

THE
Bharata Dharma

Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

Honorary Editors : { Rao Bahadur K. V. Sesa Ayyangar, M.A., B.L.
Mr. T. S. Swaminathan, M.A., B.L.

VOL. X]

JULY, 1932

[No. 4



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

चित्ते वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धा शिष्या गुरुयुवा ।

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ॥

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

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE RELIGIOUS VALUE IN SOCIAL WORK By Rama Dasa ...	67
THE LATE RAO SAHIB C. RAMASWAMY IYENGAR B.A., By V. C. SESHACHARIAR ...	70
AN ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE (The Koumaragurukulam Man- nargudi) Rao Sahib S. V. Kanagasabai Pillai ...	73
THE TEACHER By T. L. Vaswani ...	76
THE UNFINISHED LIFE By K. V. S. ...	78
EXTRACTS ...	80-85

THE BHARATA SAMAJA PUBLICATIONS

The following publications of the above Samaj are available for sale and can be had from the Joint Secretary at Adyar.

- (i) Nityapujavidhanam, (Sanskrit Text, Translation and translation in English and Explanatory Notes.) Price As. 6.
- (ii) Nityapujavidhanam. (Sanskrit Text in Telugu characters, with meaning and notes in Telugu.) Price As. 4.
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THE BHARATA DHARMA

*Sadhu T.L. Vaswani writes:—*The "Bharata Dharma" is precious to me for its noble aspiration to interpret the ancient wisdom in the light of the modern spirit. Great is India's destiny and great the mission of the Hindu Dharma in the new age. May you and your work be ever increasingly blessed in the service of *Satyam Sanatanam*!

366

30 JUL 1932



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N.B.—The Arya Mata Sabha is not responsible for any opinions expressed or statements published in this magazine unless they are contained in an official document.

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THE RELIGIOUS VALUE IN SOCIAL WORK.

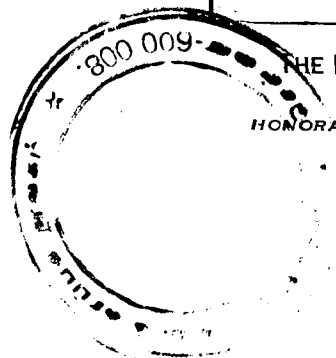
RAMA DASA.

That which we call religion is really the science of human life. It is the study of the composition of the human personality, and of the reaction of human personality to its environment. The study is made with a view to ascertaining the line of man's growth and progress. All the religions of the world have certain elements in common. They assume a purposiveness for human life. They investigate the relation of the phenomena and forces of nature to man. Some religions build their scheme on a single span of human life followed by an eternal residence in another world. Other religions envisage an endless series of lives with intervals of residence in other worlds. Some religions contemplate the world process as impersonal while others assume the existence of a personal God. All religions accept the principle of individual responsibility with limitations. They accept also the law of moral justice. "As a man sows so will he reap." All religions endow human beings with the liberty to choose between various forms of response to his environment and the obligation to accept the consequences of such choice. All religions direct human life on the basis that a human being can by his conduct in the present life ensure his well being in the future, whether that future be in another world or in another life in the physical world.

It is of the essence of religion that it should undertake to guide man to better life. All religions therefore promise a better future to those



THE LATE RAO SAHEB C. RAMASWAMI IYENGAR, B.A.,
(KAISER-I-HIND MEDALIST)
HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME.



who follow their injunctions. All religions have a scheme of human evolution whether related to a personal God or no. All of them assume a definite direction in the world process, and the existence of a Power and of Beings helping those whose lives are in consonance with the trend of that process. All religions have methods for affiliating human beings to God and to one another, and for attracting and using imperfectly understood forces for securing good living conditions in this world and in the next. In every religion there is a Theology or the science of Divinity, a ritual or method of using Divine Power for human betterment, and an ethic or body of rules guiding man in his dealings with his brethren. Within these elementary outlines there are infinite varieties of detail. There are certain main lines of difference depending upon time, place, racial features and historic accidents, between the various religions of the world. Indeed we shall not be wrong in thinking that each human being has his or her own path of development.

There is this distinguishing feature about Hinduism that it purports to be more comprehensive and detailed in its concepts and precepts than other religions. Hinduism has a frame work which transcends the ordinary scheme of a single physical life followed by an eternal future depending upon man's conduct in that life. It assumes a complex organisation in the human personality and differences among human beings based on differences in this organisation. While postulating general rules of conduct for the development and growth of all human beings, it enjoins special rules on those who seek to adopt a course of accelerated progress. Its leaders have sought to probe and to explore wider and deeper into the world process and to utilise the discoveries of such adventure for the guidance of every day life with an attention to details unrivalled by other systems.

Along with other religions Hinduism has shared the advantages and disabilities of an excessive emphasis on a future existence and the resulting neglect of physical conditions. This emphasis has blunted the perception of men to the anomalies that have grown up in course of time and to the unbridged gulf between theory and practice. Instead of arousing a determination to continuously change physical conditions from good to better, it has helped men to allow things to drift steadily from bad to worse. By enabling men to rationalise their sufferings as inevitable and settled features of physical life, it has deprived them of the initiative, enterprise, and adventure which are an inseparable part of the religious stimulus. It has encouraged the practice of textual approach to

the problems of life. It has generated indifference to the tremendous economic and social changes that the passage of time has brought about. It has produced an undesirable isolation of the individual, and bred in him a desire to 'escape' for and by himself from a world of 'evil' which is doomed to destruction.

What we need more than all other things is a shifting of the focus of our effort to the present time and to the physical world. This shifting has become imperative by the intolerable physical conditions to which we have drifted to-day. These conditions make some of our old religious invocations and formulæ almost a farce. It is time that we cultivated and practised the faith that a clean, healthy and cultured life is part of the general heritage of humanity and that the endeavour to secure such a life is primarily a religious endeavour. This by no means implies that we are to ignore higher values. It does not compel us to surrender the things that make for the accumulation of merit for the future about which Hinduism is so particular. Nor does it involve the abdication of the ideal of ultimate liberation dear to the heart of all Hindus.

A more satisfactory re-ordering of physical life may even be said to be a religious duty. It is impossible to construct a 'spiritual' life—if there is such a separate structure—on deficient physical foundations. Spiritual life comprehends both the present and the future. It includes physical as well as super-physical values. The labour, thought and sacrifice that social effort entails, the suffering, devotion and persistence that it involves, the abiding love of humanity that it calls forth, and the faith in the triumph of right that it stimulates are elements that go to build up a better personality. The creation of decent living conditions for those to whom it is now denied, and the provision of normal chances of self-expression to those to whom social conditions have become a cruel agency for repression, constitute active co-operation with the Divine laws of social evolution. In a country where the invocation of Divine intervention for securing physical well-being has been sanctified by religious tradition, the active service of man must be considered to be a path of approach to God.

THE LATE RAO SAHIB C. RAMASWAMY IYENGAR, B. A.

(Kaiser-i-hind Medalist.)

A TRUE WORKER OF WEAL

BY

MR. V. C. SESHACHARIAR.

The curtain has fallen over the earthly career of Mr. Ramaswami Iyengar, known more popularly as Ramu, to his very large circle of many friends and more loving admirers. Kolathur, better known as Kayar-Kolathur in the Chingleput taluq, claims to have the honour of being his birth-place, which he loved intensely, and by mere dint of premonition he paid a flying visit to his native home, only a fortnight back in the company of some good friends. The very stars which presided at the moment of his birth destined for him a career of supreme sacrifice and service in the latter portion of his noble and exalted life, which will ever shine as a brilliant example of Mother India's high-souled sons, whose time and talents were laid at the altar of the Temple of Humanity.

Young Ramu received his early school education in the Native High School, Mylapore, which was founded and sponsored by his first cousin the late much lamented Sir V.C. Desikachariar of local fame and repute. He was one of the first batch of Matriculates from that institution and for his collegiate education, the Presidency College, Madras, claimed to be his *alma mater*. He was fond of sports and tennis and swimming, not to speak of the regular physical exercises taught by the Indian School of Gymnastics, all of which combined to give young Ramu a well-proportioned and attractive physical body and features. From his very early years, being sweet and suave by nature and kind and courteous by temperament he was the most beloved of all his friends and relations, who ever cited him as an example for all young men to copy and follow.

After graduating in Arts from the Presidency College, Madras, in which institution, he was the fortunate recipient of a scholarship, in successive years, his first appointment was as a Clerk in the D. P. W. Secretariat under Sir Francis Spring, to whose kind notice he was brought on the recommendation of the Late Sir V. Bhashyam Iyengar. After some years of faithful service therein, he joined the Office of the Chief Inspector of Railways, Madras, where by his unremitting devotion and thoroughness of work, he attained the position of trusted Manager and won the esteem and confidence of several successive European

Officers who never made a secret of their high appreciation of his work and worth. He owned a dauntless courage and ready resourcefulness in a remarkable degree and as an instance, his attempt to rescue his beloved comrade and friend the late Mr. K. Varadachariar, at the sight of his being drawn away by the cruel sea-waves at the Mylapore Beach, even to the point of his own life being endangered, is well worthy of being chronicled.

He imbibed a thorough habit of orderliness, and powers of organisation and discipline from his first cousin the late Sir V. C. Desikachariar and his religious and spiritual fervour from his other cousin, whom it is unnecessary to mention by name.*

In February 1897, when the late Reverend Swami Vivekananda of immortal fame paid his visit to Madras, before he set sail for America, to attend the Parliament of Religions, the window of young Ramu's soul which stood closed till then, opened itself to the light of the Swami's unmatched eloquence and unsurpassed fervour. His attachment to the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, among whose prominent local activities the Students' Home is a conspicuous example, grew and flourished ever since then; and until the last day of his life he continued to be the energetic Honorary Secretary of this splendid institution. It is now a matter of public recognition that the glowing history of this great institution is likewise the history of the later life of Mr. Ramaswami Iyengar. He was a well read man and a fine English Scholar. He was fond of Srimad Ramayana and Sri Bhagavad Gita and all his leisure moments were occupied in the recitation of important and soul-stirring verses from these two sacred works. The magnificent success now attained by the Home is the offspring of the joint unsparing exertions of the Rao Sahib and his younger cousin Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachariar whose names will go down in the pages of history as types of brothers united in aspiration, effort and achievement, in the cause of National Education, planned on the ancient excellent *Gurukula* system of historic repute. The strong body of Mr. Ramu received its first rude shock by an attack of paralysis some years back, from the threatening jaws of which he was pulled out by the timely kind attention and careful tending of that Prince among Indian Doctors, our well-famed Dr. S. Rangachariar who treated with fraternal love and affection and saved and spared him in comparative vigour for these several years.

After attending the meeting of the Committee of the Home on

* [Mr. V. C. Seshachariar, Ed.]

Wednesday afternoon the 15th of June for the admission of fresh students, a cruel stroke of paralysis fell upon his body with the result that in a few minutes, Mr. Ramu was deprived of his consciousness; and he breathed his last and his noble soul took its flight with celestial wings to its Divine Home when the clock showed 8-50 p. m. on Friday the 17th of June, in the premises of the Home in its tranquil atmosphere, where the very air was resonant with the peace-chants from the Vedas and the Upanishads recited in chorus by his most affectionate students and their teachers in the large company of his admiring friends and affectionate kith and kin, all of whom gathered strong by his bed-side and remained in a prayerful attitude, wishing the noble soul a smooth passage Heavenward and a speedy return to the sphere of work dearly loved by it.

He had a unique charm of personality that attracted and retained the affection and regard of those with whom he came into contact even once. With the many gifts of character that fructify in a dedicated life he combined an unobtrusiveness and a true humility that added lustre to his achievements. Those who came near him felt that here was one who lived for a noble cause, and were stimulated to bless that cause in spirit and in kind. His enthusiasm though subdued was infectious. His approach to his work and his daily fulfilment of the exacting obligations connected with the Home were an object lesson to all public workers. The appeal of such a life to the heart and imagination of the country is bound to be dynamic. The achievements of his life are a revelation of the potentialities that await us to-day in the field of Voluntary Work. Given the man and the cause the odds are one to ten that the cause will languish. It is a favourite saying with Gandhiji that few deserving causes will languish for want of support though they may languish for want of the right type of men. Mr. Ramaswamy Aiyangar's life is a complete justification of that saying.

Those who have followed the growth of the institution with which his name is inseparably associated in their minds, will be able to recall the many years of difficulty and of trial during which it struggled for expression and growth, and how Mr. Ramaswamy Aiyangar and his co-adjutors poured out their life and energy in joyous sacrifice and service on behalf of the orphaned and destitute children whose merit and intelligence were repressed by 'chill penury.' They will also realise how the vision of the plan of education has been expanding in the mind of those whose thought has been concentrated for years in its betterment. In two decades they have elevated a debated line of welfare work to a place of outstanding import-

ance and demonstrated the many successful possibilities that await a public worker endowed with the proper equipment and willing to dedicate his life to the cause. Long may his name live green in the memories of the men and women of this country and long may his work inspire others 'to take heart again' and to 'go forth and do likewise!'

(An Adult Education Centre.)

THE KOUMARAGURUKULAM MANNARGUDI.

RAO SAHIB S. V. KANAGASABAI PILLAI.

(Continued from page 64 of Vol. X.)

3. Books selected are generally of less than 100 pages in simple language and bold type. Novels are found to be in greater demand; special selections of novels are made to prevent unhealthy literature. To divert the taste for novels, biographies are supplied. The number of biographies we have are about one and half times that of the novels. Books on Religion are fairly well represented; books on general knowledge and sanitation are in a fair number. At the units where Library service is being availed of, there is reported an appreciable fall in the play at cards.

4. Popular lectures are usually begun at 6-30 p. m., when the villagers return home with gramophone plates and gradually the folk, young and old, men and women, surround and squat around. After about a dozen plates have run, the magic lantern show is started. In the typical Hindu style, the slide of God Ganapathy is put on and invoked when the audience is Hindu. About dozen Ramayanam slides follow; the stories and their morals are explained. Then about a dozen slides of physiology and sanitation are exhibited drawing special attention to personal, home and village health. A few slides of geography and of great men finish the exhibition. Generally a talk on a popular subject follows and the business is closed at about 9 p. m. 35 such exhibitions and lectures were given during this period of six months.

Scheme of Operations.

