

THE
Bharata Dharma

JULY 1935

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THE Bharata Dharma

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

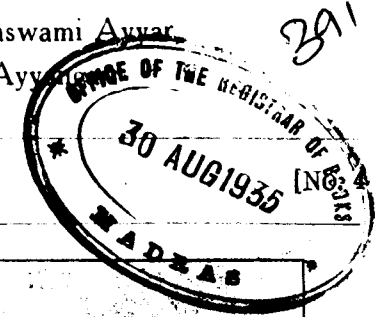
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Honorary Editors : { C. V. Krishnaswami Ayyar
K. V. Sesa Ayyar

VOL. XIII]

JULY, 1935



चित्रं वटतगंमूले वृद्धा शिक्षया गुर्युवा । गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ॥

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

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THE SAGE OF SAKORI

BY

C. V. KRISHNASWAMI AYYAR

India has often been called *the punyabhumi*. This very expressive term has, not unfrequently, been, unfortunately, misinterpreted as meaning that unless a human being is born in it, he or she has no chance of salvation. That is an obviously arrogant claim, for that will rule out the ultimate beatitude even to Lord Jesus and the Prophet of Islam. In one sense, however, that claim has substantial validity; for it can be said with perfect truth that India has been honoured by the lives of more genuine seekers after God, from the morning of time, than perhaps any other single country in the East or in the West. That is why even the most critical and cynical of Westerners come to it to seek for *sadhus* and *saints*. Some of the visitors like the author of "Naked Ascetic"—more critical than the rest—find that most of the *Sadhus* and *Yogis* are frauds, and at the best only clever thought-readers. Others like Paul Brunton find at least one or two genuine men of God. Be that as it may, the very fact that all of them consider India a likely place where they can find real saints is a testimony to its spiritual fertility. That this compliment is not undeserved will be seen from a reading of "Sage of Sakori" by B. V. Narasimhaswami. It is an attractive account of a life full of interesting incidents, of a struggle for Truth amidst most disheartening circumstances, and of the finding of "anand" of the most exalted type not far from the maddening crowds' ignoble strife but in the very midst of it. The book tells us of many supernatural events; of long fasts, longer than that of even McSwinnery of Irish fame; of cures beyond the dreams of the most eminent of medical men; of events which put the miracles of

* A review of "Sage of Sakori" by B. V. Narasimhaswami, Printed at Kesari Printing Press, Madras. Available at, among other places, all "Swadesamitran" Book Stalls and from "Manager. Sri Upasani Baba's Asram, Sakori, Rahata Post Office. Ahmadnagar District G.I.P."

Lord Jesus in one's mind but outclasses them in variety and number. All these are testified to by persons whom Narasimhaswami considers competent and reliable witnesses. Ordinarily, even an Indian—let alone a Westerner—will take all of them with more than a grain of salt. But those who knew Narasimhaswami in his *poorvasram*, will pause before condemning them as fables. He was a successful lawyer for many years, and a very critical one too. He was used to the sifting of evidence, and had a wide acquaintance with life, as a leading public man of Salem. He was not one likely to be taken in easily. That he has chosen to put them before the public as believable incidents is certainly a point in favour of their credibility. We will leave it at that, for, as he himself says, the fame and authority of Upasini Baba, one of the names by which the sage of Sakori is known, does not rest on such manifestations of supernatural power. Says the author "It is not on the possession of such powers that Maharaj (another name of the Sage) is entitled to respect. Persons with various powers like these exist who are neither fit to be worshipped, nor even to be approached by persons anxious about their own spiritual welfare" (p. 100). Where then does the sage's merit lie? Perhaps it lies not even in the freshness of his teaching, though it is worth setting out at some length.

But before we do so, our readers will perhaps like to have some personal details. Sakori is a place a few miles from Chitale railway station in the Bombay Presidency, between Manmad and Dhond. The sage was originally a poor brahmin born of a *Sastri* family, and is believed to have attained spiritual enlightenment by the grace of a Mahammadan saint named Sri Sai Baba, after being put to very severe bodily and mental torments and austerities in the manner well known to students of the history of spiritual exercises in India.

The Swami describes in two very informing chapters of his book what he considers to be the essentials of Upasani Baba's teachings. As a philosophy it seems to be an amalgam of *Sankara's Advaitism* and *Ramanuja's Visishtadvaitism*. While holding pure Advaitism as a distant ideal he believes that most if not all must begin at a very much lower level. This is familiar ground to most Hindus. It is more useful, perhaps, to know Baba's methods. Says the author "Baba describes to all the great merit and power they acquire by simply repeating the words (of the Gita, Baghavad & Ashtavakra) without troubling themselves about the meaning. Mere repetition with good actions he prescribes will go on accumulating a store of merit, the effect

of which will come one day to the devotee suddenly; the whole underlying truth of all these works, in all its fullness, will flash before him in a moment in absolutely clear and unmistakable light. Then there will be no need to discuss, comment or carry on any further *sadhana*. Till that stage is reached the reading and repetition of the works and all other mantras, slokas etc, used at the worship should be continued, with blind faith in the guru, who directs the study and whose duty is to bring about the aforesaid illumination and revelation. Blind faith is one of the cardinal doctrines of Baba's institution" (p. 138).

"Baba almost invariably directs his devotees to *Karmamarga* and *Bhaktimarga*. They should be deeply devoted to and put implicit faith first in their Guru—surrendering their will and their all to him and next in their *Ishta Devata*". . . The Karma "must be good works, unselfish beneficial works, and works in consonance with the *swadharma* of the doer." p. 140.

"Baba is very conservative and does not want his devotees to criticise and relinquish any part of the faith of their fathers as superstitious . . . If you do not find an old usage useful to you, you may omit it, and adopt some other usage suited to you and in consonance with the duties of your station. But iconoclasm, rationalism, controversialism, logic chopping etc, are anathema to him" p. 140.

"Faith is the sheet-anchor on which Baba wants all his devotees to rely. *Jnana* may be ultimate goal, but that is sure to be attained by faith and never without it" p. 142.

"If one simply goes on observing all the fasts, feasts, ceremonies and observances shown in each year's calendar, his or her salvation is assured" p. 142.

"The brahmins are directed by Baba not to fail in their *Nityakarma* and *Naimityakarma*, in addition to their Japa at the holy of holies. In addition to these, Baba rouses up the inner fervour of all by periodical *sapthas* and *yagnas*" p. 143.

"Baba generally winds up his advice by pointing out that though *Sakama Karma*, i.e., action with motive is better than inaction, still, unattached action (*Nishkamakarma*) is the best, the thing to be aimed at." p. 146.

"Baba frequently prescribes worship of Datta, *Pradakshina* to Sani, and Oudhamba, *seva* to beggars and devotees, *japa* of certain mantras, oblations at the sacrificial fire to Agni, *Ekadasi* and certain weekly

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fasts, feeding the poor and Brahmins etc" to those who come to him to get over their troubles" p. 147.

These are no new doctrines and methods peculiar to Upasana Baba. Students of comparative religion will find in them echoes of what Cardinal Newman preached and recommended, and of what is common and familiar to most Roman Catholics, and (aye) to Madhwas and others in this country. In chapter XXIV Narasimhaswami deals with what he thinks is peculiar to Upasani Baba's teaching, namely, that suffering is a blessing and should not be avoided.

"People should rejoice at having to suffer when sufferings come. Tapasvis go and seek these sufferings. If they come of their own accord, i.e., without any effort on our part, are we not better off". . . "Sufferings are needed and should not be got rid of". p. 152.

"Suffering is sent by God for the benefit of the patient. If, however, the patient finds it unendurable he should intently pray to God. (He should not try any physical means to alleviate it). This process (prayer) gives him a double benefit. It takes him closer to God—which is great spiritual gain. It will remove the disease if that is God's will" pp. 152, 153.

Christian scientists have similar doctrines. Perhaps what is peculiar to Upasani Baba is the philosophy or the reason on which his advice is based.

