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THE OCEAN OF WISDOM

An English bi-monthly devoted to a comparative study of
Religion, Philosophy, Psychology, Ethics and South Indian History.

EDITED BY

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VOL. I

JULY, 1935

No. 4

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PAGANERI CHETTIAR YOUNG MEN'S
TAMIL SANGAM

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The first anniversary of the Tamil Sangam of the Chettiar Youngmen's Tamil Association was celebrated on the 9th and 10th November, 1935, under the presidency of Swami Vedachalam. There was a large gathering of gentlemen and ladies of the locality and also of the places nearby.

On the evening of the 9th, the President was taken in procession to the special pandal put up for the celebration, where the meeting was held. Duly proposed and seconded, Swami Vedachalam took the chair. After the recital of some sacred Tamil hymns, Mr. V. P. P. M. Kasiviswanatha Chettiar presented an address of welcome to the President, and Mr. S. R. Ramaswami Pillai read out an address presented on behalf of the Jawaharlal Reading Room. The President then delivered his introductory speech, dwelling on the kind of education needed for the times. How to preserve and lengthen a healthy life, how to improve social and moral relations, how to acquire an exact knowledge of genuine religion, how to act in bringing about political reforms without adopting any violent measures, formed the chief elements of his speech. These and his advocacy of pure Tamil both in writing and speaking which he himself set as an example not only in his writings but also in his eloquent speech impressed the audience very much.

Vidwan A. Somasundaram Chettiar delivered a lecture in Tamil on "Mahizchi Malar." Mr. A. M. Saravana Mudaliar, Tamil Pandit, Lalgudi High School, also delivered a lecture in Tamil on the life of St. Thiruneelakantar.

SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

On the second day (Nov. 10) the meeting was held at 9 a.m. under the presidency of Swami Vedachalam, when Mr. K. Arumugam Pillai of the S. L. B. High School, Nagarkoil, and Mr. A. Chidambaranatham Chettiar B. A., of the Annamalai College delivered lectures on "Murugan" and "Tamil Child." respectively. After the Chairman's instructive concluding remarks the meeting came to a close.

In the afternoon sitting Mr. N. Sivagurunatha Pillai of Tuticorin, Mr. T. S. Kandaswami Mudaliar B. A., of Sattur and Mr. A. M. Saravana Mudaliar of Lalgudi delivered lectures in Tamil on 'The Universal Aspect of Saiva religion,' on 'The Sacred Kural,' and on 'The Life of St. Thirukkurippudondar,' respectively. And in sum-

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BI-MONTHLY

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MASTER OF THE SACRED ORDER OF LOVE

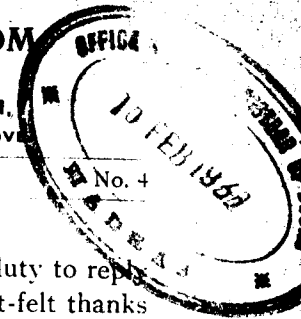
Vol. I

Pallavaram, July, 1935

THANKSGIVING

Before entering on the performance of my duty to reply to my brahmin critics, I must express my heart-felt thanks to the chairman and the members of the Tamil Board of studies of the University of Madras, both for prescribing my "Arivuraikkothu" and "Sakuntala" as Tamil texts for the students preparing for the Intermediate-in-Arts and B. A. examinations and for confirming the former as text-book even after my brahmin critics raised a hue and cry against it and demanded instant removal of it from the list of text-books. My obligation to the Board is really very great, since my life-long interest in the welfare of the Tamil people and my persistent endeavour to reform their present conditon have been greatly aided by the Board by prescribing one of my important books for a careful study and thinking of the Tamil students.

Now, it may be, nay it is, one of the important objects of a university to lead up its students to acquire a genuine scholarship in the language and literature taken up for their study; still it can be only one of the objects but not *the* object of a university. Language is simply the instrument of thought and literature the embodiment of the thoughts, ideas and sentiments of people. How the language of a people formed itself in their midst, how it was and still is used by them constitutes, no doubt, as important a study as that of its literature which reflects their mind as in a mirror. But the teaching and examining work of a university does not end with that, with the mere creation of scholarship in a language and literature with which the worldly affairs of the students are closely bound up. Over and above that, it has a greater and more important function of opening their eyes, to perceive the exact situation in which they themselves are placed as well as the true relation in which they stand to

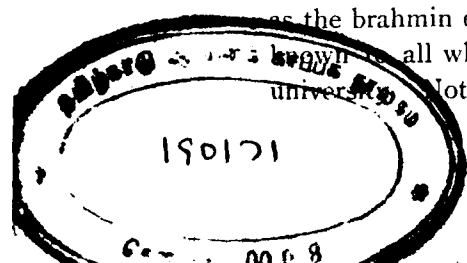


the people of their own community and to the people at large. The most important aid which education of a very useful kind is expected to render to students, is to enable them to detect the evils, the evil tendencies, the defects, and imperfections not only of their own mind but of the minds of the people also amongst whom they are destined to live. Whether a man is good or bad can be known to a degree only when his inclinations of mind come to express themselves in his deeds as he comes into close contact with others. A man and his society, so long as they live together, act and react endlessly upon each other either for good or for evil. Culture of his mind alone cannot carry a man successfully forward unless the light of his culture show the way of well-being to others and help them also to follow him. He may, with the light of his knowledge, strive hard to attain only his own welfare caring little for that of others, but the cold and dreary blast blowing from the uncultured quarters of the Philistines will quickly put it out. It must, therefore, "be our aim in learning" in the words of John Stuart Mill, "not merely to know the one thing which is to be our principal occupation, as well as it can be known, but to do this and also to know something of all the great subjects of human interest." And in the same vein Cardinal Newman also speaks of the aim of a university education; he tells us: "It is, however, in addition, of great secular utility, as constituting the best and highest formation of the intellect for social and political life."