Though there are various ways of developing Adult Education our service will be limited to 12 miles radius around Mannargudi, and to the following for the present:—

(1) *Touring Library* will go round to the village units and distribute books and deliver popular lectures including gramophone songs and magic lantern shows.

(2) *Free Reading Rooms* are to be opened at the village units with News-papers and magazines obtained locally and otherwise and two members are to read them in public for the benefit of the illiterate at a specified place and hour for as many days as possible.

(3) *Branch Libraries* are to be opened for such village units as those who pay Rs. 10 or more for 6 months and such books shall be the property of the branch. We help in the selection of books and their distribution to other branches to enlarge the scope of study for all.

(4) *Night Schools* are to be opened on local support to remove illiteracy and impart knowledge on the three R's; if a paid teacher or charitable young men are forthcoming in a village he will undertake to organise, guide and help the school with books, light etc., and supplement local enterprise.

(5) *Short Term Courses* of study shall be held at the Head Quarters periodically when agriculture will afford leisure. Such Courses shall be residential as far as possible and teach subjects as Religion and Morals, Health and Sanitation, Rural Economics, History, Geography, Tamil language, Citizenship, Science, Cottage Industry, Agriculture etc., A fixed minimum charge is to be paid by the students for the period when a GURUKULAM life will be led.

(6) *Short Visits to the Centre.* The village Adults, individually or collectively may come during their leisure and stay at the Centre for short periods by previous arrangement and study there with the help of the staff and utilising the library.

Summer School for Village Adults.

1. The school was opened on 21st April by M. R. Ry. Rao Bahadur K. V. Sessa Iyengar Avl., M.A.B.L., Advocate, Mylapore, Madras with a simple religious function, one member of each religion reciting prayers of his religion. The school lasted from 21st April to 3rd May and it was residential except for 6 students who made their own arrangements for boarding and lodging. There were 45 students in all, of whom 8 were ladies; 2 were Christians, 3 were Muslims and the rest (4) were Hindus.—(7 Brahmins, 7 Vellalas, 5 Naidus, 8 Kallars, 8 Ahamadiars, 1 Chettiar, 2 Desikars, and 2 Mudaliars. The students paid Rs. 8 per head for boarding and lodging. The school was run with additional donation, mostly in kind for boarding.

2. *Addresses.* The education given was calculated to fit one for life; all the different aspects of the life of a villager were treated. The following is an abstract of the Subjects taught.

	Addresses.	Magic lantern Shows.
1. Religion and Morals	14	1
2. Health and Sanitation	10	2
3. Village Economics	8	1
4. Tamil language	8	—
5. History and Geography	8	—
6. Citizenship	10	1
7. Science	9	2
Total	67	7

3. *Visual Instruction* by means of pictures was availed of in all possible cases. Stars as per Hindu almanac, and laboratory experiments were shown in physics and chemistry. Almost every day the teachers and the students had a free discussion which was lively and profitable bringing in a closer association.

4. *Special Features* : (1) To enable the students to follow up the subjects in their homes on their return, a summary of each lecture was printed and supplied to them. (2) Another special feature is attending the Services and worship without participating therein, in the Local Christian Church, Muslim Mosque, Jain, Vaishnava and Siva Temples, when the students were accorded a cordial welcome by the priests and the authorities concerned. (3) The local Government Hospital, the Municipal Ayurvedic Dispensary, the Veterinary Hospital, the Taluq office, and the Weaving Factory were also visited, when the officers in charge conducted the students all round and explained to them the work therein. (4) The Agricultural Exhibition Motor Van was in full service for two days, 29th and 30th April, which was fully availed of by the students and the public.

5. *Daily Routine*: The students awoke at 4-45 a.m., and attended the morning prayers at 5-45 a. m. which was followed by Physical Exercises for about 15 minutes. After having their bath they took the morning chota or kanji at 7-30 a. m. There were generally three classes in the morning between 8 and 11-30 a. m. Breakfast came in at 12 noon. After some rest, there were discussions and conversations at 2-30 p. m., when the lecturers and students had a free talk on the subjects of the day. The lunch came at 2-45 p. m., with simple watery butter-milk. There were two addresses in the afternoon between 4 and 6-30 p. m., the second one being a public lecture. Supper was generally at 7-45 p. m., and Magic

lantern and Astronomical shows were seen afterwards. On some days these were before supper. The day closed generally at 9-30 p m., except on a day or two when the Magic lantern shows prolonged unduly.

Anniversary of the Movement.

This Adult Education movement was first inaugurated on 28th April 1925 at Gokhale Hall under the presidency of Dr. Annie Besant and its seventh Anniversary was celebrated on this 28th of April under the presidency of Mahamahopadhyaya U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Avl., the veteran scholar in Tamil, when the Summer School was going on.

Note:—Any further information needed may be obtained from the President or Secretary, whose addresses are furnished above. Tamil and English Books, except journals, which can be spared by friends may be forwarded by Railway Parcel "to pay," to the address of the Secretary. They are always welcome.

S. V. KANAGASABAI PILLAY,
President.

THE TEACHER.

BY T. L. VASWANI.

Sometime ago I fell suddenly ill.

In my illness I had an experience whose memory is still fragrant.

What was it I saw? I found myself in the presence of some one. A Teacher!

I saw him on a mountain top! I saw a light in his eyes: the light of a seer. I saw serenity on his face: the serenity of certainty. He was a Seer. He was a Lover. He knew the secret of Life.

And my lips trembling with emotion, I said to him:—"Master! What shall I do to see God?"

And with a smile lighting up his lips, he said:—"Give all thou hast to the poor, and meditate on the Light!"

And soon I saw a crowd. The crowd continued to grow. The poor, simple village-folk from neighbouring places came to him believing he was a Healer. From his hands, they said, flowed a magnetism of the spirit.

And out of the crowd, stepped forward a well-dressed man. Was he a priest? And he said:—"A mad man: " And the Teacher looked at him and—smiled!

And another man stepped out of the crowd. He had stones in his hands. But the Teacher was calm, unruffled! The man opened his hands, cast the stones at the Teacher's feet, cried piteously, and wept,—then said:—"Heal me! I fear the devil!" And the Teacher said—"Fear is the greatest devil. In the name of the Holy Spirit of Healing, I ask thee to be at peace!"

And the man believed, and was healed!

* * * * *

And then I saw a satsang (Spiritual Fellowship) meeting. A crowded meeting. They all sat on the floor. The Teacher, too.

And a Brahmin got up and said:—"Get thee gone!" The Brahmin spoke these words to an ill-clad 'untouchable'. "Let him sit!", said the Teacher. "But he is an untouchable," said the Brahmin.

And the saint smiled, and said:—"Blessed are they who are soiled in service:"

The Brahmin was offended:

And I saw the next day the Brahmin had a dinner,—to dishonour the teacher: they invited him, they thought they would dishonour him by giving him a back-seat. He went and quietly sat in the very last seat. And they blushed to see the Great One was so humble!

And to the evening satsang came a woman. The people shunned her. She was a prostitute. With her tears she washed the feet of the Teacher. He looked at her! She was changed! She left her evil environment. She dedicated herself to the service of the satsang.

* * * * *

And I saw the Teacher taking meals with the outcastes. And I saw him blessing the children of the poor.

* * * * *

And I saw him at the Fellowship meeting on the third day, also. And there came to him a scholar; and with folded hands he asked:—"What shall I do to enter into the Life Eternal?"

And the Teacher said:—"Be born again:"

And the scholar asked:—"What shall I do to be born again:"

And the Teacher said:—"Pray in secret; live the hidden life in the Hidden God: and give love to every one!"

And I listened and,—Learnt!

Was it a Dream?

Dawn.

THE UNFINISHED LIFE.

BY K. V. S.

How often do we exclaim when a man passes over to the other side that he went before his wishes were fulfilled! Nearly every one has plans and schemes for himself and others and it is seldom that he sees their fruition in his life-time. 'In the morning the labourer goes out to his work; but the evening comes before his labours are over.' Very few men and women die full of years and honours and of the other good things which Fortune bestows on her favourites. Even these have their untold regrets. Ask the young man of his plans for the future. Ask him forty years thence of the plans of his youth. What a long list of abandoned hopes and unremedied shortcomings, of disappointments and failures, he has to narrate!

The unfinished life is the rule. Take the case of men whose vision is centered on the accumulation of property and the enjoyment of a prosperous life of physical ease and comfort. Or take the case of those who 'scorn delights and live laborious days.' In each case the realisation falls far short of the expectation. There are always gaps. Even if a man gets all the physical joys worth having, his success is at best an 'animal success.' The attainments do not rise higher than the level which an 'intelligent' animal would have imagined for itself, if it had the power of planning for the future. That very fact stamps the life as unfinished.

But even 'animal success' is hard to achieve. Most men live in want and die in suffering. Our passage through life is strewn with wrecks.

Ache of the birth, ache of the helpless days,
Ache of hot youth and ache of manhood's prime;
Ache of the chill grey years and choking death
These fill (our) pitious time.

The pains of life abide, Its pleasures are
As birds which light and fly."

The conclusion is forced upon us that imperfection is inherent in the very constitution of man and his environment. The mind of man is constantly idealising. It projects these ideals into a world where the response is inadequate and slow. Therefore the gap between the ideal and the actual is a permanent one. As the mind grows in strength and

* [The Light of Asia.]

capacity, its ideals multiply in number and in variety. This activity of the mind goes on unabated in spite of the nervous fatigue that sets in with age and in spite of the diminishing response that the environment makes in the afternoon of life. Even though the ambitions of a life be धर्माविरुद्ध not opposed to Dharma, only a fraction of them is ever realised in a single life. The rest remain as monuments of the impotence of human wishes. In most cases the disparity between wish and fact is even larger. The desires belong to the type described in the Sixteenth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita as attributes of men of Asuric Prakriti

"Thus much, to-day," they say, we gained; thereby
Such and such wish of heart shall have its fill;
And this is ours! and the other shall be ours!

* * * *

Rich are we, proudly born! What other men live like to us?

* * * *

and so they fall

Tossed to and fro with projects, tricked, and bound
In net of black delusion lost in lusts—
Down to foul Naraka.

* * * *

birth by birth

The Asuric wombs re-spawn them, all beguiled.*

A terrible picture and one from which we would fain look away, if it were possible. But it is too true to facts to be ignored. Most men come within the range of the description.

What then is our hope? How long are we to tread this 'Nether Road?' The Lord gives the answer.

Till they find and worship Me, Sweet Prince!

Then we get the discipline to walk by the light of the accumulated knowledge systematised and enriched by the labour, research, and experience of successive generations of truth-seekers. Then we get the strength and the detachment to shed Kama, Krodha, and Lobha which form the triple gateway to Hell. Then we get the Daivi Sampat, the qualities that make for liberation. The higher path also extends over several births. Even the man of knowledge cometh unto the Lord after several births. The Yogi 'striving strong' has to be perfected by birth.

* [The Song Celestial: Edwin Arnold].

Following upon birth until he plants his feet at last,
Upon the farther path.

Our course in evolution runs through a series of unfinished lives. There is an endless urge driving us forward to fill the unfilled gap between expectation and achievement. If our ideals are righteous, if we have 'rightly resolved', we shall become Dharmatmas, and soon become perfect even as our father in Heaven is perfect.' If on the other hand they are low and besotted we shall be floundering endlessly in a welter of dark disappointments until through some good fortune we contact Divine Grace. And then will begin a new Chapter in our evolution wherein we shall continuously

Rise on stepping stones
Of our dead selves to higher things.

EXTRACTS. I.

MARRIAGE AND UPANAYANA.

Out of the 40 Samskaras enjoined for a Brahman the Upanayana for males and marriage for females have been laid down as indispensable. The so-called Upanayanam that we now celebrate has become a complete travesty of the original. I implore you and through you the whole community to celebrate the Upanayana of your boys not later than their 10th year of age, bestowing due attention on its religious aspect, so as to impress its solemnity on the disciple on the occasion. Every parent should consider it a sacred duty to impart religious instruction and training in Sadachara to his son, and for this purpose he should render help in the starting of the schools referred to above. The sanctity and significance of the marriage Samskara which is the foundation of the most important of the four asramas, or rather, the only asrama that is practically in existence at the present time, should be zealously and scrupulously maintained. Pre-puberty marriages should be celebrated as usual, whether the Sarda Act is repealed or modified or not. In this matter certain reforms relating to unsastraic practices should be urgently effected by the community itself. One day marriages should be avoided. It is absolutely necessary to cut down the marriage expenses as much as possible by the elimination of items of vain display and luxuries but the religious ceremonies to be performed on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th days of the marriage should be faithfully observed either in the bride's or in the bridegroom's house with the minimum of expenditure. Marriages of

girls below the age of 7 and boys below the age of 15 or 16 are unsastraic and should be avoided not only because they are unsastraic but also because avoidable risks are incurred thereby.

Varasulka or sale of the bridegroom for a price, as if he were a bull (to use plain language), is not only unsastraic, but it is an outrage upon reason and common sense. I cannot find words forcible enough to express my indignation at this revolting practice.

I entreat you and through you the whole community, to consider the immediate discontinuance of this practice as your first and sacred duty. This should be enforced by suitable social sanctions against delinquents. Relations and friends of delinquents should not attend their marriages. They should break social relations with them. I would even go further and say that a league of Dharmic youth should be formed to prevent the celebration of such delinquent marriages by all peaceful means. I hope I shall live to see the complete abolition of this abominable practice.

[From the Presidential Address at the Tanjore Brahmin Conference.
From the Hindu.]

EXTRACTS. II.

SCIENCE AND PRECONCEIVED PERFECTION.

The progress of science has been attempted to be hindered by many things but by none more than by preconceptions. These ideas were very often assertions purporting to embody some religious opinion or doctrine to which any new thing must conform or forthwith be rejected.

Galileo was greatly worried over these preconceived notions about perfection. The sun was perfect; that was self-evident; and Galileo had been rash and irreverent enough to discover "spots" on the sun. Those spots were merely appearances discernible by the telescope, but Galileo's critics, choosing to take the term in the sense of moral blemishes, condemned the astronomer as a thoroughly impious person.

The progress of anatomy in the Middle Ages was very much impeded by the ban which was placed upon dissection by the Mohammedan injunction against dissection.

The Jews had no greater liberty in this respect than the Arabs with the result that the Jewish and Arabian doctors of the Middle Ages kept on repeating the statements of the Greek and Roman writers on Anatomy. They verified nothing and they discovered nothing.

