

Notes and Comments

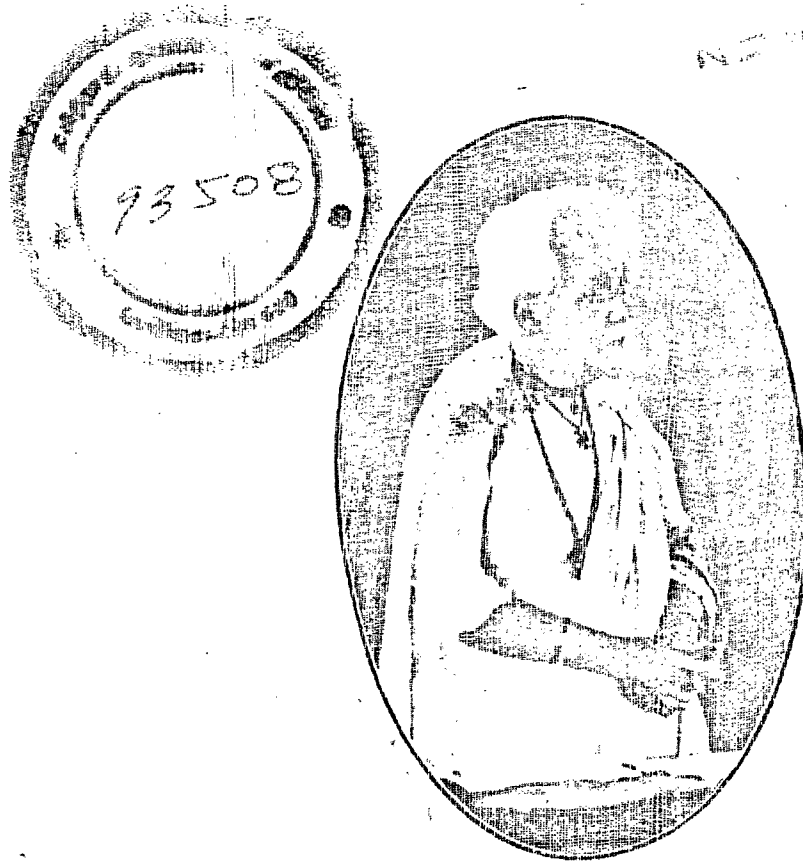
Greetings and Welcome.

Dr. Annie Besant, the President of our Association, has just returned home after six months of strenuous propaganda in Europe and America on behalf of the Motherland. We offer her a loving welcome home. As aptly expressed by *Voice of Youth*.

"The greatness of Dr. Besant, that age defying and tireless servant of India, consists in her devotion to, and profound faith in, the future of her adopted Motherland. After over half a century of public life, she is fresher than ever. She has pleaded the cause of India and spoken of India's greatness on a thousand platforms in all parts of the world. At her 83rd year she is moving from one part of the world to another (which seems too small a place for her) with the swiftness and ease of quicksilver. It looks as if she will complain of the horrible slowness of an aeroplane which has lately become her favourite mode of transport."

The Brothels Bill in Madras.

The Select Committee, appointed by the Madras Legislative Council to examine Mr. K. R. Venkatarama Ayyar's Bill for the suppression of brothels and immoral traffic, has published its report. The amendments effected by the Committee are important and commendable. But they still leave unremedied one grave omission in the Bill. There is no provision anywhere for bringing to book those who control this nefarious trade and thrive on the destitution of their victims. We are glad to note that this loophole has not escaped the watchful eye of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, who has four of her colleagues on her side on this point, as seen from their minutes of dissent. We earnestly hope that their amendments will be embodied in the Bill in its passage. The root of the evil is left intact if the 'Souteneur' throws the 'Procurer' to the Law and makes good his own escape. The Law may count the capture of the 'Artful Dodger' and Bill Sykes as a feather in its cap but where is its triumph if Master Fagin still snaps his fingers at the Penal Code? Mr. James draws attention in his minute of dissent to the importance which the League of Nations' Committee gives to the extirpation of this noxious individual. We are glad, however, that the members of the Committee are unanimous in the view that the evil



Dr. ANNIE BESANT, D. L.

Whose 83rd Birthday was celebrated all over the World
on October 1st.

STRI-DHARMA

which the Bill is intended to combat calls for immediate remedy no less in the mofussal than in the city and have therefore boldly recommended its application to the whole of the Presidency.

Besides the minutes of dissent, there is a note submitted by four members which is rather of an oracular nature: "Though we are in entire sympathy with the objects of the Bill we apprehend that there will be many difficulties in the working of its provision." No one imagines that the task of cleansing society of such cancerous growths will be all sunshine and roses. The question is, what are we going to do about it?

Nambudiri Women Cast off Purdah.

Sometime ago Nambudiri ladies belonging to aristocratic families of North Travancore created a sensation by casting off their purdah. They have adopted modern modes of dress and visited public places and attended theatres. They paid a visit to the Junior Maharani of Travancore and had a very long interview and the conversation centred chiefly on social reform. Her Highness is reported to have advised them to send Nambudiri girls to public schools and urged the necessity of doing away with the purdah system in the Nambudiri community. This is the first instance in the social history of the Nambudiris that their women, who are shut up within the four walls of their Zenana had the boldness to come out in public.

Sex Disqualification in Behar Council.

We are glad to know that Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy—a member of the Behar Legislative Council—has given notice of a resolution for the next Session of the Council urging the removal of sex disqualification so that women may be elected or nominated to the Council. Behar has only lately enfranchised its woman and it is gratifying to know that there are men members who realise the necessity of getting the women into the Councils so as to rectify the one-sided policy that has existed in man-made laws.

Child Marriage Prevention Bill in Hyderabad.

We learn that a meeting was held at Hyderabad, Rai Bishveshwar Nath Waghre, former President of the Samaj and a member, the Hyderabad State Legislative Council, presiding. The meeting had been convened to offer congratulations to Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarda and concert measures to move the Government of H. E. H. the Nizam to pass a similar Act dealing with the question in the Hyderabad State. Pandit Keshevrao, retired High Court Judge and Mr. R. S. Naik, Barrister-at-Law, were among those who addressed the gathering.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

In the course of his speech, the chairman announced amidst applause that he would introduce a Bill in the local Legislative Council on the lines of the Sarda Bill. The Bill is to be known as the "Waghre Child Marriage Prevention Bill." We receive this news with great joy and hope that the passage of the Bill will be smooth and speedy so as to do away the evil of child-marriage.

The Child Marriage Prevention Bill.

Now that the Council of State has passed the Bill and H. E. the Viceroy has given his consent, the Bill has become a law from April 1st, 1930. The debate in the Assembly and Councils which have appeared in detail in the daily press shows how awake India is to this evil of child-marriage. Even the orthodox have been able to trot out only one objection again and again viz., that a religious custom is being tampered with by Government.

Amendments to postpone the Bill to 1931, 1932, 1933, to exempt the Muslims, to raise the legal age of marriage for girls to 11, 12, 13, and 16, were all lost and the original Bill as recommended by the Select Committee was passed by 67 for and 14 against. Twenty-six elected Indians voted for the Bill, while fourteen elected Indians voted against it. Six Muslim members walked out of the Chamber as a protest against the measure.

Of the elected Indian members who voted in favour of the Bill 1 was from Madras; 6 from Bombay; 7 from U. P.; 3 from Bihar; 4 from the Punjab; 1 from the Central Provinces; 1 from Bengal; 1 from Burma; 1 from Delhi; and 1 from Ajmer-Merwara. Of the elected Indians who voted against the Bill 5 were from Madras, 2 from Bombay, 3 from Bengal, 1 from U. P., 2 from Bihar and 1 from Assam.

An Ambitious Educational Scheme in U. P.

We read in the Times:—In agreement with a resolution passed by the United Provinces Legislative Council on June 25 last the Government has appointed a committee to consider how all boys and girls in the United Provinces can be made literate within a fixed period; to propose what that period should be, and to draw up an estimate of the cost, and to estimate what useful expenditure can be incurred during the next five years on a scheme concerning girls only.

The Committee will also suggest means for meeting expenditure necessitated by the proposed scheme.

The Minister of Education and Industries is President of the Committee. Notable members of the Committee are the Director of Public Instruction, the Deputy Director of Public Instruction in-charge

of Vernacular Education, Dr. Radha Kamal Mukerjee, Professor, Lucknow University ; Sahibji Maharaj Anandsarup, Head Radhaswami Sect Hindus ; Rao Rajeshwar Bali, ex-Minister, Capt. Nawab Jamshedali Khan and five other members of the Legislative Council.

It is indeed an ambitious but a necessary scheme that the U. P. Council has adopted by passing the resolution of making all boys and girls literate. As usual the personal of the Committee is one sided. Although the education of boys and girls is to be discussed, not a single woman has been nominated. Surely the mother has as much right to formulate schemes of education for her child—whether boy or girl? When are the men who rule in every department of life going to realise the necessity of the women sharing their responsibility? We hope that the grave mistake will be rectified and women be nominated on this Committee deciding the fate of the thousands of the children in U. P.

Madras Women's Congratulatory Meeting.

Under the auspices of the Women's Indian Association, the Indian Ladies' Samaj, the Mothers' Union, Southern India Brahmo Samaj and the Madras Muslim Ladies' Association, a public meeting of the ladies was held under the presidentship of Lady Sadasiva Aiyar at the headquarters of the Women's Indian Association, Pantheon Road, Egmore, on Monday evening to thank all those who have helped in the passing of the Child Marriage Bill and to express feelings of relief and happiness.

Dr. Muthulakshmi, Mrs. Paul Appasami, Mrs. Lakshmi pathy, Mrs. Bhagirathi Sri Ram, Mrs. Minakshi, Mrs. Malati Patwardhan and Miss Lakshmi Amma spoke expressing the great relief this piece of legislation will bring to the anxious parents in India. It was hoped that since the Bill was passed by such a huge majority the orthodox would lay aside their superstitions and help in the regeneration of Indian society from its present state of weakness. Each speaker stressed that the mere passing of the Bill was not enough but propaganda had to be continued and the social conscience awakened. Resolutions were passed thanking Mr. Harbilas Sarda, the members of the Legislative Councils, the Government and all those men and women who had helped towards the raising of the marriage age. Resolution was also passed condemning Mr. M. K. Charya for his grossly insulting statement regarding the morality of the women of India if the Child Marriage Bill was to be passed. Those who wish to serve the interests of Indian women hope that he would not be returned to the Assembly in the next elections.

Rural Reconstruction Conference.

The following are some of the significant Resolutions passed at the Rural Reconstruction Conference recently held at Thanthanimalai, Karur, under the presidentship of the Zamindar of Minnampally:

TRAINING OF VILLAGE GUIDES.

1. This conference requests and urges on the District Board to conduct a peripatetic training school at four rural centres for 3 months every year at each centre and for a period of 4 years with a view to train young adult agriculturists as village guides for the civic and economic advancement of the village.

2. The courses should comprise cultural and moral lessons, civics and citizenship, agriculture, physiology and hygiene, child welfare, co-operation, scouting and games and also excursions of students to instructive centres of rural work in the presidency.

3. The District Board be requested to provide a teaching service for these schools, comprising a Deputy Inspector of Schools, a Health Inspector, an Agricultural Demonstrator trained in co-operation and a Scout Master.

BETTER LIVING.

1. This conference urges on the delegates that immediate steps be taken to carry out the following programmes of work in the villages.

(a) Cleaning of Streets ;

(b) Filling up of cesspools ;

(c) Prohibition of rubbish heaps in the streets and vacant places fronting the streets and the passing of the sewage water in the streets ;

(d) Provision of backyard pits for the collection of the refuse and cattle manure ; and

(e) Prevention of washing in the drinking water wells.

2. This conference is of opinion that the young men of each village should be trained as scouts for looking to its sanitation and other forms of social service and requests the District Health Council, the District Board and the District Scout Council to give the services of a Scout Master to the village organisation centre of the Servants of India Society for organising the work.

Women in Islam.

Mr. Khairullah Wells, writing in the *July Review of Religions*, points out that of all the misrepresentations of the Faith of Islam prevalent in the West, "the notion that the Quran permits and encourages the suppression of the freedom of women is the most absurd." He tells us that at certain periods in the history of Christendom, those in authority, in order to strengthen their sway, "found it expedient to circulate such lies". And he cites passages from the Quran to illustrate the fact that far from being suppressed and enslaved,

"a Muslim woman is accorded a status more dignified than that granted by any other religious system."

"Women," said the Prophet "are the twin halves of men". European critics point to the Purdah which is recommended by the Prophet as proof of the inferior status accorded to women in Islam.

What these short-sighted and bigoted people utterly fail to see, however, is that having her attractive parts covered is to a woman a first protection against insult and affront, and a second protection is in the behaviour of the men with whom she comes into touch. Muslim men have also to dress themselves in a suitable manner and to cast down their eyes when in the presence of women other than their wives, daughters, or near relatives.

There is also the belief that Islam does not credit a woman with a soul. The writer ridicules this belief and quotes passages from the Quran to show that there is no warrant for such belief in the sayings of the Prophet. Again, the Prophet, in explaining the faith to the people of Arabia, said:—

"You have rights over your wives as they have rights over you. Treat your women well," and, "Oh! Do you not know that woman deserves greater regard than man, for verily Allah the Almighty exalts the position of a man in Heaven because his wife was pleased with him and prayed for him,"—"When a woman performeth the five times of prayer, and fasteth the month of Ramzan, and is chaste, and is not disobedient to her husband, then tell her to enter Paradise by whichever door she liketh," and again, "Paradise lies at the feet of your mother".—*The Indian Review*.

Mrs. Sidney Webb declines to be Lady Passfield.

Mrs. Webb's refusal to modify her name and title in response to Mr. Webb's accession to the peerage as Lord Passfield reflects a stout and logical Feminism. She has already sacrificed one distinguished name to her husband, that of Beatrice Potter. It is intolerable that she should now be required to throw after it the even more lustrous name of Mrs. Sidney Webb. It is not she who has been elevated to the peerage; she obtains no vote in the Upper House, no modification of potential status in the Lower House. As the *Manchester Guardian* pointed out last week, should she commit a murder Lord Passfield's new status carries with it no contingent right for Lady Passfield to be tried by peers or peeresses of the realm. Very well, then—where the real status lies, there let the name lie also. In times to come Lord Passfield may find that his connection with Mrs. Sidney Webb is a useful mark of identification.—*Woman's Leader*.

