message for the world.

The Miracle of Regeneration

BY DIWAN BAHADUR RAJADHARMA-PRAVINA K. S. CHANDRA-
SEKHARA AIYAR AVL., BANGALORE.

"The true enemy of freedom is dead tradition: living at second-hand; the enslavement of the life of to-day to the worn-out formulas of a past age."

"Tradition" is knowledge or belief handed down orally from generation to generation. We are all, in a sense, the creatures of tradition, being "a good many hundreds or thousands of years old two minutes after we find our way into the midwife's arms." Tradition consists mainly of the culture, the accumulated experience, of the past. Even then it is only truly valuable where it is left free to us to utilise it as we will and according to our need. Else, if we are bound to accept it as our only prop or guide, irrespective of our own reason, experience and necessity, it is apt to turn into a clog and a curse. The test is whether it is used to supplement, or to supplant, individual judgment. We have all read stories of treasure burdened with a curse; any one coming into possession of it becomes subjected to all kinds of misfortunes, and can only make himself free by getting rid of the unlucky thing. This is not a bad illustration of a tradition which, instead of helping and illuminating our free will, compels to implicit obedience.

Coming to the Hindu Shastras does any one seriously pretend that they are used merely as books of reference, and not as final authorities? Some (comparatively a few) sensible and independent persons may use them as helps to their own reason; but the great majority of those who follow the Shastras take them simply as a substitute for the exercise of their own discrimination. We have sufficient illustration of this in the remarkable fact that at a certain well-known and populous city in Southern India, the seat of an important first-grade College, a meeting of orthodox inhabitants among whom were several English-educated people passed a resolution last year to the effect that, in matters of social life and conduct, not private judgment and common sense, but scriptural injunctions alone, ought to be the final guide! The abdication of reason and its enslavement by tradition cannot go further.

We have been talking so far of traditions which may, for all that we know, enshrine the wisdom of the past. But what about traditions which do not show through, on the face of them, any particular wisdom or truth? Many rules, observances and customs there are which may have been useful and even necessary when they were first made or

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adopted, but of which the utility and necessity have largely ceased with the disappearance of the conditions which called them forth. But because they are still unthinkingly practised, they have become superstitions. As in the parable of the stupid disciples who thought it necessary to continue to tie a black cat to a bed-post whenever they were performing their rituals, even though there was no milk to be kept safe for their master, an originally intelligible motive tends to become a meaningless but rigid formality, an unbreakable rule, a "dead" tradition of which the roots are not planted on the soil of a present need, growing freely as that need required, but maintain a parasite and noisome existence of their own.

There are, of course, traditions which are living and inspiring, as well as traditions which are dead. The great philosophies of the past, the master-works of literature and art, the glorious memories of heroic achievement and not less heroic endurance,—all these are living and enduring parts of our heritage. Whether we are always conscious of them or not, they will continue to guide and influence, to inspire and uplift, the country and the nation. All those things, on the other hand, to which some extrinsic authority is required to be attributed beyond that to which their own truth, beauty, and beneficent operation entitles them, all those things which we must take on trust without reference to our commonsense or to our present needs and conditions,—these are really obsessions and help merely to swell the mass of dead tradition. Unthinking obedience to them is, indeed, living at second-hand, employing the formulas of a past age to enslave the life of to-day.

"And there is hardly a country in the world upon which the dead hand of tradition lies so heavily as it does on India."

Traditions tend to perpetuate themselves; and there is no more remarkable illustration of this characteristic than the development of a primitive division of the peoples according to race and calling into the most rigid and immutable of human divisions. Not that the caste system did not have its use, a very definite and useful one, in the society of the past, in so far as it gave stability to its structure, preserved the purity of racial characteristics, maintained a high standard of vocational skill by ensuring the hereditary transmission of functions, and so on. But it has tended at the same time to racial and ceremonial exclusiveness, to a monopoly of power, privilege and knowledge among certain classes, and to the creation, at the other end of the scale, of a mass of depressed outcastes branded with untouchability and in many cases even with unapproachability.

In addition to the caste system there are other traditions which

have had the most deleterious effects. Principal among them are those relating to marriage,—restrictions of unions beyond certain defined limits; the enforcement of the married state on every girl, even if she be a cripple or hopelessly diseased, unless dedicated (among certain castes) to a life of prostitution; the insistence in the majority of castes on the marriage of girls before they attain puberty and the encouragement of consummation and motherhood at the earliest age at which they are physically capable of the same, which necessarily is often before they are really well-developed; and worst of all, the heartless restrictions as to life-long widowhood in the case especially of young girls, and the degrading treatment of widows generally.

In many cases the mere letter of a rule is enforced, without reference to its spirit, as in the case of the rules as to pollution irrespective of actual uncleanness, the excommunication of good and intelligent men who may travel to foreign lands while drunkards, thieves and adulterers are retained within the pale, the permanent ostracism of young men unthinkingly or in a moment of rashness converted to other faiths but willing to return, and of girls abducted forcibly and against their will.

Religious beliefs and observances,—speaking generally and of the great masses of the people,—have become divorced from true spirituality, and have degenerated into superstitions and forms, a process aggravated by the ignorance and avarice of the priests, and the importance attached to mere ceremonial without attention to its meaning. The bulk of the people, and even many intelligent and English-educated men, are firm believers in astrological predictions, auspicious and inauspicious times and omens (based on such accidents as the presence or behaviour of cats, donkeys, widows, "single" Brahmans, untimely sneezings, etc.), and other supposed indications of the trend of events.

It is tradition which, departing from the spirit of the original ideal of non-attachment and simplicity of life, has made tolerable and indeed inevitable a low standard of life for the bulk of the people. It is tradition which, by creating an undue attachment to the native soil and to the hereditary calling, and a strong prejudice against foreign travel, against new occupations, new methods and appliances, has tended to impoverish the people and discourage the spirit of enterprise and change. It is tradition, again, which by keeping the women of the country in immurement and ignorance, has kept low the springs of national culture and vitality.

With all these and a hundred other instances of unthinking obedience to the worn-out formulas of the past, it is certainly no wonder that the hand of tradition lies so heavily on our dear old Motherland.

That is the reason why her progress has been arrested for ages, why her wealth and her vitality has been steadily drained, why her peoples are so utterly divided in interest, so hopelessly sectional and parochial in outlook, and why through all the centuries from the time of the Greek Alexander she has been the victim of foreign domination and exploitation.

(To be continued).

A Summer Day

I saw the laughing day arise,
From out the sea,
Strewing the shore, all staid and wise
With ecstasy.
The waves played with a myriad lights
Of golden green,
Whilst gulls in skimming greys and whites
Flashed in between.
The passing hours cast gems around
Upon life's way,
And all things praised in fervent sound
The radiant day.

LELAND J. BERRY.

Autumn Roses at Devet

Edith, say could you forget
The Autumn roses at Devet?
Swaying, dancing on their bed,
"Exquisite" they were you said.
What! forgotten? fickle maid,
To care not, if our roses fade.
But in my breast (why sigh regret?)
Each lovely rose is living yet.

LELAND J. BERRY.

Autumn roses at Devet,
Autumn roses for regret!

Enthusiasm

BY Mr. S. RAJA RAM

(Continued from page 80 of the August issue.)

Similar are some of the brilliant examples we see in our midst today. Mahatma Gandhi is a truly spiritual leader. What does it

matter to him if people idolise him today with loud and piercing cries of 'Mahatma Gandhiki jai' everywhere, at all seasons and in all circumstances, and quietly pass over the valued name tomorrow? He has seen the country's salvation in Khaddar and the Charka, and he goes on as enthusiastically as ever unaffected by the passing plaudits and the equally ephemeral indifference on the part of the public. He has seen the vision and that is sufficient to evoke his best at all time. Take even his intimate follower Mr. Rajagopalacharya of Salem, a fine example of a man of true sacrifice and steady devotion to his loved chief.

The story of Sita's search related in the last few chapters of the Kishkinda and in the Sundara kandas of Shrimad Ramayana provide us with fine illustrations of the two characters mentioned at the beginning—viz., the average and the superior, represented by Angada and the illustrious Hanuman.

Enthusiasm is often praised in the great Epic, as its opposite, Depression, is condemned. Both are infectious but with opposite effects.

(1) उत्साहवन्तोहि नरानलोके सीदन्ति कर्मस्वतिदुष्करेषु ।

Ram. Aranya. 63 (19).

(2) उत्साहो बलवानार्य नास्त्युत्साहा द्रुलं परम् ।

Ram. Kishk. 1 (122).

(3) अनिर्वेदः श्रियो मूलं अनिर्वेदः परं सुखम् ।

अनिर्वेदोहि सततं सर्वार्थेषु प्रवर्तकः ॥

Ram. Sund. 12 (10).

(4) उत्साहः पौरुषं सत्त्वं मानुशं च कृतज्ञता ।

विक्रमश्च प्रभावश्च सन्ति वानर राघवे ॥

Ram. Sund. 37 (13).

(1) Men with enthusiasm do not get despirited even in very difficult undertakings.

(2) Enthusiasm gives strength; there is no strength greater than enthusiasm.

(3) Enthusiasm (non-depression) leads to prosperity, to peace, and to constant endeavour.

(4) Enthusiasm, heroism, strength, well-doing, gratitude, prowess and splendour, O! Vanara, reside in Raghava. —Sita to Hanuman.

While enthusiasm is strength-giving, depression dries up all strength, leads to weakness, confusion and misunderstanding, and easily spreads its infection to all who happen to come within its atmosphere.

Now to the story. In search of Sita, forces are despatched to the

four quarters under the rigorous and stringent orders of Sugriva of rigid discipline. The southern forces are led by Angada, the able son of the valiant Vali and the Yuvaraja of the kingdom, assisted by the great Hanuman, son of Vayu, of mighty prowess, of deep devotion and great learning, and other Vanara leaders of note. Hanuman has also been entrusted with the Chudamani to be delivered to Sita, if found. The expedition starts, with great hopes and in great exhilaration. A long way is traversed and after some days of difficult journey they enter a wide tract of waterless desert.

निर्जलं निर्जनं शून्यं गहनं रोमहर्षणम् ।

"Waterless, uninhabited waste, tiresome to tread, making the hairs stand on their ends."

Such is a part of the depressing description of this inhospitable and dreary region. The rank and file got thoroughly exhausted, famishing, thirsty. Angada saw this and, as became the leader, exhorted them to hold on until relief came.

अनिर्वेदं च दाक्ष्यं च मनसश्चापराजयः ।

कार्यसिद्धिकराण्याहुः तस्मादेतद्वीम्यहम् ॥

"Not yielding to depression, skill, not allowing the mind to go under—these are essential for the success of any undertaking; therefore do I ask you to keep on."

After a deal of troublesome march, they reach a welcome oasis and get delightfully refreshed at Swayamprabha's charming cavern, a place of great enchantment and refined enjoyment. Helped in the cause by that great ascetic lady they manage to get out and reach the southern ocean. The ocean to be crossed!

"No greater barrier could have been imagined. Invisible to the gazer is its limit, unattainable to the diver its depth. Dark as the steed of Yama, its billowing menace is uplifted in a gesture of perpetual prohibition."

The Council met, and opinions, grave and depressing, were advanced as to the wisdom of the undertaking and the possibility of achievement. No decision could be reached. All the available reasons were examined. Depression and confusion reigned everywhere. In the case of Angada, the leader himself, confusion led to misunderstanding and mis-judgment. The erstwhile dauntless leader lost his head and his courage. Fear entered his mind, fear of his king—Sugriva of severe rule.

तक्षिणः प्रकृत्या सुग्रीवः स्वामीभावे व्यवस्थितः ।

"Sugriva severe by nature is also established in kingship."
Fear leads to mis-judgment.

स पूर्वं बद्धवैरो मां राजा दृष्ट्वा त्र्यतिक्रमम् ।

घातयेष्यति दण्डेन तीक्ष्णेन कृतनिश्चयः ॥

"He has a longstanding ill-will against me. When he sees that his orders have not been executed, he shall certainly destroy me relentlessly."

भिन्नमन्त्रोऽपराद्धश्च हीनशक्तिः कथं ब्रह्मम् ।

किष्किन्दां प्राप्य जीवेयम् ॥

"Having violated the counsel, offended the king, and being devoid of strength, how shall I hope to live at Kishkinda?"

That is how depression works. Angada till then extremely trustworthy, lovingly loyal and of great valor, now feels all the reverse and wrong. What is the counsel that he gets at this stage? And it comes from an affectionate, but an equally depressed and confused source, Tara, his feeble-minded grandfather, moved by the pathetic position of Angada comes with the advice—

अलं विषादेन बिलं प्रविश्य ।

वसाम सर्वे यदि रोचते वः ॥

"Sufficient this depression. Let us enter this empty cave and live on if you agree."

The advice is, of course, rejected. But in the absence of any light, they all resolve upon death by starvation and accordingly stretch themselves down. At that desperate juncture, Sampati, the old vulture, appears on the scene, hungry for flesh and delighted to find a rich gathering of large material for prey. Meanwhile the great quest is revealed, and Sampati interested in the service of Rama is pleased and gives clear, accurate directions to reach Lanka, and suggests the means necessary to achieve the mission. The encouraging words of Sampati inspire strength and the Vanara hosts recover their lost enthusiasm. प्रतिलब्ध पौरुषाः The Council sits again, this time with emotions and mind clear and unclouded, to find out the ways and means to cross the ocean. The oldest and the wisest of the leaders, Jambavan, guides the deliberations, and the strength of each is examined. Nobody is found who can leap the whole 100 yojanas of the roaring waters in front. Jambavan, remembering all the past achievements of Hanuman, approaches him sitting helplessly in a corner, encourages him by wise and suitable words and brings to his mind the details of his glorious ancestry, the mighty deeds of his early life and his great wisdom and resourcefulness. Here are a few lines of his persuasive address—

वीर वानरलोकस्य सर्वशास्त्रविशारद ।
तूष्णीमेकान्तमाश्रित्य हनुमन्किं न जल्पसि ॥
हनुमन्हरिराजस्य सुग्रीवस्य समो ह्यसि ।
रामलक्ष्मणयोश्चापि तेजसा च बलेन च ॥

* * *
बलं बुद्धिश्च तेजश्च सत्त्वं च हरिपुङ्गव ।
विशिष्टं सर्वभूतेषु किमात्मानं न बुध्यसे ॥

* * *
लंघने प्लवने चैव भविष्यति मया समः ।
(Vayu to Hanuman)

* * *
अशस्त्रवध्यतां तात समरे सत्यविक्रम ।
(Brahma to Hanuman)

* * *
सहस्रनेत्रः प्रीतात्मा ददौ ते वरमुत्तमम् ।
स्वच्छन्दतश्च मरणं ते भूयादिति वै प्रभो ॥
स त्वं केसरिणः पुत्रः क्षेत्रजो भीमविक्रमः ।
मारुतस्यौरसः पुत्रस्तेजसा चापि तत्समः ॥

* * *
वयमद्य गतप्राणाः भवान्स्त्रातु सांप्रतम् ।
दक्षो विक्रमसंपन्नः पक्षिराज इवापरः ॥

* * *
तद्विजृम्भस्व विक्रान्तः प्लवतामुत्तमो ह्यसि ।

* * *
उत्तिष्ठ हरिशार्दूल लङ्घयस्व महार्णवम् ।
परा हि सर्वभूतानां हनुमन्या गतिस्तव ॥
विषण्णा हरयः सर्वे हनूमन् किमुपेक्षसे ।
विक्रमस्व महावेगो विष्णुस्त्रीन्विक्रमानिव ॥

"O! Hero of the Vanara world I, well versed in all scriptures, how is it you droop in loneliness and speak nothing? You are equal to our King Sugriva, even to Shri Rama and Lakshmana in splendour and prowess. Even Vainateya (Garuda) of great valor cannot transcend you in strength and speed. You are the happy possessor of incomparable wisdom, splendour and strength. How is it you would not think of your valor? You have the blessing of your illustrious father, Vayu, that in leaping and bounding you will be equal to him. You have the blessing of Brahma that you will not be killed by any weapon and

of the thousand-eyed Indra that Death may not approach you except at your wish. That great son of Kesari you are. We are helpless and hopeless. You should give us all your protection with your great skill and mighty strength. Recollect your great resources, your tremendous powers of leaping over any distance, and utilise the opportunity, displaying your extraordinary powers. Rise, O! hero of the Vanara clan! Cross the ocean in a mighty bound. The entire Vanara hosts are depressed and down-hearted and need your active encouragement. Measure the wide ocean by a gingle leap as did Shri Vikrama of the Earth and the Heavens."

(To be continued.)

THE BHARATA DHARMA, September, 1928:

The current number of this official organ of the Bharata Samaja of Adyar opens appropriately enough with laudatory verses in Sanskrit by a member of the staff of the Adyar Sanskrit Library and a tribute in English by Sadhu Vaswani to Dr. Annie Besant, the occasion being the celebration of her 82nd birthday. The variety and interest of the fare served up by this bright little magazine may be gauged from the titles of other articles in the issue among which may be singled out for special mention an article on the significance of the 'Mahalaya' and 'Navaratri' being a rendering from the Tamil of the late Mr. Subramania Aiyer of Madura, another on 'The Plan of Hindu Temples' by Mr. M. S. Sundara Sarma, and a third on 'Women's property Rights in Hindu Law' by Rao Sahib C. V. Krishnaswami Aiyer, B.A., B.L., in which the author critically discusses certain proposals for reform now in the legislative anvil and points out how they may be suitably amended from the point of view which holds that in the matter of social legislation it would be well to walk warily". Too often our ardent reformers forget that while it is necessary to weed out anomalies and age-long abuses which are tolerated merely because of the sanction of the Shastras, nothing should be done that would have the effect of laying the axe at the root of that continuous body of tradition which embodies the essentials of the Hindu way of life. Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyer deserves well of the Hindu public for emphasising this important truth.—*The Hindu*. 10-10-1928.

Shri Thyagayya's Hymns

(BY KIRTANACHARYA C. R. SRINIVASA AIYANGAR, B. A.)

PREFACE

The world of music and devotion knows Shri Thyagayya as the greatest saint and singer of the south. But he was something more than this, something higher, something deeper. To me, who have devoted about forty years of my life to the study and exposition of his hymns, he is multifaced. He is an occultist of a very high order. He walked with God and held close and unbroken communion with Him. He is of no caste, no creed, no country, no sect. He is universal; he is a catholic of the most liberal type; he is a cosmopolitan. He is a social reformer of the broadest cast and has very little to do with the gilt specimens of the clan with whom social reform means but eventual free living and free love. He is a mystic and has the open eye which pierces to the heart of things. He is no compromiser, no trimmer and no soft-spoken prelate, who "never offended the polite ears of his congregation with the ugly crude word Hell." He is no respecter of persons. He lays down his opinions as if they were Royal Edicts or ukases--to be obeyed. I find him to be a thinker of the most fearless type; nay, what is rarer, a most fearless speaker of bitter truths. When I say that he is a Buddhist in a certain aspect of his teaching I have laid the last straw that will break the neck of his orthodox, sectarian admirers. I have spoken the dreadful heresy that would take their breath away and knock them clean off their feet. He was a socialist, a democrat, a champion of the masses against the classes.

All these I will prove to the hilt by statements from his immortal hymns. His disciples, the last two of them who were close friends of mine, called them *Upanishads*—Thyagopanishad, not Kirthanas as the commonalty did. And well do they deserve the name. For to the devout heart and the clear vision of the student, they simply bristle with the latest and the most advanced teachings given to the world at present by the Great Ones on both sides of the Himalayas.

