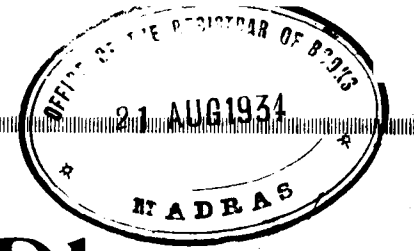


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Honorary Editors : { C. V. Krishnaswami Ayyar,
K. V. Sesha Ayyangar.

VOL. XII]

JULY, 1934

[No. 4



On the front parapet of THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT, Adyar

चित्तं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धा शिष्या गुरुर्युवा ।

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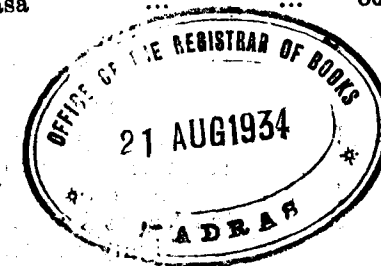
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THE BHARATA DHARMA

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VOL. XII]

JULY, 1934

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SANATANA DHARMA AND ITS PRACTICE

" Samskaras "

By

T. V. GOPALASWAMI AIYAR.

I have explained in my previous article, published in this Journal for June 1934, how Dharma has decayed, in spite of the fact that there were three Avatars since the beginning of the Kaliyuga and many others of smaller greatness have also glorified India by their births. I have now to take up a few of the Samskaras for consideration and show how they are not Samskaras, but dead traditions without life, that they have degraded the life of those who perform them, nay poisoned their life and that it is therefore absolutely necessary that people should soon wake up, see the defects and once more make earnest attempts to revive their culture and Spirituality.

Samskaras:—What are Samskaras? what takes place when any samskara is performed and how should it be performed?

Certain general principles underlie all religious ceremonies and they must be clearly grasped; some of the important ones are:—

Man is a Jivatma, encased in various sheaths (kosas), each being related to one of the visible or invisible worlds and therefore also to its inhabitants. He is thus in touch with these worlds and in continuous contact with them. The worlds with which man is chiefly concerned are Bhautika, Manasika, and Samskara and there are also four other worlds.

more subtle than these. Any man, who knows 'the Vyahritis' prefixed to Gayatri knows all these seven at least by name.

The Jivatma and Prakriti are in a state of unceasing vibration; these vibrations vary in rapidity, regularity and complexity.

The vibrations of the Jivatma are rapid and regular, becoming more and more complicated as he unfolds his powers.

The Jivatma endeavours to impose his own vibrations on his sheaths, so that they may respond to him and work harmoniously with him; but he is frustrated in his attempts, owing among others, to the vibrations of matter in the worlds around him.

He may be very much assisted in his labours by the setting up of vibrations which are in harmony with his own efforts.

There are a few more principles and all these must be studied and understood thoroughly to comprehend fully the purpose of the samskaras, in addition to certain special facts mentioned below, a knowledge of which also is necessary.

What is a mantra? It is a sequence of sounds, and these sounds also are vibrations (matras) so that the chanting of a mantra sets up a certain series of vibrations. A sound gives rise to a definite form, and a series of pictures is made by successive (musical) notes. Thus the forms created, by a mantra depend on the notes on which the mantra is chanted; the mantra, as it is chanted, gives rise to a series of forms in Bhuvarloka, Suvarloka etc. The force with which the mantra can affect outside objects in the visible or invisible worlds depends on the *purity, devotion, knowledge, and will-power* of the utterer.

The repeated recitation of a mantra gradually dominates the vibrations going on in the sheaths and reduces them all to a regular rhythm, corresponding to its own. Hence the feeling of peace and calm which follows on the correct recitation of a mantra.

The name of a Deva or other Being, mentioned in a mantra, sets up vibrations similar to those present in the Deva and his sheaths, and, as the mantra is repeated many times with cumulative effect, the sheaths of the utterer gradually repeat these vibrations with ever increasing force.

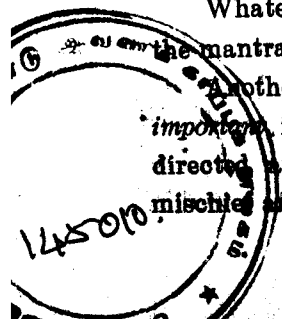
Whatever the Devata concerned with a mantra, his is the form of it, the mantra of the Deva is said to be the Deva.

Another fact is that since, in a mantra, the *sound and rhythm* are all important, if the mantra is defective in *svara* and *varna*, it is incorrectly directed and does not declare the true meaning. It may even cause mischief and produce results, the very reverse of what is intended. For

further detailed knowledge on this subject, the reader is referred to "An Advanced Text Book of Hindu Religion and Ethics"—pp. 165-170.

There are some Samskaras before Upanayana, which though not very important are useful, if properly performed. In the modern life of India, I doubt whether they can be usefully restored. What are these? They are 1 Garbhadhanam, 2 Pumsavanam, 3 Simantonnayanam, 4 Jatakarma, 5 Namakaranam, 6 Annaprasanam and 7 Chudakaranam. The first three are parental and are intended to make the woman's womb holy and a fit receptacle for spiritually-advanced souls to take birth. Garbhadhanam is a very sacred act, but at present it is more an act of satisfaction of animal desires and there are no spiritual aspirations behind them. Neither the husband nor the wife, who is generally more ignorant than her husband, understands the spiritual significance of the marriage alliance and therefore, the poor conception now prevailing on this subject. The parties do not know how the act can be made holy, a real sacrament, so that any child born to them may be worthy of the Aryan culture, spiritual and moral, which is the purpose of the Sanatana Dharma to foster. This will be discussed in detail under the Samskara of Marriage. All the above seven Samskaras as now performed are practically useless. The Samskaras four to seven are now generally performed at the time of Upanayana. One important factor for consideration by people in these days is how to cut short expenses and not how to perform them properly. Of course, there is a lot of unnecessary expenditure; but, what is essential is always given up, and unnecessary expenses go on increasing; and these come under custom and therefore they must be incurred. Blind tradition and custom !!!

No "Sanatanist" thinks it absurd to perform the "Samskara of Annaprasanam and Chudakaranam, at the time of Upanayana when the boy is generally more than twelve years old. (There are cases when Upanayana takes place in orthodox families when the boy is seventeen years old, there was a case of this kind which I saw on the 27th May 1934). What is Annaprasanam? It is the first feeding of the child with solid food, which has to be done in the sixth month; Chudakaranam is the first "Shaving the head". Is it not strange, nay absurd, to perform these two "Samskaras" after the boy has been taking solid food for some years and after the boy has had "shaving the head" over a hundred times. Of course, these are Samskaras for 'Sanatanists' and therefore must be performed! Let those whom it may concern consider whether they are not perpetuating lifeless traditions and whether these false acts and pretences



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do not corrupt the national life and tend to make the community blind to Truth. A Samskara to which importance is attached should be performed with understanding and due reverence. Else, it should be dropped.

I now take up the important Samskara, *Upanayana*:—

With this Samskara, the stage of youth may be said to begin.

"The father and mother give birth to him from mutual desire, so that he is born from the womb, let this be known as his physical birth.

"But that birth which is given, according to the prescribed Rules (*Vidhivat*) through the Savitri, by the preceptor who has mastered the Vedas, that is the true birth, "the unaging and immortal".

Manu smriti ii, 147, 148.

Various names are given to this Samskara, such as *Vratibandha*, (binding on of the vow), *Upanayana*, *Upavita* &c. Is the boy taught why it is called by these names, what they signify, what the ceremony is for, &c.? Who has to officiate at the ceremony? An Acharya; Who is an Acharya? "Because 'he gathers together' the essential teachings of all true sciences, because 'he induces other to act' according to them, because he himself 'lives them'—, therefore he is given the honoured name of Acharya." Is such an Acharya now employed to officiate at the ceremony? A purohit who has got by heart the Vedic mantras required to be repeated, with no culture and no knowledge of the significance of the Samskara, is usually employed. There are several acts performed, viz, —the boy is dressed in a kaupina, then, in a new garment; he is made to wear a munji grass; the purohit knots the munji girdle; he puts on the boy an antelope skin and invests him with the sacrificial thread (*Yajna sutra*). The significance of none of these things is explained to the boy either at the time, or before or after. A number of questions are put to the boy and the answers to them are put into his mouth. The boy does not know what the questions are and what answers he is made to give, and it is very doubtful whether even the purohit knows what they are. Most of the purohits who officiate during the ceremony and the pupil go through all the rites mechanically and do not know the meaning and purport of the various acts and symbols.

According to the ritual gone through, it is the pupil that presents himself before the guru, seeking initiation into spiritual life, and the 'teacher' after surveying the pupil and satisfying himself that he is earnest and fit for the ceremony, has to make up his mind to initiate him and exhort him to be firm in his proposed life of spiritual aspiration. In the

name of the Savitar and other Devas, the guru seizes the hand of the pupil and gives him over to Their care. He then declares himself his teacher as representing the true Teacher, the Divine Fire. Thus having felt Savitar Deva's impulse within, the guru initiates the pupil into the mysteries of the Soul and exhorts him to walk in the path of Brahman, and the pupil earnestly prays to the Lord to lead him to the Goal. Then follow several kriyas (actions) and mantras which are very instructive. Is such a guru employed?

After the Gayatri Upadesa and a few other acts, the pupil is made to repeat certain mantras which are his vows and then he presents a gift to his Guru which the latter accepts with the following formula.—By the Savitar-Deva's impulse, with the Asvin's arms, and Pushan's hands, I receive (this gift). Then the pupil rises reciting certain mantras and then there is a very important prayer to the Sun, which shows what the life of the Bramachari should be. Rules regarding the daily kindling of the Sacred Fire and of Spiritual Discipline are taught to him by the teacher:—

"Thou art now a spiritual devotee. Drink water. Do work. Sleep not in the day time. Govern thy speech. Study the Veda under thy Master. Beg for food morning and evening. Kindle the fire morning and evening. Go through this spiritual discipline *twelve years* or till you have completed the study of the Vedas." And the Brahmachari promises to obey these injunctions.

