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THE Bharata Dharma

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism
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Honorary Editors : { C. V. Krishnaswami Ayyar
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JANUARY, 1935

[No. 10



चित्रं वटतगंमूले वृद्धा शिक्षया गुरुयुवा ।

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यातं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ॥

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THE



Bharata Dharma

VOL. XII]

JANUARY 1935

[No. 10

SITA, SAVITRI, DAMAYANTI.

By

C. V. KRISHNASWAMI AYYAR.

Some months ago I read in the columns of a Madras Daily Newspaper a summary of a speech by a distinguished *Indian* publicist in which she was reported to have denounced, in rather strong language, the ideal of Sita, Savitri and Damayanti and to have stated that it was unsuited for modern women in this ancient land. The attack seems to have been so pointed and severe that it drew forth immediately, at the same meeting, a protest from an *European* lady who asked the speaker to read the ideal aright. When, later on, the speech was reproduced in a leading monthly conducted by women the attack was omitted, and so I thought that it was all due to the speaker having been lost in the exuberance of the enthusiasm of the moment and that her statement did not represent the views of even the speaker at her best, and, in any case, certainly not the view of other Femenists. But that impression is evidently not altogether correct for I find that an educated Indian of the younger generation holding a responsible office repeated the attack at a recent celebration of the Silver Jubilee of a girls' school when speaking on "The Ideals of Indian Womanhood." It would therefore seem that the view that Sita, Savitri and Damayanti are not to be looked up to by our girls as exemplars is more widely spread than I thought it was, and it would seem that is not entirely unnecessary to canvass the grounds of that attack on an ages-old element of Hindu culture.

It is difficult to appreciate what exactly those who deprecate that ideal have in their minds as to what that ideal is. The life-stories of these heroines can be told very briefly. Sita married to the ideal man of the Hindu race went with him to the forest when he was banished. When there, she was abducted by a Rakshasa to whose amorous offers she resolutely said "no" till she was rescued by her husband. She was then made to prove her innocence during her exile by entering Fire. Later on, she was

wrongly accused of incontinence when with the Rakshasa, and her husband sent her away to the forest. Then she went back to her mother Earth without any resentment against her husband.

Savitri's story is even briefer. When the prince whom she married was dead, she pleaded for his life and would not depart till her request was granted by the God of Death. Damayanti's husband left her in a forest when she was asleep and she endeavoured in all ways to know where he was, waited for his return, and when he came back she welcomed him with open arms forgetting his apparent desertion.

What is it in these lives that the critics read? If those incidents mean that those ladies were treated badly by their husbands, that they consented to be "Doormats," meekly and slavishly and that they should have been treated with more consideration, there may be some thing to be said in favour of the critics, though as Dean Inge beautifully puts it, even women trodden on as "doormats" are to be deemed to be among the noblest, for do they not often enable their men to become morally pure for treading on them as physical doormats do in the physical plane. It however requires not very close study of their lives to see that that is not the proper inference.

It should not be forgotten that all these heroines were not married as most girls of certain castes are married now, without their consent, to persons whom they did not love. On the other hand, every one of them chose her husband in a *Swayamwar*; one of them, Savitri, did so even against her parents' advice. They were not mere playthings, either, to their husbands. Sita at least went to the forest not because her husband wanted her to do so. It is her spirited taunt that he was no man to leave her behind that made him take her with him. Damayanti's husband left her in the forest because he could not bear her being subjected to hardships and not because he counted his own comfort and convenience as more important than hers. What would the critics ask our girls to do in such circumstances, towards husbands whom they themselves choose and who are not thrust on them? What is the alternative ideal? What is it that they object to? Do they object to our girls choosing their husbands as those heroines did? One would have thought that the critics would hold them up as models against the present day lip-admirers of those great women who, however, impliedly condemn them by condemning the idea of choice of husbands by girls and apotheosise marriage before the girls can have any discretion to choose. Do the critics want our girls to refuse to stand by the husbands chosen by themselves when the husbands are in trouble and have to give up com-

forts. Is it the view of the critics that wives should desert their spouses when they have to meet difficult times? Are our girls to take husbands only for periods of comfort and not "for better or worse". Will the critics ask our girls not to fight, even under the most difficult and depressing circumstances, for the lives of their husbands, as Savitri did? Do they want their modern sisters to give up search for their husbands or waiting for them, and to take new mates in the circumstances in which Damayanti was placed?

Let it be assumed that the conduct of Rama and Nala was reprehensible. What is nobler for the wives of such men to do? To forget and forgive as Sita and Damayanti did or to nurse a grievance and claim liberty to go their own way, or take other mates.

We think there will be no difficulty in answering these questions. Mere logic and intellect and an erroneous view of their own interests may sometimes delude some women, so placed, to tear themselves away. But their intuition, their heart, and their instinctive sense of what is right will make most of them act to-day, unhesitatingly, as Sita, Savitri and Damayanti did of old, in circumstances even worse than those which faced those immortal heroines. Therein lie the hope of Humanity, the secret of the love the admiration and the reverence evoked by our sisters dear.