"These afflictions come to one as the punishment for past acts and it is better manfully to face them—so that at one stroke, one's Karmic accounts may be cleared and one's mind strengthened especially in an attitude of contentment and reverence to God, the author of the law of Karma". p. 153.

"Without suffering, any quantity of sermons or book learning, may leave the heart unmoved and untouched, while a little suffering may effect more improvement than years of study and meditation. Suffering is what raises man from the brute level into God-head. The more one suffers the more godly he becomes. It is at the root of *vairagya*" p. 153.

Upasani Baba's outlook on life is summed up by the old saying "Let things be as they may" "Contentment, Faith in God, Endurance, Perseverance, Humility, Meekness, Submissive Resignation etc., are all included in it." says Narasimhaswami.

How far this attitude will appeal to modern men and women and will lead to purposeful and beneficial action is a rather tough question to answer, but it is not an attitude unfamiliar to the Hindu mind, though it is dangerously akin to fatalism. But that it should not prevent such action is

emphasised by Baba himself, for we are told in page 167 that his supreme advice is this "As one grand result is the result of centuries of *punya*, it is the duty of every sensible person to attend to *punya*—good works—incessantly. Every person may and should go on attending to such works with perfect equanimity as the result is in powerful, just, all knowing hands and will unfold itself in God's good time: Develop *Satva*. Do *Dharmic karma*, i.e., holy acts. Be always doing good; Control your desire and be peaceful and hopeful. Have faith. Learn resignation to God's will. These are the main things in life which every one can and should attend to."

We referred above to a passage showing *Upasani Baba's* conservatism. Nowhere is it better illustrated than in his attitude towards the problem of the women's place in spiritual life. In terms similar to Manu's famous verse about the ever-dependent position of women, Baba has said:

"Let men remove women from all positions involving responsibility. Nor should women themselves take up such independent positions. Women should serve their husbands"

But that this conservatism is almost revolutionarily enlightened is seen when he goes to speak of the reason for that injunction of his.

"No *prarabdha* is created or formed by one's acts unless one acts with the feeling that one is a responsible agent. Woman does not create *prarabdha* for herself as by divine will she has no independent position, and as it is not her *dharma* or lot to assume a sense of responsibility for her acts. In woman who is thus free from *prarabdha* divine power naturally resides. Therefore the *prarabdha* of her husband and elders is destroyed; and even to these, divine power comes. If women follow their *stri-dharma* (i.e., duties falling to a womanly lot) *Sat Dharma* (i.e., good works) and keep themselves in *salvic* condition, they are free from *prarabdha*."

According to the sage "Women have nothing to do except to attend to their domestic duties, to cultivate virtue, and worship God in her husband. Women need not engage in the struggle for bread or for other things. Let them leave all that to males and with pastoral simplicity, merely cook, and look after the domestic duties with the love, patience, and goodness characteristic of them. That will keep them and make them pure. Their purity will be a daily example and will turn their husbands and the whole family into pure ones even by ordinary means. And the goodness of such women will be supported by unseen influence; and this will revolutionise the nature of males at home. They will get rid of their selfishness, vice, and other effects of Karma, and become not merely good but also divine" p. 173.

All this is very attractive doctrine and will, we fancy, find ready acceptance, even among the ferminists and certainly among most ordinary women if only they can be sure of the foundation on which it is built, namely that a woman has no *prarabdha* by divine will. Is that at all true? Perhaps the Baba would say that it should be a matter of "faith"

As we said before, the life of *Upasani Baba* is interesting not because of the freshness or of the absolute correctness of his teachings. Few things in regard to spiritual life can be fresh to a student of Hinduism; nor can absolute certainty be claimed or expected of any rule or doctrine in the realm of spirituality. But lives like those of *Upasani Baba* are reminders—constant and insistent reminders—that spiritual realisation is not a vision of the past but is a fact even today and that though all may not be able to rise to real spiritual eminence, all may strive to raise above the welter of materialism and obtain a fair measure of the peace that passeth all understanding, if only he or she has the will to do so.

One aspect of the life of the sage of *Sakori* is worth serious attention. We hear nowadays so much of Hindu-Muslim unity. That it has not yet been achieved will not be seriously disputed. Why it is so, is a problem that requires serious thinking about. Is it any fault in the method of *approach* to the problem? The sage's supreme *Guru Sri Sai Baba* was not a Hindu but a *Mahammadan*. The future sage of *Sakori* did not go to him with willingness, and it was the guru that practically sought him and in spite of the *chela's* indifference, and even open rebellion, literally poured spiritual power into him, in such circumstances as to make one doubt whether such unsought and unworked for enlightenment are not likely to make people indifferent to spiritual effort. The brahmin *chela* is now the most devout worshipper at the *Mahammadan guru's* grave. Has this no lesson to those who have the fashioning of things in India in the near future? Does it not show how really Hindu-Muslim unity is to be achieved? If for nothing else, this little book is worth study for the reason that it gives a picture of an ideal *guru* who was beyond all sectarianism, exclusiveness and intolerance so often but so wrongly attributed to our *Mahammadan brethren*. *Narasimhaswami* has done a real service to draw the attention of the public to such a loveable personality in these days of Hindu-Muslim religious riots.

THE AESTHETICAL AND THE ETHICAL NATURE OF MUSIC EXAMINED.

BY

MR. M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR. B. A., B. L., L. T.

Aesthetics is the science or that branch of philosophy which deals with the theory of *Beauty* or the doctrine of *Taste*.

When did the first impression of *beauty* strike the human mind? This is one of the eternal questions that admit of no definite answer. But this much is certain. To the primitive man, whatever was agreeable was beautiful and whatever was disagreeable was ugly. Hence the first impression of beauty was, as it should have been, *sensual*.

There is a "sensual process that would elicit reflex response," viz., Rhythm or Rhythmic dance. In its absolute aesthetic value this rhythmic dance ranked in the lowest scale. Yet, it was with this rhythmic dance of the lowest scale that the history of aesthetics in relation to music began. The rhythmic dancers derived their pleasure from their bodily reactions; while their spectators derived it from their bodily reflex-actions.

Even after melody came to reinforce the dance, music could not for a long time get out of its sensual stage; for, it appealed only to the lower senses of touch, tongue, and nose. A song, therefore, on *Kissing a Miss* or *Missing a Kiss* would among primitive or primitive-minded people, elicit a lusty applause; or a song on *Kootupaori-Kosumbari* would elicit a call for *Encore*; or a song on *Vandulavum* would elicit probably both the applause and the call.

But, be it remembered, a taste for these songs and a sense of appreciating them are of a lower level and are more of intoxicating than refreshing nature.

Thanks be to God that the human mind is so constituted that it refused to stay in that lower stage for a long time and that it found a mere sensual pleasure, however agreeable, was incapable of seriously affecting it or serving any higher purpose and its field of action was not wide enough to perpetuate, intensify, or even variegate its pleasure. Hence, along with the development of the mind, arose the necessity of higher music that appealed to the higher sense of hearing.

Now, even in the case of higher music, no aesthetic element will enter, if the appreciation thereof is tinged with personal or interested consideration.

Look, for instance, at *Kaikeyi* of the *Ramayana* fame, who regard-

ed even a confessedly ugly object to be so beautiful as to deserve a decoration of an ornament. Did she not express her gratitude, at Kubja's wily suggestion to ask Dasarata for Rama's exile and Bharata's Installation, in the following flattering terms: "There are many deformed, crooked, and unsightly women on earth. But, O! Kubja, thou lookest beautiful like a lotus bent by the breeze. I shall smear thy hump with a sandal paste and decorate it with a golden garland?" Do we not, even to-day, meet with curious cases in which an oil-painting is proposed to be hung for a ninth-rate actor and a statue is suggested for a tenth-rate singer, on the ground that the former's music did not divulge his drunkenness as much as his speech and the latter could, if he would, murder his drummer and, if need be, murder his own music for it?

I trust I have now prepared your mind to accept the truth of a broad proposition, viz., "Disinterestedness is a *sine qua non* of the notion of beauty".

