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THE

BHARATA DHARMA

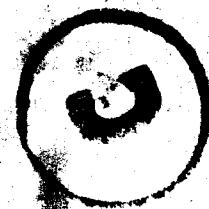
VOL XII

APRIL 1934

June 1934.

NO. 1

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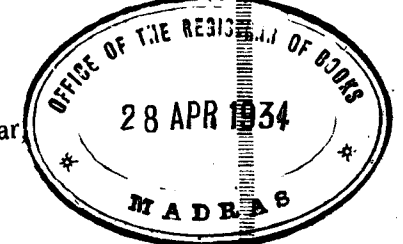


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THE ²⁹⁶
Bharata Dharma

Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

Honorary Editors : { C. V. Krishnaswami Ayyar
K. V. Sesa Ayyangar.



VOL. XII]

APRIL, 1934

[No. 1



On the front parapet of THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT, Adyar

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धा शिक्षया गुरुयुवा ।

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिक्षयास्तु 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.

PUBLISHED ON THE 15TH OF EVERY MONTH AT "MORYALAYA", ROYAPETTAH.
Yearly : India, Rs. 2 ; Foreign. 4s. Single No. : India, As. 3 ; Foreign. 4d.

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It is requested that all manuscripts for publication, books etc., for review periodicals sent in exchange and other communications to the Editors be in future be addressed to **"SOUNDARYA" PILATOPE, MYLAPORE.** All business communications may, as before, continue to be addressed to **"Moryalaya" Royapettah, Madras.**

SOME APPRECIATIONS

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

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

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VENKATASUBBA RAO.—The ideal of the Bharata Dharma is a lofty one that of enabling the readers to approach the problem of life in a spirit of reason....There is greater need in India to-day than ever to examine old customs and old conceptions and to discard courageously such as are bound to be unsuitable. The Bharata Dharma offers to its readers helpful suggestions in this direction.

MADAME MARY RAINE (AUSTRALIA).—The Bharata Dharma fills my heart with inspiration, love and pity and quickens the body to acts of helpfulness and brotherly love....I have found it a great comfort and education and look with joy to its arrival each month as it enables me to regulate my life in harmony.

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

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



THE
Bharata Dharma

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

VOL. XII]

APRIL, 1934

[No. 1

THE SANKARACHARYA ABROAD.

Fellowship of Faiths.

[We invite the attention of our readers to the following extracts from a report (by Mr. R. Krishnasami Ayyar, Advocate, Tinnevely and published in pamphlet form by T. K. Jaganatha Charya & son., George town, Madras) of a remarkable conversation between the present Sankaracharya of Sringeri,—His Holiness Sri Chandrasekara Bharati—and an European gentleman born in the Christian faith. The views expressed by the Swamiji, who deservedly enjoys a great reputation as a *tapasvin*, are so tolerant, that one wonders how it has come about that so much of narrowness and prejudice and exclusiveness are associated with the doings of Mutts such as those presided over by him. Not that the views are new, or are the result of real change; Hinduism has at all times been exceedingly brotherly to her fellow faiths: but, unfortunately, a tradition has grown up in the country among many of its orthodox followers that unless a person is born as a Hindu in this *Punyabhumi* of India and that as a Brahmin, he could not possibly obtain Moksha or attain liberation. We have heard this preached by very learned pandits; and it was with almost startling but very agreeable surprise that we read in that pamphlet that all these were not necessary. His Holiness has not expressly taken the next logical step from what he has stated. If non-Hindus can, without following the *Varnashramadharma*, attain liberation, that, at any rate, shows that the Varnashrama system is, at the best, a *local* necessity. How far a local necessity can be put upon the high pedestal of *Sanatana*

Dharma is then a matter for argument; but, any way, its present apotheosis is certainly a very much overdone affair. C. V. K.]

"While His Holiness was camping in a village in Southern India during the course of his tours an European gentleman came to see him. The visitor whom we may call simply as A. seemed to have studied some popular books on the Vedanta philosophy and the following conversation took place between them.

A: Swamiji, may I know if you are prepared to take converts to your religion? Personally I find much worth in it and I have known very many friends who so love your philosophy and religion that they would like to call themselves Hindus if that is possible.

H. H.: The Hindu system of philosophy and religion is bound to attract all thinking minds but we do not take any converts.

A: If you think that your system is a valuable one and is bound to be useful to all mankind, does it not follow that you must be prepared to take in converts?

H. H.: It does not necessarily follow. Conversion is possible or necessary only when the person who desires to be converted does not now belong to the religion to which he desires to be converted.

A: How is that? Do you mean to say that no formal conversion is necessary as those who desire to be Hindus are already Hindus by virtue of that desire itself?

H. H.: No. I mean that all are Hindus, irrespective of their desire to be called Hindus.

A: How can that be?

H. H.: Hinduism is the name which has now been given to our system, but really it has always been known only as Sanatana Dharma or Eternal Law. It does not date from a particular date or begin from a particular founder. Being eternal, it is also universal. It knows no territorial jurisdiction. All beings born and to be born belong to it. They cannot escape the Law whether they concede its binding force or not. It is an eternal truth that fire burns. It does not depend for its validity upon our allegiance to it. If we accept that truth, so much the better for us. If we do not, so much the worse for us. In either case, the law is there immutable, universal and eternal. Such is our Sanatana Dharma.

A: If then the entire world is Hindu according to you, how do you justify the restrictive caste system?

H. H.: I only told you that all were Hindus and entitled therefore to seek guidance in the tenets of our religion. I did not say that the guidance

will be the same for all. Countless are the varieties in temperaments, training, environments, hereditary leanings, parental tendencies and so on, that it will be impossible to expect any single stereotyped system of conduct for all. Our Dharma taking due notice of this undeniable fact resolves itself into 2 parts (1) *Samanya Dharma* or Ordinary Law and (2) *Visesha Dharma* or Special Law. The former guides all mankind; the former and the latter both together guide those who come under the caste system.

A: If the rules of caste have any spiritual value, why not give the benefit of them to those who are outside it?

H. H.: If water is beneficial to a thirsty man, does it follow that it will be beneficial to give it to a man who is feverish and therefore feels thirsty.

A: Your illustration is not fair. There is nothing to show that a special rule of conduct prescribed for a particular caste will be *injurious* to others who do not belong to that caste or to any caste at all.

H. H.: On the other hand, you must say that there is nothing to show that a special rule of conduct prescribed for a particular caste will be beneficial to others. For, the mere fact that it is prescribed for *that* caste makes it a special law and not applicable to the generality of mankind, if the Shastras are our only guide for telling us that a particular line of conduct is beneficial, we cannot throw them overboard when they tell us for *whom* it is beneficial. Our system and in fact any system which aims at a regulation of conduct, must be based on the principle of Adhikara or competency. Those who belong to the caste are competent to pursue Visesha Dharma; the others are competent to pursue only Samanya Dharma. Further the nature of the competence required can be learned only from the Shastras which prescribe the Dharma.

A: If then the Hindu Shastras are to be taken as the guide for all humanity and if all persons born are in your view born in your religion, how do you account for the prevalence of other faiths?

H. H.: It is their fault that they do not recognise that they are but aspects of the Aryan religion. The highest teachings of any other religion do find a place in the Hindu religion and are but a phase of the Ordinary Law laid down there.

A. Don't you think, Swamiji, that your claim is placed somewhat very high and that the other religionists may not be disposed to concede it?

H. H.: The disposition of others to concede the claim of Hinduism is quite beside the point, the intrinsic worth of anything is always there

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whether one recognises it or not. As for the claim being high, I desire to point out to you that I cannot possibly put it lower.

A: How is that?

H. H: Please excuse me if I take christianity as an example to illustrate my point. If belief in the personality of Christ is a *necessary* condition of salvation, we must be prepared to say that all those persons who have lived before the time of Jesus have been denied the benefit of salvation for no fault of theirs and simply because they happened to be born when Jesus was yet unborn. The same reasoning would deny salvation to those who have lived at the same time as Jesus and since that time but have not heard of him. Further don't you think that it was very unfair of God that He should suddenly wake up on a particular day and prescribe for all mankind a *necessary* condition of salvation? Did He forget that the people who had the misfortune to be born before that date had souls to save? If he did not forget, did He take care to prescribe for them the means necessary to enable them to attain salvation? If he did so prescribe, His prescription could not possibly have included a belief in the Jesus to be born. The only logical hypothesis therefore which any reasonable man can accept is that God *when* He created the first man (if there was such a time) simultaneously prescribed also the means for *his* salvation, for even he the first man was certainly in need of salvation and being the man the teaching could have been conveyed to him only by the only other being that then existed, namely God. We accordingly say of our Vedas that they were co-eval with the first man (not in the sense that they were created together for we believe that there was no *first* creation but that everything is beginningless but in the sense that they were co-existing) and that they are the revelations from God Himself. Any religion which traces its origin from a later time, any time after creation, and from any teacher other than God, is bound to be short-lived and imperfect.

A: But again my initial difficulty in understanding the need for, rather the fact of, several conflicting religions all purporting to point out the path to the light remains unsolved.

H. H: I told you that the principle of Adhikara or competency rules the world. As there are various gradations in competency, there are various faiths suited to those particular gradations.

A: I can quite understand this. But no religion is prepared to admit that it is intended for people of a particular gradation alone. In fact every religion claims to be the highest and the only true one.

H. H: Suppose a young boy is simultaneously asked by four persons to light a lamp, to trim the wick, to fill the oilcan, to put out the lamp, he will be in a hopeless mess and will not know what to do at all. All these things cannot be done simultaneously, but each one of those person insist upon his command being obeyed first. What is the poor boy to do? If the fifth gentleman turns up and says "Bring me a pair of scissors," he is adding one more command. The boy is already perplexed by the option which is given to him of choosing from among four alternatives. Now he has to choose from among *five* alternatives. That is, his difficulty is increased by the advent of the fifth gentleman and not at all lessened. If however this gentleman is kindly interested in the boy and does want to help him out of his difficulties and if the boy with unbounded faith turns to him for help, the gentleman has to tell him emphatically "Bring me the pair of scissors. You *need not* obey the other commands." That is, to serve as a practical guide to the perplexed boy, he has to say that his command alone is the one to be obeyed and the others are not. Similarly, any religious teacher claiming at the practical guidance of those who have faith in himself has necessarily to say "Do as I ask you to do. Ignore the commands of others."

A: That means that the religious teachers adopted their teachings to the calibre and competence of the people who came to them for guidance and to the circumstances of the times when they lived. In other words, their teachings were only relatively true though perhaps the teachers were themselves aware of the absolute Truth; in determining what to teach and what not they were guided more by diplomatic expediency than by unswerving regard for Truth.

H. H: Rather, they were guided by the needs and the competency of people. As I mentioned once before, cold water gives comfort to a thirsty man but it is positively harmful to man laid up with fever. If a doctor allows one man to take cold water and prohibits another from taking it, no partiality can be attributed to the doctor. Nor can the cold water be blamed for relieving the one or harming the other.

A: How is then one to know whether a particular truth enunciated by a teacher is absolute truth or only relative truth?

H. H: Why do you want to know it? Is it to determine the relative superiority or inferiority among the several teachers or is it to obtain for yourself a practical guide to regulate your life with?

A: It is really both; I want to know which religious teacher has approximated most to truth and then shape my life according to his teaching.

H. H: It is an elementary proposition that an umpire who has to decide between the relative capacities of two persons must himself possess a capacity higher than either of them for otherwise he will miss their weaknesses. Do you think that God has favoured you with such a high power of intellect that you can claim to sit in judgment over the intellects of Christ, Mahomed and other religious teachers? Further to decide between two conflicting theories, you must know each one of them thoroughly. Can you profess in the least to have made such a thorough study of any one religion, leave alone the other? Again, is our life long enough to permit of a thorough study of even a single aspect of a religion. Where is then the time to reduce the result of that study into practice?

