

1075

THE BHARATA DHARMA.

VOL. XIII

NO. 10



JAN - 1936

23

THE Bharata Dharma

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

—The Official organ of the Arya Mata Sabha—

[The Sabha is however, not responsible for opinions or arguments published in this magazine unless they are contained in a signed statement.]

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

VOL. XIII]

JANUARY, 1936

[NO. 10]



ceremonies

गुरुमूले वृद्धा शिष्या गुरुर्युवा । गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ॥
चित्रे

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

PUBLISHED ON THE 15TH OF EVERY MONTH AT "MORYALAYA", ROYAPETTAH.

Editorial Office. 'SOUNDARYA', Pilatope, Mylapore, Madras.

Yearly : India, Rs. 2 ; Foreign. 4s. Single No. : India, As. 3 ; Foreign. 4d.

CONTENTS.

	Page
THE ENGLISH EDUCATED HINDU'S DUTY TO HINDUISM By C. V. Krishnaswami Ayyar	257
OUR MANTRAS AND SAMSKARAS By M. B. Varadaiyangar B.A. B.L.,	265
MODERN SCIENCE IN THE UPANISHADS By N. S. Arunachala Aiyar, B.A. L.T.	272
REVIEW	275
WANIED, A COMMON PRAYER FOR HINDUS By K. V. Sessa Aiyangar	276
THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS DAY By K. V. S.	279

FEDERATED INDIA.

AN ALL-INDIA WEEKLY

With an influential circulation in British Provinces and Indian States, full of interesting articles on all topical affairs. **Subscription : Rs. 5**
per annum only. An Excellent medium for high class advertisements.
For contract rates apply to : **MANAGER,**

FEDERATED INDIA, Tondiarpet, Madras.

Advertise in The Bharata Dharma. It circulates widely in India and Burmah, and has subscribers in England, Kanya, New York U. S. A., Holland, Australia, South Africa, Malaya, Mauritius and Fiji—Besides individual subscribers it is placed on the tables of over sixty clubs, public libraries, reading rooms, schools and colleges—An excellent means of advertising. For terms apply to the manager. MORYALAYA, ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS.

THREE RENOWNED SPECIALITIES
of Ayurveda Vidwan

Poo Pundi

BALAX

Safe laxative pills. Bottle As. 2

Es'kaepée

Checks cold, fevers and infections. Bottle As. 2.
USEFUL IN DELIVERY.

GINGEHIP

Pleasant carminative and digester. Bottle As. 2.
N.B.—Remit As. Ten for one in each.

Rs. 2-8 0 for six in each post free. No V.P.P.

Sole Agents:—United Concern, 54, Bunder Street, Madras.

"NANJANGUD TOOTH-POWDER"

Radiates dental sunshine and health. Anna one (Medicated) As. 4.



VOL. XIII]

JANUARY, 1936

[No. 10

THE ENGLISH EDUCATED HINDU'S DUTY TO HINDUISM.

BY C. V. KRISHNASWAMI AYYAR.

By far the supreme quest which the English educated Hindu mind has yet to engage itself in is the quest eternal—the search for the Reality. Several decades ago, at the close of the last century, Frederick Myers gave expression to the surprise, which all rational minds must have felt, that Humanity had not applied to a search which most concerned it—the search for the things of the spirit—the methods which it applied successfully in all other fields of enquiry. Reason and the scientific method had been, for some not easily understood cause, considered inapplicable to such a quest, not only in the hands of the ordinary individual but even when the investigation was by highly intelligent minds. Scriptures began to be cited to show that such application would be fruitless. Some went so far as to declare that such use was wicked and sinful. Even when, in the middle of the 19th century, this age-old taboo was disregarded the results were only negative. Agnosticism became the fashion, but it led nowhere; and the scientists who never said "Impossible" in other fields and never wearied of fresh expeditions practically threw up the sponge in this matter. In the result, the educated Hindus tossed between this attitude of the emancipators of his intellect and the blind allegiance of his ancestors of the immediate past, neglected his great spiritual heritage. Though his women folk and he himself, often in the sly, kept up the outer forms and ceremonies, he deprived himself of that peace that passeth all understanding which mere morality or forms cannot give but comes only by contact with the Reality. What avails all other knowledge if the knowledge of that Reality is not attained? It is often asked whether the existence of such a Reality can be proved by what is now called the scientific method. Some say yes, and some say, no. To those whose bump of faith is sufficiently developed, it is a matter of indifference what the correct answer is. They will not be losers even if rationalism fails. But one of the results of English education is the shattering of mere faith. Every day students in

our colleges are encouraged by their professors to think, argue, test, experiment. It is idle to ask them to adopt a different method of satisfying themselves as to the truth in this matter. The quest if not actively pursued leads to indifference which results in the "dry-rot" of their moral and intellectual life. It is that danger that makes it necessary to renew the quest again and again. The English educated Hindu is, in my opinion, peculiarly fitted to pursue it. He has the knowledge of the correct method and just that much of speculative intuition-inherited and racial-which is necessary to make the application of that method fruitful. It is perhaps the utter absence of that instinct or intuition that has led the Western intellect into a blind alley in that matter, for, as has been well said, though the testing of a hypothesis is always the working of reason, that which first suggests a possible hypothesis is most often the result of intuition. Otherwise, there is no reason why when two scientists have the same set of facts before them, one discovers a hypothesis which leads to the formulation of a scientific truth while the other continues groping in the dark as to where those facts lead. There is another reason for the failure of the West in that sort of enquiry. It has been said by a scientist himself that there is some such thing as scientific prejudice which results in the enquirer asking for really more proof in these matters than in the case of physical sciences, and in sometimes denying obvious facts. Centuries of blind faith though otherwise harmful may have a beneficent result in India and it will be no surprise if it lessens the rigour of this kind of prejudice. If there is no such prejudice and if there is a real anxiety to reach the truth, I venture to think that the existence of the Reality can be proved by the scientific method as much as any other fact which Science claims that it has proved.

What is this *Reality* which is to be sought. That it is not an anthropomorphic extra-cosmic Entity is now conceded even by those who are, like Bishop Gore, passionate believers in God. The best description that I can give of that not easily definable Entity is "that mind, power, intelligence, of which the Universe, material and spiritual, is the manifestation and of which man's spirit is a part or a reflection". What is this *scientific method*? It consists of four parts; firstly, there is the gathering and observation of certain similar facts. Secondly, there is the enunciation of certain hypothesis relating to them. Thirdly, there is the testing of that hypothesis by applying it to *all* the facts observed, sometimes by inference, sometimes by experiment. Fourthly comes the enunciation of the hypothesis with or without modification as a rule of science.