From knowledge springs redemption : seek
That lore in faith, with spirit meek,
From Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas learn,
Nor even the Sudra's teaching spurn.
This lowest order none should scorn ;
For though from different members born,
All castes from Brahma sprang ; the name
Of Brahman all may fitly claim :
And all by reverent impulse stirred,
Recite aloud the sacred Word.
To thee I tell the inmost core
And sense of this most holy lore :
This world is Brahma : all we see
Around is nothing else than He.

Mahabharata xiii. 11811.

PROGRESS IN THE BRAHMANA OUTLOOK

BY

C. V. K.

Those interested in the betterment of Hinduism had reason to rejoice when the Sanatanists began, a couple of years ago, to organise and speak out. Not that the joy was like that felt by a well known individual when he threatened to organise Truth, as he then felt sure that the days of Truth will soon be over. The joy was, on the other hand, at the certain prospect of much desired change in the Sanatanists' outlook. Once they began to give up their complacency and commenced thinking and acting, one felt confident that the Sanatanists would cease to stick to shibboleths or would, at any rate, see that Hindu society cannot be always static. It was anticipated that no more could they or would they subscribe to texts that had had their day or support usages which, however beneficent and useful in their time, had become mockeries now. The proceedings of the Brahmana conference, held the other day at Tanjore, gives point to these observations. Its learned President (Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri) is reported to have stated: "the Brahmins should maintain their ideals of Achara, (ceremonial, ethical and social purity) and at the same time *adjust themselves wisely to the new secular life and the modern spirit*. The present mood of revolt against discipline, the modern spectacular exhibitions of licence in thought and speech and action and the love of luxury, which had been degrading the inner life of the Brahmins and impoverishing them in spirit, should be resolutely fought and overcome. The first step to be taken up by the community was self-reformation of *spirit*, without which, every other work could be in vain. They should revive their knowledge of *Mantras* and their well-thought out regulation of daily life. They should make the study of Sanskrit compulsory and also the Vedic study, the bed-rock of their cultural effort. They should lessen and eventually abolish all harmful luxuries and try to re-attain their ancient distinction of plain living and high thinking once again. *Equally important was the adjustment of themselves to the modern spirit. They should not commit the fatal mistake of thinking that modernity would forget or ignore them. They should accept and abide by its lessons in the realms of science, industry, commerce and administration.* They had to solve the menacing problem of unemployment by a wise combination of *practical pursuit* with cultural work. At the same time they had to maintain a certain number of families devoted to the maintenance of the rigid purity and austerity of their Dharmic life and to the propagation of their ideals by precept as

well as example. For this purpose, district charity funds should be started and administered wisely and carefully. They had also to preserve their heritage and add thereto the gifts of modernity which had been brought to them by the West. It was also necessary that *the Brahmins should not forget that they had to face the specific modern problems in their individual, social, economic, political, artistic and spiritual life in a national and courageous spirit. They had to uplift themselves and at the same time, uplift their Hindu brethren, as well, in the individual, social, artistic and spiritual life and uplift their Indian brethren in economic and political life. They should take a wide view, and not a narrow or selfish view or sectional view.*" (Italics ours).

Nothing could be more hopeful than what the President said as a statement of the general principle. It is a matter for satisfaction that this was no individual view. The conference implemented the suggestions of the President, at least on one matter, by passing a resolution "requesting Government to take steps to relieve unemployment by *founding agricultural colonies, by starting one industry after another and guaranteeing interest on deposits, and eventually handing it over to private agencies.*" (Italics ours).

This resolution clearly predicates that Brahmins are to get employment in those agricultural colonies and in those industries in all ways, without losing their status or degrading their families. Surely the Government is not asked to do all that the resolution wants it to do, for the Brahmin to look on and for the non-Brahmins to engage themselves in. *Manu* has, however, said : "By pursuing *hand-crafts* or *agriculture*, by begetting children on a Sudra wife, by trafficking in cows, horses or carts, *by entering the King's Service*, by officiating as a priest at the Sacrifice of one who ought not to be served, by living in open hostility to the Vedas and by their non-study *Brahmanas degrade their families.* (Ch. III 64-65).

How the present resolution of the conference is to be reconciled with that text of *Manu* we will leave it to the delegates to the conference to say. We have drawn attention to this not with a view to cavil, but to show that the resolution (which by the way, we heartily welcome) is a departure (albeit a desirable departure) from what is laid down in the ancient text. We may add that many Brahmins, including some very vocal Sanatanists, have willingly made themselves liable to this degradation by ignoring in practice the inhibitions contained in the parts of the text in italics above. Why the ignoring of one or some of the prohibitions of *Manu* should be permitted and not that relating to marrying a Sudra wife and

begetting children by her is not easy to comprehend. The punishment for all the breaches is the same and is contained in the same text. Not that we wish every Brahmin to take a non-Brahmana bride or that such marriages should even become common. Our objection to such marriages becoming common will be based on other grounds and not that *Manu* disapproved of them. What we wish to emphasise is that legislation which will and does validate them and similar departures from ancient rules is no more against true Hinduism than the present resolution of the Brahmana Conference is.

It is usual to get over departures from Shastric rules such as that sanctioned by that resolution on the ground that they are *Apat Dharma*. That much abused term has no such wide interpretation—it would appear even traditional interpretation on which so much stress is laid in Sanatanist conferences does not support such width. There is a well known episode in the Chandogya Upanishad which defines its ambit and this is the story. (Adhyaya I Khanda 10),

“When the Kurus had been destroyed by thunder and hail Ushasti Chakrayana with his wife who had not reached womanhood lived in a deplorable condition, in Ibbayagrama (the village of one who possessed elephants). He begged food of the possessor of the elephants who was eating beans. He said to Chakrayana “I have no other food than these beans that are being taken by me and are impure and stale.”