One must bring to this study many a rare capacity—a profound scholarship of the sanskrit and telugu languages and of the Vedas, the puranas, great and small; a wide knowledge of the popular beliefs, customs, traditions and legends that were common among the people in the South a hundred and fifty years ago. And he must crown his qualifications with an excellent grounding in the esotericism of the Hindu religion and philosophy.

It is not for nothing that he is taken to be an incarnation, rather an overshadowing, of Maharshi Valmiki that sang for us the

greatest and grandest epic of the world—The Ramayana. He refers to it most guardedly in one of his hymns.

It is believed that he was visited by the Devarshi Narada who taught him music. More than one hymn of his is dedicated to this teacher of his. Who Narada is, cannot, as the Secret Doctrine tells us, be given out in print. It is his association with the sages like Valmiki and Vyasa that impelled them to give to the world the Ramayana, the Bharata and Bhagavata lifting the veil a little from the great mystery. He is always found at the place and the time when the Karma of the great souls reach a turning point in their lives when they come to the parting of the ways where the Great Choice is made. He it was that set the face of Shri Suka Brahman and the Prachetasas, and many others towards the path that leads the souls to the Throne of Light. And it was even so with Shri Thyagayya. One who reads the inner meaning of the Vina of Narada, the music he plays on it, the song that flows from his lips as he courses through the worlds above and below, comes to have a faint glimpse of what the music was. He taught to Shri Thyagayya and what the cadjan leaf manuscript meant that he left with his disciple, is most curiously titled *Swaranava*—the ocean of Swaras स्वराः (Vibrations). The music that Shri Krishna plays on his flute, the Music that Sarasvati, Lakshmi and Parvati and Mahadeva play on their Vinas, the vedic, chant Saman that eternally streams forth from the Lord Brahma is the same as the Music of Narada, Tumburu, and the Gandharvas. It is the same as the lyre of Apollo of Greece, the Sun-God with its seven strings; it is the Music to which dance the apsaras (अप्सरः); it is the Music of the spheres; it is the Great Harmony, the full chord, reverberating through boundless space. Swami T. Subba Row, the Great Initiate, thus explains the Music. "Krishna is said to play upon the flute, i. e., he plays the song of Life; and the song has seven *Swarams* which give the vibrations to the current of life; and the outward *daiviprakriti* catches the vibrations of the song. These seven swarams are at the bottom of everything that is septenary in the kosmos. He is all song; He is the spirit and soul of song." And many a hymn of the saint decisively proves that his music was something else than what goes by that name nowadays.

He was an upasaka (उपासक). Of course the other two members of the Musical Trinity of South India were upasakas too and of a very high order. Dikshita felt drawn to the feet of Skanda. Shyama Shastri was dearest to the heart of the World-Mother. And many a great name in the world of the South Indian Music is to be found on the rolls of high upasakas as Srinivasulu, Matru Bhutayya Sesha Aiyengar, Bharati of Tirukkadaiyur, Mohanam Govindayya

etc. But Thyagayya, like the tapasvins of old, went through a stern course of Japa that counted ninety-six koties of the Sacred Name and covered many years, until Shri Ramachandra was to him a living reality, an ever present friend, guide, philosopher and teacher. Thyagayya was to Rama what Uddhava was to Krishna. Like St. John of the Revelation, he lay on the bosom of his Lord. To Him he turned in joy and sorrow, in darkness and light, in fair and foul weather, in death and beyond.

The songs of the other composers before and after him are but expressions of their helplessness and difficulties; they are prayers for relief from the miseries of the work-a-day world or of material existence. They are but praises or laudations, or recitals of the names and glories of the Lord in his numerous aspects and of the World-Mother.

But Sri Thyagaraja's hymns form a clear, consistent history of the evolution of his soul. It is a record of the various phases through which he passed from darkness to light, from death to immortality. You can follow him all over the road and see for yourself the mile-stones that mark it. But this does not exhaust the range of his utterances. He has sung the Ramayana for us like Valmiki. He has sung of his deity in many an aspect of his, Rama, Krishna, Varada, Ranga, Venkatesa, Narasimha, Ganesha, Skanda, Maruti, Narada (whom he identifies with the Lord himself) Sita, Mahadevi, Mahadeva, the Thulsi Plant, and the Kaveri's sacred waters. He has left behind him groups of hymns that give out ethical teachings that apply to practical life. Some of them lash and flay mercilessly hypocrisy, cant, humbug, smugfacedness. Some deal with what Music is and ought to be. Some explain his real conception of Shri Rama. Some describe his ideal of a devotee, a man after the heart of the Lord. Two of them reveal to us the divine source of the hymns and the subjects they cover. Three of them contain his views on the vedic sacrifices.

Of course we find many a piece simply laudatory, a string of holy names, pearls in the rosary of the Hindu faith.

A casual talk with my beloved brother, S. Raja Ram during a concert in one of the music halls led to a series of talks, informal of course, and limited to a small group, on the hymns of Shri Thyagaraja. I was asked to give my rendering of them and short expositions of what they taught. And that led on to the idea that they should be made accessible to the public. And *this* is the genesis of what follows and the explanation of the necessity for such a course. Of course I need not say that my brother felt most keenly the desecration that these hymns under-went in language, style and rendering at the hands of the professionals of our day. My sincere thanks are due to him for

thus giving me a chance to serve my brethren that love and revere the great saint and singer by trying to show them what might be done in that direction by better qualified students in music and religion.

(To be continued)

Prohibition of Animal Sacrifice

(FROM THE BOMBAY HUMANITARIAN LEAGUE)

His Highness The Maharaja Jam Saheb of Jamnagar, was good enough to prohibit animal sacrifice on Dashera day in his state last year as an experiment. The authorities being requested by the League in this connection this year, Hazur office order No. 33 has been issued under the signatures of The Revenue, The Political and the General Secretaries of the State prohibiting under orders from **His Highness animal sacrifice on Dashera this year also.** This is really worthy of an enlightened ruler like His Highness the Jam Saheb and his able secretaries. The League requests other States where such sacrifices are offered on Dashera day, to follow the noble example of His Highness the Jam Saheb and many such humanitarian rulers.

Literature on all topics of humanitarianism can be had from the League.

Dr. Gour's "Hindu Marriages Dissolution Bill."

BY RAO SAHEB C. V. KRISHNASWAMI AYYAR B. A., B. L.

It is a pity that sometimes those who gallantly espouse the cause—the just and deserving cause—of Hindu women allow their zeal to outrun their discretion, and Dr. Gour's Hindu Marriages Dissolution Bill is the latest instance of it. It provides that a Hindu wife shall be entitled to obtain a declaration of the invalidity of her marriage or its dissolution for any of the following reasons, namely:

- (a) impotency of the husband,
- (b) his imbecility,
- (c) the fact that he was suffering from sanious or ulcerous leprosy.

It is no wonder that this Bill has aroused considerable opposition. Divorce is an unpopular subject in all countries, and at all times, and the fate of the Divorce law reformers even in advanced England must be a warning to all who try to put asunder those whom the law (let alone God) has put together. It is no doubt true that, whether it is popular or unpopular, a true reformer must go ahead with his projects

if really there is urgent necessity for them. But is that so in this case?

One may, perhaps, not pay much attention to those among the orthodox who talk of the Bill as destroying the sacramental character of marriage, as though even in one marriage in a thousand that take place now the idea of a sacrament is predominant in the minds of those who arrange it or are parties to it. The mercenary bargaining for the *Varalakshina*, the stipulations for presents, according to a list given by the female relatives of the bridegroom (so the cowardly male relatives would have it), the provision for the celebration of the marriage festivities according to a certain agreed style, the agreement to educate the bridegroom up to a certain standard extorted from the poor girl's father—these and similar preliminaries antecedent to the farce of a *Kashiyatra* took away the last vestiges of sanctity from South Indian marriages long ago. To-day they are nothing more than the settling of boys and girls in the usual humdrum married life arranged by two sets of parents, as in all other countries, though to them are added the muttering of a few mantras by persons none of whom do understand what they are saying, amidst the din of inharmonious music and the loud chatter of those assembled in the marriage pandals. To say that such marriages are sacraments while a Western marriage in which the parties always understand what they promise and in which there is calm and harmonious music during the ceremony is a mere contract is to say what is obviously incorrect. But that does not mean that Dr. Gour's Bill is either opportune or beneficial.

The women of India—let it be said to their infinite credit—have awakened to their rights and are valiantly fighting for a higher and a freer life. They have necessarily to face very heavy odds and is it part of prudence to add to their difficulties the task of espousing what is obviously an ill conceived measure, for there can be little doubt that as it stands the Bill is more one to laugh at than one to be taken seriously. Legislation on a subject like Divorce should be undertaken only when there is a persistent call for it and when it will remedy a wide spread evil. Who can say, with any sense of responsibility, that cases where wives wanted to free themselves from husbands who are impotent or imbecile or leprous are so common or even numerous, that you should ask for a remedy and rouse opposition, when the women's hands are full with their work for getting their property rights, and for the raising of the marriageable age and the age of consent.

Apart from such objections, one may well ask, what is impotency? Who is to test it and how, when the husband says he is not impotent and the doctors differ as they usually do? All lawyers know how that

term gave infinite trouble among Muhammadans in a recent dispute before the Allahabad High Court. And why should impotency be a ground of divorce in these days of neo-malthusian leagues and birth control clinics? And the most funny thing about this Bill is the reason given for including impotency among the grounds for divorce. It seems that such a ground was not necessary when a woman could get a child by Niyoga and as the latter method has been thrown overboard by custom, divorce must step in! Then, why not restore Niyoga? That will be the logical solution. As to imbecility, is every kind of it, to be a ground of divorce? Should not the wife wait at least for a few years and see whether the husband recovers or not? What with the epoch making researches of the pundits of the tropical schools of medicine one hopes that ere long leprosy of even the worst kind will become easily curable. Apart from that why it should be in a position different from, say, consumption, is difficult to see.

The fact is that Dr. Gour has chosen for his Bill just those three causes for which there is least need for legislation. I know he has the real interests of Hindu women at heart but occasionally he is apt to give full sway to imagination. If he is anxious to legislate on divorce just now, I would suggest for his attention a ground more in need of his immediate attention. The most common cause of misery in the cases of many wives in this part of India at least is the so-called "putting away" of the wife for failure to get costly presents from her father's house, and the taking of a second wife on the most flimsy grounds. I have known cases of men with many University degrees taking a second wife because the first wife talked to a male relative of his in his absence, or because the presents made at the marriage to his relatives and the respect shown to them were not according to his own standard or that of an old lady in his party what they should have been or because the little girl would not conform to the silly prejudices of an antiquated mother-in-law, or because she would not put on a decorum altogether foreign to her own tender years and behaved like the young girl that she was, or because on the nuptials day the sweets or the beds were not of the pre-arranged kind. All this is done because the husband and his people know that they can practically condemn the girl to a living death by making a second girl take the noose. If one reform is more urgently necessary than any other in South India to-day it is to take steps to end this intolerable system. Legislate that no man can validly take a second wife when his first wife is alive, without her consent, or if that is too much to ask for, that she can divorce him on the ground that he has taken a second wife without her consent and as a corollary of the divorce claim half his property or

monthly income, and you will be bringing untold happiness to hundreds of young girls in this country. Legislate also that once the marriage takes place she becomes joint owner with him of all the worldly goods he possesses and that he cannot alienate it without her consent and you have taken a step further to make that happiness more certain. Legislate again that if a girl was married to one who is more than twice her age she could repudiate it and get a divorce when she becomes a major and you will be bringing joy and comfort to many a much injured girl. Provide by all means for non-enforcement of conjugal rights by a cantankerous but leprous or insane husband, when the disease is still on. Provide also if you want for the extreme case where the leprosy or imbecility has lasted so long, say for 15 years, and one can say with certainty that it is incurable. But to say, as the Bill says and implies, that impotency, leprosy and imbecility, should, even if it exists for however short a time, enable the wife to tear herself away from the ideal of a Damayanti is to say something utterly obnoxious to all that has been held in high esteem by millions and millions of women (let alone men) in this ancient land, and if I venture to say so, altogether inconsistent with those eternal principles for which the Bharata Samaj stands.

Kartikeya

(BY MR. L. B. RAJE)



SHRI KARTIKEYA (BALASUBRAHMANYAM)

On the Northern face of the Vimana of The Temple of Light, Adyar

These are some of the names of the great God popularly known as Kartikeya, to whom the month of Kartika is dedicated. The day of the month on which the festival is observed is the Full-moon day.

In Bombay it is called by a name which means the Dipavali of

कार्तिकेयो महासेनः

शरजन्मा षडाननः ।

पार्वतीनन्दनः स्कन्दः

सेनानीरमिभूर्गुहः ॥

बाहुलेय स्तारकजि-

द्विशाखः शिखिवाहनः ।

पाण्मातुरः शक्तिधरः

कुमारः क्रौञ्चदारणः ॥

the Devas, the day of rejoicing for the Devas, because of the victory gained over the Asuras under the commandship of Kartikeya. In the preceding month, the month of Aswin, we have our Dipavali festival on account of the victory over Narakasura and his hosts and this is followed by the victory in the higher worlds.

If we consider the meaning underlying the several names given to this Great Being as enumerated above, and He has many more names too, we shall have some idea of His work for us and our three worlds and how we can derive the greatest benefit by observing such festivals with an understanding of the objects they are intended to serve.

The several stories given in the Puranas are astronomical and historical records of the stages of evolution through which we have passed and it is of great importance to know how we came to be what we are and whither we are bound and what should be the purpose of our life. A proper understanding of the import of these Puranic stories is sure to be very helpful and an attempt is therefore made in this note to study some accounts about God Kartikeya, just with a view to induce others possessing greater knowledge on this subject of vast importance and with better abilities to deal with it, to give us more valuable information regarding the same.

Let us consider the name Kartikeya. It comes from Kritika, the third Nakshatra or constellation of the Zodiac. It consists of six brilliant stars. The full-moon of the Kartika occurs when the moon occupies this constellation and hence the month derives its name. The first part of this Nakshatra forms part of the Zodiacal sign Mesha (Aries) ruled by the planet Mars, the God of War. Also called Kumara and Angaraka which latter also means Fire. Mesha which is the first sign of the Zodiac is considered the sign of the pioneer and Mars is the planet who symbolises the forth-going energy of the Universe, sometimes called the Fire-God.

The Puranic story runs thus. The Devas and Rishis were suffering from the evil deeds of an Asura named "Taraka," the grandson of Kashyapa through Hiranyaksha. Brahma had granted him a boon that he would be invincible in the three worlds but could only be killed by a manifestation of the Lord Shiva himself through a son born of His union with Parvati and brought up in an unusual way. This was considered as impossible as the Lord was engaged in constant Tapas and would not pay attention to Parvati. The Devas, however, thought of attempting to bring this about by the help of the God of Love and Desire the Kama Deva (Madana).

Thus when Parvati according to her daily routine was offering a garland of lotuses to the Lord, the God of Love took the opportunity

(to exercise his art) raised his bow with the result that the Lord was disturbed in his Tapas and turned his eyes to the maiden with a little ripple of passion. He wanted to find out the cause for this impulse from outside and saw the Deva about to aim his dart of love at Him. That very moment the Lord opened His third Eye of power and there sprang out a terrible flame which burnt to ashes the Kama Deva before the other Devas could prevail upon the Lord to control His anger and call back the flame.

Parvati then pacified the Devas especially Rati, the wife of the Kama Deva. She made a vow to make a rigid Tapas and win the heart of the Lord. He would then Himself seek Her hand and marry Her. What was desired by the Lord was that the union with Him should be sought with a passionless love and a selfless desire for the good of the universe. These were the essential conditions of the coming to birth of that illustrious Son who was to be the Kartikeya, the deliverer of the gods from the harassing troubles of Tarakasura.

In course of time the Tapas proves successful. The lustre arising from the long Tapas spreads over all the worlds and even the Devas are unable to bear the scorching heat and they all go with Brahma to the Lord to appraise Him of the same. He promises relief and then comes to Parvati, puts Her to test and being satisfied consents to marry Her. She tells Him to arrange for a proper ceremony in consultation with Her father, the great Spirit of the Himalayas. He says that when previously He married Her when She was the daughter of Daksha Prajapati, no such formalities were observed. She said yes; but then, She added, the result was that the marriage had a tragic end. This time it must not be so and so the Lord consented to seek Her hand through Her father and marry Her after going through such ceremonies as would make their union a sacrament.

(To be continued)

Reviews.

THE SPIRIT OF HINDU CULTURE—By T. L. Vaswani, Ganesh & Co., Madras, 1928, (62 pages.)

This booklet embodies the text of Sadhu Vaswani's Convocation address at the Gurukul University on 8th April 1928 and is sent out by him with an aspiration that the essential message of our Ancient culture viz., creative culture of *Shakti*, may enter into the heart of the Nation's youth for the highest service of the Nation. The author believes that a renaissance of the Ancient Culture blended with the new scientific consciousness of the age will help in enlarging the basis

of modern life and building a new civilisation for which the world is waiting—a civilisation of synthesis and brotherliness and broad humanism. Every Indian youth should read these stirring pages and assimilating the fiery message contained therein awake to his responsibility and work for the reformation of the system of Education now current so that India may have a system of Education suited to her and India may express fully her own glorious ideals so that the whole world might be helped to move upwards in the ladder of evolution.

—Es-ca-pe.

MAHATMA GANDHI—By Mademoiselle Juliette Veillier, M. A., LL. B., D. L., Advocat a' la Cour de Paris.

Ganesh & Co., Madras. 1928

Re. One.

On December 5, 1926, Mlle. Juliette Veillier, Advocate of the court of Paris delivered an address on Mahatma Gandhi and his Idealistic Policy, at the opening of the Conference of Advocates. An English rendering of that address, by M. Leonie Brunel is given us here, in the nicely got-up, little book under review. The lecturer, the audience and the quality of the performance are all significant. Mlle. Veillier has shown deep insight into and sympathy with her subject. The result is a study very different from the sort of stuff manufactured by our cold-weather friends like Miss Mayo. Gandhiji is to Mlle. Veillier a *man* among men, thinking, speaking, and what is wonderful, *acting* Truth—a great soul, pitting his idealistic policy of Ahimsa against the brute force that threatens to overwhelm civilisation. She has thus shown, even as M. Romain Rolland, Rev. C. F. Andrews, and many others before her, that intelligent foreigners have not found it difficult to understand the Orient properly, if only they are free from imperialist prejudices and racial arrogance. We wish the book all popularity.

G. K. R.

Muhammad Ali, M. A., L. L. B., author of an excellent Arabic and English Edition of the Holy Quran, has published a little pamphlet containing a brief sketch of the life of *The Prophet of Islam*, it being an abridged edition of his larger book "Muhammad the Prophet," and he sends it out into the world to commemorate the 1400th birthday of the Great Prophet. The author next points out that the Holy Prophet laid the basis of universal peace when He taught not only that a Prophet had appeared in every nation, but also that a Muslim must believe in all those Prophets just as he believed in the Prophet Mahammad. "There is

not a people but a warner has gone among them " says the Holy Quran. So say also our Hindu books. It is wrong to say th t no other religion teaches it. All religions are from the same source—the body of Great Men—and the one Truth is proclaimed in different forms to suit the need of the different people; and to proclaim the Truth in each area and reform that particular society a leader appears sent by the the Body of Perfected Men—a Divine Messenger from that Great Sangha. The Holy Quran records truly a Message given to the Prophet. "And we sent apostles we have mentioned to thee and apostles we have not mentioned to thee". The Prophet therefore dealt with even hands in his treatment of the Jews, the persecutors, the infidels and Muslims. With the author, I ask, why cannot we Hindus accept Muhammad as a Prophet Muhammad who inspired a new life, who gave a new impulse to evolution, who lived a life of purity, love, tolerance, truthfulness, simplicity and sincerity and dedication to the Lord; the keynote of whose life, was always the helping of the oppressed, and the forlorn? A recognition of this fact and the consequent spirit of tolerance would bring about a better anity between Hindus and Muhammadans than all the platform speeches of party politicians. The author has to be congratulated on his issuing this cheap pamphlet which would inspire non-muslims to extend a loving hand with hearty affection to the Muslims in India.