But that this aim of a university to prepare her students for the great struggle in life and instruct them in all subjects of human interest, especially those relating to the social, moral and political conditions of present life, so that their future might be made brighter and better enjoyable, had not been attained by the Madras university, particularly in the department of Tamil studies, so long as the brahmin element predominated in it, is a fact well known to all who are in any way connected with this university. Notwithstanding this fact, a limited number

of non-brahmins who imbibed English education, have slowly risen to eminence overcoming the difficulties created by the brahmins and seeing plainly the miserable condition into which the people and the study of their language had been thrown, have fortunately begun the salutary work of re-organizing and re-modelling the several departments of the government that had been before in the hands of self-interested persons. As a result of this, the Board of Tamil studies has recently had the benefit of being re-constituted on proper lines and an accomplished Tamil gentleman elected as its chairman. But for the reconstituted Board even one or two of my Tamil works would not have had the chance of being put into the hands of the university students.

Within the past forty years I have brought out nearly forty works in Tamil and a few in English that deal with the history, the philosophy, the religion, the aesthetics, etc., of the Tamil people at an immense labour and an enormous cost of more than a lac of rupees, but they could not reach the circle of university students; since to the brahmin officials as well as to some non-brahmins who either curry favour with the brahmins or fear them cowardly and selfishly, my views of caste and religious reforms, my persistent advocacy of pure Tamil composition to a thorough exclusion of Sanscrit words which in recent times have been wantonly introduced into all kinds of Tamil composition at an average rate of 50 per cent, and my comparative estimate of the Aryan and the Tamilian civilisation have all been and still are as unpalatable as bitter pills. Generally the brahmins cannot brook the very idea of reforming the people and bringing enlightenment to them. For reform and enlightenment means the death of brahmin imposture. And therefore it is that anything coming from the pen of a learned non-brahmin which is calculated to reform the people and set them free from the bondage of such deception is imagined by them to touch their interests and is on that account looked upon by them with extreme aversion. Of this intolerant attitude of the



brahmins who form the enthusiastic converts to the Aryan ceremonial cult and the energetic upholders of the Aryan prestige, towards all broad-minded activities of un-Aryan people, none have spoken so truly and impartially as zen-aide Ragozin the able historian of *Vedic India*. He says:

"At a later period the followers of Vasishtha and his descendants represent the narrowly orthodox Brahminic school, with its petty punctiliousness in the matter of forms, rites, observances, its intolerance of everything un-Aryan, its rigid separatism. This school it was which stood guard through all these ages, and up to our day, the champion—and possibly the institutor, of caste; who advanced and upheld all exaggerated claims of the Brahman priesthood, to divinity, to the rule of the world, and ownership of all it holds, to supernatural compelling powers over nature and the gods themselves through sacrifice and ascetic practices, and the like."*

How true every word and letter of this statement is will be plain to all who have a personal and intimate knowledge of the brahmin community which lives in complete seclusion in the midst of millions of Tamil people and maintains its existence there by sucking their lifeblood through various channels opened by means of religion. It is no wonder then that after so long and unyielding an opposition of theirs my *Arivuraikkothu* came to be prescribed as a text-book to the students of the Madras University, should excite the resentment and bitter feelings of the brahmins.

But in fact my *Arivuraikkothu* contains nothing that could do harm either to a brahmin or to a non-brahmin, nor was it written with any intention to please the British government and displease its subjects as has been alleged by a brahmin critic. On the other hand, it is, as its title indicates, a mere collection of instructive essays written long ago at different times and on different occasions with the object of reforming the social, moral, and religious

* *Vedic India*, p. 320.

conditions of the Tamil people. Some of the essays were circulated in thousands in pamphlet-form, and others were published in periodicals. At the request of friends who saw people reforming themselves in the wholesome atmosphere created by the great, unfettered, progressive and humanising ideas which they disseminated, they were brought together and published in a book-form in the year 1921. The people being mostly illiterate it took full ten years for the thousand copies of the first edition to sell, and the second edition with an addition of some more essays was brought out in the year 1931. And now that it is prescribed as a text-book, a third edition has been called for, and it is published with but a few verbal changes, the matter remaining the same as in the second edition.

Though the book is, as a whole, disliked by the brahmins for its being written in a pure and limpid Tamil style free from Sanscrit and other foreign words, the part which aroused their ill-feelings so much is the essay "The Tamils and the Westerners" in which the stagnant and in many cases the degenerating condition of the former is compared with the rapidly advancing and regenerating life of the latter. If it contain anything that misrepresents the actual state of affairs and prejudices the public mind against the brahmins, then the critic should have in all fairness quoted the passages that contain such thing and proved its mischief and unreasonableness. But that he has not done so, that he has simply made such sweeping and untrue statements as might tend to create a bad impression of my work on the minds of both the brahmin and the non-brahmin is evidence sufficient to disclose the biased state of his mind. Following the lead of the first critic, other brahmin critics and brahmin papers also did the same not caring to inquire into the matter deeply and see whether what I wrote in that essay is not true, whether my object in writing it has not been to ameliorate the condition of the people. They cried one and all for instant removal of this book from the list of texts. But fortunately for the people, the unjust, the most selfish,

and the very narrow-minded agitation of the brahmins had not only opened the eyes of the cultured sections of the people all over the country to see clearly how obstinate the brahmins are in barring all reforms but impelled them also strongly to protest against their outcries and vindicate my cause.

Special mention must be made of the first defensive article that appeared in the "Oolien" an influential Tamil weekly in its no. for July, 26, 1935.

And on July, 27, 1935, Mr. T. A. V. Nathan B. A., B. L., the editor of the Tamil bi-weekly "Viduthalai" and the English daily "Justice"—the only organs which espouse the cause of the vast non-brahmin public, and which are, therefore, widely read by it, wrote editorials in the two papers protesting strongly against the wild accusations brought against me and my book. He also published in the two papers almost all the defensive articles and the resolutions of many protest meetings which were held in several important places in southern India and in Bombay and has thereby laid the non-brahmin public under deep obligation to him.