Gandhiji's Counsel of Perfection.

In last week's *Young India* Mahatma Gandhi publishes the following summary of a long letter of a brother describing the miseries of his married sister:—

"Some time ago my sister was married to a man whose character was hidden from us. This man has been discovered to be a rake, and no amount of dissipation and debauchery can satiate him. He has no sense of honour. My unfortunate sister found soon after her marriage that her 'lord' was sinking down more and more deeply day by day. She remonstrated. The man could not brook this, and in order to 'teach her a lesson' indulged in his excesses in front of her. He would also whip her, make her stand, starve her, etc. She was tied to a post to compel her to witness his debaucheries. My sister is heart-broken. Her lamentations make us feel wretched. We are helpless. What would you advise her and us to do? This is one of the most shameful aspects of Hinduism, where woman is left entirely at the mercy of man and has no rights and privileges. If a man chooses to be cruel and heartless, there is no remedy left to the unfortunate woman. The man may go on making random alliances, and not a little finger can be raised against him; but a woman once married is at the utter mercy of her lord. Thousands of such women are groaning and weeping. As long as Hinduism is not purged of these and such like evils, can there be any hope of progress?"

To Gandhiji the remedy in the case in point is 'incredibly simple.' Let us put it in Gandhiji's own words:—

Instead of the brother and other relatives feeling helpless and weeping with the distressed girl, they should clothe her with protection, educate her to believe that it is no part of her duty to placate a sinful husband or to seek his company. It is quite evident that the husband himself does not care for the wife. She may therefore without breaking the legal tie live apart from her husband's roof and feel as if she had never been married.... In the present instance the girl's parents are well able to support her but where it is not possible, the number of institutions that would give shelter to such ill-treated women is growing in the country.

Gandhiji is not unaware that there is a sex aspect to the question also, but he takes up a typically Mahatma attitude regarding it:—

There still remains the question of the satisfaction of the sexual appetite on the part of young women thus leaving the inhospitable roofs of their husbands or being actually deserted by them when the relief given by divorce is unobtainable. But this is really not a serious grievance in point of numbers, for in a society in which custom has discountenanced divorce for ages, a woman whose marriage proves unhappy does not want to be remarried. When public opinion in any social group requires that particular form of relief, I have no doubt that it will be forthcoming. So far as I understand the correspondent's letter the grievance is not that the wife cannot satisfy her sexual appetite. The grievance is the gross defiant immorality on the part of the husband. She should be induced to qualify herself for public service. This kind of training would be more than enough compensation for the doubtful privilege of a husband's bed.

Mahatmaji's conclusions therefore are that "the remedy for such excesses. lies not through the law but through the education of women (as distinguished from non-married girls), and through cultivating public opinion against unmanly conduct on the part of husbands."

The advice tendered by Gandhiji to the victim of the tragedy herself and to her relations may or may not be the proper remedy in the instance in point. But even if it suits her perfectly, it may not be prescribed in all cases. Gandhiji's philosophy of life is an ascetic one. In asceticism lies much of his strength and also his great weakness. Too much of asceticism has been the besetting sin of Hinduism, and it is unfortunate indeed that India's greatest teacher to-day should only accentuate that trait. Denial of sex is the chief element in all ascetic philosophies, and it is this element that vitiates Gandhiji's ideas of education, of marital problems, of social reform and of individual perfection.—*The People*.

The International Congress of the Women's League for Peace and Freedom.

By KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA.

From buoyant Helsingor to mouldy old Prah, as the Bohemians call Prague, was a depressing change. For although Bohemia is a land of romance and wonder and Prah a beautiful city of very ancient buildings, the difference between the two Conferences was very sharp and deeply marked. The Women's League, although actuated by noble sentiments and good intentions, lacks the depth and the strength which is so characteristic of the New Education Fellowship. Indeed this League gives one the impression that it is a sort of drawing-room affair where some good and kindly souls stirred by an overflow of sentiment and emotion discuss war and peace as they would discuss the Graf Zeppelin. One is favourably impressed by their good intentions but so painfully moved by their childish faith and confidence in themselves. They seem to be hardly aware of the hugeness and subtlety of the monstrous problem they are attempting to handle, the international relationship between the different countries of the world. We heard them say repeatedly that they would prevent war in future and yet they were perfectly well aware of the obvious and rapid preparations that most of the nations of Europe are making for the next war. The steady increase of the armies, the breathless race in ship and cruiser building, the rising efficiency in aeronautics and the consequent frequent air manoeuvres and last but not least, the preparations of deadly poisonous gas, all these were discussed and commented upon and a few of the secrets laid bare—for alas no one shall know what mighty preparations are being made behind barred doors in secret conferences. It is only when the explosion takes place that we become aware of the explosives which were being laid under our feet.

In the City of Prague on the 23rd of August this International Congress met. India was not entitled to send any official delegates as we have no Section affiliated to the League but Miss Shakuntala Paranjpe and myself willingly availed ourselves of the invitation extended to India for one is always ready to utilise every platform that is open to us, in order to place India's case before the public in Europe. The West is so tragically ignorant of India and the little

that is known is so detrimental to India's self-respect, thanks to the villainous propaganda which Britain is doing against India in the European press, that it becomes the absolute duty of every Indian abroad to utilise every opportunity to try to remove some of these misconceptions. Thus it was that we found ourselves in this gathering.

Miss Jane Adams, the President of the League, is a gentle and lovable personality. Her soft eyes and tender face breathed forth a large love and spoke of a sympathetic and good heart. She had suffered much persecution and social ostracism during the war for holding pacifist views. Indeed, during the heat of those times she was even dubbed a traitor to her country. The agony of her heart and sincere desire to avoid the repetition of the same horror found expression in creating this League. Thus one cannot but respect the brave souls who have rallied round it. But alas! they are so painfully ignorant of some of the methods of warfare, so inadequately equipped to fight the highly specialised machinery of these governments who hide their daggers behind velvet gloves, that one almost feels as though they are struggling to peel a cocoanut with a butter knife.

One listened with keen amusement to their faith in the Kellogg Pact and the League of Nations, a Pact which is to allow *defensive* wars, and we have yet to hear any country admit that its war was not defensive! A League that is tolerating the subjection of millions of people and the slow and most cruel exploitation of the weaker nations by the stronger!

When my turn for speaking came we explained to them that there were other wars which are carried on not merely by bomb and poison gas, but the slow destruction of countries by physical and moral subjection. We put India's case before them in all its naked brutality and for once they realised that the problem of peace is far more complicated than had seemed. The feelings of the audience were well expressed when one of the ladies said that she felt an almost physical disgust when she heard of the conditions in India. These nations who happen to belong to the country of the rulers rarely realise that they are as much victims as the ruled, of an economic policy that maintains imperial interests to put money and power into the hands of a few at the expense of both the nations. The world is like the human system, each part inseparably bound up with the other and if one is starved and made to suffer, the rest must suffer too.

KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA.

The Modern Indian Woman.

BY A. D. SATHAYE, B.A., LL.B.,

High Court Pleader, Nagpur, C. P.

I

The Modern Woman all over the world has awoke from her slumbers, and has given a rude shock to man by asserting that she is his equal; and that her present position in life is most unsatisfactory; that she has an inherent right to have a status, personal freedom and independence of thought equally with man; that at present she is allotted a mere subordinate position in life and threatens to revolt against man and to achieve her goal at the point of the bayonet.

The Indian Woman has not proved an exception to this world movement, though she is not yet in the thick of the fight, and appears to be only a back-bencher. The question, therefore, before our country to-day is, "What is the Modern Indian Woman going to be like?" Many leaders of public opinion view this movement with subdued sympathy, while there are others who with a kind of "dog-sense" smell danger ahead. Undoubtedly in India different people hold different views, and think differently about the progress of woman; but at the same time there appears to be a general consensus of opinion on this one point that the Indian Woman must advance. Different remedies have been suggested and tried to improve her present lot; but none is yet satisfied with the results achieved therefrom.

Admittedly a suitable education is the most important factor in the solution of this problem. Educationists therefore have been busy in making different changes, according to their own lights, in the standard educational schemes and curricula of the day but to no purpose. The woman's fate still hangs in the balance as honest differences of opinion still prevail; and to differ is human.

But unfortunately the fact remains that no solution has yet been generally accepted as good both theoretically and practically. The result is that everybody is dissatisfied; and the more forward Indian woman, impatient to achieve her goal, intensely vexed over this hopeless confusion about her destiny, and consequently almost

desperate about her fate, is attracted towards some of the vagaries of her sister in the West. But this naturally follows from what we read and hear about the West to-day, and she need not be blamed for it. A famous modern European Historian has aptly described western civilisation thus:—"We live in an epoch which is greedy to see and to know. The hurried and facile literature of to-day, instead of enlightening the public, can only serve to confuse its ideas. Throughout Western Civilisation the good is displayed and the evil is hidden. Modern Society is like the cities of our capitals. You see nothing in them but a display of riches, signs of prosperity, promises of happiness, monuments to glory. The people who walk in them are well dressed, in good health and seem all glad to be alive. If we are to believe our eyes, unhappiness has disappeared from earth." No wonder then that the West exercises a magnetic first impression on our more forward women.

But at times in her calmer moments and when she is in a mood to think seriously about her real position, she is confronted with the question "Is Anglicisation or Westernisation really good for her or will it turn out afterwards, when perhaps it is too late, that the remedy was even worse than the disease?" And immediately her innate conservatism gets hold of her, and a vision of her glorious *Pauranic* past hovers round her, and she is suddenly taken aback by the beauty and perfection of her ancient ideal, her traditions, her culture, her freedom, her status and what not in those good old days. But old times are changed giving place to new. How is she going to adjust this past and change the present consistently with her new idea? What is she to do? How is she to get out of this maze? And she is perplexed. But this much is certain that the Modern Indian Woman has thoroughly understood her present unsatisfactory position and is anxious to secure a healthy change in it at an early date, and no mistake about it. She is in earnest about her progress, and she will not brook any snub from any "Authorities" in this matter.

I think it is a mistake to still continue to treat the modern woman like a child, to be dictated to, nor is it possible for anybody to convince her with argument, as at present she is smarting under the hallucinations (and perhaps rightly) of her being dominated over by Man in the past, and views everything with suspicion. Now it must be admitted that the days of benevolent dictatorship of man over woman are over. With the progressive advance and triumph of woman, man the dictator must soon be a creature of the past. Hence the necessity of tackling the Indian Woman's problem from the practical point of view before it is too late.

The present is an era of self-determination. Then why not let the woman herself decide what she is going to be? Let man gracefully accept once for all the principle that the time has now come for the Indian Women to boldly come forward, and to form and declare their United Demand, and to say, "Know ye, all men, that this is what the Modern Indian Woman deserves to be, and ought to be, and this she shall be." This done, half the battle is won. Woman cannot then question man's good faith. Once the above principle is accepted, admittedly man shall not have any determining voice in matters relating to the progress of woman, but at the same time, as a person deeply concerned, as one whose most vital interests are likely to be affected, perhaps adversely, by her decision, justice and fair-play demand that he shall have a right to be heard, and also to make any reasonable suggestions to her in the matter, and also to commend for her consideration any questions at issue which in his humble opinion may have to be answered and authoritatively decided by her, before she formulates her United Demand. All the same, she will be the sole judge and arbiter in the matter, and free to lay down any new policy of her choice, to ensure, according to her best lights and view, the attainment of her "Independence, Full Equality, and Full Development", her ideal in life.

II

Now once this principle is accepted in the case of the Modern Woman, how will she proceed to formulate her United Demand? The ideal position which she is anxious to attain at present is only an abstract idea, and hence it is also rather vague. I shall therefore now proceed to make such suggestions, and also put before her such questions and matters at issue as to my mind appear to be most important in the solution of this problem; and in this connection I shall here freely quote with advantage from my articles recently published in *The Nagpur Guardian* and *The Hitavada* of Nagpur.

For the achievement of any practical, tangible, real work and success in such a mission she must, I think, first reduce or at least try to reduce all her general ideas into reasonable, consistent, and practicable schemes, suitable for practical life; schemes cut and dry, well laid and defined, and ready for immediate use. One must first know exactly what one wants, and then demand it and then there is a greater chance of success.

For this purpose, in my humble opinion, the first thing that will have to be done will be to ascertain, determine, and define the Average Modern Indian Woman as she wishes to be, and she thinks

she has a right to be, in all her aspects and in all her possible spheres of activities. Now this will naturally involve the taking into account, and also a patient and careful consideration of all the various formidable factors outside the Individuality or the Personality of the woman, which admittedly play a very important part in her life, and which require to be very smoothly adapted to and harmoniously blended with her daily life in order that the desired result may be achieved. For this purpose it will also be necessary for her to ascertain and determine all the various questions concerning the attitude and mutual relations of both the rival sexes—the man and the woman—towards each other, as regards all the peculiar problems that may generally arise in their daily life, and the solution of which or the answers to which will easily enable her to determine satisfactorily all the matters at issue, and the conclusions thus arrived at would enable her to easily solve her problem.

Here I may venture to suggest also that she will do well to bear in mind the following two important general matters of fact namely:—
(a) That Society is the basis of the State, and that the Family is the basis of the Society, and not the Individual. Man and Woman, therefore, together form the unit or the basis of Society. Nature has ordained it thus, and hence Nature will always have its course in spite of any opinions or ideals prevailing at any time. And
(b) secondly that the position women occupy in India is so radically different from their position in Europe or elsewhere, that extreme care must be taken so as not to mix up the two in the present enquiry; and that the matters at issue before the European Woman are admittedly somewhat different from the matters at issue before the Indian Woman, and hence the conclusions arrived at in the West will not greatly influence her thought and decision here, though she may consider them very sympathetically.

The questions that have occurred to me as requiring to be first solved and answered by the Modern Woman are as follows:—

1. What purpose is the Ideal Average Modern Indian Woman going to fulfil or serve in the State and in the Society?
2. What part does she propose to play in the life of man, and to what extent will she subscribe to the old idea that woman's place is to minister to the comforts of man?
3. Will she ordinarily choose to be the hand that rocks the cradle, and what will be her attitude towards her children if she gets any?
4. Will she still continue to regard marriage as an occupation?