Casper Tagliacozzi was an Italian surgeon who flourished in the middle of the sixteenth century and who had specialized in those operations known as "plastic" whereby he repaired noses, ears and lips by grafting skin from the arm.

His work aroused the fiercest opposition; he was denounced for impiety in daring to alter the human countenance "made in the image of God." The excitement outlasted his life, for after he had been many years in his grave his bones were dug up and scattered about by order of the ecclesiastical authorities.

Benjamin Franklin, who had demonstrated the identity of lightning and electricity and recommended the use of lightning conductors, had the greatest possible difficulty in overcoming resistance to his recommendations on the ground that he was interfering with the divinely sent thunder and lightning.

Yet another case of the same sort of thing is the opposition to Jenner's discovery of the efficacy of vaccination against small-pox. Jenner had many trials to bear; in some quarters it was not thanks, he got for his trouble in showing mankind how they might avoid one of the most dreadful scourges that had ever afflicted them.

One of the best examples of attempts to obstruct the beneficent progress of medical science, by alleging it as contrary to nature and to religion, is that of the introduction of chloroform.

It was assumed that pain must not be removed by any "artificial" means, that to abolish pain, even of child-birth, was "contrary to Nature."

If we did nothing except what is conformable to a state of Nature, we should still be wrapped in sheepskins and living in the dens and caves of the earth.

[From the Sixth Sense and other studies in modern science, by D. F. Fraser Harris. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd.]

STRAY THOUGHTS.

BY

DREAMER.

The Gayatri.

To what shall we liken the gayatri? It is the inspiring music on the eternal route march to perfection. It is the release of a minute fraction of the Infinite Power dammed up by the inertia of the lower planes. The initiation into this mantra is like helping a plant to send down its roots into the lower layers of soil where perpetual under-ground streams are running.

One can understand why the daily recitation of the gayatri is obligatory. Without it we are inert masses devoid of life. Without it we are objects more moved about, than moving. *The gayatri gives us our free-will*, the will to release the power of the Lord through our bodies for the betterment of the world. That is liberation. The degree of our allegiance to the gayatri is the test of our manhood and the measure of our evolution. It helps the sap of life to rise against the gravity of deadening influences of our environment. It dispels the darkening gloom of the self-centred life. It endows us with vision, objective and strength.

The access to the gayatri provides us with an inexhaustible dynamic for progress. Obstacles do exist. But they are overcome in the mind. Temptations are still there to assail us. But we see beyond, our fall before them. We see our weakness growing into strength through failures. We see outside strength pouring into us. We rally and quicken. Above all our eye is on the path. Our vision is forward. The incessant urge of this great transmuting power takes us onward—along pleasant paths. It is Yagna, Dana and Tapas combined into one.

Life with the gayatri is an eternal beginning and growing from more to more.

Of Spiritual Exercises.

What are they? Vain repetitions? Ritualistic courses? Vicarious sacrifices? Propitiation of malignant powers?

A spiritual exercise is ordinarily a course of mental and physical practice intended to strengthen the human personality as an instrument for the release of Divine Power. In this sense a spiritual exercise must satisfy three tests. It must bring us nearer the ultimate source of power

in the universe. It must help in this reconstruction of the human personality so that it may without effort or friction release more power. It must alter the vision and objective and concentrate upon the effort rather than upon the 'return' from the investment of the effort.

* * * * *

From the blighting touch of deadly sin Save O' Save.

As persistent as the constant pursuit of Divine Grace which eternally watches for an opportunity to redeem us, is the tracking by our sins which wait with equal patience for the chance of throwing us down. When we are weary, when we are excited, when we are disappointed, when things go wrong around us, when the apparent attractions of exteriors tempt us, these are the times when they assail us. Woe unto us if we yield. Our vision is blinded; our knowledge disappears. Our connection with the source of power is cut off. Our very strength becomes weakness. We become small, beastly, brutish in our emotions, veritable demons of destruction amenable only to fear, Yes. Fear is the only deterrent. Fear of physical punishment, of physical suffering, of the loss of good opinion of those who have seen us in better times.

One ray of light, one stroke of the Divine Hand can do much for us in these dark hours of real distress.

* * * * *

Morning Mists.

The mental and emotional mists rise and fill the thought atmosphere exactly in the same manner as the physical mists. From the emotional marshes they rise. From the foul emotional pools of beastly lives they grow. They screen the entire atmosphere. All are immersed in it. Those who are sensitive feel its blinding effect. It takes more than usual effort to rise above the mist level. Perhaps in that effort is a spiritual exercise a compulsory ascent to higher levels from which we see larger prospects. But mists are mists and are an undesirable obstruction to clear vision and to the day's progress on the path.

* * * * *

FROM A CHELA'S DIARY.

In all ages and in all parts of the world there have been groups of high-souled personages of great Spiritual Power who have been dominating and influencing the evolution of humanity in tangible ways. They have been the custodians of the great Spiritual Fire whose Flame they have ever kept burning. These Great Beings, who are known as 'Masters of Wisdom' form THE INVISIBLE EMPIRE that rules the destinies of men. Though the ordinary rule is that the *chelas* seek their *Guru*, it also happens not infrequently that the *Guru* is also on the look-out for the admission into his fold of qualified disciples whom they can easily spot out from among the surging ranks of humanity.

The essentials of all religions glorify the worship of God, which really consists in service to humanity. The recognition of the Self in Man must undoubtedly bring home the knowledge of the Self in his fellow-beings. Man who is the paragon of God's creation must be imbued with the knowledge that the greatest study of mankind is Man and that the greatest study of Man is Mind and that the Mind is made up of two component parts, the higher and the lower, the higher always tending to help Man in his march on the upward path to liberation and the lower involving him deeper and deeper in the tangled web of material existence with its debasing consequences.

The crying need of the hour is for a band of young men and women of dynamic personality who will carry aloft the banner of service and sacrifice and bring the light of knowledge to all dark corners of this vast world. They must be able to exert a beneficent influence upon the lives of all persons they meet. They must be able to preach the vision of a greater life Here and Now. They must bring hope where there is despair. Their greater perspective of life must enable them to push the horizon of civilisation further out, wherever they go. They will naturally take with them a ray of personal cheer and a glow of charm and serenity which will far exceed in effect the artificiality of the modern cosmetics, which is only 'skin-deep.' They must constitute themselves into deep and broad channels to carry the crystal waters of refreshing spirituality to quench the thirst of those whose souls are hankering for the same.

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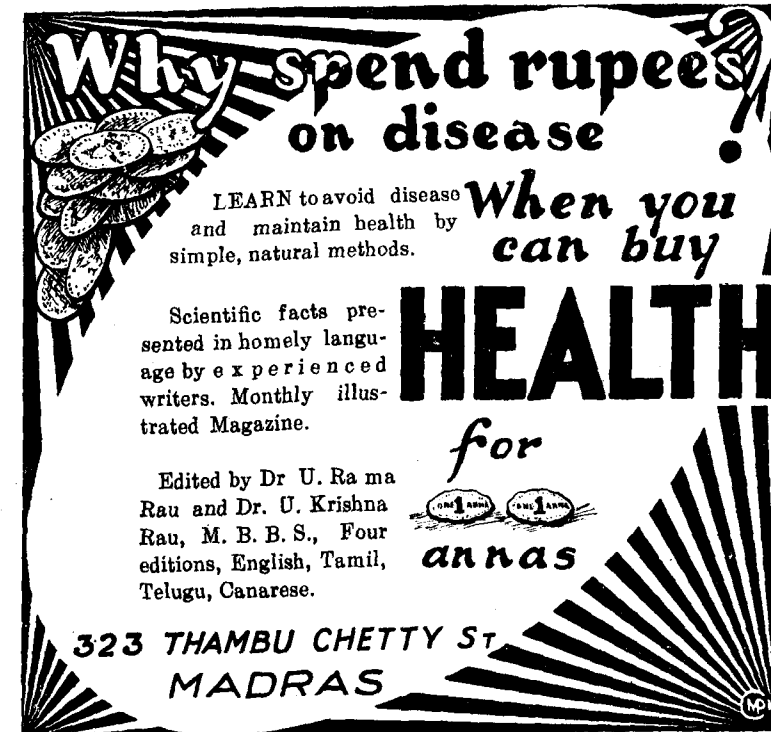
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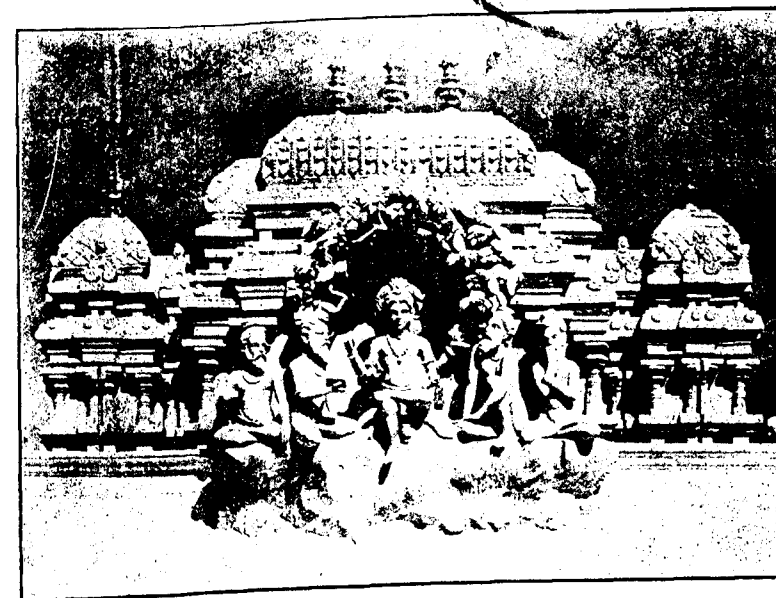
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VOL. XI

AUGUST, 1932

5-SEP 1932 [No. 5]



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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE RISHI MESSAGE and THE MODERN AGE By T. L. Vaswani ...	87
AHIMSA By K. V. Sesha Aiyangar ...	91
TALES FROM THE UPANISHADS By THE GREAT VICTOR By K. V. Sreenivasan, M. A. ...	95
SOME RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES of TO-DAY By Rama Dasa ...	100
DECADENCE OF THE GAYATRI By Dreamer ...	103
REVIEW ...	104

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VOL. X]

AUGUST, 1932

[No. 5

THE RISHI MESSAGE AND THE MODERN AGE

BY T. L. VASWANI.

The modern age is conspicuous for three achievements. May I speak of them as (a) Scientific Revolution, (b) Political Revolution, and (c) Industrial Revolution?

(a) *Scientific Revolution* :—You have steam and electricity. You cross the ocean quickly. You travel in the train with speed. You have motors and cables. The wireless brings you messages from great distances. By means of the telephone New York speaks to London across the Atlantic. What a revolution has this evolutionary science achieved! It has developed the idea of natural law; it has discovered new natural energies; it is an amazing power. But power may be both used and abused. Mere science may only work for criminal ends and prove a destructive force. Look at the science equipped nations! They have learnt the arts of destruction, and some even drop bombs from aeroplanes over poor villagers! Mere science may be no better than a monster ready to slay. Science has produced complexity, has created a heavy environment beneath the burden of which the higher life may be stifled. Science has multiplied our physical powers; but these powers may only work for destructive ends.

Science must be disciplined by a knowledge of the *Atman*. And a message of the *Atman* did India give in the long ago. It is well-expressed

in the words of an ancient scripture :—"The *Atman* is One and hath no caste." This Message must be re-worded in these days. It came to the Rishis,—those pure strong-souled seers who were the real builders of the simple, refined yet strong civilisation of ancient India. The Message came to them in the silence of fellowship with Life,—the Cosmic Life, the Creative Life that flows into Nature and Humanity and the Soul. In the light of this message of the *Atman* must the mechanical theory of life be revised. It is a theory which does not really explain evolution. For fragments without a synthesis are a poor picture of this wonderful world. The synthesis is the *Atman*. A mechanical theory cannot explain the living, throbbing universe. Nor can it help science to be a servant of Humanity.

(b) *Political Revolution* :—Political changes of a radical character have taken place in the Western countries. But how many of them may boast of having Cabinets modelled after the ideal of Shri Rama's Age, when 2 of the 8 members of the Nation's Council were spiritual men, learned in the Aryan lore? Europe has a noble passion for freedom. But when it degenerates into a desire to *dominate* the East, Europe misses its own mission. The malady of Europe is its cult of domination. "Multitudes of men," says a French writer, "are exploited, oppressed, abused, starved. "Imperialism is an accentuated form of the malady of the West. In Europe, Imperialism has meant a capitalist civilization accompanied by luxury on the one hand, and by appalling poverty on the other. Imperialism has within it, therefore, the spirit of class-war. In the East, British Imperialism has meant exploitation and racial arrogance. "Very few Westerners," writes a French critic, "come to India to learn, to pray, to love, to complete what is wanting in themselves. Those who do come are imbued with the idea of their own superiority to the people of the country in all essential respects, while in fact they are perhaps cleverer in regard to some points of secondary importance." Egoism is a sign of degeneration, and the 'civilization' which the British identify themselves with as officials or missionaries, is essentially egoistic.

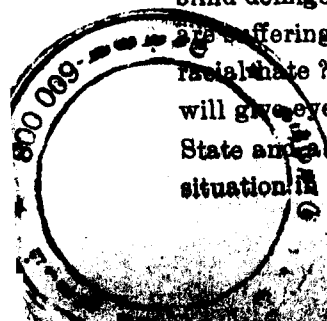
Europe's passion for freedom has degenerated into worship of the blind demigod for power. Are we surprised that democracies in Europe are suffering, more or less, from the fever of aggressive nationalism and racial hate? Who will teach them to make moral use of power? Who will give eyes to this demigod of 'democracy' to see Dharma above the State and above nations the Spirit of Humanity? An able student of the situation in Europe, Prof. Ferrero says :—"Only a moral code can save

Europe from anarchy." Europe needs a new ethical outlook; the One Atman in all races, all nations,—a vision of Divine Humanity,—is the piteous need of Western democracies.