And on August, 14, 1935, in the widely circulated Tamil weekly "Kudi Arasu," there appeared a vigorous article written by that distinguished social worker and founder of "The Self-Respect Movement" Mr. E. V. Ramasami Naicker giving pointed and pertinent answers to almost all the charges brought against my essay. It is highly commendable in Mr. Naicker that he repudiated the false and misleading news circulated by a brahmin critic that I abandoned the Saiva faith and joined the atheistic Self-Respect Movement originated by Mr. Naicker. Nothing can be farther from truth than this false and mischievous report fabricated to prejudice the people against me. I remain as before a staunch theist and Saivite, perhaps now a particle more. Nevertheless, I am not a believer in the coarse, indecent, impure and abominable Puranic myths created by fanatics with a view to catch the fancy of the masses and split them up into

irreconcilable sects, but am strongly so only in the essential principles of the philosophy and religion of the Saiva Siddhanta. Further I have been advocating for more than thirtyfive years both in writing and speaking the same social and religious reforms as those that are being advocated by Mr. Naicker for nearly ten years. That my advocacy of such reforms ante-dates the birth of the Self-Respect Movement some of my writings on the subject, I trust, will bear clear witness to. Great as is my agreement with the reform-views of Mr. Naicker, greater is my disagreement with his views in point of religion, especially the Saiva religion. It is really magnanimous on the part of Mr. Naicker to have stated this fact with candour at the very beginning of his article in which he defended my position so boldly and so very intelligently.

Numerous other articles from the pen of many a learned non-brahmin gentleman and a few from such broad-minded brahmins as Pandit Thimmappier of the Salem College and Mr. S. Kalyanasundara Iyer of Chidambaram who form noble exceptions to the brahmin community, also appeared in "Viduthalai" and "Kudi Arasu" from July 31, 1935 to September 11, 1935. But it would be tedious to mention them all here, notwithstanding my desire to state the notable points in each and acknowledge my indebtedness to them severally.

Of the many protest meetings held in Madras I must make special mention of two grand and crowded meetings convened by the commendable exertions of Mr. C. D. Nayakam, retired deputy registrar of Co-operative Society, and held in August 17 and 24, 1935 in the Pachayappa's College hall, one with Mr. T. A. V. Nathan, B. A., B. L., in the chair and the other with Mr. Rangaramanujam, Bar-at-Law in the chair. And of the meetings held in the moffussil districts, the one convened by Rao Sahib T. V. Umamaheswaram Pillai, B. A., B. L., the great Tamil patriot and the president-founder of the Karanthai Tamil Sangam in Tanjore and the other held in Tinnevely under the presidency of Mr. K. Subramania Pillai, M. A.,

M. L., Tagore Professor of Law and the famous author of many original Tamil prose works, require special mention. To the conveners, presidents, speakers, and others who took an active part in these and other meetings held in Triplicane, Purasapakkam, Perambur, Sivajnanam Park, Chidambaram, Tenkasi, Namakkal, Bombay and other places, I tender my sincere and heart-felt thanks. There are many others who served in this cause merely for the sake of public good but who, for private reasons, do not like their names should be mentioned in this; to one and all of them my deep debt of gratitude I express.

Finally, why I have been keeping quiet so long while the brahmin critics were assailing me and my book and agitating for its removal from the list of university texts, and while a multitude of learned non-brahmins were taking up the gauntlet and answering them in my behalf, requires a little explanation. My book "Arivuraikkothu" has passed through three editions and is in the hands of the reading public for the past 14 years. The president and members of the Board of Studies who selected it as a text must have deemed it useful and instructive to the students. I, therefore, wished to see in what light the criticisms of the brahmins would be viewed by the reading public and the Board and to what conclusion they would come after weighing them impartially in their mind. Moreover I thought it immodest to fight for my own views as if they were the only true ones but left them to be judged by the well-wishers of mankind and see what impression it would make on their minds without my interference in the matter. Now that the vast non-brahmin public and the Board have found my views to be true, sound and salutary, I venture to open my mouth and say what I have to say in answer to the charges laid by the brahmins at my door.

My replies to the criticisms will appear in the next issue.
Vedachalam.

such noble, high and intimate view of God. That they, in fact, had, and still have, as shown by Andrew Lang, a clear and unmistakable notion of the existence of a single Supreme Being is not to be doubted; and yet they do not seem to have discovered fire as constituting the meeting-point through which man's direct communion with God becomes possible.

By the side of savages and ordinary peoples there have always been in all places certain highly developed intelligent individuals who entertain ideas mentally, morally and religiously superior to and different from, those held by ordinary people; and only such had ever been, and still are, the real pioneers of civilisation. And to such people alone is given the rare and subtle faculty to perceive the great truth hidden in nature. No wonder then, that, from the remotest past, only the civilised nations of the world and not others had discovered the grand truth about God, formed the right conception of him and worshipped him through fire. As an instance of this, I may quote an incident from Prof. Haebler's history of the ancient Inca race. Once an Inca prince called Maita Capak ordered the people of the surrounding countries to bring all the images of their gods into the town, under the pretence of celebrating festivities for them. When they had done so, he got all the images broken to pieces and built them into the walls of the great sun-temple, simply to show the people of the helplessness of their gods. This Inca ruler

belonged to the ancient race of Chimu whose civilisation, as shown above, goes back to 5000 B. C.¹ There are many other incidents similar to this, but space and time forbid me to quote them. From what has been shown, it must be apparent that from time immemorial, not only noble and correct conceptions of Nature's truth but a partial recognition of it, in many cases, even low, mean and mistaken notions of it also have been existing side by side.

¹arnsworth History of the World, p. 5849.

CHAPTER V

PERCEPTION OF TRUTH

Then the question would eventually suggest itself to your mind, how came it about for the ancient civilized man to get at the truth, whether it was by instinct or by intuition or by reasoning or by the development of some new mental faculty, or by all these combined together? Our attempt to answer definitely to any one of these questions will involve us in insoluble difficulties of thought; and it, therefore, seems safe to explain the matter by taking mind as a whole and indivisible principle. So long as the development of mind is incomplete, it can know nothing directly of itself without the aid of material means and sense organs both internal and external; that is to say, an imperfect mind can perceive only something directly and some other thing which is beyond the range of its perception indirectly by way of proceeding from what is known to the unknown. In the language of Logic the knowledge acquired indirectly is called inferential. Where any thing can be known directly, the troublesome process of inferring, as being liable to mislead, is willingly dispensed with. By this I do not mean to say that direct perception alone is true and inference misleading. Both are likely to deceive us, if they are not carefully and properly carried on. Yet, if an intelligent use is made of, the one will corroborate

