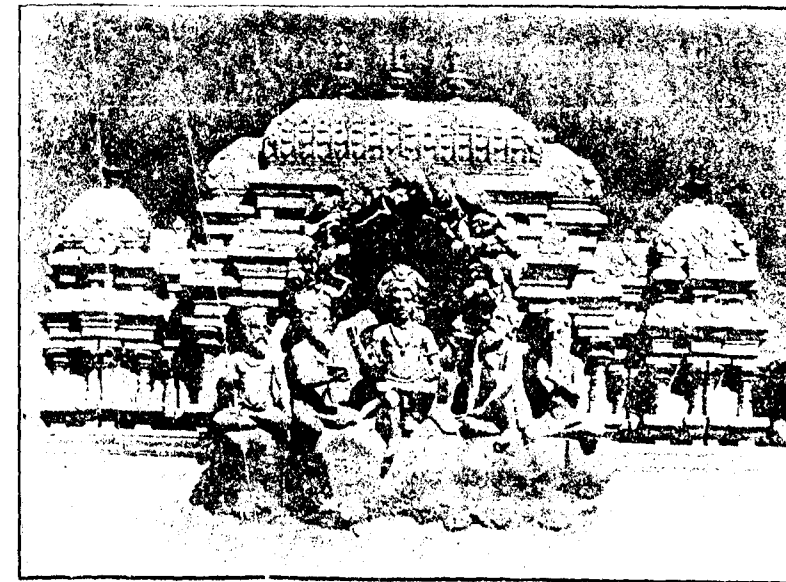


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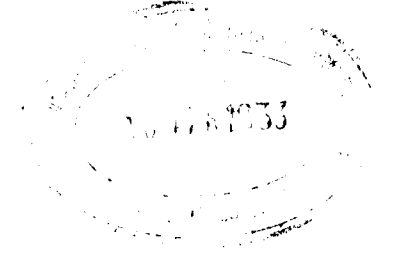
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[No. 12]



गुणेस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ॥

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[NOS. 12

AN ISLAMIC NAMAVALI*

By

K. V. SESA IYENGAR.

Chanting the names of God is a familiar form of worship in Hinduism. Many hymns both in sanskrit and in the vernacular are no more than a string of names. Take for instance the following :

कृष्णानन्तमुकुन्दमुगरे वामनमाधवगोविन्द ।

श्रीधरकेशवराधवविष्णोलक्ष्मीनायकनरसिंह ॥

The Great Saint Kulasekara bewails that people have not devotion enough to do even such a simple act as saying Ananta, Vaikunta etc. and calls upon his tongue to sing the praises of God. At first sight it seems doubtful that there can be any spiritual merit in a verbal exercise. If the recitation of god's names is no more than a parrot-like reproduction of sounds then the doubt is amply justified. 'Words without thought never to Heaven go.' But to the devotee who sings hymns names or merely an accompaniment for continuous concentration upon the personality of

***Pearls of Faith**

Islams' Rosary

Being the Ninety Nine Names of Allah with coments in verse from various sources (as made by an Indian Mussalman) by Sir Edwin Arnold author of "Light of Asia" First published in 1882 Indian Edition Published by Mr. T. S. Swaminadhan, M.A., B.L. Advocate "Moryalaya" Royapetta, Madras.

God. Where he understands their meaning, it becomes real worship. Even where he does not it is an attempt to contact Divine Presence in the mental and emotional atmosphere he creates for himself through such recitation. Many of the names stand for particular attributes of God. Many of them remind us of the legends that have grown up around His interference in human affairs. They recall to our minds the infinite mercy of God, or His love, power forbearance, or his intervention for the righting of wrong and for the relief of distress. It can hardly be doubted that meditation upon these qualities is a spiritual exercise of value. So it has come to be that most religions lay emphasis upon the spiritual merit of repetitions. The Bhagavata says मनस्त्यजतिदोग्ध्रं चिन्तितस्यानुचिन्तया । The mind sheds its dross by constant thinking (upon high things). Nama-samkirtana or, recitation of names, has been heightened to the position of a Yajna in the Kali age, यज्ञस्मेकीर्तनं प्रायेयजन्ति, people worship through the recitation of names in the Kali Yuga. Possibly owing to the evolution of humanity during the preceeding yugas, Divine Presence has become so intimate that mere calling upon the name of God brings it near to us.