5. What will be her economic relation with man, and what will be her status in the State and in the Society apart from man?
6. Will she be an independent Unit of the State, and at the same time continue to be a joint Unit of the Family together with man?
7. Will she abolish all sense of inferiority in woman, and imbibe a sense of equality with or superiority over man?
8. What kind of education will she have, vocational or merely cultural? (If vocational, give the details of the vocation she will follow, if cultural, then determine the subjects she will study, and the number of years she will ordinarily take this course of study.)
9. Will she work equally with man at all kinds of occupations?
10. Will she try or care to exercise her rights and carry out her obligations so as not to conflict with the rights and obligations of man? Will she put harmony first or her rights first?
11. Will she claim all advantages of equality and also all advantages of chivalry and follow the policy of "Heads I win and tails you loose" with man?

I need hardly mention here that I am fully conscious of the importance, magnitude, and complexity of this most perplexing problem about the destiny of the women of our country, and I also realise that no single individual can claim to solve it satisfactorily. May I therefore suggest to the All-India Women's Conference to specially consider it, and to take steps to frame and issue an exhaustive questionnaire on this most vital point, on the lines suggested herein above, with a view to ascertain the general Indian Public Opinion, and to appoint a representative committee of enquiry to report thereon, so as to enable it to authoritatively ascertain, determine and define the Modern Indian Woman of to-morrow, or in other words the Indian Woman of to-day fully developed, complete with all the necessary approved schemes for her attainment, and thus to put forth the United Demand of the Women of India for the acceptance of the Country.

This will greatly strengthen the present movement for the progress of woman, and the realisation of this noble object will then be greatly accelerated by putting before the Country such a United Demand. Then, will the Indian Woman set to work in the right direction? Will the Women's Indian Association, and the various Women's Provincial Organizations move in the matter?

A. D. SATHAYE.

Sixth International Congress of the Women's League for Peace and Freedom.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS BY JANE ADAMS.

It gives us great pleasure to hold our Sixth International Congress in this beautiful city of Prague whose traditions are so in line with our purposes. The world has long believed that the Slavs, especially the agrarians, have shown a will to peace unique among the peoples. We recall that the Bohemian Brethren long ago rejected the use of force by State or Church and proclaimed the ideal of universal peace as their fundamental doctrine. A distinguished Czech, Comenius, built up a pan-human conception of education so renowned that other countries tried in vain to detach him from Bohemia in order to secure his services as an educator, among them the United States which offered him the presidency of Harvard University. It is useless to speculate upon what effect his philosophic mind would have had upon the young overseas republic; perhaps the reproach of American materialism might have been avoided altogether.

The President of Czechoslovakia was the first of the remarkable list of peace-loving men who at the moment hold high governmental office. To President Masaryk we add Briand, Stressemann, Stauning of Denmark, MacDonald and Hoover. Without claiming that these men are pacifists, it would not have been possible in any other period of the world history to list a group of responsible statesmen so determined to find political expression for better international relations. This list may easily be increased even from those nations hitherto committed to the use of force. When the President of Mexico after the recent assassination of the presidential candidate might so easily have seized power through the use of the army, he preferred to commit Mexico to the civilized method of election and reversed her old bad habit of violence.

It is impossible to give even a summary of the advances and the disappointments to the cause of peace since our last Congress in Dublin in 1926, from the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations only a few weeks after our meeting, to the contemporaneous

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attempts to compose the difficulties between China and Russia by an appeal to both nations to refrain from war because of their pledges under the Kellogg Pact. We consider that new instrument for peace in its many bearings in the afternoon session and indeed throughout this Congress. Perhaps quite as important as the political development is the marvellous extension of the radio and television by which people can see and hear one another all over the world, and the great air-journeys such as the magnificent one now under way by the Graf Zeppelin.

A delegated convention such as we are opening this morning, is ordinarily held to appraise progress, to inspire morale, and to agree on policies. In addition, its delegates renew spiritual and social contacts and make new ones among those who are like-minded. All this we hope to accomplish here but, first because our League was organized during the war when a clear statement of ideals and an unswerving devotion to them was the paramount obligation of its members, we realize that it may easily become inflexible. New social conditions have emerged since the war, with varied changes and shifts of emphasis in different countries and we must remember that the great value of an International Congress is to discover an underlying trend through all of them, to set our national experiences into a world perspective, to so understand a general situation that each may respond to her own portion of it, in a larger and finer way. We hope for the emotional glow which will give a fresh interpretation of the purposes of our beloved League, which will clear our vision and tap new sources of spiritual energy; we hope to maintain a co-operative rather than an argumentative attitude towards differences of views, to secure real freedom of expression of conflicting ideas and thus obtain a self-determined adjustment.

That harmony is a sham which is merely a glossing over of realities. We must state our difficult issues clearly and compose them through what has come to be called creative discussion, the result of which is not compromise but a new solution of good will and pooled intelligence.

The League has led a very active life during the three years since the Dublin Congress. We shall hear during these coming days of the very successful mission of two of our members to the women of Indo-China and of China; we shall have a report, a full one, I hope, of the brilliant congress held in Frankfurt last year on the modern methods of warfare in relation to the civilian populations. The technical as well as the ethical side of the situation was ably

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presented and we congratulate those having it in charge but especially Prof. Gertrude Worker of the University of Berne and Prof. Stahlbaum of the University of Stockholm for the scientific standards they maintained: the two journeys made by Camille Drovot in the new Baltic States, and later into the Balkans in preparation for the East European Congress held so recently in Vienna which resulted in sympathetic, straightforward discussions of the vexed situation in which so many of the women found themselves. They were grateful for comradeship and eager to become members of the old and new sections of the W. I. L.

I should like to say a word about the Conference called in Honolulu last summer by the Pan-Pacific Union to which women came from all the countries bordering upon the Pacific Ocean. There was about this conference and about the session of our own League held after it, a sense of reality, a consciousness of woman's ancient role of food producing *versus* the primitive food gathering of men which restored at least to my mind a confidence which I had lost during the war, that the work of women is nurture and production and must in the end prevail over the mechanistic tendencies of society which make for destruction.

President Masaryk has said:—"In a true democracy, war and revolution will be obsolete and inadequate, for democracy is a system of life. Life means work and a system of work: and work, unostentatious work, is peace." In this lies our salvation.

Hindu Law Reform in Mysore

Opening Speech of Rajadharma Pravina Justice K. S. Chandrashekhara Ayyar, the Chairman at the First Meeting of the Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

On this the first occasion when we gather round this table, let me say how pleased I am to meet you all and to take up with you the work entrusted to us by His Highness' Government.

That work, as you are aware, has reference to the question of improving the position assigned to women under the Hindu Law as administered by the Courts of the Mysore State. Our instructions are 'to examine the subject in all its aspects, inclusive of any other incidental points that may arise in connection with it, and also with reference to any recent legislation in British India in the same direction, and to submit a report indicating in what respects the present law stands in need of reform, together with a draft bill embodying the Committee's recommendations.'

It is obvious that the task assigned to the Committee is as important as it is difficult and delicate. And if it is to be at all satisfactorily accomplished, we shall need patient and careful work in committee, besides active and sympathetic response from outside.

In the first place, we must, as you will all agree, make clear to ourselves what exactly is the present situation in regard to the rights and disabilities of women under the Hindu Law in such matters as inheritance, the order of succession, maintenance, *stridhanam*, the nature of women's estate, their powers over property, and so forth. This by itself will entail a good deal of study and research, especially since the details of the law cannot, naturally, be sufficiently familiar to all of our members.

In the second place, we have to ascertain the particulars in which the law as at present administered operates harshly, unequally or anomalously, or fails to meet sufficiently the needs and conditions of the time. This part of our task will not have been properly discharged without the fullest opportunity given to all persons interested in the matter to place their considered views before the Committee.

And, finally, when we have collected all the available materials, including information as to actual or proposed legislation in other parts of India, we shall have to consider carefully the question of

whether any and what changes have to be made in the existing law of the State, and how such changes may be most suitably introduced. This quite rightly, will form the most onerous and responsible part of our duties : but, unless our work covers all the stages I have indicated, it is not likely that we shall be fully equipped for our task as a whole.

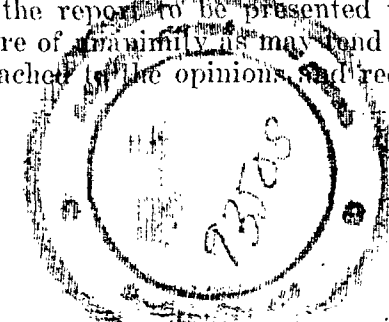
While on this matter of our preliminary work, I may observe that we shall have not only to give adequate opportunities to the general Hindu public, but also to invite opinions and suggestions from individual ladies and gentlemen known or believed to be specially conversant with the subject, that is to say, not merely or so much with its legal aspects, but rather with conditions operating in practice in regard to the position of women in various respects, together with what may appear to them to be necessary or desirable lines of reform. In order to define the scope of the enquiry and to facilitate the process of gathering information; it will doubtless be necessary to issue one or more sets of questions of a comprehensive and detailed nature. And in view of the rather technical character of the subject, and of the expediency of confining discussion and information to relevant matters, it may be advisable to base the questions either on a short and connected account of the law as it stands, or on a series of passages extracted from judicial decisions or standard treatises or other published matter, and suggestive of aspects worthy of consideration. Whatever be the alternative adopted, care will have to be taken to avoid, as far as possible, importing anything likely to be construed as our individual or collective opinion at this stage. I should imagine that if, as is to be expected, the questions are searching and exhaustive, and the written replies full and clear and to the point, the need for supplementing these replies by the oral examination of witnesses will be minimised if not avoided. This, however, is a contingency which need not be further considered now.

We may hope thus to be placed in possession of a fairly large and representative body of opinion, typical of the many varying schools of thought that prevail. We shall welcome with equal impartiality the rigidly conservative standpoint which is apt to regard as a sacrilege any proposal to lay hands, however gently, on the fabric of the Hindu Law as it stands, and the idealist attitude which will not rest content until the whole structure is rigorously examined and tested and freed once for all of its weak and unsatisfactory parts at whatever trouble, inconvenience or opposition, and, between these extremes, other shades of opinion combining in varying proportions a degree of veneration for the past with a responsive consciousness of the needs of the present and disposed to favour desirable changes provided they be not too far in advance of enlightened public opinion. I mention

this solely to remind ourselves of the need for a due measure of care and circumspection in our own initial attitude, and of the importance of giving a patient hearing to every type of opinion before forming, or at any rate pronouncing, opinions of our own. But when we shall have finished our deliberations and through them reached final conclusions, we shall not, I am sure, shrink from giving them frank and full expression, unconcerned by thoughts of the reception which may subsequently await them.

It must be pleasing to all of us, it is certainly gratifying to me, when undertaking a task of this magnitude and importance, to have on this Committee co-workers possessed of varied knowledge and experience, several of them, appropriately enough, persons learned in the law and having practical acquaintance with its operation and intricacies, some gentlemen well conversant with the world of business and commerce, one a lady highly esteemed in the educational field and widely known for her zealous interest in women's progress, and all of them representatives at once of Hindu civilization and modern culture even more than they are representatives of sections of the great Hindu community. Such a combination, whatever it may or may not accomplish, may be trusted to bring to bear upon the common task a proper regard for all that is venerable and stable in existing institutions and a discriminating appreciation of those elements which are valuable and useful and those which, on the other hand, tend to cause hardship and injustice or to promote manifest disadvantage, or are otherwise real obstacles to progress. Experience shows that, other things being the same, a fairly small and compact body is better situated for the formulation of constructive schemes of legislation than one which, in the endeavour to find place for every conceivable section or type of opinion, may be converted mainly into an arena for all sorts of conflicting and irreconcilable views. After all, as already indicated, every class of the public and every private individual interested in or likely to be affected by the reform of the law in regard to the position of women, will be welcome to place its, his or her views before our Committee in the certainty that the same will receive due and ample consideration.

I should like, before concluding, to express the hope, not only that our association round this table will be uniformly pleasant and harmonious, but also that we shall all of us make in some form or other our individual contribution to the common purpose, and that, when our labours take final shape, the report to be presented to Government will exhibit such a measure of unanimity as may tend to enhance the value and weight to be attached to the opinions and recommendations themselves.



A Problem.....and a Solution.

By F. G. PEARCE.

The Indian *paterfamilias*, and more particularly I note, the Kayastha *Paterfamilias* is ever-groaning over the difficulties of providing a dowry for his daughters. Quite recently there was an article in a magazine in which the author called down curses on the greed of would-be sons-in-law and their families. It must be no joke to have daughters, specially now-a-days, and, perhaps, must be correspondingly unpleasant to be a daughter, under such conditions. One feels very sorry both for the unhappy father and the unwanted daughter. Is there no possible solution to this frightful problems? Frightful is not too strong a word, for, to be sure, it is enough to frighten anyone.

The solution which is usually put forward is that our young man should not ask for dowries. But human nature does not change so quickly, and it will be a long time before any considerable number of youngmen, and their parents, are prepared to adopt that solution. There is another possible solution, which will shock some of my readers when I mention it but which I would nevertheless ask them to consider seriously, as it is seriously put forward. It is that some of the daughters should not be married. Then, obviously they will not require dowries. But what will they do? Let us consider.

In England the excess of the female population over the male has absolutely necessitated many women remaining unmarried; and side by side with this, the improvement of women's education has made these unmarried women no longer content to remain idle. They have sought out avenues of service, new interests in life, and diverted their energies from the channel of child-bearing which it was hitherto considered to be practically their only natural function, to other lines of work for which their constitution peculiarly fits them, such as child-rearing, teaching, nursing, doctoring, etc. Year by year women have gradually proved themselves capable of entering into many professions hitherto restricted to men, and while it is a disputable point whether the national life is enriched by their participation in specialised occupations such as engineering, aeronautics, arctic exploration, etc., which require the highest degree of physical

strength and endurance, no one now questions that society has benefited by the increasing activity and influence of women in the educational, medical, and perhaps also the political world.

Now what other countries have been driven to by the force of physical necessity, such as the inequalities of the male and female elements of their population, why should not India deliberately adopt as a preventive and remedial social and economic measure? The purely physical cause is absent in India for there is approximately an equality of males and females. No Indian women, therefore, need remain unmarried for such reasons. There are, however, other good reasons why some of them should do so, and one of them is this economic and domestic question of the burden of the dowry.