Is there any study of the Vedas? Is there, in the proper sense, any teaching to the pupil of what spiritual life is? Even the ceremony itself as now performed is a meaningless and lifeless tradition. The pupil does not know what he is doing; he is only a puppet, repeating the mantras on many occasions incorrectly and in bad 'Swara' and sometimes keeping quite silent while the purohit goes on repeating the mantras mechanically. All that the purohit cares for is his 'Dakshina' from time to time. I have come into contact with Brahmin boys in the houses of purohits and Vaidika Brahmanas. They do not know how to pronounce correctly the Vedic riks in many of the Sandhya Mantras, and I know also that even the Gayatri and the Vyahritis are not correctly pronounced by them. The meaning of the Gayatri is known only to a few purohits, and even those do not know how to meditate when they recite the mantra, what effect it produces on them and in the neighbourhood if correctly recited, and how to produce the required effect. The promise made by the pupil to his teacher at the end of the ceremony is not kept up, nor is there any intention to keep it up,

even when the promise is made. The boy is then reading in some school and he continues his study there, even after the Upanayana. He does not care to learn what spiritual life is. Can the ceremony he has gone through be called the Upanayana Sacrament? Not only a farce, but something worse!

Now let us see what is happening during the performance of this ceremony. Devas are invoked and a number of promises are made, which are not only not kept up but which, unfortunately, the purohit and even the parents and guardians of the Brahmachari know, are not meant to be fulfilled. Is it honesty to invoke Devas and promise to them that you will do certain things, while as a matter of fact, there is no intention to carry out the promise? Even in the worldly life, we call such a man a liar, a hypocrite. Is it in the first place honest to make such promises to Devas? They do not ask you to do so. Why then, this unnecessary invocation and the false promises? What a demoralising effect such acts must have on the community engaged in such unworthy acts? Yet they are called Holy Samskaras!!!

Not to perform Upanayana at all will be far better, as it will then be only a negative act, an act of omission. To do good is noble, but not to do evil is better than doing evil. Let the "Sanatanists" consider deeply the evil consequences of their acts. It is extraordinary that the 'Sanatanists' do not know how "Karmic Law" works. The Law takes no account of human ignorance. Some say the day has come when the Brahmanas have to show cause, before the tribunal of the Aryan 'Rishis', why they should not be divested of the sacred thread which they do not deserve, but are degrading by misuse.

Let me not be misunderstood that because I condemn the Upanayana ceremony as now performed, I want the ceremony to be given up. Far from it; the well instructed Brahmanas have to convene a parishad and devise what changes should be effected so as to suit modern conditions and make the ceremony effective. I may discuss the reformation of the ritual in a future article, along with other Samskaras which require modifications.

I take the next subject which is a very minor one—'Samavartanam' or "Snata Vratam". What is this Vratam for, when and where has this to be performed? Is it not that this Vratam is intended to be performed when the Brahmacharya Asrama is over, when the student has learnt intellectually the truth about Brahman, the Pranavam, the Gayatri, etc., and when he has taken leave of his guru, after his study is over? How

is it now performed? and why is it performed? It is well known that except in very rare cases, it is performed on the day of the marriage at the place where the bride lives, at the expense of the bride's parents or guardians. What have they to do with the 'Samavartanam'? Why on the occasion of the marriage and why at the expense of the bride's parents? Another curious function, which takes place before the marriage and after the 'Samavartanam,' may also be referred to here. It is the pretended pilgrimage to Benares by the bridegroom elect. Is not all this a petrified superstition which has no meaning at present and which only demoralises the persons concerned? Is it not much more honest to give it up completely?

RATIONALISM AND THE BHAGAVAD GITA.

Essence and Form.

By

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.

While moral standards are constantly in a state of flux, and sociology presents an ever-changing picture of human evolution, it is well to investigate whether behind these variable forms of individual and collective life, there runs a principle of continuity, a thread that pierces into the manifold gems of human achievement, (Sutre mani gana iva, of, Gita, VII. 7.) That the Gita is the bed-rock of Sanatana Dharma, no one who may have an honest claim to put forth on that side will deny. The claim is expressly made when Arjuna chants the praise (XI, 18.)

Tvam avyaya saswata dharma gopta

Sanatana stvam purusho matome.

(Thou art the guardian of the indestructible, eternal Law, the immortal man art thou, to my reckoning.) And where does this principle of immemorial humanity rest? Wherein lies the changeless Dharma, when we are aware of the fleeting phases of moral and social evolution? Not certainly in the strict injunction to follow up the Karmic path enjoined in the Vedas; though, the Gita does not denounce the observance of ritual, but on the other hand such observances are held to purify the intelligence. (See XVIII, 5):

Yagna dana tapah karma na tyajyam karya mevata

Yagno danam tapaschaiva pavanani manishinam.

(Sacrifices, gifts, and austerities ought not to be left out, but must be performed. They are the purifiers of the intelligent Pundits.)

One has a hazy suggestion about this stanza, that the ritualistic offerings of sacrifice, and charity are held forth as brain-softeners or dope-curatives to relax the ever strained brain-cells of speculative legicians engaged in the intellectual pursuit of tracing out the priority rights between the seed and the tree, between the First Cause and Its Cause. "*Pavanani manishinam*" (purify the wise pundits) reads like a significant utterance; the man of average understanding who does not trouble himself in intellectual doubt does not stand to gain much by these observances. But, that is another issue.

That the Gita treads the path of reform, nay, it even revolutionised pre-existing conceptions of duty and life, it does not benefit the most ardent Sanatanist to deny. The real service rendered by the Gita to Hindu religious life may, on the other hand be held to consist in its having focussed attention on the essentials and the thorough exclusion of all tendencies to Vedic formalism.

It sets its face against those who pretend to acquire merit by obedience to Vedic Word. It does not countenance Mithyachara (III, 6) the hypocrite who controls his action, but whose mind is not turned away from the objects of sense; and it sees no worth in a sacrifice linked to consideration or self-glorification. (Dambhartham, XVII, 12.) Nor may it be accused of glossing the sharp antithesis that divides the two paths of Gnana (knowledge) and Karma (action) for it expressly refers to the dualism in III, 3, and XVIII, 3, and other places and discussing the relative merits relied on by the votaries of either mode of thought proceeds to lay down the standard. And that standard is the progressive ideal which while proceeding from the Vedic texts, travels farther from them. (Sabda Brahmati varitate, Of. VI, 44). The reason for transcending the Vedas is not also left in doubt.

Trigunya vishaya veda nistraigunyo bhava Arjuna

Nirdvandvo nitya satvastho niryoga kshema atmavan (II, 45.)

(The vedas are concerned with the three qualities, all of which, Oh, Arjuna, you ought to get over. Beyond the pairs of opposites, ever seated in purity, regardless of acquisition or retention of any kind of selfish possessions, you should not care for the fruits promised in the Vedas to these Gunas, or qualities.)

Thus the other wordly pleasures of swarga (paradise) set out in the flowery speech (II, 42, Pushpitam Vacham) of those that rejoice in the

letter of the Vedas are not recommended as the fit object of attainment hereafter (Yoga) nor is one expected to feel nervous over the prospect of losing the world's goods already had: (Kshema).

Why, the declaration is expressly made, the challenge is plainly given that of all the rambling mandates emanating from the Vedas, one has the right (and the obligation)? to pick and choose.

Yavanartha udapane sarvatah samplutodake

Tavan Sarveshu Vedeshu Brahmanasya vijanatah. (II, 46).

Whether in the tank or from a vast lake, only so much water as is needed will be taken. Even so, from all the Vedas, should the wise one derive the relative enlightenment or utility.)

The central teaching of the Gita in the matter of such utility of knowledge (Gnana) is the escape from the pairs of opposites, pain pleasure &c., and of action (Karma) through a severe detachment from the fruit thereof. The vehicle that enables one to reach the goal is Yoga (equipoise). Samatvam yoga uchyate: equilibrium in success and failure is called Yoga (II, 48). This is skill in action (Yogah Karma Sukaalam II, 50). Amid the manifold songs, and hymns of diverse metre, and the reasonings of the Brahmasutras, that have occupied themselves with the treatment of life and knowledge, (see XIII, 5) there is unity and continuity that the Bhagavad Gita brings out. Yoga is the watchword. All that is said in the Vedas regarding the merits attaching to sacrifices, charity and austerity the Yogi knows. And having known, he attains the supreme seat which is at the root of them all, which surpasseth them, and which is different, from all of them, in that it is the essence, while the rest are merely formulary.....Yogi param sthana mupaiti chadyam (VIII, 28.)

The superior prerogative of the Yogi is unmistakable. What cannot be attained by the knowledge of the Vedas, by Tapas, by charity, and by sacrificial ritual, he is capable of through his devotion. The reality which is a principle concealed from their view exposes in all its splendour of universal appeal before the (divya-chakshus) higher vision (XI, 53 also, 48.)

There is a physical index to the recognition of the Yogi, who is able to stand equipoised between the external contacts of pleasure and pain, and who is not exalted by success nor depressed in failure, but takes equal interest in praise and blame.

As the peep-hole of ancient science the description of Arjuna as Savya-Sachin opens up a vista stretching out to the borders of modern

psychology. One who is capable of using the left-hand as much as the right, gives equal exercise to the right cerebral hemisphere as for the left. In most others, to whom the right arm is the main strength, brain matter has lopsided developement, the right area not being put to adequate use. Man has thus gone on arresting the harmonious and simultaneous stimulation of both the cerebral sides, with perhaps the necessary repercussions on his mental life in the way of developing the equipoise, needed for Yoga. If ambidexterity has much to do with the maintenance of mental equilibrium, its discovery by the date when the Bhagavad-Gita must have been composed (XI, 33) would be a flattering commentary on the scientific achievements of the age in the physical side. F. W. H. Myers made a modest claim in his book "Human Personality Vol. I, p. 85 (1903) that there was somewhat more of dextro-cerebral capacity than in the mass of mankind" in some forms of genius like the *calculating boy*. Physiological psychology advanced considerably during the last three decades. One should derive greater delight from thinking of Arjuna as a character of fiction that one might lift the poetry of Vyasa (whichever he may be) to the modern scientific level, than relegate the Savya-Sichin to the prose of history, and Vyasa his mere chronicler. For after all between the two, the poet is the better Yogi than the history-recorder, whatever the claimants for the historicity of Jesus might say.

SANATANA DHARMA AND UNTOUCHABILITY.

FURTHER NOTES ON FURTHER COMMENTS.

BY

T. R. VENKATARAMA SASTRI, C.I.E.

I find "The Dharmic Hindu" has notices of the article on "Sanatana Dharma and Untouchability" in the March issue of this Journal. In addition to reproducing "Commoner" in "Arya Dharma" on which we offered our comments in June, it prints two notes by learned authors, Brahmasri V. S. Ramanatha Sastriar and Mr. M. M. Ganapati Row. The editor apparently under some mistake gives the title of "Untouchability and Mixed Marriages" for which the writers cannot be held responsible.