We may trace these ideas to the Gita and to the Upanishads. Nama-samkirtana is a form of Tapas. Both the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads proclaim this, स्वाध्यायाभ्यासेन चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते. The recitation of holy texts is Tapas through speech says the Gita. स्वाध्यायप्रवचनेवेति तस्मिन्मोक्षद्वयः तद्धितपः तद्धितपः 'Svadhyaaya and Pravachana alone constitute Tapas says Naka son of Mudgala'. Hence the emphasis upon Svadhaya throughout the ancient sacred literature. स्वाध्यायान्मात्रमदः 'Do not swerve from holy recitation, enjoins the teacher upon the pupil about the enter into the tumultuous concourse of life.

In Hindu Hymonology the Vishnu Sahasranama holds the premier place. Among many sections of Hindus its recitation is part of the daily evening worship. Its merit and its beauty have attracted attention of the great Sri Sankara Bhagavad Pada and induced him to write a commentary upon it. Saint and sinner alike recite it, the one for exaltation the other for redemption. It is usually invoked for protection from disease and danger and for relief in sorrow and suffering. "What is the highest Dharma? By which recitation can a man break the bonds of Samsara?" asked Yudhishtira of Bhishma and elicited the reply 'The recitation of the thousand names of God which I am going to reveal to you'.

It is therefore a matter of considerable interest that the Prophet of Islam has enjoined his followers to "celebrate Alla with an abundant

celebration" by repeating the "99 beautiful names of Alla". The Pearls of the Faith or 'Islam's Rosary' is a collection of the 99 names "with some illustrative legend, tradition, record or comment drawn from diverse oriental sources." To those familiar with the charm of the Song Celestial, and with the haunting melody of the Light of Asia this book will make a special appeal. Sir Edwin Arnold has in this book presented the general spirit of Islam under a new and not unacceptable form. As he says in the preface 'the Soul of Islam is its declaration of the unity of God; its heart, is the inculcation of an absolute resignation to His will'. Those interested in the Koran will find in this book many of the religious ideas of the holy book presented 'in the simple familiar and credulous but earnest spirit and manner of Islam.'

Those acquainted with the Vishnu Sahasranama will be able to recall to their minds parallell words for many of the names occuring in the rosary. e. g.

1. Al-Kuddus	"The Holy one"	पूतात्मा
2. As-Salam	"The Peace"	शान्तिः
3. Al-Alim	"The All Knower"	सर्वज्ञः
4. Al-Bazir	"The All Seeing"	सर्वदर्शी
5. Al-Aziz	"The Strong"	महाबलः
6. Al-Mukit	"The Maintainer"	भर्ता
7. Al-Wahid	"The One"	एकः
8. An-Noor	"The Light"	तेजः
9. Al-Hadi	"The Guide"	नेता
10. Az-Zaboor	"The Patient"	सहिष्णुः

The great Prophet's exhortation to recite such names is an assurance of the possibility of spiritual progress through elementary devotional exercises which are accessible to all with-out distinction.

A special word of praise is due to the publisher, Mr. T. S. Swaminadhan, and to the printers G. S. Press, Leno Printers Madras for the beautiful get up and printing of the book. No pains have been spared to make the book worthy of the ideas which it contains and to make the reading of the book not merely an instruction but also a pleasure in the physical sense.

INDIA AND THE MODERN WORLD

BY T.L. VASWANI

I note brief answers to questions recently asked me :—

Q. What do you emphasise in your ideal of reform?

A. More than social *programme* is *shuddh bhavona* (purity of motive). The *motive* matters more than *organisation*. Therefore reform, like charity, must begin at home. If I am to serve society, I must begin by *reforming* myself. Vibrations of a man tell more than his words or "works".