I do not for one moment suggest that large numbers of women should remain unmarried, nor is there the slightest danger, in a country where the numbers of the members of the two sexes are about equal, that any such state of things would ever arise. What I do seriously suggest, however, is that, particularly in families in which it is difficult to provide adequate dowries for all the daughters (but not necessarily in such families *only*) it should not be regarded as a matter for reproach if one or more of the girls definitely avoids marriage and trains herself for some other useful occupation....useful not only to herself and society, but also to her family of which she will become an earning or at least a self-supporting member.

This brings me to my next point. Such a solution will not merely help the poor *paterfamilias* who is worried about the dowries of his daughters, but it will be, in a few years time, of infinitely greater help to the country as whole.

India, at present, is suffering from a very real dearth of women-teachers, women-doctors, women-nurses. In other countries, these professions are manned (the term is somewhat paradoxical) by large numbers of highly educated, highly cultured, highly respectable and respected ladies. Such a state of things has only come about because such ladies have deliberately entered those professions. Even the professions which have until recently been considered less respectable for women to enter, such as the Stage, the Opera, and the artist world in general, are now-a-days practically equal in standing to any other, simply because really cultured people have, during the past few years,

braved public opinion, and entered those professions, either for sheer love of the work, or to earn a living, or for both reasons combined. The reputation of the professions has thus risen to the level of the reputations of the people who entered them.

It can, and will be the same in India.

As one who is mainly interested in education, let me give some illustrative facts from that department of life. No one who has any experience of teaching will deny that for teaching all very little children, and perhaps for teaching all children up to the age of 12 years or so, women are much more suitable. But it is extremely difficult to secure a sufficient number of refined and educated ladies for such work in India, and it is almost impossible to retain their services. Why? For no other reason whatever than that public opinion insists, irresistibly in most cases, that they should get married, and only in quite exceptional cases can they possibly continue to teach in schools, after they have incurred the responsibilities and duties of married life.

Take the case of a promising lady-teacher, one who has the real inborn knack of dealing with children. Her employers, valuing her ability and wishing to increase it, decide to send her to a Training College. They do so. After her return, fully trained, what happens? Her family begins to exert pressure upon her to get married. Being highly educated, she is naturally sought after. In most cases, *whether she likes it or not*, she has to yield to pressure. She leaves the profession. This is not merely a loss to the school she has served, but to the country which has paid for her training.

Of course, I do not suggest that any form of pressure should be exerted *against* marriage.

The only thing I plead for is real liberty for women to decide for themselves, without pressure being brought upon them either by relatives, or by the implied reproaches of public opinion. Indian opinion, in general, is, I am aware, that all women wish to get married. I think that wish is not so general as is supposed, and that it is largely the creation of circumstances. I believe that in India, as in other countries, a certain number of women, as also of men, find themselves less suited by temperament for marriage than for other creative activities. It has always been recognised that men have the right to abstain from marriage if such be their case. I see no reason why it

should be considered a cause for reproach if a woman claims the same right, and exercises it.

It will be clear to my readers that, in actuality, it is mainly because of the existence of this reproach that this change will be difficult to bring about. Indian public opinion, at present, takes a bad and uncharitable, not to say suspicious view of the unmarried woman. It is accustomed to attributing the worst motives to her, to cloaking her in the vilest suspicions. This public opinion must be changed, if we are to progress.

Where the city of faithful friends stands;
Where the cleanliness of the sexes stands;
Where the healthiest fathers stand;
Where the best bodied mothers stand;
There the Great City stands.—Walt Whitman.

How to Encourage Widow Re-marriages ?

BY SHRI KRISHNA D. CHITALE.

In spite of more than 50 years' social agitation in this country, India is not very much advanced in the social field, though the progress is not absolutely disappointing and the position of Indian widows, be they young or old, has remained stationary so far as their re-marriages are concerned and calls for some urgent solution in order to free them from the pangs of widowhood. How hard and even dangerous it must have been for a social reformer to practise what he preached about 30 or 40 years ago can be easily imagined from the fact that even a man like the late Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade could not re-marry a widow though he was the first responsible public man to declare from the platform and the press that widowers at least should re-marry widows, and had to be satisfied by marrying a girl of 12 who was fit to be his grand-daughter and not his wife. Even though I admit that the late Ranade lacked the courage and force of conviction to bring into action what he preached, he was not to be wholly blamed for that act of his, for orthodoxy was so powerful then that it threatened him with immediate and complete social ostracism.

This is not the place to enter into the merits and demerits of this particular case but I have simply mentioned it to show how dangerous it was for a man even of late Justice Ranade's status to break the established and cherished traditions of society in those days.

Judging the progress we have so far made it can be safely said that public opinion has now been so moulded and prepared that it can at least without great aversion tolerate a thing like widow re-marriage. But this progress is not at all worth while having when we realise the fact that widow re-marriages even to-day are so few that they can be counted on the tip of the fingers. In a country like India where there are lakhs and millions of child and aged widows, isolated examples of widow re-marriages are certainly not things over which we should be jubilant. If we move onwards with this speed it will take more than 2,000 years before the question of widow re-marriages

ceases to be burning question and will be ridiculous like the present Government of India's scheme of Indianising the Army. The question of child-widows is so important and urgent for solution that I have decided to devote a special article to this subject. In this article I have decided to deal with this subject in general without making any distinction between child and grown-up widows.

It is now realised by all responsible public men in this country that if any reform, political or social, is to be made in this country, the best and effective way would be, after some ground is prepared, to take the aid of Legislation and bring the sorely needed reform into practice by statute. Whether it is a question of prohibition or it is a question of giving effect to Mr. Haji's bill for the reservation of coastal traffic to Indian Shipping Companies, all need the help of legislation without which nothing satisfactory is possible.

A suggestion of my humble self, that widowers in this country—I am writing in reference to the Hindu society only—should be legally prohibited from marrying young virgins, was ridiculed as silly and childish by some responsible public men even though I had suggested that a modification should be made so as to make it possible for only fully grown up virgins and bachelors to choose in marriages either widowers or widows. By this suggestion I only sought that young virgins should not fall a victim to the wishes of their parents or guardians whose senses have become so blunt that they do not make any distinction between a bachelor and a widower while settling the marriage. The virgin, tender, raw in her judgment and inexperienced of this world as she is, falls an easy prey to the iron wishes of her parents or guardians. I am sure, no virgin who is sufficiently grown up as to pass a proper judgment on the problems of life which vitally concern her, will accept a widower in marriage unless she has a special liking for him. I now ask, with all frankness I possess "How many of the virgins who are married to widowers have given their consent to such marriages after full maturity of thought"? Most of them are married to widowers either against their will or at a time when they know very little the implications of marriage and the difference between bachelors and widowers." My proposition in short is "For widowers—only widows—unless grown-up virgins with ripe judgment select widowers in preference to bachelors." Whether my suggestion is ridiculed or laughed at, I honestly believe that this is the only way to accelerate the disappointingly slow progress of widow re-marriages; and unless this suggestion has been given effect to by passing a legislative measure as

suggested above, the problem of widows will remain unsolved till dooms' day.

It is likely to be argued by many that when the age of consent is increased to 16, for which the Age of Consent Committee is sitting and whose report will be shortly out, where does the necessity of such a measure arise? Assuming for the sake of argument that the Age of Consent is fixed at 16, even then I contend that this problem remains unsolved. A girl of 16 is not so developed as to think independently and can be easily influenced either by her parents or guardians who are interested in a particular widower and want the girl to be married to him. Therefore, instead of relying on the scanty provision of the age of consent, we should make it absolutely impossible by law for a widower to get a virgin as his wife, unless a particular virgin so chooses on her own responsibility and with the full knowledge of the responsibility she is undertaking. When we have succeeded in discouraging marriages between widowers and virgins, widowers will at least out of necessity be compelled to offer their hands to young widows who will then be in a position to enjoy a stage in life which is so long denied to them because of the prevalent social practices. If, therefore, we want to free the widows from the pangs of widowhood and not let them die in utter despair, the remedy lies only in bringing into practice the suggestion I have made above. We shall thus give a fair chance to the widows to live a life worth living.

S. D. CHITALE.



Flower Gathering. By a girl of 13 years.

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Reformers at Work

BOMBAY VIGILANCE ASSOCIATION.

The following address was delivered by Miss E. C. Gedge of Missionary Settlement for University Women at the 6th Annual Meeting.

I have been asked to address this meeting in order to tell you something of the part which women have played during the last year in the efforts which have been made to strengthen public opinion and hasten the abolition of the vice area in this city. Women and men co-operate in this work and have done so since the inception of Vigilance work in our city. The growth of public opinion which can already be seen is one of the finest examples of what can be achieved by the close co-operation of men's and women's societies for the cause of Social reform.

I think that this year marks an epoch in our work and the most important event has been the passing of the resolution in favour of abolition by the Municipal Corporation—Following on this, the Vigilance Association issued the manifesto which was sent to all its affiliated Societies including the Bombay Presidency Women's Council. Subsequently it was decided to hold a meeting for women in support of the manifesto at the Women's Council Room in the Town Hall. This meeting was addressed by Mr. R. P. Masani and Miss M. K. Davis and the numbers present and the general tone of the meeting showed such an advance in the interest taken in this important subject, that at the next Council Meeting, we decided to ask if a deputation of women, might wait on H. E. the Governor in support of the manifesto. His Excellency consented and a deputation of Ladies led by Lady Tata, President of Women's Council was received by His Excellency and given a sympathetic and considerate hearing. We were very grateful to His Excellency for his willingness to receive this deputation.

A criticism of our deputation was made in a leading daily paper by a writer who did not give his name and we are most grateful for the able reply to this letter which was made at our request by Mr. H. W. Bryant, Secretary of the Vigilance Association. There is much work

for women to do not only in educating public opinion, but in helping to meet the practical difficulties of the situation if, as we hope, the vice areas are soon to be abolished.

We find that many people fear that if the area disappears, the houses of ill fame will be spread all over our city. Unfortunately this evil already exists and we believe that the vice area as it now stands is the supply from which houses in other parts of the city are clandestinely supplied with women.

Another fear often expressed is that the streets will become unsafe for women. I believe that this fear can be allayed by enquiry into the condition of Colombo and Rangoon after the abolition of the areas. Women have in no case suffered from an increase in molestation after abolition of vice areas, and this is emphasised by the League of Nations report. Neither do we women desire to buy our safety, at the expense of our less fortunate sisters.

We women have been told that we want to reform the world in a day, but this is not true. We believe that by quiet and steady work a great deal can be done in three years to improve the condition of things in Bombay after the suppression of the tolerated areas.

Our part will be a very practical one and will consist of helping to dispose of the women released from brothels. In an able pamphlet entitled, "Next Step after Abolition," Miss Dickinson has outlined the problem of the disposal of these women. She points out, "that the vast majority of the women not only come from outside Bombay, but are in touch with their families. Many of them spend half the year in Bombay and the remainder in their native places. These could and probably would return home of their own accord when they found that their foothold in Bombay was no longer secure."

The repatriation of foreign women would dispose of another section and there would remain a number of women outcaste and homeless who would have to be medically treated and dealt with by rescue homes, of which six already exist in our city.

Our Bombay Presidency Women's Council through the initiative of Mrs. F. S. Talyarkhan has already started such a home which at present accommodates about thirty women. We are glad to be able to report to-day that Government has offered us a site and buildings at the back of the Children's Aid Society in Umerkhadi and there we hope to see our home expand into something much larger and more able to meet the needs of the new situation. If the accommodation for women in Bombay city be proved inadequate the difficulty of

housing them might be met by a camp in the mofussil, run on the lines of a Criminal Tribes Settlement.

The problem is very great, but proper investigation has shown that it is not insuperable and we women need to go forward in full co-operation with the men in the work undertaken by the Association in the belief that with God's help we can win through. We need faith, hope and courage to carry out this difficult task firmly and wisely and step by step.

AMENDMENT OF THE MADRAS CHILDREN ACT IV OF 1920.

Statement of Objects and Reasons for the proposed Bill.

BY DR. MUTHULAKSHMI REDDY.

It is recognised by all civilised Nations that the first and primary duty of the State is to secure for every child the right to be trained to be bodily, mentally, and socially fit. Hence the measures adopted to achieve that end are both preventive and remedial; but we in this Presidency have till now been devoting our attention and thought only to the latter, but our every-day experience tells us that it is far more profitable to the individual and to the State, to prevent the onset of blindness and other physical infirmities, rather than give treatment after those diseases have set in, and have caused damage to the vital organ. Apart from the physical deformities caused by ignorance of parents, there are much more serious afflictions of the society brought about by a diseased and perverted human mind resulting from bad associations, and improper environments, such as habits of drinking, theft, prostitution, etc.

We know that our present efforts are directed towards providing Hospitals, Asylums, Rescue Homes, Blind and Deaf Schools; and thus segregating and stigmatising the individuals after they have become physical and moral wrecks, and a menace to society.

All the same, it is the State and the Society that has to bear the whole burden and the responsibility. From experience of other advanced countries we learn that our labour, and money, can be more profitably utilised in preventing or reducing the above-mentioned serious consequences, arising from parental neglect, or the association of the young with undesirable individuals, or living in improper or immoral surroundings.

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Modern psychological research has proved that the child character is largely determined by factors of environments and training in its early life.

The Madras Children Act does not contain any provision for the prevention and punishment of offences against children. Under our present Act, only the vagrant and youthful offenders are tried and sent to the Children's Aid Society, Madras; and a few cases of children rescued from brothels on information supplied to the police by social workers or well-intended neighbours.

Even though the present sections of the Madras Act have been copied from the English Act of 1908, still the other important provisions that effectively deal with offences committed against children have been unfortunately omitted.

The English Act of 1908, as well as those of the Bombay and the Calcutta Act, contain provisions not only for the immediate removal of children from unhealthy and immoral surroundings—such as the company of a prostitute, a drunkard, but there are also provisions to prevent juvenile smoking, cruelty to children, and children being induced to bet, to wager, and to pawn articles, or to beg, and children being given intoxicating liquors.

My present Bill intends to amend the Madras Act so as to bring it on a line with the Acts of the other Indian Provinces as well as the English Act. Further there is a clause in my Bill to prevent the training of girl children by Devadasis for a life of concubinage or prostitution.