In addition to the bias of interest which will incline one to [mis-] take the ugly for the beautiful and vice versa, there is still another cause which will [mis-] lead that one to the same result, though from a different standpoint. I refer to what is called the Static Law of Beauty or the Law of Relativity.

Beauty has been wrongly regarded as an entity and the musicians laboured under a mistaken notion that they had no other option than to adjust their music to the entitative notion of beauty held by their audience. The truth is that beauty is, not an entity, but a relation.

A rustic passes by and even lives amidst a beautiful scenery; and, yet, he heeds it not. While, a townsman, living far from that scenery and crushed by a weight of anxieties from which the rustic is happily free, ever appreciates it and has at least a photo thereof before him. Hence, beauty is a matter of undoubted relation. The people must not therefore be supposed to have any absolute idea of beauty germinated in their mind; but beauty grows in proportion to the development of their mind and in its relation to the outward nature.

Too often do we find the musicians tainted with a spirit of amateurish exclusiveness, born of narrow prejudice which leads them to say that this country's music is good and that country's music is bad. Do not the Europeans cry down the Indian Music? Do not again, the Indians return the compliment with compound interest? The law of relativity will, if carefully understood, set right these erratic persons.

Again, ugly is the sight of a man covered with dust and blood, sterotously breathing through dilated nostrils and mouth agape and also with a wild look of fury in his eyes. But the very pathology of his appearance and expression will seem almost sublime, if we see in him a devoted warrior fighting for his fatherland. But, again, to a mind which has overstepped the boundary of the notion of Fatherland and thinks of mankind as of one universal brotherhood, the appearance of a blood-stained soldier is doubly loathsome.

Thus, the idea of beauty cannot, in the nature of things, be absolute but only relative.

This truth, Emerson puts in another form and observes: "We love any forms, however ugly, from which great qualities shine. If command, eloquence, art, or invention exists in the most deformed person, all the accidents (that usually displease) please and raise esteem and wonder higher."

As a matter of fact, those who ruled human destinies were not generally handsome. Look, for instance, at Mahatma Gandhi's awkward person and think of the magical influence he exercised not only here but also elsewhere. Look, again, at the unlovely, blind-eyed face of Sarabha Sastri and think of the extra-ordinary service he rendered to the music-world by elevating the much-neglected flute to the dignity of solo-music. In all these cases, even the deformities come to be reckoned to be ornamental and advantageous on the whole. The rule, that is to be observed here, is that the *more durable inner beauty overrides or eclipses the less durable outer beauty*. The former more than compensates for the want of the latter. This is what is meant by the Static Law of Beauty.

Side by side with this Static Law, there is another Law of Beauty, called the Dynamic Law which you will do well to take note of, if at all you desire to form a correct conception of beauty.

Now, out of the political, social, and intellectual history of man, one tendency unmistakably springs, viz., the tendency to individualization. From the ancient theocracies whereby the masses of men were swayed body and soul, in the name of some divine power, to the modern societies, the tendency ever grew stronger and stronger to free the material existence and the moral activity of the individual from the thralldom of the customs and opinions of the community.

While Homer, in ancient times, sang of the fortunes of a nation, as a whole, Shakespeare, in modern times, showed man a prey to his own individual passions. While, again, Vyasa, in ancient times, sang of the

fortunes of a race, as a whole, Thiagaraja, in modern times, presented to the world songs more or less of the *Mampahi* type and narrowed down his prayer to his own individual salvation.

Mr. Sorinzi avers that the same tendency is revealed even in European music and observes that, if Haydn is compared with Chopin, music will be found to forsake the expression of universal ideas and to seek the mysteries of the individual soul.

This tendency to individualization is called the Dynamic Law of Beauty.

I am not personally fond of these high-sounding expressions. I found them used by my predecessors and I but followed them.

I have no remarks to pass about the Static Law. But doubts, I fear, may be entertained regarding the Dynamic Law or the tendency to individualization.

Is such a tendency desirable? Should not the fine art aim at universality? Is not universality, as opposed to individuality, the first condition of beauty? Did not Valmiki's *Soka* become *Sloka*, because the grief, he felt, was, not individual, but universal?

Further, it is said that individuality finds no expression either in painting, or in poetry, or even in music. King Lear, for instance, may be painted to show only a suffering man but not that individual foolish king who gave away his kingdom and reaped ingratitude. "In Memoriam", again, would have been long forgotten, if Tennyson had made his grief, at the death of his friend Arthur Hallam, a personal one. But we know that the poet felt his grief so artistically that he converted it into a type or a mirror of general grief, with the result that Queen Victoria, brooding over the loss of her husband, felt comforted on reading the poem.

Even music cannot express individual love, hatred or anger. It may be joyful or sorrowful—*joyful* without object and *sorrowful* without cause.

It may be contended that these remarks apply only to the absolute or pure or sound-pattern music but not to the *sahityam* or language-music. In other words, while pure music may point to universality, the wording thereof must necessarily point to individuality. For example, pure music may describe only a suffering woman; but its *sahityam* must specifically point to *Sakuntala* disclaimed by *Dushyanta* or *Damayanti* abandoned by *Nala*.

Be it noted that, even in the latter specified cases, the suffering is

not the deserved suffering of a dissatisfied miser or disappointed usurer but the sympathy-enlisting suffering of a selfless person—intensely ethical and having therefore a direct message to mankind. In this sense, even the *sahityam* or the wording of music, though it may refer to individuals, points only to universality, because the individuals chosen happen to be types or typically related to the welfare of humanity.

It is therefore the music of purely selfish individuals sung for their selfish purposes that is condemned as being outside the pale of æsthetics. A song, for instance, the wording of which relates to the usual content of a promissory note will surely be laughed out.

But even Thiagaraja's songs, though they point to individuals, may be regarded to belong at least to the borderland of æsthetics; inasmuch as they conjure before our eyes a typical Bhakta yearning for salvation and thereby setting a good example for his innumerable followers.

Let us now turn to those who are of opinion that nothing is æsthetical which is not ethical also. To these moralists, as we may call them, beauty, goodness, and usefulness are all interchangeable terms. They deny the validity of the æsthetic pleasure, pure and simple; and *Art for Art's sake* is to them a meaningless shibboleth. According to them, therefore, music must stand self-condemned, if it does not conduce to morality.

Naturally, here, a question arises, *viz.*, Does music—*can* music—conduce to morality? I have my own doubt about it.

For, if music were a sure road to morality and if the beautiful were, at the same time, the good also, the 'musical' Nero should have been the most sympathetic Emperor; but we know, he fiddled, when Rome burnt. Exquisite art and degrading corruption seem to love each other; nay, history shows they lived together. In Greece, for instance, Phidias had scarcely completed the Parthion, when the glory of Athens departed. In Rome, Leo X, under whose patronage the modern Roman art flourished, was one of the most profligate and licentious popes. In France, Paris has been noted, alike, for art and immorality. Even in our own country, Thiagaraja, who raised the Carnatic Music to the pinnacle of its glory, found that even his pointed music could not pierce the impervious rock of irreligion, impiety, and immorality with which he was surrounded and cried in despair—*Tholinejesina* and *Thelialeru*.

The truth is that morality does not belong to the constitution of music. The origins of both music and morality as well as the laws that govern their growths are as poles asunder. While music is a source of,

and is ever associated with, pleasure and enjoyment, morality is a flower which blossoms and ripens only amidst painful trials but would wither and decay in an atmosphere of pleasure and enjoyment, especially in its initial stage. While, again, music dreams that life is beauty and esteems the praise of the world, morality finds that life is duty and esteems the praise of the conscience.