Then Chakrayana said, “Give me out of those.” So asked, the elephant-man gave some of the beans and added: “Take this water near me and drink it.” To which Chakrayana replied “If I drink it I will be drinking *uchishta*. (Food left by another after eating and so impure). The elephant-man then retorted “Are not the beans also *uchishta*”?

Then said Chakrayana (herein lies the moral) “I will not live if I do not eat these beans, while for a drink of water, I can get it wherever I like.”

How fairly affluent men, who are not in such sore straits as Chakrayana was in, can agree without any qualification to such *adharmic* acts as engaging in agriculture, or trade, or industries as they are doing now and are invited to do by the resolution, is not easy to understand. The implication of it all is that Sanatanist Brahmanas have, when they got to what is called “*brass tacks*” come to evaluate *Manu*’s ancient text properly. We hope that this process of enlightening themselves will prosper, for the Brahmins, even as many of them are now, when all is said and done, form excellent raw material, and Hindu society can ill afford to ignore or do

without them altogether. On the other hand, every effort should be made to utilise their inherited qualities of personal cleanliness, love of study, otherworldliness, and (on the whole) simple living to the best advantage of the society of which they are members. It is because latter-day obscurantism has narrowed their vision that their privileges have come to be challenged. That the scales over their eyes are beginning to fall is a matter for satisfaction, though the particular resolution referred to above, may, by reason of introducing more competition into the domain of agriculture and industry also, create more caste-hatred.

As Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar—a stalwart amongst the Brahmana-Sanatanists—put it in his Presidential Address in the Second South Indian Musical Conference (a few days ago) “Orthodoxy is *everywhere* only a safeguard, and progress and improvement can be attained only by the push and urge of liberals, reformers, and radicals” (Italics ours).

Your hearts are lifted up, your hearts
That have foreknown the utter price,
Your hearts burn upward like a flame
Of splendour and of sacrifice.
For you, you too, to battle go,
Not with the marching drums and cheers,
But in the watch of solitude
And through the boundless night of fears.
Swift, swifter than those hawks of war,
Those threatening wings that pulse the air,
Far as the vanward racks are set
You are gone before them, you are there!
And not a shot comes blind with death
And not a stab of steel is pressed
Home, but invisibly it tore
And entered first a woman’s breast.
Amid the thunder of the guns,
The lightnings of the lance and sword,
Your hope, your dread, your throbbing pride,
Your infinite passion is outpoured.
From hearts that are as one high heart
Withholding nought from doom and bale,
Burningly offered up,—to bleed,
To bear, to break, but not to fail!

“To Women” Laurence Bunyan.

HUMANITARIANISM

By

SADHU VASWANI.

The modern world is face to face with many problems. To solve them we need the light of a New Renaissance and a New Faith in Life. Humanitarianism is rooted in Faith in Life. As a movement, humanitarianism appeared in the West in the 18th century, "the age of sensibility." But humanitarianism is older than the 18th century. Humanitarianism in India is ancient as her hills. Humanitarianism is coeval with Jainism, perhaps the most ancient of the world's religions. And even in the West, Pythagoras and his Brotherhood bore witness to the value of vegetarian and fruit diet for culture of the heart. The eminent French thinker rightly said:—"The heart has its reasons which reason know not."

Humanitarianism stands for the Gospel of Simple Life and the spirit of creative sympathy. Humanitarianism is inspired by an intuition of the kinship of all sentient life, a vision of the Fellowship and Brotherhood of Life. In its larger sense, humanitarianism covers the whole field of unselfish service. "I see in this world," writes a Western thinker "two heaps: one of human happiness and one of human misery. Now, I take the smallest bit from the heap of happiness and add it to the heap of misery, I score a point."

In this spirit is the hope of a new social order. If the motive of self-interest can give way to another motive identifying oneself with others there is hope for the world. If I can feel in me another's pain and understand that in removing it I help my own self-realisation, I bring into play that new motive in which is the hope of a new order. True life does not begin until I learn to identify myself with others. True life grows in the measure I extend more and more this Act of Identity.

How does the magnet attract iron? An influence, a *shakti* goes out from the magnet into the particles of iron and re-arranges them, revolutionises them, and the piece of iron itself becomes a little magnet. Like a magnet is the motive for which I plead. Let it enter into our conduct, and social order will be re-arranged, revolutionised. He who is inspired by the motive which sees one's own good in the welfare of others will draw an increasing number to the service of man,—the service of the Universe.

And are not the animals, too, children of the Universe? Yet we send them to the slaughter-house! Meat-eating is a growing habit. Liebig in his "Animal Chemistry" refers to the restlessness of carnivorous animals

and remarks that men who feed largely upon flesh display similar "irritability" and want of repose. Flesh-foods are rightly regarded in the Hindu Scriptures as *rajasic*. Many years ago, Dr. Seville made the startling statement that paralysis was "more commonly found among those who ate heartily of animal food." "Man is what he eats,"—wrote the German thinker, Fierbach. And the Hindu teaching connects *mana* with *anna*. It is not right to say that vegetarian races are weak. History bears witness to the fact that the athletes of ancient Greece took figs, nuts, curds grain and bread.