A: Where then, Swamiji, is your practical advice to me?

H. H: You believe in God?

A: Yes.

H. H: You believe in the wisdom of God?

A: Yes.

H. H: You believe that that wisdom will be impressed in every act of God?

A: Yes.

H. H: You grant that that wisdom must be apparent also in his giving you birth?

A: Certainly.

H. H: God had then a purpose, a wise purpose, in giving you birth?

A: Yes. Even my birth cannot be purposeless.

H. H: God had a purpose, a wise purpose, in giving you birth as the child of a particular set of parents.

A: There must be. I do not believe in chance.

H. H: What more patent purpose need be sought after to explain your being born of Christian parents than to admit that in God's view Christianity was the best suited to one of your competence? The Lord in his supreme wisdom can well be safely relied upon to judge what is the religion best suited for us. He knows that our poor intellects will be helpless to decide for us the path which we have to tread, takes upon Himself the responsibility of deciding that path and gives us birth in that country, clime, time, and faith best suited for us. Why should we ignore this gracious mercy of the Lord and try to do the impossible in canvassing the relative value of the several religions?

A: I have tried to understand Christianity and follow it to the best of

my lights but very many doubts are cropping up now and then and I have not been able to meet with anybody who can solve those doubts. That is why I wanted to study other religions.

H. H: Doubts can never be solved unless you approach the persons who have not merely studied their religion but are daily living it. For the purpose of trade you are prepared to cross the seas and explore the air but for the purpose of truth you want the teachers to go to your door and resolve your doubts. This attitude that religion is an interesting side aspect of life must go. If once you realize that religion is life itself and not an *aspect* of it, you will begin to explore the entire world earnestly for a proper preacher who is ever waiting but is waiting for a symptom of that earnestness. I am not prepared to admit that there are not such teachers in Christianity. They may not be in the ordinary world of strife, for such a world did not want them and they have no use for such a world. They may be even in the midst of that strife as that strife cannot injure them and as the world cannot recognise them. Go therefore in search of such true Christians and ask them in true humbleness of heart to solve your doubts. They will do so in no time and you will find that God in spite of your doubts, was after all justified in making you the child of Christian parents.

A: If your aim is to make a Christian a better Christian, a Hindu a better Hindu and so on, your Religion is more catholic than I thought it was. In parting, may we have your gracious blessings?

H. H: Blessings are the monopoly of God and we shall all pray for His gracious blessings. Please let me once more point out to you that God has already blessed you with a good physique, a virile mind, and an intellect. An Artist ever so capable even though provided with the finest of colours and with the finest of pencils and even though he may have thought out the finest of subjects cannot depict a picture on the vacant air. To use and give expression to all the facilities and conceptions, he does require a stable background of canvas, however thin and worthless it may be. Don't waste therefore your gifts in airy speculations as to the relative value of the several religions. Apply your God-given gifts on the stable backgrounds of your God-chosen faith, Christianity. When the painting is over and you are contemplating the beauty of the picture, the background may fade away from your view of its own accord. But not till then. Remember!

THE KUCHELA TRADITION IN HINDUISM.

K. V. SESA AIYANGAR.

The Kuchela tradition is a living tradition in Hinduism. To men and women sweating under the yoke of economic distress the possibility of miraculous transformation of a beggar into a prince is an abiding source of comfort. To devotees of God suffering from the many repressions of penury the Kuchela legend brings an assurance of an ever watching Providence that does not neglect their physical wants. To those who hold the riches of earth as dross and seek to press forward on the path of spiritual evolution, Kuchela-Krishna is an object of reverent worship. Through all the centuries that have elapsed, the light of this episode has shone in Hindu legendary lore reconciling people to the enigmatic afflictions of life and strengthening their faith in the existence of a Lord of Love who will not desert His children in distress.

One peculiar feature that makes the episode so popular is that Kuchela does not appear to have possessed any exceptional claim to have deserved the Divine favour that came to him. He was merely a poor and obscure Brahmin conforming to the usages of his caste with stoic indifference, and pathetically helpless in matters of the world. Kuchela does not belong to any of the familiar groups associated with the life of Sri Krishna for whom Krishna worked miracles. He was not a relative like the Pandavas. He was not a kinsman like the Yadhus. He was not an object of affection like Gopis, nor a hero like Bhishma nor a holy personage like the Rishis, nor an intimate associate like Akrura or Vidhura, nor even an enemy like Sisupala and Salya. In Kuchela's case there was neither blood relationship, nor communal affiliation, nor love bond, nor the appeal of a soul aspiring for higher self realisation. There was just a casual association for a few weeks during student life in the Gurukula of Sandipani.

The triumph of Kuchela is therefore the triumph of the average man. The problems that troubled Kuchela are those that every Hindu has to face. The miraculous intervention that happened in Kuchela's life is one which many Hindus believe may happen in their own lives. From a slightly different aspect it may be said that every one has at some period or other in his youth enjoyed the ennobling atmosphere of The Higher Presence. Every one has afterwards had to descend into the atmosphere of the earth and experience the shock of contact with the repulsive facts of the work-a-day world. To every one has come the trial of preserving the inspiring affiliation of youth amidst the inevitable

temptations arising from the obligation to maintain a growing family with little income. From every heart there goes up the prayer for relief from domestic affliction of various kinds. With what results? Some definitely yield to temptations and wander away from the path of rectitude. Some hold on in a precarious manner to the anchorage of faith. Only a few preserve an unswerving loyalty to the ideal of righteousness. Kuchela's place is in the last of these groups. His ultimate worldly success is therefore a guarantee for all who aspire to tread (the straight and narrow path) that to those who seek 'first the kingdom of God and His righteousness' the good things of the world will be added.

'SEARCH FOR TRUTH.'

K. S. RAMABHADRA AIYAR.

The sweet, strident Voice of the Inner Soul
Proclaims the majesty of the Universal Lord,
Peace, contentment and a search for Truth
Embrace your being from end to end.

Man has a source of exquisite joy
In the inner fibre of his self,
It is a source of eternal of Truth,
It is a scene of boundless activity.

The source of Life is God,
The source of Truth is God,
The source of Knowledge is God,
The source of Bliss is God.

God transcends and outshines the physical laws,
He creates, preserves, destroys and re-creates,
The cycle goes on from hour to hour and age to age,
Even the smallest atom reveals His infinite Power.

Let us meekly search for truth,
We will find It within ourselves,
Any where and everywhere He resides
And spurs us on to boundless service.

Peace, Peace, Peace!

C. W. LEADBEATER

BY

C. V. KRISHNASWAMI AYYAR.

Charles Webster Leadbeater, who passed away at Perth, on the 1st of March 1934, was a remarkable personality in some respects. In the Theosophical Society he was esteemed, by many, as second only, if at all, to Mrs. Annie Besant, and enjoyed a great reputation as a lecturer, writer and occultist. If it may be said of Madame Blavatsky that she was the Theosophic hero (must we say heroine?) as Prophet, and Col. Olcott was the hero as King and Mrs. Besant was the hero as Poet (poet is but orator writ differently), Mr. Leadbeater may be said to be the Theosophic Hero as Man of Letters. He wrote many a useful book in his long career—he was 87 years old when he died—from a Buddhist catechism to a recondite treatise on *Chakras*. Many students of religion, not only of the Theosophical variety, were great admirers of his writings.

Two or three things distinguished his books from the other occupants of the book-shelf. They discovered a singular clearness of thought on subjects where "woolliness" is not altogether uncommon. That and an uncommon directness of expression—a directness which one finds usually only in books on Science—gave his writings on Religion an irresistible appeal; and the present writer wishes to lay a wreath of gratitude for the timely and invaluable help which he among others owed to them for an escape from profitless intellectual dialectics. And there were a few subjects which Leadbeater made peculiarly his own: books on which readers of the *Bharata Dharma* are likely to be interested in. The problem of Death is as old as the hills. It got a new handling by the Rationalists in the latter half of the nineteenth century, to combat which much experiment was carried on by the Society of Psychical Research. Leadbeater was a keen student of this problem—which student of religion is not? But he had no *odium theologicum* in him to make him spurn this new aid to establish the old view. His "Other Side of Death" is a book of outstanding merit which no student of that subject can ignore without serious loss; and no one single little pamphlet has brought more solace to bereaved Humanity than Leadbeater's "To those who mourn". He has marshalled, in the former, nearly all that has been said on the subject of Survival of Personality from different points of view, and it is almost encyclopaedic in its contents.

His "Invisible Helpers" deals with another branch of knowledge—we say knowledge for we believe that it has long past out of the region of

mere speculation—which is very helpful. Millions of accidents are prevented and never occur in life, specially in the case of children, because of such helpers. "Heaven guards us in our infancy" is a truism to many: as true as that the Earth revolves round the Sun. Leadbeater has collected a hundred illustrations of this truism and of similar ones in the case of adults. His two volumes on "The Hidden Side of things" are fascinating and helpful reading and make one realise, far more than any two other volumes, the kindness and love which all serious thinkers looking below the surface see in this world of apparent misery and pain. It is a much needed corrective to the cheap materialism into which those who have seen and suffered pain and sin and do not think, easily glide into.

Leadbeater's many books on Theosophy (in special) are no doubt marked by his usual clearness of thought and expression and if we were asked to choose an elementary text book on "Theosophy" among the many introductory books for the use of a first enquirer, we would unhesitatingly prefer Leadbeater's "A Text book of Theosophy" to any other, even to that by Mrs. Besant. But, perhaps, these specially Theosophical books may not interest the general reader.

One branch of Leadbeater's work which would be of specially attraction to our readers is his study of the "true inwardness" of religious festivals and the significance of the sacraments of religion. In the December issue of the *Bharata Dharma* we drew the attention of our readers to his views on certain aspects of the great festival of Christmas. In this issue they will find some interesting peeps into the sublimity of "Easter". His "Science of Sacraments" is a book of rare value, and we have often felt that if only some one would do for "Hindu Sacraments" what he has done for Christian sacraments, there would not be half that indifference to Hinduism among the educated Hindus as there is at present.

About his powers and success as an occultist there would naturally be a great difference of opinion. There are those who argue that his occult perception could not have been of a high order when he did not see that he was to drop his last mortal coil in twenty days and undertook a perilous long journey within that period. There are others who rate his powers very high indeed. Be it as it may, few will question his extraordinary clarity of thought and expression, and the great helpfulness of his writings.

EASTER.

By

C. V. K.

This month of April 1934 began in the middle of the Easter Holidays and most men and women had a much needed spell of rest and recreation. One wonders, however, how many of them thought of the origin of these holidays and the significance of this period of 'off-work.' Even among those who had the leisure to think of it, it will be a moot question whether it meant anything to them personally apart from its being the festival of the rising of Jesus of Nazareth from his sepulchre sometime after he was left there as dead. A miracle no doubt to wonder at, but of little to touch their own lives. The following for much of which the present writer is indebted to C. W. Leadbeater's "The Hidden Side of Christian Festivals", will, it is hoped, be of interest and profit.

The word Easter is derived from *Eostre*, which is the name of the Anglo-Saxon goddess of Spring; there is a further derivation beyond that, because *Eostre* is only another form of *Ishtar*, *Ashtaroth* or *Astarte*, the Queen of Heaven, and even that in turn, if we go far enough back, comes from the Sanskrit *Ushas*, which means light; the word from which springs the title *Ushas*, the dawn maidens of the Vedas. So fundamentally Easter is the great festival of light—of the rising again of the Light of the World.