Q. You talk of the wisdom of the Rishis. Don't you think. Hinduism, even at its best, Higher Hinduism has had its day?

A. I hardly think so. Hindu vitality is not ended. The wisdom of the Rishis is like the sun, ancient yet renewed again and again. The sun is ancient, yet has not passed away. Higher Hinduism has a living quality which does not decay but shows forth its shut-in-splendours more and more as the centuries run. The Hindu Dharma has shown a wonderful power of assimilation and adaptation in the modern world. And this because it is not an "ism" not a "creed", not a "ritual", not a *shastraic* theology, not a scriptural code, not a book-bounded belief. The Hindu Dharma is a *darshan* and a *jivan*, an *insight* and a *life*. Priests cannot imprison it, not covers of books. The Hindu *Dharma* is neither parchments nor customs. Again and again has the Hindu *Dharma* seemed about to sink: but just then has it come up again, and periods of its trial have been the very beginnings of its newer and bigger developments. For a long time, the evil of untouchability had discredited it. To-day it is passing through a new process of self-purification and enrichment. In the words of an ancient poet:—"A breath of God is within it". The wisdom of the Rishis has, I am convinced, a message to the modern world.

Q. What do you think is the greatest need of the nation's youth?

A. Self-knowledge and self-discipline. We hear of "youth revolt". This "revolt" is, largely, "imitation" of the west. Self-knowledge and self-discipline will achieve emancipation from "imitation". In this period of impact of the west upon the East, India's youths will do well to *know* carefully and critically of the great ideals which have inspired India through the ages and to control their impulses and appetites.

reveal its true character only in exile. India has a spiritual mission; and Russia in her peasants, with their instinctive love of the artistic and simple, may yet vindicate spiritual values. Out of the heart are the issues of life; and the heart of man, in West as in East, is hungry for God.

Q. To whom look you for India's achievement in the coming days?

A. To the little, noble army of men and women who, rich in the wealth of renunciation, worship the Cross in daily life and proclaim the *mantra* :—"I am of the *Atman*, and the *Atman* is unconquerable."

" In discourse more sweet,
For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,
Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, fore knowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, fore knowledge absolute;
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy:
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.

PARADISE LOST.

AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY.

T. V. GOPALASWAMY AIYAR, B. A.

(Retired Deputy Collector and Publicist.)

I have to express at once my utmost disapproval of the action of the higher classes. The action of the higher classes towards them is not moral. One of the causes of India's subordinate position is their treatment by the caste-people. Of course, during the last some decades, moral conscience has been aroused and there have been movements started in many places to uplift them by education &c. The Olcott Panchama schools started in many places in Madras, such as Adyar, Kodambakam &c., by Col. Olcott, the President Founder of the Theosophical society and the work of the other Indian reformers belonging to the class of Caste-Hindus and the work of the Christian missionaries and others have contributed largely to create in them a sense of self-respect and raise to some extent their social status. Hard work is carried on by many Indian reformers to wean them from many of their evil customs, such as drink &c. There is very little doubt that in the course of a few years they will be more or less on a level with the caste-Hindus. The Hindu religion is emphatic in enunciating the principle that all human beings are brothers and sisters and that it is the duty of the more-knowing to treat the less-knowing as younger brothers and help them in a way, similar to that which an elder brother of a Hindu family has to adopt towards his younger brothers. The neglect of the caste people to discharge this duty of theirs has led to the enslavement of the caste people by others. God is the Father of all human beings and therefore, He is the Father of all,—Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vysias, Sudras, Adi-Dravidas, Adi-Andhras &c., by whatever name the depressed classes may be called.