Before I answer this question as to how far the Reality can be reached in that way I wish to make two preliminary observations. Firstly, the fact that you cannot make any experiment in respect of a theory or hypothesis in the manner in which it is done in Physics or Chemistry is not a bar to the acceptance of a scientific proposition. If that be so, most astronomical truths cannot be accepted. Secondly, even that aspect and part of scientific method was not unknown to the Hindu mind. That the Hindus were familiar with experiments of the sort which is dear to the Western mind will be seen by a reference to our ancient books. As an example, I may mention Udayana's experiment relating to the weight of air. Trying to prove that air had no weight he showed how a small bladder made of thin membrane filled with air did not cause a greater descent in the scale than the same bladder when empty. This experiment was used to prove that Earth and Air were separate *bhutas*, and not one. The conclusion arrived at may or may not be correct, but it shows none the less that the Hindu scientist was capable of testing and anxious to test truths by methods other than mere speculation and inference.

The argument of "design", "beauty" and "purposefulness" of the Universe as we see it is well known. The inference drawn from them, is, that they show the existence of a super-human power or intelligence. That argument is fairly-old and so I do not dwell on it. I however request attention to four new lines of approach to this question which have become prominent in recent times. They may be called briefly, the astronomical, the physical, the psychical, and psychological indications. Under the first of these headings falls what is known as Bode's Law in Astronomy. Let us take the figure 0 first and 30 after it, and go on doubling the later figures. We get 0, 30, 60, 120, 240, 480, 960, 1920, 3840, etc., Add 40 to each of these and we get 40, 70, 100, 160, 280, 520, 1000, 1960, 3880. There are eight principal planets viz. Mercury, Venus, The Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Few, however, know a very significant fact about the distances of each of these from the Sun. It has been found that Mercury is 39, Venus is 72, Earth 100, Mars 150, Jupiter 520, Saturn 950, Uranus 1920, Neptune 3000 millions of miles distant from it. Compare the two sets of figures and it will be seen that there is a remarkable agreement between them except in the case of Neptune. The figure 280 in the middle agrees fairly well with the mean distance of all the small planets or asteroids revolving between Mars and Jupiter. Is this not as good proof of an intelligence behind our universe, as one gets of any fact in several other departments of science.

At any rate it is a fairly attractive line of enquiry and to what more fruitful use can the intellect of India be put than to carry it on further.

Again, take the physical basis of our universe. Scientists are now agreed that the ultimate basis of it all is energy, in fact, *matter* is now said to be only a manifestation of energy called electrons and its subdivisions. This has entirely cut the ground under the feet of the mechanical theory of the universe. If matter as such goes, what remains? Something immaterial, which, it is conceded, acts according to certain definite rules and not aimlessly. Has this not got us very near the idea of a non-material intelligence of which this Universe is but a manifestation.

Let us pass on to the psychic side. Hundreds of cases of true psychic phenomena in which the existence of something which survives the physical body of man have been gathered. At one time the scientists refused to believe in the accuracy of these phenomena. But now, it must be said to their credit, that attitude has changed, and it is conceded that some instances of apparitions of the dead and dying, communications from the dead tested by cross-correspondence and appearance of the living in places far away from where their physical body lies have been proved as well as any other fact. Some of them have been, as in the case of experiments in physical and chemical sciences, produced under test-conditions, and they challenge explanation. The more rational explanation of these is the survival of the human personality which makes the existence of a universal intelligence postulated along with it for ages, more credible. The scientist however will not yield so easily. The explanation now offered for these phenomena is that they are due to "fourth dimension" and "ectoplasm" for whose existence there is no better evidence than for the existence of the spirit apart from the human body. Why then prefer them to the ages-old belief?

Passing on to the psychological evidence, no one discovery in the realm of psychology has attracted more attention in recent times than that of what is called "*Subliminal consciousness*" or the "subconscious mind". Freud and others have made it the basis of nearly all aspects of human conduct. That sub-conscious mind is said to be the repository of knowledge far beyond what is acquired in the present life and it is also said that it inspires conduct which is altogether inexplicable if regard is had only to the circumstances of one's past in the particular body he or she now has. Where did he or she get that knowledge? What is the source of such inspiration? A fairly reasonable explanation of it all will be that they come from past lives and from the accumulation of

experience made then—in other words they point to the truth of doctrine of transmigration of human personality. The orthodox scientists have practically no explanation to offer except to say that it is due to the sub-conscious mind—which takes one nowhere. The theory of transmigration makes the existence of personality apart from the body or phenomenal world extremely likely. I may here refer to a peculiarity of the rational mind in such investigations. The theory transmigration of souls and the doctrine of Karma go together. Karma done in past lives has been stated to be the explanation of genius, of difference in birth-conditions, and in the mental and physical capacities of human beings, and of evil and suffering which exist indisputably. It is however said, even by those who admit its usefulness in that way that that doctrine is not scientifically proved. A recent writer said of it: "That it is more than a theory cannot be asserted or *proved*". That is a fair example of the Western rationalistic attitude in regard to spiritual problems. It may well be asked how "the doctrine of Evolution" so dear to the scientist more is than "a theory" in the sense in which that critic used that term. How is it better "proved"? If the doctrine of karma is not to be accepted because the *origin* of any one's karma is unexplained and is said to be *Anadi*, Darwin's theory should be thrown overboard because it does not explain the origin of *life* or the origin of the Universe. His theory merely postulates life and universe and then explains what has occurred afterwards. Even in later stages it has a "missing link". Yet scientists and scientifically minded men who take Darwin's theory as a proved rule and work on it would ask for more proof as regards the doctrine of Karma.

The four lines of thought that I have indicated briefly are worth-pursuing and I hope that they will be taken up by the English educated Hindu scientists and that, at no distant time, it will be their glory to have demonstrated to this world that the Indian intellect has lost nothing of the power that has made the Upanishads the wonder of the world, though it is adopting a different method.

So far as I have dealt with what is the universal aspect of what is called the world of spirit. It is worth our while to spend a little time in dealing with certain local aspects of it to which also the Hindu intellect should turn its attention. In this country, as elsewhere, the spiritual problem is beset with social and ethical difficulties. On the broad question of the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, most

educated Hindus have little doubt, in whatever way they may have arrived at that conclusion. But their present attitude towards the local or national aspects of that question is undesirable though understandable. So much that really has no connection with the realm of the spirit and is objectionable have been introduced into it that rational minds are naturally repelled from it altogether. The fact that some of those who are the professed supporters of Hinduism will allow no discrimination in that matter but would adopt a "take them all or leave them" attitude makes the work of reclaiming the respect of the Indian intellect to the really useful portions of them more difficult than ever. In spite of all that, we think that a patient and calm investigation of these aspects is the duty of the educated Hindu, and he will easily find that much of it is not dross. But before I proceed to consider the lines of approach to that problem, I may just indicate briefly why such local aspects require attention. Firstly, all but the highest have, at all times, in all climes, found the necessity of some sort of formalism for establishing their connection with that Supreme Intelligence or Reality. It has always been a question of degree. Religious nudism is as unattractive as physical nudism, though it may suit the fancy of a few. Secondly no one, any more than Omarkhayam, is able to "with fate conspire to grasp this sorry scheme of things and shatter it entirely to bits and then remould it nearer to his heart's desire". Most of us have to lie in beds made by others, and it is not the best part of wisdom to defy the surroundings around us in a matter that concerns us most, every day. Even if the best part of a socio-religious structure is rotten, is it not a really educated man's duty to investigate and reject rationally, instead of rejecting it out of hand? There are many questions of absorbing interest in that domain awaiting such investigation. For blind belief I ask not; nay I would advise against it. But sympathetic understanding with no prejudice either way is the least that an educated mind should give them. The choice nowadays is erroneously believed to be between blind belief and total rejection without enquiry.