Dr. Smiles is therefore perfectly right when he observed that the cultivation of a taste for beauty of form or color or even sound had no necessary effect upon the cultivation of the mind or the development of character. Indeed, good conduct—or, for that matter, character—cannot be acquired either by looking at a variety of clouds or by listening to a variety of sounds but by constant effort sustained from the cradle to the grave. As Rama Brahman, the father of the celebrated Thiagaraja, learnt by bitter experience, consequent upon the ruin of his first, school-exposed boy, the most telling way of teaching moral principles was—not placing, before young children, a catechism of dry moral instruction; not asking them to carry, in their pockets, a *vade-mecum* thereof; not requiring them to listen to the precepts, unaccompanied by the examples, of the ill-paid, ill-fed, ill-treated, ill-estimated, and therefore ill-disposed wrecks, called by courtesy schoolmasters; not even teaching those young children to dance or sing—but making those moral principles *felt* betimes in the midst of well-regulated families where those children, seeing them put into *actual practice every day*, would form moral *habits*, so that when they reached years of responsibility, those habits would be already ingrained in them to such an extent as to incapacitate them to fall a prey to any kind of temptation whatsoever; and their conscience would have no need to argue but would cry aloud against the temptation with the revolt of invincible disgust.

It is true that each act done by man may seem trivial in itself, just as the snow-flakes fall unperceived and each flake, added to the pile, produces no sensible change. But, again, just as the accumulation of all the snow-flakes makes the terrible avalanche, all his accumulated acts at length become consolidated in habit which finally sprouts itself into powerful character.

Can, then, such avalanche-like character be deemed to stand on such a slender and delicate support as music?

It is now high time to cease mincing matters and to call a spade a spade. Music and morality are two different entities and are not neces-

sarily interrelated. Music, therefore, does not necessarily conduce to morality; nor does morality necessarily conduce to music.

That is why, all over the world, we see at times musicians without morality and moralists without music.

Richard Wagner was a musician without morality; while, the ancient Roman was a moralist without music. Doubtless, Richard Wagner was a bright luminary in the firmament of European Music; and his favourite theme, it is said, was *Renunciation*. But in actual life, we are told that he renounced nothing but coveted wealth, coveted other men's wealth also, and—nay—coveted other men's wives as well! Vide Frank Howes's *Appreciation of Music* p. 6. As for the ancient Roman, "to come, see, and conquer" and also make laws for the conquered was his peculiar passion; and his emotions were of such a simple, austere, and practical character that they found a sufficient outlet of expression in the daily duties of the citizen-life.

Valmiki's employment of the two antithetical epithets, while describing the twin-sons of Rama, needs special mention here, viz., कुशीलवौचैव महातपस्विनौ Balakanda, Sarga 4, Sloka 35:

Govinda Raja's commentary on this line runs thus: कुशीलवावपिमहान्तौ तपस्विनौ which may be translated thus:—The twin-sons of Rama were good musicians and yet highly disciplined persons. The word अपि in the commentary and the word 'yet' in the translation speak volumes for the antithetical nature of the two epithets.

Evidently, then, even Valmiki hinted at the usually opposing nature of music and morality.

It seems, therefore, to be hazardous to reconstruct a musician's life and personality from his artistic works alone. A man's art comes in the last resort from the subconscious part of his mind and does not therefore tell us very much about his conscious life. It is further a fact of psychology that we tend to compensate in our subconscious lives for tendencies that find no overt expression in our ordinary wide-awake behaviour; and these tendencies it is that often appear in works of art.

All these observations point to an irresistible, though not pleasant conclusion that an author of "Morals", like Seneca, may so conduct himself in actual life that he may have to look forward to nothing else than a dishonoured old age and ignominious death; or, again, that an apparently Bhakti-inculcating song may possibly be composed by a

drunken rascal or a consummate cut-throat. Vide Eric Blom's *Limitations of Music*, p. 4., wherein the author bears out my view and states that the art need not reflect its creator's everyday outlook on life.

Having thus warned you against a persistent fallacy that music conduces to morality, I shall now tell you how music and morality may so co-operate with each other as to fulfil each its function.

Music and morality may be spoken of as the two wheels of the car of the human mind whereon the Jivatma may ride on to its destined goal. Or we may say that morality, like the steam-power, works the machine of the human mind; while, music, like oil, serves to lubricate it. Or we may say in our own time-honoured oriental fashion:—गीतिमाता नीतिःपिता That is to say, morality, like a father, exercises its disciplinary control with a stern command; while, music, like a mother, exercises its loving control with a persuasive appeal. Both kinds of control, I think, are necessary for the healthy growth of the human mind.

To sum up, music has nothing directly to do with ethics but is limited only to aesthetics. Whatever engenders agreeable feelings in man; whatever makes him forget his self and identify himself with it; whatever does not react in pain but invariably leaves him quite refreshed and even refined; and whatever, in fine, enables him to recognise a Universal Life and feel happy over his merger with it—all these conjointly come under the category of the *Beautiful*. If music satisfies these conditions, surely it is beautiful. This, in a nut-shell, is the aesthetics of music.

I am the wind that breathes on the sea
I am the wave of the ocean.
I am the murmur of billows
I am the ox of the seven combats
I am the eagle upon the rocks
I am a beam of the sun
I am the fairest of plants.
I am wild boar in valour
I am a salmon in the water
I am a word of science
I am the point of the lance in battle.

Amergin.

THE GIFT OF ARABIA.

BY T. L. VASWANI.

"The greatest gift the hero leaves his race
Is to have been a hero"

These pregnant words of George Elliot come to my mind as I think of Mahomed.

Him I revere as a hero—one of the greatest heroes of Humanity.

Islam like other world-religions, is split up into sects. Islam has 72 sects. Yet they all unite in paying homage to Mahomed.

And I a child of un-Islamic influences,—I also pay homage to him.

When will *Hindu* society celebrate the Day of his birth and invoke its blessings?

It is the essential humanity of Mahomed which is, to me, his greatest fascination.

"All actual heroes are essentially men"—said Browning. And Mahomed was essentially, a man. He claimed to be no supernatural figure. He claimed to be a servant of the Most High.

He reckoned himself in the rank of the "illiterate". God has lifted him to the rank of the world's illustrious ones.

The word *Mahomed* means the "Praised one". Millions praise him to-day from one end of the world to the other. Millions utter every day the prayer:—

"Allah is the only God and Mahomed is His prophet!"

In a dark period of the world's history he came to bear witness to the One Allah. On Him he mediated in that cave among the foothills of Mount Hira. Of Him there came to him the word to go forth amongst men and give them His message. To Him his faithful spirit testified in the streets of Mecca and on the battlefields of faith and in the midst of all dangers and difficulties, all trials and tribulations. His uncle asks him to follow the counsels of prudence and keep quiet. To him, Mahomed speaks the following words and then bursts into tears:—

"Though they gave the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left to bring me back from my undertaking, yet will I not pause till the Lord carry my course to victory or till I die for it."

He is insulted every day,—insulted, persecuted. He persists in a lonely course. He is a hero. He is a servant of God. "The path of service" writes Ibsen, "is not the path of popularity."

And when in his 62nd year he is on his death-bed and in deep

(Continued in page 102.)

THYAGA BRAHMAM & "KARMA".

BY

C. V. KRISHNASWAMI AYYAR

Thyagaraja Swamin, adored also as Thyaga Brahmam, is too well known as a composer of *kritis* to need introduction to our readers. Some time ago, many articles were published in this journal on his Art and his songs. Thyaga Brahmam, the philosopher, is, perhaps, not so well-known. Some of the sweetest of his creations are also the shortest and yet the most expressive expositions of important and sublime aspects of Hindu Philosophy. As they are in Telugu, most songsters and listeners do not know their purport. Even in the Telugu country, the music of his *kritis* has attracted so much attention as to make people neglect the substance of them. His views on philosophical doctrines may not be novel, but as the opinions of one of the foremost among the great men of God who have honoured this country with their lives, they are of great confirmative value. Below we give two of his famous songs in which he descants on the great doctrines of Karma and Destiny—their inevitability and the effect of prayer on them.

Pallavi.

Rānithi Rāthu Surāsuralukaina.

Anupallavi.

Pōnithi Pōthu Bhoosurulukaina.

Charanam.

Devēndrunuki sudēhamu poorva

Dēvulukāmritamu abhāvamugāni

Ā vanacharabhadhulu Ā munulukegani

Pāvana Thyagaraja bhāgya Sri Rama.

Surāsuralukaina—Even to the Devas and the Asuras

Bhoosurulukaina—Even to the Devas of the Earth, (the Brahmans.)