Therefore, it is the duty of every caste-Hindu to see that his younger brother of the depressed classes is socially and morally helped to express himself as best as he can and rise to his full stature. Until this is willingly done by the caste-Hindus, the slavery of the Indian nation in some form or other will continue. It is sad to contemplate the Temple satyagraha movements, carried on in some places. Why should there be any such movement? I saw an article some days ago in "The Hindu" by a 'sanatana dharmite' and I was pained to read it. It was full of the presumption that temples and the Deity in them existed solely for the higher classes. He seems to think that the worship of the deity in the Hindu temples is the monopoly of the caste-Hindus, because it has been the 'custom', and there need not be any innovation. In India, and of

course else-where also in this world, (because it is easy to follow without thinking and thinking originally along unaccustomed lines is rather a hard task) custom is invoked to support any unmeaning and cruel action. Let us think rationally and consider why the depressed classes should be excluded from temple worship when they want it and unnecessary bad blood created? Is the claim unsastraic or unreasonable? It is wrong to plead custom and it is not a proper test. Several customs which have been inhuman, immoral and cruel and practised in the name of religion have long ago disappeared and some are disappearing. Was there not the inhuman custom of "suttee"? Were there not human sacrifices? Was there not slavery? Was there not dedication of minor girls to temples? Have not all these been abolished? Has the Hindu society or any other society or country, which had slavery and animal sacrifices, gone backward, because of the abolition of the immoral and cruel practices? In the same way, the abolition of this custom of excluding the depressed classes from temples, hitherto used only by the caste-Hindus, will in no way bring about any catastrophe. On the other hand, it will bring about a rare amount of gratitude and goodwill on their part towards the caste people and create true love between the Hindus of all classes. It is sectarianism and superstition (and superstition is always meaningless) that has brought about discord in the Hindu community, comprising different castes and sub-castes. What was the rationale for the exclusion of the depressed classes from temples? Let us look at the problem using common sense. The aid of these people is invoked on the occasion of car festivals to drag cars in which the 'idol' is placed. Has their touch of the cars rendered the 'Deity' impure? In the case of temple entry and worship, these people do not claim to go into the sanctum sanctorum for worship. They only want entry into the temple where from they can see the 'Deity' and offer their worship. God who is all pure can not be rendered impure by their presence in the precincts of the temple. He is every where and equally in the heart of the depressed classes as in the heart of the saintliest brahmins.

They are as much the sons of God, Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient, as any other, including the holiest Saint. The Lord Sri Krishna says :—

"Sages look equally on a brahmana adorned with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, and even a dog and an outcaste.

Gita v 18.

"Seated equally in all beings, the supreme Lord, unperishing within the perishing he who thus seeth, he seeth. Gita, xiii, 28.

"The Lord dwelleth in the heart of all beings, by His illusive power (Maya) causing all beings, to revolve, as though mounted on a potter's wheel." Gita, xviii, 61.

Many more quotations can be given from the sacred scriptures, truly sacred and not pseudo-sacred. While such is the teaching of the Sanatana Dharma, what is the objection to a depressed class member being allowed to worship in the temples where Idols are kept only as an external symbol of the Omnipresent Father? If it is contended that he is not clean and so forth (and I believe this is the basis for the origin of the custom), by all means, let the condition be laid that he must purify himself by bath, wear clean clothes & c., such conditions, as any reasonably minded person will surely accept. The conditions which are observed by the caste people, he may be asked to conform to. If the priest so desires, let him be allowed to offer the oblations himself. But I am of opinion it is unreasonable to deny him the right to worship in any temple, provided he satisfies the reasonable conditions imposed on him. I know of one temple where every one, of any caste, of any community of any race, is permitted to take part in worship, provided he accepts the conditions which are laid down; and they are applicable to all, without any distinction. There is more power of God manifested in that temple than elsewhere. It is called the temple of Light, situated in the precincts of Adyar, Madras. My sincere prayer is that the people may have the wisdom to accommodate themselves to the existing changing circumstances and will use more commonsense and not be blindly superstitious. These are days of democracy. Any one who has eyes to observe, will see that Empires ruled by such autocrats as the Czar of all Russia and the Kaiser of Germany have changed their forms of government and the autocratic rulers have been mercilessly expelled or otherwise dealt with. There are also other instances.