The result is that much that is valuable is being destroyed along with much which should be unceremoniously rejected. Take the question of "Caste" for example, which in this country alone is made a spiritual affair though it exists in some form or other all over the world. Belief in it may not be necessary for a belief in Hinduism. That system may be after all only a bulwark erected for the preservation of our Faith, at a particular period in its development. But is it all to be destroyed as is

attempted to be done to-day? How many have cared to investigate the prohibition of certain inter-marriages and of certain class of foods for certain castes having peculiar duties, which is all that is left of the caste system to-day, in the light of the principles of heredity and eugenics and dietetics. Are those parts of that system to be rejected without investigation simply because, some insist on all its modern farcical phases, such as the prohibition of the inter-marriage of a Kandramanickam Brahacharanam with a Mangudi Brahacharanam or the eating of onions or drumsticks on Ekhadasi days. Take that aspect of the Varnasrama system which unfortunately has been altogether neglected even by its blatant supporters. If we may say so, the *asrama* system is the best solution of the evils of competition and is the strongest foundation of a social polity based on co-operation between the young and the old. The neglect of that system is the cause of much unemployment nowadays. Men much past the shastric age for a *vanaprasta* are competing with younger folks for the good things of life and cause economic dislocation. Is the Asrama system not worth preserving because a few individuals mix with it extreme notions as regards its other part relating to *varna*? Are our temples to be demolished, as one very eminent reformer—curiously not of the iconoclast variety but a sincere *bakta*—said in a moment of irritation, because they are mismanaged and are sometimes hot-beds of vice. We hear so much of *agamas* now in connection with the entry of Harijans into temples. How many of the educated classes have cared to read them and see what justification there is in them for such prohibition? The attitude is generally, "If they are agreeable to my view well and good; if not they should be destroyed; in neither case are they worth reading". Take again the problem of some of our *nitya naimitya karmas*. What attempts has educated India made really to understand their significance? The very time chosen for Sandya *upasana*, several of the mantras we have to utter in it, are worthy of all admiration, if only we understand them. The investigations of the Psycho-Research-Society have thrown useful light on many a part of our *sraddha ceremonies*. It may be that many mantras in them are unintelligible and one mantra is specially unfit for utterance by any decent man. But is that a reason for us to discard them altogether? The mantras which we are to utter every time we take food have immense psychological value, if only we know their meaning. And there are many other such aspects of our socio-religious system that deserve preservation to enable us to get that purity of mind and body which will help us to understand the Reality. But this is not the

place or time for any elaborate discussion of them all. I am now anxious only to indicate broadly how valuable some parts of them are. I hope educated India will now turn its attention seriously towards these and similar problems. I do not blame it for its doubt and disbelief in them in the past. Perhaps such doubting was even necessary. As Havelock Ellis says: "The man who has never wrestled with his early faith, the faith that he has been brought up with, and that yet not really his own—for no faith is our own that we have not arduously won—has missed not only a moral but an intellectual discipline. The absence of that discipline may mark a man for life and render all his work in the world ineffective. He has missed a training in criticism, in analysis, in open-mindedness, in the resolutely impersonal treatment of personal problems which no other training can compensate". But the Indian intellect has, now at least, come to the stage where it has had sufficient training of that sort.

That such rationalistic investigations are worth making and are not at all irreligious, but that, on the other hand, they are permissible and even desirable has been proved recently by a passionately orthodox defender of our Faith. No exponent of Hinduism has had, in these latter days, more eager and appreciative audiences than His Holiness the Sankaracharya of Puri, and none of his discourses have been set up by his followers as worthy of special admiration than those in which he spoke about the scientific basis of Hinduism, though paradoxically at other places these defenders would disavow all this rationalistic thought. I claim that the revered Swamiji's great influence is itself the result of his English education. Alone among the three Sankaracharyas who are well-known to the South Indian public, he is a Master of Arts of our Madras University and his excursions into such rationalistic regions, fugitive though they may be, are the result of the leaven that English education has introduced into his intellect. That patient and painstaking work in the field of even abstract science will lead to confirmation of the great spiritual truths so intuitively seen by our fore-fathers needs no emphasis. Sir J. C. Bose has demonstrated it beyond all dispute. I plead for such enquiries, not only for that reason, not only for the positive contribution that they make to the sum-total of human knowledge, but also for the encouragement and hope and confidence they will give to the Hindu intellect. They will dispel the benumbing idea that the Hindu mind is fit only for speculation and that clear and definite thought is beyond its capacity.

The English educated Hindu has, to-day, a special duty towards Hindu Religion, Hindu Culture and Hindu Civilization, and the streng-

thening of the ideals for which they stand. That religion, that culture, and that civilization, need not only not fear comparison with others but have a distinct contribution to make to the world of spirituality. There are some parts of them that need reconstruction. The doings of some of their defenders have made it sometimes difficult for thoughtful men to enthuse over and defend that civilization and culture and religion. But that is a different story, as Kipling would say. It was said by a famous Christian that, oftentimes, christians have to be christians in spite of the church. It may be that Hindus have to be Hindus in spite of certain temples, certain mutts and certain exponents of our great faith. But the work of separating what is valuable in them from what is degenerate is worth pursuit, and it is for the English educated Hindus to blaze that trail. None, in my humble view, are more competent for that glorious work.

OUR MANTRAS AND SAMSKARAS.

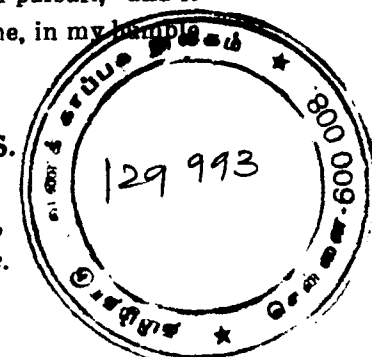
BY

Mr. M. B. VARADAIYANGAR, B.A., B.L.,
Retired Advocate, Malleswaram, Bangalore.

(Continued from page 208.)

Chaula चौले (first) tonsure.