the truth of the other. When mind reaches a high stage of development, its perceptive function is performed quite independently of any inferential process. Substances and occurrences not knowable with the help of sense-organs are oftentimes directly perceived by mind with a wonderful accuracy. The eminent psychologist F. W. H. Myers has given, in his epoch-making work 'Human Personality' (p. 80), the names of several well-known mathematical prodigies who, without the least mechanical means, could work out the most intricate sums in arithmetic and find out the result in a minute. Among them, the case of an uneducated little boy called Dase is the most astonishing of all, for, in the words of Myers, he "received a grant from the Academy of Sciences at Hamburg, on the recommendation of Gauss (another mathematical prodigy from his third year), for mathematical work; and actually in twelve years made tables of factors and prime numbers for the seventh and nearly the whole of the eighth million, a task which probably few men could have accomplished, without mechanical aid, in an ordinary life."¹ As illustrating the remarkable mind-power of Emanuel Swedenborg to perceive things hidden from the perception of average human intellect, Andrew Lang states the following case: "Kant, however, prints one or two examples of Swedenborg's successes. Madame Harteville, widow of the Dutch envoy in Stockholm, was dunned by a silver smith for a

¹ Human Personality, p. 83.

debt of her late husband's. She believed that it had been paid, but could not find the receipt. She therefore asked Swedenborg to use his renowned gifts. He promised to see what he could do, and three days later, arrived at the lady's house while she was giving a tea, or rather a coffee, party. To the assembled society Swedenborg remarked, 'in a cold-blooded way, that he had seen her man, and spoken to him.' The late Mr. Harteville declared to Swedenborg that he had paid the bill, seven months before his decease: the receipt was in a cupboard upstairs. Madame Harteville replied that the cupboard had been thoroughly searched to no purpose. Swedenborg answered that, as he learned from the ghost, there was a secret drawer behind the side-plank within the cupboard. The drawer contained diplomatic correspondence, and the missing receipt. The whole company then went upstairs, found the secret drawer, and the receipt among the other papers. Kant adds Swedenborg's clairvoyant vision from Gothenburg, of a great fire at Stockholm (dated September, 1756)."¹ It is no easy thing to convince such a great sceptic thinker as Kant of the supernatural powers of a man, unless he himself had actual personal experiences for believing them to be true. In the case of Swedenborg a high-developed clairvoyant vision had become an undoubted fact of great spiritual significance, believed not only by himself but also by other great men of his time. Swedenborg himself says

¹ The Making of Religion, p. 26.

that it pleased God to open the sight of his Spirit so that he might see the things in the spiritual world and give a correct account of them¹. It is remarkable that he too declares, "The Divine Life is internally in the fire of the sun of the spiritual world, but externally in that of the sun of the natural world."² So far it is plain that when the human mind arrives at a high stage of development, it acquires the rare and subtle faculty of sounding the depths of nature's mysteries without having recourse to any external means of knowledge. I deem it, therefore, not improbable that the seers amongst the civilized nations of the past had acquired a direct knowledge of the intimate relation in which God and fire exist, not through any reasoning process that we pursue, but quite independently of it; for do we not find even in this scientific age in which the reasoning process has attained its zenith, man remains still powerless to discover this nearness and clear manifestation of God but gropes in its very light like the blind man and expresses mistaken ideas not only about God but also about other important matters connected with it?

¹ God, Creation, Man, p. 19.

² Ibid, p. 34.

CHAPTER VI

SUPREME QUALITY OF THE CONCEPTION

Now coming back to our subject the conception of God as Rudra, I find in it a rare excellence not met with in similar conceptions held in the minds of other ancient nations. No doubt, when they came to speak of their vision of God, they declared that he had appeared in light or descended as fire, but as regards the spiritual form in which he appeared they gave us no any very clear description of it. That only shows some lack still in their mental development. But in the case of ancient Indian seers, the description of God's spiritual form is quite clear, definite and easy to imagine. For Lord Rudra is said to have a spiritual form glowing with red colour. The possession of red colour speaks volumes for his almighty power and grace. Even on this material plane, to the very act of seeing things and distinguishing one from the other, different shades of different colours possessed by each are very essential. In importance colour stands first, while light is only secondary, since light simply illumines the former and does nothing more, whereas colour does all the rest necessary for the acquisition of objective knowledge. Further, light itself does not become visible without some colour, whereas colours exist independently of light.

Now, of all colours having so much vital significance, only two: red and blue, are supremely important, since they are primary; others being merely the blending of the two in varying proportions. Notwithstanding the fact that many scientists hold three colours to be primary, Prof. Helmholtz "the first (scientific) head in Europe since the death of Jacobi" takes only two.¹ As regards the red colour the opinions of the scientists are unanimous; but as regards the other primary colour they disagree. "Young took violet for the other primitive colour," while others take it to be either green or blue; one of the greatest scientists "Maxwell considers that it is more properly blue."² Again, one of the profoundest thinkers and scientific men of the present century, I mean Prof. William James, takes only red and blue as the original colours.³

These two colours signify many vital truths which underlie the workings of both the physical and spiritual forces in nature and which up to this time remain undreamt of even in the domain of science. Let us, therefore, consider the significance which they bear in relation to our subject. All the physical forces in nature may be divided into two classes as heat and cold. Formerly it was thought that heat and light were distinct energies; but now after the most carefully conducted investigations they are considered

¹ Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, vol. I. p. 218.

² Ibid, p. 220, foot-note.

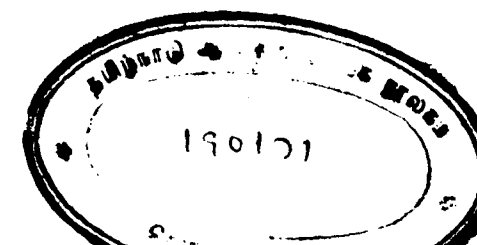
³ Talks to Teachers, pp. 81, 82.

PREFACE

*"The Caiva Siddhanta system is the most elaborate, influential, and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all the religions of India. It is peculiarly the South-Indian, and Tamil religion. * * * Caivism is the old pre-historic religion of South India, essentially existing from Pre-Aryan times, and holds sway over the hearts of the Tamil people"* :—Dr. G. U. Pope in his English translation of the sacred Tamil lyrics, the *Thiruvachakam* of the great Saiva Saint Manickavachakar, p. lxxiv.