All the symbology of our evolution centres round the fountain and origin of that evolution—the Solar Deity, Who in the Greek philosophy was called the *Logos* of our system. *Logos* means "Word"; it is the Greek term used in the well-known and most beautiful text: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Modern Christian belief has become largely material and non-philosophical, chiefly, because of its most unfortunate and persistent confusion of the very personal Jewish tribal deity *Jehovah* with the Supreme First Cause of all. Those who hold that view think of God as a Father, but a savage and tyrannical Father, jealous and cruel beyond all earthly experience, capriciously creating one man healthy and another full of fell disease from his very birth, throwing one man at birth into the lap of affluence and another into grinding poverty, and capable of casting either or both of these men into everlasting torture after death if they will not do violence to the intellect with which He has endowed them by pretending to believe certain incredible stories.

It is indeed true that no man can comprehend God; but we can at least form a more intelligent conception of Him than this, and the first step towards such a conception is to recognize that He has many manifestations. Of the Absolute, the Infinite, the All-embracing, we can at our present stage know nothing, except that He is; we can say nothing that is not a limitation, and therefore inaccurate. But in Him are innumerable universes; in each universe millions of solar systems. Each solar system is the expression of a mighty Being Whom we call the Solar Deity, the *Logos*, the Word or expression of that infinite God. This Solar Deity is to *His system* all that men mean by the title God. He permeates it; there is nothing in it which is not He; it is the manifestation of Him in such matter as we can see. Yet He exists above it and outside it as well, living a stupendous life of His own among His Peers. As is said in the Veda. "Having permeated this whole universe with one fragment of Myself, I remain."

Out of Himself this Solar Deity has called this mighty system into being. We who are in it are evolving fragments of His Life, sparks of His divine Fire; from Him we all have come; into Him we shall all return. He pours Himself down into matter, and thus suffers very truly an eclipse, a crucifixion, a death, and then rises again out of that matter in order that we, humanity, may be. The whole life of the solar system comes from Him, and therefore those who wish to fulfil that which He has indicated for us, those who wish to become wise, must follow in His footsteps and develop as He has developed. All the ancient religions have taken up these ideas and have woven them into beautiful symbols, differing according to the religion, the race, and the people; and that very same symbolism, which indicates and describes the life of the aspirant in terms of the life of the Sun God, exists in the Christian Church, and is shown in the course of the Christian Year.

The first half of that year (from Advent and Christmas up to Trinity Sunday) is as it were the active, eventful part of the solar life; and then the next six months are devoted to practising and preserving what we have learnt, so we pass into the comparatively calm waters of the Sundays after Trinity, when all goes on quite quietly with only occasional great festivals, none of which are connected with the life-story of the Christ, which is also the life of the Sun-God. In all religions alike the Sun-God is always born in midwinter, directly after the shortest day, born at midnight of the 24th of December when the constellation *Virgo* is on the horizon. Hence it is said that He is born from the Virgin; and yet after

the birth, when the sun has risen into the heavens, Virgo still remains the immaculate and heavenly Virgin. We see there a sidelight upon the story of the Immaculate Conception which appears not only in the Christian religion but in many other older faiths.

The Sun-God is reborn, because the shortest day in the northern latitude is past; for months the days have been growing steadily shorter, as though He were being vanquished by the powers of darkness; but now this decrease is conquered, and He begins to reassert His powers, and the night slowly yields before Him. He has still to pass through the storms and tribulations of winter; and that is why the early life of the Sun-God in all religions is always surrounded by trouble and sorrow and difficulty. Krishna suffered much from persecution and had to be hidden among the cowherds as a child, because the king sought His life; the Lord Jesus was assailed by Herod, who attempted to kill Him; in all the stories of the Christ-life in any religion we find the same thread running through. Osiris Himself, thousands of years before, was cut to pieces and destroyed by Set, and only after that He was gathered together and rose again. In Ancient Egypt the people mourned over the death of Osiris, just as some Christians now mourn over the death of the Christ on Good Friday, and they rejoiced in the great festival of the assembling together, the gathering together of that which had been separated, just as we now rejoice at Easter.

Great are the storms and tribulations of winter, but the Sun-God survives them all, and His strength is steadily growing as the days lengthen towards the vernal equinox. At that equinox, as the name implies, day and night are exactly equal all over the world; and after it the sun crosses the line, so that in the northern hemisphere the days grow steadily longer, and the victory of the Sun-God over night is assured. He rises triumphantly over the line and ascends in the heavens, ripening the corn and the grape, pouring His Life into them to make their substance, and through them giving Himself to His worshippers.

Every one of us will have in turn to undergo the suffering symbolized by the cross; every one of us must learn how to give himself up utterly for others; but also for every one of us is the glory of Easter, the Resurrection, the victory, the triumph over matter.

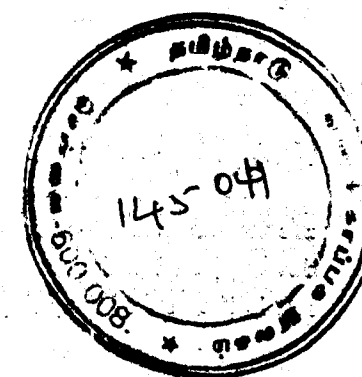
That still remains ever and gloriously true. The victory which man gains over the lower nature is something which must be achieved in the life of every one of us. There must come in his life a point at which he finally triumphs over the lower matter and rises out of the darkness of

sin and ignorance into the light of wisdom and the higher, purer life. So Easter is not only the commemoration of something in the far-distant past; it is a real day of celebration and of thankfulness for the victory which man has gained, is gaining, and will gain all through the ages over that which is lower, that which is less developed.

The life of the Christ should be the type of the life of every one. We, too, must pass through those stages, those steps, through which the Christ passed. We must suffer with Him all the sorrow and the pain of the Easter week, a veritable crucifixion of all that seems to the man worth having; but he who endures to the end, he who passes through that test as he should, for him the glory of Easter is to be also revealed, he also will gain the victory which makes him more than man, which raises him to the level of the Christ Spirit. That victory is for every one of us, and when we thank God for the Easter festival, we are thanking Him for that magnificent possibility, and also for the fact that there are many even now who have realized that.

In His Resurrection is the earnest of our own. Because the Logos Himself has entered matter, has triumphed, and has risen from it; because the Christ, the great World-Teacher, has passed through that experience also, it is certain for every one of us that, when our time comes to endure that suffering and that crucifixion, it will lead us, as it led Him, to the higher glory of the resurrection and to final triumph—a triumph which is final because it is based on knowledge.

Therefore have we a true joy in exchanging with one another the traditional Easter greeting. For just as on Christmas Day we wish one another a happy Christmas, so when the early Christians met one another on Easter Day one said to the other: "The Lord hath arisen," and the reply, was: "He is risen indeed." Not from an earthly grave, but from the grave of matter; risen in truth and in splendid reality—risen for evermore. So in his victory we triumph too.



DEEP SOUNDINGS IN THE MAHABHARATA.

BY

KEERTANACHARYA C. R. SRINIVASA AIYANGAR.

It was the poet Gray that placed on record the eternal truth that the dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear full many a gem of purest ray serene; I do not know whether modern science endorses this view about the birth place of precious stones. But, the Hindus called the Ocean Ratnakara (a store house of gems). Now, the Mahabharata is such a fathomless place of waters and the daring and skilful diver is a million-fold rewarded for his pains. Here is one such precious find. The Sabhaparva of the Mahabharata gives a very fine description of the audience halls of Indra, Yama, Varuna, Kubera and Brahma. A careful perusal of it brings to light many a rare and valuable piece of information.

Chap. VIII tells us that Indra is enthroned in state in the company of Sachi, Mahendrani, Sri Lakshmi, Hri, Keerti and Kanti. Now, these cannot be separate individual queens. Sri Lakshmi and Hri are the wives of Mahavishnu, Keerti and Kanti are excellences and the expression may stand for the presiding deities thereof. As for Sachi, it is the name given to the wife of Him who holds the position of Indra for the time. For Indra is the name of an office and not of a person (like the Trimurtis, Vasishta, Narada, Vyasa, Sankara, Buddha). Mahendrani is explained in the comments as the ruling deity of Devendrahood. Then Sri, Lakshmi and Hri must likewise signify the powers connected with beauty, wealth and modesty—Indra is endowed with these divine excellences.

There is an expression that gives us the idea of many souls that have duly qualified themselves to occupy the place of Indra, but wait their chance since there is already one in power. This applies, evidently, to all other place holders and their ganas (hierarchies). There is a sutra in the Vedanta Sutras that tells us that a Mukta-jiva (liberated soul) stands on a par with the Iswara himself with the exception of one aspect. He cannot be the ruler of worlds and systems though he is fully capable of discharging the functions: there is already one in power (Jagatvyapara Varjam).

We find there "Savarni". That is a title for some of the Manus that are to rule over us—Savarni, Daksha Savarni, Brahma Savarni, Dharma Savarni, Rudra Savarni, Deva Savarni and Indra Savarni. Savarni himself is the son of Surya by his wife Chaya. The expression Savarni denotes

that he was of the same Varna or complexion as the personages coupled with the name. The colour indicates the spiritual level attained by the person and refers to his aura.

Vyasa is found among those that visit that Hall. It is Vyasa that wrote the Bharata; it is he whom we know as Krishna Dwayapayana (Krishna born on the island). But it may also refer to many others, about twentyseven in number that held the place of Vyasa (editor of this manvantara).

We find that Valmiki the singer of the first and proudest Epic, the Ramayana, occupying an honoured seat therein.

Even such exalted beings as Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Mareechi (Patriarchs or Prajapatis) deign to visit the Sabha, but it is a surprise to come upon the name of Goutama in the list seeing that Indra offended him mortally and was cursed by the Rishi. Equally strange is it to find Sukra there as he is the priest and counsellor of the Asuras, the eternal foes of the Devas. Another sentence "Brihaspati and Sukra are ever present there" confirms this statement.