This Samskara is performed for boys always. It should be done either in their 3rd or 4th or 5th year. In cases in which owing to unavoidable circumstances the time has to be extended, it may be done at any time after the 5th. During the normal period fixed above, it should never be done when the boy's mother is pregnant and even if it is urgent it should not be after the 5th month of pregnancy. The sutras referring to this ceremony in Apastamba Grihya are 3-11 in patala VI, khanda 16. Here also, as usual the *mangalasanam*, the usual household God's worship, Ganapati, Vishveksena worship, should be performed. Some people, in fact all, observe udakasanti, ankurarpana, pratisara bhandas also. The usual sankalpa is also done before hand. The first sutra runs as follows—Janmanah adhi triteya varshe-chaulam punarvasooh=The tonsure of the boy should be done in the third year of the birth in the nakshatra of punarvasu. As I have already observed Apastamba and most of our ancient Sutrakaras are very brief. The author has referred to only one age as the third year and only one star as punarvasu and his commentator is equally brief. Other later writers have developed on them and have given us more latitude for celebration. Vaidika sarva bhauma i.e. (Appiah Dikshita) has elaborated upon this and has given us the different years of celebration. So



SL
R4m.2, 12350 N36, 100

also the several auspicious nine stars, Hasta—Asvini—Vishnu—Paushna—Sravishta—Aditya—Pushya—Saumya—Chitra. The following ten stars are mentioned by the author of Kalamrita i.e. Asvini—Mrgasirisha—Punarvasu—Pushyama—Hasta—Chitra—Svate—Sravna—Dhanishta—Satabhishak—Revati. In all cases auspicious periods i.e. the uttrayana, the asoonya masa according to the customs of the country and community, the several different months for boys and girls (for boys even, and for girls odd) and during the first half of the day should be chosen. The auspicious days like Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays, days other than the 2nd, 8th, and 13th newmoon and full moon days are prescribed. The dark fortnight Monday is condemned. The author of Muhoorta Martanda i.e. Narayana mentions the same stars and mentions the auspicious lagnas or muhoortas, taking exception to that lagna to the eighth of which there are bad planets. In fact every author is particular about the seventh, eighth and ninth zodiacal houses being free from any planet from the lagna except Venus on the eighth. The 2nd sutra referred to by Apastamba is

ब्राह्मणानां भोजनं उपा यनवत्

Brahmananam bhojanam upa yanavat or upanayanavat meaning thereby that the feeding of brahmins and brahmin boys along with the boy are common to this as well as to initiation ceremony. The boy ought to be fed with food which contains no salt and astringents, but the practice is entirely different. Among some, the mother is also made to eat along with the boy. (To me it seems that this practice seems to have arisen when the boy's tonsure was performed at a very early age as in the case of certain highly orthodox families immediately after three years) Then two ladies i. e. sumangalies bring fire for homa i. e. sacrifice—The sutra referring to this is

सीमन्तवदग्ने रूपसमाधानादि

Seemanthavath—agneh—upasamadhanadi—meaning the fire sacrifice is as in seemantha. The next sutra to be considered is

अपरेणाम्नि प्राञ्चमुपवेश्यत्रेण्याशलल्या त्रिभिर्दम्भपुञ्जीलैः शलालुप्लप्सेनेति तृष्णीकेशानं विनीय यथर्षिशिखान्निदधातिः

Aparena—agnim—prancham—upavesya trenya—salalya tribih—darbah punjeelih—salaluglapsena-yiti tooshnim—kesanam—vineeya—yatharshi—sikhani dhadhati—The father or preceptor makes the boy sit down to the west of the fire, facing the east, combs his hair silently with a porcupine's quill that has three white spots with three dharbha blades and with a branch containing a bunch of udambara fruits or country figs and he

arranges the locks in the fashion of his ancestral rishis, or according to their family custom. This last sentence is covered by the next sutra

यथावैषां कुलधर्मस्यात्

Yathava—yesham—kula—dharma—syath. Just before this, lukewarm water in a small vessel, barley, a cow for presentation, fresh cow dung, twelve blades of darbha grass of the length of a cow's ear i.e. the space covered by the stretched thumb and forefinger and a razor are got ready. After this preliminary sacrifice the pradhanahoma—main sacrifice—is to be performed while the boy is being shaved. This is done with a separate fire. The boy is seated facing the east and the hair is divided into three clots with the porcupines quill and with the luke warm water and with the mantra

उष्णेन वायु उदकेनेति अदीतिः केशान्वपतु

Ushnena Vayu—udakenati—adithi—keshan vapatu. The first shaving is supposed to be done by Aditi. The water is sprinkled on the head—Next with this mantra आप उन्दन्तु

Apa—undantu—the boy's head is wetted commencing from the east and going round in the right hand direction. The central clot of hair which is concealed (as it were) is cut first or shaved first having three dharbhas in the head with this mantra i.e. Yenavapat—The acharya who shaves the boy is seated towards the south of the sacred fire. Either the mother or another brahmachari—unmarried boy says this mantra i.e. यत्क्षुरेण Yathshurena. Here the name of the boy is mentioned. The clot so cut with the dharbhas is put into the mother's or unmarried boy's hand by the acharya or teacher. Again similarly the hair on the southern side of the head, with another set of three darbhas (out of the twelve), is shaved with this mantra येन पूषा

Yena pusha. Again those on the west upwards and below with this mantra येन भूयः are cut and handed over to the mother or unmarried boy. Similarly those on the northern side are treated and delivered to the mother or boy with the mantra येन पूषा

Having shaved on all sides the acharya touches water. After this the brahmachari, the unmarried boy, or the mother, whoever has got the hair etc., deposits them with sommi leaves in the cow dung kept ready for the purpose. After this, the boy (generally) and mother rise up and take this cow dung with the hair etc., in her hand and uttering the mantras

उप्त्वायकेशाम्

burys them underneath the udambara branch kept there or under an asvatha tree. Some authors like Gautama order it to be buried in the

forest. Then the razor is cleaned and delivered to the barber who ought not to use that razor afterwards for any purpose for three days. Then the father delivers the cow to any brahmin i.e. the acharaya seated on the southern side. These are covered by the sutras 8-11 as follows—

अपांससर्जनाद्याकेश निधानात्समानम् क्षुरंप्रक्षाल्यनिदधाति तेनस्यहं कर्मनिवृत्तिः वरं ददाति
Apam—samsarjanat—akesanidhanat—samanam—kshuram—prakshalaya
nidadhati tenatryaham—karma nivirthehi—varamdadati. Then the barber shaves the head of the boy according to the proper form. Then the boy is bathed in hot water and dressed properly. Then the feeding as usual. In commencing the rites the following propitiatory mantras are first uttered (They are those used in seemantha)

धाताददातुनोरयिमीशानो जगत्स्पतिः । सनः पूर्णेन वावनत्

Dhatadha dhatu—no rayim yisanah—jagataspati. May God, the almighty protector of the world, give us plenty of wealth. May He satisfy us as we desire

धाताप्रजाया उतराय ईशे धातेदं विश्वं भुवनंजजान धृतापुत्रंजमानायदाता तस्मा
उह्व्यं घृतवद्विधेम

Dhata prajaya—uta—raya—yeesé—dhatetham visvam bhuvanam jajana—
dhataputram—yajamanaya—data tasma — u — havyam — ghritavadvi-
dhema—I serve him with ghee i.e. namely I perform the fire sacrifice with ghee so that He may bless me with children and wealth. He is the progenitor of offspring.