Many, under influence of Western thought, regard animals as no better than convenient articles provided by Nature for human consumption. But a new outlook upon the animal world is developing in the West. Wesley Mills in his work on "The Nature and Development of Animal Intelligence" tells us that "the trend of investigation thus far goes to show that at least the germ of every human faculty does exist in some species of animals." Listen to the testimony of another writer—E. Petavel says:—"The beast, too, has a soul; he possesses the organ of thought; he has the power of receiving ideas; his memory is subject to the laws of the association of ideas; he reflects; he learns; he dreams; he sometimes invents; he has a sense of the beautiful, manners often exemplary, a feeling and thankful heart; he loves his kind and man, his relative and his superior in the hierarchy of the universe." Is there a man more grateful than the faithful dog? An English mystical writer, R. W. Trine, voices the very wisdom of Hindu Rishis when he says:—"Some animals are much more sensitively organised than many people are, and consequently they get the effects of our thoughts our mental states and emotions, much more readily than many people do. Therefore whenever we meet an animal we do it good by sending out to it thoughts of love!" Yet another,—a powerful preacher in our days of the Gospel of Love, the late Archbishop Wilberforce said:—"I plead for them (beasts and birds) that you will help to shield them, first, from the thoughtlessness of ignorance; secondly, from the senseless cruelties of fashion; thirdly, from the thoughtful barbarities of science."

I wished we celebrated every year a *Pashu-Pakshi Day*. This day may be associated with the birthday of Mahavira,—if we are able to fix historically the date; the Mahavira's life is lost in mists of antiquity. We may, also, celebrate a "Dumb Friends' Day" on October 4 sacred as the anniversary of St. Francis. He, after Jesus, he more than any one else, brought into the West the faith in the kinship of all sentient life. He

was a lover of brother bird and beast. To us of India this faith is ancient as the hills. The Faith of Buddha and Mahavira and of the Vaidic Rishi who said:—"Look upon all sentient beings with friendly eyes." Current civilisation suffers from cruelty. There is cruelty in our laboratories: we call it "vivisection." There is cruelty in our sports and fashion. How we destroy birds for beautiful feathers! There is cruelty in our diet. There is cruelty in our dealings with dogs and horses. This cruelty (*himsa*) is entering more and more into Indian life, also. This cruelty reacts on our character. The eminent sociologist, Herbert Spencer, wrote:—"The behaviour of men to the lower animals and their behaviour to each other bear a constant relationship." And Ruskin wrote:—"For character building, which is our great business in this world, no small part is done by our treatment of the animals committed to our care."

To defend the weak, to guard those that are below us in the scale of evolution, is to grow in the nobility and strength of life. The beast and the bird cannot speak to us in the language we understand; they cannot protect themselves; for centuries they have suffered for our sins against them. The blessed Buddha said:—"As wisdom came to me, I resolved to defend the weak, and to all living things I gave compassion of a heart." Yes,—"with wisdom grows *"maitri"* or feeling of kinship with all life; and *maitri* (compassion) will be the basis of a new morality,—a new culture, a new civilisation in the coming days.

The beautiful sentiment of kinship with the lower world survives in our custom of feeding birds and the fish and the ant and the cow. It is a custom most of the "educated" have ceased to respect.

An important note in Aryan life was:—reverence for the cow. The cow was revered as "mother" of the world. "Cows with their milk," we read in the Mahabharata, "uphold all creatures of the universe." In a Vedic prayer, the Rishis invoke the cow thus: "O rich in blessings, come!" The unit of scale in the Vedic days was the cow. So we read:—"gold worth a hundred cows" (*hiranyam satimatam*). And Aryan India's Superman, Sri Krishna, is always pictured as the supreme Lover of the cow. To-day cows are led to the slaughter-house; and not unoften beef cattle reach the hands of butchers in a state of fever; fever is brought on for want of water and nourishment; can the flesh of fevered cattle be fit for human food? Cow-slaughter has, also, meant scarcity of milk; need we be surprised that there is a heavy mortality of infants?

There is need of a strong sustained agitation to stop animal slaughter in municipal areas. So many fine bulls, Brahmini Bulls, are being killed or

constrained to drag conservancy carts when national economy demands that they be preserved for breeding purposes. There is need, too, of a strong village organisation. Volunteers should be sent to the village-folk to ask them not to sell cattle to those who would slaughter them. Workers should go out into different parts in Krishna's and Buddha's spirit of mercy, and build up centres of Daya Dharma;—the Religion of Humanity. The movers and shakers of India, the makers of history, her true leaders and liberators have ever been the dreamers and music-makers of this dream and music of mercy,—the prophets and proclaimers of *Ahimsa*!

It is the religion of humanity we need. And servants of this religion must take the message to the village-folk. Not in big cities—centres of confusion,—but in the villages lives the real Indian nation. A patriot of Japan,—one who did much help to his nation by serving the village-folk, said when asked what his religion was:—"nothing outer; my religion is to sacrifice myself for others." And when more and more of the nation's workers will understand that in "sacrifice for others" is real self-realisation, that the welfare of each is the Good of all, the present social order will yield place to that New Order which the prophets and world-patriots have preached.