The audience hall of Yama is the haunt of some very strange characters. Dhruva is there though he is the regent of the Pole Star and of the large world of which it is the centre. Vena the king finds a place therein. How could this be if he is the son of Pridhu one of the minor incarnations of Vishnu. The king is preserved for ever for us as he that put in practice every wild and outrageous idea of ultra reformers and in consequence brought upon himself his own ruin at the hands of the Rishis and Brahmins. It is strange company for the pure and high souls in the Halls of Yama. Stranger still is it to find there Rama and Lakshmana, the incarnations of Mahavishnu. After his work was over Sri Rama is said to have gone back to his home on high; his brother Lakshmana preceded him; so how could they find a place in the Sabha of Yama. An old commentary on the Bharata explains it thus: Yama is said to have had a private talk with Rama to remind him that it was high time for him to close his life on earth. So there must be some connection between the Yama and the brothers. But this is as weak and pointless as one could make it. The presence of Parasurama there makes the matter darker and more mysterious. How could he be anywhere else than on earth. He is one of the seven Chiranjeevis (the long lived). This length of years is taken to cover a day of Brahma at the most. Again, we meet Parasurama in the Bharata Period. He takes the side of the Princess Amba of Kasi who had a mortal feud with Bheeshma,

She thought that he was at the root of all her misery and wrecked life. So Rama of the axe came to Bheeshma, his most faithful and devoted disciple, to lay his commands on him to right the wrongs of Amba by taking her to wife. This Bheeshma would not and could not do as he had taken a stern vow of celibacy. Then there was no other go than for the pupil to accept the challenge of his master to a mortal fight. Twenty one days they fought on and Bheeshma came out of it the better man. Later on we find that Parasurama took Karna as his pupil through a mistake for which the Prince was cursed so dreadfully that it brought about his death. Further, he is supposed to be still on earth as the Patron Saint of the country known after him as Parasurama Kshetra. This leaves for us only one way out of the difficulty. Rama, Lakshmana and Parasurama were avatars of Mahavishnu. The first two were his Vehicles of manifestation all their lives, while Parasurama was used as such only during a certain portion of his life. Sri Rama, the next incarnation met him in fair fight and worsted him; but he also took away from him the Avataric energy and essence that was placed in him for a certain purpose. Parasurama felt it, recognised Mahavishnu in Sri Rama and was given leave to go to Mount Mahendra to perform tapas. Now on the face of all this, how are we to solve this riddle if we take Rama and Krishna and the other Avatars of Vishnu as in reality souls on the path of evolution, who were selected by Iswara as the best instruments for the time to carry out his purpose. We can in a way account for their stay behind in the worlds of form. They are the men whose evolution continues; and they may again be chosen for the Lord's work or rise to loftier heights. In the case of Parasurama he is still on earth with us; how could he have his alter-ego in the halls of Yama. I do not see how we can apply to his case the explanation that Maharishis and Gods are found located all over our system at the same time. They have advanced so high that they could manifest themselves in full consciousness in many centres at the same time. This is but an expression of the omnipresence of Iswara whom they approach so near: (vide the powers of Viswamitra who was a creator of worlds against the Lord himself; Maharishi Atri who took the place of the Sun himself for a while; his wife Anusuya who was mother Ganga herself for long years; Vasishta who holds the office of Acharya to the solar kings and holds his place as regent of a star in the great Bear). Now Parasurama is not ranked among such, as to be present in more places than one.

The name Janaka among the assemblage must be taken to mean

some other than the Janaka of the Upanishads, the father of Seetha. Neither the Ramayana nor any of the Puranas have anything to tell us of this King initiate more than this. Bhavabhooti, in his most wonderful and most suggestive play Uttararamacharitra leaves us in no doubt about him. The Janaka of the Ramayana is the same as the Janaka of the Upanishads who was taught by Rishi Yagnavalkya. As a mukta, a jeevanmukta and a videhamukta too, he has raised himself to the Iswara level and it is hard to explain his presence in the particular audience of Yama.

Vena, the wicked is here among the high and the holy; strange indeed; but stranger still to find there his father Prudhu, a minor incarnation of Vishnu.

We find Janamejaya here. Is he different from the King of that name, the son of Parikshit that ruled after the Pandavas?

Mrichikemda whom we meet in the Bhagavata Purana as having been rudely roused from his long sleep by Krishna forms one of the audience of Yama. The personage of that name we meet here may or may not have any relation to the one who sang a hymn of praise to Sri Krishna that was among the hymnology of our fore-fathers.

"One hundred and one Dhrutarashtras, eighty Janamejayas two hundred Bheeshmas, hundred Beemas,"—is it not enough to take one's breath away? We know of only one Bheeshma, one Janamejaya. There is the Dhrutarashtra of the Bharata, the blind King. There is a Gandharva of that name and there is one of the four Maharajahs so called. We know of the Bheema, the Pandava; and another King so named, the father of Damayanti (if my memory serves me right). But eighty, hundred and two hundreds beats me hollow. I may venture an explanation here, the only one possible. These names may stand for offices in cosmic and systemic evolution held by individual souls just like the Trimurti, Indra, Vasishta and the like.

But Jayatradha without any explanation or qualification does not fit in with the Jayadratha that was slain by Arjuna later on when Krishna darkened the Sun with his Chakra to bring it about.

Of the trees that are found there embodied and wait upon Yama we find Simsupa Phalasa, Darbha, and reeds. The old commentary tells us that it is the Ruling Deities of these that find a place in the hall. Now Simsupa is the tree that afforded shade and shelter to Seetha in the Asoka grove. Is there any key to unlock the mystery that underlies? Seetha abides in the grove that is aptly named Asoka—free from grief (though in apparent bondage). This is characteristic of the Jeevatma whose Swarupa is Ananda though the Personality may be invested in matter and limitations. Then Simsupa must be something connected with that state of consciousness.

Passing on to the Sabha of Varuna, the Lord of the waters, we find some curious bits of information there. His wife is Varuni. Now this is

probably the same as one of the fourteen products of the churning of the Ocean of milk. It is said that the Gods took her to themselves. (Sura is another of her names; hence those that adopted her were called Suras or Devas, in contrast to those that rejected her, the Asuras). We are told that She is known on earth as Gowri. The latter is the consort of Mahadeva. Are these two the different manifestations or aspects of the same power? What is the point of similarity between Varuna and Mahadeva? Varuna is the great God in the Rig Vedic Pantheon and Mahadeva is the first and foremost of the later Trinity. Again, we find the great Nagas in the Sabha of Varuna; and some of them are found as the ornaments of Rudra.

Kapila the incarnation of Vishnu, Garuda the mount of Vishnu, are also found in the hall; and with them the Eight Vasus who have a distinct home of their own. But why do we meet with the Emperor Bali, the son of Virochana while we find him in one of the underworlds where Ravana found him in one of his expeditions.

Vali too, the famous monkey lord has a place there along with Ravana—whom he made short work of. But Ravana is one of the wardens of Vaikunta (Jaya and Vijaya) who went back most naturally to their own essence until they came down again to work out their curse. It is generally understood that they merged in the essence of Vishnu when they received their death at His hands. How did Hiranyakasipu merge so and remain in the bosom of the Lord until he came out as Ravana? And did Ravana do the like until he came out as Sisupala? But this would not fit in with the spirit of the curse laid upon them that made them stay in the world of men until their three births were over. Then they should have reposed in the intervals in some unmentioned sphere of existence. If Ravana is given a place in the hall of Varuna, are we to take it that his other two manifestations also went there? If so why do we find no mention of it.

If Vali spends his delightful existence with Varuna, why should his brother Sugreeva be denied the privilege and pleasure. Valmiki has it that he went back to his Archetype Surya. Then Vali ought to have gone to Indra and we find no mention of him in Indra's hall.

Of the holy rivers that find a place in Varuna Sabha, we find Vytharani, the Hindu Styx. But its place is in the world of Yama since the souls of the departed are ferried over it.

Coming to the audience of Hall of Kubera the names of Vibheeshana and Narada call for explanation. The former is like the other a Chiranjeevi, long lived. The Rakshasa is still the Ruler of Lanka down here. There is no mistaking him for another as the text describes him later on in the chapter as the righteous minded and as the brother of Kubera. As to Narada his range is over the fourteen worlds that is to him as one since he is one of the staff corps of the systemic Iswara—Why does he affect a particular section of it?

We have here the valuable information that Chakradharma is the King of Vidyadharas, Dharma of the Kimpurushas, Mahendra and Gandhamadhana of the Rakshasas.

We now come to the last of the audience Halls of the Gods, even that of the four faced Brahma. It has no defined form or shape; it changes quality and manner in materials every second; it knows no limits; Heat and cold it knows not; It is ever equable and pleasant; it has neither roof nor pillars and is lighted up by rare gems of varying brilliance. The sun, the moon and fire pale into the significance by contrast of those that frequent it. We come across the fourteen Patriarchs (creators). But strange it is to find Prahalada among them. Durvasus (that much misunderstood and misread Rishi) is there along with Rishyasringa, The virgin ascetics (Sanat-kumara and the rest) keep them company. We are told that there are twenty seven grades of Gandharvas and Apsarasas that sing and dance before Brahma. An old commentary explains this to mean the presiding deities of the 27 constellations; or twenty grades of Apsarasas and seven heads of the Gandharvas.

While enumerating the presiding deities of time periods we find there are five Yugas (the four usual ones and the Yuga Sandhi—the meeting points of the Yugas), four kinds of days (those of men, Devas, Pitris and Brahma). Of the Devatas of holy waters, we read two names Sri Devi and Lakshmi Devi. Are they different? Why are they here while Vaikunta is their home? There are seven Hierarchies of Pitris; four of them are on the Rupa levels and three of them on the Arupa levels. The seven kinds of these beings are named Vyragas Agnishvattas Garhapatyas, Lomapas, Yekasrungas, Chaturvedas, and Kalas. The Dikpalas are there and along with them Mahadeva and Parvati and Subrahmanya whose home is on the Mahakailasa. Strange indeed; but stranger to find the Lord Narayana there.

I pray that light will be thrown on some of these dark points by those gifted with the Open Eye.

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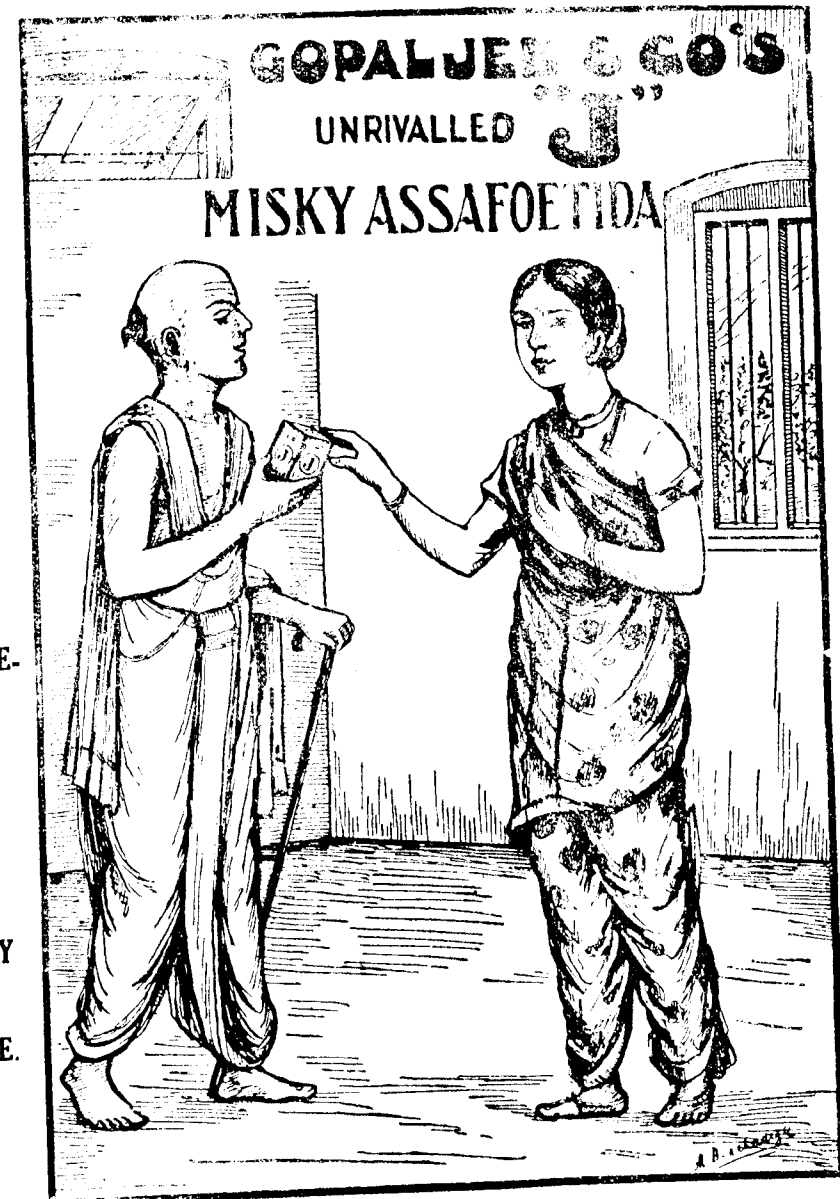
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Bharata Dharma