(c) *Industrial Revolution* :—The modern age is an Industrial age. Machines make possible production on a large scale. Look at big cities? Many machines; but the *man* is subordinated to the *machine*. Much wealth; but there are in it the groans and tears of the poor. There are slums; there is appalling poverty. The Wembley Exhibition, recently held was, in a sense, a picture of Western civilization—a picture of its failure? This "Civilization" is proud of its guns which symbolise destructive force. Industrialism has meant class-warfare, social waste, economic serfdom.

II.

A recent critic finds fault with the Ancient Ideal as "providing none of those amenities of life which we Moderns assume as a matter of course" and as imposing "iron bound fetters in every direction upon individual and group initiative." What a misrepresentation! If indeed, by "amenities" you mean "bhoga," it is true the Ancient Ideal did not provide for it in its scheme of life. India, it is true, is being flooded with luxuries. But to what end? Senses get temporary satisfaction; but the life within us is becoming weaker. The race-soul is being stifled under the burden of these luxuries. Happiness lies not in luxuries but in simple life. And it is no spirit of "imagined unhistorical reconstruction" of the Past that I submit that India in the Aryan age was more happy than she is to-day. It is a common mistake of European critics to represent the Aryan age as one of iron-bound fetters." Freedom,—personal, social, political,—is not an ideal exclusively "modern." The Aryan Ideal was, I humbly submit, one, one essentially of freedom. Is not freedom the very breath of the spiritual and the simple? Not in imitation but in self-realisation lies the true freedom of modern India. Listen to the following testimony of a Western Critic of present-day China:—Since the miserable mechanical imitation of Western forms was adopted over a dozen years ago, chaos has never ceased to reign." "Chaos, indeed, is the word for much that passes current as "civilization." For its dominant impulses are acquisition and bhoga; those of the Aryan age were knowledge and tapasya. They made Aryavarta a leader of the nations in the morning of history. Acquisition and bhoga have undermined Europe as they did Greece and Rome. The historian of the future will speak of our century as definitely the century of the Fall of the Occident. For India to imitate Europe would



be to go further down the way of fall. More robust and simple and spiritual than our own was the Aryan age. And Aryavarta evolved a Synthesis of Life which influenced several nations.

To-day the nations, including India, need the Message of Aryavarta, the Message of the Rishis. The modern West, I gladly admit, is not without its elements of greatness. Two of these are Science and Love of Freedom. Liberty is a holy word. But liberty itself fails of its rich fruitage, without spiritual *sadhan*. Great is science, and greater wonders may science reveal in the coming years. Yet what is science without moral value? Forces of nature? Yes; but there are deeper forces. Hidden forces of the "Atman." These did India study in the long ago. Aryan India worshipped a vision of an Inner Realm. And Aryan India developed a civilization at once simple and recondite. Its motive was culture of the soul. It was sustained by a Spiritual Synthesis. The basic principle of Aryan life was *brahmacharya*, not *bhoga*. At the heart of Aryan civilization was the strength of a spiritual purpose. That made the Aryan simple, strong, fearless. That made India a Shrine of Culture, a Temple of a Religion of Humanity.

This, then, is my message to you, that are young. Keep alive Her memory. One spring day I went into a garden. And Nature was radiant with flowers. And the song-birds sang. And of one, the *bulbul* I asked:—"In thy song is a strange *shakti*,—a power that moves. Tell me the secret of it." And to my heart the *bulbul* answered: "In my lyric cry is Remembrance," Remember the Rishis and remember Her, your Mother, in your daily life! A new *shakti* then will pass into your work,—educational, social, political, religious. Keep alive Her memory and the inspiration of all who have reproclaimed Her as the Hope and Healing of the Nations. Then go to the villages where they wait for you, men and women with hunger in their hearts. Go to the poor and give them the Message of the Greater India that is to be! Go and tell the toiling multitudes to turn from the oppressive emptiness of these days to the inspiration of the Ancient Ideal. It made Aryavarta a Model Nation in the long ago. It will renew the life of Hindustan, will rejuvenate Her, will make Her mighty again,—mighty and young with immortal youth.

AHIMSA.

K. V. SESA AYYANGAR.

Ahimsa literally means non-injury. The word is associated in the popular mind with the non-killing of animals for food, sport or sacrifice, and to a lesser extent with the avoidance of cruelty to animals. With reference to human beings it is used with many meanings ranging from non-violence of all kinds to non-resistance to evil. Ahimsa holds an important place in Hindu thought and the ramifications of its influence can be traced in the conduct of groups widely separated from one another in culture and in distance. But its effect has been more to qualify and to deflect the main currents of belief and conduct built upon violence, conquest, and destruction, than in the origination of any independent faith. Even in this direction its position is one of arrested development.

To take first that phase of its expression in which we are keenly interested at the present day, viz., pacifism with its implications, there are but few conspicuous instances of it in the legendary lore of the past. These few appear to have attained conspicuity by reason of their rarity. The first outstanding example is that of Prahlada son of Hiranyakasipu commonly classified as an Asura, i. e., as one who opposes God's plan. Hiranyakasipu by his penances obtained boons which enabled him to set up as a rival to Sri Maha Vishnu the presiding Deity of the Universe. He usurped so to say the administration of the earth for a while. It was not a bad administration though. For under his regime,

अनुसूयन्मृगसीत्

'the earth yielded without toil and tilling.' And he wanted all men to fall down and to worship him as God. Men obeyed him in this. He had a son Prahlada who even as a child was a devotee of the Lord Maha Vishnu. Prahlada persisted in paying obeisance to Vishnu or Narayana and in singing his glory even to the face of his own father in spite of all exhortations to the contrary. Prahlada was persecuted by his own father for this open profession of faith in Sri Maha Vishnu. The persecution took the shape of several open attempts to kill Prahlada by fire, by poison, by hurling from hill top etc. To all these Prahlada willingly submitted invoking the name of Vishnu, and came out unhurt by all the weapons of destruction. In spite of his father's cruelties his affection for his father remained as strong as his faith in Vishnu.

The 2nd well-known instance is that of Vasishtha the sage who resisted with non-violence Viswamitra's terrible weapons both physical and super-physical. Vasishtha was a great Brahms Rishi, a Brahmin sage

whose refusal to give the cow Kamadenu gave offence to king Viswamitra, and who was attacked by the latter. Vasishta simply planted his Brahmadaṇḍa—literally the Brahmin's rod—before him and waited. Weapon after weapon hurled by Viswamitra flew towards Vasishta but did not get beyond the rod. Not even the mighty Brahmastra, the miraculous weapon for which there is no opposing power, that by which Rama killed Ravana, has any greater effect. At the hurling of Brahmastra Vasishta became indignant. His body emitted fire. The Devas became frightened and implored Vasishta not to imperil the world; and thereupon Vasishta received the weapon without suffering any harm, to the amazement of the Devas.

तदस्त्रमुद्यतं दृष्ट्वा देवाः सान्निपुरोगमाः

* * *
त्रैलोक्यमासीत्संवत्सं ब्रह्मास्त्रे समुदीरिते ।
* * *

एवमुक्तो महातेजाः शर्म चक्रे महातपाः

Ramayana Balakanda Sarga, 56.

After this final failure of physical force Viswamitra exclaimed: "Fie, Fie upon the warrior's strength, the Brahmin's might is might indeed." He betook himself to the forests and after repeated penances and after surmounting many temptations, himself became a Brahma Rishi. The other familiar instance is that of Brahmin ascetics in Asramas or hermitages which were raided by Rakshasas without resistance. Ascetics were also way-laid and killed by Rakshasas without resistance even though they had the power of vanquishing their opponents by the power of their penance.

As against this we have the fact that even great sages were given to cursing evil doers with terrible fates which overtook the victims almost immediately, and that the more powerful ones sometimes destroyed their enemies by using their psychic powers. Indeed the willingness of the lesser ones to die by the Rakshasas is attributed to their reluctance to use the small store of their power accumulated by long and patient penance.

शपास्ताः कुर्वन्ति तपसोऽव्ययम् (Raghuvamsha XV. 3.)

Even in the case of Prahlada his father ultimately died at the hands of Sri Maha Vishnu who assumed the form of Lion-Man and came out of a pillar in order to fulfill the words of Prahlada that Vishnu was all pervading and was to be found even in a pillar. Thereupon the father struck the pillar with his sword and then suddenly appeared Maha Vishnu in the Lion-Man shape. Hisanyakasipu without being daunted, attacked him and

was torn to pieces. Sri Ramachandra the Avatar is known as Kodandapani the holder of the mighty bow'. His fame as a bow-man who could vanquish his enemy with a single arrow is proverbial. In nearly all temples the images of Gods are carved with weapons, in the case of Vishnu with Mace and Discus and in the case of Siva with the Sula or Trident. There are hymns to these weapons alone, which if daily chanted are believed to give protection against unexpected danger. There are many invocations and hymns for Divine intercession by the destruction of one's enemies. Many and various are the mantras, spells and charms for ensuring safety and prosperity by destroying adversaries.

Kings in Ancient India were expected to go out for periodical hunt to stay the depredations of wild animals. Sacrifices involving the slaughter of sheep and horse were looked upon as a meritorious duty. It was a cherished tradition in illustrious Royal families to make unprovoked war upon surrounding kings for establishing their right to imperial sovereignty.

As to the King's duty and the duty of all Kshatriyas to fight in a righteous battle and either kill or get killed the Bhagavad Gita is the standing authority. Many of the arguments of the Pacifists are there turned down and Arjuna is enjoined to

"Stand up and fight

Conquer thy foes and enjoy the spacious realm "

Sri Krishna exhorts

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च

कर्णं तथाऽन्यान्पि योधवीरान्

मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्टा

युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् Ch. XI (Verse 34.)

*Strike, strong-armed Prince, at Drona! at Bhishma strike! deal death

On Karna, Jayadratha; slay all their warlike breath!

'Tis I who bid them perish! Thou wilt but slay the slain;

Fight! they must fall, and thou must live, Victor upon this plain!

In the same chapter Sri Krishna reveals what is perhaps the inner secret of the world process as a continuous change or transformation through destruction by the time force. The Lord himself is the great Kala

* The translations of this and subsequent verses are from the Light of Asia.

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो
लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः

Thou seest Me as Time who kills,
Time who brings all to doom,
The slayer Time, ancient of Days,
Come hither to Consume ;

(Ch. XI. Verse 32.)

The vision of this transformation and of the all-consuming destruction which it involves strikes terror even in the heart of such a mighty warrior as Arjuna who exclaims.

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि
दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसंनिभानि ।

दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म

प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ (Ch. XI Verse 25.)

नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादि

पश्यामि विश्वेधर विश्वरूप ॥

लेलिहसे प्रसमानः समन्ता-

ल्लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।

तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं

भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो (Ch. XI Verses 16 and 30.)

With awful brows aglow,

With burning glance, and lips lighted by fire

Fierce as those flames which shall

Consume, at close of all,

Earth, Heaven ! Ah me ! I see no earth and Heaven !

Thee, Lord of Lords ! I see,

Thee only—Only Thee

Now let Thy mercy unto me be given.

And nowhere end of Thee, nowhere beginning

Nowhere a centre ! Shifts—

Wherever soul's gaze lifts—

Thy central Self, all wialding, and all winning.

Thou, that hast fashioned men,

Devourst them again

One with another, great and small, alike !

Thee, O creator whom Thou mak'st,

With flaming jaws Thou tak'st
Lapping them up ! Lord God ! Thy terrors strike
From end to end of earth,
Filling life full, from birth.

Apart from this redness 'in tooth and claw' which is seen in nature and which appears to be part of its inevitable feature, there are occasions when God himself takes flesh and comes down and lives in the world of men for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil doers, for the establishment of righteousness.

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे (Ch. IV Verse 8)

Thus two conflicting phases co-exist in Hindu thought. Destruction and violence are inherent in God's scheme. Pacifism has also a place but only at certain levels. Ahimsa in the sense of non-killing of human beings under all circumstances is not part of the inviolable duty of men.

"TALES FROM THE UPANISHAD."

THE GREAT VICTOR,

C. T. SREENIVASAN, M.A.

The gods and the Asuras contended furiously for the supremacy of the kingdom of the heavens. Day and night they waged internecine wars causing untold suffering everywhere. Neither of them showed any sign of abatement nor willingness to come to some terms of honourable peace and settlement. Time and again the Asuras far outnumbered the array of the gods. The latter stood constantly in imminent peril of a complete rout and destruction. Faced with such a dire calamity the gods were greatly perplexed and did not know what to do. A majority of them despairing, favoured the proposal of abandoning the fight in favour of the unrighteous. But the wisest among them stepped forward and said : "Shame upon those who should counsel us to abandon the Kingdom of Righteousness to the demons ! Have the gods forgotten and forsworn their noble lineage ? Who dares to insult our godly parentage, the direct descendants of Brahma himself, by submitting to the enemies like cowards ? In times of great distress it is but meet that we should appeal to our Sire for help. Has our Sire ever failed to succour the

needy and the helpless? Let us stop this idle prattle of a cowardly flight from the field of battle. Brahma will certainly help those who fight for the cause of Truth and Righteousness." The gods, being visibly moved by this impassioned speech, counselled together to appeal to Brahma for help in the hour of their need.

Gathered on a holy spot and seated on the grounds spread with 'kusa' grass the gods prayed fasting three days and nights to their progenitor thus: "Listen, O Lord and kind Sire, to our prayer and humble petition and save us from this utter annihilation at the hands of the evil-doers. Have we not kept our faith in Thee alone, observing thy plighted word and not deviating even by the breadth of a hair from the path of righteousness? Send us then, O Lord, thine help that will give us the victory according to our desert." So saying they all meditated upon Brahma to come immediately to their aid.

Brahma who awoke from his yogic slumber, heard the prayer of the gods and was immensely pleased with them. Near and dear to God are those who suffer in the cause of righteousness. Brahma sent word to the gods that he himself would lead them in person to everlasting victory. Courage thus returned to the gods for they knew that there was nobody in all the fourteen worlds mightier than Brahma.

Armed with his trident and conch and mounting his war-chariot made of fire and drawn by winged horses Brahma hastened to the help of the gods. The heavens shook with thunder and lightning as Brahma's car descended from the celestial region. Many stars and planets were up-rooted from the firmament and dark clouds overhung the entire sky. Brahma's blazing car looked verily like a fiery dragon let loose in darkness hastening to devour the demons. The Asuras became puzzled when they beheld these awful sights in the mid-sky, speculating much over the calamities portended by such events. Thousands perished merely by the fright of the ominous appearances in the sky; and the few that remained, lost courage and fled from the battle-field leaving no trace behind. Such is the greatness and power of Brahma! Never in their time the gods witnessed such a miracle. Within a short time the battle field was cleared of the Asuras and the gods were left the sole masters of the heavens. Thus by the victory of Brahma the gods once again obtained majesty. Thereupon Brahma returned to his abode of Truth where he covered himself with his yoga.