It is obviously necessary to bring ourselves back to the points we are considering. We are not on the point of *not touching* any one or anything

not "Suchi" (clean) according to us. We are on the point of *untouchability* and its essential character to Hinduism.

There is no argument needed to state our present law or practice. Our caste divisions and their gradations as superior and inferior are based on touch pollution. A will take what B has touched but B will not take what A has touched. If they touched each other, A will not bathe but B will wash and purify. B is of the superior caste. The unapproachable castes cannot enter the temple. That this is the present state of things is not denied. I will not controvert that, whoever else does. I am commending a relaxation of your ideas. Relaxation there is in certain directions. The theory still remains at the point that has been left behind. I am attacking this theory on the ground that it was not essential to our religion and in its present form it is a morbid extravagance which requires check and change.

Mr. Sastriar's examination has not much relevancy to my suggestion of change. It examines our methods of exegesis for the purpose of administering law. "Ekam Vakyam" is pure fiction. It is known to be pure fiction. It is an essential part of interpretation for *administration*. It is a mode of determining what holds the field. It has nothing to do with change, legislation, what should be. In this sphere the historic sense and a sense of desire and direction are necessary. No one can ignore the why and the how here.

To put it concretely. We have many texts contradicting each other. A Judge cannot decide unless he makes up his mind as between them. He cannot say, "this is" and "this is not" at the same time. As between conflicting rules he must say: "this is the rule." An opposite rule being pointed out, he must put it aside, saying "this is not *now* the rule" or "this is not the rule in this part of the country" or "this is not the rule in this community or family." One written rule is chosen; or all written rules are superseded by usage. This the administrator of rules has to do. He cannot say generally that Manu is altogether superseded because he has to appeal to Manu when he comes to another question. Therefore he takes all law books as alive equally and does the best he can to find the operative rule in the time and in the place and for the person who invokes his aid. You must view the whole unhistorically or there will be chaos. Time and history have no place where the question is, what is it now and here.

That this is a mere *device*, every one knows. The Mimamsaka knows it and Sastriar knows it. "Ekam vakyam" is not believed by anyone to

represent the fact, any more than a man walking into a museum can believe or does that the exhibits of different geologic periods are all of one time, and justify his statement by saying "all that is the mistaken historians' folly. We, in our wise philosophy, have no past nor present nor future but we have only the eternal present. For us Time stands still." The Mimamsaka is not ignorant of the fact that one lawgiver may say and has said, "That is Manu's opinion, not Mine", or Manu ruled in another age; Sankha and Likhita in another age; this, my Smiriti, is for this age" or that in the teeth of all Smritis, a *puranic* text may say "The following things have fallen into disuse in this age and good people do not practise it." We require no more proof for "*Ekam Vakyam*" being a mere administrative device and fiction for the achievement of a very definite result.

Let not my critics talk of my following Mr. Mayne or the orientlists. Every one including the Smriti writers and the Mimamsakas who interpret know that time passes, and men and their ideas and institutions die and are replaced. Sastriar himself says: "We also believe in the changes effected by time and circumstances" and opens a paragraph with the words "According to this *convention*", remembering that he is in an unreal world in the whole of that discussion. By the way my article did not discuss the priority and posteriority of Manu, Yajnavalkya, Gautama or Apastamba. Time, place or personal preferences may account for differences. There are some who would gladly maintain that while the world moves, we in India belong to a different order of humans and have never changed since the world began. Pride takes strange forms, credit becomes discredit and discredit becomes credit. "I have never changed. Time has taught me nothing and can teach me nothing" will not be accepted as a matter for pride at all times and places and by all persons.

Sastriar is at pains to cite the texts indicating the opposite of what I have stated. He need not have worried to do so. My point is that other ideas have found acceptance with some teachers, indicating that untouchability is not recognised as a cardinal idea. If that is not negated as untrue, *untouchability* as of the *essence* of religion disappears.

Sastriar refers to two methods of development—that of recognising the body as the seat of the gods and that of "breaking away from the body as the most wretched and impure enclosure, while yet living in it." Both are exaggerations and the common sense of humanity and their practice accept neither alternative. The text of the Yoga Sutra which he cites belongs to this latter school which is said to hate having to live in

the body. Does any one have the sense of that wretchedness and impurity. Will Sastriar recommend it? If either unbalance has to be chosen I prefer the unbalance of the conception of the body as the seat of the gods as more consistent with our fundamental philosophy. I am glad Sastriar shrinks from saying that "Achara" equates with untouchability. I used the word *morbid* for what Sastriar describes so adequately in the following words: "*Saucha* is an attempt towards perfection, where only the utter impurity of the body in all its bearings is realised. This state should be gradually induced by a process of cleaning out the body which accrues a sensation of touch-me-not-ism being psychologically and painfully alive (and that constantly) to the wretchedness of its own impurities" I am willing to let it be judged by any unprejudiced critic.

That we attach subjective and spiritual values to physical acts is true. It arises out of habit and repeated action and education which produces both. The process by which we attached these values is also the process by which we have to detach them. That process is already at work. We have changed and are changing. It is visible to those who observe; only we prefer to say that the changes are all for the worse from the purer conceptions of our books. Before passing on, let me add that I seem to detect a desire in Sastriar to dismiss Apastamba's rule of cooking as one for inferior households. Apastamba states existing practices and, where he considers them wrong, denounces them. This practice is not held in disapproval. He does not consider that high spirituality is at stake.

What I shall next say has something to do with what both articles contain. I am told that my article lacks the *organic view of life*. Human destiny and its fulfilment are, it seems, not remembered in my thesis and orthodoxy proceeds on a clear definite view as to both. I wonder whether an organic view of life will be conceded to Manu or Yajnavalkya or Apastamba? Did they have in mind conceptions of human destiny and what it required. A true metaphysic, a profound psychology and an all-embracing science are claimed as the exclusive possession of orthodoxy. I claim the first two for our ancients. The third is too high sounding. The science that comes out of experience they had and it was adequate for their purposes. I am a great admirer of their psychology; our present day metaphysic is not superior. Our acquaintance with modern Science has given us a kind of polemical writing which is neither ancient nor modern, neither science nor life, and which true orthodoxy will neither understand nor accept.

One who is not acquainted with Indian Life at first hand might draw the conclusion from these articles that our belief is that we shall get purer and purer if each of us lived by himself and in himself, that the erection of temples as a place of worship for all communities was a mistake and a detraction from specialisation in purity, and that severe restriction in intercourse between major and minor communities is the ideal.

I do not deny and have never denied the value of *dehasuddhi* and *chittasuddhi*. Nor do I deny the value of vision, self-control, pure emotions and sentiments untouched by evil. Perpetual and unremitting attention to touch is not essential to physical good, let alone mental and spiritual health. Purity of heart is needed for God-realisation. Purity as conceived by the Hindu (which means a certain amount of obsession of mind) is not necessary. I notice in the course of these discussions a perpetual return to the question whether people will not eat and drink prohibited things in prohibited company or a looseness in sex relations will not set in, as the result of change or relaxation. Eat and drink and mate as it is best for you but do not allow your mind to fasten on them as things to worry about. Those who have any acquaintance with psycho-analysis know that the impure of heart are not the only ones whose mind wallows in the mud but those who struggle for but are not established in purity (that is, the vast majority) are often in the same case.

Taking all the articles and the ideas brought up by them together—we have a vast population: much of it is *non-dvija*. Of *dvijas* again we have non-Brahmins claiming to be *dvijas*. Of Brahmin *dvijas* again we have *arthaparas*, *Kamaparas*, *Vartavrittis*, *Shalins*, *Yayavaras* etc. and we have some (how many?) disgusted with their wretched impure bodies and shrinking from others' touch. These make *untouchability* the essential of Hinduism while others, not all impure contemptible people, I hope, go about without this exaggerated 'touch-not-ism,' not quite appreciating this essential of their religion. We are viewing the matter individualistically and remembering only a few. While all this washing and scrubbing are to go on to make the skin and heart bright and clear as crystal, the advantage to the whole community of every individual being put through the process of purification is not so much as recognised. I suppose *dehasuddhi* and *chitta suddhi* will make the very face of the man beam and glow with the health of body and mind and in this very life without waiting for the next one. Is it

desirable in the individual health of you and me that those whose approach is so very obnoxious to us and so very endangering to public health should be purified. Is it wholly impossible to effect such a change as would save our consciousness from the invasion which their presence anywhere near at present makes on it. Are these disciplines of value to all or only to the almost non-existent *mokshaparas* and *dharmaparas*. If we disciplined these, will they still, after all the disciplines, remain the same unclean people to be kept at the distance of a hundred feet. Our minds hark back to a very small group at the top in one part of the country with its introverted gaze, not so much as recognising the value even of its discipline to all the classes. What a curious result of our discipline with its boasted supreme efficacy. The discipline never makes the man immune against attack from without so that he goes on disgusted with his body and diligently practising untouchability to the end of days. It cannot be used to raise up the unclean below in this life though the *dehasuddhi* and *chitta suddhi* are immediately operative in all cases. And yet we boast of our profound psychology.

Compare the psychology of the man who found a place for two Harijan Saints among the Alvars and Nainars of the temples with the psychology of his puny descendant who could not have conceived of it and will feel appalled if we proposed it to-day. Compare the psychology of the man who commended the limited division of four *varnas* to that of one who revels in divisions and thinks the more division, the more isolation, and the more untouchability, the more wide-spread will be the specialisation in purity. Compare the psychology of one who found for all Indian groups an ancient connection with the *varnas* and a place sometimes in genealogies current in the land. Compare the psychology of those who located the shrines and holy waters all over India and planted colonies in the Greater India carrying over and spreading their purifying culture in foreign lands with those who had narrowed their outlook, banned voyage across the seas, worried about the impurities all along the roads they walked and settled down into the spiritless population that had not seen more than a few villages around. Compare the outlook of people who instituted an order of sannyasa in which all narrow group ideas are to be left behind and the sannyasin should take his *bhakti* from all four *varnas* indiscriminately without distinction of high or low, so as to keep alive at a high point the sense of common humanity. If our ancient institutions were searched it will be found that legends, parables, stories and institutions to enforce the idea of the oneness of humanity side by side with recogni-

tion of differences in appropriate spheres are allowed to feed the emotion of the community.