We know that in this Presidency there is a section among the Devadasi who do not hold any *Inams* and hence do not render any service to the temple, but still persist in training their girls to a life of prostitution and dedicating them to the temples to be styled "Devadasis" with the sole purpose of living on the earnings of prostitution. As these have been successfully evading the penal clauses contained in the Penal Code, Sections 372 and 373, under the plea of religion and custom and as my amendment to the Hindu Religious Endowments Act will affect only the *Inam*-holding Devadasis, it is very necessary that those children also should be guarded against any such abuse of parental authority. It is worthy of our earnest consideration that in the United Province which is faced with a similar problem, a special Act named "The Naik Girls Protection Act" has been recently passed by the U. P. Legislature to protect the minor girls of the Naik Community from being trained to a life of prostitution.

REFORMERS AT WORK

As one of the important aims of the State is the protection of the future generation, a certain amount of legal and social safeguards are found to be necessary in every country to prevent abnormal and anti-social elements in society contaminating human life at its very source.

POONA SOCIETY WORK.

The annual function in connection with the Poona Seva Sadan Society's maternity home and with the Lady Lloyd Infant Welfare Centre, which is the City Branch of the Bombay Presidency Infant Welfare Society, was held at the headquarters in Sadashiv Peth yesterday, when Lady Sykes presided and distributed prizes and certificates. In addition to a silver medal and awards to a nurse and three midwives for passing the Public Health Examination which entitled them to become Lady Health Visitors, the infant children of 80 mothers who have been confined at the Society's maternity home during the past year, were presented with gifts by Lady Sykes. The following were the prize-winners: Mrs. Ramabai Pitre (silver medal), Mrs. Gogte, Mrs. H. Salvi and Mrs. Nerkar.

In welcoming Lady Sykes, Her Highness the Rani Sahab of Sangli, President of the Society, said that a nation might achieve the greatest advance in the domain of literature, science or art and it might succeed in evolving the most perfect system of self-government, but if disease went on decreasing its population every year and if its successive generations continued to lose their strength and vitality, that nation would soon be a nation of the past. The Poona Seva Sadan Society recognised that fact and struggled to do what it could to promote public health as well as maternity and infant welfare work. Public health education was the power which had to be maintained to keep public opinion alive to the imperative need of preserving the health of the community, and maternity and infant welfare work were the two great spheres in which much practical work could be done to conserve and improve public health. Her Highness added that the practice of preventive medicine rested upon the growth of medical science and the application of that knowledge to the problems of disease. Work in that direction was hampered by general poverty and lack of funds as well as by lack of public opinion and education. Her Highness paid a tribute to Lady Sykes' keen interest in the alleviation of human suffering and in the uplift of India's womanhood. This

was not the first time Lady Sykes had evinced sympathy for her fellow-beings and had deeply interested herself in their progress and welfare.

An appeal to the public to assist the Society financially was made by the Chief of Bhor who stressed the great need for preventing the high maternal and infant mortality throughout the country. He said that a great deal could be done by sending out trained and intelligent lady doctors, nurses, midwives, and health visitors to various towns and talukas for work among the women and children.

In thanking the Ranisabheb and Mr. Devadhar for their welcome, Lady Sykes expressed her pleasure at meeting so many workers in a good and great cause, which could not fail to inspire admiration and sympathy in all who had the welfare of women and children at heart. Much of the success of the movement was due to the disinterested help of many other workers who, in an honorary capacity, provided such an adequate staff for the Health School. The work could only be carried on through the agency of women, for it was to the women in the villages that the appeal must first be made. The need was already widely recognised, and as the Public Health School turned out an increasing number of women really qualified to be health visitors, the demand for their services would gather volume and be capable of absorbing all the staff that could be possibly trained. Lady Sykes assured her hearers that in carrying on the movement in the way they were doing they would always have her earnest support and sympathy.

SOCIAL REFORM SECTION OF THE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

Mrs. Brijlal Nehru, Secretary of the above section writes—

Enclosed you will find a scheme of work suggested for carrying on the work of social reform throughout the year. This scheme was presented before the Standing Committee meeting at Delhi and was approved by it. The suggestions made are not exhaustive and at the same time they are too many to be taken up by the constituent committee all at once. Besides, the social conditions of different provinces differ so widely that the option of choosing their own item of work has to be left to the local committees themselves. It is recommended that items which are marked should be taken up by all Provinces as they apply to all equally and are very important. As intensive work is always productive of better results than extensive work, it will be better if besides the compulsory items only one or two more are taken up by the local committees.

A.

Requiring Legislation and Propaganda Method of work

Items.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Prevention of Child Marriage.* | (a) Appointment of small vigilance committees to watch individual cases to dissuade them and to urge social boycott against them. |
| | (b) Propaganda through the Press and platform by means of magic lantern lectures and popular songs. |
| | (c) Protest meetings.* |
| (2) Prevention of unequal marriages. | The same as above. |
| | (d) Members of legislatures should be approached and asked to bring about measures in the Assembly to remedy this evil. |
| (3) Prevention of Polygamy. | Same as (1) and (2). |
| (4) Segregation and Prevention of marriages of lepers. | Protest meetings and the same as (2) (d). |
| (5) Equal rights of inheritance.* | (a) Holding of meetings where public men versed in law should be asked to lecture on the rights of women. |
| | (b) Meetings of women urging the necessity of legislation. |
| | (c) Persuading members of the legislatures to introduce suitable bills. |
| (6) Protection of women labourers in factories and mines. | Same as No. (4) by means of getting maternity benefits laws passed in local Councils as has been done in Bombay. |

B.

Requiring Propaganda Only.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| (7) Removal of customary Purdah. | (a) Holding of mixed meetings and debates. |
| | (b) Holding of women's meetings to explain the harmful effects of Purdah especially from the medical point of view. |

STRI-DHARMA

Requiring Propaganda Only—(contd.).

- | | |
|---|---|
| (7) Removal of customary
Purdah—(contd.) | (c) Encouragement of mixed Clubs
wherever they exist. |
| | (d) Encouragement and holding of
mixed social gatherings. |
| (8) Prevention of enforced
widowhood. | Propaganda and discussion at meetings. |
| (9) Prevention of enforced
dowry and <i>Dehi Leti</i>
system. | Same as A (1) (a) (b) (c). |
| (10) Maternity and infant work. | This work can be started by starting
maternity Homes, by appointing
Health Visitors and trained nurses
for teaching and training <i>dais</i> . By
opening Baby clinics and by help-
ing the infant welfare work where-
ver it exists. |

Attuned to every speck of earth and sky
We stand, and in our beings catch the cry
Of growing grass, the delicate noise of wings
Among the leaves, the throb of little things;
And each a priceless portion of our own
Large growth, which knowing, we become alone
Re-lit with the pure flame that Deep to Deep
Scatters to separateness in our dim sleep
Of pains and pleasures.—*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.*

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HINDI

सच्ची पूजा

(ले०—श्री वसंतीदेवी)

एक समय एक राजा ने प्रण किया, कि मैं प्रत्येक सोमवार को शिव मंदिर का कुंड दूध से भरवाऊंगा। इस प्रण को पूरा करने के लिये उसने अपनी सारी प्रजा को आज्ञा दी कि सोमवार के दिन कोई ग्वाला दूध न बेचे और जिन के घर में गौएं हैं वहाँ भी दूध न पीये और न ही पकाने व जमाने में बर्तें, वरंच सारा दूध शिव कुंड में डाल दें। सोमवार के दिन राजा स्वयं भी दूध न पीता था और न ही रनिवास में कोई दूध पीता व बरतता था। सारे शहर का दूध कुंड में डाला जाता था परन्तु कुंड न भरता था। फिर राजा ने कड़ी आज्ञा दी कि बालकों व रोगियों को दूध न पिलाया जाय, उन के हिस्से का दूध भी कुंड में ही डाला जाय। परन्तु तब भी कुंड न भरा। इस तरह कई सोमवार बीत गये। एक सोमवार को एक वृद्धा स्त्री ने थोड़ा सा दूध कुंड में डाला और कुंड भर गया। यह शुभ समाचार जब राजा को मिला, तो राजा ने उस स्त्री को बुलाया और कहा: देवी, पिछले कई सोमवारों को इतना यत्न करने और इतना दूध डालने से यह कुंड न भरा, पर आज तुम ने कितना दूध डाला जो यह कुंड इत भर गया? स्त्री ने उत्तर दिया—

“राजन्, मेरे घर में एक गाय है। आज मैंने प्रातः ही उठ कर दूध दुहा और आप की आज्ञानुसार मैं दूध मंदिर में लाने के लिये तय्यार ही थी कि मेरे पड़ोस में एक बच्चे के रोने की आवाज़ आई। इस बच्चे की मां थोड़े दिन हुए मर गई। पिछले सोमवार को भी वह बालक सारा दिन रोता रहा, उसे दूध नहीं मिलाया। आज सवेरे उस का रोना सुन कर मुझे बहुत दुःख हुआ और मैंने सोचा कि आज यह बालक फिर सारा दिन भूख से व्याकुल हो कर तड़पेगा। यह सोच कर मैं एक गिलास भर कर दूध उस बच्चे के लिये दे आई। मुझे निश्चय था कि यद्यपि आप की आज्ञा है कि सोमवार को कोई दूध न पीवे और सम्पूर्ण दूध शिव कुंड में डाला जावे परन्तु जब आप इस मातृहीन बालक का हाल सुनेंगे तो मुझे उस दूध देने के लिये क्षमा कर देंगे। मैं बाकी दूध लेकर मंदिर की ओर आरही थी कि मार्ग में मुझे एक और स्त्री मिली, उस के हाथ में खाली बर्तन था। उसने मुझे देखकर बड़े विनीत

भाव से कहा, ‘माता आप के बर्तन में दूध है, कृपा करके मुझे थोड़ा दूध दें, मैं प्रातःकाल से बर्तन लिये फिरती हूँ, मुझे कहीं दूध नहीं मिला, दुग्गा तिग्गा दूध का मूल्य देने पर भी कोई दूध नहीं देता। मेरा पति बहुत बीमार है। अब दो चार दिनों से वह बहुत निर्वल है, दूध के अतिरिक्त उसे कुछ पच नहीं सकता। आज सारा दिन यदि उसे दूध न मिला तो उस का रोग और भी बढ़ जावेगा और मुझे डर है कि मैं और मेरे छोटे २ बालक अनाथ हो जावेंगे। माता, मेरी दशा पर दया करो और भगवान के लिये मुझे थोड़ा दूध दे दो। मुझे निश्चय है मेरे दुःख का समाचार सुन कर महाराज आप को मुझे दूध देने के लिये क्षमा करेंगे।’ राजन्! उस का दुःख सुन कर मुझे दया आई और मैंने उस का बर्तन दूध से भर दिया, और बाकी जो थोड़ासा दूध रहा था, वह मैंने लाकर शिव कुंड में डाल दिया। बड़े आश्चर्य की बात है कि उस दूध के डालने से ही कुंड भर गया। ईश्वर दीन दयाल दीनबंधु हैं, वह दीन जनों के स्वामी व हितकारी हैं, दीनों को दूध देने से ईश्वर प्रसन्न हुए और ईश्वर की अत्यंत कृपा से ही आज यह कुंड भर गया।”

यह सारा हाल सुन कर राजा करुणा से भर कर बोले: “देवी, मैं अज्ञान के वश में होकर धर्म की ओट में पाप कर रहा था, दीनों पर अत्याचार किया, बालकों को सताया और यह सब मैं भगवान को प्रसन्न करने व भगवान की पूजा करने के लिये कर रहा था। परन्तु अब मेरा अज्ञान दूर हुआ और मुझे विदित हुआ कि भगवान सर्वव्यापी हैं, वह एक मंदिर में बंद नहीं हैं। वह धर्म के बाहरी आडंबर से व बहुमूल्य भेंटों से प्रसन्न नहीं होते, दूध, जल, वायु, फल, सब उनकी ही देनगी है, वह यह भेंट नहीं चाहते। भगवान दीनबंधु, दीनानाथ, दीनन हितकारी हैं, दीनों की सेवा करने से ही भगवान प्रसन्न होते हैं। ईश्वर की संतान की तन मन धन से सेवा करना ही ईश्वर की सच्ची पूजा है। ईश्वर ने दीनों को, पतितों और शूद्रों को कभी नहीं त्यागा, वे निर्वलों के बल, निर्धनों के धन, अनाथों के नाथ हैं। हम मन वचन कर्म से सब का भला करते हुए और दीन दुःखियों के दुःख दूर कहते हुए ईश्वर की सच्ची पूजा करें।”

धर्म की ओट में

(ले०—श्री एन० यज्ञेश्वर शास्त्री)

शैशव मृत्यु—संख्या

मद्रास प्रान्त में सन् १९२७ ई० में तीस सहस्र प्रसवकालीन आयु (बच्चा पैदा होने की अवस्था) की स्त्रियां जोकि उस प्रान्त की कुल स्त्री संख्या की बीस प्रति सहस्र हैं काल के गाल में चली गईं। इंग्लैंड और वेल्स में इसके मुकाबले चार प्रति सहस्र की संख्या थी। इस संबंध में यह शंका की जाती है कि यह निर्धनता और अनुपयुक्त पौष्टिक साधनों का प्रतिफल है अथवा छोटी अवस्था के मातृत्व का। परन्तु इस विषय में डाक्टरों की सम्मतियों की अपेक्षा, जो कि सम्भवतः एक दूसरे के प्रतिकूल होंगी, व्यावहारिक ज्ञान अथवा साधारण बुद्धि को पहिला स्थान देना योग्य है।

मनुष्य अपना अस्तित्व एक सूक्ष्म पिण्ड अथवा कोष के रूप में, जोकि माता के गर्भ में एक परोपजीवी की हैसियत में होता है, प्रारम्भ करता है। प्रायः लोग इस के लिये प्रार्थना करते, मन्त्रें मनाते और स्वागत करते हैं इसलिए इसे परोपजीवी जैसे तिरस्कृत नाम से नहीं पुकारा जाता, परन्तु जीवन-शास्त्र (Biology) के अनुसार जीव-पिण्ड एक विजातीय रचना है जोकि दूसरे की जीवशक्ति पर वृद्धि पाती है। जब एक बालिका उस आयु पर पहुँचती है—जब उसकी वृद्धि हो चुकती है—तब वे पौष्टिक द्रव्य जो उसके पूर्ण विकसित शरीर को बनाने के काम में आते थे, जीव-पिण्ड को वृद्धि देने में लगाये जा सकते हैं। परन्तु एक ऐसी बालिका के लिए जो अब भी वृद्धि पारही हो मातृत्व या तो उस के या गर्भ-स्थित शिशु के पौष्टिक साधनों में अवश्य कमी का साधन बनेगा। दुर्भाग्यवश भारतीय बालिकाओं को मातृत्व का बोझ १९ वर्ष की आयु ही में उठाना पड़ता है और विशेष करके ब्राह्मणों की दशा तो और भी बुरी है।