Ere long the gods fell from their virtue. Infatuated with their new power and glory they became vain of their majesty. Forgetful of

their gratitude to their Kind Lord and Sire, they all declared with one accord: "To us belongs the victory; to us alone belongs this majesty. Who is there or here or anywhere mightier than we?" Thus puffed up the gods strutted like jackdaws over the battle-field with a false sense of pride and vanity.

But hidden in their hearts unseen, Brahma heard and saw all that the gods spoke and did so soon after his departure. A gentle sign of mirth at their ignorance was visible on his tender lips but a sigh of pity for their folly escaped from his heart. He knew that but for his timely help the Asuras would have won the day. But the gods who had been labouring under the delusion of their power and glory, thought that they alone had achieved the mighty victory. So much so, even if Brahma were to appear before them as on the day of their victory, the gods would fail to recognise their Lord and kind Sire. Great and rare is indeed the soul that has obtained freedom from the meshes of vanity, wealth and power that had eaten into the very vitals of the gods themselves. Brahma reflected thus: "Even the gods are deluded by my all-powerful Maya. Alas, what shall befall the poor misguided and erring humanity! Gods or men, they shall come to grief given up to lust greed and avarice. This is my eternal decree. Their kingdoms and wealth shall avail them naught in the hour of their peril."

Brahma then made himself manifest to the gods. When the sun rises the glory of the firmament disappears; and in the presence of the majestic form of Brahma the gods were shorn of all their glory and splendour. His appearance struck terror into the hearts of the gods for the latter failed to recognise their Lord and Sire, their intellect being clouded by vanity and pride. In wonder and awe then the gods asked one another: "Who is this mighty Being? Is he an Asura returned to give battle? Or is he worthy of our adoration and reverence? Never have we beheld such a wonderful Being till now." But none of them had the courage to approach the Being directly for answer. The weaker of them secretly planned to take to their heels. At last they all turned to Agni, the god of fire, who was powerful among them and said: "Jataveda, do ascertain for us who the Being is and whether he is worthy of our adoration."

"Be it so" Agni replied, and he ran up to Brahma.

Brahma said: "Who art thou?"

Agni replied: "I am Agni; I am verily the Jataveda."

Brahma: "What power have you who are of such a nature?"

Agni : "I can burn to ashes whatsoever there is within the universe or even out of it."

Brahma : "Very well, great indeed is your prowess, but I should like to test your strength a little. I like also to measure my strength with yours."

Agni : "Indeed ! I am mightily pleased to meet my equal so soon. Now name your test."

Thereupon Brahma placed a blade of grass before Agni saying "Burn this if you can," Approaching it with all his might Agni could not burn it. Defeated and abashed Agni thence returned to the gods and said : "I could not ascertain whether the Being is worthy of our adoration." The gods felt highly disconcerted with the reply, and turning to Vayu, the god of air, said : "Vayu, do ascertain whether the Being is worthy of our adoration."

"Be it so" Vayu replied, and he ran up to Brahma.

Brahma : "Who art thou ?"

Vayu : I am Vayu and I am called Matariswa because I move in the skies.

Brahma : What power have you who are of such a nature ?

Vayu : I can absorb in the wink of an eye whatsoever there is on earth."

Brahma : Wonderful is your power, but I should like to test your strength a little and to measure mine with yours."

Vayu : Indeed ! I am mightily pleased to meet my equal so soon. Now name your test."

Brahma then placed the blade of grass before Vayu saying "sweep away this if you can." Approaching it with all his might Vayu could not even shake it or lift it by an inch. And he returned to the gods saying : "I could not ascertain whether the Being is worthy of our adoration." The gods then despaired and approaching Indra, their king and master, besought him saying : "Maghavan, do ascertain for us whether the Being is worthy of our adoration. Helpless we are stricken with fear and anxiety."

"Be it so" Indra replied ; and he ran up to Brahma. But Brahma disappeared before him. As Indra was the most powerful of the Gods Brahma disappeared to show how little avail the former's power was to obtain a knowledge of Brahma. When the great gods like Agni, Vayu and Indra failed to get a knowledge of the true nature of Brahma, what shall it be said of the poor ignorant human intellects ? Gods or men

they alone will obtain a knowledge of Brahma who are wise and good.

Indra however did not return like Agni and Vayu but remained in contemplation of the Being, with a firm resolve to obtain knowledge. Days and nights rolled away but Indra did not get up from his meditation. At last Knowledge herself in the form of the goddess Uma, perceiving his faith in the adorable Being and pleased with his unswerving contemplation, desired to manifest herself to Indra.

There in the ether of his heart Indra met with a woman lustrous and highly adorned, Uma, the daughter of Himavat. He asked her : "Is the Being worthy of adoration ?" She the goddess of Vidya, said : "It is Brahma Himself who alone is worthy of highest adoration. For, verily in this victory of Brahma you obtained majesty." So saying she disappeared.

Through the grace of Uma Indra obtained the knowledge of Brahma and through him Agni and Vayu. Therefore these gods became excellent before other gods, for they touched nearest the Being knowing him to be Brahma. This was the declaration of Him by the gods : "He shines forth like the splendour of lightning and disappears like the twinkling of the eye. He is a Mahatman who obtains a lasting vision of His Glory and Majesty."

What the gods could not easily possess man can permanently attain by humility, work, and worship. Brahman is to be adored by every individual soul day and night, for He is the Being of Beings. Let one purify his mind by constant restraint, reasoning, and knowledge of the Vedas. Let him then daily approach the Being by a recollection of His Existence and ascertain again and again His true nature till all the doubts are cut asunder and his knowledge of Brahman becomes perfect. For there is nothing else alive or blinking other than Brahman in all the fourteen worlds from the highest down to the minutest electron. He alone is the only Power, the Great Victor that moves the mighty stars and sways gently the blade of grass. There is naught else but He, the Almighty Brahman for fear of whom the wind blows, the fire burns and the firmament moves.

(Kena)

SOME RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES OF TO-DAY.

RAMA DASA.

All over the world there is the stir of a new life. The extension of education has stimulated scientific curiosity in the masses. We see its fruit in original and courageous thinking on the problems of life by persons who were hitherto accustomed to take other peoples' opinions on trust. In the religious sphere men are asking with earnestness and insistence the old questions of life and death and happiness. While alive to the achievements of the past they are desirous of carrying on both the investigation and the application of the result to life farther than has been done by their forbathers.

All religions have felt the impact of this spirit. In Christianity there is a growing conflict between the Fundamentalists who look upon the Bible as a revelation and its verses as inspired and the Modernists who do not consider it profane to doubt this tradition and are willing to question and reconcile the implications of their faith with the proved facts of scientific research and experience. The same spirit is pervading Islam though more slowly and in a milder degree. In Hinduism we appear to be on the eve of a momentous awakening spiritual and secular.

It is important that we should study the expression of this spirit and realise its inwardness and power. Such study is being practically forced upon us by the changes that are taking place around us. On every side the old religious landmarks are vanishing. Steadily and as if under the pressure of a compelling urge men are changing their outlook on life. With or without regret they are adopting habits and forming organisations which in course of time are bound to transform Hindu society. What is the meaning of these changes? Whither are we heading? What will ultimately happen to Hinduism? These questions are being asked by many in whispers and with fear. It may not be incorrect to describe the thinking mind of India as filled with interrogation marks.

Are we witnessing merely one of those periodic revivals of religious fervour which in the past have added new phases to Hinduism? Or are we entering into a new era where religious life and religious power are going to have significance and application different from the past? Now as before there are those to whom religion is an intensely personal affair, men who seek in and through it mystic experience and personal salvation. For them the traditions of the past contain enough to guide and to help. All that they desire is to be left to themselves and they are willing to leave other people to follow their own courses.

But there are others—and these form a growing section—who ask questions, difficult, inconvenient, and sometimes unanswerable. They ask them with insistence though with humility and reverence. They look at Hindu society as a whole. The grievances of its parts they feel as their own. The needs and difficulties of its groups urge them to find a remedy. Why should souls suffer in darkness and in distress in a world where light and joy abound? That is their problem. In helplessness they seek for help in religion.

One outstanding feature of modern religious movements is their social appeal. Equal spiritual opportunities for all. To every one according to his need. No monopoly. Share and share alike. This is the dominant note of religious movements like the Bharata Samaj, Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Theosophical Society. They emphasise the fact of human brotherhood and the resulting implication of equal distribution of cultural assets and opportunities. They look to religion for a solution of the many difficulties of the present time. According to them it is only religion that can help in getting the social vision focussed on the right ideals. It is only religion that can furnish the dynamic which will enable society to progress towards those ideals. It is religion that will introduce checks and balances in social organisation, and a periodic revision of social values. Thus the new school is even more strongly dependent upon religious thought and impulse than the traditionalists who look upon change with aversion and fear. Both profess loyalty to the ancient faith. The one resists disturbance while the other courts it. The one desires that religion should be left alone while the other relies upon the religious spirit for effecting changes and is anxious to exploit the potentialities of religious power for temporal use. It may be that by their combined operation we shall be enabled to express the religious spirit in the many forms in which it can minister to the activities of a growing society.

A second significant feature of modern religious movements is the freedom of thought, expression, and organisation that is claimed and conceded. The extent to which this freedom is carried is astounding. We are having democracy in the religious sphere all on a sudden. The Hindu mind is refusing to accept things on authority. It affixes interrogation marks to established dogmas and doctrines. It challenges the validity and helpfulness of practices for which no support can be found except in texts and traditions. The man in the street lays claim to personal spiritual experience and to judge for himself the soundness of

accepted religious postulates. And he claims the further right to modify them and to propagate the new modifications on institutional lines. It is a phenomenon full of portent for the future. Indeed it is causing some modern movements to be understood more as revolts than as revival or reformation. Not unnaturally it is producing bitterness within the Hindu ranks.

A part of this freedom is due to the scientific curiosity that is now extending to the mass mind and which desires that religious truths no less than physical should be capable of explanation, experiment, and verification. The claim for scientific demonstration in religious matters may evoke surprise. But it is there. Texts along with kings appear to have outlived the age of Divine right. Their authority is subjected to challenge by people who do not accept their infallibility. It is this spirit that questions the need for intermediaries between God and man. It is this spirit that presumes to doubt the efficacy of old rituals and desires to explore the source of their power. It is this spirit that is relegating to a secondary place the quest for personal salvation and is deflecting the religious impulse to social helpfulness. For if we are members one of another we cannot be selfish enough to desire to be saved alone.

There is to-day a great outpouring of power throughout the world. Human consciousness is expanding so as to comprehend the whole world as a unit. Human sympathies are broadening though under limitations so as to comprehend the entire human race as a single family. The world is being linked together in intimate cultural and economic relationship. There is a unique exchange of experience between the nations of the world. Men are getting the vision and the strength to do and to dare things that have not been dreamt of before. In India many movements have arisen and more are likely to arise all having as their objective the betterment of human life. It is often a difficult problem to assess the worth and beneficent character of these movements. We may not however be wrong if in judging them we remember that as long as a movement promotes human brotherhood and stimulates sacrifice and service, as long as it endeavours to pool human strength for battling against the common foes of man, as long as it seeks to replace the exploitation of man by man by exploitation of the resources of nature by man, so long that movement is a spiritual movement, i. e., one of co-operation with the Will of God, or in our Hindu terminology it is one in conformity with Sanatana Dharma.

DECADENCE OF THE GAYATRI

DREAMER.

What is it that is resisting the spirit of the Gayatri? Why do we find many of those who have the rare privilege of a formal initiation into the Maha Mantra negligent in their duty towards it? People take infinite pains about what shall we eat? How shall we sleep? Where shall we travel? But they are utterly indifferent to their allegiance to the Gayatri. Some do not care whether they possess this precious right or no. Others give it only a lip recognition. Those in whom the great Gayatri lives are few at the present day.

All the time there are millions of men who are envying the possessors of this right and who thirst for the fortune of its contact. Some of these try to cultivate connection with it in spirit. It may not be incorrect to say in one sense that the whole of Hindu India looks up to the Gayatri as a priceless national treasure. It cherishes with reverence the scriptures that glorify the Gayatri. It reveres the men who live a life of loyal devotion to the Gayatri. It still respects those who are willing to profess external adherence to its forms.

Can it not be that all may share in its sanctification and stimulus? Is it possible for its possessors to cast it away from them in the indifference born of ancient familiarity and object to others picking it up with eagerness and rearing it with genuine faith? We do not like to face this question. But it is being asked in the profound depths of the sub-conscious mind of Hinduism. And one day it will be answered in the only way in which the religious spirit answers such questions.

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मेद्वेष्योऽस्तिनमिषः ।

येभजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहं ॥

Gita Ch. IX.

'I am alike for all! I know not hate,
I know not favour! What is made is Mine!
But them that worship me with love, I love;
They are in me, and I in them!

Meanwhile it may be useful to study the obstacles that hinder the steady flow of the influence of the Gayatri and attempt to remove them. Ignorance of its meaning and of its power, ignorance of its traditions, ignorance of its possibilities in modern India, and ignorance of the relative

* Song Celestial Edwin Arnold.

ease with which one can enshrine it in one's life; these are the primary obstacles that have to be cleared. It is ignorance that has bred the tremendous inertia which is so marked a feature in our mental make-up at the present day. The dispelling of ignorance will help to lift the deadening weight of this inertia. That is the first step.

REVIEW.

"Gitodayam" by Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar published by P. Varadachari and Co., Madras.