The above extract expresses the just estimate arrived at by that great Christian missionary and profound Tamil scholar Dr. G. U. Pope as regards the intrinsic merit and high antiquity of the Saiva Siddhanta the religion and philosophy of the Tamil people. Most of his active period of life Dr. Pope spent in the heart of the Tamil country moving intimately with all classes of the Tamil people and learning at first-hand not only their beliefs, customs and manners but also their ancient classics such as *Thirukural*, *Purananooru*, *Silappadhikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Palamoli*, *Naladiyar*, *Periapuranam*, *Sivajnanabodham*, and others. His erudition in Tamil was equal to, and in some respects even exceeded, the erudition of great native scholars. So his impartial estimate of the Saiva Siddhanta, coming as it does from a great western scholar who com-

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bined in himself the culture of both west and east, might, by being prefixed to this preface of the following work of mine on Saivism, serve well to impress its value and importance on the minds of those learned Indians and Europeans to whom it is a sealed book. For the modern philosophic and religious thought in the east and the west is so strongly coloured either by the atheistic system of the Buddhists or by the pantheistic system of Sankara and his cult, except where the most wholesome teachings of Professor William James have pervaded, that almost all lines of inquiry either into the realm of matter or into the realm of spirit, might be said, without exaggeration, to end themselves either in a materialistic monism or in an idealistic monism; that is to say, they affirm simply that in the end (the end of what is not clear from what they affirm) there exists nothing but what appears to be a form of energy whether you call it matter or spirit.

In whatever way this kind of monism so stubbornly held in the teeth of all human experience, may seem to satisfy certain "tough-minded" people, certain it is that it cannot satisfy the cravings of the "tender-minded" people, as the two types, namely the monists and the pluralists, have been so pertinently called by Prof. James. We who live in the world of both mind and matter, we who acquire all our knowledge and experience by our contact with so many intelligent beings higher and lower, with so many products of matter which minister unto our wants, cannot rest content with such a nameless and formless and therefore such an incomprehensible monism, but

need a system which would meet our wishes and aspirations in entire harmony with our past and present experiences.

While our worldly experience is thus many-sided, it has yet a unity that underlies all its variety. In the words of James, "It is both one and many," and therefore "let us adopt a sort of pluralistic monism."* Now the Saiva Siddhanta furnishes us with such a *pluralistic monism* as is evident from the following quotation taken from one of the fourteen authoritative works in Tamil which treat of the Saiva Siddhanta system. According to this system, "There are six entities which have no beginning. The first of these is the Lord (Pathi) Who is One. The second is the aggregate of all Souls (Pacu) with their undeveloped potentialities of thought and act, interpenetrated by a divine but hidden influence. The third is the impurity of Anavam wearing the form of darkness. The fourth is twofold deeds (Vinai). The fifth and sixth are the two kinds of Mayai, the pure and impure the substratum and material of the phenomenal universe."†

In the following work which contains the essence of my lectures delivered at different places and on different occasions, I have given to the best of my ability a clear and rational exposition of the views of the Saiva Siddhanta relating to the six entities enumerated above. For the

* *Pragmatism*, p. 13. † Taken from Dr. G. U. Pope's translation of the *Thiruvartupayan*; see his *Translation of the Thiruvachakam*, p. li.

guidance of my readers I will give here a succinct explanation of the six categories.

Saivism is strictly a monotheistic religion holding that only as God which is truth, intelligence, and bliss, which is above births and deaths, which is all love and grace towards all individual souls, which is distinct from both matter and finite selves and yet dwells within them and without and is ever active in bringing the souls out of darkness and setting them in its light and beatitude. It calls God by the name of *Sivam*, simply because this term specifies the essential quality of God which is pure love, pure bliss. In later times many more gods such as Subramanya, Ganesa, Veerabhadra and others were adopted into its fold but none of the founders of the Saiva religion held any one as God except Siva. In the ten collections of the sacred hymns or Thirumurai sung by St. Thirujnanasambandha, St. Appar, St. Sundarar, St. Manickavachakar and others, there is not a single hymn sung in praise of any god other than Siva. And in each and every temple of Siva, his only true emblem the Sivalinga is set up in the central shrine as the pre-eminent object of first worship, while the images of all other gods are quartered around the central sanctuary and offered only subordinate places and ordinary worship. Thus you find that not only do the ancient sacred literature of Saivism but the very construction of its temples and the pre-eminent form of worship daily offered in them to Siva also bear indisputable testimony to the monotheistic character of the Saiva religion.

According to Saivism God is as remote and transcendent as he is near and personal. Though his nature is one, it appears to be twofold to the finite conception of the individual minds, just as the sun which appears to our naked eyes like a small bright disc, is, in reality, immense in its size and thus seems to present two aspects to our perception and conception. As has been so well pointed out by Prof. James in the lecture on Philosophy in his epoch-making work: "The Varieties of Religious Experience," "that the transcendentalist reasonings fail to make religion universal," this incomprehensible and inconceivable aspect of God can never appeal to a devout mind that is thirsting after to obtain at least a glimpse of his presence and personality. In so far as God is will, intelligence and freedom, he cannot be an unfeeling, unintelligent and impersonal existence. Nowhere is the personal aspect of God which is in vital relation with all living beings is so strongly emphasized as in Saivism. Since he is in and near every vital being and is helping them all to develop their faculties of thought and feeling, life is held in it so sacred that taking it away from a man or a beast is looked upon by it as an unpardonable and sacrilegious crime. Hence the very word Saivism has come to be applied to a vegetarian mode of living also.