What is the lesson? The Almighty God intends that the autocratic rule should end everywhere and there should be a general mass awakening and the individuals, communities and nations should be able to express their life fully and freely and not be curbed or suppressed. A wise person studies the situation and helps the individual, communal and national growth along the lines intended by the will of God, as manifested in the expression of His life. Fighting against the plan of God and trying to go against His Will is simply foolish. In this connection it will do well

to remember the Teachings of the Lord Sri Krishna.—The substance of the teaching of the XI Chapter of the Bhagavat Gita is "He was Time incarnate, laying desolate the world, made manifest on earth to slay mankind; because, the kings were Asuras incarnate as kings but Asuras in their action. As the warriors ranged on both the sides had already been killed by Him (i.e. as their death had been already determined by the Lord), Arjuna would have an easy time. He had only to fight and they would all fall dead and he would have no trouble to conquer them. His divine form was also shown where Arjuna found that his enemies had already been vanquished." This teaching clearly shows that the Lord has a plan and that His plan is carried out, and wise people willingly co-operate with Him in carrying out the Plan as Arjuna did.

The Lord is now bringing about democratic rule every where and all those who study the trend of events and work unselfishly along the line which is patent to every keen and unselfish observer, without distinction of sex, creed, caste, colour, race &c., aiming at the welfare of all, will succeed in their attempts. All attempts to the contrary will end in ignoble failure, because, He has willed and His will must prevail.

But the past is past—with all its pride—
And its ways are not our ways :
We watch the Flow of a Fresher Tide,
And the Dawn of Newer Days.

GAMBLING IN THE RACE-COURSE.*(Contributed.)*

The plan outlined by Dean Inge about a year ago in a broadcast speech on "what I would do with the world for bringing about an Utopia within 20 years" deserves serious consideration of all well-wishers of our country and particularly the members of the several legislative bodies. I would particularly invite their attention to the following observation therein:—

"Betting and gambling would be suppressed as a greater source of national vice than drunkenness."

The vice of gambling has of late assumed enormous proportions and has become quite fashionable particularly in connection with horse races which have become a regular feature in the activities of many important cities both in British India and in the Indian States. It is a fashionable vice patronised by the swells of the Society, official and non-official, following the distinguished lead of Viceroys and Governors who not only present valuable cups in token of their patronage of the races, but also observe their going to the races on their cup day as a State function by driving with all the paraphernalia attached thereto. It is responsible for having brought ruin and disaster to millions of families in almost all grades of society. Confining myself to this Presidency, Madras, its disastrous effects were not lost sight of by the Local Legislature, but unfortunately the remedy it devised has only touched the fringe of the question. The Anti-gambling Act which it enacted about two years ago has prevented gambling in bucket shops in connection with horse races in the Presidency Town and in the mofussil; but it has not prevented gambling in the commodious buildings specially provided therefor on the Race-Course itself. The ample facilities provided by the Race Club for the free and unfettered indulgence of this too tempting pastime by persons of both sexes in all grades of society, and the sympathetic support of the Railway authorities in providing Race Specials in abundance on Race days from the City to the Race-Course at Guindy will naturally lead the common-folk to think that betting on horses is not there treated as gambling or as a vice at all, but merely as a contribution to a worthy object. The direct result of the legislation, therefore, has been not to diminish materially the scope for gambling on horses but merely to concentrate and intensify the gambling in the premises of the Race Club itself and for the exclusive benefit of that Club and the professional bookies who carry on their operations in those premises. Now,