This is an interesting dramatisation in Tamil of the Bala Leela of Sri Krishna. It is divided into eighteen scenes recalling and intended to remind the readers of the eighteen Yogas in the Bhagavad Gita. The scenes are based upon the episodes in the life of Balakrishna in the Gokula and in the Brindavana. The childhood exploits of Gopalakrishna have been a perennial theme for Hindu poets and dramatists both in Sanskrit and in the vernaculars of the land. It would be difficult to find a parallel throughout the world to the daring freedom with which they have sought to familiarise the masses with the personality of divine incarnation. The rapid and difficult alternations between the cosmic and the human background against which the scenes have to be painted require peculiar genius in the author; and it requires an equally peculiar genius in the public to adjust to the corresponding rapid alternations of consciousness. Nevertheless Hindu scriptural literature abounds with such attempts. It is irrelevant to question the propriety of this method or its ultimate efficacy. Familiarity may have its undesirable associations and there may be something to be said for preserving an austere atmosphere, and even formal reverence, in approaching things spiritual. But the method has become too much of a settled fact to be made a subject of comment.

Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar needs no introduction to the readers of the Bharata Dharma. His contributions on Re-statement of Faith have appeared from time to time in these pages. In this book V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar has sought to effect a remarkable combination of diversion and instruction. He seeks to give to the boyhood episodes of Sri Krishna a philosophic significance and to indicate in the words and actions of

Balakrishna, the germs of the doctrines that have been ultimately revealed in the Bhagavad Gita. That this task would be difficult and exacting and would demand unique qualities of understanding and exposition goes without saying. Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar has brought to bear upon his subject all the ripe thought and study of a life-time which are not little in the case of a gentleman of his culture, equipment, and æsthetic sense. It is a matter for congratulation that he should have devoted his talents to an object which fulfills the three well-known qualities of Tatva, Hita and Purushartha. Through the diversion of dramatic literature, he has introduced the public to the contact and enjoyment of high philosophic truth. The Tamil is such as will be understood even by those who cannot lay claim to any scholarship in it. Both the book and the drama are bound to become popular in the Tamil Nad.

2nd Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon 1928-1931 issued by the Managing Committee, Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon.

This report is a report of service in the various departments of life that is now becoming associated with the activities of Ramakrishna Mission all over India. A perusal of the Report reveals both the popularity of the mission and the appreciation of its service by those to whom it is directed. To Hindus in Burma the mission is more than a nursery for the transplantation of Hindu culture in the particular aspect in which that culture has an appeal in distant lands. It is therefore not inappropriate that the work of the mission finds adherents and supporters among Burmese Buddhists also. We wish the Society larger opportunities of service in the years to come.

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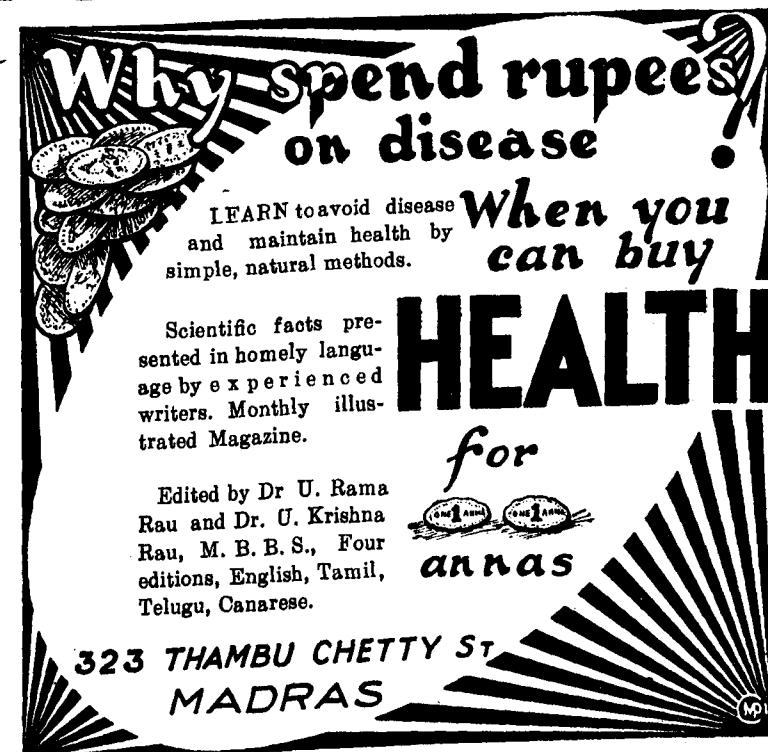
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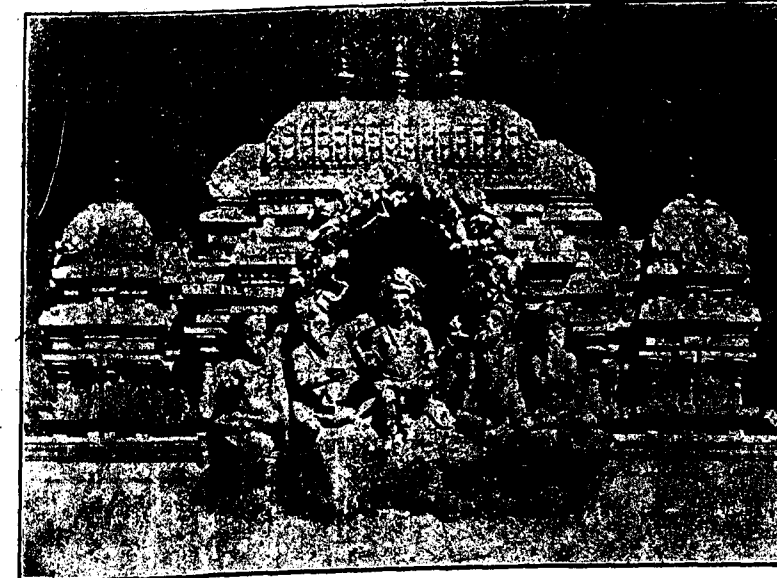
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VOL. XI

SEPTEMBER, 1932

8 = NOV 1932 No. 6



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

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A RE-STATEMENT OF FAITH	
by Professor S. K. Yegnanarayana Aiyar, M.A.	107
THE LIVING PAST by T. L. Vaswani	111
GAYATRI by Dreamer	113
TALES FROM THE UPANISHADS by C. T. Sreenivasan, M.A.	113
KUCHELA by K. V. Sessa Aiyangar	122
REVIEWS	123

SOME APPRECIATIONS

T. V. VENKATARAMA AIYAR.—The Bharata Dharma is an organ of humanity and stands for the highest ideals of Hindu culture and Philosophy. It is ably edited.

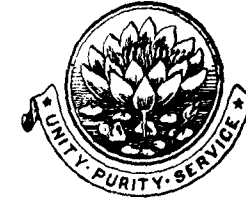
MR. JINARAJADASA FOR DR. BESANT AND HIMSELF.—The attempt of the Bharata Dharma is most necessary if Hinduism is to survive as an effective force in the reorganisation of India to-day....Not only her (Dr. Besant's) sympathy but her enthusiasm is exactly with such a work as is being attempted by the Bharata Dharma.

SIR. P. S. SIVASWAMI AIYAR.—The Bharata Dharma has offered a platform for the discussion of our religious and social problem from the standpoint of modernised faith responsive to the requirements of intellectual progress and rapidly changing social and economic conditions. The articles in the journal have been thoughtful, broadminded and inspiring.

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THE

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N.B.—The Arya Mata Sabha is not responsible for any opinions expressed or statements published in this magazine unless they are contained in an official document.

VOL. X]

SEPTEMBER, 1932

[No. 6

A RE STATEMENT OF FAITH.

PROFESSOR S. K. YEGNANARAYANA AIYAR, M. A.

We are asked to state whether the influences now operating upon Hinduism are wholly evil and therefore to be resisted. The editor unfortunately gives us no clue as to what influences he had in mind. I take it that the following are some of the most important of influences :—

1. Contact with the west or in general with people outside India with different religions and cultures.
2. The modern tendency which may roughly be called the scientific tendency attaching greater importance to experiments and verification and making cautious statement of generalisations, instead of indulging in abstract propositions building blind theories based on them and indulging in wordy warfare as the schoolmen did.

¹ Questionnaire.

1. Are the new influences operating upon Hinduism wholly evil and therefore to be resisted?
2. What adjustments are necessary for obtaining the greatest benefit from their contact?
3. What immediate efforts would you suggest to instil greater knowledge and belief in the primary sacraments making for spiritual progress?
4. Would you recommend a uniform sacrament or sacraments for all Hindus?
5. What steps if any would you advise for promoting greater understanding, unity and co-operation among the followers of the many and diverse creeds in Hinduism?

3. The rise of democracy which is emancipating the women and the "under dog". The man of birth and status is no longer superior to men without these so-called advantages. "Rank is but the guinea stamp. Man is true gold for all that" as the poet sang. The enhancement of the value of the individual has its tremendous repercussions upon our conception of man as a member of society and indirectly upon our religious conceptions.

If I am right in my surmise of the influences which the editor has in mind, I have no hesitation in pronouncing these to be good. But like all great forces, much depends upon what use we make of them. Under wise guidance these influences may be made to be great factors for upliftment or improvements otherwise for blind iconoclasm.

Turning to the second question, i.e., what adjustments are necessary for obtaining the greatest benefit from their contact, I am of opinion that the great Hindu society must have some machinery for taking stock of the situation from time to time. Re-examination of fundamentals in the light of growing knowledge is characteristic of all living and growing religions. Christianity had its oecumenical Councils. Buddhism had its sangha and we too had our own Parishads that settled important matters. But in these degenerate days, we have become cowards and are afraid of change, and even when the time spirit compels the introduction of a change, it is smuggled into the existing system and a false impression is created that there has been no change. Commentators of great religious books even when they take a step forward, are afraid of boldly announcing their departure from the existing state of affairs. They take extra pains to make us believe that their interpretation is still confined to the four corners of the text book, though as a matter of fact the spirit of the old text book may be departed from. This commentator mentality must go. We must have intellectual honesty. We must have the courage to state that God has not created the world and revealed all that is necessary for the benefit of mankind and has absconded. On the other hand, God is ever present with us and is revealing himself in various ways. Our spiritual heritage is getting added to. The race of seers is not ended. From Yagnavalkya to Ramakrishna, from Gargi to Dr. Besant there has been an unbroken series of great men and women who have added to the common stock of religious experience. The last chapter of our Holy Scriptures is not yet written. Revelation in fact is not a phenomenon of the past, but is an ever present affair. With this attitude in mind, we must encourage the

holding of Parishads or Conferences where not only Pandits of the old type should be invited, but men of light, of wide culture and vast experience will also be co-opted. I am second to none in my admiration of the Pandit of the old type and I feel sorry that the race is fast dying out. But my admiration for that fine type has not blinded me to the defects characteristic of that type. The Pandit's vision is limited. His knowledge may be profound and deep so far as his limited sphere is concerned, but is not vitalised by contact with other departments of knowledge. I would also suggest that in these conferences, live problems should be dealt with in an intelligible way and not mere scholastic problems discussed in a learned manner. The Vakyartha method generally adopted in the Parishads of Pandits is like a rope dancing or some clever gymnastics showing the dexterity of the performer, but it does not add to the wisdom of persons assembled. Discussion must be carried on in the vernacular of the province and in ordinarily understandable prose. Then only Parishads would become contributories of knowledge and cease to be the mere curiosities that they are at present. Any one watching the proceedings of some of these learned assemblies would be struck by the fact that both the subjects discussed and the method of handling them are time honoured ones. So far as the Pandits are concerned, it is as if the magnificent discoveries of scientists from Galileo onwards that have profoundly affected the Philosophy of the west are non-existent. Yet it is a truism to say that Vedanta has nothing to fear from science. It would get additional confirmation from that quarter and need not fear any mortal shock.

The third question is about suggestions for instilling greater knowledge and belief among all the Hindus in the primary sacraments making for spiritual progress. Here we are confronted with the fundamental difficulty of getting an intelligible idea as to who are the Hindus. When a challenge was thrown out the other day on the floor of the local Legislative Council, the learned Advocate-General satisfied himself with the very imperfect definition that Hindus are those who follow the Hindu law, and that what the Hindu Law is, every lawyer knows; that is to say, Hindus are defined only negatively, roughly as inhabitants of India, who are neither Christians, nor Muslims, nor Parsees etc. This reminds us of the famous attempt of Upanishads to describe Brahman as "not this and not this". What is there in common between the orthodox Brahmin and the untouchable who is now being welcomed with open arms by the Muslims, Christians and every other proselytising faith. How can we

form a common link between these two extremes, the Brahmin and the Adi Dravida. Personally I should think that all Hindus should be encouraged to wear some kind of caste mark, that is for example, application of sandal to the forehead, if not anything else.

I am also for insisting on some common sacrament which all Hindus should observe, some kind of simple worship every day, some uttering of prayer which should redound from Cape Comorin to Himalayas every morning and every evening. We have very much to learn from Muslims and Christians. At stated hours the Muezzin calls from the minarets and at stated times the Lord's prayer is being uttered by all the Christians from the Archbishop down to the veriest pauper supported by the parish. In this connection, I should like to pay my humble respects to that great leader of ours Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who has boldly come forward to initiate all Hindus in holy mantras whether they be touchables or untouchables.

We are asked to state what steps we would recommend for promoting greater understanding, unity and co-operation among the followers of the many and diverse creeds in Hinduism. One of the most effective methods of bringing about a better understanding is frequent meeting of leaders of thought of various schools, not as their progenitors did in times of old with a view to win victory over the opponents and get titles like *Prathivathi Bhayankara*. They must meet in an attitude of humility and with a view to find out points of similarity and not stress the points of difference. It is only by such leaders meeting, exchanging thoughts and exercising their mighty influence on their followers that better co-operation can be brought about.

Lastly, though not included in the questionnaire, I should like to make one or two suggestions which would be of help to the real workers in the field. Systematic attempts should be made to instil into the minds of younger generation a legitimate pride about their matchless spiritual heritage. As an aid thereto knowledge of sanskrit language should be encouraged. Children of both sexes should be taught to repeat selections from masterpieces and thus helped indirectly to master the language, which unfortunately is looked upon as a difficult one, and which once the first hurdle is cleared, is one of the easiest and pleasantest things to learn. Thirdly, the priests that worship in temples and help the laity in the matter of conducting sacraments must be very much better educated than they are at present. Many a lover of sanskrit would have experienced a tragic shock when he hears the sanskrit words

horribly mis-pronounced by priests and purohita who are absolutely ignorant of the meaning not only of the Mantras they are repeating, but also of the simple sanskrit words composing the formula regulating the details of ceremonies. Princes and rich men must come forward to endow Theological Institutes which would train scholars who could speak with authority on the glories of our religion. As an aid to all these an organisation must be brought into existence which would print and publish the great classics of our religion and make them available even to the poorest amongst us. To take one example, the Gita must be made available at one anna a copy.

