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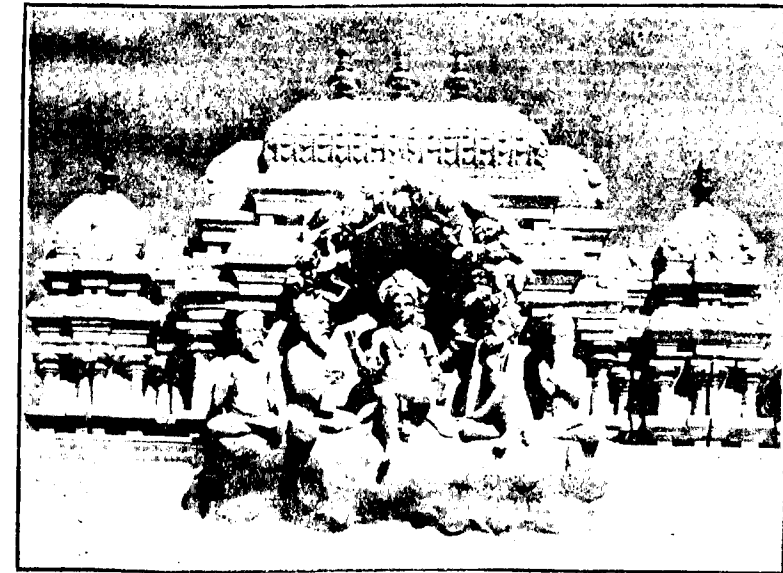
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Ah! The wonder under the Banyan tree! There sits the Teacher a youth; the disciples, elders. The teaching is silence, and the disciples' doubts are dispelled.

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Open to every threat

Of storms that clamour by

Scaffolding veils the walls

And dim dust floats and falls

As moving to and fro, their tasks the masons ply!

One of these "masons" and "builders" was Annie Besant. She toiled for a New India. She worked for a new Civilisation. She built for a New Age. Homage to her!

DANGER TO UNPROTECTED WOMEN IN BENGAL.

[From the Hindu Review]

Abducted Radharani: Radharani, the 11-year-old girl of Srimati Subhasini Mahanta of Benares, was found out after full three months at Burdwan Railway Station. It might be recalled that this girl was suddenly found missing from Rani Mahal Benares, on the 22nd March last from her mother's protection. Information having been given to the Benares Mission the Mission workers informed Police and Railway authorities at different important places and the news was also published in the papers, but the girl could not be traced out. The girl gave a statement saying that a middle aged woman enticed her away, took her to various places and at last left her there at the station.

Rajshahi Cases: Srimati Subhasini, married wife of Chaitan Pramanik of Bekulpara P. S. Lalpore, Rajshahi, was abducted by some Muhammadans by force at night. It is reported that she was abducted for the purpose of giving away in nika marriage to a particular Muhammadan. Chaitan is very poor but with the help of his neighbours he has filed a complaint in the Natore S. D. O's Court against six Muhammadans under sections 365/ 366/ 398/ 109/ 114/ 120 B I. P. C. The woman has not been found out as yet. Brahmachari Srichaitanyaji and Babu Sailesh Chandra Ray, Muktear, Natore, have been looking after the case.

The abduction case of Duari is still pending as the abducted woman, wife of Krishnendra Paramanik, has not been found out as yet.

Besides these we have received information of abduction of another young minor girl named Bimala Sundari, sister of Ramendra Nath of Bharatipara, near Arani Rly. station, Rajshahi.

(Continued on p. 172.)

DO GOVERNMENT HELP CONVERSION?

BY DEWAN BAHADUR R. SREENIVASAN, M.L.C.,

President Depressed Classes Federation (Madras.)

In a communique issued by the Government and appearing in the 'Madras Mail' dated 26th September 1936, regarding the Government activities for the uplift of the Depressed Classes, up to the year ending 31st March '36, it is said that "In most districts the Missionary organisations have on the whole, rendered valuable assistance to the Collectors in seeing that the land which was intended for the Depressed Classes did come into their possession". It is a well known fact that the Missionary organisations avail themselves of such opportunities to effect conversion of these people. It is quite obvious that the Collectors, who have a huge staff from Village Munsiffs to the Divisional Officers in their Districts, are powerless and have to seek help from outsiders, the staff being corrupt and under strong influence of the land-owning Caste-Hindus, who are apathetic towards the uplift of the Depressed Classes. Some Missionary organisations go to help these poor people with a view to convert them, in most cases after securing promises of conversion. The land intended for the community known as the Depressed Classes (Scheduled Castes) passes on to another (the Christian community). Thus those who do not seek the help of the Missionary organisations are left landless and suffer iniquitous treatment from the Caste Hindus and land-owners. The object of the Government to help the Depressed Classes is thus defeated.