Rānithi Rāthu—What is not (destined) to come will not come.

Pōnithi Pōthu—What is not (destined) to go will not go.

Devēndrunuki—To the Devendra

Sudēhamu—a good body (1)

Poorvadēvulu—To the Asuras

Amritamu—the nectar (2)

Abhāvamugāni—were not vouchsafed.

Ā vanacharabhadhulu—The hardships inflicted by the inhabitants of the forests (Rakshasas)

Ā munulukēgani—(were the portion) of even the Rishis of (the forest) (3)

Pāvana—Oh! the purified and the purifier

Thyagarajabhāgya—Oh! the wealth of Thyagaraja's—(devotion)

Sri Rama—Oh Sri Rama.

(1) Even Indra who is a most powerful god could not get rid of the ugly things on his body caused by Goutama's curse on him for his immoral relations with Ahalya, wife of Goutama.

(2) Even though Asuras proved really more powerful and abler than the Suras in the churning of the Ocean of Milk, when it came to a question of reward, the best product of the churning, the nectar was given to the Suras.

(3) The Munis were men of high character and austere life; yet they were not free from the constant disturbances to their devotion and from physical torments, caused by the Rakshasas.

The saint asks why did all these apparently inexplicable hardships occur. The answer he finds in Destiny. Is this Destiny a blind one? It is not so, according to the sage. It is the God's way of making each man reap as he sows, and even incessant prayer is of little avail in the absence of good actions, as will be seen from the next song.

II.

Pallavi

Aparādhhamulanorva samayamu

Kripajoodumu ganamaina na.

Anupallavi.

Chapalachittudai manaserugagan

Jalipettukoni moralidu na

Charanam,

Sakala lōkula palamulunerigi

Samrakshinsu tsundaka nan

Nogani bhrovatheliya, kirtana

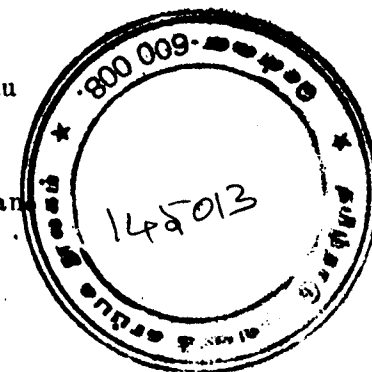
Sathaka monarcho Thyagarajanutha! na.

Chapala chittudai—With inconstant mind dominated by desire,

Manasu erugagane—not knowing what was in your mind

Jalipettukoni—full of sorrow and doubt

Moralidu—continuously asking for (benefits for myself)



Nā ganamaina aparādumulu—My serious misdeeds
 Orva samayamu—(This is) the occasion for pardoning
 Kripajoodumu—Look (on me) with compassionate eyes.
 Sakalalokula palamulunerigi—Knowing the results of (the karma) of
 all (Jeevas) in all the worlds
 Samrakshinsu tsundaka—When (you are) protecting (them).
 Nannu okani bhrova theliya—To make you know that you should
 protect (this one individual) me.

Thyagarajanuta—Oh ! object of Thyagaraja's devotion.

Kirtana sathakamunorchi na—My (misdeed) in singing a hundred
 songs.

Oh, the object of Thyagaraja's devotion, pardon the sin of one who
 not knowing Your mind, and constantly dominated by changing desires
 sang innumerable songs to you to protect me alone, while you in your
 great compassion, knowing the results of the karma of the countless
 jeevas in the universe, were protecting them all, according to their
 deserts.

(Continued from page 99.)

humility he asks :—"Oh Allah ! Have I not fulfilled my mission ?", the
 faithful who surround him in one voice answer :—"Yes Allah !".

Yes :—Mahomed fulfilled his mission. Mahomed was faithful to the
 word he pledged to Allah. Mahomed's course is no longer lonely. Maho-
 med's message lighted the darkness of the middle ages in Europe.
 Mahomed's message inspired the culture of the great Universities of
 Cordova and Seville. It has been a force in the life of Asia. It has been
 the inspirer of mystics and dervishes. One of them was the woman saint,
 Rabia, who sang rapturous songs. In one of them she pours out her heart
 in the following words :—

"O God : If I worship Thee for fear of Hell, let me be burnt in Hell.

"If I worship Thee to win Paradise, let me not enter Paradise.

"But if, O Lord : I worship Thee for Thine own sake, withhold not
 from me Thine everlasting Bounty."

I know of no nobler vision of spiritual life than what those words
 enshrine. Homage to him who inspired Seers and saints like Hafiz and
 Rabia : Homage to Mahomed. His name is a call and consecration to the
 nations.

RESTRAINT OF CHILD MARRIAGE.

(Legislation in Mysore.)

BY C. V. K.

The Mysore Legislative Council refused permission, the other day,
 for the introduction of a bill drafted on the lines of what is now known
 as the Sardha Act in British India. We are sure to hear some "well
 wishers" of India like Miss Mayo say that that is another indication of
 the utter unfitness of Indians for self-Government. But even at the risk
 of alienating such friends, we would state that the Mysore Council did the
 right thing in throwing the bill out. We wish at the outset to state, as
 clearly as we can, that we welcome that decision not because we have
 the least sympathy with those who fancy that the Hindu religion will
 crumble if post-puberty marriages are permitted. We are of opinion that
 our sublime religion is not at all so brittle as that. We wish also to
 make it clear that nothing would give us greater pleasure than to see
 that the age of marriage of girls is raised not only to 14 as the bill pro-
 posed to do but to 18 which is the age of majority. We may also be per-
 mitted to say that we are not among those who object to social legislation
 by the Legislative Council of either a Native State or of British India.

Our objection is to the nature of the method sought to be employed.
 Even a good object can be attempted to be reached in a bad way. And
 we think that, except in two classes of cases, *compulsory* social legisla-
 tion is utterly wrong even if the object is a desirable one. If, as in the
 case of *Sati* or sexual intercourse before puberty, any social or religious
 custom is inhuman and is opposed to all canons of civilised life, the law
 must *compel* its discontinuance. If, as in the case of dedication of minor
 girls to temples, where the result is to virtually compel them to lead a
 life of prostitution, a social or even a religious custom is *contra bonus*
mores (against sound morality) the legislature is entitled to *compel* people
 to give it up. In all other cases we think legislation should be only
optional. Even at the risk of being considered retrograde, we think that
 irrevocable betrothal before puberty, which is all that early marriage
 means in India, is in neither of those categories. We have read with
 care what the Age of consent Committee has to say on this matter in its
 report. We have listened to or read the reports of the speeches of many
 good men and women who have decried the present practice as "inhuman"
 "devitalising", "barbarous". But having regard to its working in the
 Brahmin Community for centuries and the general level of health of its
 members and of their high intelligence and culture, we are unable to
 place it anywhere near *Sati* or dedication of girls. If in recent times it
 has produced lamentable results it is due to the disregard of the safeguards

under which the system worked. We would have had more sympathy with these legislative endeavours, if post-puberty marriage, for example, was illegal and it was sought to make it valid. But, fortunately, whatever doubt there was about it some years ago, it has ceased to exist now. Even the orthodox do not now contend that it is legally *invalid* though they condemn it as *irreligious*. We would have approved of a legislation—even if it was compulsory—if it merely went as far as the orthodox view of the shastras went. Herein lies the explanation of an apparent anomaly that was pointed out in the course of the debate in the Mysore Council. It was said that those who objected to the present bill, ignored that there was already on the statute book of that State an act penalising the marriage of girls before *eight*. But the critic forgot that the sastras, even according to the most strict construction, do not *compel* marriage before eight. Even according to the more illiberal of the two readings of a famous verse a girl become a *Kanya* only at eight (*Astavarshat bhavet Kanya*) and there will be no interference with one's religion if marriages before eight are *compulsorily* prohibited. There would be some justification for such legislation if it merely sought to place a sanction behind the more liberal reading which makes ten the age of *Kanhyuhood*. In those cases the legislature would be only supplying a new sanction which the King in a Hindu-state has to enforce the *Dharma*, under to the shastras. But the present legislation proceeds farther than that. The orthodox Hindu does not concede that post puberty marriage is at all religious and there is honest difference of opinion as to what the shastras say on that matter, though we ourselves believe that they assume that the girl to be married had already attained puberty. And it is notorious that most girls in India attain puberty before they complete fourteen, in normal circumstances. To put the age of marriage for girls at 14 is really to compel post-puberty marriage. Compulsion of such sort, merely on the ground that the reform is a desirable change, is, we think, beyond the scope of a legislature. Once again, we are anxious not to be misunderstood. We readily concede that the change sought to be made by the bill is desirable in a way. Personally we would go even farther than the bill and make eighteen the age of marriage for girls (not only for the boys). But we would refrain from countenancing any compulsion, on a matter of this sort. We would argue and persuade. Fancy, for example, an attempt to introduce a bill to compel all Hindus to give up eating flesh-food. The spiritually inclined Hindus of all castes have, in latter days at least, given up such food. Medical opinion is more and more in favour of vegetarianism. Is an enthusiast to be allowed to get through compulsory legislation on such a matter though the object is, surely, a very desirable one.