These are some of the ideas that struck me in connection with the questionnaire issued. I am thankful to the learned editor of the Bharata Dharma for the opportunity he has given me in expressing my ideas upon a very important matter by answering his questionnaire.

THE LIVING PAST.

BY T. L. VASWANI.

Let the dead past bury its dead : Sang the poet.

India, it is true, has custom and systems heavy with decay. These must be swept.

But there is a Living Past. A Past that does not die. There is an Ancient that like the sun-rise is young and fresh and new. Commune with it,—I say to the nation's youth; and you will have a new, creative *shakti* for the building of a new nation.

India's Future, I humbly submit, must have its roots deep in the Living Ideals of her soul.

They have not failed us; we have failed them.

In loyalty to them lies the hope of India's world-mission in the New Age that is dawning.

Already the war-weary West looks to the Wisdom of the East for a message of help and healing. It is true not many in the West have a true knowledge of India, either ancient or modern. Yet a feeling is growing in Europe and America that the new word of power must come from the East. Groups here and there turn to India to-day,—as did the sages and thinkers of China and Japan in the long age,—as the Promised Land. As a French writer puts it:—

About modern India, the information given by the press is scanty, manipulated, second hand; it issues from agencies whose chief object is not the spreading of truth. As for the descriptions given by the

tourists, novelists, missionaries, etc., they most often impart a very one-sided and prejudiced impression. And yet India is, for most continental Europeans, whether literate or illiterate, a kind of Realm of the Spirit, a Motherland of God, a Christ among the Nations. India is, now-a-days, in the imagination of the Western peoples, what Palestine was for the Christians at the time of the Crusades.

Modern Europe lies exhausted, lies wounded. Francesco Nitti, an eminent Italian statesman, goes so far as to say that "the whole of Europe is decadent." "All of Europe," he adds, "is going downward." And again:—"Every day that passes Europe is sinking rapidly." The more I think of it, the more I feel that for a new inspiration Europe must turn to the Culture of India. It is a culture pre-eminently spiritual. Western education on its two sides, classical and scientific, has a great value for modern India. But we must distinguish between Western culture and Westernism. In India there has been a confusion of the two; and not a few of the educated youth look upon the Ancient Ideals as outworn superstitions of an infant race. Westernism has infected not a few with that lower materialism which resolves the soul into a phenomenon of matter. And I sometimes think that back of the school of violence in Western politics is a frank philosophy of materialism. Westernism has taught not a few to make material efficiency the one great test of progress, so that you are civilised in the measure you develop the art of killing or exploiting the weak! Ancient India was a culture-state but went down in the day our culture stood in aristocratic aloofness from life and religion became identified with a creed of inaction. Western education roused us from inertia; but Westernism made us irreverent of *Ishwara's* revelations to our Race and imperilled the values of Indian Ideal. We came out of a Dark Age only to enter the Darkness of an imitation-cult. It taught us to worship the idols of power and machinery, money and goods. We forgot, as Lord himself has recently reminded us, that these are "useful only as they set us free to live and are but means to an end. "Westernism with its cult of the machinery and money-bag trampled upon the vision of India, the vision of the Eternal Youth. What do we find to-day? Imitation. Which means suppression. There is no creativeness in the current system of education. Even our national politics are mainly imitative, not Creative.

GAYATRI.

By

DREAMER

On the Gayatri Day I sat in meditation on the 'Mother of metres'. As I pondered over its significance through slow and deliberate repetitions I seemed to be lifted as by an unseen power, from dark depths where primitive passions poisoned life, into the very 'abode of Gods', and into a presence that permeated the Universe. It was like a vast ocean whose waves were perpetually beating upon the shores of inert matter in calm impatience.

* * *

And then I saw another vision as of a mighty river coursing through time in unsurpassed grandeur. It carried the waters life. Here and there through fissures in its banks men managed after infinite toil to draw a little of its precious contents to irrigate their lives. Only with constant exertion was it possible to keep the openings from silting up. For lack of this energy many had let their lives become dry. The waters flowed past without touching them.

* * *

Down through endless regions of time the river flowed until it came to a place where a mighty dam had been thrown across its bed. The dam lifted a little of its waters and sent them through the high plains which adjoined the banks. Then did I behold a new miracle. Barren wastes burst suddenly with verdure. Famished lives were filled with strength. Idle men became active. And shining Devas again came down and lived among men gathering sweet blossoms of devotion, and the thank-offerings of sacrifice offered through acts of mutual service.

TALES FROM UPANISHAD.

C. T. SREENIVASAN, M. A.

VI

The Debate.

The fame and prosperity of the Videhas knew no bounds, for they were ruled by their Sire and king Janaka. The splendour of the king's court had reached even the distant heavens where his name was held in high esteem and respect by the gods themselves. A pious and ardent student of Vedanta, Janaka was a devotee of the Brahmins to whom he gave unstintingly his liberal support and patronage. From the distant corners of India, men of learning, science and wisdom flocked constantly

to the king's court whence they returned doubly profited materially and spiritually. In a word poverty, pain and ignorance found no room in the kingdom of the Videhas.

Now the king entertained a desire to find out who among the Brahmins knew best the Vedas, that he might be guided by them in the governance of the country. With this object in view he made an announcement to the public that he intended to conduct a sacrifice called '*Bahudakshina*,' for securing the commonweal and prosperity of the whole country. The very name of the sacrifice indicated that liberality was to be the key-note of the ceremony. For, it was proclaimed throughout the country that whosoever knew Brahman best would get a reward of a thousand cows whose horns were adorned with two hundred grains of gold and precious gems as well. And Janaka alone knew the secret that liberality shown to men of learning and respect was the easiest means of acquiring knowledge. Many acquire wealth, but few, alas, possess the qualifications to be rich.

The result of the king's announcement was tremendous. Thousands of learned men with hoary traditions hastened to the court of Mithila. On the day of the sacrifice there were assembled the Brahmins of the Kurus and the Panchalas, who could recite the four Vedas from memory without pause. There came also Yajnavalkya the prince of the Yogins and the Vedantins; the sparkling Gargi the pride of Vachaknu and the flower of the Indian womanhood; Ushasta the illustrious son of Chakra; Uddalaka the godly son of Aruna; and a host of other great persons whose names were regarded as authorities in their respective sciences and Vidyas. All were duly assembled at the king's behest in the magnificent sacrificial hall.

To such an illustrious assembly Janaka spared no pains to present the proverbial splendour of his court. In the midst of them all, the king sat on his golden throne inlaid with diamonds, rubies, emeralds and other rare stones of great value, whose lustre however paled before the rays of justice, virtue and mercy emanating from the bright forehead of the king. The men of acute learning thought that in the king Nature and the Divine had effected a happy union.

The king stood up and bowing to the assembly said: "O venerable Brahmins! My salutations to you! My people and my kingdom are blessed by your sacred presence at my humble court. My race of Mithila itself has become thrice blessed by my beholding the assembly of such godly men.

"Whoever among you, O learned Brahmins, know Brahman, best shall drive home these cows adorned with gold and precious gems."

So saying the king sat down on his throne awaiting eagerly the claimant of the reward.

At first the king's speech puzzled and perplexed a large number of the Brahmins. For they all said to one another: "Why should the offer of cows be made to the knower of Brahman in particular, when there are among us giants in the sciences of sacrifices, rituals and other pre-eminent branches of knowledge. The science of Brahman, being very ancient, is no doubt greatest and best of all sciences. But who dare announce that he knows best Brahman. Even the gods dare not say this." Thus saying they all sat wondering who could be that courageous person coming forward to claim the reward.

For a time none came forward; and the king remained anxious lest the object of his sacrifice should go unfulfilled. It was then that Yajnavalkya the fruition of Sama Veda, stood up and addressing his disciple said: "Gentle youth drive home those cows." The youth hastened accordingly to carry out his master's command.

Yajnavalkya's simple and straightforward resolution stupefied at first the vast concourse of the Brahmins who sat agape wondering whether they were wide awake or dreaming. For never in all the three worlds of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, was there a person who could proclaim that he knew Brahman. Here, on earth, in the sacrificial hall of Janaka, Yajnavalkya stood calm and self-possessed ordering the cows to be driven home thereby implying that he knew Brahman. Everybody thought that such a person must be Brahman himself, for it is said in the Vedas that he who knows Brahman is Brahman. Soon the wonder and himself there being nothing else besides him. Soon the wonder and awe gave place to envy and jealousy; for none could brook the idea of a single man taking away the reward for which they had all come from distant parts of the country. They then became angry questioning themselves how Yajnavalkya dared to call himself the best knower of Brahman. But they lacked the courage to question him directly.

There was then Asvala, the Hotar priest of the Janaka's palace. With the silent approval of the king he rose to address Yajnavalkya thus: "O Flower of the Brahmin race! Stay a while your order for driving home the cattle. Before doing that you must answer us whether you are indeed the best knower of Brahman."

Yajnavalkya replied smilingly: "We bow to the knower of Brahman. Since none came forward to claim the reward, I desire to possess the cows, being fond of them."

The Hotar priest said, "Yajnavalkya, do not touch the cows, for the king had announced that none should take them away without showing his worth. It is also enjoined in the Sastras that a knower of Brahman shall not accept or take away anything without proving his desert."

Yajnavalkya was in fact pleased with the priest's opposition since he had not come there merely for the reward. So he said; "Asvala, I shall willingly abide by your request. It will delight me much to be questioned in the most searching manner on the subject of Brahman; then there will be ample time for us to fight over the apportionment of the reward."

Everybody was pleased with Yajnavalkya's reply because they hoped to hear shortly the most difficult of the sciences expounded. Intense silence prevailed in the hall of sacrifice. Clad in white silk and adorned with sacred beads, ashes and sandal paste Asvala looked the very spirit of Sacrifice itself. But beaming with peace, wisdom and equipoise Yajnavalkya looked the mightier of the two, beautiful like the rising sun. Anxious minds were speculating over the trend and character of the debate.

After bowing to the august assembly Asvala said; "Yajnavalkya, all this is pervaded by death and subject to it. By what means overcoming death is a sacrificer liberated?"

Subtle is the problem of death and subtler the way of liberation. If the latter were to be procured at all, death should reveal the secret of life. Who can understand the deep meanings of life and death? Perhaps the sweet mystery of the one is the grim tragedy of the other! To conquer death first, and then to avoid rebirth—who has achieved that supreme consummation?

Exhibiting not even the faintest trace of hesitation or perplexity Yajnavalkya replied "Asvala, you have done well to begin with the subject of death as your first question. For life and death are as it were, poles apart but the two inevitable aspects of the natural course of all things within this universe. They are the two eternal light and shadow chasing each other throughout this infinite majesty of a universe. Their mutual opposition is the mainstay of the universe. But the two constitute a vicious circle from which escape seems to be well nigh im-

possible for the generality of the mankind. Now and then a good soul having become disgusted with the monotony of this cyclic existence, looks around with a view to ending this miserable but nonetheless bewitching destiny.

"With unbiased mind let us enquire into the nature, meaning and value of life and death. What is death if it be not a mental attachment toward unrealities born of the natural ignorance of the mankind regarding the character of the material world and the soul. The former which is unreal, is viewed as the real, while the soul, the only existent reality, is treated as the perishable. Wonderful is this beginningless ignorance of mankind that is able to achieve the impossible feat of mutual transference of alien and opposing attributes! Since attachment hides the purity of the soul, death is termed a bond; the senses by which this feat is accomplished, are called the chains that characterize death and bind the absolutely free soul to a mortal coil. But life furnishes the means in the form of a correct knowledge of the nature of such attachments whereby the bonds are cut asunder.

"Asvala, speech which is fire, is the priest called Hotar. The speech of the sacrificer is verily this Hotar. By the fire of speech a person obtains liberation. It is by speech that a man gets attached to his treacherous senses and their evanescent objects; and by speech which is knowledge he is freed from the snares of widespread death."

Asvala proceeded with his second question. "Yajnavalkya" he said:

"All this is pervaded by and subject to days and nights, bright and dark halves of the lunar months. By what means overcoming the grasp of time is the sacrificer liberated?"

Yajnavalkya: "Your second question follows logically from the first. For both life and death are pivoted on time for their play. Without liberation from the sense of time, solar and lunar, a person does not obtain complete salvation.

"Aditya who is the sun and ruler of days and nights, is the priest called Adhvaryu. He is the eye of the sacrificer, by whose grace the sacrificer gets freed from the temporal sway of the days and nights. To such a person the sun never sets or rises. By the vital breath which is called Wdgathar—the breath of the sacrificer himself—he is freed from the lunar months. Having thus obtained complete liberation from the bonds of time, the person is neither born nor does he die."

Asvala: "Yajnavalkya, the atmosphere that we breathe, hangs, as it were, in the mid-sky without any foundation whatsoever. By what means

then does a person approach the place of Heaven and what does he conquer thereby?"

Yajnavalkya : Mind which is the moon, is the priest called Brahma which is the mind of the sacrificer. By this mind the person grasps the atmosphere leading to Heaven. By this Brahma which is absolute liberation, one conquers the worlds of the shining ones, the noisy worlds of the forefathers and the painful worlds of the men below. By mind which is infinite he conquers the world of the infinite as well. By means of the vital breath a sacrificer recites the sacred mantras whereby he conquers the world of the atmosphere. Thus by performances of rites and sacrifices with a correct knowledge of their import, man attains liberation in life itself from the meshes of time and death."

Thereupon Asvala bowed to Yajnavalkya and remained silent.

Ushasta son of Chakra, rose next and said : Yajnavalkya, all holy works like sacrifices etc., have worldly effects only and therefore absolute liberation by them alone is impossible. For obsessed by ideas like virtue, vice, pain and pleasure and seized by the fetters of the senses and their objects of enjoyment, the sacrificer roams about in the world trying to cast them off but assuming them again and again under different forms and conditions. Do therefore explain to me, O venerable sage, the Brahman which is present as the unaffected Witness of these panoramic changes and which is free from any taint of virtue and vice, free from all sensual fetters and their attributes like touch, taste, smell, sound, form etc."

Yajnavalkya : "Ushasta. The Brahman you referred to, is your soul which is within every being."

Ushasta : "What is the soul that is within every being?"