धातानोरयिं प्राचीर्जीवातुमक्षिताम् - वयंदेवस्य धीमहिमुमतिस्त्यराधसः

Dhata—no—rayim—pracheem—jivatam—akhshitam—vayam—devasya—
dheemahi—sumatim—satyaradhasah—The same almighty protector, may He give us wealth. Of what kind—The same as those that have been (handed down) gifted to our ancestors from time immemorial and that will never decrease and also truthful and sympathetic qualities. We shall adore him for His blessing.

धाताददातु दाशुषेवसूनिप्रजाकामायमीदुषे दुगेणे-तस्मैदेवा अमृतास्संव्ययन्तां विश्वे-
देवासो अदितिस्सजोषाः

Dhata—dhadhatu—dhasushe—vasoom—praja—kamaya—meedhushe dhu-
rone—tasmai—devh—amritah—samvya—yantam—visve—devaso—aditi
—sajoshaha. May the same protector—always accustomed to giving—May He give me the virile strength that is necessary for the production of children with a wife. Therefore may Aditi and Visvadevas of equal love to me bless me and my children with eternal life or indestructability, immortality.

यस्त्वाह्वादाकीरिणामन्यमानोऽमृत्यं मर्त्यो जौहवीमि - जातवेदायशो अस्मासुवेहि प्रजा-
भिरे अमृतत्वमस्याम् ॥

Yah-tva—hritha—keerina—manyamanah—amartyam martyoh—joha-
veemi—jatavedayasah—asmasu—dhehi—prajabhi—agni—amritatvam—
asyam—O God of fire when I invoke you with a praising heart as the giver of immortality, please give us plenty of food and wealth and renown also so that we may enjoy them all with our children—

यस्मैत्वं * सुकृते जातवेद उलोकमग्रेकृणवस्योनम - अधिन * सपुत्रिणं वीरेवन्तं
गोमन्तरयिनशतेस्वस्ति ॥

Yasmai—tvam—sukrite—jataveda—u—lokam—agne—krinava syonam—
asvinamsah—putrinam—veeravantam—gomantham—rayim—nasate.
svaste—O God of fire bless us (as you would those for whom you have created the happy worlds) with strong children, grand-children and servants as well as plenty of wealth and cattle.

त्वेसुपुत्रश्वसोऽवृत्रन्कामकातयः नत्वामिन्द्रातिरिच्यते

tve—su—putra—savaso avritan—kamakatayah—O the son, unexcelled strength, in the act of giving and satisfying your devotees desires even Indra does not excel you. (There is nobody greater than you)

उक्थ उक्थेसोम इन्द्रममादनीधे नीधेमधवान् सुतासः । यदो * सबाधः पितरं नपुत्रा-

स्समानदक्षा अवसेहवन्ते

Ukthā—ukthe. soma indram—mamadha—neethe neethe—maghavan—
sutasah—yathuma yat—yeen—sabadha—pitram—na—putrah—samanah
—dakhshah—avase—havante—Soma gave Indra, the great, the noble, every weapon he asked for and satisfied him as other demigods of equal power or prowess worship or pray Indra for their (same) protection. Just as boys of the same parents call for their aid, the parents, so also the other gods. Therefore let all pray for Indra as the common parent of all. The fire sacrifice referred to at the beginning is as follows—after the utterance of every mantra i. e. in all eight offerings are made to the fire with the darvi. Then for the completion of this ceremony fifty eight smaller offerings are made to the same fire, which are styled Upa-homas. Then the following mantra is uttered for shaving the head of the boy, commencing from the east with three blades of the holy grass i. e. first the clot.

आपउन्दन्तु जीवसेदीर्घायुत्वायवर्जसे ज्योक्तसूर्यदशे ॥

Apa—undantu—jeevase—deerghayutvaya—varchase—jyokhtha—suryam
drise—May the water wet this boy's head for life. How long? As long as full life i.e. 116 years with full powers of vision and strength so that he

may live and offer his prayers to God almighty, visible in this Sun. The next mantra is

येनावपत्सविताक्षुरेण सोमस्यराज्ञोवरुणस्य विद्वान् तेन ब्राह्मणोवपतेदमस्यायुष्मा जर-
दष्टिर्यासदयमसै ॥

Yena—avapat—savita—kshurena—somasya—rangno—varunasya—vid-
van—tena—brahmano—vapata—yidam—asya—ayushman—jarathashtih
—yathasat—ayam—asau—May this boy be shaved with a weapon i. e.
razor similar to the one with which the expert barber Savita—Sun shaved
the head of the king Soma—Varuna—O, Brahmans order me to shave the
head of this boy with such a razor, so that by my shaving this boy may
live a long life and be healthy and strong. (This is for the eastern part
of the head.) The next mantra for shaving the southern part of the head
is as follows—

येन पूषाबृहस्पतेरग्रेन्द्रस्य चायुषेऽवपत् - तेनास्यायुषे वपसोऽश्लोक्यायस्वस्तये

Yena—pusha—brihaspateh—agneh—Indrasya—cha—ayushe—avapat—
tena—asya—ayushe—apa—soslokyaya—svastaye—With the same razor
that Pushan shaved the heads of Brihaspati. Agni and Indra, let the
acharya (myself) shave you and may you live long and renowned. The
next mantra is used for the western portion of the hair.

येनभूयश्चराययंज्योक्चपश्यति सूर्यम् - तेनास्यायुषे वपसोऽश्लोक्यायस्वस्तये

Yena—bhuyah—charati—ayamechokcha—pasyate—suryam—tena—asya
ayushe—vapa—soslokyaya—svastaye—By having a shave with such a
razor, may this boy move about as he pleases in all directions. May he
live a long and renowned life and may he see the sun for ever. The next
mantra is for the northern clot of hair. It is

येनपूषाबृहस्पतेरग्रेन्द्रस्य चायुषेऽवपत् - तेनतेवपाम्या सावायुषावर्च सायथाज्यो-
वकुमुना असाः ॥

The first half is like the third. By such razor do I shave you so that you
may live a long brilliant and happy life. Here ends the function of the
acharya. The next mantra is addressed to the barber who completes the
rest of the shaving.

यत्क्षुरेणमर्चयता सुपेशसावत्पवपसिकेशान्-शुन्धिशिरोमाऽस्यायुः प्रमोषाः ॥

Yat—kshurena—marchayata—supesa sa—vapta—vapasi—kesansundhi—
sirahma—asya—ayuh—pramosheeh—O, barber, when you shave this
boy's head with such a sharp and brilliant razor, then may you not
lessen his life, though you clean his head. N.B. The very act of shaving is
intended for keeping the head clean and not allow the hair to grow

luxuriantly. The next mantra is for secreting or burying the hair as
contemplated in sutra 8 of Apastamba already referred to.

उत्तावपकेशान् वरुणस्यराज्ञो बृहस्पतिस्सवितासोमो अग्निः - तेभ्यो निदानं बहुधाऽ-
न्वविन्दन्नन्तरायावापृथिवी अपस्सुवः

Uptavaya—kesan—varunasya—ragnah—brihaspate—savita—somo—agni
—tebhyo—nidhanam—bahuda—anvavimdan—antara—dyava—prithivi—
apah—suva—brihaspate and the rest having buried the hair of
Varuna, the king (where) in the sky, and in heaven, they themselves
attained those places. So also myself will attain those places after bury-
ing the hair of this boy. After the sacrifice is over, Agni is worshipped,
brahmans are given betel leaves and nuts and fruits i. e. cocoanuts or
plantains etc. The boy is blessed along with the parents, and then with
the dinner, the function comes to a close.