The Humanitarian Movement is, especially, a movement of Simple Life. It is the power of simple life we need. Not a little of what we misname "civilisation" is a cult of pleasure and pride; it rejoices in the life of sensations, excitement.

Driving through a big European city at 12 o'clock one night, I saw men and women rejoicing in drink and excitements, rejoicing in *bhoga*. In another big city towards the close of a Religious Conference, they had a banquet, and divines from different parts of Europe and America filled glasses with liquor! One of them asked me to drink; I requested to be excused. A lady sat by my side. She pressed me to join others in drinking! I requested to be excused. They knew I was an Indian; they did not know that I was a teetotaler. It pained me to think that Indians had lost the right of being regarded what they once were,—total abstainers.

A message of the Humanitarian Movement, as I understand it, is "simplify!" "simplify!" In introducing luxuries and fashions, the West has done harm to itself and the East. The West has developed complex industrialism which causes social disorders and creates wars. Students of international politics know that there is today competition between England, America, Japan and France for power and economic domination in the

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East. There is little hope of a world-peace as long as big nations covet the East for "exploitation."

Simple life is essential to health and happiness. Home Industries should help in making India's life simpler and contribute to happiness of the mass. The Gospel of Simple Life is what India's youths urgently need to-day, (1) *simple food*:—Nutritious but simple food will build up health. Over-indulgence and lethargy are causes of disease. It has been said:—"The blood is the life." The quality of life depends on the purity and circulation of blood. When Akbar requested the famous Jain Saint, Banarsi Das, for an *upadesh*, that simple, holy man said:—"See, O Emperor, that your food is pure and clean", Pure, clean food will build up a pure body, a temple of the Spirit: (2) *simple dress*; (3) *simple bedding*:—Luxury is squandered labour. Luxury is economic malpractice. Intoxicants, stimulants, scents, show-articles have a weakening effect on character. Soft living is a sin. Mohamud was in the habit of sleeping on a hard mat. A friend said to him:—"This is too hard a bed for you. I would give you a soft couch." But that simple great man of Arabia said: "A soft bed is not for me: I have work to do in the world!"

In humanitarian propaganda one should not forget that woman has her honoured place. The Hindu books represent woman as *Shakti*. Woman energises the work of man. Woman makes man creative. If man represents *activity*, woman represents *life* and its blossoming into *inspiration*. Humanitarianism will do yet greater things when its work is permeated by the creative *shakti* of women-workers.

The current criminal code needs to be improved; the prison system needs to be reformed. Public opinion in India must be mobilised against capital punishment and cruelty of the laboratory. Cities and villages must be made to realise the urgency of improving the general condition and promoting a humane treatment of cattle in India. The cruel custom of sacrificing animals in the name of 'religion' must be vigorously combated. The sacred Upanishad rightly says:—"Ahimsa is *yajna*, is true sacrifice." Surely, religion should teach us to be guardians of birds and beasts,—our younger brethren. As a Chinese sage said:—"The practice of religion involves as a first principle a loving, compassionate heart for all creatures."

Asoka opened hospitals for animals in the long ago. Such hospitals need to be multiplied today. Let schools and colleges give to their students lessons in kindness to animals. Let boys and girls be trained in little acts of mercy, little deeds of love!

The great Belgian patriot and preacher, Mercer, wrote:—"Leibniz had the beautiful and profound idea that life has three modes on earth,—it sleeps in plants, it dreams in animals, and it wakes in man. Modern thought is expanding, universalising this idea". Humanitarianism is rooted in a consciousness or conviction of the One Life in all. Out of this consciousness grows reverence for bird and beast. They, too, are masks of the One Life.

"I come in the little things,—said the Lord:

Yea! on the glancing wings
Of eager birds, the softly pattering feet
Of furred and gentle beasts; I come to meet
Your hard and wayward hearts".

Piteous and urgent is the world's need of this vision of the One Life in all. Humanity cries for a new Mahavira, a new Buddha, a new St. Francis to teach us the truth that to love the little creatures is to love God, the Great Lover of the little ones. Yuddhishtira of Great Heart stands—so we read in the *Mahabharata*,—before the gate of heaven. And the God at the gate tells him:—"Come! Enter thou the heaven!" Yuddhishtira says:—"The dog is with me!" The God says to him:—"You must leave the dog behind." Yuddhishtira says:—"Faithful has been the dog to me: I cannot leave the dog,—no! Not for the sake of the God!" "Come!" says the God, "let the beast stand outside: enter thou!" Yuddhishtira says:—"I cannot enter heaven alone!" And the dog changes its form: the dog becomes *Dharma* and says to Yuddhishtira:—"Well done! enter thou the highest heaven!" And into the Kingdom of Krishna man cannot enter alone. Man must receive into his brotherhood both bird and beast. And without their blessings and without a heart of helpful love man cannot fulfil his pilgrimage nor enter the highest Heaven. In the words of the Blessed One:

For whoso beholds in every form
The one Living Life,
Sees all separate living things
Issued from the One:
Such an one hath Brahma!
He attains!"

Gita.

(Extracts from Sadhu Vasvani's Presidential address at the recent All India Humanitarian Conference held at Bombay).