—Es. ca. pe—.

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C. R.

The "Bharata Dharma"—India is passing through a period of great stress and the younger generation is looked upon as the architect of India's future. The Bharata Dharma is the voice of the aspirations of the younger generation. The September issue of it of which we have received a copy is full of fine articles which will be read with great interest. We wish the journal a bright and brilliant career.

—The Daily Express. 21—10—28.

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Sr. S. Ganesan, the enterprising publisher of Madras, has now brought out a translation from the original of my History, if it may be so called, of Satyagraha in South Africa. The translation has been carefully made by Sr. Valji Govindji Desai. The volume is well printed, is bound in Khadi, covers 511 pages and is rightly dedicated by the publisher to the late Maganlal Gandhi. The book contains 50 chapters and covers practically the whole of the period of my stay in South Africa. Those numerous readers who are following *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* cannot afford to be without this volume, if they will rightly understand the implications of truth as they have occurred to me and the very wonderful and matchless force which I have called or rather which Maganlal Gandhi called 'Satyagraha,' otherwise rendered as 'love-force,' 'soul-force,' 'truth-force,' as distinguished from the force connoted by the term 'passive resistance.' Satyagraha is not conceived as a weapon merely of the weak. It is the strongest force that one can possibly imagine or wish for and is a complete substitution for brute force. Those who will understand how the former worked in South Africa in the face of all odds should possess this volume.

—M. K. G. in 'Young India.'

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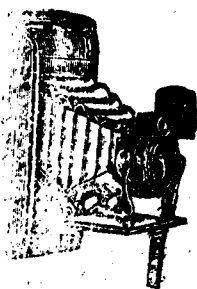
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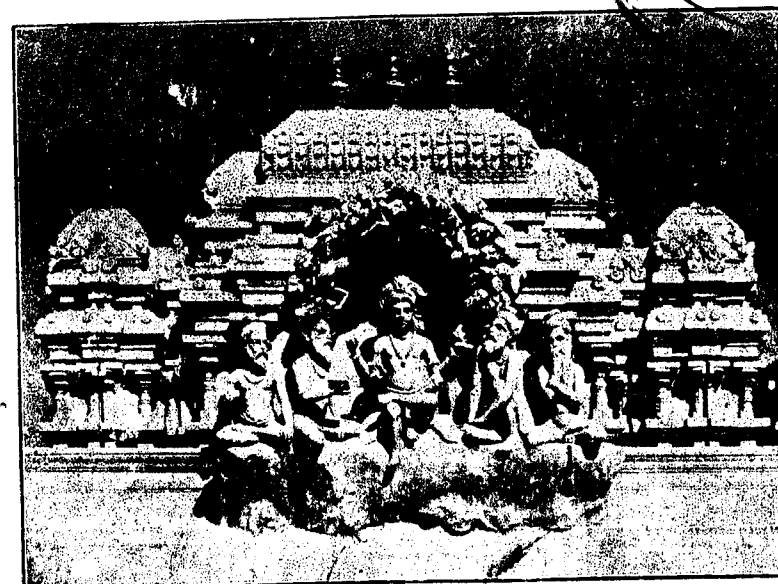
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VOL. VI.

NOVEMBER 1928

1- MAY 1929



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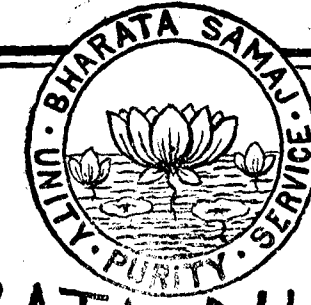
THE HUNTER AND THE SHEPHERD, BY THE 'RUI'
(See explanation of the picture on page 145)

Maharshi Valmiki
writing Shrimad Ramayana
with the blessing of Brahma
and the inspiration of Shri Narada.



उदारवृत्ताथपदमेनोऽग्रेभ्यः स गमस्य चकार कीर्तिमान् ।
समाश्रितः श्रोतव्यं यजमानो यजमानं काव्यमुदात्तमुनिः ॥
तदुपगतममाममं धियां सममधुरोपनतार्थवाक्यचद्रम् ।
गुर्वचरितं मुनिप्रणितं दशशिरसश्चन्द्रं निशामयध्वम् ॥

Palakanda II (42-43)



BHARATA DHARMA

(The Official Organ of the Bharata Samaja)

VOL. VI

NOVEMBER 1928

No. 8

Our Frontispiece

We are glad we have been able, by the kindness of the Govinda Bhavan Karyalaya, Calcutta, to reproduce the two fine pictures representing the life of Rshi Valmiki.

The first one relates to the incident in his early life as a hunter and dacoit in the forest. He was a strong and heartless hunter who waylaid the travellers, plundered all their goods, and thus protected his big family consisting of his parents, wife and children. One day Devarshi Narada happened to pass along the forest route, and he was promptly attacked by the hunter. Narada surrendered, but asked the hunter why he was committing cruel sins by plundering poor travellers of their property. The hunter replied—'For the protection of my family.' Narada asked if the family who benefitted by his cruel deeds would share his sins. The hunter believed so, but the Rshi doubted seriously and asked the hunter to make sure of it and offered to stand there till he went home and came back with the answer of the family. The hunter thinking that it might be a device of the Rshi to escape him, but willing to test the doubt expressed by the Rshi, bound Narada to a tree and went home. The picture shews the hunter in the act of binding the Rshi to the tree.

He went home and asked the members of his family one after another if they shared his sins committed day after day in finding the wherewithal to maintain them. They all replied that while they were satisfied with his discharge of duty to them in the matter of their maintenance, they were not concerned with how he found the means and would not share his sins; further, they dissuaded him against taking to

sinful means. The hunter returned with much remorse, his heart purified by intense repentance for the past, and asked the Rshi to teach him the way to salvation. Narada taught this repentant, unlettered sinner of strong will to utter the name—Ram—constantly. Eventually, the hunter purged himself of all of his impurities, became thoroughly purified, and evolved into the Sage Valmiki with his heart now full of love for all—man, animal and bird. The second picture shews Rshi Valmiki writing Shrimad Ramayana under the inspiration of Devarshi Narada for the good of the world. In the presence of the Rshi who was always radiating love around him, are seen the lion and the cow, the deer and the tiger, the peacock and the serpent—all happy in loving companionship. Such is the alchemy of true and unselfish love and such the centres the Rshis created in the India of old. May such centres of peace and love once more cover the field of India of the present and restore our dear country to its ancient, but at present hidden, glory, through her sons and daughters growing in kindness and understanding, with hearts full of affection for all and minds keen of perception of the eternal goal of the Life-Truth behind all phenomena.

[For an understanding of the Life of Shri Narada,
please see the contributions elsewhere in this issue.]

‘Eliminating’ Religion?

By T. L. Vaswani

[From the Presidential address at the recent Behari Students Conference held at Motihari.]

Understand what is deeper than controversial or constitutional politics,—viz, the great hidden movement of India's soul, represented by her seers and sages and saints. The notes of this movement,—the truly Indian movement,—are simplicity and spirituality. And that word, ‘spirituality’, I know is repugnant to a number of my countrymen today. Some have said to me in all seriousness: “Abolish religion to save India”. I do not blame them. Sectarian conflicts have sullied the name of religion. And have not the Bolsheviks abolished Christianity? Let India follow suit,—argue a number of educated Indians to-day. Many, indeed, of the educated nationalists in India are disciples of the West. And in modern European states religion is largely suppressed. Will India suppress religion? Yet the remedy of abolishing religion may be worse than the disease. In abolishing religion, you may abolish India itself! India, I humbly submit, will not follow Europe's way; the Indian, whether Hindu or Muslim, is

essentially a religious animal. It seems to me each community must develop a Religion of Reverence for all prophets, and of Service and Patriotism,—saluting India as the one Mother at once of Hindus and Muslims. Hinduism will not surrender to Islam; Islam will not surrender to Hinduism; but the orthodoxy of each will undergo radical transformation, and both will teach their devotees that they all are one another's in One God, One Humanity, one Indian nation, and one loving fellowship with the Poor. India's saints and poets have, age after age, declared the One is the God of all, and that His Light shines in all religions and all races. Reverence for all religions and prophets,—is what our *Shakti Ashrams* endeavour to awake in the hearts of young men. Reverence, not mere tolerance. True reverence which, as Mark Twain said, is “respect for another man's God”. India's place in the great family of the nations will be determined by the measure of her loyalty to her spiritual idealism, her witness to the divinity of man, her wealth of the wisdom of life. India's leadership will not be of money and exploitation; her leadership will be of service and spiritual idealism. To young men studying in different colleges, I say: Remember that education is, essentially, the leading forth of the soul and therefore, the discipline and development of the soul's vehicles,—the bodily senses and emotions and the mind. We live by affirmation, not negation. God is the deepest affirmation of life. Indeed, the most dynamic part in the history of India is the part played by religion. Nor may you explain the world's history without religion. Bernard Shaw rightly says: “Civilisation cannot survive without religion”. The ancient word *dharma* is significant. This is how *dharma* is defined in the *Vaisheshika*—What makes for advancement in this world and Attainment in the next,—that is *dharma*. *Dharma is the Law of Advancement and Attainment*. *Dharma is Shakti*. Far, then, from asking you to eliminate religion in the name of nationalism, I say to you: Make love of India a part of your religion. Our nationalism will be purer, richer, nobler, more dynamic in the day we appreciate and act up to the teaching of Shri Krishna to Arjuna: “Whatever you do, do it unto Me”! The nationalist movement in India will be invincible when we shall see in it the urge of a Divine purpose. I plead for a new nationalism,—one which may be inspired by the ideal of spiritual democracy. A bigger and nobler ideal this than the socialist ideal. For socialism builds at best from without, not from within. Socialism does not go deep enough into the root of the creative life of nations. Socialism takes up a section of life,—the economic,—an important section and one we must not neglect. But we must remember, too, that life, in the fundamentals

is a spiritual process. This gives an inner continuity to the life of India, the life of humanity. Young men! I ask you not to surrender this immortal heritage of India,—the sense of the Atman, the One Eternal Self, the Spirit of creative evolution.

The Miracle of Regeneration *

IV.

"This is the true Indian problem":

Namely, how to release the Soul of India from the grip of the past, how to rouse her to a vivid sense of the present, to make her turn her gaze to the future that lies in front of her, instead of keeping it fixed on departed glories, dead traditions and outgrown standards.

"Solve it, and everything else which keeps India back to-day will melt away like the morning mists."

Can it be doubted that, if India's sons will allow the dead past to bury its dead and turn their thoughts to the crying needs of the day, if they will but throw aside unreal fetters and prepossessions, and set themselves to encompass present freedom and prosperity, at whatever cost of cherished opinions, all those difficulties which loom so large now will vanish in a moment, and that Mother India can at once shake herself free and stride proudly on to her appointed goal? All this is not poetry or idle fancy, but a matter of common sense. Other nations which have been in equally bad case have accomplished their salvation by resolutely turning their faces away from the past: Japan did it a half-century ago, and Turkey and even Afghanistan are doing it today, before our eyes.

Let us take up, as an illustration, the one problem of Indian solidarity which is giving so much trouble in these days, and consider what other peoples, who have not the same rigid commitments from the past as we, would have done in the same circumstances. What, for instance, would the English and the French have done in India were they, through some divine dispensation, put in the place of the Hindus and the Muslims? The example of Canada furnishes, I think, a decisive answer: they would have hastened to get rid of all removable differences, to evoke the largest possible measure of unity in aims and methods, and set about building a new nation as quickly as might be in their new surroundings. A still more striking example is that of the

* Unrevised Notes of Talks, by Rajadharma Pravina Dewan Bahadur K. S. Chandra-
sekhar Aiyar.

United States of America, which has received and absorbed people of all sorts of nationalities, religions and cultures, and speaking all manner of languages, and made out of them one definite racial type, able to wage successfully the struggle for existence in their new country, a single nation able to keep out foreign intervention and take in its own hands the control of its own affairs.

I do not say that we whom God has placed in India should or can solve the particular problem in the same way that other peoples may be imagined to set about doing it. National character and history count for a great deal in regard to the range of possible actions and policies. My point is, that the problem has been solved in other countries and at other times; and if we in India cannot do it, or rather have not yet done it, it is because we—and particularly the Hindus—are still obsessed with an undue reverence for the past, because we are tied too firmly to its apron strings to be able to move forward on our own legs with ease. If we did but realise that Hindu and Muslim, Christian and Buddhist, high-caste and low-caste, were fated by providence to live together, if we could only agree to sink our differences and work for common ends, instead of lamenting past glories and keeping alive existing rivalries and hatreds, the problem of self-determination would be solved once and for all. This is only one instance, an extreme instance it may be, of how our difficulties will vanish if we but clear the path of progress of all sorts of self-imposed and imaginary obstacles and barriers. And the method of clearing away the obstacles is simple in essence: it consists in nothing more than a change of mentality, sufficient to leave us free to employ all the resources ready to our hands to meet existing conditions, and not merely such as may be recommended and approved by past tradition and authority. Of course, there may be, there must be, much good in these; but let us test them and then make them part of a living, glowing ideal urging us from within to the new goal, instead of taking them on trust and following them blindly wherever they may lead.

"The Law of Life cannot be cheated."

Life is a unique kind of activity difficult to define. It involves a twofold relation between the organism and its environment: on the one hand, a liability to be influenced by surrounding conditions, and, on the other, a capacity to influence and modify the surroundings. Life thus implies action and reaction, in other words, variability, which is indeed the central fact of life. And yet, in spite of ceaseless change, the living creature retains its integrity. How is this achieved? Herein lies a mystery. As has been picturesquely observed, "the distinctive criterion of the living creature is this, that in a world where all the

clocks, so to speak, are running down, it is able to counteract its running down by also winding itself up." Life is not merely a process of external accretion, but it is rather the incorporation and assimilation of new material in an active way. It is an aspect of creative evolution, change with a continual emergence of new characteristics. The Law of Life is thus, shortly, the Law of growth; and when an organism, an individual, institution or nation, becomes incapable of growth, when it cannot effectively respond to and act upon its actual existing environment, then it begins to decay and it must die.

We hear much talk nowadays about making weak men healthy and old men young by injections of extracts and the engraftings of glands. All this is futile and opposed to the processes of nature. You cannot cheat the Law of Life by reliance on external devices of this kind. The true source of vital energy is from within: and when this is left free to act, it will keep the mechanism properly wound up, provided the parts be not damaged beyond repair. Similarly, too, with regard to a country. The heritage of the past does, undoubtedly, count for much in the development of a people, provided it becomes part and parcel of the life and character, instead of remaining an external object for indiscriminate worship or admiration, and provided, further, that existing conditions are not ignored, nor the supreme importance overlooked of new ideas, increased capacities and aptitudes, fresh discoveries and conquests of nature. To us in India at the present day it remains especially true that "life is richer now in its opportunities, more exhilarating in its occupations, more tantalizing in its questions, more urgent in the close pressure of its reality, than it ever was for our forefathers." This, after all, is merely an application of the biological truth that, besides heredity, there are other factors equally important in regulating the development of living creatures; namely, environment (present conditions and opportunities) and function (habits, occupation, outlook).

"The race or country which has not liberated its inner life cannot hope for freedom in the real sense of the word."

We have already sufficiently considered the meaning and implications of real freedom, how inner freedom differs from outer freedom, what are its enemies, and how it is to be attained. It is enough to add at this point that true freedom, by its very nature as an inner spiritual impulse, must be won by each nation for itself; it cannot be got by solicitation from, or gifted as a favour by, another. It is equally obvious that, however justly and sympathetically one nation may rule another, according to its lights, this cannot amount to real freedom for

the subject nation. Good government certainly is no substitute for self government, though it may be a temporary halting stage on the way to the achievement of self-government.

"And even if it gets what seems like outer freedom, the fruit when tasted will be found, for all its outward fairness, to be dust and ashes within."

It is this fact which is forgotten by people who are fond of repeating Alexander Pope's hackneyed lines:

*"For forms of government let fools contest,
Whate'er is best administer'd is best."*

A steel-frame organization like that of Fascist Italy or like the British dominion in India may be very efficient and allow of a great deal of personal liberty and even material prosperity; but it cannot give the people real happiness and contentment unless these can feel that they are masters of themselves in the fullest sense, free and fit to mould their circumstances and their destiny according to their own light, their own peculiar genius. The soul of man is like a bird; as the bird cannot sing its sweetest notes when confined, even if it be in a gilded cage, so man cannot live at his best unless free to live as his inmost nature prompts him. It is the inner freedom enjoyed by the ancient Greeks which accounts, not only for their outer freedom, but for what may be called the spaciousness of their life, the large outlook, the joy and elation of temperament, the massiveness and range of thought, the wonderful richness of culture. The ancient Hindus, judging by what they have left behind, must have had the same inner freedom in a remarkable degree; but we, their descendants, have long lost the gift, and must now win it afresh for ourselves.

(To be continued)

Shri Thyagayya's Hymns

(II) SHRI THYAGAYYA THE CHANNEL OF THE DIVINE INFLUENCE

(By Kirtnacharya C. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, B. A.)

There are three hymns on this subject. The first deals with the qualifications that the saint brought to his work. The second tells us to what particular classes they appeal and what branches of religion and philosophy are represented by the songs. The third reveals to us

22 or 2, N23
N28 or 29

the divine source from which he drew his inspiration. Nay, it is something more. Let me take them in their order—

The Kirtana in the Raga "Manoranjini" that begins with the words "Atu Karadani Palka" tells us in its Charana—"Veda Sastropanishad Vidudaina Nijadarini Batti, Dasu-daina nathu-pai."

It means, "On me, who have mastered the Vedas, the Shastras, and the Upanishads; who am your faithful and humble servant, walking along the Right Path."

And this statement of his is borne out by his minute acquaintance with every branch of the World-Religion and Philosophy.

The Second Kirtana in the Raga "Reetigaula" opens with the words 'Ragaratna Malika Che'. It is well worth giving in full.

PALLAVI

Raga Ratna Malika Che Ranjillu nata Hari. —Shata (Raga.)

ANUPALLAVI

Baga Sevinchi Sakala Bhagyamondutamu Rare

CHARANA

Naigama Shat Shashtra Puranagamatha Sahitamata—Yogi Varulu Yanundamu Nonda Sanmargamata—Bhaghavatottamulu Goodi Pade Kirtanamulata—Tyagararaju Kadatere Tarakamani Jesina Shata.—

It is a custom holding among the devotees of a God to make an offering to Him of some valuable object. A jewel, a garment, a (vahana) conveyance, are some of the ways in which their devotion finds expression. And it is also a time-honoured custom for them to invite their kin and friends to be present on the occasion and partake of the beneficent streams of force that are given back by the Lord in His sweet Mercy and Love.