What is the offering at the extremity of a village in Vaisvadeva; What is the offering of food to a lowest class beggar at night without a sense of pollution of the remaining food; what is the unpolluting touch of an untouchable in a temple festival; but the recognition of a higher idea which in other moments the ordinary man is unable to rise up to with the distracting ideals from below? The ancients kept the higher and the lower in visible evidence for their obvious psychic value. The associate Sudra in a Brahmin household and even the mixed unions with its conventions (which exist now without becoming marriages) helped to remove a sense of segregation. While the removal of some of these things has a better side, the removal of much that was founded on a profounder psychology has had injurious consequences.

These are stray thoughts. Those to whom these thoughts are presented, if they know our society, will be able to gather up the ideas and make them a coherent whole. I do not deny that there is an underlying ideal and an attempt to reach it in orthodoxy. It is the ideal of a narrowed vision and limited psychology. It has the strength of everything narrowed and limited but it has not the breadth of vision to see what might be if they raised this vast population to the level of its own conception of the possibilities of uplift.

SIMPLE RELIGION.

BY

[KUMARADASA.]

In these days when the struggle for existence is keen, when the demands on a man's time are enormous, when the needs of the family for which a man's responsibility is really onerous absorb almost the whole of his time and energy it is hardly possible to devote one's attention to any serious study of philosophy or religion. This state of affairs really breeds indifference to religion. One often hears these words coming from the mouth of most of our educated men, specially the younger among them who have their professional or official work to do, practically all through the day:

"I have no time to seriously study any religious books. My work hardly leaves any leisure for such study. If at all there is any leisure."

should devote it to some recreation and relaxation so that I may keep myself fit."

In the case of many a young man, nevertheless, it will be true to say that his indifference to religion is not due to want of time. The way it has been presented by our orthodox religious propagandists who seem to care more for the formalism of religion consisting of rites and ceremonies, the identification of religion with caste restrictions and social customs and manners without emphasis upon the fundamental tenets of religion and the essentials of the real spiritual life, the absence of any help or guidance from them to face the realities of life with its manifold problems in several domains, the ideas he has imbibed from Western writers like Earl Russel who believe that religion is not a necessity but a hindrance to man's progress, the glamour of Soviet Russia whose progress is imagined to be the result of the annihilation of faith in God and Religion, the misreading by certain politicians of the causes of the decline in the material prosperity and political status of our motherland as they attribute this fall to our religion—all these have conspired to breed a spirit of antagonism to religion in the minds of many young men and indifference to it in the minds of a far larger number. Perhaps just to please their elders in the family, especially the womenfolk, our young men may rush through their Sandya or similar ablutions and observe other ritualistic requirements, or occasionally visit a temple—all this without their heart being touched or their head being illumined in respect of God or Religion. It cannot be denied that all this savours of indifference, pretence and perchance hypocrisy in some cases.

That it is necessary to counteract the present tendencies will be admitted by all lovers of our motherland who have faith in God and their Religion. Addressing myself for the moment to believers in Hinduism I venture to suggest that definite propaganda should be undertaken to inculcate into the minds of our youth the simple and fundamental verities of religion so that early in life they may imbibe the true spirit of religion with its ideals of self-development and unselfish and loving service for the good of the world for the achievement of the Divine purpose.

They are so simple and natural that they can be explained not only with regard to our religious and philosophical works, but also from a study of nature and the latest discoveries and researches of modern sciences including Geology, Botany and Biology.

FUNDAMENTALS OF RELIGION.

(1) God exists as the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent power that is immanent in the Universe and transcends it. He is the ultimate reality whose attributes may be summed up as Infinite Love, Wisdom, Power, Beauty and Joy.

(2) Individual spirit evolves from the mineral to the vegetable, from the vegetable to the animal, from the animal to the human and from the human to the super-human kingdom. Units in the sub-human kingdoms evolve by the development of instinct by experience and self-consciousness is reached only in humanity. Man is to gain experience and gradually develop the qualities of Godliness, viz., Love, Wisdom, Power, Beauty and Joy. At last man's will and purpose merge in that of God and he attains perfection in that atone-ment. That is the ultimate goal of man.

(3) Man's search for God or God-realization and the path he pursues must thus be in accordance with the above Law of Evolution. Man must co-operate with the law. If he does so he is moving in the right direction and he marches towards the appointed goal while at the same time he is helping all living beings, plants and animals etc. of the sub-human kingdom as well as his fellowmen—whosoever are brought into contact with him—to move similarly. This is seeking God and the Kingdom of His—Righteousness. The simple solution of the problem of right and wrong is this: If an act would tend to take us and others God-ward, i.e., develop qualities of Godliness already mentioned, that would be right. If it tends to take us otherwise, i.e., in a contrary direction it would be wrong. Thus the basis of all ethical character and conduct is this conception of the Divine will or the Law of Evolution mentioned above.

(4) Man is God in the making. Man has no doubt some degree of free will to work within the universal laws observable in nature, not merely inanimate nature but the entire creation. Man is the architect of his own fortune. The law of cause and effect operates in his life as in outer nature. It operates as much in mental, moral and spiritual realms as in the physical plane.

In its application to the concerns of man's life with its vicissitudes, pleasures and pains, fortunes and misfortunes, it is called the doctrine of Karma—a word which is now freely used in the writings of Western thinkers and philosophers of the present day. Man is free in choosing the lines of his thought, word and deed. Once he sets them into motion the effects will ruthlessly follow. He binds himself by his previous

causes. At the time of their generation he had freedom to choose one way or another and thus ensues one result or another. Thus it will be seen that the working of Karma is not identical with blind fate.

Further new forces may be set in operation to counteract or modify the effects of past causes before they fructify. For instance, a ball is set in motion in a direction by a kick: but soon after, a stone may be made to strike it from a different direction. The latter force modifies the former and the resulting effect is different from what it would have been if the ball was free to move on by the momentum of the first force. Man is always free in his choice and the law is unerring in giving the due effect. Man makes or mars his own life and there is no outside fate arbitrarily determining weal or woe. The Law of Reincarnation is entwined with that of Karma as the latter cannot work itself out unless there are a series of births. Further, man cannot in one brief span of life develop all the qualities so as to reach the goal. The lessons are too high to be learned in one life.

(5) It is not possible to lay down regulations as to how a man should conduct himself in the details of every day life so that he may be on the side of right as defined in paragraph (3) above. But certain attitudes and methods may be given which may be more or less developed or followed by all aspirants to the spiritual life who do not want to drift in the current of evolution, but wish consciously to pursue a path of attaining the goal with a determination and set purpose so as to reach it with the least possible delay not merely for their individual benefit, but also for being better able to serve others by attempts to make them also attain the ultimate bliss sooner than would otherwise be possible.

Faith in God and His plan and belief in the laws of his governance of the universe will give us a sense of security, peace and harmony with the rest of the world. Our outlook on life in general should be one of abounding optimism and our attitude towards our fellow beings one of brotherliness. Whatever struggles one may have to face in his attempts to lead the right life he faces them with a gladness born of faith and a hope that all will be well under Divine guidance and help which are surely vouchsafed for one who has set his feet on the right track. God-men who have reached the goal are always ready to convey such guidance and help to aspirants. These Great Ones are only waiting to be called upon for the help that is so sorely needed to assure the speedy and final triumph of the human soul in its struggle to achieve its freedom or release the imprisoned splendour of the God within. The realized *Atma* could

not have withdrawn themselves from the world as soon as they reached their goal. Any earnest soul may attract the attention of one or more of Them. But it is life that will count with Them not mere professions and beliefs of religion or metaphysics. Life consists in thoughts, emotions, words and deeds.

(6) It has now been established by advanced modern psychologists that thoughts are forces with occult power of unknown proportions. Thus it is necessary that every aspirant should first take care of his thought-control. Then words and deeds will take care of themselves. Life must be infused with the qualities of Love, Wisdom, Power, Beauty and Joy. This means that these qualities must be manifested in thoughts, emotions, words and deeds. In our work-a-day world, in our domestic concerns, in our activities connected with the earning of our bread, in the market place, in our offices and places of business, in our public or political activities undertaken for the good of the town or the country—not merely in our prayer hours, not only on special sacred days and not alone in our places of worship—in fact, in the utilization of even the least little God-given matter or energy on every plane of being, we must remember that we are accountable to God that He watches over our output and that our spiritual life, i. e., our attempt towards God-realization is there, however apparently unconnected with religion or spirituality our concerns may seem to one who is a superficial observer and who has not understood that the so-called worldly duties and concerns, pleasures and pains, earthly things and aims are all but parts of that mighty scheme of God in this world of manifestation conceived for the good of the evolving souls.

(7) To help us to maintain the right attitude and regulate our life properly it is necessary to resort to some methods and practices. Early in the morning before beginning the normal work of the day (either in connection with *Sandya* or other similar practice or otherwise) every aspirant should spend time in meditating on the fundamental truths that have to be borne in mind with a prayer that one might be enabled to live the right life in the course of the day when one has to discharge various duties and come into contact with all sorts and conditions of men and things. (The subject of prayer is a very important one and it cannot be fully explained here. If possible it may well be dealt with in a separate article). The morning meditation will help us in times of temptation by right thoughts arising in the minds as though a friend is pulling us up and will give us guidance by suggesting right courses of conduct.

Again at nights one must review one's thoughts, emotions, words and deeds of the day. One will find that in some matters he has acted in the right way and that in perhaps many he has stumbled in spite of the promptings of one's higher nature or in utter ignorance. He can resolve to live better the next day with a prayer for more light and greater strength to act up to one's ideals. Persistent efforts carried on with sincerity and determination will result in less and less failure and greater and greater approach to the ideal life of righteousness.

Daily study of some scripture or book which contains holy thoughts and exhortations, though it may be only for half an hour, would help us to be steady in our aspirations, would remind us of the ways in which others have attained spiritual heights before us and would also supply hints to regulate our inner and outer life in such a manner as to harmonise both in the direction of God-realization.

The last suggestion that is well worth making in this connection is the habit of ruminating over such high thoughts in moments of relaxation or when one is perforce idle say, for instance, when waiting on a railway platform, when the mind is free from worldly duties and the ordinary avocations. One often wastes many such moments in idle talk or in worrying over the past. It will do good to body, mind and spirit to utilise even such odd moments in a pleasant reverie or recollection of high aims.

In conclusion, the present writer would only express the hope that men more learned and devout than himself would earnestly formulate measures for giving a grounding to our young men in the understanding of the simple and fundamental truths (whether they agree with him in all that has been said in the foregoing paragraphs or not) without taking them through subtle metaphysics, without scaring them away by emphasizing over much the formalism of rituals and ceremonies and without alienating their sympathies by saying such things as that religion requires one form of wearing the hair on the head rather than another and that one who shaves his face every morning is not fit for religious culture.