if gambling is a vice which ought to be checked it is so wherever it is practised and one cannot understand the logic of prohibiting it outside the Race-Course but of allowing, if not also indirectly encouraging it, on the Race-course itself. The vice of gambling is no doubt a cosmopolitan vice and has been present in some form or other in all countries; but gambling in connection with horse-races is not one which is indigenous to this country. It has been imported from Europe where it is a favourite pastime, and as far as the large mass of people here are concerned, it has been even more prejudicial to the well-being of the country than the alcoholic drinks which have also been largely introduced from the same source. As an economic concern, horses are of less value in this country than in Europe where they are used for ploughing lands; and race horses in particular are hardly of any utility, especially as motor vehicles have practically supplanted vehicles drawn by horses. Anybody who pays a visit to the races at the Race-Course cannot but realise that out of the very large crowds that assemble there for the races, at least 99 per cent do not know anything about horses and do not care for the development of fleet-horses; their sole object in attending the races is gambling. It is also well known that this vice is responsible for good many crimes committed for securing the money which is to be utilised for gambling. It is a great pity that no effort has been made so far to arrest the vice itself at its Headquarters which can be done only by preventing gambling altogether. It is interesting to note the views of the Ancient Law-giver Manu on this question and what he considers to be the duty of the ruler with regard to it:—

"Gambling and betting let the King exclude from his realm; those two vices cause the destruction of Kingdoms and princes".

"Gambling and betting amount to open theft; the King shall always exert himself in suppressing both (of them)".

He says further that the King should corporally punish not only those who gamble or bet, but also those who afford an opportunity for it, and should also instantly banish from his town gamblers and sellers of spirituous liquors. (Vide Sacred Books of the East Vol. 25 at pages 380 and 381). The ancient Hindu sage and the modern English Dean agree in their emphatic condemnation of this vice. That gambling, in whatever form it may be practised, is a vice fraught with disastrous consequences to the community at large and that to suppress it is a duty which the State owes to its citizens are evident from the many Police raids which are made for the detection of gamblers in the city and their subsequent prosecution and punishment therefor, which we

find reported from time to time in the Newspapers. But the culprits thus dealt with belong to the scum of society who gamble on a petty scale in obscure and—unfrequented corners of the City. That such persons should be punished, while gambling in the open by a large mass of people on a gigantic scale is not only allowed but looked upon as legitimate if not also commendable is like “straining at a gnat after swallowing a camel”. It is very unfortunate that while foreign vices are so easily introduced and copied to the material and moral ruin of large masses of the people of this country, the many good things in their culture and civilisation, which if adopted will prove highly beneficial to our country, have practically been ignored and have had little effect.

From Federated India.

“Things that to one generation seemed to be essential parts of a permanent structure are treated by the next as mere scaffolding. The quest of truth goes on endlessly, ardently, fruitfully. And yet with every gain of knowledge we realize more clearly that we can never really know. To understand, as Einstein lately said, is to draw one incomprehensible out of another incomprehensible. From time to time we discover a fresh relation between observed phenomena but each of the things which are found to be related continues to evade our full comprehension; and that is apparently the only kind of discovery we can achieve. Our joy in the quest itself never fails; we are constantly learning that it is better to travel than to arrive.

Sir Arthur Ewing.

KUCHELA

K. V. SESA AIYANGAR

(Continued from page 122 Vol. X. No. 6.)

A FATEFUL MORNING

In the uneventful course of Sudama's life and at a point where physical wants pressed exceptionally hard there came a turn. How shall we explain it? Good things in the physical world have their ultimate source in the unexplored realms of thought. It was from these realms that an idea came one day into the mind of Sudama's partner in life. To her the burden of the family must have been a heavy responsibility. Her discharge of domestic duties must have been a real Tapas. As if in response to that Tapas, it dawned upon her mind that there should be a way out of her difficulties. She had heard at some time that Sri Krishna who was then reigning as King of Dwaraka was a class-mate of her husband. Krishna was a Brahmanya Deva and a Brahmana Priya. Krishna was giving gifts to Brahmins. He has given a pledge that he will secure all the conditions necessary for security in yoga to those who worship him.

‘Turning not elsewhere with minds set fast.’