The wealthy, the rich, the high-placed members of Society can afford to indulge in such methods of service. But Shri Thyagayya was a Brahmana; that is but another word for grinding poverty. And he would have nothing to do with kings and nobles of the time. He would take nothing at their hands. His daily round of alms gave him what was needed. "Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little long." How can he ever dream of competing with the plutocrats? It was clean beyond him.

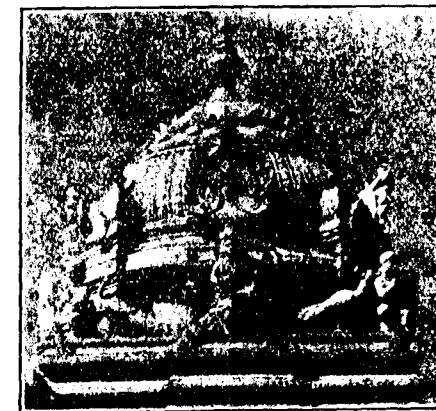
Yet he would serve his Lord; he would make his offering to Him, be it but the widow's mite. He would bring his quota to the work, even as the squirrel did during the throwing of the bridge over the sea from the mainland to the Lanka. He would place round the shoulders of his beloved Rama a priceless rope of gems, a hundred in number. But they would not be material, of the earth; but something far higher, something bordering on the impossible to the high-placed ones spoken of above. His rope of gems would be a garland of a hundred choice melody types, pieces fashioned in them; and devotion of the highest type would be the gold string that runs through them. And surely, Hari will be mightily pleased with this humble but rare offering of his servant. "Hari, Shata Raga Ratna Malika Che Ranjillu Nata."

(To be continued)

Kartikeya

By Mr. L. B. Raje

(Continued from page 142 of the Oct. issue.)



SHRI KARTIKEYA (BALASUBRAHMANYAM)

On the Northern face of the Vimana of The Temple of Light, Adyar

They saw that all Kingdoms of Nature were saturated with Shiva's Retas (re-generative power) almost to a breaking point, like an overflowing tank without an outlet and did not see how to remedy the evil. They, as usual, appealed to Brahma and as He also could not help them

they sought the aid of Vishnu. Brahma and Vishnu then thought of Agni (the Fire-God) and on his appearing before Them, commanded him to go to Shiva's abode. He went, and seeing the over-powering lustre of Shiva's gate-keeper Nandikeshwara became humble and passive and managed to pass through the gate. He then entered the secret chamber of Shiva's abode and there found Him with His consort Parvati (a young maiden—the Purana calls her Balika). He begs of Her to give him alms and holds out his hands to receive them. The Lord would not allow Her to leave His company to give him the alms. She therefore gives them by words only. He receives the same in his hands and drinks the contents, which are no other than the effulgent re-generative seed of the Universe. He is, however, unable to bear it within himself. But as he is only the mouth of all gods, as soon as he returned to them they all participated in it with him. The result was that they all became conceived and could not bear it. Then they again approached Vishnu for relief. He told them to pray to the Lord Himself. All the Devas and Brahma then prayed to Shiva and were told that they should throw out the contents and obtain relief. They did so. Then Agni Deva who did not get relief in this way prayed to the Lord and he was advised to transfer what he was impregnated with into all the wombs of nature. He hesitated to do so as he was afraid of doing harm thereby. He was assured that he might do so by a slow process from month to month and only when responsive conditions were present.

The first recipients he came across, when returning from the Lord's seat to these mortal worlds, were the six wives of the six out of the seven Rshis (the constellation of Great Bear). The wise Arundhati, wife of the sage Vasishta, refused to go near Agni and remains where she was to the present day. The beguiled six lost their higher position and came down to the plane of our Earth's Zodiac leaving the higher plane of the 'Saptarshi' and now form part of the constellation Krittikas. But for this sacrifice on their part, Agni Deva could not have fulfilled his mission of bringing down the Lord's Power to our plane of worlds and its manifestation as Kartikeya for the deliverance of all those living in these three worlds of ours.

The Purana says that the Lord Himself came to them one day as He felt lonely on account of the loss of His wife Sati, the daughter of Daksha Prajapati, who had thrown herself into the sacrificial fire of her father. She was re-born as Parvati, the daughter of the Himavan (the great Himalayas), but was not yet wedded to the Lord Shiva. The Rshipatnis (wives of six of the Rshis) sympathised with Him, and went to his abode to bear company and help Him to pass His time. The

Rshis then followed them there and what passed between them and the Lord there was only a prelude to the story of Agni Deva and Krittikas given above. We shall see the import of the whole story later on. I am giving these details here as they will help to make the meaning underlying the whole story to be understood clearly then. One wonders at the ingenious methods adopted by the great author of the Puranas to convey to us great truths about our evolution and the stages through which we have passed, by such interesting stories, which enable us to remember them better than if only abstruse accounts were given to us of this past history of our globe.

We find then that Agni Deva brings this terrible creative power through the six Krittikas down to our world and throws it into Ganga on the other side of the Himalayas. There the six-faced Kartikeya is born—the all-powerful son of Shambhu and Girija (Parvati). The moment the child is born Parvati finds her breasts full of milk and asks the Lord the reason for it. He, the knower of all that happens in His Universe, tells Her the good tidings of the birth of Their son who was to be the Saviour of the three worlds. The Celestial-messenger, Narada, propagated the joyous news through all the worlds and the illustrious Kumar was surrounded by all Devas and Brahma and Vishnu. In the midst of these rejoicings Shiva and Girija came to Earth from Their abode to see the child. Parvati then took him to her breast and covered him up. Both Shambhu and the World-Mother were delighted and the child was duly sprinkled with sacred water by the Rshis and surrounded by all the Devas. As the child was one day on the lap of his Father he squeezed with his hands the serpents round His neck and counted His hands. He counted numbers in the reverse order, as he ought, being the Initiator of mankind on the Path of Return after the completion of the process of Involution.

He is then informed of his mission by the Devas and undertakes to kill Tarakasura. He led the army of the Devas against the Daitya and destroyed him. He was then duly installed as the Supreme Guide of Evolution in the three worlds and all the Devas bow before Him.

Let us next see the import of the story regarding his birth, related above.

(To be continued)

Social India During Smriti Period

(By Mr. A. Rangaswami Ayyar, B.A. B.L., Madura).

There is a marked difference between Hindu Society, as depicted in the pages of Kautilya's Artha Shastra, and as portrayed in some of the important Smritis. There are twenty Smritis of greater or lesser authority, as enumerated by Yajnavalkya, and of these, the Smritis going under the names of Manu and Yajnavalkya, have the foremost place on account of their age, authority, and completeness.

As regards the age of Kautilya, we are on solid ground. Kautilya was the Minister of Chandragupta, the Founder of Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta was a contemporary of Alexander, the Great, who invaded India in 327 B. C., and he overthrew the Nanda Dynasty with the help of Kautilya, and became king in 322 B. C. At the end of Arthashastra, Kautilya refers to himself as having rescued the scriptures, the science of weapons, and the earth which had passed to the Nanda King, from oppression. (Book XV Chap I). Vishnu Purana refers to Nandas being slain by Kautilya, a Brahmana, and the latter installing Chandragupta on their throne, and says that Asokavardhana was a grandson of Chandragupta (IV 24).

The second and thirteenth Edicts of Asoka refer to Antiochus of Syria (260—247 B. C.), Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt (285—247 B. C.), Antigonus Gonatas of Macedonia (278—242 B. C.), Magas of Cyrene who died 258 B. C., and Alexander of Epirus who died between 262 and 258 B. C.

The Smritis of Manu and Yajnavalkya, in their present form belong to a period later than that of Artha Shastra. The Smriti period in the evolution of Sanskrit Literature is generally put down as later than the Sutra period, though it is quite possible that with regard to a particular Sutra, its age may perhaps overlap the period of a particular Smriti or may even be subsequent to the latter. Arthashastra is written in the Sutra Style, preferring prose to verse, and uses words which are obsolete, and some of which go against the rules of Panini. Kautilya himself in the last verse of the Arthashastra calls his work as "Sutra and commentary." Yajnavalkya uses words which are modern, and in accordance with the rules of Panini. Manu and Yajnavalkya write in verse. Kautilya includes 'enemy' in the elements of sovereignty enumerated by him (Bk VI. Chap. I). He uses the word 'Prakriti' to denote these elements including the enemy and says that this word is his own technical term not used by others in the same sense (XV. I). We find the word 'Prakriti' used in Manu Smriti in the same sense as

Kautilya, including an enemy, and can conclude from this and other circumstances that Manusmriti in its present form is later than Arthashastra. Arthashastra refers to Manavas or the School of Manu, amongst other schools of political thought, from which Kautilya often differs. The teachings of the Manavas might have been embodied in the form of Sutras extant during the time of Kautilya, and might have taken shape in the final form as is found in our present Manusmriti containing such changes and alterations which were necessitated by changing conditions of time. The points of difference noted by Kautilya between his opinions, and those of the school of Manavas indicate that the injunctions laid down in our present Manu Smriti on those points differed from what was taught in the Manava School as understood during Kautilya's time. For example Kautilya divides sciences into four, while he says that the Manavas hold that there are only three sciences, viz, the triple Veda, Varta, and the science of Government (I. 2). The present Manusmriti appears to classify the sciences as five fold, adding to the above threefold division, the science of dialectics, and the knowledge of the self (VII 43). Again, while the Manavas made the King's Council of Ministers consist of 12 Members, and Kautilya would hold that it should consist of as many members as the needs of the dominion would require, the Manusmriti lays down that it shall consist of 7 or 8 Ministers. (VII 54).

Although it is quite possible that the time at which the Great Grammarian Panini lived and flourished might be anterior to Kautilya, yet some time must have elapsed since he wrote his Sutras for their attaining a high degree of acceptance, and this time could not be later than when Patanjali wrote his famous commentary 'Mahabhashya' on the Sutras of Panini. Patanjali refers to the contemporaneous sieges of Saketa in Oudh, and of Madhyamika in Rajaputana, by the Yavanas (Greeks), and the horse Sacrifice of Pushyamitra, the founder of the Sunga Dynasty which followed the Mauryas in Magadha. The age of Patanjali is about 170-148 B.C., and is subsequent to Kautilya.

The age-long social life of the Hindus appears to have continued for thousands of years without any serious interaction of cultures of any high degree of development penetrating from outside India, and such changes as have been wrought in its frame work seem to be due to the normal evolutionary forces which experience and changes in environments brought about by efflux of time usually bring, or to the interaction of indigenous cultures and social systems existing side by side on Indian soil reacting on Aryan social life. But in the period covered by about six centuries just before and after the beginning of the Christian Era, there was a series of crowded foreign influences

which must have tended to affect Hindu Social life in an extraordinary manner. After Alexander left India, the Greek influence continued in the North West, and there were dynasties of Greek Kings in the regions now covered by Afghanistan, Bactria, and the North West of India, right up to the middle of 1st century after Christ. There were the Imperial Sakas, a Scythian tribe who ruled in the North West. Some of these Saka Kings called Kshatrapas and Mahakshatrapas established their sway in Mathura (Muttra), Malwa, Kathiawar, and even as far south as the Southern Mahratta country. They derived their title from the Persian Kshathrapa (*English* Satrap) and we derive our Saka Era from them. Some of these Saka rulers are traced even after the middle of the 3rd century after Christ when the Great Hindu Empire of the Guptas rises into view. The Saka Emperors in the North West soon gave way to the Indo-Parthian or Pahlava Kings, who in their turn gave way to the Kushanas, a Turkish or Turushka race of whom the most famous was the Great Buddhist Emperor Kanishka. The Kushanas were succeeded by the Guptas. These foreigners were not uncompromising in their attitude towards the religion of the country, as the later Mussalmans, and the more recent Europeans who appear on the stage of Indian history long afterwards. On the other hand they merged in the course of a few generations into the comprehensive fold of Hinduism, affected in some cases by its daughter culture, the Buddhistic. Yet they introduced new strains into the stream of Hindu culture, which the exponents of the latter could not view with unconcern or equanimity, and sought to protect themselves from. Along with these foreign impacts, Buddhism gave a higher place to ethical conduct, over ritual or dogma.

We find references to the tangle caused by these foreign influences in our Smritis, Puranas, and other writings belonging to this period in their present form.

Manusmriti says "But in consequence of the omission of the sacred rites, and of their consulting Brahmanas, the following tribes of Kshatriyas have sunk in this world to the condition of Shudras (viz) the Pundrakas, the Chodas, Dravidas, the Kambojas, the Yavanas, the Sakas, the Parathas, the Pahlavas, the Chinas, the Kiratas, and the Daradas (X 43-44).

Again in Mahabharata, Anushasana Parva, chap 33, it is said that the different Kshatriya tribes, Sakas, Yavanas, and Kambojas became Shudras through not following Brahmanas.

A fiction was introduced that these Yavanas, Sakas, Parthians, Pahlavas, and other foreign tribes originally belonged to the Hindu fold and fell away subsequently.

It is not surprising that during these confused and troublous times which preceded the great religious and Sanskrit renaissance, which arose under the Gupta Emperors, Hindu society tended to conserve itself by attaining a greater amount of rigidity and exclusiveness and infusing a greater degree of strictness in social and moral relations, by the elimination of such customs as were thought to have a tendency to loosen the bonds of morality, and the metrical Smritis which belong to this period reflect the influences prevailing at the time. We can refer to some of the changes which took place in different directions, some distinctly progressive and good, and some reactionary and retrograde.

(1) Disappearance of Intercaste Marriages. i.e., the marriage between a man of a higher caste and the woman of a lower caste. The greater rigidity of caste.

(2) Indissolubility of marriage and interdiction against remarriage of women. Discouragement and disappearance of remarriage of widows. Abolition of divorce.

(3) Early marriage of girls.

(4) Giving up animal food and intoxicating liquors.

(5) Lowering the status of womanhood.

(6) Abolition of Niyoga

(7) Supplanting animal sacrifices by worship and devotion to the Supreme and Devas.

Let us now compare Kautilya's Artha Shastra and Manusmriti.

(To be continued)

Shri Narada

By. Mr. S. Raja Ram

Deva Rshi Narada is the most ubiquitous and venerated character of Hindu sacred literature. He has a part in practically every great event described in the ancient Puranas. It would probably be more correct to say that most great events seem to be due apparently to the mischief of this 'walker of the skies.' In this article we shall briefly study the birth and activities of this greatest of Bhaktas.

The word 'Narada' means 'the giver of wisdom.'

नारं परमात्मविषयज्ञानं ददाति इति नारदः ।

The beautiful address of the personified Bhakti to Narada brings out this idea delightfully :

जयति जयति मायां यस्य कायाध्वस्ते वचनरचनमेकं केवलं चाकलय्य ।
ध्रुवपदमपि यातो यत्कृपातो ध्रुवोऽयं सकलकुशलपात्रं ब्रह्मपुत्रं नतास्मि ॥

Padma Purana Bhag. Mahatmya 1 (79).

Here Bhakti salutes Narada, the son of Brahma, the source of all happiness, and hearing whose word of wisdom Prahlada conquered illusion and the child Dhruva attained everlasting glory and occupies his eternal state—Dhruva pada.

Narada is the foremost of Deva Rshis; for Rshis are of three kinds—Deva Rshis., Brahma Rshis and Raja Rshis. Deva Rshis are mighty Adepts who have dedicated themselves to the task of assisting the progress of humanity, themselves being, however, the flower of a different line of evolution.

His Previous Lives

The two previous lives of Shri Narada can be known from the accounts in the Shrimad Bhagavata. In the life antecedent to the previous one, he was Upabrahmana Gandharva, beautiful, but given to a sensual life amidst women. He was called on by the Prajapatis to sing the praises of Hari. "Taking me as having shown disregard to them they cursed me to be born a Shudra in the next life in which I took to the service of the Great Ones and gained illumination." (Shrimad Bhagavata I Ch. 7 (69-73).

In the next life he was accordingly born as the son of a Shudra servant in a Brahmana house. It so chanced that in that house many spiritual Initiates turned up once as guests. Narada was then a young lad of five and engaged himself in the service of the Great Ones, without waywardness, अपेताखिलचापल without love of toys, अधृतक्रीडनक and of very few words (अल्पभाषि). The sages took compassion on the lad. He became attached to them, heard Shri Krishna's stories constantly sung by them and gradually glimpsed the light within. The Great Ones blessed him on their departure. The lad then made rapid progress in devotion and steadfastness, transcended Rajas and Tamas, acquired humility and self-control, and having learnt the secret of Brahma Vidya, that Karma can be conquered by service done without attachment dedicated his life to the service of humanity. His mother then died of serpent-bite. The boy then wandered to the north, and exhausted in travel he refreshed himself with water and sat in meditation and realised his goal.

ध्यायतश्चरणाम्भोजं भावनिर्जितचेतसा ।
औत्कण्ठयाश्रुकलाक्षस्य हृद्यासीन्मेशनैर्हरिः ॥

—Bhag. Sk. I. Chap. VI (17).

Then came the stage, experienced by every spiritual aspirant, when all seemed dark and the spiritual vision clouded.

दिदृक्षुस्तदहं भूयः प्रणिधाय मनोहृदि ।

वीक्षमाणोऽपि नापश्यमवितृप्त इवातुरः ॥

—Bhag. Sk. I. Chap. VI (20)

At this time he hears a voice from the unseen, blessing him with speedy perfection and achievement. He continues singing the name of Hari without convention, attachment, jealousy and pride. At the end of the Kalpa he enters the heart of the Lord along with Brahma, and comes out one of the first along with Marichi and others at the beginning of the next.

His Present Incarnation and Activities

Now Narada goes round the three worlds unimpeded, always carrying out the Divine Will and helping in the fruition of the Great Plan. Vina in hand, ever singing the praises of the Lord in harmony with Nada, the Mystic sound, ever pleasant of face and manner, radiating love and compassion upon all created beings, Narada is welcomed as a friend in all the three worlds. Wherever there is trouble or misunderstanding, his advice is eagerly sought. Even the Asuras had trust in his loving wisdom. He is the confidant of men and women alike, and foes arrayed in opposite camps alike sought his counsel. This universal accessibility and confidence were abundantly used by the great sage often in inscrutable ways, oftentimes again in diplomatic and dubious modes, but always so as to work out the decrees of His Will, in the adjustment of Karmic accounts as rapidly and as thoroughly as may be. It is worthy of note that even when the results of Narada's intervention caused material suffering to any set of people, the sufferers themselves took the pain in good part, as a result of their own Karma, cast no blame on Narada, deeming him but the agent of Divine Will, loving and respecting him the same as before.

He has been the greatest servant of humanity—one of the world's eternal helpers. He comes only next to Kumara in the list of Siddheshas (Great Adepts) who wander the earth always seeking opportunities to impart wisdom to deserving seekers. The Kumaras address him as the foremost of Krishna-Dasas, the crown of viraktas (passion-free) and the Sun of yogis—

अहो नारद धन्योऽसि विरक्तानां शिरोमणिः ।

सदा श्रीकृष्णदासानामग्रणी योगभास्करः ॥

Padma Purana—Bhag. Mahatmya Ch. II (54.)