We are against the Mysore bill on another ground also. As Sir Vepa Ramesam said the other day in his lecture at Bangalore, similar legislation in Madras has led to clear and open disobedience of law. Why add to the number of occasions in which contempt for law is possible. It is rendered possible in this case because of the inadequacy of the punishment prescribed by it. Mere fine or simple imprisonment is not enough to prevent such marriages. If child marriage is really an evil like sati and dedication of minor girls, why make the punishment so lenient. Make it sufficiently severe and there will be fewer ready to openly defy it. It is said that even as it is the provision is a good piece of educative propaganda. We doubt it very much. It is, if anything, educating people on the lines of Gandhiji's civil disobedience movement. That cannot gladden the heart of any lover of peace and order. To those who believe in the advantages of late marriages this bill is not necessary. To those who do not, this bill sets up no appreciably useful ideal. This leads us to what we, personally, consider another very substantial objection to the bill, viz., its ineffectiveness to combat the evil sought to be put down. It is said the bill will put down early widowhood. We are not with the old gentleman in the Mysore Council who said, "Then, abolish marriage and put an end to all widowhood". That evidently was intended as a crushing repartee but is not sound sense. There is always a question of degree in such matters. Surely, widowhood at 3, 4 or even eight is certainly different from widowhood at 30, 40 or 80. But the bill does not affect widowhood at all. Not all the punishments provided in it affect the validity of the marriage made in controvention of it. The girl married at 3 will be a widow if her husband dies soon after, even if the parents are sent to jail for long terms. We must make the marriage invalid to prevent widowhood and if that is done, nor even the bravest Sanatanist would get his daughter married before the age fixed, and make her a concubine and her children illegitimate. If the invalidity is attached to marriages before the girls complete *ten* years there will be, we think, hardly any real opposition. It will be said that that would not gain another object of such legislation, viz., the prevention of early *motherhood*. But does the present legislation effect it? It does not really do so. In spite of the few shocking instances gathered by Miss Mayo and others of her tribe, sexual intercourse between husband and wife before puberty is extremely rare in this country. In most cases it occurs only after puberty, though in many cases it may be too soon after it to be desirable. A few cases of the other kind will always exist even in spite of the most drastic legislation, and it is needless waste of legislative power to provide for such cases "The law takes note of only

what is common" is a well recognised maxim of all civilised jurisprudence. But even at 14 motherhood is undesirable. As *Sushruta* said 16 is the minimum age for such a purpose, and does the Sardha Act or the present bill prevent all possibility of conception before sixteen. The present attempts have only served to irritate a fairly large part of the public without doing any real good. As the Right Honourable Mr. V. S. Sreenivasa Sastri said some time ago such *compulsory* legislation is very much in advance of public opinion. It fails to satisfy the canons set down by that eminent jurist, Dicey, in his famous book on "Law and Public Opinion" as to how far legislation can be in advance of such opinion.

We have made these remarks not in disapproval of legislation in these matters. Our real object is to stimulate legislation on lines which will be really effective. We believe that such legislation should in the present stage of public opinion proceed on some such lines as these: (1) Make all marriages where the girl's age is below ten and the boy's age is below 18 *invalid*. This is not unshastraic nor will it arouse much opposition. Further it will prevent early widowhood in a fairly large number of cases; (2) Make sixteen the age of consent even within marriage. This will really prevent early motherhood. Some will say that this is unworkable. How is the present law which puts it at 18 worked and why should sixteen be more unworkable? There may be secret violation of the law. So there will be that even if you have it at 18. We think that such sinning is likely to be rarer than the present open defiance of law. (3) To minimise opportunities for secret violation of the law make the guardianship of the girl vest in the parents and not in the husband till the wife completes sixteen years and legislate against conjugal rights being enforceable by a husband till then. This suggestion may not be *rogue* proof. But which legislation is? On the other hand there will be more public sympathy for such legislation and less hardship in its enforcement. We hope reformers in Mysore will not be depressed by the failure of the present attempt and throw up the sponge, but that they will renew their efforts in the direction indicated. We would also urge on reformers in British India the advisability of getting the Sardha Act amended on those lines. So much for legislation. For the rest our suggestion is, educate public opinion till it agrees to the age of marriage being at least the age of majority for both sexes. Economic forces are with the reformers in this matter, and we think that the time is not far distant when that consummation will not only be devoutly wished for, but will be a realised fact. Meantime, be considerate and conciliatory in your advocacy. For that is likely to be more successful in reducing opposition than an attitude of righteous indignation and disdainful disregard of ages-old and deep rooted sentiment.

WHY WAS THE WORLD CREATED? *

"Why did God create the World?" This question has perplexed the philosophic mind of the human race since the beginning of philosophic thought; and the wisest of the race have regarded it as really unanswerable. Why is this so? To begin with even the best developed and trained human intellect is limited by certain facts of its nature, which facts restrict its operations to a comparatively narrow field—the question under consideration being clearly outside of that narrow field.

Inasmuch as the "why" of creation—the "meaning" or "wherefore" of this activity of the Creative Power—is a fact of the essential being of that Power, it would seem that before one can know this "why", this "reason," this "welfare" of Creation, he must know the "what" of the essential being of the Creator—and that clearly transcends the power, scope and field of human intellect and imagination as well. Even Intuition in its highest activities throws no light on the subject.

But it may be interesting to briefly consider just what men have thought in their speculations upon this subject—just what their philosophical, metaphysical and theological "guesses" on the subject have been.

THE CONATIVE PRINCIPLE OF BEING

While the general philosophic thought, in its highest presentations, has inclined to the conception of an *Absolute Principle of Being, Perfect and Complete in Itself*, there have also always been certain thinkers who have conceived of a *Conative Principle of Being, i. e., a striving working, attempting, longing, desiring, endeavouring, acting Principle*, filled with the inner urge to express and manifest itself in outward forms, phases and conditions of existence. To such a Principle the "why," "reason," and "wherefore" of Creation would, of course, be simply that of the *inherent desire to Manifest Outward Existence*—the Will-to-live, as Schopenhauer called it. The difficulties in the way of the hypothesis of the Absolute Principle are mostly absent from this opposing hypothesis, as we shall see presently when we consider the former.

This hypothesis of the Conative Principle was held by (the Bhagavad Gita in the East and by) Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher who lived about 600 B. C. It was advanced in a somewhat different form by Schopenhauer, the German philosopher of the last century, and has been recently put forward in a still different form by Bergson, the modern Belgian philosopher, in his philosophy of "Creative Evolution," in which the Conative Principle is called "Life"—its creation being held to be caused by the desire and striving of "Life" to live in outward form and expression. Wundt and other German philosophers have also conceived of a Conative Principle of Being, which is described as "a spiritual creative activity; a striving, feeling, sensing, like that which we experience in ourselves."