THE ORIGIN AND MAINTENANCE OF THE UNIVERSE IMMANENCE—A SCIENTIST'S VIEW

By

SIR OLIVER LODGE

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

We cannot conceive the origin of any fundamental existence. We can describe the beginning of any particular object in its present shape, but its substance always existed in some other shape previously; and nothing really either springs into being or ceases to exist. A cloud or dew becomes visible, and then evaporates, seeming to spring into being and then vanish away; but as water vapour it had a past history and will have a future, both apparently without limit. In our own case, and in the case of any live thing the history is unknown to us; but ultimate origin or absolute beginning, save of individual collocations, is unthinkable.

The truth that science teaches, on the one hand, is that everything is a perpetual flux, that nothing is permanent and fixed and unchangeable:

"The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt like mists, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go."

On the other hand, we learn that, in its ultimate essence and reality, everything is persistent and eternal: that it is the form alone that changes, while the substance endures. No end and no beginning—a continual Eternal Now—this is the scientific interpretation of I AM.

There are those who think that in the last resort the ultimate reality will be found to be of the nature of Spirit, Consciousness, and Mind. It may be so—it probably is so—but that is a teaching of Philosophy, not *at present* of Science.

The teaching of religion may be summarised thus:

"All that exists, exists only by the communication of God's infinite being. All that has intelligence, has it only by derivation from His sovereign reason; and all that acts, acts only from the impulse of His supreme

activity. It is He who does all in all; It is He who, at each instant of our life, is the beating of our heart, the movement of our limbs, the light of our eyes, the intelligence of our spirit, the soul of our soul."—(*Fenelon*).

So also with regard to maintenance.

The multifarious processes around us—the succession of the seasons, the flow of sap in trees, the circulation of our own blood, the digestion of our food—all these things are beyond our power, and are not contrived or managed by our conscious agency—not even the occurrences in our own bodies. But by means of such unconscious processes our muscular and nervous systems are supplied with nutriment and we thus become master of a certain amount of energy.

The energy of our muscles, or of some of them, is within our control, and we can thereby direct other physical energies into desired channels; but we cannot in the slightest degree alter the amount of that energy. We utilise terrestrial energy, by directing and controlling its transformations and transferences, within the limits of our knowledge: but we do it always by moving material objects, and in no other way. For instance, we cannot, directly or consciously generate an electric current, or magnetism, or light, or life; for all these things we depend upon partially explored properties of matter, which we can arrange in a certain way so as to achieve a desired end.

A multitude of complex processes are constantly occurring in our bodies without any intervention of consciousness; and though we may make a study of the functions of the several organs, and gradually learn something about them, it is a study as of something outside ourselves; the due performance of bodily function is independent of our volition. We can interfere with and damage our organs, and with skill we can so arrange damaged parts that the self-healing process shall have time and opportunity to act; we can also introduce beneficent agencies and stimulating drugs; but our power of direct action is practically limited to muscular and mental activity.

The essence of Immanence is that nothing is common or unclean, until abused; and the nobler the faculty, the fouler is the degradation caused by its abuse. A sense of the responsibility involved in the possession or lease of all this intricate mass of mechanism, entrusted to our care and the wish to keep it in good order without giving unnecessary trouble to others to set it right, and without blaspheming the Maker by applying it to bad and ignoble ends will arise almost imperceptibly, when the body

is even begun to be understood. Many faults originate in ignorance and want of thought.

Among the material objects we move are the parts of our own bodies; indeed it is through muscular intervention or agency that we act on bodies in general. We know of no other method. Even when we speak we are only moving certain face and throat and chest muscles, so as to generate condensations and rarefactions in the air; which, travelling by dynamical properties, excite corresponding vibrations or movements in the ear drum of our auditor; vibrations not in themselves intelligible, but demanding interpretation from the recipient. So also it is with the traces of ink left in paper by our muscular action when we write. Only to a perceptive eye, and informed and kindred mind, have they any meaning.

It is probable that even when we think, some special atomic motion goes on in the brain cells, though this is an example of unconscious movement, of which there are many examples in bodily function: but directly we begin to attend to mental processes we leave the physical region as understood by us, and enter a more deeply mysterious physical region. Unknown as this is for purpose of analysis, from the point of view of experience it is more immediately familiar than any other: since it is through the activity of mind that every other kind of existence is necessarily inferred. Thought is our mechanism or instrument of knowledge—through it we know everything—but thought is not what we directly know. Primarily we think of things, not of thought itself. So also sight is our instrument of seeing—through light we see—but it is not light that we perceive, rather it is the objects which send it in certain patterns to our eyes.

Whereas we can act on the external world only through our muscles; in ourselves we are aware of things belonging to a totally different category, with which muscles and movement and energy appear to have nothing to do—such things as thought, purpose, desire, humour, affection, consciousness, will. These mental faculties seem intimately associated with, and are displayed by, our bodily mechanism; but in themselves they belong to a different order of being—an order which employs and dominates the material, while immersed or immanent in it. Every purposed movement is preceded and inspired by thought.

Such reasoned control, by indwelling mind; may be undetectable and inconceivable to a low order of intelligence, being totally masked by the material garment; and the purpose underlying our activity may have to be inferred, by such intelligence, with as great difficulty as we feel in detecting indwelling purpose and the spontaneous operations of Nature.