Why should not her husband therefore seek relief at the hands of Sri Krishna? So with faded face and trembling frame, bending under the weight of unbearable poverty she approached her husband and said:

ननु ब्रह्मन्भगवतः सखासाक्षाच्छ्रियः पतिः

ब्रह्मण्यश्च शरण्यश्च भगवान्सात्वतर्षभः

तमुपैहि महाभाग साधूनां च परायणं ।

दास्यति द्विगुणं भूरि सीदते ते कुटुंबिने ॥

Is not the Lord of Lakshmi your friend? Is he not the friend and refuge of Brahmins? Why don't you approach him who is the support of the good? Knowing your distress he is sure to give us considerable wealth.

स्मरतः पादकमलमात्मानमपियच्छति ।

He gives even Himself to those who worship His Feet.

In Kuchela's mind the suggestion took an entirely different shape. Evidently it must have been like this “Sri Krishna, yes, he was my class-mate and is my friend. It did not strike me that I should go and see him. Thanks for the prompting,

अयं हि परमो लाभः उत्तमं श्लोकदर्शनं ।

'Is not this the highest gain that I get a vision of the Lord?' So saying he asked his wife whether there was any thing in the house that he can take to Krishna as a present. That was a further problem to his wife. She went out and begged four handfuls of pounded rice from neighbours and tied it up in a rag and gave it to her husband. With this present in his arm Kuchela started on what was to be a fateful trip. In the mind of his wife the existence of the family entirely depended upon the issue of the trip. Was Kuchela indifferent towards family responsibilities? By no means. But to beg for earthly favours from Sri Krishna was to him unthinkable. He was not unwilling to accept relief but would never make it the object of his visit. To this day an unresolved conflict rages in every devotee's mind as to the propriety of seeking earthly gifts in the presence of God. It is one of the interesting fact of spiritual experience that a worshipper who recognises that all that he has and gets is through the grace of God, is not always able to co-ordinate the contact of Divine presence and the request for earthly favours.

The finding of one generation will not serve the next. It tarnishes rapidly except it be preserved with the ever renewed spirit of seeking.

Creeds assert in outworn phraseology beliefs which are no longer held or which longer convey an inspiration to life.

Edgington.

" OF THOUGHTS "

by

DREAMER

Our entire life is pervaded by thought. Every one of us is living in his own thought atmosphere. This atmosphere moulds his personality. Action or inaction and the quality of action depends on that atmosphere.

A large percentage of humanity live in the thought atmosphere as they do in the physical atmosphere without troubling themselves about it. Like the pressure of the physical atmosphere the pressure of thought is by them unfelt. To them has not come the knowledge of the possibilities of change. There are no questionings in their mind; no discontent with things as they are.

* * * * *

Thought is not inert. Physical science tells us that even the molecules of the air are in constant agitation with great velocity. The mobility of thought must be immensely greater. Thought has this peculiarity that it can suddenly get refined or become coarse. Also, refined thoughts attract more refined thoughts. That is how thought grows. We build our mental home so to speak thought by thought. Often times in the early stages good thoughts are constantly swept away by the surging currents of coarse thoughts. But with effort and with persistence they can be given a permanent place in the mind. One more quality is needed and that is *वैराग्य* that is to say the resistance to the assailing currents of muddy passions.

* * * * *

Thought culture is a fascinating occupation; voluntary and deliberate thought culture. With a little steady effort we can vastly improve the quality of our thoughts. We are sure to enjoy the effort when we adopt it. It is like spending a little time each day on the terrace of a house above the deafening din and confusing excitement of ground floor life.

* * * * *

Mental life is not one of idleness. It cannot be so in the very nature of things. It is one of intense activity in the thought world. There are thoughts which like flowers are fragrant and beautiful to behold and to contact. There are thoughts which are like tiny seeds and which take root in the mind and extend into emotional and physical life. They are like the tree "with roots above and branches below".

* * * * *

Thought growth is like some of those earthly trees every part of which has its use, root, bark, fibre, leaves, flowers and fruit. Thought colours our speech and action. It bids us speak and be silent. It prompts us to do things and restrains us from action. It diffuses through our emotions transforming their quality. In the thought world it spreads out in rich foliage and flower and fruit. The tree of thought spreads its branches above and below. Life period by life period it grows until no one knows its form or its origin or its end.