संस्कार।

कुछ दिन हुए एक ब्राह्मण भद्रपुरुष का विवाह-सम्बन्ध एक ब्राह्मण कन्या से होना निश्चित हुआ था और वह भद्रपुरुष समाज सुधार के कार्य को प्रगति पहुँचाने के विचार से यह

विवाह सोशल मैरिज एक्ट (Social Marriage Act) के अनुसार (रजिस्ट्री कराके) कराना चाहते थे। उनका विश्वास है कि विवाह एक पुरोहित के सामने एक विधि विशेष के अनुसार कृत्य होने के कारण संस्कार नहीं बनजाता बरन विवाह एक प्रकार से प्रतिज्ञा-बन्ध या करार-ठहराव होने के कारण संस्कार होता है और सभी ऐसे करार-ठहराव या प्रतिज्ञा-बन्ध जो भद्र व्यक्तियों के बीच होते हैं संस्कार होते हैं। यह विचार धार्मिक विश्वास में उस उदारता का द्योतक है जो सत्य का विशेष गुण है परन्तु खेद का विषय है कि यह गुण आज भारत की धार्मिक कड़रता में बहुत कम पायाजाता है। बहुत से हिन्दुओं के लिए कोई भी कोलाहल अथवा नाद यदि वह संस्कृत में पुरोहितों द्वारा उच्चारित किया गया हो संस्कार समझलिया जाता है। निम्नलिखित घटना विश्वासघात और मिथ्या साक्षी का एक उदाहरण है :

एक विधवा ने कुछ वर्ष हुए अपनी पुत्री का, जो अल्पवयस्का थी, विवाह एक वृद्ध पुरुष के साथ जिसे मिरगी आता थी केवल इसलिए करदिया कि उस के पास सम्पत्ति थी। अग्नि प्रज्वलित की गई, देवी देवताओं का आवाहन किया गया और विवाह सम्पादित होगया। उस कन्या ने अपनी बाल्यावस्था वृद्ध रोगी की सेवा सुश्रूषा में व्यतीत की और आफत की मारी शीघ्रही विधवा होगई। ऐसे कृत्य न तो विवाह ही हैं और न संस्कार ही। बरन् विश्वासघात और मिथ्यासाक्षी हैं—विश्वासघात इसलिए कि एक जीव माता-पिता की रक्षा में सौंपा गया और उसे अन्याययुक्त विवाह संबंध में फंसा दिया गया; मिथ्यासाक्षी इसलिए कि अग्नि के समक्ष पत्नि के लिए सम्मान की प्रतिज्ञा कीगई जिसका वास्तव में यह अर्थ न था।

TAMIL

நம் தேசத்தில் இந்துப் பெண்களின் நிலைமை.

BY MISS R. INDIRA.

நம் தேசத்தில் பெண்கள், அதிலும் இந்துப் பெண்கள், படும கஷ்டமும், துக்கமும் பார்க்க என் மனந்தாளாமல், மிகவும் கஷ்டப்பட்டு, என்னையும் அறியாமல், ஓர் ஆவேசம்கிளம்பி, அந்த ஆவேசமானது வெகுநாளாக என் மனதை வாட்டி, அதை மனதிலேயே அடக்கிவைக்க முடியாமல் ஜனங்களுக்கு வெளிப்படுத்தும்படி இதை எழுதுகிறேன்.

பொதுவில், அநேகம் பேர்களுக்கு பெண்கள் என்றால் ஒருவிதமான அவ மதிப்பு ஏற்படுகிறது. இப்பொழுது ஒரு வீட்டில் ஒரு ஸ்திரீ ப்ரஸவித்தால், ஜனங்கள் அவளுக்குப் பிறந்தது பெண்ணை, பிள்ளையா என்கிறார்கள். ஒருவேளை பிறந்தது பெண்ணையிருந்தால்—ஹும்; “பெண்ணை” என்று இழிவாய்க் கூறுவதை நான் எத்தனையோ இடத்தில் பார்த்திருக்கிறேன்.

ஒரு வீட்டில் ஓர் பெண்பிறந்தால், அதை அதன் மனம் போனபடி விட்டு அதற்கு மிகச் செல்லம் கொடுத்துக் கெடுப்பது, அல்லது அவளுக்கு மிகவும் துன்பம் கொடுத்து ஒருவிதமான சுதந்திரமும் யஸ்சகாமல் அவளை மிகவும் பாழாக்குகிறார்கள். சிலவிடத்தில் பெற்றோர்கள் மிக்க செல்வமுடையவர்களாயிருந்தால், அவர்கள் பெண்ணுக்கு பால்யமுதல் ஆபரணங்கள் என்னும் பேயைப்பூட்டி அன்னபாணுதிகளை அளவுக்குமிஞ்சி ஊட்டி, சீராட்டி, தாலாட்டி, அந்தப்பெண்ணுக்கு உட்கார, எழுந்திருக்க பணியாளர்களை வைத்து, தேகத்தைத் தாராளமாய் வளரவிடச்செய்கிறார்கள். அப்பெண் நன்றாய் வளர்ந்து, மிகவும் சொம்பேரியாகவும், கல்வியில்லாமலும், சந்திரமில்லாமலும் எந்த வேலை செய்யவும் வணங்காமலும் மிகவும் வியாதிபஸ்தர்களாகி விடுகிறார்கள்.

எனென்றால், இலம்பிராயத்தில் அவள்கீர எலும்புகளுக்கு, ஒரு வேலையும் தராததினால் அவைகளெல்லாம் மிகவும் பலஹீனமாய்விடுகிறதின் காரணமாக, மார்வலி யென்றும் இன்னும் அநேகவிதநோயால் பீடிக்கப்படுகிறார்கள். பெண்ணின் பெற்றோர்கள் அநேகம் டாக்டர்களை வைத்து அதற்கு அநேகவிதமான மருந்துகளைக் கொடுத்து அவளை எழுந்திருக்கவிடாமல் படுக்கையில் போட்டு விடுகிறார்கள். மறுபடியும் கொஞ்சநாளாகக்கெல்லாம் ஒருவனுக்கு மணம் என்னும் நிர்ப்பந்தத்திற்கு அநேகம் பணம் செலவழித்து அந்தப்பெண்ணை உட்படுத்திகிறார்கள்.

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நம் தேசத்தில் இந்துப் பெண்களின் நிலைமை

அந்தோ! பரிதாபம்!! பெண் மாமியார்விடு சென்று பலவிதமான கஷ்டமடைந்து, ஒன்று தாய்விட்டிற்குத் திரும்பிவருவது அல்லது அங்கேயே கஷ்டப்பட்டுக்கொண்டு அநேகம் குழந்தைகளுக்கு, தாயாக இருந்துகொண்டு தன்தேசத்தின் பலத்தையெல்லாம் இழந்து கஷ்டப்படுகிறார்கள்.

மற்றும், உதாரணமாக, ஒருவீட்டில் ஒரு பெண்ணை மிகவும் அருமை யாக வளர்த்து பாலியத்தில் ஒருவளை வியாதிபஸ்தனென்று தெரிந்துக்கொண்டும் பணத்திற்காக ஆசைப்பட்டு, அந்தப்பெண்ணின் ஸம்மதமில்லாமல் அவனுக்குக் கலியாணம் செய்து கொடுத்துவிடுகிறார்கள். பிறகு அந்தப்பெண் தன்மனம் பிடியாமல், புருஷன்வீட்டில் கஷ்டப்பட்டுக்கொண்டிருக்கும்போது, அவள் துர் அதிர்ஷ்டத்தால், அவள் பிதாவும் மாணமடைந்து விடுகிறார். பிறகு பிதா இறந்த சிலகாலத்திற்கெல்லாம் நோயுள்ள புருஷனும் இறந்து விடுகிறான்.

அந்தோ! பரிதாபம்!! அந்தப் பெண்ணின் கதி என்னவாகும். அவள் தாயோடு வந்து இருந்து கொண்டுதான் அவஸ்தைப்படவேண்டும். ஒரு வேளை அந்தப் பெண்ணின் தாய் தன்பெண்ணை வைத்துக்காப்பாற்ற சக்தியில்லாம விருந்தாலும், பெண்ணின் மாமியார் வீட்டிலிருந்து அந்தப் பெண்ணுக்கு ஜீவனம்சம் கொடுக்காமல் அலங்கியமாய் இருந்துவிடுகிறார்கள். என்னசெய்வது! அந்தப் பெண்ணை அவளது உறவினர் அவளைக் கல்விச்சாலையில்சேர்த்து ஒரு மெட்ரிசுலேஷன்வரையில் படிக்கவைக்கிறார்கள். பிறகு அவளை அவள் இஷ்டப்படிவிடாமல் அவள் கொஞ்சம் முன்னுக்கு வந்ததும் அவள் புருஷன் வீட்டார் அவளைப்பார்த்து, நீ ஏன்படித்துக் கஷ்டப்படவேண்டும். கஷ்டப்பட்டு வேலைசெய்து சம்பாதிக்க வேண்டும். நம் வீட்டிற்குவந்து சுகமாய் சாப்பிட்டுக்கொண்டு சந்தோஷமா யிருக்கலாம் என்று சொல்லி அவளை வற்புறுத்துகிறார்கள்.

அந்தப்பெண் கொஞ்சம் புத்தியுடையவளாயிருந்தால் அவர்கள் சொல்வதைக்கேளாமல் சுயபுத்தியால் தன்வழியே சென்று தன்பிழைப்புக்கு ஒரு வழியைத்தேடுவாள். (எப்பொழுதும் பெண்கள் ஒருவருடைய ஆதரவில் இருப்பதை விட, தாங்களே உழைத்துச் சம்பாதித்துச் சாப்பிடுவதைவிட மேலானது ஒன்று மில்லை.) ஆனால், அந்தப்பெண் பிறர் உபதேசத்தை கேட்பவளாயிருந்தால் ஒரு வழியும் செல்லாமல் படித்தும் ப்ரயோஜனமில்லாமல் வீட்டிலிருந்துகொண்டு அவஸ்தைப்பட வேண்டியதுதான். இந்த காலத்தில் தனக்கு எது நல்லது என்று தோன்றுகிறதோ அதன்படி செய்யவேண்டுமே தவிர, பிறர்களுக்குப் பாயந்து ஒன்றும் செய்யாமலோ, எப்போதும் பிறர் சொல்வதைக் கேட்டுக் கொண்டோ மனச்சஞ்சலாப்பட்டுக்கொண்டிருக்கக்கூடாது. அநேகம் பெண்கள் படித்தும் புத்தியில்லாமல் ஒருவழியும் செல்லாமல் வீட்டிலிருந்து அவஸ்தைப்படுகிறார்கள்.

சிலர் தங்கள் பெண்களைப் பதினாறு, பதினாறு வயதுவரைவில் வீட்டிலேயே வைத்துக்கொண்டு வீட்டுக் காரியங்களில் அவர்களை இறுத்தி அவர்க

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ஸ்திரீ தர்மம்

ஞாக்கு மணமும் முடிக்காமல், கல்வி, ஸங்கீதம், கைத்தொழில், ஒன்றும் கற்று வைக்காமல் இருந்து விடுகிறார்கள். (பெண்கள் காரியம் செய்வது இழிவு என்று நான் சொல்லவில்லை. அவர்கள் எவ்வளவு படித்திருந்தாலும், எவ்வளவு மேன்மையாயிருந்தாலும், அவர்கள் வீட்டுக்காரியங்களைச் செய்யவேண்டியது அவர்கள் முக்கியமான கடமை.) பிறகு கொஞ்சநாளாகக்கெல்லாம் தங்களுக்கே புத்தி வந்தோ அல்லது பிறர் போதனையாலோ, அந்தப் பெண்ணை பதினைந்து வயதுக்குமேல் ஒரு கல்விச்சாலையிலோ, ஹாஸ்டலிலோ கொண்டுவந்து சேர்க்கிறார்கள். அவளைக் கொண்டுவந்து சேர்த்த இரண்டு மூன்று மாதத்திற்கெல்லாம், அந்தப்பெண் ஆங்கிலம், ஸங்கீதம் முதலியவைகள் கற்றுக்கொள்ள வேண்டும் என்பது அவர்களெண்ணம். அப்படி அந்தப்பெண் சீக்கிரம் அவைகளையெல்லாம் கற்றுக்கொள்ள இயலாதவளாயிருந்தால் அந்தப் பெண்ணின் பெற்றோர்களும் மற்றவர்களும் அந்தப் பெண்ணை நிந்திக்கிறார்களே தவிர நாங்கள் சிறுவயதிலேயே அந்தப் பெண்ணுக்கு கல்வி கற்பிக்காமலிருந்தது தங்கள் தப்பிதர் நானென்று உணராமல் இருக்கிறார்கள்.

அந்தப் பெண்ணைக் கல்விச்சாலையில்விட்ட இரண்டு மூன்றுமாதங்களுக்கெல்லாம் அவளை ஒரேவழியிலே செல்லவிடாமல் நீ படித்ததுபோதும், நீ சங்கீதம் கற்றுக்கொள் என்று அதில் இரண்டுமூன்று மாதங்களிருக்க வைத்து அவைகளிலும் அவள் தேர்ச்சியுடையவளா யில்லாவிட்டால் அவளை கலியாணம் செய்து கொடுப்பது தான் உசிதமென்று சம்சாரமென்னும் பாசக் கொடியில் விழச்செய்து விடுகிறார்கள். ஐயோ பாவம்! அந்தப் பெண்ணை ஒரு வழியிலும் கொஞ்சநாள் மிருக்கவிடாமல் அந்தப்பெண்ணின் மனதை சஞ்சலப்படுத்திவிடுகிறார்கள். அப்பெண்ணை சம்சார பந்தத்தில் அகப்பட்டுக் கொண்டு சீக்கிரத்தில் அநேகம் குழந்தைகளுக்குத் தாயாகிவிடுகிறாள். தந்தைக பலத்தையு மிழக்கிறாள். பிறகு படித்தவர்களைப் பார்த்துத் தானும் அவர்கள் மாதிரி படித்து சந்தேஷமாய் தேசத்திற்கு உழைப்பவதவிட்டு இம்மாதிரி தான் கஷ்டப்படுவதை நினைத்து மனம் வருந்துகிறாள். இவ்விதம் அநேகம் பெண்கள் இருக்கிறார்கள்.