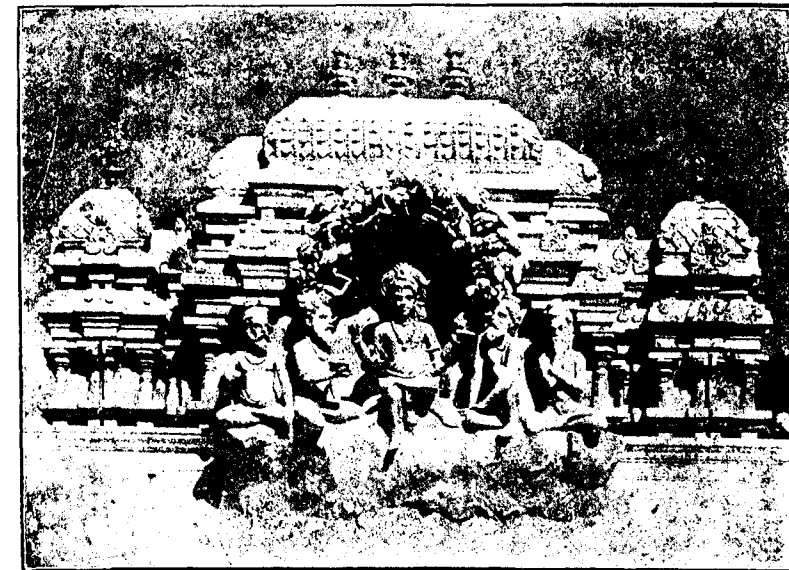
Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

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

VOL. XII]

JUNE, 1934

[No. 3



On the front parapet of THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT, Adyar

चित्ते वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धा शिक्षया गुरुर्युवा ।

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ॥

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

PUBLISHED ON THE 15TH OF EVERY MONTH AT "MORYALAYA", ROYAPETTAH.
Yearly : India, Rs. 2 ; Foreign. 4s. Single No. : India, As. 3 ; Foreign. 4d.

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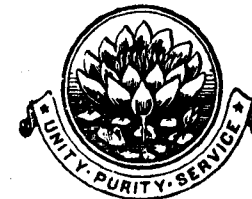
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N.B.—The Arya Mata Sabha is not responsible for any opinions expressed or statements published in this magazine unless they are contained in an official document

VOL. XII]

JUNE, 1934

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SANATANA DHARMA AND UNTOUCHABILITY.

Notes on Comments.

By

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

Some time ago my attention was drawn to an article in Arya Dharma by one who prefers the pseudonym of "Commoner" commenting on my article in Bharata Dharma? I wish to record some thoughts on the subject, by answering the questions they raise. Convenience dictates following the lines adopted by the critic and then an excursus into some general considerations.

If I may repeat my point, the question is, is untouchability of the essence of Sanatana Dharma? Will that be intelligible as a statement of our dharma to Apastamba or Manu or even Yajnavalkya? I leave my critic to consider it and answer it if he chooses.

Cleanliness, godliness or holiness have been generally associated. They are not one. They need not always go together. Conceivably a clean man may not be godly and a godly man may not be clean. "The mind is the maker of the feeling" of cleanliness or pollution, I agree.

"If the mind was disturbed by the idea of pollution, the only means of purification is what the mind imposes". I stand by it and my critic approves of it.

"Talking from the point of view of a world pervading love is it permissible to decry anything as unclean" asks he. In a certain sense it is not. There are people who ignore uncleanness in others out of their

overflowing love. Love protects them. They have a way of handling uncleanness, that it does not, it cannot, touch them. That is ideal strength. That is what our discipline should aim at. That is why untouchability is not of the essence of *Dharma*.

"What does the Hindu mind require to feel pure?"

It is not a correct question. The Hindu mind is not of one type. It did not always require the same things. It requires now what it did not require before. It need not in the future require the same things as now or in the past. Beef-eating did not prevent our ancients scaling spiritual heights. Our minds now require its avoidance. There is therefore no use putting the question in that form as if at *all* times *all* Hindu minds require certain things for their purity, nor speaking of untouchability as of the essence of *Dharma*.

Do I advocate re-introduction of old discarded practices? Knowing by experience how usual it is to put that question to discredit an opponent, I took care to answer it, that I am not advocating a return and said a return was not possible.

"What is the harm in any man eating and cooking his own food?" There is none. But the Sutra writer thought of the Brahmin as having very high spiritual duties to perform and therefore no time to spend on cooking food for himself. Nor was eating so important or meticulous a function with him that he should be his own cook. He accepted food anywhere, conscious that he could command food to do its work both by his disciplined physique and by the power of his *bhavana* in and through the *parisheka mantra*. There was a time when alms of cooked food were taken from all four castes.

I do not object to any one avoiding contact with any other, *if his mind required it but let him not set it up as an ideal for all Hindus of all times and as being of the very essence of Hindu dharma*.

I do not see contradictions, strange or otherwise, in what I have said "The ultimate aim is the clearness or cleanliness in the mind." I stand by it.

Untouchability, seclusion of the forest and magnetism—whatever this last word means; there was a time when orthodoxy treated the word as theosophic twaddle but now orthodoxy seems hospitable to pseudo-scientific words and such support as can be got from them—are connected in orthodox imagination but without foundation in our books; that was my submission.

"Untouchability is *necessary* for physical cleanliness and for mental

cleanliness or purity". It is not. My critic recites many times in the year "Apavitrah pavitrova" and knows how the quality of physical ceremonial purity described by the word *suchi* is obtained by Godward thoughts which have the effect of diverting our minds from our inadequacies and investing them with a sense of high efficiency.

"If a man cannot be pure in the world, it is better to be pure outside it". Does any one get outside the world? Can anyone?

What is "specialisation" in matters of spiritual purity? Has a man to be for ever guarding against touch to specialise in spiritual purity?

Does the man who walks on his toes for avoiding or minimising impure contact think of or practise "the virtues of solitude"?

"Weakness and cowardice", I agree, "are responsible for strange experiences". The more we found institutions and disciplines on a vivid and ever-present sense of weakness and cowardice, the more will those qualities grow and dominate and overwhelm us.

That the orthodox class and the forward class are one, I, at any rate, well remember. If I did not I should not be addressing them. I should not be reminding them of the need for vital reactions.

I discounted the active sincerity of our desire to uplift. I included myself in it. If the critic says that I am wrong as to himself I will accept his assurance and apologize though I do not know who he is nor desire to pierce the veil that he has thrown over himself. But is there any visible proof of active work of uplift? Sahajananda asked for Rs. 3000 for the completion of a temple and has applied for funds. He is building a separate temple and does not desire entry into the local temple of Nataraja. He has not succeeded in getting it.

God does not choose to withdraw into oblivion anything of value for the time and place. Time spirit is described as Vishnu in the Purana that bears His name. Vital reactions of a suitable character are willing submission to His purpose and aid in His work. We have shown this submission in the past by making necessary changes.

"The orthodox Hindu will not be perturbed at the prospect of decay and death of institutions, codes or even Truth".

How curious! What a strange statement to make! I can understand a denial that the consequences will ensue. How can we tread the path of *sanatana dharma* and decay and death overtake us? If these evils happen, it is proof that we have not walked the path. Then it is not God that withdraws. It is we that choose decay and death even of Truth

by our unbending attitude. But the evils will not happen. Our country will react and live ; it will not refuse to react and die.

I agree cordially that " Truth is, was and ever will be whether man recognises it or no " And that Truth is in this sphere the eternal, ever-moving, reacting, changing LIFE identifiable as one and the same through all the changes.

It is not my thesis that the changes made in the past were not good. They were in many or most cases. Only further changes may become necessary and may have to be made and should be made if approved by the popular sense and my appeal to the public is that they should approve of changes in certain directions and my friends on the other side seem to me to be inconsistent in claiming that desirable changes have been engrafted in social life in the past but that no changes could ever be made in *sanatana dharma* in the future. I am for recognising that life is mobile and may and will need changes and adaptations. My friends catch a moment in time and stand there, as if life were static and could be shut up within an undying formula and declaim against all movement and change. At every turn we face both change and identity as of the essence of life. I and my critic have both been changing from childhood to age every particle of our physical and mental outfit without ceasing to be ourselves. Why catch one fleeting moment of time and erect it into eternity both past and future? Why think of unchangeability (which is death) as a creditable feature of living institutions and declaim against vital reactions as discreditable?

There are two well known paths. There is the path of Karma. There is the path of devotion. Wisdom has influenced both in different ways. Let me hasten to add that Karma is not without devotion or wisdom. Nor are the latter devoid of all Karma. It is a matter of stress or emphasis. Strict regulation of every detail of life including regimen as essential, super-added to the rigid caste and sub-caste grouping, based on ideas of health and eugenics, is the path that traces its origin to the Karma marga of earlier periods and its wide prescriptions and ramifications and developments. The other path is that of the Bhakti and the Jnana Schools with emotional and intellectual support for the sense of oneness of all humans. Diversity and oneness are differently stressed and founded on these paths. Speaking from a very broad point of view, the South has adopted the former and the North the latter point of view. It is my suggestion that the South should relax its rigidity in some respects. There is a point of view presented in sister Nivedita's Educational Ideals that is worth

considering. A person is not merely disciplined in the early plastic years of life but watched throughout life in India. It is better to discipline and send people forth into the adventure of life in the certainty that they are equipped fully to meet and solve all the problems of life, if in the vast world they are to be strong with the restraint that comes from within.

This takes me on to the topic of protection and the erection of protecting walls. My critic despises my exhortation to a middle course with a due sense of proportion. Set your heart on a protecting wall! Erect it and keep behind it. You cannot get outside it without danger. Adopt moral protections but go forth into the world with faith in God and courage in your heart. So can you do more for yourself and for the world from which you cannot escape if you would and you should not escape even if you could and to which you owe a duty. There is more in the verse than people understand by it: " The unprotected one stands preserved by *daiva*. The well-protected one perishes stricken by it". The unprotected develop inner powers of protection in the very struggle with the evils around. The too much protected remain with undeveloped resistance to evil and fall a prey to its first onslaught. The application of this truth may require discrimination but it is not to be forgotten that it is not true the more the protection the more safe you are, and that the fate of too much protection by the erection of protecting walls is death in every sphere whether it is body, mind or spirit. Fortunately the practice of people is better than their rigid and inflexible precepts. My critic probably goes forth and battles with life more efficiently than I do though he expresses verbal preference for a more rigid and less efficient way of life. I am sure that the orthodox recognise the need for adjustments and will make them in due time or will bless them when they have come about without their help. No one who feels that I am proffering the hand of death need accept it. Let them make their own solutions. I take leave however to say " please do not, in your worst anger and vexation with heretical friends get obstinately confirmed in the idea of 'no change' whatever the cost, even if it be decay and death of Truth with a capital T."

The broad stream of life will make its own path and flow on. The question for each of us is what contribution shall we make? I am sure we shall decide honestly each by and for himself. The present contribution that we are making is to put our ideas before each other and before the public. Each one's decision or choice of alternatives will be made in the stillness of the night and the depths of the heart.

SOCIAL LEGISLATION IN BARODA.