The interaction between mental and physical conditions is an interesting study. Thought has to be expressed in the physical world through the physical medium. Its growth in its own world is equally dependant upon the allegiance it is able to secure from a good physical body amidst good physical surroundings.

Unhealthy bodies and bad environment cannot express a good thought adequately. They cannot also enable one to live healthy mental life in the thought world. It is a vicious circle which can be broken only with effort. Good thoughts breed good life. Good life breeds good thoughts.

It is easier to break the circle by beginning with improving ones thought.

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THE GAYATRI

BY

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What is the Gayatri? Literally interpreted it means the song of salvation. Loosely rendered in to English its substance is as follows :— Pervading the Three Worlds is a Power lustrous as the light of the Sun. That, we adore in reverent worship. May it fill our minds with life.

The invocation of the Gayatri implies an affirmation of our faith in the purposiveness of the world process and in our capacity to establish touch with it in our lives. Those who have spent their lives in the daily worship of the Gayatri can hardly imagine a life in which Gayatri has no place. With the life of the God pulsating around us on every side how can we be content with being inert masses of clay. With the light of the sun of intelligence shining upon us how can we prefer the darkness of animal existence? Without intermission and without end vibrates the Divine life.

It maketh and unmaketh mending all.

It seeth everywhere and marketh all.

None can turn it aside or stay.

In such a position which is the better course? To reject the life which is to be had for the asking or to accept and to use the priceless gift that is freely given? Why should we not open our minds to its influence and let it stream into and through our lives? Why should we close the door to its entrance, or receiving it try to lock it up in ourselves. We cannot lose it or exhaust it. Nor can we deny it to another. It is a perennial and inexhaustible current accessible to all who seek it. In allegiance to Gayatri is our line of growth. Step by step it helps us to grow. From birth to birth it leads us in the long journey of evolution. It gives and takes from us according to the measure of our attainments. Happy are they who seek it. Happier those whom it seeks and uses. It can function without us. We can function as mean only with it.

By our meditation we invoke it. By thought the contact is made. Does the result stop with a mere enlargement of mental vision? Is it

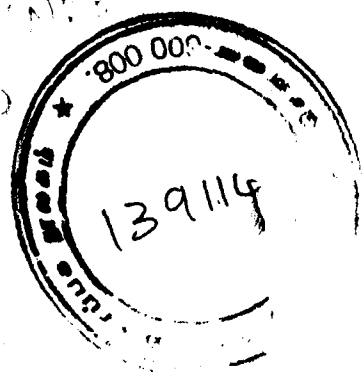
merely a temporary elevation into the dizzy heights from which we survey the world process against infinite back ground of time? Does the power energise all functions equally whether good or bad? Or is there a discrimination in its choice? In its meditation are we ourselves generating energy which goes into the general reservoir of power that directs the world?

* * * * *

This is a fact of experience that we feel at peace with life through the Gayatri. We feel one with the world process. We feel that we are being used by a higher agency for our betterment and that we are using ourselves and that power for betterment of the world.

* * * * *

Let us yield ourselves to the Gayatri. There is no alternative. If we invoke it, it grips us. We cannot pray for illumination and shun light. We cannot ask for stimulus and prefer inertia. It cannot be. We therefore attract the Gayatri at our peril. We are bound to be awakened from the mental slumber of animal life. Gradually but inevitably we shall loose those pleasures and enjoyments which through the heritage of animal evolution we have come to count as part of ourselves. The wrench from them is perhaps one of the most painful chapters in human evolution. Birth after birth this operation extends with much struggle and failure and bleeding and laceration of the heart. It is then we have the stage "the evil I would not that I do; the good I would, that I do not." Then comes a stage when even rest is denied, rest which fills up so much of "animal time." We have to face a period of restless activity in one sphere or another.



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So calm, so happy was the time.

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