Now, it is this hankering of the human mind after the living personal relation of God to itself that has prompted it to feel deeply the need of setting up a physical image before its outer eyes as a means of setting up a cor-

responding mental image before its inner eyes. For all our knowledge of anything consists in bringing into our mind a mental image corresponding to that particular physical thing and storing it up permanently in our memory for after use. Blot that image out of your mind or forget it altogether and you thereby lose the knowledge of it also once for all. In fact, a man of vast knowledge is distinguished from another man of small knowledge only by his power of forming in his mind as well as of fixing on his memory myriads of distinct mental images corresponding exactly to the forms of physical objects which he was observing attentively and noting carefully. This psychological law pertaining to the formation and development of the human mind must disclose to us the necessity of keeping before our eyes an image made of clay or wood, stone or any mineral matter for the sake of raising up in our mind a clear image of God corresponding to it. For, is it not utterly impossible for us to conceive of an object that we have not previously seen or heard, touched or smelled or tasted? It is the deep-felt longing of the human mind for a concrete thing to meditate upon that has brought into existence a multitude of temples not only in the Tamil country where its number is comparatively very large but also in other ancient civilized countries such as Egypt, Babylonia, Chaldea in the west, and Mexico and Peru in the east. We cannot close this part of our subject relating to idol-worship better than in the words of Dr. Edward Caird taken from his masterly treatment of "The Evolution of Religion." His words run as follows:-

"To represent God as a mere object is, as we have seen, to express the divine in an inadequate form, in a form that, at least, cannot be made fully adequate to the idea; for the principle of unity in all objects and subjects cannot be properly represented as one object among others. But, at the same time, it is also true that in some sense the whole is involved in every part of the universe, and therefore any part of it may for a time be taken as a type of the whole. * * * When the spiritual cannot yet be separated from the natural, it is of the highest importance that the natural object which represents the spiritual should be, as it were, transfigured by the imagination, so that it may, so far as possible, symbolically take the place of the spiritual."*

Viewed in this light how significant is the worship paid to Sivalinga in the great temples that burst so magnificently on the sight of the travellers all over the south of India, must become apparent to all who have a right-thinking mind. I cannot pursue the treatment of this topic farther in a short preface like this. For a detailed explanation of the origin and meaning of the Sivalinga-worship the reader is referred to my Tamil lectures on "The Image-worship" and "Sivalinga" and to my English lecture on "The Conception of God as Rudra."

Now, as to the second entity of the Saiva Siddhanta: "The aggregate of all Souls." From the tiniest and the most simple unicellular organism called *protoplasm* to the highest and the most complex organism called man there

* Dr. E. Caird's "The Evolution of Religion," vol. 1, p. 227.

exist from all eternity countless individual souls each having a distinct character of its own and each undergoing different degrees of development in accordance with its nature, capacity and effort. All these souls are not the principles created out of nothing according to some religions, nor are they the splintered pieces of God itself according to some other religions, nor do they constitute so many evolved centres of unintelligent matter according to some material sciences, nor could they be pure fictions imagined in the infinite absolute according to some rank idealism. On the other hand, they are as eternal as God and not even a single soul could, by any known or unknown power or process, be reduced into nothing nor could any one of them be transmuted into any other of the group. According to the Saiva Siddhanta, and "the pluralistic, as according to the Leibnizian view," says Dr James Ward in his remarkable *Gifford Lectures*, "all the individuals there are have existed from the first and will continue to exist indefinitely."* And the same authority, like the Siddhanta, holds tenaciously to the view that "individuals who have no 'doubles,' whose like all in all we never shall meet again."† In upholding the eternal reality of individual souls Dr. F. C. S. Schiller has said even more emphatically as follows:

"The ultimate self-existence of spirits, the doctrine that existences are many, spirits uncreated, uncaused, that are and ever have been and can never cease to be, is the

* *The Realm of Ends*, p. 204.

† *Ibid.*, p. 18.

cannot be indifferent to him, and that the doctrine of real kinds is metaphysically false."*

In spite of this demonstrated fact of science, some idealistic monists of the neo-Vadantic school still passionately cling to the doctrine which asserts that all the mental and material phenomena passing before us are not so many variant and distinct realities but are mere shadows or reflections of an Absolute Being which alone is real. This too is a mere assertion, for according to which you cannot have any means of proving it, since all that is known is unreal and only that which is unknown is real. If all that we experience is unreal, then, let me ask 'Who are you that argue thus please? If you are as you say an unreal phantom of an unknown something, why should we, who do not believe that we are such phantoms, believe you any more than any phantom of a dream? Why argue about the incomprehensible being of which you claim to be the inexplicable reflection?' Such questions must inevitably be suggested to every thinking mind by this idealistic monism. We cannot evade them by eloquent preaching, or by quoting scriptural texts, or by claiming the authority of the learned over the unlearned. These ob-

* Formal Logic, pp, 56, 57. Dr. Schiller expounded the same fact long ago in his Riddles of the Sphinx, p. 358. thus: "In the interpretation, therefore, of our world Pluralism is supreme; it is the only possible and relevant answer to the ultimate question of ontology. It is only by asserting existence to be ultimately many that we can satisfy the demands either of the Real or of the Ideal. And it is a mere prejudice to suppose that there is any intrinsic difficulty in the ultimate existence of many individuals; for the conception of ultimate existence is no more difficult in the case of many than of one."

jections will continue to arise in the mind of every one who confronts the hard problems and severe life-struggles that are ceaselessly going on within and without himself.

Another weak point in the doctrine of the idealistic monism is that it speaks of its absolute and transcendent being in the language of matter. We have seen visible and tangible substances casting shadows and reflections. Even among material substances those that are invisible like air and ether do not cast either shadows or reflections. How, then, can the incomprehensible Absolute, which is an immaterial, and consequently invisible and intangible being, throw out such despicable shadows and reflections as ourselves and our surroundings? To get over this difficulty he has created, the idealist has no other means but to create a further and still greater difficulty which too is contrary to all our experience. He says that all these individual selves, their bodies and surroundings being mere illusions, have no real existence of their own and as such do not affect the transcendent Absolute in the least, even if it is spoken of in the terms of matter. This view of the idealists undermines the very fundamentals of knowledge, since he who strives to know the Absolute is as illusory as is the process of his knowing. Consequently his position must end in the same despair and ignorance as it was at the beginning. As I have already given a detailed criticism of this view, I would now pass by it by quoting the opinion on this subject of a great living authority in philosophy, Prof. Eucken. He states in his great work on *Life's Basis and Life's Ideal*: "From being a life penetrating

power Pantheism becomes more and more a vague disposition; indeed an empty phrase. The living whole, which in the beginning raised things to itself, has finally become a mere abstraction which cannot hold its ground before vigorous thought. Thus, with an immanent dialectic, such as historical life often enough shows, the movement, since it strove for breadth, has been destroyed in its life-giving root; it has abandoned the basis from which it derived its truth and power. Immanent Idealism shows itself to be one great contradiction; a fascinating illusion, which, instead of reality, presents us with mere appearance."^{*}