Vidyarambha, विद्यारंभ.

This function is mentioned only by Dhrama Sindhu and by none else.
None of the great Smriti or Sutra writers mention it, though the practice
is extant all over Southern India, in all Indian orthodox Hindu families.
Further, except the usual preliminary ceremonies of Punyaha, the worship
of the household God, and the feeding of the Brahmans and subsequent
blessings of the boy and the parents, no Vedic mantras are uttered. The
only verse that is in common use is

सरस्वतिनमस्तुभ्यं वरदेकामरूपिणि । विध्यारंभंकरिष्यामि सिद्धिर्भवतुमे सदा ॥

Sarasvati—namas—tubyam—varathe—kama—rupeni—vidya—arambam
—karishyami—siddhih—bhavatu—me—sada. O Goddess of learning. I
bow thee, who is real blessing in bodily form. I begin to learn. Bless me
with success always. Generally the six letters

नमश्शिवाय or the eight letters नमोनारायणाय

always preceded by the Pranava ॐ is written on rice spread in a plate
Gold is mentioned but copper is more or less always used. A
recent publisher of Mysore by name Mr. K. Venkatramavadhani mentions
a practice according to which the letters are written on the face of the
lad on sandal paste. With due deference. I do not remember to have noticed
this practice any where. He also refers to Markandeya as enjoining a
homa—fire sacrifice, repeating the names of the Sutra, Kandarishi, Gotra-
kara etc., with ghee. The same thing is mentioned by the author of
Smritichandrika quoting Markandeya as above. One thing to be noted in
this connection is that the boy is made to sit facing the west and the
Acharya or Guru sits facing the east and makes the boy write.

MODERN SCIENCE IN THE UPANISHADS.

BY N. S. ARUNACHALA AIYAR, B. A. L. T.

(continued from page 240)

To return to the nebular hypothesis, Astronomy tells us that such evolution and dissolution of solar systems are ever taking place in the different portions of space:—masses of nebula evolving into mighty Suns, becoming again dead stars (like the companion star of Sirius, which is six times bigger than our Sun); and finally to be pulverised by mutual collision into atoms and nebula, to be reformed once again into beautiful stars and their planets and satellites. "Brahma fashions the Sun and the Moon as he did in the former Kalpa". *Suryaschandramasou dhata yathapurvam akalapayat* (Rig. x-190.3, & Naraya, 1-14); for Nature ever follows the line of least resistance, and the constituents of a dissolved system take up their former shape. That all the planets and their satellites with the objects in them, are derived from the Sun is glimpsed-in the text, 'We bow to the Sun, which is the origin, the support and destroyer of everything', *Namas savitre jagat prasutim sthiti nasu hetave*. In fact a considerable portion of the praise in the Vedas is to the Sun as the source of every thing. 'Whatever is produced is from the Sun', says the *Chhandogya* (III-19-2) II-9-3. Even the uttermost planet Sani (Saturn) is described as the son of the Sun.

Regarding the evolution of animal and vegetable forms, viz. the gradual development of higher forms from the lowliest single-celled organisms, which is forced upon our conviction by the graduated series of structural forms and the records of the successive strata of rocks, as by the repetition of their history in the development of their egg-cells to mature forms, only the broadest outlines are sketched in the Upanishads. Details could not have been worked out in those days; in any case, they were out of place in a work which deals only with the highest generalisations. We cannot say how much truth there is in the statement that the ten Avatars of Vishnu prove that the ancient rishis knew the exact order of evolution of higher animals, how man has been developed from some fishlike form, through the reptile and the lower mammal. The Upanishads content themselves with saying, "Animals were developed from plants, and man from animals," as referred to above. Some further details are attempted (but not very successfully) in the 4th Brahmana of first adhyaya of the *Brahadaranyaka*. The *Aithareya* (1-ii-2&3) in describing the order of development of the higher animals, shows us how the object of Evolution is to afford a chance for the higher vital powers in

the organism to come out at their best. It allegorically tells us how the Devas (the Vital Forces) were not satisfied even when the cow was evolved. *Gam anayat tah abruvan navai noyam alam alam iti*. Then was the horse evolved, the powers were not satisfied even then. But when Man was evolved, they cried out in joy. "O this is satisfactory. Man is indeed satisfactory", *Purusham anayat, tah abruvam sukritam bhata iti, Purushevava sukritam*. For taken as a whole, it is only in Man that the mind and the sense perceptions have found scope for their highest development.

Again the highest consciousness, the pure *chit* aspect of the Brahman manifests itself only in Man. The *Aithareya* (1-iii-ii) puts it in a dramatic fashion and makes the Brahman think thus, "It thought how can the sense perceptions and the mind satisfactorily do their work without a higher co-ordinating agency." Is man like the other animals only an efficient machine for eating and sleeping and procreation. Has he no higher destiny? If the sense perceptions and mind should go on with their usual work, that is, without an ethical side, we should have in the evolution of man nothing more than the glorified 'Ape and Tiger.' But as man progresses in his evolution, this moral side makes its appearance. He would not with an easy conscience put up with all that the brutal struggle for mere existence requires. As Huxley says, "For his successful progress through the savage state, Man has been largely indebted to those qualities which he shares with the Tiger and the Ape. His exceptional physical organisation, his cunning, his sociability, his curiosity, his imitateness, his ruthless and ferocious destructiveness when his anger has been roused by opposition." Then we arrive at a certain stage of civilization when the *Ethical process* comes into conflict with the *cosmic process*, as Huxley would like to represent the mere 'struggle for existence.' He says, "In this ethical process in the place of self-assertiveness it develops self-restraint, in the place of thrusting aside or treading down all competitors, it requires that the individual shall not merely respect but help his fellows. Its influence is directed not so much to the survival of the fittest, as to the fitting of as many possible as to survive." Hence the ethical process at its highest, personified in the Upanishads as Brahman, asks, "If the eye could see (without me), &c.&c., what am I then?" *Koham iti. Simanam vidarya prapadyata* 'So it entered into the brain through the *Brahmarandra*'. That is why the top bone in the new-born child is not joined till after some months.

It is, thus, only when the ethical process gains the upper hand in man that he can rise to the Divine; for as the *Sankhya Sutra* says, "The object of existence is the realisation of the Divine in him", *Pradhanasya Atma*

khapanartham pravriti. "He will have to learn the lesson of self-restraint and renunciation", says Huxley. But he adds "The practice of self-restraint and renunciation is not happiness, though it may be something better". It is Bliss-herein the West has approached the Eastern conception of contentment being the Highest Bliss.

Our grand-father Vyasa thus sings of the joys of contentment, "Take all the pleasures of this world, and all the pleasures of Swarga, and put them in one scale-pan; one sixteenth part of the joys of contentment will out-weigh them both".