The essence of any conception of a Conative Principle is, of course, karma (Gita 8.3) the *Desire to Act* (Yatha Ischasi Tatha kuru, Gita 18.63.) A modern writer has expressed such a Principle as: "A Power with the Desire to Act, or a Desire with the power to Act." This last statement im-

plies simply a *Will-principle*, inasmuch as Will in its two phases is (a) Desire, and (b) Action, respectively. Buddhism is often held to postulate this Universal Will-Principle as the Reality, or Supreme Being—but a closer inquiry shows that it considers the Universal Will-to-Live as merely a *manifestation or expression* (vyakti) of an Underlying Reality which is Unknowable and Beyond Thought.

This class of hypothesis has been favoured by certain schools of philosophy for the reason that it seemed to furnish a clearer and simpler answer to the question of the "why," "reason," and "wherefore" of the created world, while at the same time its Principle is held to be no more difficult to account for than is the Absolute Principle of the opposing school. The objection to it, advanced by the opposing schools, is that this conception lessens the dignity and grandeur of the Principle of Being, holding, as it does, that this Principle finds it necessary to struggle, strive endeavour and work for all Eternity to manifest and express objective life for itself—yet never really attaining anything, or actually "getting anywhere," and being always apparently under some compelling Law of its own essential being.

THE ABSOLUTE PRINCIPLE OF BEING

The schools of thought which postulate the existence of an *Absolute Principle of Being*, approach to the answer of our question: "Why did God create the World," from an entirely different position. In fact, perhaps the subtle reasoners of this school *refuse to consider the question at all*, Sampad 16.1-6) stamping it as illogical and fallacious on its very face. Their reasons for this position are as follows: (1) *The basic postulate of the (existence of an absolute Principle of Being carries with it the implication that such Principle must be absolutely free, independent, unconditioned, beyond cause, or motive, or influence outside of itself, and free from compelling motives, laws or influences within itself; that it must be omniscient and omnipotent, i. e., must have perfect wisdom and infinite knowledge as well as absolutely free will and power to act; that it must be complete and perfect, and lacking in nothing which could add to its perfection or completeness of being.* (2) this being admitted, it is seen that any assumption of a necessary "why," "reason" or "wherefore" impelling the Absolute Principle to the activity of the creation of the World is practically attributing a necessary "cause," "motive," "or influence" (external or internal to itself) to that which must be free from such attributes by reason of being Absolute—this in short is akin to asking "what causes or influences the action of that which is beyond causes, influences, or motives to action." (3) therefore, the question is seen to be illogical, fallacious, self-contradictory, paradoxical, and without real meaning or validity.

Such philosophers while refusing to "answer" the question for the reason just given, sometimes venture an "explanation" to meet the difficulty along lines something like this: "The absolute Principle simply *wills* to create, not as the result of any desire, motive, influence, reason, of end to be gained, but simply as an act of *pure free will*, (Ischa 18'63,) without cause, reason, of motive as we understand these terms." But as

we can understand Will only as responding to desires, motives, influences, reasons and ideas, the "explanation" does not "explain" much to our intellects. It simply elevates the activity to a plane of being into which our thought cannot follow it. So this "explanation" is not far removed from the above-stated "refusal to answer the illogical question," is it?

This school of philosophy also strives to show the illogical nature of the would-be *answers* of other schools to this question, which answers seem to indicate that the Absolute Principle seeks to "*gain*," "*acquire*," or "*secure*" something which seems desirable to it and which it previously "*lacks*." The objection to these is, (1) that the Absolute cannot be thought of as possessing *desire* (i.e., longing for, craving after, earnest wish for something that it *lacks*), for such would be an impelling *cause, influence or motive to action*, which is unthinkable of the Absolute; and (2) that as the Absolute is and must be *perfect and complete*, and "*lacking nothing*" which could add to its perfection and completeness, then the assertion of "*desire for that which is lacking*" is unthinkable of the Absolute. Moreover, it is added, as there is *nothing outside* of the Absolute which it could desire to acquire (there being no *outside*) then all that it could *desire* or *lack* (even if such were otherwise possible) would be *that which is already within itself*—which idea is illogical and absurd.

This school also objects to another answer which is sometimes made, i.e., the hypothesis that the Absolute creates *in order to become*, (*Brahma*) *conscious*, as consciousness depends upon *objects of consciousness*, and these are lacking unless it creates them. The answer is that this idea of consciousness is merely that of *finite consciousness*, not *infinite consciousness*; finite consciousness depends not only upon objects of consciousness, but also upon the concentration of attention upon particular objects; whereas infinite consciousness is above such limitations, and may be considered really rather as super-consciousness than as ordinary consciousness. Moreover, the Absolute being *omniscient*, all-wise, all-knowing, cannot well be thought of as ever being *unconscious*, or lacking in full consciousness. Finally (even ignoring the other objections), how could that which was *unconscious* happen at the same time to be *conscious* of what it lacked, and also *know how* to proceed. The hypothesis is discarded as lacking in logical validity and real meaning.

THE ANSWERS OF THEOLOGY.

But theologians rush in where philosophers fear to tread. We find in all lands and in all religions, theologians boldly and positively answering (!) these questions which the wisest philosophers deem un-answerable. And this is all the more startling because the theologians first assert their conception of Deity is that of Absolute Being, and then proceed to announce answers and explanations which the philosophers of the Absolute discard as illogical and without meaning or value. Let us take a glance in passing at these different answers advanced by the theologians

(orthodox and "heathen" alike, for there is really not much difference between them in the matter of such answers).

You will notice, though, that although these theologians (orthodox or heathen) positively assert that their particular conceptions of Deity postulate the fact of Absolute Being to Deity, nevertheless nearly all of their answers and explanations of the acts of Deity imply that *He is but a magnified Man. Their conceptions are anthropomorphic—they think of Deity as acting from the same motives, reasons, influences, causes and desires that they, themselves, would possess if they were suddenly elevated to the Throne of Heaven.* They ignore the axiom that: "*All this which is asserted of the Relative and Finite, must be denied to the Absolute and Infinite*" (and vice versa)—this from the very laws of thought and reason, and by reason of the very meaning of these respective sets of terms. This fact alone is enough to destroy the value of the "explanations" of the "why and wherefore" of the Divine Activities—but there are other reasons as well why such explanations must be futile and inadequate. Let us take a brief glance at this class of answers, and consider still more briefly some of the most apparent objections to each.

Here are some of the "explanations" or "pious guesses" of the theologians: (1) That the Deity was *lonesome*, and created the World for companionship. Imagine a perfect, Infinite and Absolute Being—a Self-Sufficing Being—as being lonesome, and needing companionship! (Ekaki na ramate.)

(2) That the Deity *wished to gain experience or knowledge*, and created the World for the purpose of experiment and study. Imagine Omniscience requiring experience or knowledge! Would it not require as much knowledge and experience to create a World, as could be gained by studying it after its creation?

(3) That the Deity *wished something to love*, and hence created the World to bring forth living creatures to be loved. This is too pitifully anthropomorphic to require criticism. It is almost as crude as the conceptions of some of the Hindu sects which hold that Deity craved Love and hence created a Female Deity as a Mate.

(4) That Deity *craved worship and glory*, and created the World and men in order to be worshipped and glorified. Clearly the childlike, naive conception of a people accustomed to vainglorious and conceited kings and potentates who desired reverence and glory!

(5) That the Deity *wished to manifest His wisdom and power*, so as to see what He could accomplish in the way of Creation, and therefore created the World as an illustration and proof of His Omniscience and Omnipotence. Another conception inspired by the thought of an ambitious potentate! Surely this picture of Deity acting like a child with a new toy is not a worthy conception! And what was Deity doing during all the preceeding Infinitude of Eternity? If, as some would claim, the present World is but one of a series of progressive experiments, it would seem that Deity has made but little progress considering the countless

aeons which have passed in the past of Eternity, not to speak of the absurdity of thinking of All-Wisdom and All-All-Power having to resort to "experiments" in order to create a satisfactory world—having to *learn by experience* like an apprentice. If Omniscience and Omnipotence could not have produced a perfect World in an instant, and at one attempt, then it can never hope to do so in the future, for the very doubt denies the fact of All-Knowing and All-Power. And, forget it not, there was as much "time" (or possible time) in the past of Eternity as there will be in the future of Eternity; so that if it is claimed that Deity *needs time* in order to work out perfection, we must reply that, even in that case, He has had already an Infinitude of Time—a beginningless Eternity. In short, reason shows that all such conceptions are in flat contradiction of the Omniscience and Omnipotence, the Absolute Infinity, of Deity! And yet men gravely announce such "explanations"!