ஓ! பெற்றோர்களே! நீங்கள் எங்களுக்குக் கஷ்டம் கொடுக்கவேண்டுமென்று ஒன்றும் செய்வதில்லை. ஆனால், எங்களுக்கு கல்வி என்னும் செல்வத்தை பாலியத்திலேயே தரவேண்டுமென்று நாங்கள் வெருவாய் பிரார்த்திக்கிறோம். நாங்கள் பாலியத்திலேயே கல்வி கற்காமல் வயதானபிறகு கல்வி கற்பது கஷ்டம் என்று தெரிவிக்கிறோம். இனிமேலாவது நீங்கள் உங்கள் பெண்களுக்கு பாலிய விவாகத்தை நிறுத்தி அதற்குப்பதில் பால்யத்திலிருந்து கல்விச்சாலையிலேயோ, சங்கீதசாலையிலேயோ, அல்லது தொழிற்சாலையிலேயோ அவர்களை விடுத்து அவர்களுக்குச் சுதந்தரம் கொடுத்து முன்னேற்றம் அடைவிக்கும்படி பிரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

நம் தேசத்தில் இந்துப் பெண்களின் நிலைமை.

ஆ! கொடிது !! மிகவும் கொடிது !!! உங்களுக்கு ஆண்பிள்ளைகள் பிறந்தால் அவர்களை ஐந்தாம் வயதிலேயே பள்ளிக்கூடத்திற்கு அனுப்புகிறீர்கள். அவர்கள் ஒவ்வொரு வகுப்பிலும் இரண்டு மூன்று வருஷமிருந்தாலும், மனம்சலியாமல் அதிக பணம் செலவழித்து படிப்பென்னும் அமுதத்தை ஊட்டுகிறீர்களல்லவா. ஏன் பெண்பெதைகளாகிய எங்களுக்கு எவ்வளவோ கல்வியறிவு கடவுள் கொடுத்திருந்தாலும் எங்களை ஒருவழியிலும் செல்லவிடாமல் எங்களுக்குச் சுதந்திரமும் தராமல் எங்களை என் எப்பொழுதும் கண்ணீர்விட்டுக் கஷ்டப்படும்படி செய்கிறீர்கள்? ஆண்பிள்ளைகளைவிட நாங்கள் எதில் தாழ்த்தவர்களாயிருக்கிறோம்? நீங்கள் எங்களையும் சிறுவயதிலிருந்து கல்வியில் விடுங்கள். நாங்களும் படித்து முன்னுக்கு வந்து நாங்களும் ஆண்பிள்ளைகளுக்குச் சமமானாகச் சம்பாதித்து எங்கள் பிழைப்புக்கு நாங்கள் வழிதேடிக்கொள்ளுகிறோம். நீங்களேன் ஆண்பிள்ளைகளுக்குப்பணம் செலவழித்துப் படிப்புக்கற்றுவைப்பது அவசியம் என்றும் எங்களுக்குப்பணம் செலவழித்துப் படிப்புக்கற்றுவைப்பது வீண் என்றும் நினைக்கிறீர்கள்? இனிமேலாவது, நீங்கள், எங்களை அப்படி நினைபாமல், எங்களுக்கு பால்யத்திலேயே கல்வி, ஸங்கீதம், கைத்தொழில் முதலியவைகள் கற்றுக்கொடுத்து எங்களை முன்னேற்ற வழி தேடுங்கள். எங்களுக்கு சுதந்திரம் கொடுங்கள். எங்களை தேசத்திற்கு உழைக்க விடுங்கள்.

இப்பொழுது தான் எங்கே பார்த்தாலும் கல்விச்சாலைகளும், தொழிற்சாலைகளும், ஸங்கீதச் சாலைகளும் ஏற்பட்டிருக்கிறதே. பெண்கள் கல்விச்சாலையிலிருந்துக்கொண்டே சௌகர்யமாய்ப் படிப்பதற்கு ஹாஸ்டல்களெல்லாம் ஏற்படுத்தி இருக்கிறார்கள். உங்களுக்குத் தெரியவில்லையா?

அதிலும், மிஸ்ஸஸ் வெங்கடசுப்பராவ் அவர்களால், சென்னை மைலாப்பூரில் (ஸேவா ஸ்தனம்) Seva Sadan என்னுமோர் ஹாஸ்டலை ஏற்படுத்தி அதில் பெண்களை ஜாதிவித்யாசம், வயதுவித்யாசம், பணவித்யாசமில்லாமல் அநேகம் பெண்களை அநேகம் இடத்திலிருந்து சேர்த்துக்கொண்டு அவர்களுக்கு எல்லாவித சௌகர்யங்களும் கொடுத்து அவர்களுக்கு கல்வி, ஸங்கீதம், கைத்தொழில் (அதிலும் எல்லாவிதக்கைத்தொழில்) முதலியவைகளைக் கற்றுக்கொடுத்து சுவர்மெண்ட் பரிசுஷக்கு அனுப்புகிறார்கள். தங்களால் முடிந்தவரையில் அவர்களை நல்ல வேலைக்கு தங்கள் மூலமாகவே அனுப்புகிறார்கள். அந்தம்மான் பெண்கள் முன்னேற்றமடைய எவ்வளவோ கிராமமெடுத்துக்கொள்கிறார்கள். அந்த அம்மாளுக்கும், அவருக்கும், பூரண ஆயுசு உண்டாகும்படி நாம் மனமாரக் கடவுளைப் பிரார்த்திக்கவேண்டும். இப்பேர்ப்பட்ட, அருமையான வித்யாலயம் இருக்கும்பொழுது, நீங்கள் ஏன் உங்கள் பெண்களைக் கொண்டுவந்து சேர்க்கக்கூடாது?

இனிமேலாவது விழித்துக்கொண்டு உங்கள் பெண்கள் முன்னேற்ற வழிபைத் தேடும்படி பிரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

சமாசாரக் குறிப்புக்கள்.

திருக்குறள் தீபாலங்காரம் :—இது திருச்சிஞ்ஞாயினி ஜில்லா குளிர்த்தலை தாலுகா மருங்காபுரி ஜெமீன்தாரினி ஸ்ரீமதி கி. சு. வி. இலட்சுமி அம்மணியவர் களால் இயற்றப்பட்டது. இதன் விலை ரூ. 3. சுத்தமான அழகிய பதிப்பு.

திருக்குறளை அம்மணியவர்கள் செம்மையாய்க் கற்றாய்ந்து கிந்தித்து அதன் அருமையை உலகினர் எணையர்க்கும் உணர்த்தற்பொருட்டு தெள்ளிய செந்தமிழ் எசன நடையில், நமது ஆன்றோர்கள் குறள் வாக்கியங்களுக்கு இலக் காய் நின்ற புராணேதிகாஸக் கதைவாலாறுகளை மேற்கோளாக ஆண்டு, முப்பாற் பொருள்களையும் “கருங்கச்சொல்லல் விளங்க வைத்தல்” என்னும் முறைப் படியே எழுதிப்போந்து இனிது முடித்திருப்பது ஜெமீன்தாரினி அம்மையவர் களின் உயர்ந்த கல்வியையும், திறந்த உணர்வையும், தேர்ந்த ஒழுக்கத்தையும் விளக்குகின்றதோடு, நம் தமிழ்காட்டு மாதர்களையும்கூட நல்ல கல்விப் பயிற்சி கொடுக்கப்பெற்றால் ஒவ்வொருவரும் உலகமுய்யும்படியான ஓர் அருஞ்செயல் புரிவர் என்பதையும் புலப்படுத்துகின்றது. தமிழ்காட்டார், இக்கிரத்தத்தை வாங்கிப் படித்துச் கிந்திப்பாரேயானால், அம்மணியவர்களுக்குத் தாம் எவ்வளவு கடன்பட்டிருக்கிறோ மென்பதை யுணர்வர். ஓர் ஸ்திரீ ரத்னம் இயற்றிய இக் கிரத்தத்தை மதிப்பிடக்கூடாது ஸ்திரீதர்ம பத்திரிகைக்குப் பெருமகிழ்வே யாம்.

TELGU

స్త్రీల సమస్యలు

మనమ్యులకును, జంతువులకునుగల ముఖ్యభేదములలో నొకటి మనస్సు. మనస్సునా కేవలము పరిస్థితులనుసరించి యేదోయొక విధముగ జీవించుటకాక, మన మనుభవించు సమస్తకష్ట సుఖములను, మంచి చెడుగులను గుఱించి విచారించి, వాని యన్యోన్యసంబంధముల నిర్ణయించు శక్తి. ఇంతేకాక ముందు మెనుక లాఠయుశక్తిగూడ మనస్సుయొక్క స్వభావమనియే జెప్పునగును. గతించిన యనుభవములవలన ప్రతిమానవుడును ప్రస్తుత సమయమున, ముందుగాబోవు వానిని గుఱించి యోచించుట కొంతవరకు సహజమైయున్నను, ఇట్టివి సాధారణముగ దూరపాలోచనలుగాక, మన యనుదిన చర్యననుసరించినవై, విశాలములేక క్రిక్కిరిసినవై యుండును. కాని తన భవిష్యత్తునుగుఱించి తన ప్రస్తుత జీవనమును తదనుగుణ్యముగఁదిష్టమనానికే మానవుడని జెప్పుట భాగ్యముగాని, తదితరులకట్టిపేరు తగదనుటకు సంభవముండునా?

అటులైన మన స్త్రీలెందరు తమ భవిష్యత్తునుగుఱించి యోచించుచున్నారు? అనగా మనకెన్ని నగలు, నాణెములు వచ్చుననెడి కేవలయార్థిక విషయములగుఱించిగాని, లేక, కేవల మత సంబంధమగు పారమార్థిక విషయముల గుఱించిగాని యెందరు విచారించు చున్నారనెడి విషయమును నే నిచ్చట చలంచుట లేదు. స్త్రీలు—భారత స్త్రీలు, తాముకేవల భారత సంఘవాసులేకాక, ప్రపంచ మందలి సమస్తమానవ సంఘమునకును జెందినవారని గ్రహించి, అందువలన భావి సాంఘిక సమస్యలెవ్వియని, యెందరు సోదరీమణు లా లోచించుచున్నారు? తంతి వార్తలు, ఆకాశ విమానములు, రేడియో యుద్ధలగునవి విద్యుద్ద్యేగముతో ప్రసరించు యుద్ధములలో భారత స్త్రీలు కేవలము తమ జాతీయ సమస్యలను, మాత్రము యోచించిన ప్రయోజనములేదు. మనముకూర లేదనినను, లోకమందలి

సమస్తజనులును రానురాను చేరదీయబడెదరనియు, యొకరికష్ట ముఖములు, సంకోచ దుఃఖములు, నాగరికము యొకరుగనవి తదితరుల నెన్నీయో విధముల మూర్ఖులైందించుననుట కేమైన సంభవమున్నదా? సంఘమేవిధమున మారుచున్నది? ఇతరజాతుల స్త్రీల సమన్వయంబు? వానిని వారెట్లు సరిజేయుచున్నారు? మన సమన్వయకును, వారి సమన్వయకునుగల సంబంధభేదములెవ్వి? అను వానిని మన స్త్రీ లాలోచించుట యత్యవశ్యకము. ఇట్టి సమన్వయలో కొన్ని ముఖ్యమైన వానినీ క్రిందచర్చింతుము. ఈ సమన్వయకునగు సమాధానము లివ్వించుకొని. ఇవి కావనిగాని చెప్పట నాతాత్పర్యముకాదు. అది ప్రతి పురుష, స్త్రీ చదువరి యొక్కయు కర్తవ్యమైయున్నది. కాని యిట్టి సమన్వయగలవనియు, వీనికితగు ప్రత్యక్షరముల నొసంగుట మన భారత స్త్రీల కర్తవ్యమనియు, నేను గట్టిగ నమ్ముటవలన వాని నిశ్చేట చర్చించు చున్నాను.

మొదటి సమన్వయ: స్త్రీలు, గృహనిర్వహణము:—స్త్రీ, గృహ లక్షి, గృహమున కధికారిణియగు రాజ్యయనియొక తలంపు చాలకాలమునుండి యు ప్రబలియున్నది. ఏ సంఘముయొక్క పూర్వచారిత్రమును బరికించినను పురుషుడు జీవనోపాధి కనునగు వస్తువులను, పరికరములను జేకూర్చువాడేగాని, వాని నైకొని, గృహమును నిర్మించుట స్త్రీబాధ్యతయైయుండెను. తాను, భార్య, పిల్లలును సుఖముగ జీవించుటకుగాను పరికరముల సమకూర్పుటకు కష్టపడి యింటికి వచ్చిన పురుషునికి శాంతి, సంతోషము, పునర్జీవము నిచ్చుచరిస్థితుల నేర్పరుచుట, జాతీయభావి సంపదకాకరమైన తమ బాలబాలికలకు తగు అన్నపానాదులు, వస్త్రములు, పోషణ, విద్యయు నొసంగుటకు తగు వీలునేర్పరుచుటయు, స్త్రీల పనులై యుండెను. అనుదినచర్యయందు మానవునికి విశ్రాంతిచేకూరవలెను. అట్టి ప్రశాంత సమయమున నేమనుజుని యుత్తమ గుణములు నృద్ధిబొంది యాతని జీవనమును నాగరికముగా నొనర్చును. అట్టి విశ్రాంతినిజేకూర్చి తమ పనివారు నిజ నాగరిక జీవితములు గడుపునట్లును, దేశోద్ధరణకు దోడ్పడునటానర్హుగల్గు అవకాశము స్త్రీల కొసంగబడియుండెను. అనేకమందిస్త్రీలీ యుత్తమమగు యీ పనిని సాధించుకొని, సామర్థ్యముల బడసియుండిరనుట చదువరులెఱింగియేయుండును. దేశోన్నతి స్త్రీలహస్తగతమైయున్నననుట కనుమాత్రమైనను సంభవములేదు.