Valmiki and Vyasa who gave the splendid epics, Shrimad Ramayana and Shrimad Mahabharata, to the world, wrote under Narada's inspiration. He appeared to the Pandavas before the great Rajasuya sacrifice, was in the assembly of Princes when Shishupala upbraided Shri Krishna and met his doom, and warned Kamsa and Hiranyakashipu of their coming fall. He is universally honoured for his unexampled virtues detailed in the Shanti Parva of the Mahabharata (Ch. 237). A few preeminent of them are—his unblemished character, great energy, straight-forwardness, deep wisdom combined with humility, helpful advice given in kindly words, passionless in debate and zeal in keeping others' secrets.

Above all, Narada is a Great Mystic. The following from the Secret Doctrine reveals something of his exalted occult standing.

"Narada—the old Vedic Rshi—connected along with Asuramaya in Mystic Astronomy, Chronology and their cycles, Narada is one of the incomprehensible characters in Mahabharata and Puranas—son of Brahma in Matsya Purana—the progeny of Kashyapa and Daksha's daughter in Vishnu Purana—Deva Rshi cursed by Daksha and Brahma. In the Aryan allegory the rebellious sons of Brahma are all represented as holy ascetics and yogis. Reborn in every Kalpa, they generally try to impede the work of human procreation. Daksha Prajapati brings forth 10,000 sons for peopling the world—Narada, son of Brahma virtually a Kumara, interferes with Daksha's aim by persuading the sons—Haryashvas and Shabhalashvas—to remain holy ascetics, for which Daksha curses Narada to be reborn as a man—Brahma cursed him previously for refusing to marry.

In Cis-Himalayan Occultism, Narada is called the Messenger and the executor of Universal decrees of Karma and Adi Buddha, a kind of active and ever incarnating Logos who leads and guides human affairs from the beginning to the end of Kalpa. He is Karma's visible adjuster on a general scale—the inspirer and the leader of the greatest heroes of this Manvantara. Abused as Kalikaraka—Pishuna, &c.

Dr. Kenealy considered him one of his twelve Messiahs. What Narada really is cannot be explained in print, nor would the modern profanes gather much from the information. Narada's activities are verily to serve and to guide universal progress and evolution. Narada visits Patala also. Narada learned more than Sehsha's wisdom in 'his knowledge of Cyclic intricacies'. It is he who has charge of our progress and national weal or woe. It is he who brings on wars and puts an end to them.

He is one of the Fires above mentioned, and plays a part in the evolution of this Kalpa from its incipient down to its final stage. He

is an actor who appears in each of the successive acts or Root Races of the present Manvantaric Dharma.

The hidden symbolism of Narada—the great Rshi and the author of some of the Rig Vedic hymns, who incarnated again later on during Krishna's time has never been understood—yet in connection with the Occult Sciences, Narada, the son of Brahma, is one of the most prominent characters; he is directly connected in his first incarnation with the "Builders". Narada is one of the seven Rshis, the mind-born sons of Brahma. The fact of his having been during his incarnation a high Initiate—he like Orpheus being the founder of the Mysteries—is corroborated and made evident by his history. S. D. III—291.

II

By Dewan Bahadur K. Sundaram Chettiar, B.A., B.L.

District and Sessions Judge.

Any attempt on my part to portray the glory and grandeur of so great a Deva Rshi would be as futile as the innocent frolic of a child in beckoning the silvery moon to climb down from her gracious seat in the firmament on high. But no child desists from such an attempt, being engrossed in the admiration of the moon, which throws into oblivion any doubt as to the success of such an attempt. Children as we are, in the view of the Great Sages, the weakness of the attempt is no disparagement, but on the other hand will be treated by them with benign grace. That being so, I have made this venture.

The name of 'Shri Narada' is sacred to everyone within the fold of Hinduism. It acts as a magnetic charm on the mind of every devotee and serves as an elixir of his spiritual life. For, he is the king of devotees, and is the brightest gem in their crown. Truly has the Lord said in the 10th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, that of all the Rshis, Deva Rshi Narada is identical with Himself. In this Kali Yuga (the iron age), it is this Great Sage, who serves as the beacon-light on the path of devotion. Full of benevolence, cognisant of the frailties of humanity in this age, and imbued with an ardent desire to show them an easy way for the attainment of the goal, He has prescribed a *maha-mantra* in what is called the "Kali Santarana Upanishad." The practice of uttering this sacred mantra, in a spirit of a sincerity and faith, and with prayerful devotion and strenuous concentration, illumines the mind, and frees a man from the bonds of *samsara*. Of course, the *sine qua non* for this means of attaining liberation even in this Yuga,

is stated to be truth in word and purity in mind. This dispels an ordinary misconception that in Kali Yuga, the mere repeated utterance of the sacred names of God, is enough for attaining salvation.

As an important functionary in the great Occult Hierarchy, he exercises his influence on the three worlds, *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah* and *Suvah*. The Hindu Puranic lore is replete with anecdotes connected with this Great Rshi. A careful study of those incidents is sure to impress on the reader that the purpose of this Maha Rshi is to draw out the virtues latent in one who is on the spiritual path but still struggling in his great pilgrimage with genuine aspiration, by putting him to the acid test which proves to be his greatest ordeal. He has thus been a real benefactor to many a soul, by accelerating the progress of their evolution. But the drama which has to be played is often not an ordinary one. The part assigned to each actor or actress is so skillfully planned, that the traits of character, good or bad, have to be manifested fully and the result will always be an agreeable surprise. The chagrin naturally felt in the course of the play of conflicting emotions will vanish at the end, and even the wicked and the wily will only regret their folly and will be driven to admire the sagacity of this Deva Rshi, whereas, the oppressed virtuous will be loud in their chorus of praise and gratitude to him. The shallow mind falls into the errors of thinking that Narada is fond of creating quarrels, and enjoys the arena of strife, brought about by his own machinations. Nothing is farther from the truth, and I make bold to observe that such a charge amounts almost to blasphemy.

Full of compassion, He is ever ready and anxious to help the needy, give succour to the distressed, console the gloomy, uplift the down-trodden and right the wrong. But it is the folly of many which wards off his helping hand, though it is outstretched for rendering aid in the hour of need. An ungodly spirit, lack of faith and humility, a self-complacent attitude, prejudice born of pride, and disregard for anything but the mundane are some of the sentinels who will scare away the great Ones, and frustrate their attempts to render help. There is however, a sure guarantee, that the righteous are never forsaken.

In most, if not all, the great events which have occurred in this world, according to the Puranas, has Narada figured, and invariably his intervention has been for the promotion of virtue and suppression of vice. High was the regard, which the divine kings of old had towards this great Rshi who endeared himself to them by his timely warning when danger was imminent, by his wise counsel in the midst of embarrassment and confusion, by his skilful diplomacy when such help was sought for and by his valuable guidance in the hour of despair

in the thick of the fight. So great is his benefaction, that no true bhakta fails to appeal to him for help when stricken with grief, and so broad is his condescension that it embraces within its folds an ignorant child as well as a mature man, the poor and the lowly as also the rich and the high, and even the humble peasant and the mighty monarch.

The speciality of this great Rshi, cannot be easily overlooked. As an embodiment of the highest devotion to God, he pours forth his love in melodious notes of divine music, with ecstatic delight, enrapturing the soul—what a blessed soul he is, who has attained his perfection through the great path of devotion! From the inner fountain of the heart, springs up the current of devotion which flows out as tears of joy and ripples forth in thrills of excitement and sounds out in melodious hymns in praise of the great Lord of the Universe. That is how a true bhakta has ordinarily manifested his piety.

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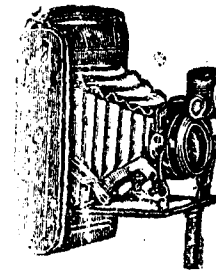
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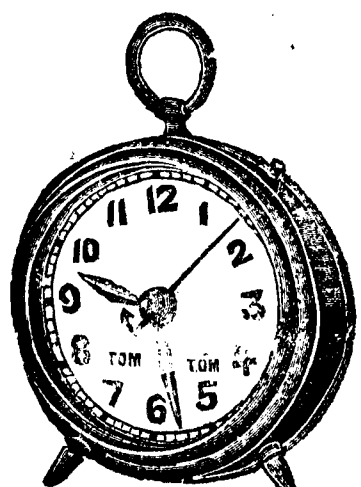
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62

Shri Kashi

Special Number

Chidambaram

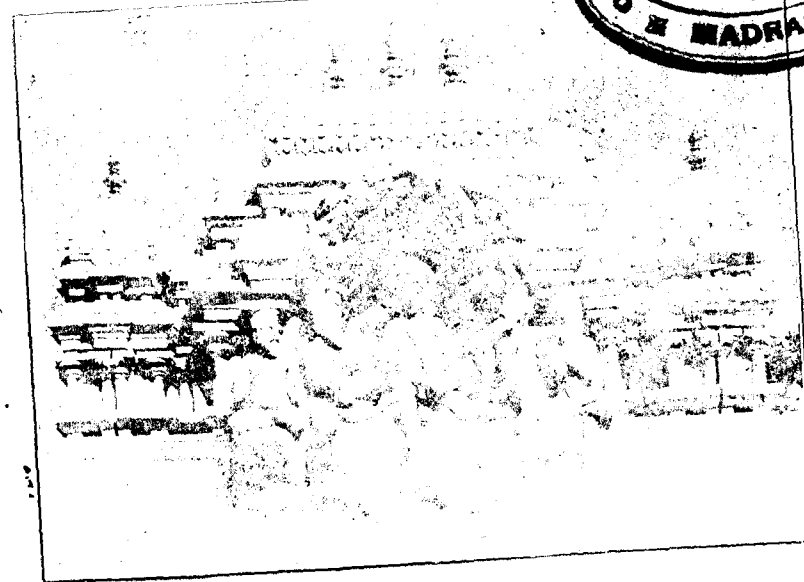
THE

Bharata Dharma

Magazine of Liberal Hinduism: Editor: Mr. S. Raja Ram

VOL. VI.

DECEMBER 1928



On the front parapet of THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT, Adyar:

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धा शिक्षया गुरुर्युवा ।
गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यातं शिक्ष्यास्तु छिन्नमंशया ॥

Ah! The wonder under the Banyan tree! There sits the Teacher, a
youth; the disciples, elders. The teaching is silence, and the disciples'
doubts are dispelled.

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SHRI NATARAJA



CHIDAMBARAM

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BHARATA DHARMA

(The Official Organ of the Bharata Samaja)

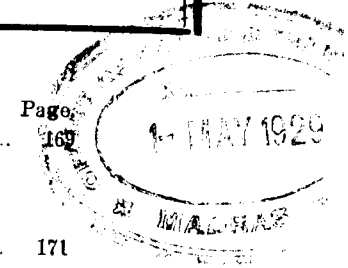
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Notes

We believe our readers will be greatly interested in this number which is exclusively devoted to the collection and presentation of high and holy thoughts on (i) Shri Kashi, our holiest city, and (ii) Shri Nataraja, at Chidambaram, the grandest symbol of Shiva's ecstatic, cosmic dance of creation, its maintenance and dissolution. We have tried to place before our readers the information and thoughts we have gathered in regard to the historical, religious, social, cultural and occult aspects of Kashi, con-



tributed by deep scholars, keen thinkers, distinguished writers, eminent philosophers and high occultists. Similarly, we have gathered and present valuable material in respect of Shri Nataraja at Chidambaram. We were prompted to devote and dedicate this number to Kashi and Chidambaram in view of the fact that this year the annual T. S. Convention meets at Benares, and here is what Dr. Besant says of it:

"The 1928 Convention in Benares will be an ever-memorable one, for the World-Teacher will be there, its Centre and its Guide. It is a profound joy to me to stand aside, now that he shines out with such power and life, and no lesser persons can teach while he is there. I have placed in his strong hands the sole management of everything at Benares and all who love me will serve me best in serving him. There will be no ceremonials during the T. S. Convention days, for the life he pours out so richly will, when the hour comes, create its own forms in which his exquisite Ideals will clothe themselves; but that hour is not yet. All outward forms, which are lifeless, will pass away; no living form will perish, and the Devas who serve him, the Devas who shape the beauties of the nature that he loves so dearly, who paint the sunset and the dawning, the tiny flowers and the mighty trees, will, as they ever do in Nature, manifest in new forms of natural beauty, in the Kingdom of Happiness which he is founding on our earth. That heavenly kingdom is within each of us and its sun will irradiate the new world with its beams, the forthshining of the Spirit within us, the One life which lives in us all."

On the 26th of this month occurs at sacred Chidambaram, the place on which saints and sages have lavished their unstinted and whole-hearted devotion and praise for ages past, the grand annual festival which culminates in what is called the *Ardra Darshan*, the vision of the Supreme vouchsafed to two Rshis, Patanjali and Vyaghrapada, for which they did severe tapas for so long. We refer our readers specially to the explanation of the symbology of Shri Nataraja given by the late B. R. Rajam Aiyer, recorded in his "Rambles in Vedanta" from which we have taken the liberty to make extracts.

Mr. M. S. Sharma's explanation is original and compels attention, just as his picture of Vyoma Tandava—reproduced on the second cover-page—compels admiration. It is a copy of the larger picture he exhibited at the last fine Arts Exhibition at the Senate House, and which was the admiration of all discerning students of Art and Symbology.

The City of Salvation

By Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, K. C. I. E., LL.D.

With far greater justice than the proud city on the banks of the Tiber can Benares lay claim to the appellation of "The Eternal City". Its antiquity goes back to a date far more distant than that of any of the cities of ancient Greece or Rome. The history of Egypt may go back to an older date, but Thebes and Memphis are now no more than names. The famous cities of ancient times have mostly sunk into oblivion. They owed their importance to their position as the capital of some reigning dynasty and they shared the vicissitudes of fortune of their rulers. Though Benares has often been the capital of some Hindu principality, it has played but a small part in the political history of India. Its fame does not rest upon its connection with any earthly ruler or any supreme pontiff. Its predominance in the Hindu world rests upon deeper foundations, upon its long-established association with the Hindu faith. It is the holiest city in the Hindu world, and it owes its sanctity to the Ganges and to the fact that, more than any other place of pilgrimage, it is believed to be the favourite abode of Mahadeva, its presiding Deity. The Ganges is considered sacred throughout its course and there are innumerable places where Mahadeva is worshipped. But no city on the banks of the Ganges, and no temple raised to the Great God can claim the same veneration and devotion from Hindus. For thousands of years myriads of pilgrims have been drawn to Kashi from all quarters of India. It holds its head high above all other places of pilgrimage and is the most cosmopolitan city in the Hindu world. What is the secret of this extraordinary spell of Kashi?

The appeal of the city to the orthodox Hindu is very different from its attraction to the foreign tourist, or the educated Hindu. What strikes the tourist is the splendid beauty of the magnificent row of noble buildings of Hindu architecture, along the ghats, the numberless temples with their cupolas and spires and waving flags, the picturesque crowds of men and women bathing in the river, or performing their worship, the quaint awnings under which the Pandas (Priests), seated on wooden platforms, offer their services to the pilgrims, and the Panch Ganga Mosque with its graceful minarets towering over the whole scene. It is the splendour of the ghats in the morning sun that must have suggested the name of Kashi, the resplendent city. As his boat moves slowly on the surface of the stream, the tourist notices the burning grounds in close proximity to some of the ghats, and the huge

sewers pouring their volumes of crude sewage into the river. Probably he thinks it strange that a river so contaminated should be considered so holy. If he has travelled widely, he may perhaps be reminded of the beautiful buildings on the Grand Canal in Venice, or the picturesque houses of Srinagar on the banks of the Jhelum. But neither the Grand Canal nor even the Jhelum can bear comparison with the Ganges, and the houses on the Jhelum are rickety structures. The tourist pays a visit to the bazaars, where metal ware of artistic design and finely embroidered silk fabrics attract his attention. He notices the narrow tortuous alleys flanked by houses of several storeys, alleys so narrow that they are hardly ever penetrated by the rays of the sun, except at noon. The alleys are crowded with pilgrims wending their way to the river or returning from it, and stopping here and there to offer worship to a way-side idol. The God of Hinduism is not to be sought only in spacious architecturally built temples but is to be found on the way-side and in every nook and corner. The pious Hindu is glad of the symbols that remind him of Divinity at every turn. Benares is a city which has grown up irregularly with the ages and those who built it were, unlike the builders of the celebrated temple-towns of South India utterly innocent of any principle of town-planning. The narrowness of the roads was due to the fact that the river was the great high way of commerce.

The tourist who is not obliged to reside in the city carries away an interesting and not disagreeable recollection of his visit to what he would consider a typical Hindu city, unless he extends his travels to the South of India.

The Hindu who has received a Western education and has had his notions widened by travel, views the city with very different feelings. He feels a pride in the past of the city which has for ages been one of the greatest strongholds of Hinduism and Hindu civilization and culture, and has been a living centre of intellectual and spiritual life, handing down the torch of learning and religion from generation to generation. But he is disgusted with the insanitary condition of the city, the lack of any ideas of civic cleanliness among the people, the utter absence of any plan in the lay-out of the town, the squalor of the lanes, the pollution of the holy river, the snob-bish display of fine ornamental carvings in stone or wood in the verandahs and balconies of houses otherwise mean or rickety. The lanes of the city, with their filth and obstructions and with an odour of tobacco, are an abomination and a standing offence against all principles of sanitation. He would be appalled at the financial impossibility of reconstructing and improving the city on

any rational lines. Perhaps the best thing he could wish for is a huge conflagration which would spare no building or street except those abutting the river or the main roads.

The pious Hindu of the orthodox world is not affected by any of those features of Benares which shock the senses of the educated Hindu. He is not very much disturbed by the pollution of the river. Is it not sacred enough to wash off all stains physical or moral? He is not offended by the burning-grounds in the vicinity, for they serve to remind him of the fleeting character of life. Death has no terrors for the faithful. It is but the portal to blissful eternity. Nor is he offended by the sight of the deformed and the diseased or by the importunities of the mendicants who obstruct his way to the shrines. There is no sense of contamination in the jostling of caste against caste within the precincts of the temple. If the temple of Vishveshvar lacks the spacious and noble proportions and architecture of the great Dravidian temples, he is compensated by the easy personal access to the symbol of the Deity and by the feeling of intimate communion with the object of his worship. As happily observed by a writer of genuine sympathy and insight, idolatry and symbolic ritual were never regarded as indispensable to Hinduism, but rather as a kind of spiritual Kindergarten to help the masses to understand the abstract ideas of Brahman philosophy. The unsophisticated mind of the orthodox Hindu draws spiritual sustenance and hope from the visit to the river and the temple, unlike many an educated Hindu who is disillusioned by the sight of Kashi at close quarters. The latter is repelled by the cramped and dirty surroundings and is unable to concentrate his mind on devotion amidst the distractions of the close throng of pilgrims. To him, concentration of mind or meditation is only possible in the solitude of the closet, the open country or the peaceful forest, or in spacious temples and cloisters.

The magnetism of Kashi for the orthodox is due to the presence of the God Vishveshvar, and to the belief in the efficacy of the sacred waters of the Ganges to wash away all sins, and in the promise of salvation to all who shake off their mortal coil in the city. Kashi is spoken of as the Avimukta Kshetra, from which the God Shiva and his consort are never absent, and as the Ananda Vana or the Blissful Wood. It is also described as the Maha-smasana or the great burning ground, in which the dross of all flesh and all sinful desires and dispositions are destroyed. Though Shiva is the name of the Supreme being in his aspect as the power of destruction, it is the destruction which is the essential preparation for a purer and nobler life and for perfect bliss. That is why the Great God is spoken of as Shankara or the bliss-giver.