One of the ideals for which the "Bharata Dharma" stands is the amelioration of the present condition of women in Hindu Society. Reformers have long felt that among the methods by which such betterment could be effected are changes in the Hindu Law of marriage and in the part of that law relating to the rights of women in regard to property. There has been no doubt a slight difference of opinion among them as to the lines on which the change should be effected, but it relates to details. All who are not absolute "no-changers" are agreed on the main point, viz., that the present state of the Law as administered in British Indian Courts is unfair to Hindu women. Several eminent lawyers are of opinion that the restrictions are latter day innovations. For example, they say that the limit on the power of a Hindu female to alienate property inherited from her husband is due to a misunderstanding of the law by British Indian Courts. Be that as it may, most Hindus feel that there must be radical changes to restore to or newly invest on Hindu women, rights which will make them economically independent and get them greater freedom of choice as regards marriage, if they are to have that opportunity for self expression which they by reason of their fine qualities so well deserve. Two Indian States have taken up this question for solution in right earnest—Mysore and Baroda. We print below extracts from a note prepared and issued by the Baroda State—for a copy of which we are indebted to the courtesy of its eminent Dewan—Sir V. T. Krishnama-chariar—showing the changes made recently by its Legislature at the instance of its enlightened Ruler, H. H. Sayaji Rao Gaikwar, who has long been a leader of Social Reform in this country. They will be of interest as showing the general lines on which reform should proceed in other parts of India also, though opinions may legitimately differ as to a few details.

C. V. K.

Position of a widow in a joint Hindu Family.

A joint Hindu Family, as is well-known, consisted in Baroda, as it does even now in British India and elsewhere, only of male members of the family. A widowed mother or a widow of a deceased son or a deceased brother was not a coparcener, i.e., she was not a member, technically speaking, of a joint Hindu Family. She was only a dependent. She had no rights of ownership over the family property. She had only a right to maintenance. Under the law now amended, the widow of a deceased coparcener (i.e., member of a joint Hindu Family) shall be a coparcener

herself. This makes a great change in the status of a widow; she has now all the rights which were formerly enjoyed by male members of a joint Hindu Family, that is to say, she now becomes an owner of the family property jointly with the other members of the family. One of the important rights of a coparcener is the right to ask for a partition of the joint family property. A son or a brother could ask for a partition, get his own share determined and separated and become the full owner of that share, whereas a widow had formerly no such rights. She could have a share, if a partition of the family property took place among her sons but she herself could not ask for a partition. She had therefore to remain content with what she got by way of maintenance. Now under the amended law she becomes a coparcener, and as such will have as much right to ask for partition and get her own share in the family property determined and separated as any male member of the family and when she exercises that right she will get a share equal to that of a son, if there is one; in the absence of a son, she will get what her husband would have got, if he had been alive at the time of partition. This change assuredly places a widow in a more advantageous position than the one she held formerly.

Position of a widow in respect of self-acquired or separate property.

When a man having self-acquired property died, the property according to the old law descended to his sons, grandsons and great-grandsons; the widow of the deceased person did not inherit the property of her husband. She inherited only when there was no son, grandson or great-grandson. By the amended law, a widow will inherit her husband's property along with the son, grandson and great-grandson and she will be entitled to a share equal to that of a son.

Widowed daughter-in-law.

She now ranks next after the mother in the order of succession. Formerly, she had no place in the enumerated heirs who inherited the property of a deceased person in the prescribed order.

Position and rights of daughters.

A daughter inherited to her father only in the absence of a son grandson, great-grandson, and the widow of the deceased. If any one of these was living, a daughter took nothing by way of inheritance. No change is made in this position but now a daughter is given more rights in her father's family than she had before. Formerly a married daughter had no rights in her father's family. Even if she was a widow and had no means of maintenance in her father-in-law's family, she could not

claim any maintenance from her father's family. This was a real hardship in some cases and according to the law now amended a widowed daughter is given a right to maintenance in her father's family provided she is living with her father from the time of her husband's death and there are no means of maintenance in her father-in-law's family and her father can afford to maintain her. An unmarried daughter was only a dependent in her father's family, had only a right to maintenance and marriage expenses and when partition took place, she was entitled to get $\frac{1}{4}$ of what her brother got, in lieu of maintenance and marriage expenses; but she could not force a partition and have her share separated. She is now given a right to ask for the separation of her share (equal to $\frac{1}{4}$ of her brother's share) in lieu of maintenance and marriage expenses, even if no partition takes place in the family. This will place her in a more independent position and she will be free to live apart from the family and mould future life according to her own wishes.

Formerly when daughters inherited their father's property the son of a predeceased daughter did not take any share along with the living daughters. To remove this injustice, the law is altered so as to make the sons of a predeceased daughter coheirs with the living daughters. A similar right of representation is also given to the sons of a predeceased sister, when inheritance goes to the sisters of a deceased person.

Simplification of law of succession in certain cases.

In certain cases the law of succession was complicated. For instance, when daughters inherited, an unmarried daughter was preferred to a married daughter and among married daughters a poor daughter was preferred to a rich one. All these distinctions are now removed and all daughters whether married or unmarried, rich or poor will take equally. Similarly the Law of Succession to Stridhan is very much simplified. Under the Mayukha Law which prevails in Gujarat and also in the State, the three kinds of Stridhan, viz., Yautak, Ayautak and Shulka descended to heirs each in a different order. All these complications are removed and now one uniform order is prescribed for succession to all Stridhan.

Women's estate.

Formerly a woman had absolute interest in her Stridhan only but a limited interest in all other property. She could do what she liked with her stridhan but as regards all other property which she held as an heir or which came to her share at the time of partition, she had only a limited interest; that is to say, she could only enjoy the property but could not dispose of it; she could not alienate it except for certain purposes recogni-

sed by law; such property descended after her death not to her heirs but to the heirs of the last male owner. A great change is effected in this position. A woman will now have absolute interest in property which she acquires either by partition or as an heir, provided the value of such property does not exceed Rs. 12,000. If the property is worth more than Rs. 12,000 she will have absolute interest in the property worth Rs. 12,000 and only limited interest in the rest of the property. She has now as much right of alienating property which she holds absolutely as a male owner had before.

These changes, taken with the right of asking for a divorce conferred by the Hindu Divorce Act which has been in force since the year 1931, place women in the Baroda State in a far more advantageous and enviable position than women in British India or elsewhere.

Wills.

The law uptill now did not allow a Hindu coparcener to dispose of by will his undivided share in the joint family property. This restriction is removed and coparceners have been given the right to dispose of by will their undivided share in the joint family.

Marriage.

Until now the Hindu law as administered in Baroda allowed marriages between Hindus belonging to the same Varna. Intercaste marriages, i.e., marriages between a bride belonging to a lower caste and a bridegroom belonging to a higher caste and between a bride belonging to a higher caste and a bridegroom belonging to a lower caste were held to be valid only if custom recognised such marriages as valid. In the absence of custom such marriages were held to be invalid. Parties belonging to different castes were compelled to resort to the Civil Marriage Act if they wanted to marry. This restriction of Varna is now removed so that a Hindu belonging to any caste will now be at liberty to marry a girl of any other Hindu caste without having recourse to the Civil Marriage Act.

The degrees of consanguinity within which marriage is prohibited among the Hindus are reduced, after considering the opinions of medical men and other experts who have made a study of Eugenics. The prohibition is now confined to the descendants, the ascendants, and descendants upto three degrees of ascendants upto three degrees. The prohibition relating to marriage within the same Gotra is also removed, subject to the aforesaid prohibited degrees, thus widening the field for the choice of brides and bridegrooms.

In Gujarat marriages are restricted to certain circles called Gols

within the castes or sub-castes. This was found to be hampering the healthy growth of the society. His Highness the Maharaja Saheb, therefore, appointed a committee to examine the extent of this evil and suggest remedies. An Act called the Caste Tyranny Removal Act is passed based on the recommendations of that committee. Certain customs enumerated in the Act are styled "tyrannous customs" and it is provided that no caste shall excommunicate or otherwise punish a member of the caste for a breach of such "tyrannous custom". If a person is so punished, he will be at liberty to prosecute the leader or the headman of the caste; the penalty prescribed in the Act is simple imprisonment not exceeding six months or fine not exceeding Rs. 1000 or both. The Act came into force on 14th December, 1933.

VEDANTA IN DAILY LIFE

OR

The Philosophy of Ramana Maharshi

BY

VIDYASAGARA PROFESSOR P. P. S. SASTRI,

Presidency College, Madras.

In our last article,* we introduced our readers to the interesting personality of the great sage at Tiruvannamalai and promised to answer some fundamental questions regarding his attitude to life. We had occasion to spend recently a few delightful hours in intimate contact with this great seer.

Maharshi Ramana's attitude towards life is one of unmixed indifference in that none of the problems which usually confront us has any interest for him. The Vedanta teaches us to see the essential identity between the self and the non-self and explains to us that the seeming differences that subsist between the self and the non-self are but the effects of our natural ignorance regarding the true nature of the Self. But all vedantins agree that these seeming differences will continue to persist in this material world till we realise for ourselves through our own experience that the only true entity is the self and that all others which are but projections of our own ignorance, vanish into thin air before true knowledge. We have therefore been taught to expect the existence of differences between the self and the non-self in all our transactions in the world of ordinary experience.

* "As the East Sees It"—January 1934—Bharata Dharma.

When, therefore, any personality confronts us, giving the lie direct to our expectations, it makes us pause and probe into the real character of such a personality. Ramana Maharshi is one such arresting figure. Hindus, Mohomedans and Christians, not to speak of foreigners, gather before him, revere him, feel his magnetic personality and return to their daily life with greater faith, each in his own distinct type of religious persuasion. Ramana himself does not speak much nor often. But he does not fail to answer pointed questions, however irksome or impolitic they may be. The external shell of imperturbable indifference can be broken through. There have been moments, when, with a suddenly lit-up enthusiasm, he pours forth eloquently very interesting solutions to recondite problems which the enquirer thought of asking but which he had not had the inclination or temerity to actually voice forth.

The early life of the sage has been a bitter struggle against all odds. In his interesting biography, Mr. B. V. Narasimha Iyer has vividly portrayed all the trials and tribulations which young Venkata Ramana endured in his search after the Truth. We are assured that the Truth which Venkata Ramana intuitively perceived in his sixteenth year has remained with him unshaken and doubly fortified through all these thirty-five years of varied experiences.

What then is that Truth? We know that Ramana's academic equipment (in the matter of book-knowledge in Sanskrit and Tamil, even to-day is not of the type that dialecticians and professionalists specialise in. But he always speaks in the language of the Upanishads and the famous Tamil classics, often quoting the more popular extracts thereof and studiously avoiding the more recondite and brain splitting conundrums. He asserts that the Self alone is true and everything else is untrue. To the enquirer who knows his Self, there is no question of the existence of any kind of differences or differentiating conditions restricting the nature of the Self. If he is asked the question whether he has experienced his Self, out comes the answer, who has not experienced his Self. The concept of I is always permanent and is the experience of all. No one denies his own existence. If we turn round and tell him that no one denies his own existence and no one also denies the existence of all other things besides himself, he answers, with a sly smile, that he who does not deny the existence of everything beside the Self has not really understood the true character of the Self.

The true and the false are only relative terms, whose ambits grow narrower or larger with each individual's experience. To one who has not

heard of or seen England, the existence of England is a myth, as his range of knowledge excludes it and limits it only to his own narrow range. To one who has no faith in worlds or planets other than our own, the existence of other planets or worlds beyond ours is equally a myth. Thus, what is true or false according to one need not necessarily be so according to another as well. Similarly, to one who has not comprehended the true character of the Self, non-self is equally true as his own Self. But to one who has comprehended the true character of the Self, non-self as such does not exist. For, is not everything but the Self; and where is the room for anything beside the Self to exist. Time, space, matter—all are but the various manifestations of the Self which is always true, which alone is and beside which nothing else can exist.