Nevertheless, whenever our movements are not controlled by thought and intelligent purpose, but are left to chance and random impulses, like the actions of a man whose reason has been unseated, nothing but error and confusion results;—quite a different state of things from anything we observe in the orderly and beautiful procedure of nature.

It is sometimes said that the operations of nature are spontaneous; and that is exactly what they are. That is the meaning of immanence. "Spontaneous", used in this sense, does not mean random and purposeless and undetermined; it means actuated and controlled from within, by something indwelling and all prevailing and not absent anywhere. The intelligence which guides things is not something external to the scheme, clumsily interfering with it by muscular action, as we are constrained to do when we interfere at all; but is something within and inseparable from it, as human thought is within and inseparable from the action of our brains.

In some partially similar way we conceive that the multifarious processes in nature, with neither the origin nor maintenance of which have we had anything to do, must be guided and controlled by some Thought and Purpose, immanent in everything, but revealed only to those with sufficiently awakened perceptions. Many are blind to the meaning to the fact even that there is a meaning in nature; just as an animal is usually blind to a picture, and always to a poem; but to the higher members of our race the Intelligence and Purpose, underlying the whole mystery of existence, elaborating the details of evolution—and ultimately tending to elucidate the frequent discords, the strange humours, and puzzling contradictions of life—are keenly felt. To them the lavish beauty of wild Nature—of landscape, of sunset, of mountain, and of sea are revelations of an indwelling Presence, rejoicing in its own majestic order.

"Earth's crammed with Heaven

And every common bush afire with God."

The idea that the world as we know it arose by chance and fortuitous concurrence of atoms is one that no science really sustains, though such an idea is the superficial outcome of an incipient recognition of the uniformity of nature—a sequel to the perception that there is no capricious or spasmodic interference with the course of events, and no changes of purpose observable therein, such as we are accustomed to in works of human ingenuity and skill. We are accustomed to associate "will" with the degenerate form of it called caprice, and to consider that "purpose" must be accompanied by

changes of purpose; so that a steady, uniform, persistent course of action is puzzling to us, and wears the superficial aspect of mechanism. An omnipresent, uniform, immanent Purpose, running through the whole of existence without break of continuity or change of aim, is beyond our experience; and, like every other uniformity, is difficult to detect or realise. As an instance of this difficulty, I need only cite the long-delayed discovery of an all-embracing medium like the terrestrial atmosphere. An intelligent deep-sea creature would find it most difficult to become aware of the existence of water. Similarly humanity has existed all along in a pervading and interpenetrating ether, of which to this day men have for the most part no cognisance; although it is probably the fundamental substratum of the whole material world, underlying every kind of activity, and constituting the very atoms of which their own bodies are composed.

Looking at the truths of geometry, the laws of nature, and the beauty and organisation of the visible world, it is as impossible rationally to suppose that they arose by chance, or by mere contentious jostling, as it is to suppose that a work of literature or a piece of music was composed in that way.

The process of evolution appears to us self-sustained and self-guided because the guidance is uniform and constant.

In nature, heredity and survival will explain the persistence of a favourable variation when once originated, but the origin of variations is still mysterious, and the full meaning of heredity is not yet unravelled.

The struggle for existence has been one of the means whereby animal life has been developed and perfected; but now that it has become conscious and purposeful, in humanity, the apparently blind struggle is suspended at the higher level, and the weak and suffering are attended to and helped—not exterminated. There must always be disciplinary effect; but it can be effort for something better than bare subsistence; it can conduce to evolution of character, and development of soul. Mere struggle and survival is an inferior instrument for progress, and it can be superseded wherever it has done its necessary preliminary work. The Divine purpose is fulfilled in many ways; and far more can be expected of self-conscious evolution than of the long slow process which has rendered it possible.

The kind of selection actually or best known to us is that which has been directed by human beings; and inasmuch as the highest human beings are themselves conscious of help and guidance, it is to be assumed that such help and guidance has been in constant activity all along.

operating on, or rather in, the refractory materials, so as slowly to develop in them the power of manifesting not only life and beauty, but also consciousness, spiritual perception, and free will.

(Adapted from 'The Substance of Faith' by Sir Oliver Lodge).

A PRAYER.

Before Thy Presence, Lord, I come, impure and weak
 Deep laden down with worldly merchandise of mind,
 A prey of vain emotions uncontrolled, revolting,
 To seek, at last, a haven from a weary quest,
 And straying, vain, erratic wanderings which led
 To lands, far distant from my Father's home.
 Now would I unload all my burdens self-imposed,
 And ask forgiveness, Father of prodigal sons,
 For all the past ingratitude that I have shown
 Altho' Thy gifts and Thou, Thyself, were heritage,
 Supremely good, paternally, divinely, offered.
 Oh, grant, that I may now approach Thy holy Fire,
 To let its rays divine transmute my heart, my soul,
 Consuming all the dross and stains adhering thereunto,
 That thus I may put on more Innocence Divine
 And unlearn knowledge futile and evanescent,
 Plucked on my ways off trees with fruits forbidden.
 For thus, I know, Thy Grace would not forsake me
 Thus would I courage muster and my faith renew
 To make this prayer of mine a fervent hope
 That henceforth Thou wilt take the reins of all my will
 That it may be confirmed, subservient to Thine,
 For then—oh, blessed thought!—I should be
 To stray away again from Thee, O Father mine.
 Thus would my eye admiringly be stayed on Thee
 And in Thy Ever-Presence find its Sabbath Rest,
 And thus my self become so destitute, so dead,
 That henceforth Thou, alone, wouldst be its Life, its Goal,
 Its hidden Treasure and its Pearl of Greatest Price,
 Therefore, my God, chain me to Thee, increase such love,
 As far transcends what mortal love may taste and know.