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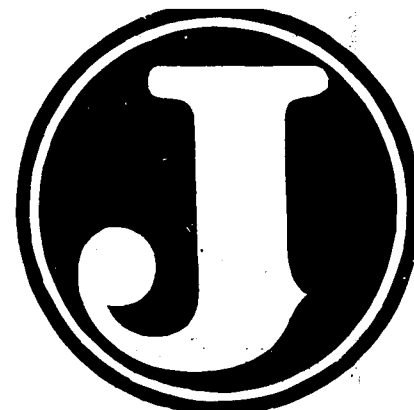
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K. V. Sesa Ayyangar.

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AUGUST, 1934

[No. 5



On the front parapet of THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT, Adyar

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धा शिक्षया गुरुर्युवा ।

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिक्ष्यास्तु 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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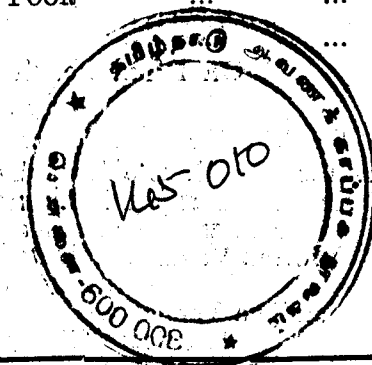
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THE

Bharata Dharma

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VOL. XII]

AUGUST, 1934

[No. 5

SANATANA DHARMA AND ITS PRACTICE.

Marriage Sacrament.

BY

T. V. GOPALASWAMI AIYAR.

This is a very important subject on which a great deal can be written usefully to show conclusively how the practice of child-marriage is wrong and full of evil and not dharmic and has been one of the chief causes of the degradation of the Aryan culture and the slave-mentality of the Brahmanas and the communities who have been blindly following their example, because of the belief that what the Brahmana does must be dharma. I have explained in my article published in the June issue how and when and why the Kshatriya dharma decayed and that Sri Krishna's Avatara was, among others, to destroy the Kshatriyas, as they were beyond redemption. I have also shown sufficiently that the Brahmana dharma also began to decay even during the time of Sri Krishna and that, in spite of the fact that there have been three great Avatars, viz., Sri Krishna, The Lord Buddha and the great Sri Sankarachariar and that many others of smaller greatness also glorified India by their birth, the practice of dharma in India has been at a low ebb for some centuries. As this is an article for the Bharata Dharma in which space is limited, I have to be brief leaving out a great many facts and arguments and I therefore touch only a few of the most important facts and figures,

"India was great and had a Civilization unrivalled in the spirituality of her religion, in the perfection of her Dharma", &c., as mentioned in my May Article. The Soul of India is still great, but it is bound in chains, by the action of her sons and daughters. If it is liberated which her sons and daughters alone can do and no outsider, it will be a giant among the nations of the world and will show her splendid power, spiritual, intellectual, moral and physical, and in many other ways also which we cannot speculate on, at present. There are many dead, lifeless traditions masquerading as religion, while as a matter of fact they are only superstitions, because of the want of the one thing which alone can keep any tradition fresh and profitable; and it is the spirit of real affection and consideration for others, viz., true love, the foundation of Sanatana Dharma. One of these dead traditions is child-marriage and the heartless, cruel and unnatural restrictions placed on women and especially widows. If man will not give freedom to women, just as much as he wishes to have, how can he have freedom? The Law of Karma works most unerringly and it cannot be circumvented. Mathadhipathis and other so-called religious teachers preach only adharma and not dharma based on Veda and true inner knowledge born of wisdom and they exploit the ignorant. This is why India is a subject Nation; and Brahmanas and Samnyasins, who are most responsible for it, have fallen low. This fate would not have befallen them, if not deserved. The Law of Karma does not punish. "The only decree of Karma, an eternal and immutable Law, is absolute harmony in the world of matter, as it is in the world of spirit. It is not therefore Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we who reward or punish ourselves, according as we work with, through and along with nature abiding by the Laws on which that harmony depends, or,--breaking them." Let us examine what Rishi Gargyayana says with reference to marriage:—

He says, "When the development and maturity of the seed are complete and strong in him, and kama or creative desire moves thereto, the youth should marry a maiden younger than himself. Brahmacharya should be observed both by the youth and the maiden. The marriage of a Brahmachari youth with a Brahmacharini maiden is the most praiseworthy. When both know Brahman, they will not suffer from the violence of joys and sorrows, breach of rules and inobservance of regular times, etc." For further details, see pp. 238-242, sec. 111, chap. VI Pranavavada of Gargyayana, by Babu Bhagavan Das, Vol. I.

What does the Veda teach? "The Veda comprises two sections:—one

section called Brahmana lays down rules in express terms; the other section comprises mantras to be recited in the course of the ritual, expressing the acts to be done at the time. They express the thoughts and aspirations of the person, engaged in the ritual. If there is no express Brahmana text prescribing the use of a mantra, with reference to an act of ritual, such a connection has to be inferred from the mantra itself." This is the teaching of the Mimamsakas, as I have learnt from those who know. As there are no express Brahmana texts giving express directions in respect of the marriage rituals, we have to study the marriage mantras to determine what the Veda teaches. If any Smritis, most of which contain interpolations of the worst kind, made by interested persons to exploit the weak, conflict with the teachings of the Veda, the tradition and the smritis must give way to the paramount authority of the Veda, and it is the Vedic Teaching that must be considered authoritative and binding. There is also a saying current, viz., "Is it Veda Teaching, to be accepted?" Thus, the rule is that Vedic injunctions should be obeyed in preference to custom.

The mantras to be recited by the bride and the bridegroom on the occasion explain fully the nature of the marriage sacrament. And if the marriages are performed against the letter and spirit of the Vedic mantras, they cannot be called Sacraments.

"I seize thy hand to have a *fine* progeny, that thou mayest live with me, till thou shalt attain decay. The Devas, Bhaga, Aryaman, Savita, and Purandhi have given thee to me, for householdership."—Tait., Eka., I, iii, 3. This mantra has to be recited by the bride-groom holding the hand of the bride at the time of Panigrahana. Again, the bride is addressed thus—

"Giving birth to *manly* children and devoted to the Devas, be thou conducive to our happiness and well-being."—Rig Veda, X, 85, 44. The following mantra is uttered by the bridegroom after Saptapadi (pacing seven steps with the bride).

"A friend shalt thou be, having paced these seven steps with me. Nay, having paced together the seven steps we have become friends. May I retain thy friendship and never part from thy friendship? Let us unite together, let us propose together; loving each other and ever radiant in each other's company, meaning well towards each other, sharing together all enjoyments and pleasures, let us join together our aspirations, our vows and our thoughts." Tait., Eka., I, iii, 14.

Again, on the first day of the marriage, while in the bride's house,

the bride-groom has to offer a number of oblations. Let me consider some of them. "This maiden about to pass away from her parents to the husband's home has ended her vow of maidenhood."—Tait, Eka., I, iv, 4.

And further on he prays to Indra, "Do thou release her hence, but not thence; there do thou keep her well fixed."—*Ibid.*, 5.

Another mantra connected with Lajahoma, the oblation of fried grains, also offered on the first day, is, "This maiden worshipped Agni, the Deva Aryaman; may that gracious Deva release her hence, but not thence."—Tait, Eka., I, v, 7.

The above mantras amply prove that, on the first day of the marriage, the bride must be of an age fit to leave her parents' house *for good* to take her abode *permanently* in her husband's house, to be the mistress of the house, to direct the sacrificial rites, such as Agnihotram, etc., which have to be performed daily by a married man. The "pravesa homa" and the subsequent ceremonies are intended to take place in the husband's house, according to the Vedas.

The following mantra is addressed to her at the time of departure "Go to the house that thou mayest be the lady of the house and, as mistress of the house, thou shalt direct the sacrificial rites."—Rig Veda, X, 85, 26.

When the married couple start for the husband's home and as the bride mounts the car, the mantra addressed by the husband is "Thou shalt be mistress henceforth and bear me ten sons, etc."

When the bride is about to enter the husband's house for 'pravesa homa,' he says "Be thou a loving queen in the house to the father-in-law, a loving queen to the mother-in-law, a loving queen to the sister-in-law, a loving queen to the brother-in-law."—Rig Veda, X, 85, 46.

On entering the house, he addresses her "May thy joy increase here through off-spring? Be thou ever awake here in this house for thy duty as householder. With this thy husband, do thou join thy body, and as thou advancest in age, thou shalt teach the sacrificial law."—*Ibid.* 27.

After the Pravesa homa, a trial of self-restraint which the bride and bride-groom have to exercise takes place. There are several Grihya sutras on the subject. I am considering here a few, by Sankhayana, Asvalayana, Jaimini, Bodhayana and Apastambha.

(a) Sankhayana—"Through a period of three nights, let them refrain from conjugal intercourse.

(b) Asvalayana—"From that time, they should eat no saline food, they should be chaste, wear ornaments, sleep on the ground for three

nights, or twelve nights, or one year, if they wish to beget a son who shall turn out a Rishi."

(c) Jaimini—"For three nights they shall sleep together on the ground abstaining from intercourse, eating no saline food and observing Brahmacharya."

(d) Bodhayana—"They shall eat no saline food, sleep on the floor, wear ornaments, and observe Brahmacharya for three nights if they desire to beget a Shrotria, for six months if they desire to beget a Rishi, and one year a Deva."

(e) Apastambha—"For three nights, the couple shall lie on the floor, observe Brahmacharya and avoid saline food."

I need not dilate on the underlying idea in the matter of this special injunction to observe Brahmacharya. The longer the period of self-restraint on the part of both husband and wife, in spite of the exciting cause, the greater the merit. This self-restraint can only apply if the bride and bride-groom were men and women in the prime of life and *both* understand what spiritual life is, as Gargyayana says.

Several Grihya Sutas detail the specific acts that have to be done on the fourth night or later on, in the husband's house after the period of self-restraint, which they have imposed on themselves, is over.

What is Seshahoma, performed in the latter part of the fourth night of the marriage? At its end, the wife is to look on the husband and say "With a loving heart, I regard thee who knowest my heart. Thou art radiant with tapas. Fill me with a child and this house of ours with wealth. Thou art desirous of a son. Thus shalt thou reproduce thyself." Then, the husband looks on the wife and says, "I see thee radiant and eager to be filled with child by me. Thou art in thy *youth* now; enjoy me therefore, and so reproduce thyself..., being desirous of a son." Tait, Eka., I, xi, 1 and 2.