For as long as this faith is cherished by millions of Hindus, Kashi will continue to attract pilgrims in the future, as it has done in the past. This faith in the spiritual efficacy of Kashi is entertained not merely by the common people, but even by the learned who are imbued with the traditional spirit of the Hindu religion. Numbers of learned Pandits and Sanyasis resort to the holy city for the purpose of spending their life in the performance of the austerities prescribed by religion, and they are able to devote their spare hours to the teaching of Hindu religion and philosophy. Benares has been the centre of attraction to men of light and learning from time immemorial, and the fame of its great teachers and spiritual leaders has attracted scholars from all parts of India for the study of the Hindu religion and Shastras. Founders of a new religion like Lord Buddha, and eminent protagonists of schools of philosophy like Shankaracharya, have felt a mission to preach and establish their doctrines and systems by challenging the exponents of rival systems and schools to public discussion in this great centre. The Universities of ancient times, like those at Taxila and Nalanda, have disappeared long since and even their names have been forgotten. The predominance of Benares in the world of Hindu learning and culture has been due not so much to royal favour or patronage, as to the voluntary concourse of Pandits and scholars attracted by the spiritual atmosphere of the place. The cause of Samskrit learning did not receive much encouragement in other parts of India in the early days of British rule. But Benares was fortunate. The Samskrit department of Queen's College in Benares was established in the early decades of the last century and it was started by Pandits, several of whom, like the late Gangadhara Shastri, possessed an all-India reputation. The Samskrit department of the Hindu University which has been evolved out of the Central Hindu College, started by Dr. Besant and her Hindu friends in the nineties of the last century, has also been working in the same field to keep alive the old system of learning. How long the spiritual life and attraction of Kashi will last, it is difficult to forecast. Many a social institution in India which has successfully withstood the attacks of alien invaders and religions and cultures has been profoundly affected by the influence of Western education, and by the inrush of modern scientific ideas. Will the position of Benares as a centre of ancient learning and of spiritual life be able to survive this impact? It is only by the assimilation of whatever is valuable in Western culture and by a process of adaptation and reconstruction that the old culture and learning have any chance of survival. This was part of the ideal of the Cultural Hindu College, and continues to be the ideal of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

the guiding spirit of the new Hindu University; but though the Hindu University aims at giving religious instruction, it has not yet addressed itself seriously to the task of presenting to its students a synthesis between Hindu religion and modern knowledge in a form suitable to present requirements. The difficulties of the task cannot be exaggerated. It is not easy to find professors of the type of Dr. Bhagavan Das, who once devoted his time to instruction of this kind in the Central Hindu College. Men with the requisite knowledge of modern philosophy and a true insight into the old system of philosophy and culture are few and far between. Let us hope that this task will be faced sooner or later, and that the lamp of Hindu philosophy and religion will be kindled afresh to glow into brightness in the spiritual centre of India.

One secret of successful teaching may very well be borrowed by the Hindu University from the old system of teaching in Hindu India and from the great Universities of England. It is the tutorial system, which brings the teacher into intimate contact with a small class of pupils, that is responsible for the success of our old Patashalas and the old Universities of England. The mass production of graduates by lectures to hundreds of under-graduates at a time, and the absence of any intimate contact between the professors and the pupils, are responsible for the deterioration of modern education. The tutorial system is easy to suggest, but difficult to carry out. It requires a multiplicity of teachers and an enormous endowment of funds, or the missionary spirit. But, until the problem is squarely faced, it is hopeless to expect a real improvement in the quality of education.

Kashi

By Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, M. A.

Early in the morning, just after sun-rise, the tourist by train or by road crosses the Ganges river, leaving Mogul Sarai station on the main-line between Calcutta and the Punjab, and his eyes gaze upon a feast the like of which they have never enjoyed yet, or hope again to enjoy. On the farther side of the river, extending over a distance of nearly four miles to the left of the bridge, lies the sacred city of Kashi. That shore is considerably higher in level than the nearer shore. The river takes a bend to the north at that point and thus the sun's rays fall full up on the city before they fall upon the plain around. Temples and towers, tall buildings, all grey with age, occasionally interspersed by green trees, glimmer in the golden rays of the rising sun.

This holy city, which enchants the curious eyes of a modern tourist, was a flourishing city even in the very beginnings of the Aryan civilisation in India. There has been no period in the history of that civilisation when this city's glory faded. This Aryan civilisation has undergone various reverses and set-backs. The Hindu religion, the Vedic religion, has assumed various shapes and forms during the various periods and has so far been altered from its original forms as to be unrecognisable in these later days, but for the continuity of its name. This city has all along been the one connecting link, the one unchanging nucleus around which different kinds of material has been gathered in various periods to form the Hinduism of those periods.

To Karmins, Jnanins, Yogins and Bhaktas (those who sought salvation through work and service, through study and knowledge, through meditations and austerities, and through piety and devotion), to Vaishnavaites, Shaivaites and Shaktas, and to every other sect of Hinduism, the city has been holy. And not alone to the Hindus!

To the Buddhists, Kashi is the most sacred city. It is one of their five sacred cities. For salvation "die at Kashi"—this is a dogma alike in Buddhism and in Hinduism. It was in Kashi that Buddha first met his five disciples and gave them the Teaching of the eight-fold Path. It was in Kashi "at the Hermitage of the Migadaya that the supreme wheel of the Empire of Truth was set rolling by the Blessed One—that wheel which not by any Samana or Brahman, not by any god, not by any Mara, not by any one in the Universe, can ever be turned back." "Kasika the harlot of Kashi went to Heaven." Hiuen Tsang visited Kashi. The whole of the Buddhist texts, Ashvagosa's Buddhacharita, Fo-sho-Hing-Tsang King (a Chinese work), Mahaparinibbanasutta, Mahasudassanadhammacakkappavantanassutta, Saddhammapundarika, Mahavagga, the Jatakas, all give descriptions of the holy city and its sacredness to Buddhism.

To the Jains also the city is sacred. Suparshvanath, the seventeenth Tirthankara was born in Benares. To the Muhammadans also the city is sacred. The famous Mosque, built by Aurangzeb is one of the modern sights of Benares. Buddha, Shankara, Kabir, Chaitanya, Vallabha and Tulsi Das, all have connections with Kashi. In modern times, it is the headquarters of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society. It was in Kashi that the body assumed by the World Teacher in His present advent was prepared for the great purpose.*

There may be cities in the world whose names we know, which

* It is a chief centre for Christian Missionary propaganda in India.

are more ancient than Kashi. But of such cities perhaps nothing more than the names survive. Their importance is more in the note-books of archeologists than in the world of realities. Of a few, perhaps, some broken pieces of bricks also have been dug up. There are cities sacred to other religions through association with the respective Teachers of those religions. But Kashi is Kashi—never surpassed, without a rival, without an equal, with none even to approach anywhere near it. It was a holy city in the dawn of civilisation. It was so through the various periods of civilisation, and it is still a holy city.

The city is mentioned in the Vedic Samhitas. Divodasa, whom the Puranas mention as a king of Kashi, is a well-known name even in the Rigveda. In the Shatapatha Brahmana it is narrated how Dhrtarashtra the king of Kashi was defeated by Shatanika and how, as a consequence, the people of Kashi ceased to kindle the sacred fire. Ajatashatru is mentioned as a king of Kashi in the Brihadaranyakopanishad. The city of Kashi is mentioned in the Shrantasutras. Panini mentions the name Kashi. Both in the Skanda and Brahmavaivarta Puranas there are long sections dealing with Kashi. The king of Kashi played a very important role in the Mahabharata story. Every Purana describes the glory of Kashi. Shri Krishna is said to have burnt the city of Kashi.

The Puranas describe Kashi as the confluence of five sacred rivers, their names being (1) Dhutapapa, (2) Sarasvati, (3) Kirana, (4) Jarna, (5) Ganga. So a part of Kashi is called Panchaganga. Tradition says that there are sixty-four ghats in Kashi between Asisanga (the place where the river Asi joins the Ganges) and Barnasanga (the place where the river Barna joins the Ganges)—the two limits of Kashi. But there are five sections which are more important than the rest. They are the two above mentioned places and (1) Dasashvamedha, (2) Manikarnika and (3) Panchaganga. Near Manikarnika is the well held to have been dug by Vishnu and filled with His sweat.

Thus is the city of Kashi the most ancient of the living cities of the world, the most sacred city in the world—sacred alike to all sects of Hinduism as also to all the living religions of the world—sacred to Buddhists and to Jains, as also to Muhammedans and to Christians, the city which will be the most sacred to the future generations of mankind through its associations with the World Teacher in His present advent; the city that has been sanctified by the presence of Shiva, the city that has been made holy by Vishnu, the city where Buddha, Shankara, Kabir, Chaitanya, Vallabha and Tulsi Das have lived, the city which has from the time of the Upanishads been the seat of learning through all ages of the history of India.

Kashi

By Dewan Bahadur C. V. Viswanatha Shastri, B.A., B.L.

(Retired District Judge)

Simply to pronounce the name KASHI evokes a host of suggestions in the mind of every Hindu, and stirs up in it a wide range of ideas spiritual, religious and social. KASHI stands for antiquity, greatness, wealth and splendour, heroism, liberty, law, self-control, beauty and mighty men. She is known as the ETERNAL CITY, the belief being that she is co-eval with Creation, and will survive Mahapralaya. Rome is also known as the 'Eternal City', but she was founded only in 753 B. C.; whereas our KASHI existed even at the period of the Mahabharata War, and this was about 5000 B. C. For, the Gita says, Kashi Raju, the valiant, was arrayed with his army on the side of the Pandavas in the field of Kurukshetra. The *Ramayana* also refers to this ancient city.

Situated between the Varna and the Asi, two rivers that flow into the sacred Ganges, she is also known as Varanasi, or Benares. The mighty Ganges skirts it on the East, so that, at this spot, the river takes a northern course. A dip into the sacred river in the morning has to be done facing the rising sun; and this is one of the factors which contribute to its great sanctity. The place is said to combine the virtues of the all other places of pilgrimage; and anyone, of whatever creed, however great his misdeeds may be, dying within the compass of Pancha kosh (10 miles) road which surrounds the city, is transported straight to heaven. Even one who resolves to go there on a pilgrimage, and who dies after having taken three steps towards this end, reaps the same reward.

She has all along been the stronghold of Brahmanical Hinduism, and every religious teacher has gone there to prove the infallibility of his teachings. Lord Buddha, although he gained enlightenment at Gaya, went there first to preach his new faith. This was in the fifth century B. C. And Shri Shankara did the same ten centuries later. Hiuen Tsang, who visited the place between 629 and 645 A. D., refers to 100 temples sacred to Shiva, with 10,000 votaries. A General of Muhammad of Ghazni raided the city in 1033 A. D.; and in 1194 A. D., Jaichand, Raja of Benares was killed in battle by Kutb-ud-din. Then the place was governed by Muslims. It was ceded to the British in 1775.

Lord Buddha began to preach his doctrines at Sarnath, which lies 4 miles north of the city. This place was known as the Deer Park.

Hiuen Tsang who visited it describes the Sangharama (monastery) and vihara, and a lofty stupa built by Asoka, 70 feet high. The Muslim raid left the place a ruin. Excavations carried out by the Archaeological Department have unearthed many relics, and they are all now housed in a Museum on the site.

Eminent pundits, philosophers and grammarians lived in the holy city, and students from all parts of India flocked there to receive the finishing touches to their education. A School of Law, known as the Benares school, had its origin there. It is in the fitness of things that our revered Dr. Besant started a High school there, and that it formed the nucleus of the Hindu University, which is now carrying on its many-sided educational activities under the masterly guidance of Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya. It is a sight to see the majestic buildings that have sprung up in the University area, and a cultural atmosphere pervades it.

An idea of the wealth and splendour of the city during the early days of British rule, can be gathered from the following description by Macaulay: "Commerce had as many pilgrims as religion. All along the shores of the venerable stream lay great fleets of vessels laden with rich merchandise. From the looms of Benares went forth the most delicate silks that adorned the halls of St. James's and of Versailles; and in the bazars the muslins of Bengal and the sabres of Oude were mingled with the jewels of Golconda and the shawls of Cashmere." It is therefore no wonder that the first design of Warren Hastings was on this city which, in wealth, population, dignity and sanctity was among the foremost in Asia. Chait Singh, the Maharaja of Benares, having evaded the call to furnish a cavalry contingent for despoiling Oude was fined 50 lakhs, and Hastings led British troops against him when the fine was not paid. The Maharaja fled to Gwalior. Lord Curzon revived the principality, and a Brahmin Raja now rules over a tract of land on the Eastern side of the sacred river. He is styled the Raja of Benares.

Great centres of pilgrimage have also always been great emporiums of art. The ornamental brasswork of Benares has a world-wide reputation. The weaving of brocades (kincobs) is an old Benares speciality, and the industry was encouraged by Moghul Emperors. Even now it is a thriving industry, and a visit to the places where the silk and gold threads are dexterously woven together without the aid of any drawn pattern but only according to the conception of the worker, shows the amount of hereditary skill that has accumulated in the weavers.

Devotional music of a very high order is always to be heard in the

numerous temples that are scattered all over the city. And one can hear spoken in it all the languages of Aryavarta.

The finest view of Kashi is to be obtained from the sacred river, the banks of which are bordered by ghats. Taking a boat one has to glide down the river, to obtain a glorious view of the morning sun striking against the gilded cupolas of the temples and mansions all along the western bank. And a similar trip on a full-moon night will present visions of bewitching beauty. Starting from the Asi ghat at the confluence of the Asi and the Ganges, you reach the Ratha Mizr ghat which belongs to the Maharaja of Rewah. From there you go to the Tul-i ghat, which is in memory of Tulsi Das, the author of the Hindi *Ramayana*. Near the Janaki ghat you meet with the pumping station of the Benares Water Works. Then comes the Bachbraj ghat, which belongs to the Jains. Sirala ghat is close to the site on which Chait Singh fort once stood, and is the finest of all the ghats. The Dandi ghat belongs to the staff-bearing ascetics called Dandi Pants.

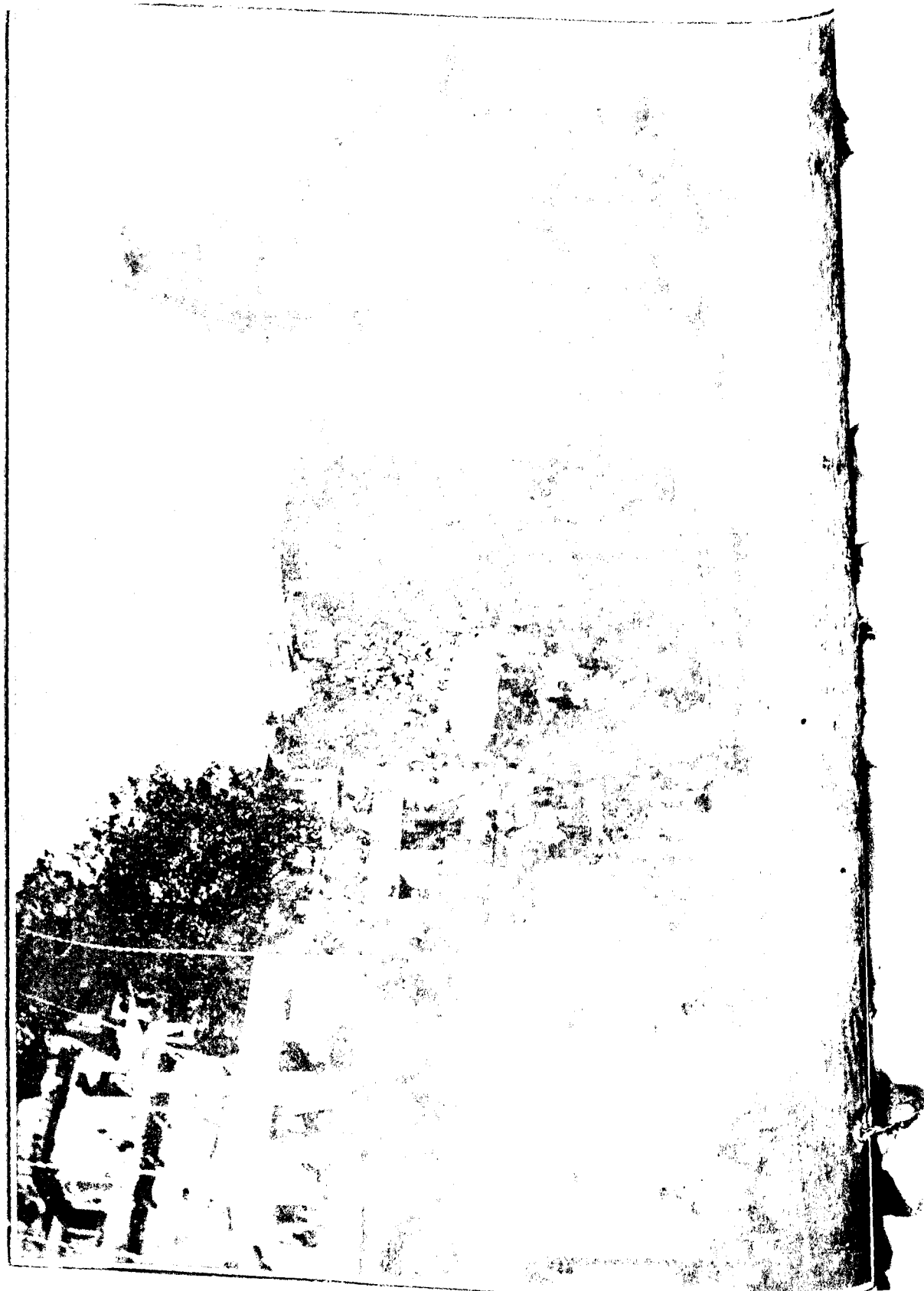
THE PICTURE OPTICALLY REPRESENTS

Manikarnika Ghat

The name of the ghat is explained, identifying the place, as the spot where the ear-ornament, the Manikarnika, of Vishnu fell into the river. It is the most important ghat. Just near this, almost forming a part of it, is the burning ghat called after Vishnu himself in his manifestation as Jalsai, the sleeper on the ocean.

Then comes the Hanuman ghat at the head of which is the Hanuman temple. Here one meets with numerous monkeys, who thrive upon the eatables thrown to them by pilgrims. Close to this is the Harishchandra ghat where you see the burning ground once in charge of Harishchandra. The Kedar ghat comes next, with the Kedar temple above. This ghat is popular among Bengalis. The Mansarwar ghat was built by Raja Man Sing and leads to the Mansarwar tank, round which there are sixty shrines. The Narada ghat takes its name from the famous Rshi; and the Someswar ghat adjoins the temple of the moon. All kinds of diseases are supposed to be healed by a bath in the river at this spot, and by worshipping Someshvara. The famous Ahalya Bhai of Indore built a ghat near it. The Dasashvamedha ghat indicates the spot where Brahma offered as a sacrifice ten horses. Then come the Man Mandir ghat, and the observatory built by Raja Jai Singh. This famous astronomer built four other observatories at Delhi, Muttra, Ujjain and Jaipur. Numerous yantras are to be seen





1928]

THE BHARATA DHARMA

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there, and they all reveal the wonderful skill of the architect. The most sacred of the ghats is the Manikarnika ghat and at the top of it is the Manikarnika well. Then follow the Scindia's ghat, the Panchaganga ghat and the Trilochana ghat, at the head of which is the Trilochana temple. The last is the Raj ghat where the Barna joins the Ganges; and near which is the gigantic railway bridge known as the Dufferin Bridge.