All this is alright. But what is the bearing of this knowledge on the daily life of every individual? The correct and only answer to this question is the life led by Ramana Maharshi. He does not see differences among the votaries who seek him. He does not show partiality to this devotee or that devotee. In fact, he seems to love more intensely and truly the representatives of the animal kingdom who pass in review before him than others belonging to the so called higher kingdoms. He teaches you, mostly by example and rarely by precept, that if you can bring yourself to look upon everything else as being permeated by the one and only True Self even in thoughts and acts of daily life, yours will soon be the experience of those who have sung the greatness of the advaita-consciousness all through the ages in all religions. This attitude of Ramana Maharshi is certainly by no means a pose. Anyone can perceive for himself, if he watches the great sage hour in and hour out and day in and day out, that, here at any rate, there lives one who cannot be accused of saying one thing and doing the reverse.

We are naturally inclined to know the means through which one can attain to such a state of seeming indifference to all surrounding objects which in reality is the result of the true apprehension of the real character of the Self. The Maharshi is very definite that the Sastras alone cannot help one. He goes even further and asserts that ignorance of the Sastras is certainly not a handicap in one's search after Truth. Does the Science of Yoga help one directly to Self-realisation? It may, but it is not the only way. A favourite quotation of his is "This Self is not attained by concentrated repetitions of the Scriptures, nor by subtlety of understanding, nor even by varied and extensive love; but It is easily attained by him who really wills It or seeks It truly." It is this non-emphasis on

the traditional and orthodox methods for the acquisition of true knowledge that is the characteristic contribution of Ramana Maharshi. By this single stroke he raises the Vedanta to its high pedestal and makes it the common ground for all real lovers and seekers after Truth, by divesting them of all narrow class or credal distinctions based on accidents of birth or environment and infusing into them the spirit to translate the axioms of the Vedanta into the facts of daily experience.

THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHIC TRUTH.

BY

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Philosophic truth is not of the nature of poetic truth which is an idealisation and realisation of imaginative thoughts by giving expression to them in words. Nor is it of the kind of scientific truth, which is a generalisation of the results of experimentation, observation, tabulation and speculation. It is different from artistic truth which is an objectivisation of the glimpses of imagination generated in the artist's mind in moments of inspiration and expiring with the end of inspiration. Even religious truth which has its end in a revelation falls short of philosophic truth.

Philosophic truth is one of an eternal nature. It deals with esoteric knowledge and is not confined to exoteric or visible things. It is at once the centre and circumference of all knowledge. It is a combination of all human and divine wisdom and is the sum and substance of life, light and love. It is the culmination of love; the unseen light beyond the perception of which, there remains nothing to be seen. It is the goal of human life. It is spiritual radiance and the all-embracing divine effulgence.

Philosophic truth begins where poetic truth ends. It commences with the problem of death and ends with the solution of Life Eternal. It is at once the antithesis and complement of scientific truth. Though philosophic truth is often disparaged as frippery and moon-shine and the pursuit of it as a wandering in a cloud-land, a hunt after mirage and a wild-goose chase, it is the only thing that is real and eternal. It is not subject to change in its nature, in its essence, though there may be variations in the process of pursuing it or in the degree of realising it.

Any change that is associated with or attributed to it is one of degree and not of kind.

In the other branches of knowledge, the truth is quite different from the process of the application of knowledge or of the obtaining of knowledge. But in philosophy the knowledge of truth is the truth itself. The light comes from within and not from outside. The mind turns upon itself and begins the process of analysing it. But even this inward process of self-analysis is a preliminary step in the pursuit of philosophic truth. What we call Metaphysics and psycho-analysis are but the elementary stages of this progress.

In the higher stages of progress is developed what is called self-consciousness. It is the knowledge of the 'self' that enables the philosopher to identify himself with the 'Spirit' or the Divine Principle in him. In the final stage, the 'Knower' and 'Known' ultimately resolve and dissolve into one and the same thing. Soul-consciousness is an effusion of the soul itself. It is what sun-light is to the sun. By realising the nature of his own soul, the philosopher knows the nature of the Universal Soul. Both are one and the same. The individual soul is only a wave in the ocean of the Universal Soul. Just as by knowing the nature of a piece of clay, the nature of the whole clay in the world is known, so also, by knowing the nature of the individual soul, the nature of the Universal Soul is known. The last stage is reached when the philosopher knows and realises that his soul is but a part and at the same time one with the Universal Spirit. This super-consciousness is what is called, in Vedanta philosophy, as the 'Atmic-consciousness' of the Yogi, who attains universal consciousness when his 'Jivatman' merges in the "Paramatman." This is what is meant by 'Moksha' or the 'liberation of the soul', the result of the extinction of the individual in the Universal.

Philosophic truth is eternal, infinite, indivisible, indestructible and immutable and is not easily comprehensible to the intellect or to the mind of man. There are no two realities in it. It is the one and only Reality. Or, is at least that, in the absence of which, all else is false and unreal. Philosophic truth is indefinable, indescribable and incommunicable. But it is attainable by all and those who have attained to it have described its nature as "Sat-Chit-Ananda" swarupa, or Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. But even these words are only the faint and feeble echoes of the inner vibrations of the inner spirits in them, for, the real state of the experience of the truth itself is inexpressible. It is only to be known by an actual experiencing of it.

The knowledge of Philosophic truth cannot be bequeathed to posterity in a practical sense, though theories dealing with the process of progress are postulated and transmitted to posterity. There is no progress in this, unlike in the other branches of knowledge, in as much as the actual experience of Philosophic truth cannot be handed down to after-generations for further development. Every individual, in every age, has to begin his attempts afresh to realise it. The intellect is of use only in the initial stages in so far as it enables the philosopher to realise, that there is, in him, a principle higher than the intellect, a substance, which cannot be pictured, objectivised or described in words. The 'self' itself has to make the study of itself and acquire the truth by conscious and constant effort and self-experience.

All knowledge is grounded on Philosophical truth. All lines converge on the same point. All the rivers of knowledge lose their waters in the oceanic consciousness of Philosophic truth. The knowledge of Philosophic truth alone constitutes the fountain from which spring the sprouts of other branches of knowledge. It is the source as well as the confluence of all other channels of intellectual achievement. The different branches of progress are but the various parts, bits and the rays of the sun of philosophic truth. The rays of the sun cannot exist without the existence of the sun. In this sense, Philosophic truth or progress in it is the only real progress. In Philosophic progress, the 'self' itself is the entity progressing in self-knowledge. This self-knowledge cannot be borrowed or bought ready-made from others. It is to be acquired by one self. In the pursuit of Philosophic truth 'self' and self-knowledge progress endlessly and cannot be separated from the process of advancement.

In other sciences, the conclusion or result can be separated from the process by which it is attained. But with Philosophic truth, the process of obtaining knowledge is itself progress and the knower too is progress. No one can tell us the nature of the 'souls' in us or about their progress. But this self-knowledge should not be confounded with the knowledge of one's own weaknesses, powers and idiosyncrasies or of those of the tribe. It is not what is called knowledge of human nature. It is a knowledge of the 'inner-man'; the true self which is the same in all. Philosophic truth is the consciousness of the one without a second, of the ever-lasting, ever-enduring absolute, ultimate infinite Reality.

This truth reveals the Omnipotent, All-pervading the All-penetrating and All-knowing Author of the Universe in His unalloyed Beauty. Other sciences deal only with the works of the

'Author'. Philosophic truth is a mystery of all Mysteries. There is no greater miracle that can be conceived of than the attainment of this truth which teaches "Know Thyself". It teaches self-reliance, self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-effacement in the end. Philosophic truth is the grand and glorious power which can make a veritable God of man. By it the savage can evolve into the sage. It is the abandonment of philosophic truth that reduces God into a frail human being and the adherence to it restores man to the pristine glory of a mighty Potentate. Philosophic truth takes off the veil of ignorance and frees the human soul from the darkness of illusion or "maya" by illuminating it with divine immanence. In fine, philosophic truth asks man "when God has deigned to become man, why not you, man dare to become God?"

SANATANA DHARMA AND "SANATANISTS".

Decay of Dharma

By

T. V. GOPALASWAMI AIYAR.

I have explained in my previous article published in the Bharata Dharma (May 1934) what Sanatana Dharma is and why it is called Sanatana Dharma, what Dharma is and why the teachings and practice thereof should vary from time to time to suit देशकाल वर्तमान, i.e., place, time and other conditions, but subject to the fact that they must express Truth, as per Plan of the Easwara of our system. धारणाद्धर्ममित्याहुर्धर्मो धारयति प्रजा: "That which supports, that which holds together the peoples of the world, that is Dharma". (Mahabharata Karna Parva lxix-59.) The practice of Dharma in the light of Sanatana Dharma began to decay at the beginning of Kali yuga, as one can learn from a study of the Mahabharata and Bhagavata. Sri Krishna says that many asuras took birth as kings, that Kshatriya dharma was not practised and therefore, one of the objects of His Avatara was the destruction of the Kshatriyas. The Brahmana dharma also began to decay. The 'Sanatanist Brahmanas' began, even then, to lose knowledge of Dharma and the Dharma they practised began to lose its spirit, and this, Sri Krishna Himself proved. On one occasion, the cowherds who accompanied Him in one of His excursions were hungry and thirsty, and having been quite exhausted by their wanderings they prayed for food. Sri Krishna sent them to the Brahmanas who were performing a यज्ञ (sacrifice) close by, to beg for food. These Brahmanas

who did not know the spirit of the sacrifice, but who were arrogant and thought that the soulless karma they were performing was the all-important thing, refused to give them food. Thereupon He sent the cowherds to the wives of the Brahmanas. The ladies, immediately on hearing their request, overpowered with devotion to the Lord, took with them all kinds of food they had prepared and went to the place where He was, to see Him and receive His blessings, though their husbands, brothers and sons obstructed them. (Srimad Bhagavata, Skandha X, Adh. 23). Is it not significant that the men who pretended to be holy not only refused to feed the hungry cowherds and the Lord but had even the ignorance and stupidity to prevent their wives, mothers and sisters from doing so? Sri Krishna, the sanatanists now declare to be an Avatara; but this is the way He was treated in His days, by the Brahmana 'sanatanists'! Again, let us see what the state of things was at the time of the Lord Buddha and the great Sri Sankaracharya. The life of the Lord Buddha is full of incidents to show that the Brahmanas of His day did not know Dharma, that their teachings, their sacrifices and their austerities were asuric and adharmic, not based on Dharma and Wisdom, that there was no Brahmana available to show Him the Path, and that He found His way by His own tapas (meditation and samadhi). What was Sri Sankara's experience? He found that Brahmanas were only Karma-vadins, preaching and performing Vedic rituals, sacrifices and even horrible animal sacrifices and did not know Dharma. Thus, true Wisdom had been lost in India, and hence, the Avataras of the Lord Buddha and Sri Sankara. How is it now, in spite of the Teachings in the Bhagavad Gita by the Lord Sri Krishna, of the grand Teachings of the Lord Buddha and of the great Sri Sankara? Sri Sankara's Teachings and the commentaries we have now of His Teachings have produced only intellectual ad-vaitins. They observe certain customs having no life behind them which are not reformative at all and which have no bearing on Sanatana Dharma. They preach only speculative philosophy and it has absolutely no influence on their conduct and life and most of them say that paramarthica (spiritual) life is different from (Vyavaharica life) daily life in the world. But I have learnt from great men and women who know Dharma and to some extent by my own practice that Truth is practical, intended to be practised, though one cannot make it practical for another. It is the duty of every man who means to lead a spiritual life to make it practical by creating in himself that intelligence, that power to discriminate the essential from the unessential and of becoming conscious of his thoughts, feelings and actions and ever trying to harmonise

them. Orthodox "sanatanists" find it difficult to think rationally and intelligently, simply because they blindly believe that 'sampradaya' (custom) should be followed and thus set up many dark caves in their minds where light cannot penetrate. This is a simple truth to understand. Where there is prejudice, rational and consistent thinking will be impossible however intelligent one may be in other respects. Have we not seen intellectual giants in one department of life who are very poor specimens in other matters? Unless one tries his best to free his mind of all prejudices and makes every effort to discipline his mind and make it a fit instrument for his use, instead of being used by it, he can never understand Truth and cannot make any progress on the spiritual Path. What does Arjuna say?