The Grihya sutras state the circle of relationship that ought to be avoided in choosing brides and their qualifications and disqualifications. One would naturally expect, if marriage after puberty was forbidden, a distinct statement to that effect, especially when the marriage mantras and Grihya sutras clearly show that marriages were intended to be performed only when husband and wife were of mature age. But we find no such prohibition in the Grihya sutras, but Jaimini is clear that the maiden should be a yuvathi (a youth).

Jaimini, "With the consent of his parents, he shall marry a girl who is an *anagnika*, who is of equal caste, who belongs to a different gotra, and

who is not a sapinda of his mother." 'Anagnika is one who has attained puberty, and as Jaimini prescribes sexual intercourse on the fourth night of the marriage, she must be a Yuvati, the word used in one of the Vedic mantras. Tait Eka I. XI. (2).

Thus, there is absolutely no doubt that the Vedas and the early Grihya sutras and the ancient Rishis of India direct that marriages should take place only among adult men and women, who know what marriage union is and that child-marriage is opposed to Vedic injunctions.

I have now to consider the evil effects of early marriage, which will conclusively prove that "child-marriage" as advocated by the "sanataniists" cannot be Sanathana Dharma, as such evil effects can not result from practising Dharma. The Joshi report is a valuable record of facts and figures, which show the heartless, un-told cruelty inflicted on women in the name of religion. The Joshi Committee was all-Indian, except for one British woman-Doctor, the Chairman being Sir Moropant Joshi, formerly Home-member of the Central Provinces. The other eight members included two judges and four lawyers. Of the ten members, six were Hindus and three Muslims. This Committee did its work for about a year, travelling all over India interviewing about four hundred witnesses. The following is the final pronouncement of this weighty Committee.....

"Early maternity is an evil and an evil of great magnitude. It contributes very largely to maternal and infantile mortality, in many cases wrecks the physical system of the girl and generally leads to degeneracy in the physique of the race. Let us compare the case of Sati which was prevented by legislation with the case of early maternity. Satis were few and far between. They compelled attention by the enormity of the evil in individual cases, by the intense agony of the burning widow and the terrible shock they gave to humane feelings. But, after all, they were cases of only individual suffering; the agony ended with the martyr and the incident had some compensation in the martyr being almost deified as an ideal Hindu 'Pativrata', a devoted wife, the subject of adoration after death. In the case of early maternity, however, the evil is widespread and affects such a large number of women, both among Hindus and Muslims, as to necessitate redress. It is so extensive as to affect the whole framework of society. After going through the ordeal, if a woman survives to the age of thirty, she is in many cases an old woman, about a shadow of her former self. Her life is a long lingering misery and she is a sacrifice at the altar of custom. The evil is so insidious in all the manifold aspects of social life that people have ceased to think of it.

shocking effects on the whole social fabric..... If legislation was justified for preventing Sati, there is ample justification for legislation to prevent early maternity, both on the grounds of humanity and in furtherance of social justice." Joshi Report, page 102. I have to note that the facts leading to the report are recorded in nine closely-printed volumes of evidence. One of its members, I learn, has stated that "things are far worse than they are described in the Report, because we did not wish to excite or provoke unnecessarily the feelings of orthodox people", while another described the evidence as "a relentless story of cruelty and selfishness".

The Joshi report gives the following facts :—

Deaths of girls from 10 to 15, are nearly double those of boys of the same age. Vol. IX, page 93.

The first child among the Hindus almost always dies. Vol. I page 439.

A girl of 22, had her eighth pregnancy. Vol. VI, page 38.

A Madras girl only 21 years old had her seventh pregnancy and she died soon after of inanition. Many mental wrecks among these young girl-wives were due to pregnancy, &c.

In addition to early marriages, there is the baneful "purdah" system in the north of India, which adds to the untold havoc, caused by infant marriages. Deaths from tuberculosis, consumption, &c., of young women in their teens are common in the north of India. Tuberculosis which thrives in damp, dark, airless corners plays havoc in the zenanas. The purdah system produces osteomalacia, usually in the child-bearing period of life, but it often starts before marriage, when the girl goes into seclusion. Its effect is to soften the bones and often to produce such marked deformity that natural labour becomes impossible.

The committee is of opinion that the girls likely to marry under 15 form 48.4 percent of unmarried women of all classes, a very large percentage, considering that except in a very small minority of the population of India, prepuberty marriage is not considered compulsory. As to prepuberty consummation, the committee found that, although not usual in any class or community, "the practice exists to a far greater extent than may be ordinarily supposed and requires a drastic remedy."

Dr. G. J. Campbell, M. D., gives, as bad results of early marriage, tuberculosis, "which often develops during pregnancy or lactation" and Osteomalacia (softening of the bones), of which she knew of 27 Caesarian operations, in the previous year, from this cause alone. The girls look five

or ten years older after the birth of the first child. Children are small and below par in vigour and resistance to disease. Vol. I, page 443.

Dr. N. H. Blair L.S.A. London, of Darjeeling gives a few instances of horrible suffering, she has come across,.....Vol. VI, page 287.

1. A girl of 12 years 6 months, who suffered from labour pains for seven days.

2. A girl who died of labour pains at the age of 11 years 10 months.

3. A girl about 12 years 6 months old who had to have her baby decapitated and who nearly died.

4. Many girls under 13 suffer from Osteomalacia as a result of early maternity.

Dr. E. A. Douglas, Lucknow, says... "I saw a girl of 12 whose vulva and vagina were so badly mutilated and mental condition so badly affected that she was quite demented." A very sad tale. Vol. IX page 53.

The Sarda Act was passed by a very large majority of 67 votes against 14, and came into force on 1st April 1930 after an interval of about six months from the date it was passed. The object of the Government in giving this interval was to make the people acquainted with the provisions of the Act, but it had a pernicious effect. There was during this interval a flood of marriages of infants of all ages, from infancy upwards. This was the 'affection' shown by parents to their children. What was the result as disclosed by the census which was taken in 1931? The number of infant widows under 5, increased from 15,000 as per previous census report to 31,000, a result of the 'special love' shown by parents to their 'dear' girls! The census report says..... "The year that elapsed between the rush of anticipatory marriages and the taking of the census left time for many infants, married in haste to become widows for life" page 221. A melancholy tale, which the "sanatanists" alone can view with equanimity.

The Joshi report, the evidence recorded by it and other facts and figures above detailed show what a heartless, cruel custom child-marriage is. Can a custom which has produced such a havoc be Sanatana Dharma? Their Holinesses Sri Sankarachariars of whom there are many in India and those who pose as religious teachers who strongly advocate marriage of girls before they are ten years old and clamour and incite the ignorant and the foolish for the repeal of the Sarda Act have to answer.

N. B. The quotations, I have given in this article from the Joshi report and the census report have been taken from Eleanor F. Rathbone's

book,— "The Child-marriage, the Indian Minotaur," published in 1934 by George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Census figures.....

1921.....

1931

	wives	widows	wives	widows	Monstrous cruelty
0—1	9,066	759	44,082	1,515	
1—5	209,397	14,380	757,770	29,365	
5—10	2,016,687	102,293	4,200,534	105,482	
10—15	6,330,207	279,124	7,269,208	185,339	
Total	8,565,357	396,556	12,271,594	321,701	

Total population 318,942,480

352,837,778

(To be continued.)

T. V. G.

A SCIENTIST'S RELIGIOUS FAITH.

One of the most interesting problems discussed in the domain of human thought during the latter half of the 19th century and the beginning of this one, was whether Science and Religion were "Friends or Enemies or Neutrals" as a great scientist put it. At the beginning of the controversy there were few among the scientists who did not believe that they were "Enemies". The opinion among them has however, been veering round latterly, in favour of a reconciliation between the two. Scientists like Eddington, to-day, openly confess that the scientific method of approaching Truth and Reality is not the only one. Yet there have been and there are few among them who like the professed religionist have full faith in what are called the dogmas of religion but what are really the necessary fundamentals of religious faith. They concede vaguely the existence of an Ultimate Power or Intelligence which has made and guides the World, but questioned further, there have been few who could definitely postulate the details of their religious faith. Among the very few scientists of eminence who have been consistently standing on the side of religion and have definite views on all that make a true religious life, none is more conspicuous than Sir Oliver Lodge; and our readers will, we are sure, be glad to know what exactly, he who as a scientist will believe nothing without evidence, has to say on this great question. In his exceedingly valuable little book on the "The Substance of Faith allied with Science", a book which should be in the hands of every one who wishes to think rationally and yet

reverentially about religion, he formulates his faith as follows. We trust that a perusal of this will make our readers, in large numbers, go to the book itself wherein he amplifies, in language at once eloquent and precise, the answers that he has given here briefly. Few that read them without prejudice can fail to admire the robustness of his thought and great humility of one whose intellectual eminence is such as would have made many another arrogant and self-sufficient.

C. V. K.

What are you?

I am a being alive and conscious upon this earth, a descendant of ancestors who rose by gradual processes from lower forms of animal life, and with struggle and suffering became man.

What, then may be meant by the Fall of man?

At a certain stage of development man became conscious of a difference between right and wrong, so that thereafter, when his actions fell below a normal standard of conduct, he felt ashamed and sinful. He thus lost his animal innocence, and entered on a long period of human effort and failure; nevertheless, the consciousness of degradation marked a rise in the scale of existence.

What is the distinctive character of manhood?

The distinctive character of man is that he has a sense of responsibility for his acts, having acquired the power of choosing between good and evil, with freedom to obey one motive rather than another. Creatures far below the human level are irresponsible; they feel no shame and suffer no remorse; they are said to have no conscience.

What is the duty of man?

To assist his fellows, to develop his own higher self, to strive towards good in every way open to his powers, and generally to seek to know the laws of Nature and to obey the will of God; in whose service alone can be found that harmonious exercise of the faculties which is identical with perfect freedom.

What is meant by good and Evil?

Good is that which promotes development, and is in harmony with the will of God. It is akin to health and beauty and happiness.

Evil is that which retards or frustrates development, and injures some part of the universe. It is akin to disease and ugliness and misery.

How does man know good from Evil?

His own nature, when uncorrupted by greed, is sufficiently in

harmony with the rest of the universe to enable him to be well aware in general of what is a help or a hindrance to the guiding Spirit, of which he himself is a real and effective portion.

How comes it that evil exists?

Evil is not an absolute thing, but has reference to a standard of attainment. The possibility of evil is the necessary consequence of a rise in the scale of moral existence; just as an organism whose normal temperature is far above "absolute zero" is necessarily liable to damaging and deadly cold. But cold is not in itself a positive or created thing.

What is sin?