In the matter Education, in a foot note to G. O. No. 2116 Law and Education dated 3-10-'36, it is stated that "converts to Christianity to any other religion from the communities comprising group I (Scheduled Castes) and group II (Backward Classes) shall not forfeit eligibility to half fee concession merely because of such conversion". Here also it is clear that the concessions intended for one community are carried away to another community; thus depriving the community for which such concessions are intended.

In the matter of service, referring to G.O. No. 947, dated 10th September 1934—Public Service General Rule No. 7, Sub-Rule 5 (b) (1) the proportions specified against the Scheduled Castes is 1 to 12. When a member who enters as a Scheduled Castes candidate becomes convert to Christianity after getting himself appointed as a Scheduled Castes member, he deprives a member of the Scheduled Castes of that appointment and he enjoys the privileges and pension of the service till his death.

The above facts clearly show that what the Government give to the

Scheduled Castes through one hand, is being taken away by them through the other. Unless the Government issue an order that the members of the Castes would lose their concession and forfeit the advantages they enjoy as members of the Scheduled Castes the moment they become converts to any other faith, full justice would not have been done by the Government to the members of the Scheduled Castes for their uplift.

(Continued from 170.)

The district of Rajshahi has won notoriety for abduction of Hindu women within the last few months. We do not know how far the judgment in the Khorde—Govindpore case will be helpful in the matter of checking this menace.

Woman Molested at Bangaon: A case for abduction of a respectable Hindu widow in a village in Bangaon subdivision in Jessore has just been committed to sessions by the S. D. O. Bangaon under section 366 I. P. C. A widow aged about 25, of a respectable Hindu family, while on her way from kitchen to the bed room at night, was suddenly knocked down by a band of three Mussalmans in the courtyard of the house and was bodily lifted and carried away to a considerable distance evidently for immoral purposes. They gagged the woman when she tried to raise hue and cry. On their way some 4 more Muhammadans joined them and all of them took her to the bank of a tank and began to threaten her. In the meantime some Hindus of the neighbouring houses attracted by her shrieks and cries hurried to the spot and the Muhammadans took to their heels snatching away her wearing cloth. The woman then returned to her house completely naked. The widow and her nephew could recognise the first three Muhammadans who were their co-villagers. The accused tried to make a compromise first and then threatened the woman and her helpers with dire consequences as a result of which the woman had to be removed to Bangaon town for safety during the pendency of the case in the lower Court.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON HINDUISM:—ANSWERS

BY T. V. GOPOLASWAMI AIYAR B.A., B.L. *Deputy Collector (Retired)*

I. SCRIPTURES

1. As far as I find, the Bhagavad-Gita is the only Scripture which can be said to be authoritative for many reasons. The chief among them are:—

i. The Yoga which is taught there is the supreme secret and therefore any teaching which is opposed to it cannot be Sanatana Dharma.

ii. There are no other scriptures now extant free from defects of various kinds. It is these scriptures, full of contradictions, exaggerations and wrong teachings, which have led to the development of many undesirable qualities in the priestly class. A text-book may be caused to be prepared by a competent committee on "Dharmarthakamamoksha". I may also add that even the Vedas are inapplicable to modern conditions. They are abstruse and misleading and are mostly misunderstood and misapplied.

iii. The true Dharma has been forgotten by efflux of time and therefore Sri Krishna incarnated to give the teachings required for the protection of the good, for the destruction of the evil-doers and for establishing Righteousness again by precept and example, as required for this 'Yuga.'

iv. The Teachings given and examples set by the Great Teachers of India from Sri Krishna upto Guru Nanak who were all Aryan Hindus and who were born in India to teach Dharma are authoritative teachings that should be our guide to understand Sanatana Dharma and prepare text-books for our practice in modern India. The accretions to their Teachings which have gathered round them after their departure must of course be excluded. A Text-book containing the main teachings and examples set by these Great Teachers may be written and this also may be taken as "supplementary guide".

2. These must be translated into the vernaculars. There must be besides, an English edition.

3. In my opinion, the Basic Truths of Hinduism are:—

The six Truths referred to—viz—(a) The One existence (b) The Many (c) Reincarnation (d) Karma (e) Yajnas (f) Visible and Invisible Worlds (g) Existence of Devas and Rishis.