(6) That the Deity *desired to be amused*, and so created the world as "sport," "recreation," or "amusement"—something in the way of a Cosmic Drama, "which for the pastime of Eternity He doth contrive, enact, behold"; mankind being but "a moving row of Magic Shadow-Shapes that come and go, round with the sun-illumined Lantern held in Midnight by the Master of the Show," as Omar Khayyam puts it. This is a typically Oriental conception, inspired doubtless by the thought of the pleasure-loving potentates and princes of those lands. Even one of the great ancient Vedantists fell into this theological error, and said that it seemed that Brahman must be thought of as acting like a great Prince, and creating the World "for sport" alone as there could be no other "reason" attributed to the act of a Being who was possessed of everything. The idea is crudely anthropomorphic, of course, and is particularly distasteful to the Occidental mind, except perhaps as a form of poetic expression as in the case of Omar, who possibly merely so intended it (What the easterns hold is the converse namely that a sage to whom the world is sport, recreation or amusement is in fact Paramesvara, a Lord.

(Ed. Kalpaka.)

(7) That the Deity *so loved Man* that he created the World as his dwelling place, and then brought him into being. Outside of the objection of anthropomorphism in this case, one cannot help wondering (with the skeptic) how even Deity could love anything that was not in existence, *not even begun*. And, also, if such were the case, why did not Deity manifest His love more fully, in the direction of making the world a Heaven, in the first place? And Man an Angel?

(8) That the Deity is under the Illusion or Delusion of "Maya," and created the World under the influence thereof. This is another Oriental idea, doubtless inspired by the frequent example of the Potentate or Prince under the influence of hasheesh, or other drug! The idea of a Deity "under the influence" of the Cosmic Drug of Maya, is pitiful—even more pitiful than the Occidental notion of a Deity who "makes mistakes" and "changes His mind" frequently; or of an otherwise mentally

incompetent Deity (Maya was rendered by deceit, illusion, delusion, etc., only since the time of the Buddhists. Originally Maya meant wonderful skill and power; which Power was a limitation of an Absolute.

(Ed. Kalpaka.)

Surely distorted pictures of an Absolute, Perfect, Omniscient and Omnipotent Being!

IS THE WORLD A DREAM?

This is about the end of the list. But before closing, let me call your attention to the metaphysical hypothesis (advanced by thinkers Oriental and Occidental) at different stages of the history of metaphysical thought, which holds that the creation of the World is the result of the *Dream of the Absolute*—that the World is unreal, and simply a mirage or phantasmagoria arising from the "dream" or at least "day dream" of the Infinite One. Of course, in its crude and literal form this conception is clearly anthropomorphic, and must be discarded as such. But it is worthy of note that this idea has been accepted by many of the world's most profound metaphysicians as being the *SYMBOL* of the true nature of the World in its relation to the Absolute One. Viewed as a symbol, it has a philosophical value to the minds of many thinkers on the subject, and is found as the basis of many esoteric schools of thought (although sometimes cleverly disguised).

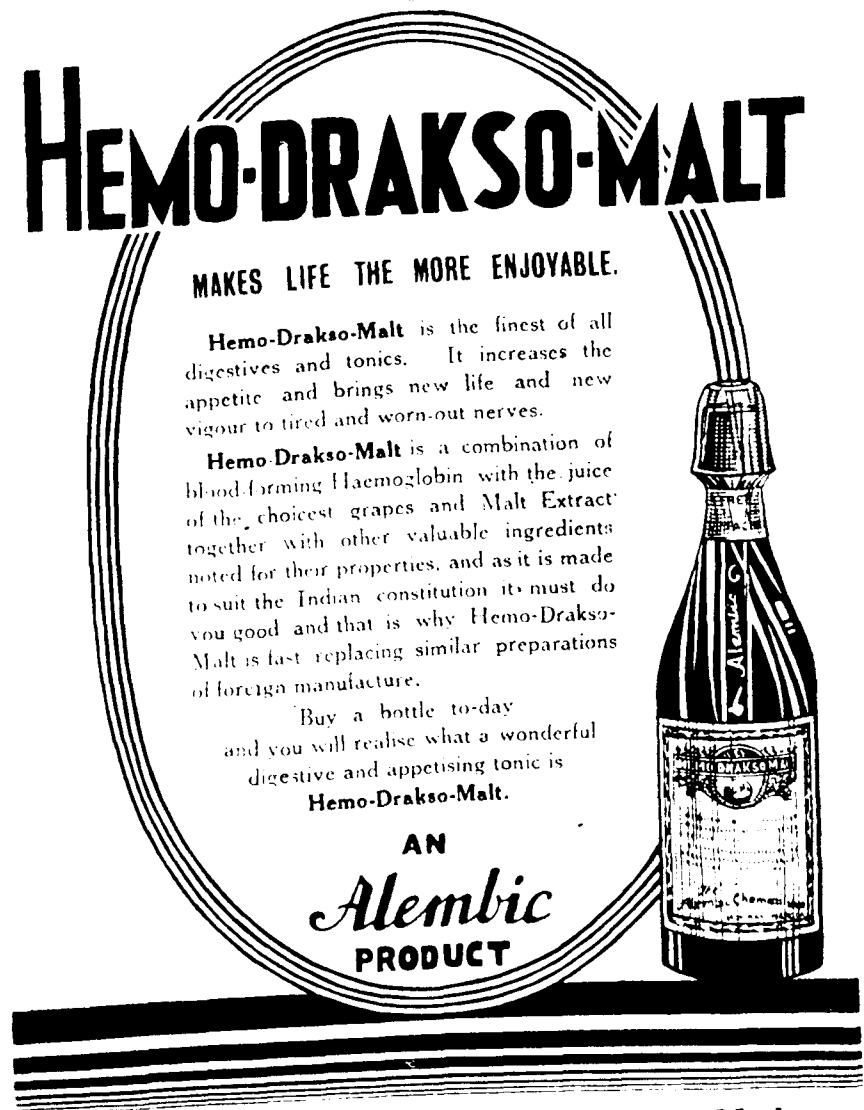
THE IDEALISTIC CONCEPTION.

That the Word is a Mental Creation of the Absolute—a Cosmic Thought-Form in the Infinite Mind—is, of course, the teaching of many important schools of Oriental and Occidental Idealism. But, it must be noted in this connection that even such a high metaphysical conception does not explain the "why" the "reason," the "wherefore" of the creation of the World—it merely expresses a hypothesis or teaching regarding the "how" or "what" of the creative processes, that's all. The question of the "why" and "wherefore" of Creation, still remains unanswered even in this lofty conception.

And, finally Christian Science holds that *the material world was never really created at all!* This school seems to hold that the material world is merely the result of "error of mortal mind," and has no actual existence in Truth. This at first seems to settle the question, if the doctrine is accepted; but alas! the "mortal mind" or intellect of us generally persists in asking: "*But how did mortal mind arise—and to whom did the 'error' first manifest itself?—finally, WHY, in both instances?*"

"HE KNOWS!"

And so, at the last we find ourselves just where we started—asking "Why?" but receiving no answer. But, as old Omar said: "*But HE knows it all—HE KNOWS!*" And with that, I, for one, am content—at least for the present. (Yogi Ramacharaka in "The Kalpaka")



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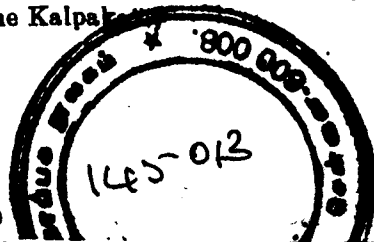
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