The presiding deity of the place is Vishveshvara, enshrined in the Golden Temple, the expense of gilding which was defrayed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the Punjab. Aurangzeb built a mosque near it, and between the two is the well of knowledge (Gnana Kupa). Outside the Golden Temple are the Temples of Shanesvara and Annapurna. A visit to the temple is not complete and will not give the finishing touch, and the pilgrim will not reap his full reward unless he visits the Kala Bhairava temple. There is in it, close to the image of the presiding deity, an image of a dog to which images of dogs made

THE PICTURE OPPOSITE REPRESENTS

Dasashvamedha Ghat

One of the five great tirthas of Benares. The tradition is that the gods wanted to dislodge King Divodas, who had acquired temporal and spiritual ascendancy over the city. Brahma came with the purpose of straining his hospitality, and demanded materials and resources enough for performing ten horse sacrifices. They were all supplied and the purpose of Brahma was defeated.

in sugar are offered.

After bathing in the various ghats, and after having visited the numerous temples, the pilgrim must on foot make the circuit of the Pancha Kosh road round the sacred territory of Kashi, commencing at the Manikarnika ghat, proceeding by the Asi ghat, and returning by the Varna ghat. The whole route is $36\frac{1}{4}$ miles in length, and is picturesquely lined by fine trees and small shrines.

Benares

[From the *Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, by Count Hermann Keyserling]

When Brahma weighed the sky with its gods against Kashi (Benares), Kashi, being the heavier, sank down to earth.

The sky, being the lighter, soared upward.

Again and again I must think of these verses from Shankar-

acharya's Manikarnikastotram, for the breath of divine presence hangs over the Ganges more mightily than I have ever felt it anywhere else.

Use of the Pilgrimage

In the case of pilgrimages all factors contribute to set the strings of the soul in motion and to make their vibrations continue. The change of locality makes men forget their accustomed surroundings; for the time by keeping the goal of the journey constantly in the mind's eye derogatory memories are excluded from consciousness; imagination, finally, increases the possible influence of the holy place to such a degree that the soul surrenders itself with the utmost receptivity to that which is actually present. But it is not only this subjective quality which conditions the beneficial effect of holy places: they become objectively sanctified through the accumulation of religious thought-forms of its visitors. These thought-forms produce in the end an atmosphere which takes possession even of men who journey there in an unholy mood. And this blessed power grows with the passage of time. They become gradually real sources of Divine Grace. He who measures a time-honoured pilgrim's road in a devotional attitude may easily find at the end that, from the spiritual point of view, he has progressed farther than years of inner struggle would have brought him. India is intersected in all directions by pilgrim's roads; it is strewn with holy places; again and again the wanderer, in ever new and therefore stimulating forms, is reminded of the presence of God. But nowhere so powerfully as on the Ganges. This holiest of rivers rises in Shiva's paradise, in the snowy Kailas in the Himalayas. He who gets there is bodily in the presence of God. Then it flows through densest mountainous woods in which Munis and Rshis dwell—supermen, Jivanmuktas, for whom life and death are one; he who penetrates to them is sometimes accepted as their disciple. And progressing in its southward course, from the sunburnt Punjab to the fruitful plain of Bengal, the river sanctifies site upon site. No one has ever climbed up to the Kailas; few have ever reached the Mahatmas; but Benares can be approached by each and all. Thus this town is the focus of all the religious thoughts which are connected with the Ganges, and this fact bestows its unique sanctifying power upon it..... It is glorious when the sun rises above the horizon, and the faithful on the ghats bend towards the giver of life in their thousands in one single gesture of adoration.

Streets and Temples

I spend many hours every day in the labyrinth of streets which

link temple to temple, and which in themselves are thickly strewn with shrines and altars. No Christian place of pilgrimage has as many 'stations' as Benares. And in almost every one of them the divinity is honoured in a special form and from a specific aspect. Most attention is, of course, paid to the idols, which are calculated to suit the poor man's power of understanding; thus, even in Benares, the town of Shiva, Ganesha, the elephant-headed protector of earthly success, receives the richest sacrifices. The educated do not object to this; their philosophy approves and encourages every form of devotion. Their view teaches that all concepts of faith have the sole object of giving an aid to men to become conscious of their deepest selves. The simpler and coarser a man is, the cruder and less spiritual must be the images which are proffered to his attention, for more subtle ones would fail of their aim in his case. It cannot be expected of the peasant that he enters into direct relation with Brahma. The peasant is to pray quite happily to the gods whose images were created by the uncultured imagination of the people, for as long as he believes, as long as the object of his veneration really holds fast the attention of his soul, this object does for him precisely what the contemplation of the absolute does for the Rshi and the Muni. There are, moreover, not many who really know; not many who are truly beyond the sphere in which discipline and traditional cults are advisable. The point is to realise God truly, not merely to imagine that one does so: who has gone so far as to be able to do this without 'name and form'?.....

Holy Men at Benares

Yesterday towards sundown I saw the one show-saint of whom my Indian friends had told me that he was to be taken seriously. He made a great impression upon me. Not because he has already sat for seven years in a receptacle like a dovecot, which he only leaves once a day in order to bathe in the Ganges, and because, through the whole of this long period, he has never said a word; not because his gymnosophic existence represents the completion of a successful activity as a teacher—in this connection almost every Indian is worthy of admiration because almost every one of them is capable of renouncing the world at a moment's notice and ending his days in poverty and seclusion; the saint impressed me through his highly intelligent and wonderfully spiritualised expression. His eyes revealed nothing of that moist glamour which grows with emotional hallucination, his traits showed nothing of that estrangement which is simultaneously a sign of the derangement of the inner equilibrium. His consciousness is, no doubt,

wrapped up completely in the experiences of his inner life, but what it reflects must be truly his inmost self, for otherwise his expression could not be so real; he looks as self-contained and strong as any man of action. If only he would speak, he could reveal much, but he is speechless. I can well understand it. The desire for communication disappears in proportion to the advance in interiorisation, and he who does not possess the temperament of the scientist, the man who does not to this extent remain a child of the world, no matter how unworldly his aims may be, becomes ever more monosyllabic until he finally becomes dumb. . . .

The Charity of the East

There is actually much more charity among the natives of India, as in the whole of the East, than among us. The sense of belonging together is so strong there, the consciousness of being unique so little developed, that no extraordinary determination is necessary in order to let one's neighbour participate in one's possessions. Apart from catastrophe, real famine, the poor in the East seem to be exposed to the danger of starvation far less than they are with us. Every one gives as far as he can to the needy, supports poor relatives, the sick, children and wanderers; he does so as a matter of course, without making any fuss about it; he does not believe that he is doing anything very special, and above all he does not count upon eternal gratitude. He knows that what he is doing, benefits himself. For this reason there is, in the whole of the vast Orient, incomparably less resentment among the poor towards the wealthy, a much lower estimation of riches, and a much more free attitude towards material needs and their satisfaction. No needy individual makes any fuss about accepting support; it would never occur to any priest to be particularly grateful for sacrificial gifts; there the existence of a holy man, who does nothing and is supported by his fellow-men, is a matter of course. It ought to be like that everywhere. But the matter-laden West will hardly climb to so elevated a position.

Superstition—Priesthood—Imposture

Benares is overflowing with the diseased and the infirm. No wonder: a great number of the pilgrims come here in order to die on the shores of the Ganges. I have indeed, during these days, seen more of that which induced Prince Siddhartha once upon a time to leave this world than ever before. And yet I have never felt less compassion. These sufferers suffer so little, they have, above all, no fear whatever of death. Most of them are superlatively happy to be allowed to end

their days near the holy river; and as to their infirmity—well, that must be endured; it will not take very long anyhow. And some old sin is no doubt scored off in the process. The faith of the Indians is said to be pessimistic. I know of none which is less so. It believes in a scheme of the world in which every being rises upward inevitably, in which, at most, one man in millions of millions succeeds in falling lower. The whole processes of the world bear him along in so far as he progresses, and he must overcome all resistance before he can deteriorate. The aim of this ascent is, of course, not one which may seem desirable to the Westerner. His soul is still too young to strive after liberation. But it is certain that to the Hindu liberation means the same state of bliss as Heaven does to the Christian. . . . The man in the holy city who expects to meet only saintly and wise men, to meet only the expression of real religiosity and profound understanding, will suffer grave disappointment in Benares: nowhere on earth, on the contrary, does one meet with more superstition and more lack of understanding, more mercantile priesthood, and more well-calculated swindles. It is not possible that the mass should not be superstitious in a place where visible and tangible phenomena conduce so much to such a belief; only a developed individual can differentiate with certainty between the symbol and the empirical reality. And it would be inhuman if no people could be found who make money as far as possible out of such misunderstanding.

Hatha Yogis

Among the Yogis all too great a porportion train themselves not upwards towards God, but downwards towards the animals: for, if a man gains power over muscles not usually subject to the will, for instance, if he learns consciously to regulate the beating of his heart, this means that he is retrogressing to the condition of the worm; just as, if a man can let himself be buried for weeks without taking harm, it means that he can do what hibernating animals can do even better. These Hatha Yogis are all of them insipid and are regarded as such; the whole of the energy which, at best, is controlled by their intellects, is confined to the body. And probably most of the pilgrims are more or less superstitious. This must be so where psychic phenomena are regarded as primary, for only the intellectually gifted and cultured individual possesses enough self-criticism in order to differentiate, without external assistance, between true and false ideas. The mass, after all, in so far as it is to progress in this world, is better served by crude realistic nature; for this reason the Christians and the Muhammadans make a much more genuine impression than the Hindus. The former

accept only the tangible; that is to say, something real, nothing imagined, no matter how small a portion of the whole of reality this may be; whereas the latter, intent only too frequently upon unreality, ultimately become unreal themselves.

Sarnath

To-day at sundown to take leave of Benares I went once more to Sarnath, that field of ruins which mark the place where Buddha delivered the first of his sermons which became famous. Several visitors from Ceylon were present, among these two yellow-garbed Bhikshus. They gathered round the Stupa erected by Asoka, and held a liturgical service amid a tiny congregation of believers. What a contrast to the ritual of the Hindu temples! How plain and simple, how uncomplicated is Buddhist piety! I let the atmosphere of Sarnath take complete possession of my soul, and then passed in review all that I had seen and experienced in Benares. Yes, Buddhism can be welcome tidings to the man whose soul has grown sick of wealth and multiplicity; who feels weary to death after so many reincarnations, who does not care any more for progression, who only longs for the end. In Buddhism the sun of India sets; it contains the whole atmosphere of the twilight hour, the entire sweetness of the hope of speedy rest, the whole blessedness of loving promises; soon everything, everything will be overcome.

The atmosphere of Sarnath still has me in its hold. To-night I want only rest, rest at any price. And that makes me think how wonderful it would be if Buddha had spoken the truth when he asserted that it is possible to be extinguished for ever. But is it possible? Is there not a thousand times more Hybris in this idea than in that of thousand-fold reincarnations? The gods did regard the undertaking of Buddha as Hybris, and he knew very well what an immense task he had accomplished. The whole of creation, from Brahma downward, must continue for ever, only he, a son of man, succeeded in stepping out of the circuit.... The Nirvana of Buddha differs from that of Hinduism; to the Hindus it means a positive condition, Buddha envisaged it essentially as the end. He has revealed nothing concerning what it is, he has left open all possibilities; but his emphasis lay unquestionably on the idea of an ultimate end. This gives its unique atmosphere to Buddhism, its sweet sundown colouring. Of all the twilights of the gods which there have been, the one to which the sermon of Benares gave rise resembled twilight most.

Benares, a Tremendous Centre of Force

(From *THE MASTERS AND THE PATH*)

By the Rt. Rev. C. W. Leadbeater

I have seen a million pilgrims together in the holy city of Benares, many of them no doubt ignorant and superstitious, but for the time full of devotion and utterly one-pointed. The mass of devotional feeling generated by such a crowd is almost incalculable, and the Adepts never miss the opportunity of utilizing it for good. It is, of course, unquestionable that a similar number of equally enthusiastic but intelligent people would supply vastly more force—and also force capable of playing upon a higher plane altogether; but we must not for a moment make the mistake of ignoring the value of the vast amount of energy produced by ignorant and even fanatical people. The members of the Brotherhood have a wonderful faculty of separating the evil from the good, or rather of drawing out the last ounce of force which can be used for good, even from the midst of a great deal that is evil.

It is common to find the most intense devotion allied with bitter sectarian feeling; in such a case the Adept will extract and make use of every particle of the devotional feeling, simply ignoring and leaving behind the savage hatred which to us seems to be a part of it. Therefore people with most undesirable characteristics often produce a certain amount of good karma, though it is undeniable that it would be far greater if it were dissociated from the other unfortunate qualities.

Such a city as Benares is always a tremendous centre of force, even quite apart from the annual pilgrimages. It is a city of shrines and relics, and these also can be utilized as channels by the Adepts....

The Hidden meaning of Kashi

(From *THE ESOTERIC WRITINGS of Swami T. Subba Rao*)

The Mystic Significance of Sacred Places

The mysterious ideas generally associated with the position of Benares (Kashi), its past history and its innumerable gods and goddesses, contain clearer indications of the secrets of final initiation than a cart-load of books on Yoga philosophy. Look again at Chidambaram and examine carefully the plan on which its celebrated temple was

built by Patanjali, by the light of the Kabalistic, the Chaldean, the Egyptian and the Hindu doctrines relating to the great mystery of the Logos. You are far more likely to penetrate this mystery by such a course of study than by examining all the obscure statements of the ancient initiates regarding the sacred voice of the great deep and the impenetrable veil of Isis. Masons are searching in vain for the lost golden delta of Enoch; but an earnest seeker of truth who has comprehended the rules of interpretation which are applicable to such subjects will not find it very difficult to discover this delta in Chidambaram. Similarly, various occult secrets find their true interpretation and explanation in Shrishylam, Ramana, Jugganath, Allahabad and other places, justly considered as sacred, owing to their various associations, by the followers of the Hindu religion. It would require several volumes to explain at length the sacred symbols connected with these places and their mystic significance and interpret in a proper manner the Sthalapurams relating thereto. As no writer was permitted in ancient times to divulge in clear language the secrets of occult science to the public, and as books and libraries could be easily destroyed either by the ravages of time or the vandalism of barbarous invaders, it was thought proper to preserve, for the benefit of posterity, in strong and lasting edifices of granite, some of the greatest secrets known to the designers of these buildings, in the form of signs and symbols. The very same necessity which brought into existence the Sphinx and the great pyramid led the ancient leaders of Hindu religious thought to construct these temples, and express in stone and metal the hidden meaning of their doctrines. A few explanations and suggestions will be sufficient to justify the foregoing statements, and indicate the manner in which these symbols should be interpreted.

A Sanskrit verse is often repeated by Hindus, which says that journeys to seven places of pilgrimage will secure Moksha to the devotee. These places are enumerated thus; (1) Ayodhya, (2) Mathura, (3) Maya, (4) Kashi (Benares), (5) Kanchi (Conjiveram), (6) Avantika (Ojeen), and (7) Dwaraka. Now, these places are intended to represent the seven centres of occult energy in the human body, known as (1) Sahasraram, (2) Agnya, (3) Vishuddhi, (4) Anahatam, (5) Syadhisthanam, (6) Manipurakam, and (7) Muladharam respectively. The ideas associated with these places will become intelligible when examined in the light of the doctrines connected with these force-centres by Yogis.

A Great Spiritual Truth

It is generally believed by the Hindus that death in Benares secures final emancipation from the necessity of a rebirth. This belief

is so strong in the minds of the ordinary people as to lead a considerable number to resort to this place every year for the purpose of remaining there till they die.

This certainly appears to be a ridiculous superstition. But a great spiritual truth is lurking behind this strange belief. This truth will become apparent when we ascertain what death at Benares is really intended to mean. From the foregoing arrangement of the seven sacred places alluded to, it will be seen that Benares corresponds to the heart in the human body, in the centre of which the *Anahata Chakram* of the Yogis is located; and the truth of this inference is further strengthened by the manner in which Kashi is described in the *Sankalpam* (preliminary recitation before bathing or commencing any worship). It is therein said that Benares is between Asi and Varuna; that it is situated in Anandavana; that it is in Mahasmasana (or the great graveyard or burial ground); that it stands in front of Gouri; that it is held up by the three points of the trident of Shiva; that it is in the midst of Brahma Nalam (the narrow passage of Brahma), going northwards, and that it is at the end of Mani (Manikarnika means Pranavakarnika). It may be easily seen now how far this is a figurative representation of the *Anahata Chakra* of the Yogis. This *Chakra* is between the two Nadis, Ida and Pingala in the human body, which are represented by the two small streams, Asi and Varuna, named in the foregoing description. The state of ecstasy is realised when consciousness is centred in the germ of *pragna*, which is placed in the *Chakra*, and hence Benares is an Anandavana, which literally means a pleasure garden. When this centralization of consciousness in the germ of *pragna* is secured, the objective consciousness realised in the physical body and in the astral body entirely ceases; consequently, before the spiritual consciousness of the regenerated spirit (the Christ after resurrection) is awakened, the condition realised may be compared to that of sound sleep or *sushupti*—the death of the incarnated Christ, the death of the individual man. This is the time of the great peace and calmness after the tempest. Hence Kashi, or *Anahata Chakra*, wherein this condition is realised, is the great burial ground or burning ground, as every thing—the ego and the non-ego—seems to be dead and buried for the time being. Gouri is the Sophia of the gnostics and the Isis of the Egyptians. When this condition—that of *pragna*—is reached, the spirit is in front of the Divine light and wisdom, and ready to behold the mysterious Goddess without the veil as soon as its spiritual eyes are opened on the other side of the Cosmos.

Hence Benares is in Gourimukham. This condition again marks the termination of the three conditions of consciousness experienced by

the incarnated spirit, *viz.*, the ordinary, the clairvoyant and the Devachanic conditions. These three states of differentiated *pragna* are the three points of Shiva's trident. Again, *Anahata Chakra* is in the *Sushumna nadi*--a mysterious and narrow passage running through the spinal cord to the crown of the head through which vital electricity flows, and Benares is therefore said to be in *Brahmanalam*, which is another name for *Sushumna nadi*. Further, the condition above alluded to is represented by the dot over Pranava, and hence Benares is described as *Mani-karnika*.

It will thus be seen that Benares is an external symbolical representation of the *Anahata Chakra* of the Yogis. Death in Benares therefore means the concentration of *pragna* in the original germ consciousness, which constitutes the real individuality of the man. It must further be noticed that *Sahasraram* represents the positive pole and *muladharam* the negative pole in the body. From the mysterious union of their energies in the heart the sacred and irrepressible (*Anahata*) voice is generated in the *Anahata Chakra*. This voice is heard when the tempestuous activity of conscious existence terminates in the death of *Sushupti*, and out of the ashes of the individual man the regenerated man springs into existence electrified by this "song of life." Hence it is stated, that when a man dies at Benares, *Rudra* (a form of manifestation of Thoth, the initiator), communicates to him the secret of the Logos and secures *moksha* for him. It will be clear now that the popular belief is full of meaning to a student of occult science. Similarly, the traditions connected with every other important place of pilgrimage will yield much valuable information when properly interpreted.

Shri Nataraja

Nataraja means the Lord of the Stage. The idea is that the world is a stage, a puppet-show which presents the vision of life and activity through the power of the all-pervading Atman or God, the unseen Lord of the Stage. . . . But for the inner Atman all the world would be mere *Jada* (inert or dead). . . . The Atman or Self being the real teacher of the human mind, Nataraja is meant to represent the Teacher or Guru. . . . One of the functions of the Guru, and perhaps the most important, is to *be* what he teaches--to enforce his teachings by example. It is this idea that is the key-note of the Nataraja symbol.