ఈ దినములలో స్త్రీలోకమున జరుగుచున్న మార్పులను బరికింపుడు, మనమేమి గమనింప నగును! స్త్రీలు స్వాతంత్ర్యమును గోరుచున్నారు, దానిని కొంతవరకు సంపాదించియున్నారు. ఇంకను ననేకవిధముల నీ స్వాతంత్ర్యమును బడయుటకు తీవ్రప్రయత్నములజేయ బూనియున్నారు. ఇట్టి వీరి ప్రయత్నములకు దోడ్పడు పురుషులెల్లరును నవనాగరికులనియు, సంఘోద్ధారకులనియు వినుతిన బడుచున్నారు. కాని స్త్రీల స్వాతంత్ర్యమనగా నీకాలమున నేమావమునుజెందుచున్నది? సాధారణముగ “స్వాతంత్ర్యము”నగా: విలెరుల యాటంకములు మాత్రమునులేక ప్రతివారును తమ స్వేచ్ఛననుసరించి యోచించుట, మాట్లాడుట, కృషి యొనర్చుటకును గల నడుపాయుచుని తలంపుగలదు. స్వాతంత్ర్యముయొక్క నిజ తత్వమిదియేనా? స్వాతంత్ర్యమునునది కేవలము మనజానిబాహ్యవిషయములపై నాధారపడియున్నదా, లేక, అలెనియంతర్గలమగు భావములు, గుణములపై నాధారపడియున్నదా? ఇట్టి విషయములగురించి యోచించుటకిది తరుణముకాదు. ఈ విషయమిట్లుండగా ప్రక్షాళకాలమున స్వాతంత్ర్యముగల శ్రీలనగా నెట్టివారని మన తలంపు? ఇంతవరకును శ్రీలు గృహపరిసరములందుండి యచ్చటి యుత్కృష్ట కార్యముల నిర్వహించుచుండిరి. కాని పురుషులు క్రమేణ శ్రీల గృహములను, వారి సహజనుందిరములనే, కారాగృహములుగ నొనర్చిరి. వంటజేయుట, పిల్లలకనుటయను నీరెండుకార్యములజేయఁబిగాని తదితర విషయముల కవకాశ మియ్యబడలేదు. ఈ కారణమున శ్రీ తన గృహపరిసరములనుండి వెలువలికి నచ్చుట కవకాశమిచ్చు ప్రతివిషయమును, బాటయను, స్వాతంత్ర్యదాయకమనెడి తలంపుగలిగినది. తల్లులు తమ యధీనమందున్న పిల్లలకులేగిన యాహారసదార్థములిచ్చు విషయమై తగురీతినియోచించి యన్న పానాదుల తయారుచేయుటమాని, మోటారు కారులందు ద్రిమ్మరుట స్వాతంత్ర్యము; పిల్లలను కనుటయేగాని, వారిపోషణార్థమెట్టి బాధ్యతయు నహించక, దాదులచేతులందుబెట్టి శ్రీ సంఘములయందుసన్వసించుట స్వాతంత్ర్యము; వైద్యశాస్త్రజ్ఞులు పిల్లలకు తల్లిపాలనుమించిన యాహారము మరి లేదని చెప్పుచుండగా వారికి డబ్బీపాలనుగాని, సరిగన్నానమైన జేయని ఆరోగ్య విహీనలగు దాదులపాలు గుడుచునట్లేర్పాటుజేసి, దేశోద్ధారణకును, శాసనసభల వోట్లకును దిరుగుట స్వాతంత్ర్యము; తేబ్రాయమునభావి జీవనమునకు దగు శరీర పోషణ, సద్గుణభ్యాసముల కనునగు, విద్యావిధానమునిచ్చి, తమ శిశువుల జాగ్రత్తగ

శ్రీ గురు

కాపాడి, పెద్ద పేదగలవారినిజేయటమాని, నిరక్షర కుతూలు, ఉన్నతాదిర్పరహితము, కేవలము జబ్బు ప్రధానముగ భావించువారి హస్తములయందుంచిన యెవల, వారి యెడల కొంచెమైన సామర్థ్యాతేచేని నోకరులు, చాకరులు, ఉపాధ్యాయులచేసెల పాలబాలికల వదలి పురపాలకసంఘమునందుగాని, బెంచి మెజిస్ట్రేటు యుద్యోగమునందుగాని, కాలముగడుపుట స్వాతంత్ర్యము; విశ్రాంతి దాయకమును, ఆనందమయమును, నిజ నాగరికతకాకరమునగునట్లు గృహముల నిర్మించి పసివారు బాబోపు యుత్కృష్టకార్యముల నిర్వహించుగలుగు శక్తిదగు పునాదిని నెట్లించుటమాని సినిమాలు, టిఫిన్లు, సముద్రతీర సంచారములే ప్రధానము చేయుటయు స్వాతంత్ర్యమే. మనమందరమును జాత్యుద్ధరణమునకు గృహములనివ్వించి బాహ్యప్రపంచమున దిగులులాడుచున్నాము. మనమే జాతీయధర్మం యత్నించుచున్నామో, యేదేశోన్నత్యమునకు మన యావజ్జీవమును భారబోయ నమిట్టి యున్నామో, ఆ జాతి—ఆదేశము మనయింటనేలేదా? మన బాలబాలికలేగదా! లేనట్టి భారత జాతి? భారతదేశము? నేటిసాయంత్రమునరే మనము—అల్లిదండ్రులము—యందునది. లేనట్టిదనము మనదికాదు, మన బిడ్డలది. మీరు బ్రతుకవలె నన్న అన్నపానాదులు, వస్త్రములు, గృహములు జేకూర్చుటయును ప్రధానమున జరుగవలెను. దీనిని శ్రీయా, పురుషుడా మిగుల కాశలముతో చేయ గలుగును. శ్రీలే యీ పనిని చేసివచ్చోనర్హత్కృష్టమగు మన బాలబాలికలు సద్గుణభ్యాసముల యందారిజేరునట్లు బాచు బాధ్యత నెవరు నహించవలెను? ప్రశాంతగుణము, ఓర్పు, సౌమ్యము, అపారప్రేమ, అసాధారణత్యాగము, మృదుత్వము, మొదలగునట్టి దైవికగుణములు గలవారలేగదా నిట్టి బాధ్యతను నిర్వహించవలెను? వారెవరు శ్రీలూ, పురుషులూ? ఇన్ని మాటలేల, సృష్టియందే, తన రక్తమును, ప్రాణమును, యాహారమును, తన యావజ్జీవమును నిస్సంకోచముగ పంచియిచ్చి శిశువును నిర్మించి, పెంచి, లోకమునకు ప్రసాదించినదెవరు? కావున గృహధికార మెవ్వరిది? ఈ యధికారమును నహించుట గౌరవనీయమా, కాదా? దీనిని పరిత్యజించి బయటదిరుగుటయే స్వాతంత్ర్యమగునా?

చదువు నేర్చుకొనుటకుగాను పాఠశాలకొక బాలుని బంపియుండిరి. కాని యా బిడ్డ విద్యాభ్యాసమునందంతగా సభిరుచిపొననందున యుపాధ్యాయుడు

శ్రీల సమస్యలు

వాని భయపెట్టి, తిట్టుట కారంభించెను. భయముచేత నా బిడ్డయేదోయొక విధమున చదువుచుండెనేగాని, తన విద్యాభ్యాసమునందా సక్తివలనగాదు. తానేల చదువవలెను, ఆచదువనునది యానందకరముగానుండు విలువేదాయనడు యుద్దేశ్య మా బిడ్డకు గలిగించు, ఉద్దేశ్యము ఉపాధ్యాయుని నుననునకు తట్టనేలేదు. ఇట్లుండగా నొకనాడా బిడ్డను యుపాధ్యాయుడు కొట్టి, శిక్షించెను, వెంటనే నది పలకను వగులగొట్టి, పుస్తుకమును నలిపి, చింపి, దానిపై సిరాబోసి కాలికో దూరముగాతన్నీ పాఠశాలనుండి పారిపోయెను. పాఠశాల ముఖమునే జూచుచున్నది బాదెకాని యా బిడ్డ పాఠశాలకేగవలెనుగదా, విద్యాభ్యాసమునకు? అట్టోనప్పుటకు పాఠశాల పరిస్థితులు, యుపాధ్యాయుని నైజమును నెట్లు నూడవలెను? బిడ్డకు పాఠశాలయొక్క ప్రాముఖ్యతను దెలిపి దానియందలి యాసక్తి నెట్లు జనింపజేయవలెను? ఇట్టిదేగదా పై నచర్చించిన శ్రీల సమస్య!

బాల్యవివాహపు చట్టము :—హరబిలాన్ శారదగారి బాల్యవివాహపు చట్టము శాసనసభయందు తీర్మానింపబడెననియు, రాబోవు ఏప్రిలు మొదటి తేదీ నుండి యది యాచరణలోనికి వచ్చునట్లు వైస్రాయిగారి సమ్మతిపొందెననియు చదువరులెఱింగియేయుందురు. ఈ చట్టమునకు తమయ సమ్మతినిదెల్పుచు సభలలో కొందరు తీర్మానములగా వినుచున్నారు. వీరిలో కొందరు సత్యాగ్రహసద్గుణ నవలంబింపవలెననియు దలంచుచున్నారు. హిందూదేశమంతలో బహుతక్కువ భాగము బాల్యవివాహములు జరుగు చెన్నరాజధాని ప్రజలవలననే దేశమందిరుల కన్న యధిక యాందోళనమును, యీ చట్టమునకు దిరుగుబాటును జూపబడుట బహు వింతగను, శోచనీయముగను నున్నది. నిష్ప్రయోజనములు, కేవలము హానికరములునునగు యాచారముల వదలుట, నిర్మూలనమొనర్చుట శ్రేయస్కరమని యొప్పుకొనెడి వారుకూడ, యట్టి యాచారములకు దాసానుదాసులై వెనుకంజ వేయుటనుజూచి, నవ్వవలెనా, లేక, దుఃఖించవలెనాయని దెలియకున్నది. ఎట్లులైనను బాల్యవివాహములను జనులే వదలుచుండగా వాని నిర్మూలించుటకు చట్టము లేలయనువారి వివాదము కడుంగడు యాశ్చర్యముగనున్నది. గమ్యస్థానమును గుర్తెఱింగినవారు, దానిజేరుట శ్రేయస్కరమని యెంచువారును—కాదు, గట్టిగనమ్ము వారును, అట్టిస్థానము నెంత త్వరితముగజేరిన యంతమంచిదిగదా? ఈ స్థానమును

శ్రీ భక్త

జేరుటకు మనమొనర్చు ప్రయత్నములకు చేయూతనొసంగు దొరతనము వారిచట్టములని రసించుట సమంజసమా? కేవలము పూర్వీకులకుగాను ప్రాజ్ఞులైన మతగ్రంథముల దెచ్చిచర్యల నొనర్చుటవలన ప్రయోజనమున్నదా? మన ప్రస్తుతపరిస్థితులకు, క్రేయస్థులకును వ్యతిరేకముగనున్నను యీగ్రంథములయందలి వ్రాతల ప్రకారమే వడుచుకొనవలెననుట మానవుని మనోవికారతను జూపదు.

ప్రతిస్త్రియును, కనీసము మన సంఘ సభ్యురాలగునారైన, తమతమ గృహములందేగాక తమ స్నేహితులు, బంధువులగృహములందుకూడ శాల్య వివాహములు జరుపకుండుటకు ప్రయత్నములు నలువలెను. మఱియు వీలయినంత వరకును తమ బాలికలకు 14 వర్షములకే వివాహమొనర్చుటకూడ మాన్పవలెను, మన చదువరులలో నెంతలో 18 సంవత్సరములకు బాలికల వివాహ మొనర్చుట యుత్కృష్టమని నెమ్మొనరిని మాతలంపు. ప్రముఖుల నేకులు 18 వర్షములే బాలికలకు వివాహమునకు యుక్తవయస్సునినమ్ముచున్నారు. కావున మన సభ్యులెల్ల కీ సూతన యాచారమును వెలగొల్పుట భావికృషియైయున్నది.

గ్రంథ విమర్శనము

చంపకమాలిని—పదల :—246 పుటలు డబ్బులుకొను 10 పుటలుపైసముద్రింపించబడినది. వెల రు. 1—0—0. ప్రకాశకులు, విక్రేతలు ఏ. యస్, శివ అండుకో, అడయాగు, మద్రాసు.

చంపకమాలినియను నీగ్రంథమును, చెన్నపురియందు లేడి వెల్లింగునన్ బ్రయిసింగుకాలేలో సంస్కృతలో హాధ్యాయనియు, వంద్రమాళి మొనంగు గీర్వాణ గ్రంథములను, మధువన వ్రాసానము మొదలగు తెలుగు కన్నడ గ్రంథములను రచించిన విదుషీమణియగు ఆ. రాజస్వామిగారిచే రచించబడినది. ఇది సూతన పద్ధతిని రచించబడిన సాంఘిక నవలయని చెప్పుచొప్పును. భాష భారాళమై మృదు మధురముగనున్నది. ఇందలి వ్యర్థమును ముద్రణ దోషములంతగ గమనింపదగినవికావు. ఇతివృత్తమొంతయు మనోహరము. నారీజనోద్ధరణమే యాచర్యముగ గలిగిన నీవిదుషీమణి గ్రంథమును అంధ్రనాటిలోకమున కంకితమొనర్చుట యొంతయు సమంజసముగనున్నది. ఇందు పాత్రములన్నియు చక్కగ పోడింపబడినవి. కథానాయకయగు చంపకమాలిని ధైర్యసాహసములు, వినయవిధేయతలు, విద్యాబుద్ధులు, శీలసౌజన్యములు, కార్యనిపుణత—కష్టసహిష్టుత—చట్టదల—విషయ విచారణమొదలగు గుణములు చక్కగ ప్రదర్శించబడినవనుట యతిశయోక్తి కాదు. రాజ్యాభిషేకపై కేశాంతరములయందు తలదాచుకొనియున్న తెండ్రిని తిరిగి సింహాసనమందు నూర్పుండబెట్టిన చంపకమాలిని చరిత్రము వర్ణనాతీతము. ఈమె కాంధ్రమున గ్రంథరచనకిదియే ప్రధనుప్రయత్నముగ దోయచున్నది. కావున నీమెయింకను అశ్వత్థమ సాంఘిక నవలలనురచించి యాంధ్రనారీ జనాభ్యుదయమునకు దోడ్పడునని నమ్ముచున్నాము. చిన్నలు పెద్దలను భేదములేక యెల్లరు పరిపదగిన నీగ్రంథము అంధ్రచేశసంకంఠటను వ్యాపింతుల కెంతయుతగియున్నది.





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