Not that no Western thinker had appreciated the joys of contentment before Huxley; for cries Shelley.

....."(I have) nor that content,
Surpassing wealth, the sage in meditation found
And walked with inward glory crowned."

But the *sine qua non* for the evolution of man is *speech*. Without speech his science, his arts, his civilisation, would all have been impossible. There could have been no development of thought without speech. Man has been sometimes defined as the 'Speaking animal.' This is too true; for without speech we should have been unable to rise above the ape; without speech man's mental development would have been poor and his conquests over Nature an impossibility. How true then was Shelley when in a flash of poetic insight (they call a seer a *Kavi* in the Upanishads) he cried, 'Speech created Thought', a statement that seems so absurd at first sight. But the ancient Rishis recognised the importance of Speech in the development of ideas and said, "Speech is God, Speech is the world, *vagvai devah, vagvai ayam lokah*, and since we owe our very human nature which is capable of rising to the Divine to speech, they glorified it saying "Speech, O king of kings is the Supreme Brahman," *Vagvai samrat param Brahma* (Br. IV-1-2)

The law of evolution governs the development of Human Societies, as also their laws, manners and customs. The general conception as regards the social organization of the Hindus is that the Rules of Conduct are for ever fixed. We are told by foreigners that we are unprogressive; and the pity of it is, many of us believe it ourselves. We do not realise that our customs and manners have changed from time to time: as a fact, we are not more conservative than other races are. Nor did our sages promulgate rules for all time. The very fact that in this vast continent customs differ in different parts; may, that even in the same village different communities of the same caste follow different customs; and that there

have been as many as fifty law-givers; all these prove that rules of conduct have changed in India according to time and place, *Kalova desova*. The ideas of the ancient sages as regards social and moral evolution were most democratic, though we are often such slaves to customs now. Apas-tamba, the Law-giver for most of us in this Kaliyuga, says in his Dharma Sutras, "the authority for social laws are the assembly, and also tradition", *Dharmagna Samayah pramanam, Vedachcha* The same ideas were expressed by Manu:—

The sources of Law are the Vedas, Sruti, Custom and 'Equity and good Conscience.

The ancient Law-givers recognised that social rules must change to suit the changing times, but that we need not forget the experience of the past ages. They knew well that the 'old order changeth yielding place to new.' The Tamil Nannul remarks, "There is nothing wrong in old things passing away and new things coming in."

Let us recapitulate. We saw that ultimate scientific analysis lead to the grand Truth of a single underlying principle, the *electron*, which is but the physical aspect of the Brahman. Science lends no support to the belief in creation by an external God. Nor do the Upanishads either. There has been no creation in the ordinary Christian sense, but cycles of evolution and dissolution, an evolution from the simple to the complex, from homogeneity to heterogeneity, from chaos to cosmos. We have also seen how the *Thaithriya* Upanishad describes every step in the evolutionary process from Nebula, through Akasa, Vayu, Agni, Apas, Prithivi, Plants, and Animals, to Man; and how in man the struggle between the lower animal nature and the higher altruistic spirit has gone on, so that 'the ape and the tiger' may die in him, and he may rise to the Divine, proving the Sankhya aphorism: *Pradhanasya atma khyapanartham pravritih*.

REVIEW

"THE DHARMIC HINDU"—George Town, Madras.

This journal which was once being issued fortnightly and then occasionally has now been converted into a monthly. Annual subscription Re. One. The Editor Mr. T. K. Jagannathacharya is a sincere and enthusiastic worker in the cause of Hinduism and his writings are always worth reading even by those who may not see eye to eye with him on all matters. We wish the journal every success in its new incarnation. C. V. K.

WANTED, A COMMON PRAYER FOR HINDUS.

BY

K. V. SESA AIYANGAR.

In all religions a direct invocation of the Higher Powers with the object of securing physical and spiritual welfare is held to be quite legitimate. The invocation may take different forms. Sometimes it is a ceremony or a ritual. Sometimes it is the meditation on a formula, or the recitation of a hymn, or the attendance at a temple generally or on specific occasions. Often times, it is a simple, direct, and trustful appeal for intercession spoken or silent. Whatever the particular mode adopted, the substance of it is the establishment of contact between man and the Higher Powers with a view to the ordering of life on better lines. The differences in form are to be traced to the differences in the conception of the Higher Powers and to the particular conditions that are considered practicable and helpful in the invocation. Climatic and social influences also play a part in the adoption of different methods.

Prayer is based upon faith. The experience of the world justifies this faith. It is not proposed here to enter into a discussion of the validation of faith in the light of facts about the objective Universe which science is more and more revealing to us. It is enough to notice that science has not demonstrated that faith in prayer is misplaced. One may even go further and say that science more and more furnishes rational basis for such faith. This indeed should be part of its province. For faith, prayer, and answer to prayer are facts of natural phenomena which are worth studying even by science.

Prayer may be of many kinds. But it is of its very essence that it should establish contact between the human personality and a Higher Presence. In that contact is a lifting power. All prayers need not necessarily contain entreaties for physical or spiritual gifts. They may be mere statements of the joy of the experience of the Higher Presence, or descriptions of the vision of the expanded consciousness. Even though they do not contain any entreaty they do steadily purify and strengthen. They quicken the growth of the personality.

The introduction of a petition in a prayer is however perfectly in place. Most men desire the good things of life, and a good time while they are on earth. They work for these things. Their thoughts are directed towards them. Their whole life is focussed on their attainment. It is therefore quite natural and proper and sincere that they bring their desires up at the time of their prayer and place them before God. By doing

so they will be recognising that all good things come from God. It is to be preferred that men should realise that the good things of life are the gifts of God, rather than that they should imagine that they get them independently in some surreptitious way. Asking for mundane gifts from God indicates the belief that that the province of prayer is the whole of life itself and not merely that particular portion of it representing spiritual as opposed to physical values. Instead of attempting to hide or be ashamed of their desires at the one time when there should be neither reserve nor reticence in the mind, it is better that they let the radiance of the Higher Presence play about the entire field of their mental and emotional activity.

There are many advantages in this. It enables the desire ridden person to see his desires in their true perspective. In very many cases this tends to eliminate a large number of budding evil desires which perpetually sprout like weeds in the mind. It helps to induce the conviction that he should pursue only right methods for achieving the objects of his desires. It sustains him in his effort to procure them in the face of difficulties. Again, it enables the petitioner to acknowledge that he is only one of the contributing agents to the achievement of the desire. It also helps to rationalise failure and to see success in its proper light.

The faith on which prayer is built is faith in a Higher Power which is actively and intimately interested in human welfare and is able to produce results in human life here and beyond. Different religions have conceived the nature of this Power and its operation on life along similar and yet different lines. In Hinduism, there is a surpassing abundance of technique in prayer. Hinduism may be said to have specialised in the art of invoking the Higher Powers for operating on human life on a scale not approached in other religions. While this is so, one also finds the persistence of an astounding variety of primitive methods. These have simply been left to exist side by side with the superior forms. We have only to look at the crude rites which sometimes pass for worship among the lower castes and tribes and the gruesome offerings they think fit to make to their Gods to realise the truth of this.