H. C. Backstrom in the Christian Esoteric.

THE SON OF MAN.

By—RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

From His eternal seat

Christ comes down to this earth,

where, ages ago, in the bitter cup of death

He poured his deathless life

for those who came to the call

and those who remained away.

He looks about him,

and sees the weapons of evil

that wounded his own age,—

the arrogant spikes and spears, the slim sly knives,

the scimitar in diplomatic sheath,

crooked and cruel,

are hissing and raining sparks

as they are sharpened on monster wheels.

But the most fearful of them all

at the hands of the slaughterer,

are those on which has been engraved

His own name,

that are fashioned from the texts of

His own words

fused in the fire of hatred and

hammered by hypocritical greed.

He presses His hand upon His heart,

He feels that the age-long moment of His

death has not yet ended,

that new nails turned out in countless numbers

by those who are learned in cunning craftsmanship

pierce Him in every joint.

They had hurt Him once

standing at the shadow of their temple;

they are born anew in crowds.

From before their sacred altar

they shout to the soldiers, Strike!

And son of Man in agony cries,

"My God, My God,

why hast Thou forsaken me?

(From the Visva-Bharati News for December 1934)

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5. Dharmarajya.
6. Federated India.
7. Harijan.
8. Hindu mind—December, 1934
9. Kalpaka—December 1934.
10. Madras Criminal Cases December, 1934.
11. New Age. Madras, Vol. I, No. 7.
12. New Dawn Hyderabad, Sind, Vol. V, No. 5.
13. Peace. Vol. VII, No. 12.
14. Scholar. November & December, 1934.
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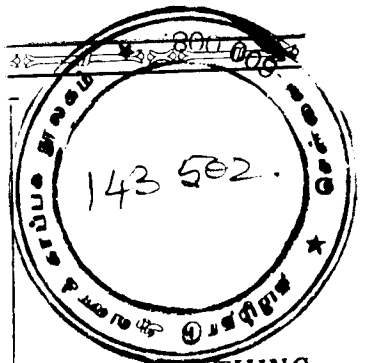
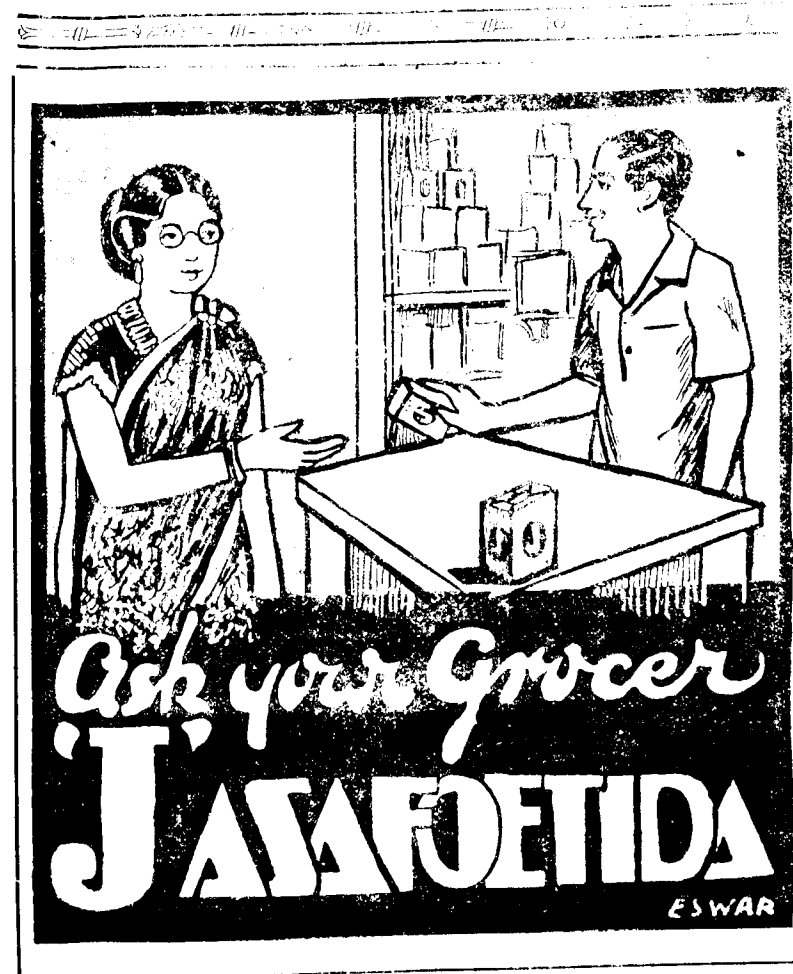
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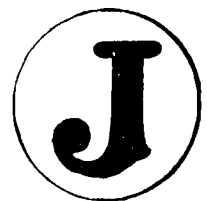
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