Yajnavalkya : "The ability to distinguish the soul from every other thing with which it is wrongly identified, is the one indispensable means for attaining liberation. In the absence of such a discrimination a person is seized by the hands of death, and being caught in the whirlpool of births and deaths, he assumes perforce one body after another till he obtains a true knowledge of the purity and freedom of the soul. Possessing this Viveka or discriminative intelligence one reaches ere long the real Self which is absolute liberation itself. This is also the grim meaning of death itself, for death signifies rebirth and birth is intended for the realisation of the true nature of the soul. When this is once obtained, life and death become meaningless terms being indistinguishably merged into to the true nature of the soul. That Brahman which is the

eternal witness free from the fetters of the senses and their attributes, is your soul which is within every being. A recognition of this simple fact—and you do not continue any longer."

Ushasta : "Yajnavalkya. What you have so ably explained I fail to grasp clearly. It looks as though you have merely pointed out to me a point in the midsky. Tell me in more precise terms the nature and the location of the soul."

Yajnavalkya : "Be it so, Ushasta. That which breathes by the breath, descending by the descending air, ascending by the ascending air and going everywhere with the outgoing air, is your soul which is within every being."

Even then Ushasta did not understand. So he said : "Yajnavalkya, I shall humbly crave your indulgence. To define Brahman by such signs like respiration etc., is as inadequate as to define a cow by saying 'the cow is an animal that goes there.' Explain to me once again the Brahman which is within every being. Of what avail is the human intellect if it cannot define the soul in clear and precise terms?"

Becoming a little impatient Yajnavalkya said : "Dear man, know once for all that the soul could not be defined precisely as this thing or that as you would ordinarily define an object. For how could the definer be adequately defined? A definition would make him an object of his definition which is absurd, since it would lead to another definer, ad infinitum. This is simple commonsense, O Ushasta, and having grasped this, do not attempt the impossible. The soul is ever the only subject that will never become the object. Hence you cannot behold the Beholder of the beholding; you cannot hear the Hearer of the hearing; you cannot think of the Thinker of the thinking; and you cannot know the Knower of the knowing. Acts like knowing, beholding, hearing and thinking are two-fold. The common ones pertain to the organs like the eye, ear, mind etc., of which they are the effects being their modifications. But the higher ones called the spiritual, belong to the soul of which they are its very nature being neither its modifications nor its attributes. The former class of activities, being of the nature of effects only, have a beginning and an end, but the latter belong permanently to the soul and are neither acquired nor lost at any time or place. That is your soul the eternal and unaffected witness. Every thing different from it, is transient and unreal."

Thereupon Ushasta resumed his seat.

Next Kahola son of Kushitaka, said : "Yajnavalkya, what you have

explained till now pertains to the soul so far as it has an existence independent of the body and senses. Now tell me about that particular knowledge whereby practical emancipation could be had."

Yajnavalkya: "Well said, Kahola. You seem to be eminently gifted with practical insight. Infinite are the ways of description of the soul. But all the human labours do not even touch the Actual by the fraction of a tenth part of millimetre. Absolute liberation is difficult to be had without renunciation which is hard to be attained in life. Knowledge and renunciation constitute the highest wealth in man. What is called wealth is twofold, human and divine. Human wealth supplies the means and wherewithals for performance of sacrifices and rites whereby the worlds of the gods and forefathers are obtained. But these worlds are as true as our dream worlds, lasting as long as the effects of sacrifices last! Therefore even the worlds of the gods have to be renounced. For it is folly and ignorance to yearn for them which are the temporary effects of certain sacrifices.

"Desire then to possess the soul which is free from hunger, thirst, grief, old age and death, possessing which the person becomes the imperishable. But desires born of ignorance, bind mankind to the wheel of births and deaths. Then they long for wives, sons, and wealth and perform sacrifices to secure them. Compared to the soul such things are as unsubstantial as our dream phantoms; and in this mad and blind bargain the soul is entirely forgotten. Such is the power of Ignorance that shrouds the only Factor of existence that counts. Thus men suffer misery and bondage for which they can blame neither God nor Nature but their own avarice, ignorance and folly.

"Attaining the wisdom of the soul as the One unaffected Witness a Brahmana should arm himself with the sword of renunciation against the onslaught of the carnal desires. Thinking is meant for knowledge leading to the realisation of that One Witness. Thinking constitutes ignorance or bondage if it is about unreal things like wealth and the worlds of enjoyment. By not-thinking of such unreal things a person obtains renunciation which is liberation. Knowing thus the Wisdom and the Strength one becomes a true Brahmana having understood the thinking and the not-thinking of the Brahman which is within every being.

"Such a Brahmana, though he might live breathing and moving like an ordinary man, has really risen above the sphere of work, desires and sacrifices. Unaffected by the latter he becomes the One Witness. The

so called fetters of the senses and the bonds of ignorance are in fact mere illusions born of a constrained imagination. The only remedy is a permanent knowledge of the soul as the one unaffected Witness of all changes."

When Yajnavalkya finished his speech every body sat spell bound. For the truth of his exposition had reached the innermost recesses of the hearts of the hearers. There after Kahola became silent.

Next Uddalaka son of Aruna, said: "Some years back in the country of the Madras we abode in the house of Patanjala of the family of Kapi, for the sake of studying the science of sacrifice. Patanjala's wife was possessed by a Gandharva. The latter questioned us thus: 'Do you know the Thread by which this world, the other world and all beings are bound together, and their Inner Ruler?' We said, 'No'. The Gandharva exclaimed, 'Whoever knows the Thread and the Inner Ruler, knows the worlds, gods, Vedas and the elements; he knows the soul and all.' He then told us all about the Thread and the Inner Ruler. Thus I came to know them. If you, Yajnavalkya, ignorant of this Thread and the Inner Ruler, take away the cows, your head will surely drop down."

When Uddhalaka had spoken thus, all the Brahmins shook with fear and consternation lest the challenge if unanswered should lead to a tragedy in the sacred hall of sacrifice.

But quite unmoved and unconcerned Yajnavalkya replied, "Proceed gently, O Gautama, and let not men be frightened out of their wits. I know indeed the Thread and the Inner Ruler. Otherwise I shall not be speaking thus."

Gautama: "Any one can talk like that. But mere statement is no evidence of one's knowledge of them. If what you say is true, then tell me what you know of them. If I have unwittingly offended you, O venerable sage I crave your mercy."

Yajnavalkya: "Gautama. Who will not admire a bold and independent seeker of truth. The Vedas also proclaim that none but the brave beholds the truth.

"The wind is the thread, as it were, binding together this world, the other and all beings within them. Therefore it is said of a dead man that his members are relaxed; for by the wind as by a thread they are bound together."

(To be Continued)

KUCHELA.

K. V. SETHA AIYANGAR.

After vanquishing Kamsa and crowning the old King Ugrasena as king of the Yadavas, Krishna joined his parents from whom he had been separated since birth. Vasudeva and Devaki received their long lost children with tears of joy. Krishna and Balarama were administered the sacraments suited to the twice-born. After being initiated into the Gayatri they were sent for their education to the hermitage of Sandipani in Avanti the modern Ujjain.

प्रभवौ सर्वविद्यानां सर्वज्ञौ जगदीश्वरौ ।

नान्यसिद्धामलज्ञानं गृह्णमानौ गेहेति ॥

Bhagavata X 45-30

Masters of Wisdom and Lords of the Universe, like ordinary mortals they sought their Guru, hiding their nature and their knowledge. They pleased their Guru by their devotion and modesty and Sandipani taught them all the Vedas and sciences and arts.

सकृन्निगदमात्रेणैव संजगृह्णतुर्गुरुः ।

अहोरात्रैश्चतुःषष्ट्याः सयत्ताः तावतीः कलाः ॥

Bhagavata X. 45-35.

Their educational career was one of phenomenal brilliance. What their teacher said only once they grasped immediately. In sixty-four days they completed as many arts.

In the same hermitage and undergoing instruction at the same time was a Brahmin boy named Sudama. An inexplicable accident of life gave to this poor and obscure youth the company of Sri Krishna during his school days. And a rare good luck gave him the capacity to understand Sri Krishna's identity, a privilege denied to many greater than he. All the same, their mutual association in the Gurukula of Sandipani was free and intimate. In the democracy of school life distinctions were levelled and minds communed with one another without reserve. Both were treated equally by their teacher and shared equally the joys and adventures of gurukula.

Part of the discipline of discipleship in ancient India was service in the house of the teacher. One day Krishna and Sudama were asked by the master's wife to bring firewood. When they were returning after gathering fuel from the neighbouring forest they were overtaken by a storm. In thunder, lightning, and rain they lost their way and after wandering hand in hand for a time spent the lonely night in the

forest. Next morning the anxious Guru set out in search of his lost pupils. Discovering them in that sad plight his heart was touched, and he blessed them in affection and gratitude.

अहोहे पुत्रका यूयमस्मदर्थं ऽतिदुःखिनाः

एतदेव हि सच्छिष्यैः कर्तव्यं गुरुनिष्कृतम् ।

तुष्टोऽहं भेद्विजश्रेष्ठाः सत्याः सन्तु मनोरथाः ।

छन्दांस्ययातयामानि भवन्ति व ह परत्र च ॥

Bhagavata IX. 80-40, 41 & 42.

My brave lads, you have faced peril for my sake. You have acted up to the highest traditions of discipleship. May your heart's desires be fulfilled. May you have unfading memory of the Vedas. In the chequered chart of Sudama's destiny this blessing had a unique fulfillment. And Krishna was the fulfiller.

Years passed. To Sri Krishna these were years of strife, adventure, and ascendancy. At the end of them, he found himself reigning in splendour as King of Dwaraka. To his whilom classmate the future was neither exciting nor prosperous. His was the lot of the poor brahmin, the rendering of meek adoration to household gods in the sphere of common duties. But it was a sore trial in two ways. Penury dogged his footsteps. To add to the affliction came an ever growing family. In the providential distribution of gifts in this world the share of Sudama consisted of poverty and its consequential ordeals, with mental detachment and restraint as compensations. Shut out from the race for wealth by the vows of his caste, Sudama had to extend his acquisitions in the realms of patience and long suffering. Mated to a wife of equal virtue he eked out a famished livelihood with such things as chance brought in his way. It was a trying process. Sudama sank deeper and deeper in the bottomless mire of economic distress. Joy gave place to depression. The terrible pressure of want gradually transformed young Sudama into a Kuchela, a man in rags. Such was the class mate of Krishna when we meet him in our story.

कृष्णस्यासीत् सखा कश्चिद्ब्राह्मणो ब्रह्मवित्तमः

विरक्तइन्द्रियार्थेषु प्रशान्तात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ॥

यदच्छयोपपन्नेन वर्तमानो गृहाश्रमी ।

तस्य भार्या कुचैलस्य क्षुत्क्षामा च तथा विधा ॥

Bhagavata X 80.6 & 7.

(To be continued)

REVIEW.

(1) The Message of the Gita

by

PROF D. S. SARMA. M.A.,

(M. R. Seshan Publisher, Triplicane, Madras.)

According to Professor Sarma the Gita is a Yoga Sastra, a gospel of spiritual life in all its phases. 'In a hundred different ways it points out the increasing happiness of Yoga or union with God gained through service, love and knowledge, and the increasing misery of Kama or mere self-centred desire. The soul which is of divine origin can have peace and rest only in a world of spirit, where it can have harmony, permanence and freedom, and not in this world which is full of strife and change and bondage. The path of Yoga with its well-known stages of Karma, Bhakti and Jnana leads, us up into that spiritual world, while we are still remaining in this, whereas the path of Sanga or attachment, with its equally well-known stages of Kama and Lobha, and Krodha leads us only down and down into the whirlpool of Samsara. In other words, when a man eradicates his desires based on the delusive notion of an exclusive individuality and trains his heart to flow out in love and sympathy towards all beings and looks upon the faithful discharge of his duties as the highest form of worship of God, he treads the path of light which leads him to his true home.'

The Message of the Gita is an ancient quest. In the old days it was only the few who were able to speak or write about it. In modern India we have gained the faith to express our feelings about it, with courage and reverence. The Gita is now practically the gospel of leading thinkers and workers. All profess adherence to it. Many find enough in it to inspire, to console, and to guide. More are anxious to read and understand it for themselves. At such a time an address like this by one who has thought and pondered over its meanings and dwelt in the atmosphere of the great book is a valuable contribution satisfying a felt want.

By those who have read the Bhagavad Gita as a book of daily devotions the address will be liked for its balanced distribution of emphasis and for its careful selection of thoughts and texts. To those less intimate the address gives an attractive introduction to its study and a correct attitude of approach to its teachings.

The Peace Maker

This is a monthly English Magazine published in Madras and is an advocate of Islam in South India. The August number of this magazine is an interesting issue containing contributions on aspects of Islam and on its present condition. Non-muslims will enjoy the freshness and faith with which the writers approach the question. The tenets of Islam deserve to be more correctly and widely known than they are at present by non-Muslims. It is a matter for rejoicing that Muslims are presenting their religion in a form that will help those who are not of their faith to appreciate the great truths and traditions of Islam. In this land of many religions a proper understanding of one another's religion is a civic duty the fulfilment of which will reduce the incidence of communal discord that is a lamentable feature of the present times.

Report on the working of Bharata Dharma

1931-32

This report is confined to the period during which the Arya Mata Sabha assumed management of the journal. During this period our late Brother Mr. Rajaram continued to be actively associated in the editorship until his passing over in February 1932, after which Mr. T. S. Swaminatha Aiyar joined the editorship. The journal continued to be edited on lines found effective by previous experience. The articles that have appeared are all of them original contributions to the journal. They cover a wide ground and include exposition of the Upanishads, translation of hymns, anecdotes from the Puranas and Ithihasas, and sketches of the lives of Saints. Attention was devoted to relate the teachings of the Gita and the Upanishads to contemporary conditions. A special feature of last year has been the publication of contributions which emphasised the need for re-adjustment of the Hindu Faith, and the methods of such re-adjustment. The journal has also emphasised the paramount need at the present day for the translation of religious faith into religious practice through communal service.

Among the contributors to the journal have been many leading men and women whose assistance alone has made the work possible. That the journal does fulfil a need is testified to by the appreciations that have been received, and in some cases published in the columns of the journal. Difficulties do exist, and steady effort in the future will be required to preserve and to enlarge the place of usefulness which the journal has secured.

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