The little drum in one of the right hands is meant to express the

idea that God or the Guru holds the cause of all the world, *i.e.*, sound, (*Sabda Nishtam Jagad*, through sound the world stands) in his hand; in other words, all the world is in his hand, to be folded or unfolded at his own will. To the Gnani or wise man the world exists only if he chooses, and not otherwise. The deer on one side is the mind, because the latter leaps and jumps from one thing to another as wildly as does that animal. The Atman is far beyond the reach of the deer-like mind; and so the deer in the picture is placed near the legs. Nataraja wears the skin of a tiger which he himself slew. Ahankara, or the skin of egoism, is that tiger; it is beastly and ferocious and fiercely fights when attacked, but it has to be killed, and Nataraja the Guru alone can kill it. On his head he wears the Ganges, *i.e.*, Chit Sakti or wisdom, which is most cool and refreshing, and the moon which represents the ethereal light and blissfulness of the Atman. One foot is planted on and crushes the giant Muiyala, *i.e.*, Maha Maya, the endless illusion which is the cause of birth and death, while the other foot is raised upward and represents the *turiya* state, which is beyond and above the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep, and leaves behind the mind, Maya and the world. The other right hand, representing the idea of peace, indicates the blessed calmness which is the glorious privilege of wisdom. In one of the left hands, is held *Agni* (fire), *i.e.*, the Guru brings in the *Jyotis* of the Atman itself to attest the truth of his teaching. The idea is that the truth of the Guru's teaching can only be fully understood on practical realisation, in experience (*Anubhava*). The place of the dance, the theatre, is *Thillaiivanam i.e.*, the body (of the individual as well as of the kosmos) spoken of as *vanam*, or forest, on account of the multitude of its components. The platform in that theatre is the cremation ground, *i.e.*, the place where all passions and the names and forms that constitute the vision of the world have been burnt away--pure consciousness devoid of attachment to anything outside and devoid of illusion.

The above are some of the leading features of the Nataraja symbol. The Guru teaches that Maya--illusion--should be crushed down, that the world should become subject to us and not we to the world, that the deer-like mind should be left behind, and *Ahankara* (egoism) be destroyed, and that man should ascend to the regions of pure, unconditioned consciousness free from passion and free from deception, and enjoy the calmness which is his birthright, the bliss, the light and the truth that form the Self. Viewed in the light of this inner meaning the image of Nataraja is no more a meaningless idol, a piece of stone or copper, but a symbol of the highest teaching, an object that can inspire and elevate.

—From *Rambles in Vedanta*

THE DANCE OF SHIVA

(FROM THE BOOK OF THIS NAME BY DR. ANANDA COOMARASWAMY)

Of the various dances of Shiva I shall speak of only three, one of them alone forming the main subject of interpretation. The first is an evening dance in the Himalayas, with a divine chorus, described as follows in the Shiva Pradosha Stotra.

"Placing the Mother of the Three Worlds upon a golden throne studded with precious gems, Shulapani dances on the heights of Kailasa, and all the gods gather round Him :

"Sarasvati plays on the Vina, Indra on the flute, Brahma holds the time-marking cymbals, Lakshmi begins a song, Vishnu plays on a drum, and all the gods stand round about :

"Gandharvas, Yakshas, Patakas, Urugas, Siddhas, Sadhyas, Vidyadharas, Amaras, Apsaras, and all the beings dwelling in the three worlds assemble there to witness the celestial dance and hear the music of the divine choir at the hour of twilight."

The second well-known dance of Shiva is called the Tandava and belongs to His Tamasic aspect as Bhairava or Virabhadra.

Thirdly, we have the Nadanta dance of Nataraja before the assembly (sabha) in the golden hall of Chidambaram or Tillai, the centre of the Universe, first revealed to gods and rshis after the submission of the latter in the forest of Tarakam, as related in the Koil Puranam.

In the forest of Tarakam dwelt multitudes of heretical rshis following the Mimamsa. Thither proceeded Shiva to confute them, accompanied by Vishnu disguised as a beautiful woman, and Adi-Sesha. The rshis were at first led to violent dispute among themselves, but their anger was soon directed against Shiva, and they endeavoured to destroy Him by means of incantations. A fierce tiger was created in sacrificial fires, and it rushed upon Him : but smiling gently He seized it and with the nail of His little finger stripped off its skin and wrapped it about Himself like a silken cloth. Undiscouraged by failure, the sages renewed their offerings and produced a monstrous serpent, which however Shiva seized and wreathed about His neck like a garland. Then He began to dance. But there rushed upon Him a last monster in the shape of a malignant dwarf, Muyalaka. Upon him the God pressed the tip of His foot, and broke the creature's back, so that it writhed upon the ground : and so, His last foe prostrate, Shiva resumed the dance, witnessed by gods and rshis.

Then Adi Sesha worshipped Shiva, and prayed above all things for the boon, once more to behold the mystic dance : Shiva promised that

he should behold the dance again in sacred Tillai, the centre of the Universe.

The dance in fact represents His five activities (Panchakrtya), viz., Srshti (overlooking, creation, evolution), Sthiti (preservation, support), Samhara (destruction, evolution), Tirobhava (veiling, embodiment, illusion and also, giving rest), Anugraha (release, salvation, grace). These, separately considered, are the activities of the deities Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheshvara and Sodashiva.

Shiva is a destroyer and loves the burning ground. But what does He destroy ? Not merely the heavens and earth at the close of a world-cycle, but the fetters that bind each separate soul. Where and what is the burning ground ? It is not the place where our earthly bodies are cremated, but the hearts of His lovers, laid waste and desolate. The place where the Ego is destroyed signifies the state where illusion and deeds are burnt away : that is the crematorium, the burning ground where Shri Nataraja dances, and whence He is named Shudalayadi, Dancer of the burning-ground.

Now to summarise the whole interpretation, we find that—

The essential significance of Shiva's dance is threefold : First, it is the Image of his rhythmic play as the source of all movement within the cosmos, which is represented by the arch : Secondly, the purpose of his dance is to release the countless souls of men from the snare of illusion : Thirdly, the place of the dance, Chidambaram, the centre of the universe, is within the heart.

Nataraja at Chidambaram

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COSMIC DANCE

THE SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

By M. S. Sundara Sharma

लोकानाहूय सर्वान्डमरुकनिनदै धौरसंसारमन्त्रा-
न्दत्त्वाऽभीतिं दयालुः प्रणतभयहरं कुञ्चितं पादपद्मम् ।
उद्धृतेदं विमुक्तेरयनमिति करादर्शयन्प्रत्ययार्थं
विभ्रद्बहिं सभायां कलयति नटनं यस्त पायान्नटेशः ॥

"Awakening the world, all immersed in terrible Samsara, by the sound of His little drum (Damaruka), granting it assurance of freedom

from fear, the Lord of Compassion raising (in mystic dance) His inclined foot and pointing to it with His hand as the path to Liberation, and inspiring confidence by the display of fire, the Lord of the Theatre dances His Dance in the Assembly (Sabha). May He protect us!"

Of all the images of Indian art that of Nataraja is the best known in the world at present. The Cosmic Dance which it is said to symbolise has now become a stale phrase! But fully to realise what the conception of the Cosmos was in India of old and then to understand what the Dance meant in connection with it, is not easy unless one knows exactly the rationale of Indian Iconography, which is a subject that needs much investigation and understanding.

A knowledge of the idea and conception of Shiva is very essential fully to grasp the rationale of the Dance of Shiva, as Nataraja. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are the three aspects of the One Lord Ishvara. The functions of creation, preservation and destruction belong to each of these three aspects, although superficial knowledge of the present day has associated only one of these triple functions with each of the three aspects of the One Lord. Vishnu has done as much destruction and killing as Shiva himself, in the puranic legends. Every one of the Avatars of Vishnu came down to put an end to Adharma, personified in some person. Why then is Shiva alone associated with destruction? It is because the real symbolism of his weapon, Parasu, or the axe, which he is invariably made to hold in his hand, has not been rightly understood.

Scientific Background

To be brief, Shiva symbolises the Evolution of Spirit-Matter. The creation, preservation and destruction of Spirit-Matter is his function. And his work is the first work. Then comes that of Vishnu, who stands for the Evolution of Life-form. Then, lastly, comes the work of Brahma, the first aspect of the One Lord, the Evolution of Consciousness.

We are at present concerned only with the functions for which the conception of Shiva stands, in order to follow closely the conception of his Dance as Nataraja.

Matter, as defined by modern science, is characterised by its capacity of divisibility and movability. That which is divisible and that which is capable of motion is what we call matter. The *Parasu* or the axe in the hands of Shiva stands for divisibility, because it is a weapon used to cut asunder or divide things. The *Mriga* or deer in the other hand of Shiva stands for motion or movability. It is no wonder that

the Rshi-Artists who made forests their home saw in the quick-moving deer a symbol of motion!

Further Shiva is wedded to Parvati, the daughter of the Mountain. And who is this daughter of the Mountain if it is not the matter of this world, which can all be traced to the mountains? Hence Shiva stands for Spirit-Matter and its Evolution. The work of Shiva, the third aspect, begins first and his work of creation, preservation and destruction is symbolised uniquely in the Dance of Shiva as Nataraja.

The right back hand of Nataraja holds the little drum called the *Damaru*. It stands for the *Law of Vibration*, the first of the systemic laws that govern the Universe.

The right front hand is held in *Abhya-hasta*, the coalescing fingers of which stand as a symbol of the *Law of Divine Coherence*.

The left back hand holds Agni, or fire, thereby standing as a symbol of the *Law of Disintegration*.

The left front hand is held in *Danda-hasta*, or rod-hand, which is the magnetic rod which holds the worlds in space, thus symbolising the divine *Law of Magnetic Control*.

The left leg which is raised up and held there symbolises the *Law of Fixation*.

The right leg stamping under its foot the *Apasmara purusha*, or the dwarfish figure of a human being, stands for the *Law of Sacrifice and Death*.

The smiling lips on the face of Nataraja stand for the seventh of the systemic laws, the *Law of Love*.

Thus it would be seen that these seven systemic laws, besides which there is none else we know, of governing the visible Universe, are symbolised here in the wonderful and beautiful conception of the Dance of Nataraja. These seven systemic laws and their working can be elaborated into seven big volumes, showing clearly how Spirit-Matter is created, preserved and finally destroyed, enunciating therein the Evolution of Spirit-Matter.

That is in brief the significance of the image of Nataraja.

The Astronomical Basis

Why Chidambaram, of all places where you find the image of Nataraja, is given pre-eminence, why Nataraja is made always to face the South, why Nataraja is made to hold Agni always in his left hand, why the temple at Chidambaram is, unlike all the other temples, longer from North to South, etc., can all be understood only when we understand the origin of this particular image of Nataraja.

Of all the nations in the world the ancient Hindus were pre-emi-

nently astronomers. Their Astronomy, as embodied in the Surya Siddhanta and other such works, is a perfect science in itself, in which centuries and centuries of observations are embodied. Their knowledge of the Stars was perfect and complete. Their conception of the Universe was really Cosmic. All their calculations and conceptions seem to have been done not from an Earthly point of view at all, as modern Astronomy almost always is. Their place of observation seems to have been somewhere in inter-stellar space!

"Of asterisms I am *Mrigasirisha*" says the Lord Krishna in his song Divine. This asterism, together with *Ardra*, the modern Betelgeux, forms the constellation we know more familiarly as Orion. Now it does not require much imagination to see in the grouping of this constellation the Dancing figure of Nataraja, when once pointed out.

Ardra, or Betelgeux, is the right shoulder, *Belatrix* is the left shoulder. The three stars of the belt is the left thigh. *Saiph* is the left foot which is raised up and held. The three stars considered as the dagger of Orion is the right thigh. And *Rigel* is the right foot stamping upon the dwarf. The constellation *Lepus* immediately below *Rigel* and *Saiph* beautifully suggests the crouching figure of the dwarf at the foot of Nataraja. If seen on a clear dark night none can fail to notice the semi-circular group of stars round the head of Orion which well suggests the prabha of the image of Nataraja. It is to the left of this unique constellation suggesting the form of Dancing Nataraja, that you find the Pleiades or *Agni*, suggesting thereby why the left hand of Nataraja is always made to carry *Agni*. The more one looks at the group of stars, the more is one confirmed that the conception of the image of Nataraja must have been suggested by them and by them alone. The fact that the day when the moon is in the same meridian as that of *Ardra* or Betelgeux, is the day called the *Ardra Darsan*, the day set apart for the worship and festival of Nataraja, only confirms the idea. The fact that the Milky way flows right over the head of these group of stars confirms the conception of the Ganges flowing out of the head of Nataraja.

Position of this Constellation

At present, this group of stars is well seen right overhead, a very inconvenient position for careful observation. When it is rising or setting we cannot see in it the erect posture of Nataraja. But if it is generally known that due to the precession of the Equinox this group of stars is made to move South and North and *vice versa* slowly, it would be possible to conceive of a time when this group must have been seen far in the South just where we see the Southern Cross now

That must have been according to astronomical calculations somewhere between 20 thousand B. C., and 10 thousand B. C. At that time Orion or Nataraja, as we may well call the constellation, would have been seen standing upright in the Southern sky. Beautiful and prominent as the constellation is, it could not have escaped observation and admiration. But, being in the Southern sky, it would not have been observed in the Northern latitudes, just as the Southern Cross is not now. So that the superimposing of the conception of the image of Nataraja on the constellation could have taken place only in the South. It is therefore very possible that this gives us an idea as to the date when the first migration of the root-stock of the Aryans came to the South of India. They must have been struck when first settling in the Southern parts of India with the beauty of the then Southern Constellation, and superimposed their idea of the Cosmic Dance upon it, or they might have got that notion from the civilised Toltecs, or Nagas, who were already here in the South of India. Clearly and evidently the conception of Nataraja is very very old.

Further, this beautiful constellation moves from North to South, and then the other way once in about twenty-five thousand years. The Northern-most latitude is not more than about eleven or twelve degrees north of the equator. The latitude of Chidambaram happens to mark out this northern-most limit, and hence the importance of the place. That Chidambaram temple is longer from North to South unlike the plan of other temples in India, is very suggestive of the motion of this group of stars. Nataraja is made always to face South, because you have to face South in order to see it when first conceived.

There is not much esoteric significance connected with the names of personalities that are now associated with this temple at Chidambaram. But one thing is certain. They are of later and recent origin, and may have had a good deal more to do with the modern history of the place than otherwise.

The *Rahasya* of the place is really a secret, which, like the esoteric significance of the Lingam, is too truly sacred and metaphysical to be revealed to the profane and the vulgar; hence its superficial nature was left to the speculations of the mob.

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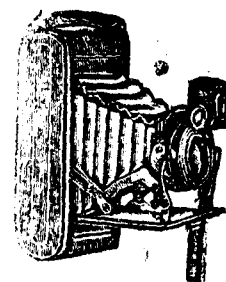
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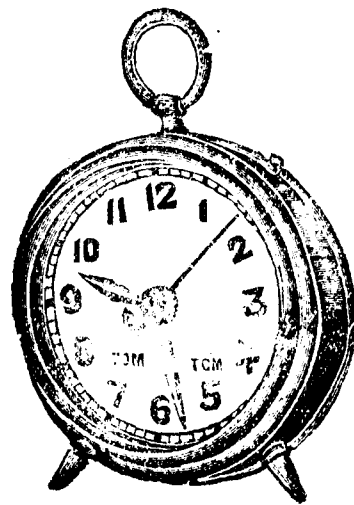
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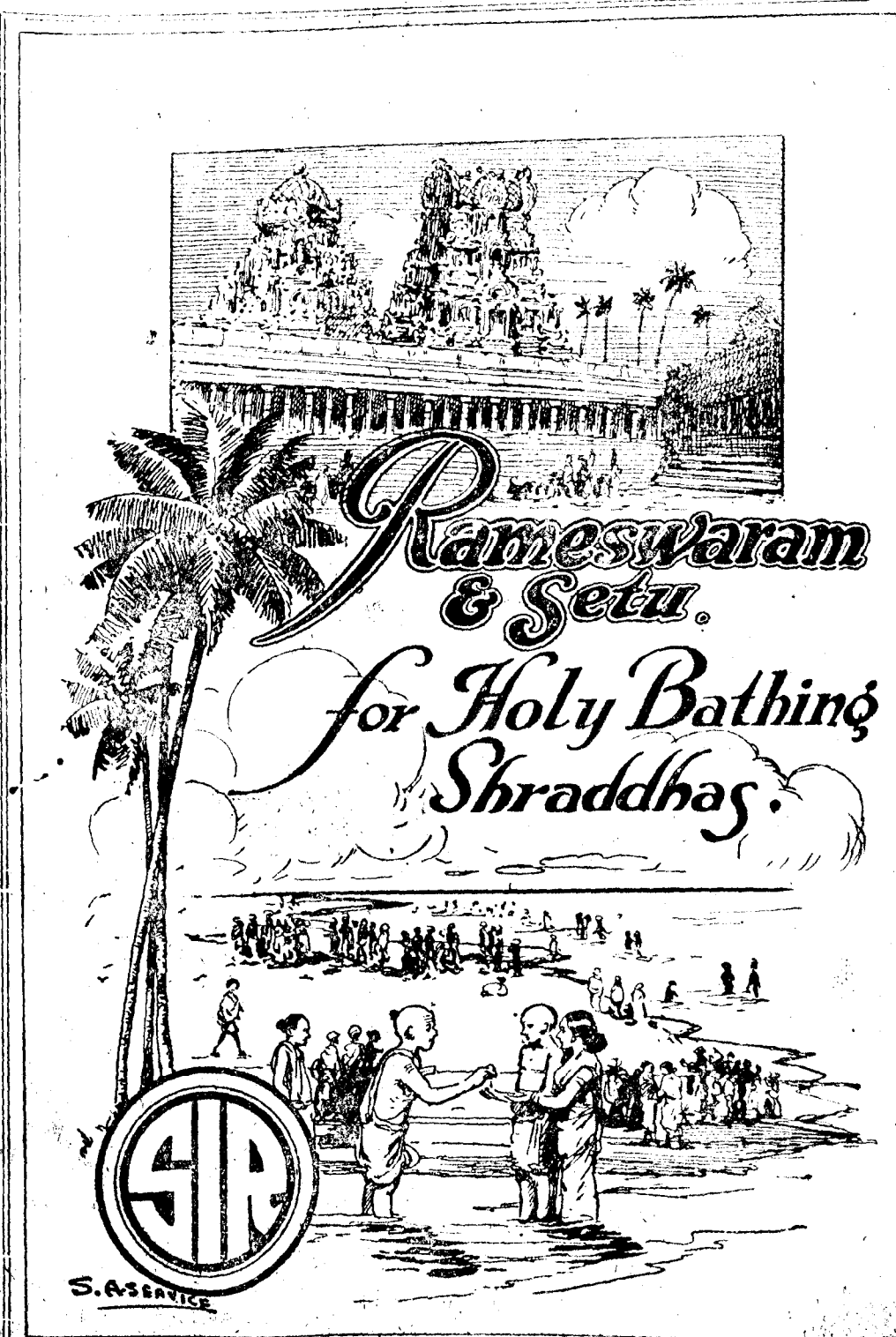


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