Sin is the deliberate and wilful act of a free agent who sees the better and chooses the worse, and thereby acts injuriously to himself and others. The root sin is selfishness, whereby needless trouble and pain are inflicted on others; when fully developed it involves moral suicide.

Are there beings lower in the scale of existence than man?

Yes, multitudes. In every part of the earth where life is possible, there we find it developed. Life exists in every variety of animal in earth and air and sea, and in every species of plant.

Are there any beings higher in the scale of existence than man?

Man is the highest of the dwellers on the planet Earth, but the Earth is only one of many planets warmed by the sun, and the sun is only one of a myraid of a similar suns, which are so far off that we barely see them and group them indiscriminately as "stars." We may reasonably conjecture that in some of the innumerable worlds circling round those distant Suns there must be beings far higher in the scale of existence than ourselves; indeed, we have no knowledge which enables us to assert the absence of intelligence anywhere.

What caused and what maintains existence?

Of our own knowledge we are unable to realise the meaning of origination or of maintenance; all that we ourselves can accomplish in the physical world is to move things into desired positions, and leave them to act on each other. Nevertheless our effective movements are inspired by thought, and so we conceive that Intelligence is immanent in all the processes of nature; for they are not random and purposeless, but organised and beautiful.

What is to be said of man's higher faculties?

The faculties and achievements of the highest among mankind—in Art, in Science, in Philosophy, and in Religion—are not explicable as an outcome of a struggle for existence. Something more than mere life is

possessed by us—something represented by the words “mind” and “soul” and “spirit”. On one side we are members of the animal kingdom; on another we are associates in a loftier type of existence, and are linked with the Divine.

Is man helped in his struggle upward?

There is a Power in the Universe vastly beyond our comprehension; and we trust and believe that it is a Good and Loving Power, able and willing to help us and all creatures, and to guide us wisely, without detriment to our incipient freedom. This Loving-kindness continually surrounds us; in it we live and have our real being; it is the mainspring of joy and love and beauty, and we call it the Grace of God. It sustains and enriches all worlds, and may take a multiplicity of forms, but it was specially manifested to dwellers on this planet in the Life of Jesus Christ through whose spirit and living influence the race of man may hope to rise to heights at present inaccessible.

How may we become informed concerning things too high for our own knowledge?

We should strive to learn from the great teachers, the prophets and poets and saints of the human race, and should seek to know and to interpret their inspired writings.

What, then, do you reverently believe can be deduced from a study of the records and traditions of the past in the light of the present?

I believe in one Infinite and Eternal Being a guiding and loving Father, in whom all things consist.

I believe that the Divine Nature is specially revealed to man through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lived and taught and suffered in Palestine 1900 years ago, and has since been worshipped by the Christian Church as the immortal Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

I believe that the Holy spirit is ever ready to help us along the Way towards Goodness and Truth; that prayer is a means of communion between man and God; and that it is our privilege through faithful service to enter into the Life Eternal, the Communion of Saints, and the Peace of God.

What do you mean by the Life Eternal?

I mean that whereas our terrestrial existence is temporary, our real existence continues without ceasing, in either a higher or a lower form, according to our use of opportunities and means of grace; and that the fulness of Life ultimately attainable represents a growing perfection at present inconceivable by us.

What is the significance of “the Communion of Saints”?

Higher and holier beings must possess, in fuller fruition, those privileges of communion which are already foreshadowed by our own faculties of language, of sympathy, and of mutual aid; and as we know that man's power of friendly help is not confined to his fellows, but extends to other animals, so may we conceive ourselves part of a mighty Fellowship of love and service.

What do you understand by prayer?

I understand that when our spirits are attuned to the Spirit of Righteousness, our hopes and aspirations exert an influence far beyond their conscious range, and in a true sense bring us into communion with our Heavenly Father. This power of filial communion is called prayer: it is an attitude of mingled worship and supplication; we offer petitions in a spirit of trust and submission, and endeavour to realise the Divine attributes, with the help and example of Christ.

Explain the clauses of this prayer?

We first attune our spirit to consciousness of the Divine Fatherhood; trying to realise His infinite holiness as well as His loving-kindness, desiring that everything alien to His will should cease in our hearts and in the world, and longing for the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven. Then we ask for the supply of the ordinary needs of existence, and for the forgiveness of our sins and shortcomings as we pardon those who have hurt us. We pray to be kept from evil influences, and to be protected when they attack us. Finally, we repose in the might, majesty, and dominion of the Eternal Goodness.

What is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven?

The Kingdom of Heaven is the central feature of practical Christianity. It represents a harmonious condition in which the Divine Will is perfectly obeyed; it signifies the highest state of existence, both individual and social, which we can conceive. Our whole effort should, directly or indirectly, make ready its way,—in our hearts, in our lives, and in the lives of others. It is the ideal state of society towards which Reformers are striving; it is the ideal of conscious existence towards which saints aim.

RELIGION AND ECONOMIC LIFE.

Here below, we print extracts from the discourses which Dr. Stanley Jones delivered recently at Madras to large audiences. He belongs to a class of Christian Evangelists—the term is used not in the technical sense—happily growing in numbers, whose interpretation of the Gospel is less rancorous and more practical than they used to be. Problems of religion have, in the case of most people, ceased to be mere problems of creed, dogmas, rites and ceremonies. The hunger now is for the faith that touches your everyday life, that which gives you not only spiritual sustenance but also less ethereal food. Religion has now in fact ceased to be merely a matter of speculative discussion; it has to come to what is familiarly called “brass tacks.” “Give us this day our daily bread” is no more a mere metaphor. This is so not of any one religion. It is a problem to be tackled all the world over, though in India it may be less prominent now than in the West. We, therefore, welcome Dr. Jones’ method of approach. It is a great improvement over the ages-old preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven on the other side of Death, to the hungry and the depressed on this side. Dr. Jones naturally deals with the difficulty from the Christian point of view. What has Hinduism to say on it? Take the ever pressing problem of poverty. “The poor have always been with us” in a sense somewhat different perhaps than the context in the New Testament suggests. What has Hinduism said and done to comfort them? It is a crude way of looking at Hinduism to say that it has told them that it is their *karma* to suffer. Innumerable Choultries and temples, the daily dole at each man’s door, the extensive ceremonialism, however reprehensible it may be otherwise, and other phases of Hindus life provided that no one went without reasonable creature comforts in this country till very recently. The peculiar organisation of our village life provided for it all. But times are changing. Those aspects of Hinduism which saved India from the horrors of poor laws are disappearing. Half the “sting” of poverty, as all know, is that the “other fellow has better times.” The simple life of even the very rich in villages, where their style of living was hardly different very much from that of the rest, the distribution of the extra produce of land and cattle almost everyday to the poor neighbours made for contentment. To-day the rich are vaunting their riches to an extent unknown to their country and the standards of life of the rich and the poor differ so widely that there is room for the poor to feel that they are poor and to make them question themselves why they are poor. It is time that Hinduism faces this new danger, and we are grateful to Dr. Jones for raising these questions in

the direct form in which he has done it. We may not agree with all his solutions, and we believe that the real solution is in “going back to our Rishis” as Swami Vivekanand well said. The difficulty really is to remove the obstacle caused by a false interpretation of what our Rishis prescribed. The subject is very important and we hope to recur to it later on.

C. V. K.

PROBLEM OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION.

DR. STANLEY JONES’ LECTURE.

Has religion an alternative programme for world reconstruction to Marxian Communism. A choice must be made, in this generation or the next. Were they to base the future of the world on the programme of Marxian Communism, or had religion any adequate alternative? There was an attempt to hold the present order by force. That would succeed only for a while. On the other hand, Communism did present a living issue and one that religion must face. That issue was coming to a head in many parts of the world. One-sixth of the territory in China had already gone communistic. If the present Government fell, the probable alternative was Communism. The old religions were out of it. Prof. Hu Shih, the father of the Renaissance Movement in China, stated that Confucianism was dead. General Chang Ki Shek, the leader of the nationalist forces in China, stated that all educated men in China were weighing the relative merits and programmes of Communism and Christianity and coming to their conclusion.

This issue could also be seen in India. A student told the speaker. “I have two sets of books in my hands; in one hand, I have Lenin and Marx and in the other Gandhi and Tolstoy; and I do not know whether to go the non-violent and religious way of Gandhi and Tolstoy or the violent and irreligious way of Lenin and Marx.” The dilemma of that youth is the dilemma of many throughout the world in East and in West.

The speaker continued: “I am not an economist, nor even a socialist; nor am I taking any part in politics. But I am a religious man, and as a religious man I say that we must present an alternative programme or abdicate. For, economists are attempting to organise life on the principle of co-operation rather than competition. Whether we agree with the

methods and the result or not, there is no doubt that the attempt to build life on the co-operative principle is one that challenges us to think in terms of world re-construction. Personally, I think that Christianity will fit in better to a co-operative order rather than to a competitive one. I am, therefore under obligations to see if I can find a better programme.

"In the pages of the New Testament we do not find a detailed set of rules for world re-construction. This at first sight seems to be a drawback, but in reality it is not. If Christ had given rules for social re-construction, we would have out-grown them, because we soon outgrow rules; but we never out-grow principles, because they are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Out of these principles we can make rules to suit changing situations. So, while Christ did not give rules, He did give principles and suggestions, which, if followed, would lead to a new world order. His general programme was the Kingdom of God on earth. What he meant by that he suggested in the announcement which he made in the Synagogue at Nazareth at the very opening of His ministry. This was the announcement of his programme: "The spirit of the Lord is upon them; He hath set me to preach good tidings to the poor—the economically depressed. He hath set me to proclaim the release of the captives, the socially disinherited; He hath set me to open the eyes of the blind—the physically disinherited, and to set at liberty them that are bruised—the morally and spiritually disinherited." These four items constitute the main points of his programme, a gospel to the poor, the economically disinherited; to the captives, the socially disinherited; to the blind, the physically disinherited; to the bruised the morally and spiritually disinherited." These four things contained the main outlines of his programme, and we must take them up one by one to see whether they provide an adequate alternative to Marxian Communism. For, this question will not be settled by argument, but by the producing of a better order.

"For religion to withdraw within itself and be taken up with its own inner emotions is to court the same disaster which fell upon the Russian Church when it specialised in the tinselled glory and splendour of its service, while leaving untouched the great problem of the rights of common man."

CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO THE POOR

RELIGION AND POVERTY.