The twice born castes have definite Vedic rituals which are believed to ensure one's physical and spiritual welfare. There are Vedic rites and sacrifices of different kinds for achieving different desires. All caste-Hindus worship in temples where a man's mere presence, especially on particular occasions, purifies his person. Temples are at the present day the main channels through which the prayers of the largest section of the

Hindu community are addressed. There are in addition to this penances and vows which, when successfully carried through yield desired results. There are general hymns and hymns addressed to particular Gods. There are special formulæ which when recited under certain conditions enable a person to realise his desires. The theory of it all is that by the propitiation of Higher Powers we assure ourselves of their help.

We may be inclined to justify all these differing methods on the basis that by whatever path a man approaches God by the same path he is accepted. Nevertheless, a question often arises in the mind whether there is no deep significance in the form of approach to God, in the conception of the Divine Presence which inspires such approach, in the choice of the mental and the physical attitude appropriate to such approach, and in the recognition of the responsibility of the individual for fulfilling the Divine Will. When we look at the situation of Hinduism in this respect we feel poignantly the utter lack of standardisation. There is no common form of prayer, no common back-ground of thought and no common atmosphere of approach which are followed by the whole of Hindu society. Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam are relatively superior to Hinduism in this respect. They have recognised forms of prayer held in reverence by the whole community. These can be and are used by all their members without distinction. They have conceded the right of the least among them to approach God along the path which is trodden by the greatest. The results have not revealed any diminution of the efficacy of prayer. Who can deny that that it has, on the contrary, helped to reach a higher average level of spiritual effort when the whole community is taken into account. Their success ought to be a standing urge to Hinduism to do likewise.

That there is a dawning perception of the need for common prayer for all Hindus is illustrated by the new practice that is springing up of having what is called a prayer at the beginning of public functions. But under what conditions! None knows in what language or to which God it is going to be, or whether it is to be the singing of a hymn or asking for a blessing or how long it will last. The audience is not able to join in the mental effort. One cannot but regret that Hinduism has not exploited the inexhaustible potentialities of congregational prayer. In the vast masses of Hindu population there lies what may be called a virgin field in the matter of prayer. The tragedy is all the more profound when we remember that Hinduism has a conception of the Divine Personality at least as rich as that in any other religion. It has a faith in the invocation of

Divine aid and on the potency of that aid for satisfying human wants that is unique. It has a view of the province of prayer and of its infinite range of operation that is unsurpassed by any other religion. Yet can it be said that this power of the Hindu society is organised and disciplined on a scale comparable with that in the other religions? Who can tell the extent of the loss?

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

K. V. S.

To the wide distribution of copies of the New Testament is to be attributed the reading of the Gospel story by non-Christians and their thinking over its significance. Such thoughts are necessarily uninstructed.

The atmosphere of the Christmas is brought into the minds of non-Christians by the activities during the Christmas season in India. The Christmas week has come to be the week of the stock taking of India's cultural advance. In congresses and conferences, leading workers and thinkers in various fields of national life gather during this week from all parts of the great continent for consultation and deliberation. They discuss the mistakes if any in the past, and frame programmes for the future. It is a period of a great creative activity and it is appropriately timed during the season of the birth of one who has wrought such profound changes in human life.

As a Hindu reads and re-reads the simple story of the birth of Jesus he is struck with the similarities and differences of the story from that of the birth of the Hindu Avatars of God. The birth of a redeemer or deliverer of God's chosen people has been prophesied. It is waited for in expectation for a long time. The birth is an occasion for rejoicing in Heaven. Wise men on earth see its signs and render homage to the child. The wicked fear His coming. Between Heros of the Gospel story and Kamsa of the Krishna story there is a resemblance which extends also to their attempt to destroy children immediately after the birth of the Avatar

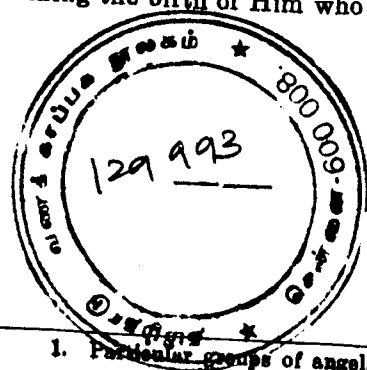
After this the paths diverge. In the lives of the Hindu Avatars the emphasis is upon the possession of super-human power and its exercise for the

protection of the good from harm and for the destruction of sinners who will not repent or retrace their evil course. The reader's thoughts are made to dwell on the unique marvel of the living of human life upon an afflicted earth by God. The contemplation of the infinite beauties of the manifestation of the limitless within the limited is a favourite theme in Hindu hymns. The composer's imagination reverentially struggles to describe the indescribable glory of such contact. For instance one day baby Krishna opens his mouth to his mother in fun to protest against the charge that he was eating earth. And the mother beholds in the baby's mouth the whole Universe including herself and the baby! In the Gospels even though we have miracles and contacts between God and the Avatara life travels along a different path. The culmination of the life of the Hindu Avataras is on the field of battle as a Victor vanquishing the evil foe in an epic fight, to the praise of Devas and of men. In the Gospels if one may say so in all humility and reverence, it finds its consummation on the Cross.

The difference is one whose meaning is worthy of deep thought. Such thought however more properly belongs to Easter. For this season the best thought is along the following lines adapted from the Srimad Bhagavata.

* * * *

Then came the glorious time, of all times the most auspicious, when the Lord of Creation came to the earth. Peace pervaded the four quarters. Stars shone with full radiance. Rivers flowed with sparkling water. Lotus buds in tanks burst into full blossom. Soft breezes blew wafting pure fragrance. The smouldering household fires of the twice-born leapt into flame. Kinnaras' sang. Siddhas' and Charanas praised the Lord. Vidhyadhara' damsels danced with Apsaras' maidens. Devas and Rishis showered flowers. The minds of the righteous grew serene. Heaven and Earth rejoiced welcoming the birth of Him who is never born.



1. Particular groups of angels.

TO LET

COME TO SPENCER'S

for all your requirements

MOST UP-TO-DATE GOODS
MODERATE PRICES
PROMPT SERVICE

DEPARTMENTS.

Grocery and Provisions
Silver and E.-P. Ware
Watches and Clocks
Cutlery
Crocery
Glassware
Lamps
Ironmongery
General Hardware
Chemists and Druggists
Perfumery and Toilet
Gramophones
Sports and Games
Bicycles
Photographic and Artists'
Materials

Stationery
Fancy Goods
Boots and Shoes
Leather Goods and Saddlery
Travelling and Camp
Requisites
Tailoring
Men's Outfitting
Ladies' Outfitting
Haberdashery
Complete House Furnishing
Cabinet Making
Aerated Waters
Bakery

SPENCER & CO., LTD.,

MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS.

Printed by V. C. Krishnaswami at the India Printing Works, and Published by the
Secretary, Arya Mata Sabha, "Moryalaya", Royapettah, Madras.