Then, there is the formidable theory of the materialistic monists who exult in reducing all mind and matter to what they call 'energy' or 'force.' It is not at all plain how one can think of energy apart from the matter which produces it. By a most difficult and hard exercise of thought we may hope to abstract force from matter and imagine it to have a separate existence but whether we will succeed in it is the point at issue. Whenever we try to form an idea of motion, we are unconsciously led to bring into our mind the picture of a moving vehicle, or a running horse. For, we acquire knowledge and experience only by observing the qualities and movements of particular things. Though the growth of knowledge consists in generalising into abstract principles the actions and attributes of individual objects similar to each other, yet the images of these individual objects arise distinct in our mind by law of association, so inseparably bound up with their actions

^{*} *Life's Basis and Life's Ideal*, p. 21.

and attributes that it is absolutely impossible for us to conceive of them as two independent sets. When we try to think of beauty, we invariably think of it as it exists in a beautiful person, or in a fine painting, or in a fresh blown rose. When the thought of intelligence, or of virtue enters our mind, the image of an intelligent man, or of a loving friend, or of a charitable person appears in intimate union with it. The process of thought is such and such is the constitution of mind in every human being that he cannot hope to achieve his mental development otherwise than in this prescribed manner. In the words of John Stuart Mill: "The general propositions, whether called definitions, axioms, or laws of nature, which we lay down at the beginning of our reasonings, are merely abridged statements, in a kind of short hand, of the particular facts, which, as occasion arises, we either think we may proceed on as proved, or intend to assume." He continues, "All inference is from particulars to particulars: General propositions are merely registers of such inferences already made, and short formulae for making more."* From this it must be apparent to you that the meaning of the abstract term 'energy or force' cannot be conceived of except as it is found either in mind or in matter. "How," we may ask with Dr. James Ward, "can the bodies of abstract dynamics be conceived as merely geometrical figures moving according to rule, if they are collectively endowed with all the forces of nature: gravitation, light, heat, electricity, chemical attraction, etc? What are these if they

* *Mill's Logic*, p. 126.

are not the active properties of material bodies?"* As the great scientist Clerk Maxwell has said, "that wherever magnetic force exists, there is matter"†, the theory of the materialistic monists who say that inasmuch as all mind and matter are reducible to a single form of energy, there must ultimately exist only energy or force, should be given up as a forgone conclusion.

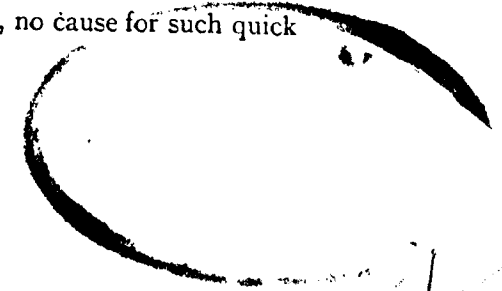
Even granting it to be true that mind and matter in their ultimate form exist as mere energy, we are not precluded from making a correct estimate of its nature and constitution. When a visible and tangible substance changes into an invisible and intangible form, its existence is not easily ascertainable except by its action on other bodies. For instance, so long as oxygen and hydrogen appear in their combined form as water, we can see and feel them; but when they are separated, they immediately change into a subtle gaseous form which we can neither see nor feel; but we can detect their existence by bringing a red-hot splinter near the mouth of the tube in which oxygen has been collected; when so brought the splinter at once bursts into flame. But if you take the same splinter near the mouth of the other tube in which hydrogen is, it is not re-kindled. Instead of a red-hot piece of wood, if you bring a lighted candle to the mouth of this tube, the gas itself is lighted and it burns with a pale, blue flame. By such means, we are enabled to apprehend the existence of oxygen, hydrogen and other gases, though to our naked eyes these seem to be an empty void. So far it is

* *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, p. 60. † *Ibid*, p. 128.

manifest that the existence and characteristics of different substances in their subtle state, can be ascertained only by their different modes of action upon other visible and tangible things. Now I think it would be easy for us to extend the range of our mental vision either to a remote past or to a distant future in which this whole universe remained in or will dissolve into, a subtle form which might be best described only by the term 'energy' or 'force.' Still that energy, I think I am justified in saying, must be not a single undifferentiated unit existing quite independently of both matter and spirit, but simply a subtlest form of the two comprehending within its area all the manifold elements that have already come and still to come to our knowledge. All that is found in the effect must, as a law of necessity, lie in the cause, but of course in a subtle and latent form. That is the tenet held by our Saint Meikandan. To obtain an accurate knowledge of a certain cause, you must proceed to study not the cause itself but its effects. The value of this procedure can best be illustrated by a golden saying of Lord Jesus: By their fruits shall ye know them and not by their roots. A good number of seeds different in kinds and characters are so similar in their shape and size that they defy detection even by practised eyes. But when they are sown in the ground, they grow into different varieties of plants and trees and yield fruits greatly varied in colour, size and shape, taste and smell. Only then are you able to say what sorts of plants and trees they were. Similarly when all transform into a subtle seed-like state, we are justified in inferring that all the

variations palpable in their solid, liquid and gaseous conditions must exist there in so finest a form transcending our conception that we can best describe them only by their action which a vague, indefinite and indistinct term as 'energy' or 'force' is best fitted to express. Thus interpreted in the light of Saiva Siddhanta, even the theory of the materialistic monists may be made to acquire a new and pregnant significance and harmonize with the fundamental principles of practical knowledge. Except on this interpretation, the theory of the materialistic monists, too, being inexplicable from the practical and scientific point of view and on that account quite arbitrary, must be left behind as useless to guide us to a right understanding of the facts of life and nature.