"This yoga which Thou hast declared to be by equanimity, O Madhusudana, I see not a stable foundation for it, owing to restlessness;

For the mind is verily restless, O Krishna; it is impetuous, strong and difficult to bend; I deem it as hard to curb as the wind. (Gita, VI, 33 and 34).

What is the Lord's reply?

"Without doubt, O mighty-armed, the mind is hard to curb and restless; but it may be curbed by constant practice and dispassion. Yoga is hard to attain, methinks, by a self that is uncontrolled; but by the self controlled it is attainable by properly directed energy.

(Ibid VI, 35 and 36).

A man who wants to understand truth must free his mind of all prejudices, must make his mind ever pliable and balanced and see that he harmonises his thoughts, emotions and actions. Unless this attempt is made, he cannot discern the essential from the unessential and pursue the consistency of intuition and choose the right path, the path of Dharma. Therefore the Sanatanists find it difficult to reconcile themselves to changing times and new ideas and teachings, which are more real and are based on Sanatana Dharma, than the traditions and customs which they have been following, as it is easier to follow a beaten track. They therefore, make wrong statement to suit their purpose. Sri Krishna was called a मायावि (Juggler etc); and His teachings and examples are not followed by the "orthodox" even now, though they call Him an Avatara. He Himself says;

"Whatsoever a great man doeth, that other men also do; the standard he setteth up, by that the people go. There is nothing in the three worlds, O, Partha, that should be done by Me, nor anything unattained that might be attained; yet, I mingle in action. For if I mingled not ever in action unwearied, men all around would follow My path, O son of Pritha."

(Gita III, 21, 22, 23).

He says He not only preached Dharma, but practised it, so that the people might learn from His precept as well as His example, what Dharma was. Yet in His time, He was not regarded as an Avatara, though He proved His greatness in many ways. He was suspected by His own brother Balarama that He committed theft of a jewel called Syamantaka and one of His hundred names is "Syamantaka manerharta", one who carried away syamantaka jewel. What have the Sanatanists said of the Lord Buddha? Some have said that the Avatara was intended to *mislead* people (see Vishnu Purana) and some have said that He was not an Avatara, though orthodoxy counts Him as one of the Avatars that have already appeared.

The Lord says in the Gita which is accepted as an authority by the Sanatanists:—"Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I myself come forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the evil doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age:"

(Gita IV, 7 and 8).

Is it not strange that in spite of this declaration the Avatara of the Lord Buddha should have been and should be even now disposed of in this manner and that His Avatara was not for establishing righteousness? What was His life and what were His Teachings? In the midst of Adharma that prevailed at the time, (even animal sacrifices by the Brahmanas were very common, not to mention several other adharmic acts), He, a born king, brought up in affluence and guarded from every care and worry and in such a way that nothing but pleasure and happiness surrounded Him, quite ignorant of the misery, poverty and all the thousand afflictions to which humanity was subject, becoming aware, by chance as people call it, of the misery, sorrow &c., of the world and touched by deep compassion, gave up His kingdom, His dear wife, son &c., and left His palace one night, unobserved with a firm resolve to find the cause of sorrow, misery &c., in the world. The story is very pathetic and one has to read His life to know what a great Soul He was. He was determined to find Truth at any cost, and though He could not find any teacher to guide Him, prompted by His own inner voice and after seven years of tapas, (meditation and contemplation), one day, when the Sun was setting, He saw the Light in Himself, became one with the Eternal and won the Victory; His doubts had cleared away and He became the Buddha, the Enlightened. Of course, the "sanatanists" do not know and cannot know what Buddhahood means, because they are the followers of blind traditions and customs, not understanding, nay not even trying to understand how

they have cropped up, which, even though some of them are opposed to Vedas, they treat as "Sanatana Dharma". What a strange interpretation of "Sanatana Dharma"! The Buddha is the abode of the Eternal. The Buddhahood is what is briefly described in the Gita verses:—

"Therefore verily there existeth, higher than that unmanifested, another unmanifested, eternal which, in the destroying of all beings, is not destroyed. That unmanifested, the "indestructible", It is called; It is named the highest Path. They who reach It return not. That is My supreme abode: (VIII, 20& 21).

"For I am the abode of the Eternal, and of the indestructible nectar of immortality, of immemorial righteousness, and of unending bliss: (XIV, 27).

The Buddha found the Law and His first sermon was on the full moon day of Ashada about the year 600. B. C. and this is still remembered by all true Samnyasins; and the present Great Jagatguru, one of the highest Adhikarikas, the Teacher of Devas and men, in memory of this incident and out of His love for His great Predecessor in office, recites the same Sermon, whenever the anniversary of that preaching comes round. The recitation of the Sermon commences at the moment of the full moon, on the Ashada full moon day and it is said, He adds to it a simple address of His own, expounding it and applying it. The Lord Buddha preached His doctrines in the sacred land of Northern India for about fortyfive years travelling on foot from place to place, with a number of His disciples and the result is said to be that hundreds of His disciples, owing to close contact with Him and the powerful influence which He shed all round, became Paramahansas (jivanmuktas), not the kind of 'paramahansa parivrajaka Samnyasins' we have now in India. The sermon He preached is known in Pali, the language He spoke, as "Dammachakkapavattana Sutta", which has been translated as "The setting in motion of the Royal Chariot-wheels of the Kingdom of Righteousness". It is more briefly described as the Turning of the Wheel of the Law".

There is a tradition in India that व्यासपौर्णिमा (Vyasa pournima) is a holy day and I doubt whether most of the samnyasins who perform what they call Vyasapuja know the significance of the function and its holiness. This is the same holy day—Full moon day of Ashada. If they know it, the Lord Buddha would not have been considered as an Avatara, intended to mislead humanity, one of the worst acts of Sacrilege any Hindu can be guilty of.

According to modern orthodoxy, (I am talking of South India) there are no Kshatriyas or Vaisyas. But are there Brahmanas? What does Sri Krishna say? "Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness,

and also uprightness wisdom, knowledge, belief in God, are the Brahmana duty, born of his *own* nature": (Gita xviii, 42), and in the previous verse, 41, He says:—"Of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras, the duties have been distributed, according to the qualities born of their *own* natures." He is very clear.

He does not say that because one is born of Brahmana or Kshatriya parents, he is *ipso facto* a Brahmana or Kshatriya. The svabhava (inborn nature) of the Brahmana is preponderance of satva guna; and in order to deserve the name of Brahmana, he must have satva guna in a large measure, viz—the qualities above mentioned. How many "sanatanists" have the qualities above mentioned, especially, serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, uprightness and wisdom? Another characteristic of a Brahmana is that he must be the friend of all creatures (Manusmriti, II, 87.)

It is the rule that the study of Vedanta should begin only after the qualifications known as "the Four Sadhanas" are acquired. The first sutra in the Brahmasutras is to that effect. How many of the 'advaitins' have the qualifications referred to? If they have, they will not say that "paramarthika (spiritual) life" is not meant to be lived, and that advaita is not practical. Because most of the "sanatanists" have not risen even above desires and hatred (kama and krodha) and sankalpa (desires born of imagination), the first stage for the study of advaita, they do not and cannot get any glimpse of Truth. They generally see wrong to be right, they are surrounded by their cocoons and move round and round in them. I shall take only a few verses from the Gita and show that Advaita is intended to be practical. Else, what is it for? To get honours and titles? In my opinion, it is intended to be practical, to make men realize Truth, which is Wisdom. The Lord says:—"The Yogi, who thus, ever harmonising the self, hath put away sin, he easily enjoyeth the infinite bliss of contact with the Eternal. The self, harmonised by Yoga seeth the Self in all beings, all beings in the Self; everywhere, he seeth, the same:" Gita IV, 28, 29.

What is this Yoga? "Yoga", in short, means "dwelling in union with the Divine". How is this to be done? By harmonising the several vehicles which the Jiva has for his use, making them pure, looking at everything from an imper-sonal point of view, making the mind perfectly pliable, and obedient to Buddhi (the Inner voice, which such a man will have), so that what he thinks to be right he feels to be right and he acts accordingly and thus, there is ever perfect harmony between his thoughts feelings and actions. Sri Krishna says....."Perform action, O Dhananjaya, dwelling in union with the Divine, renouncing attachments, and balanced evenly in success and failure. Equilibrium is called yoga:" (Gita, II, 48)

what is this equilibrium or balance? The Lord says, "He attaineth Peace, into whom all desires flow, as rivers flow into the ocean, which is filled with water but remaineth unmoved—not he who desireth desires."

(Gita II, 70).

"He who seeth inaction in action and action in inaction, he is wise among men, he is harmonious, even while performing all action." IV, 18

"He who is able to endure here on the earth, ere he be liberated from the body, the force born from desire and passion, he is a harmonised, he is a happy man,

(Gita V of 23).

"The yogi who is satisfied with wisdom and knowledge, unwavering, whose senses are subdued, to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same is said to be harmonised. He who regards impartially lovers, friends and foes, strangers, neutrals, foreigners and relatives also righteous and unrighteous, he excelleth."

(Gita, VII, 8 & 9.)

The above verses, I think, are sufficient to explain what the Lord means. He also describes in many places the methods to be adopted to get the above qualifications. He briefly sums them up in Chap. XVIII... thus:—

"United to Buddhi purified (Buddhi is intuition, developed by discriminative reason and practice of harmonious living) controlling the self by firmness, having conquered sound and the other objects of the senses, having laid aside passion and malice, dwelling in solitude, abstemious, speech, body and mind controlled, constantly fixed in meditation and yoga, taking refuge in dispassion, having cast aside egoism, violence, arrogance, desire, wrath, covetousness, selfless and peaceful—he is fit to become the Eternal."

Slokas 51, 52 & 53.

What is this yoga practice for? To make the Yogi fit to become the Eternal; in other words, to realize the Self, which is the *Summum bonum* of human existence. There is thus no doubt that the Advaita philosophy is intended to be practical and not to be only lectured on to get honors, titles, money &c.

In spite of the fact that there have been three great Avatars from the beginning of the Kaliyuga, namely, Sri Krishna, the Lord Buddha, and the great Sri Sankaracharya, and many others of smaller greatness who have also glorified India by their birth, the practice of Dharma in India is at a low ebb. Why?

In the subsequent articles, I shall take up a few of the Samskaras and show how they are lifeless, nay worse than lifeless, and have poisoned the life of India and have degraded her in the opinion of thinking men.

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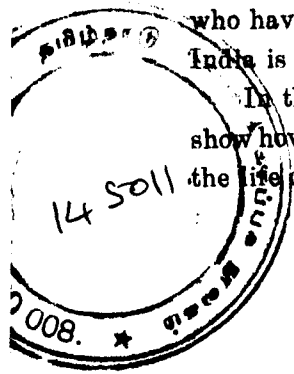
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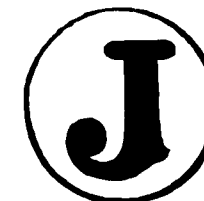
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