"Dr. Jones next discussed the question whether religion had any message in regard to poverty. Did religion simply preach contentment to the poor in their poverty? Oftentimes it did, and as a consequence the labouring people of the world were deeply suspicious of that kind of religion. Some labourers in the West sang the ribald song: "Religion says you will get pie in the sky by and by when you die; in the meantime be content with your disabilities." Again, if religion only offered charity to poverty, it was not much of a message. There must be charity, of course, but unless religion came to the fundamental injustice which existed in human society, it had no real message for the poor. The only adequate message which the Christian Gospel could give to the poor was that there should be no poor. We should so organise the resources that God had given for all so that they might be sufficient for all.

When we turned to the pages of the New Testament to find out whether it had any message of poverty, we found that when the announcement was made to the Mother of Jesus that this Child was to be born, she broke out into ecstatic song. She seemed to catch the meaning of what was going to happen with the impact of this new Kingdom upon life. "He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts—a general revolution; He hath put down Princes from their Thrones—a political revolution; He hath exalted them of low degrees—a social revolution; the poor He hath filled with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away—an economic revolution." Here was the key to the new Kingdom which would abolish everything in every realm which would not fit in with its new spirit. It was the breaking-in of a higher order into the lower order and replacing it, where it was founded on greed and exploitation and unbrotherliness. We had set this song of Mary to music and so lost its significance. It had to be looked at in its bare literalness to see its astonishing character.

Mr. Bernard Shaw had said that this was the most revolutionary song written in the Western world, but the Christian Church had not taken it seriously. Was this just an ecstatic song of Mary, or did it strike the keynote because the rest of the Gospels corroborated her vision. When John the Baptist came and demanded repentance, he said that repentance meant this: "he that hath two coats, let him give one to him that hath none, and he that hath food, let him do likewise." Here was a repent-

ance which meant economic sharing. When Jesus and his disciples went into the corn-field and plucked ears of corn on the Sabbath day, the religious leaders objected. He justified it saying: "Do you not remember what David did when he had need; how he went into the House of God and took the bread kept in the presence of God and gave it to his men?"

THE CRITERION OF HUMAN NEED.

Human need was the criterion as to how sacred things should be used. There was nothing more sacred than abolishing the hunger of man. In the Parable of the Vineyard, the Master had said: "It is my will to come unto those lost as much as unto thee." It seemed that God willed a closer approximation to human equality, but we, His children had willed inequalities. To the statement that there were inequalities in men, in their endowments and, therefore, should be in the distribution of goods, let us remind ourselves that Christ took cognisance of these inequalities in the parable of the talents. He said that from each would be taken in contribution according to his endowments. Putting the two parables together, we come out at this place: To each according to his need and from each according to his ability.

That we might be quite sure that religion had something to do with hunger, He gave us the teaching concerning the last day, in which He said to those on the right: "I was in hunger and you fed me; athirst and you gave me drink." When the righteous objected, asking that they did not see him hungry and athirst, He replied: "Inasmuch as you have done to one of the least of these, you have done it unto me." So, here religion was service to God and service to man combined: to do the one was to do the other, and to refuse to do the one was to refuse to do the other.

If religion took up its time and energy in meticulous sacrifices to God instead of in living service to men, it would come under the condemnation of Jesus. Religion to-day dared not pass over justice in human relationships and the love of God; else it would come under the same condemnation."

FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE.

"The second item in the programme for world reconstruction, Dr. Stanley Jones said, was release of the captive. There could be no real release to the captive unless there was righting of economic relationships. Most of the divisions between man and man, and nation and nation were the result of economic injustices and clashes. At the basis of our world difficulty, at the present time, was economic maldistribution. Jesus was therefore, right in putting release of the captive after good news to the poor.

Jesus came to give man life and he would therefore, lift from man everything that brought him into bondage and captivity. Man was held in bondage by four great forces—by other men, by institutions, by circumstances, and by himself. Jesus would lift all these bondages and make men free. The test of any civilisation was its view of man. What did it think of the human personality apart from race, birth, colour and money? Economists were trying to produce a classless society through the dictatorship of one class—the Proletariat.

The Kingdom of God would also produce a classless society but in deeper terms. When Jesus was presented to the Temple, Simeon, an aged saint, took the child in his arms and said: "Now Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of Thy people of Israel." It must be noted that he saw that Christ was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles or to unveil the Gentiles as the marginal translation gave it. The Gentiles were to the Jews the people in the lowest rung of society. They had divided life into five groups. At the top of the social scale was the Pharisee, proud of his God-given possession and feeling it sacrosanct. Below him were the common people among the Jews. Below them were the Galileans who, being of mixed blood, were considered inferior; and below the Galileans were the Samaritans. To call a man a Samaritan was to abuse him. Below the Samaritans were the "Gentile dogs." Simeon saw that this new movement would be unveiling the possibilities of even the Gentile. Religion must not merely unveil God; it must also unveil man and show his infinite possibilities.

John, the Baptist, took up the same theme and said that with the coming of Christ every valley should be filled and every mountain should be made low. He struck the note of a greater equalising of human life. Most people would not mind the valleys being filled: but could object to mountains being made low. But the fact of the matter was that mountains

were high because valleys were deep, they were made at the expense of the valleys, and everything that lived at the expense of others must be brought low to its proper evaluation.

When Jesus healed men on the Sabbath day, the religious leaders objected because it was the breaking of a religious institution. But Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for Sabbath. The right of Government or religious institutions or rites and ceremonies to exist must be judged by the question of what they did to human personality. The Greeks said that man was the measure of the Universe, but they said it abstractly and philosophically. Jesus said it in other words concretely and morally.

All the way through the teachings of Jesus there was this question of the worthwhileness of man as a man. The shepherd sought the one lost sheep; the woman swept the house to find the lost coin; the father waited for the prodigal to return home.

When Peter hesitated to go in to associate with Gentiles, "the Spirit of God bade him go, making no distinctions." Here we found the power of religion directed towards the making of no distinctions. Anything that made distinctions between man and man was irreligious. The whole teaching of the New Testament could be summed up in the words: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." Paul summed up the whole thing in these words: "In Jesus Christ there was neither Greek nor Jew (racial distinction); neither barbarian nor Scythian (cultural distinction); neither bond nor free (social distinction); neither male nor female (sexual distinction)."

If the Kingdom of God were to be really accepted as a working programme, the bondages from every source which bound man would be broken and it would surely mean release to the captives.

The lecturer referred to the observation of Jesus that He had come to open the eyes of the blind. The Kingdom of God would mean the lifting of the whole burden of physical suffering from Man. Jesus made the healing of disease an integral part of the Kingdom of God. He did not heal disease to show power or to validate his claims; nor did he use it as a bait to get them to listen to His evangelistic message. He healed because man needed healing and healing stood in its own right in the Kingdom of God. "I would therefore heal people whether they listen to my evangelistic message or not." *The hospitals should not be used as baits for evangelistic purposes, for healing stood in its own right.*

The next item in the programme was to set at liberty them that were bruised, or as the Aramaic translation gave it, to strengthen with forgiveness them that were bruised. This pointed to those who were morally and spiritually disinherited,—those that had bruised themselves by their moral falls. They did not break the Laws of God; they broke themselves upon them. Could there be forgiveness in a world of Law? Nature seemed to be hard and unforgiving; but break a bone, and Nature would at once set to work to heal it. Wound yourself and the corpuscles of healing would

rush to the rescue. There was a Red Cross organisation in the Universe. If that was true in Nature, certainly it would be in religion.

The next item in the programme was the proclaiming of the Lord's Year of Jubilee. This referred back to the Old Testament, where every fifty years the Jewish people had an year of jubilee in which all debts were cancelled, all slaves freed, all lands re-distributed, and there was a fresh national beginning. Jesus took this idea, enlarged it, and made it part of his programme. But that sounded like Communism. True, and in early Christianity it did result in a voluntary Communism. The fact was that Christianity would fit in far better into a co-operative order than into a competitive one. In a competitive order, it was not at home; it was gasping for breath, for it was not in its native air. Its native air would be sharing goodwill and love. It would, therefore, fit in better into the co-operative rather than into the competitive order.

The power behind all that to put it into operation was the first item: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me". There were two sides to this announcement of Jesus. One was the programme and the other was the power behind the programme. Two sets of people came to this whole matter. One took the programme without the power. But they soon became weary and discouraged. There was nothing more obvious on the horizon than the tired humanist. Bertrand Russell says: "The best that we can do is to keep an unyielding despair." The humanists lacked the dynamic resources that came from fellowship with the Spirit of God. On the other hand, there were those who took the power and left the programme. They said: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon us. We are very happy and by and by we are going to Heaven." They had got to have both. There had been a clash in many minds as to whether they should preach an individual or Social Gospel. Obviously they must do both. For evil could be in the individual will and also in the collective will. There was such a thing as an evil soul, and also such a thing as an evil system. They must strike at both.

"As to the steps to be taken to realise this new order, I would suggest five; first, we must anticipate the coming of this Kingdom of the new day and act as though it were already here as far as we are personally concerned. Our attitude towards men and the human personality should be what they would be if the new order were now realised. Second, we should train people to live co-operatively. Denmark has distributed its wealth and its social position in a very remarkable way by training the people in co-operatives. There are very few rich people and very few poor. The national wealth had been widely distributed. Third, we must teach these ideas and lay the basis of the new day in the minds of men. Fourth, when these ideas are accepted by a majority they should be embodied in political life. Fifth, in the meantime I can lay hold on the resources of God to change my life from a selfish basis to an unselfish one. In other words, the resources of the Spirit of God are at my disposal."

"The Hindu".

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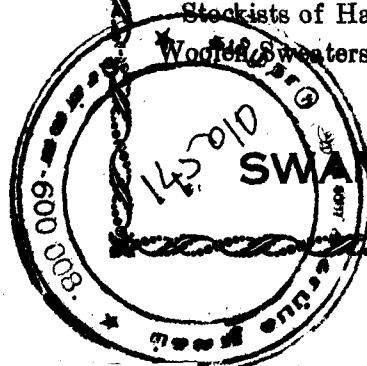
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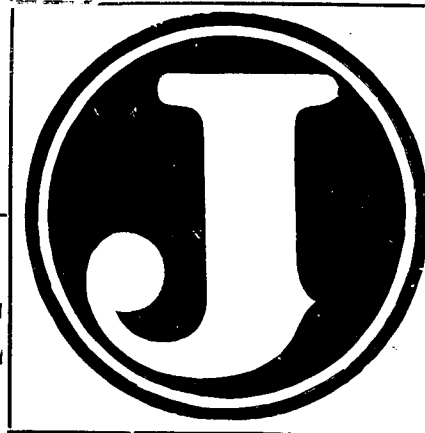
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