But physiologists may, here, step in and affirm thus: 'Without brain, mind is never seen to play its part independently; when the brain is in proper working order, when it is able to act upon the various stimuli received from outside, consciousness originates; if any slight injury occurs to it or if the strong influence of some intoxicating thing is brought to bear upon it, all consciousness vanishes; and is it not then quite clear that mind is simply a function of brain and nothing more, and with the destruction of this organ is destroyed irretrievably the mind also?' In answer to this, I wish to call your attention to the momentous fact recently brought to light in some of the American hospitals, concerning certain cases of sudden deaths in which, after very careful and minute post mortem examinations of dead bodies, no cause for such quick

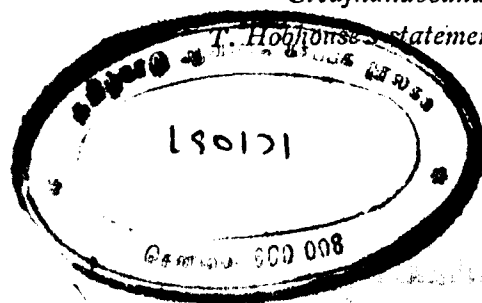


extinction of life was discernible either in brain or any other vital organs of the body. The whole body and all its parts were in thorough good order and in perfectly workable condition; still there was no life in it. How do you account for such a strange phenomenon on a purely physiological principle? The vehicle was there in excellent order but the driver left it owing to some mysterious cause not within the reach of the physiologist's ken.

But it may be asked why consciousness is affected when brain goes wrong. To this our St. Meikandan would answer by stating simply "Because the soul is set within this engine-like body."* By this compendious answer he means that the individual soul is not the maker of this complex machine, since he is plunged in ignorance, but it was made for him by a Supreme Being of perfect intelligence and given him so that he may attain knowledge by making a careful use of it, by preserving it, by paying close attention to the wonderful adjustments of all its parts and how all of them work together to produce results desired by him.† If soul be the maker of it, he can set it right when it goes wrong, and remain unaffected by its disorder. But he is not so; his mind is eternally blinded by the darkness of an evil principle and for the very removal of this darkness and for illuminating his intellect, will and emotion, he stands in sore need of this marvellous mechanism. It is no wonder, then, that he becomes affected when the organism gets into disorder. This may be made very clear

* *Sivajnanabodham, 3rd Sutra.* † *Compare Prof. L.*

I. Hobbhense's statement in Mind in Evolution, p. 14.



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ming up the lectures in his concluding speech the swami pointed out the notable points in each lecture and illuminated them with his own interesting and instructive remarks. On this occasion the Sangam's present of a gold medal and an address of appreciation to Vidwan A. Somasundaram Chettiar were given away by Swami Vedachalam.

Then messages of goodwishes received from Mr. R. P. Sethu Pillai B. A., B. L., of the Annamalai University and several others were read out. After a vote of thanks by Mr. M. M. Sathappa Chettiar, the celebration came to a close.

On the two days about 2,000 poor people were fed by public funds collected by the Sangam. V. S. Moorthi.

Swami Vadachalam's Address *(Continued from no. 2)*

Rarely indeed can we find contemporary poets, especially of the East, appreciating and acknowledging the merits of one another. Green-eyed jealousy would usually play its full role. As such, the greatness of Tirukkural is only enhanced by the uniform praise that had been showered upon it by the contemporary poets. Would you believe it when I say that one contemporary poet went to the extent of questioning the wisdom of those who would try to whisper in a derogatory manner that Valluvar belonged to a lowly clan.

FRUIT OF RESEARCH

"Research has established the lower limit of Tiruvalluvar's age as the first century A. D. Let me explain briefly how the great epic Manimekalai, was written simultaneously with Silappathikaram another great classic, during the days of Chera Senguttuvan. Kocla Vanikan Sathanar, the author of Manimekalai being the favourite poet of King Pandiyan Nedunchelian, Ilango requested him to record the story of Kovalan and Kannaki in verse. But Sathanar wrote and finished the story of Manimekalai, the daughter of Kovalan born to him through his second wife Mathavi. In this work he referred to Tiruvalluvar, the author of the Tirukkural, as the Poet that uttered no falsehood and who sang:

"No God adoring, low she bends before her lord:

Then rising, serves: the rain falls instant at her word!"

"There is no doubt that Silappathikaram was written in the second century A. D. St Tiruvalluvar should have lived before the age of Silappathikaram. My long research has led me to the conclusion that Valluvar should have been born thirty years before Christ.

THE SAIVA SIDDHANTA JNANA BODHAM
IN TAMIL, THIRD EDITION,

(Lectures on the religion and Philosophy of the Saiva Siddhanta)
320 pages; price Rs 3

This important work contains nine Tamil lectures delivered by Swami Vedachalam at different times and on different occasions on some of the most important subjects belonging to the Saiva religion and philosophy. The importance of Saivism to the human welfare, its great value to the human understanding is not recognized at present even by the Tamils who are the real inheritors of this ancient wisdom of their great forefathers. The reason for this is that as the influence of the brahmins the enthusiastic converts to the Aryan ceremonial cult and pantheistic philosophy began to spread among the Tamils from the 16th century A. D., down to the present time, the study of Tamil language and literature has been discouraged and its place been usurped by the study of Sanscrit. Although the people do not know a bit of this dead language, the brahmins have managed with tact to introduce Sanscrit when performing rites and ceremonies at homes and when offering worship in temples, and thrust out Tamil as unfit for all such sacred functions. When one thinks of the wonderful submissiveness with which the people have been made to accept this reproach to their own great language Tamil, even while they persist in not holding any temple as sacred which is not celebrated in the sacred Tamil hymns of the ancient Saiva Saints, the art of the brahmins looks really astonishing. It is this state of things that explains the neglect into which the study of the Siddhanta has fallen.

But fortunately for the Tamils the author of the above work has revived the study of the Siddhanta by bringing its fundamental principles under elaborate scientific treatment and creating a permanent interest in it in the minds of people. The fruit of his forty years' labour in this field is stored up in this great book. Further, it is written in a pure, clear, vigorous, and eloquent Tamil style which is peculiar to the author.

Contents: The intrinsic merit of Saiva religion, The true principles of Hinduism, The comprehensiveness of Saiva religion, The Personality of God, Love to all living beings, The two lights of Saivism, The worship through symbols, The true significance of Sivalinga, and The meaning of the dance of Siva. *Kanagarayan.*