But I should like to split the (a) and (b) into three as follows or other ways as may be deemed desirable to express these Truths. (i) There is

one Transcendental Self-existent Life (called by various names such as Atma, Truth, Reality, the Indestructible etc). Eternal, All-pervading All-sustaining, whence all worlds derive their existence, whereby and wherein all manifestations, visible and invisible, live and move and have their being.

ii. For our system, this Life is immanent in and manifested as, God, Esvara, also called Narayana, the One Creator, Preserver and Regenerator.

iii. All manifestations in our system proceed from the Esvara of our system who harmonizes all evolutionary and life processes in it and is the basis of all Dharma—which is called, Sanatana Dharma. Another most important teaching of Sanatana Dharma is— "The Brotherhood and Solidarity of Man without distinction of caste, creed, sex, colour, race etc—" See Ch. XIV 1-4. This must therefore be added.

[N. B. It is because this teaching has been left in the background there is so much of cruelty, oppression, exploitation etc.]

II. PUJA OR WORSHIP

I cannot answer the questions under this head in detail. I know that almost everywhere I have seen that the worship carried on is only mercenary and mechanical. The rituals require revision to suit modern conditions and the officiating priests must know the meanings and the technicalities of the puja they perform. Steps should be taken to effect this reform in a suitable manner.

III. YAJNAS

It is essential to lay stress on the fact that all manifestations are interdependent and that the Pancha-mahayajnas represent this Truth. What Pancha-mahayajnas are must be explained and a chapter on this subject must form part of the Text-book referred to by me under I. iv.

IV. SAMSKARAS

The object of every samskara is to see that every person who is born is made to take full advantage of the available knowledge and his spiritual progress is hastened. Under modern conditions the formalities have to be reduced to a minimum to obtain the maximum results. The Text-book I have suggested should contain a clear chapter on the following points 1. What is man? 2. What are his vehicles (Upadhis or Koshas)? 3. What is the relationship between man and these vehicles how they act and react on each other, how they are to be harmonized, how Right food, Right emotions, Right thoughts, Right beliefs, Right actions, Right means of livelihood, etc., affect the different vehicles and

how they act and react on each other and why it is necessary to understand them. With the aid of such a book, we may dispense with all the samskaras except Garbhadhana, Upanayana and Vivahah and even these should be very much simplified and performed in a truly religious spirit and not as a formality.

i. The Garbhadhana sanctifies the creative art and is not to be undertaken carelessly. The husband and wife must be taught to know that they are entering on a very sacred duty: their emotions must be pure and holy, so that they may give birth to a noble soul.

ii. The Upanayana may be left optional and our present rituals require a great deal of modification. Many items have to be omitted. At present the brahmachari is made to take many vows which he does not mean to perform. This not only makes the ceremony a farce but also materially affects the character of the concerned persons. Only such vows as the brahmachari can fulfil must form part of the ceremony. It may be performed at any time before marriage when he can understand the meaning and use of the ceremony.

iii. Vivahah also must be made very simple; the Bharata Samaj has published a ritual and this may be adopted. This is an one day ceremony and ends with Benedictions.

V. MARRIAGES

i. I recommend only post-puberty marriages. These may be performed with truly religious spirit, as prescribed in the pamphlet "Vedic marriage Ritual" published by the Bharata Samaj, Adyar. I also hold that the maiden should be at least 16 years old and the bridegroom not less than 20 years old. These limits have been prescribed by our ancient Ayurvedic Rishis such as Sushruta etc. The Vedic mantras and the ancient Grihya Sutras clearly state that the husband and wife must be young men and women.

2. Intercaste marriages, interracial marriages and civil marriages may be allowed. The marriages should take place with the full consent of the bride and bridegroom, supported except when there are strong objections to the alliance, by the consent of their parents or guardians. (c) Early and unequal marriages should not take place.

3. Age of Marriage:—Sixteen years for girls, except in very rare cases where there may be valid reasons for marrying earlier; but in no case under fourteen. For men, the minimum age is twenty.

4. Pre-puberty marriage should never be allowed. There should be

no sexual union allowed even after fourteen unless there has been a lapse of at least six months after the maiden has attained puberty.

5. Varasulka and kanya sulka must completely disappear. Dowries and presents must be left to the free will and pleasure of the concerned parties. There should be no demand of any kind.

VI. SHRADDHAS

2 & 6. I think the anniversary should be remembered; but the form in which the ceremonies are now performed is unsuitable. It has to be simplified and altered to suit modern conditions. Those who have a good knowledge of the meaning of the Vedic mantras and of the after-death conditions of human beings have to take up the work. As at present performed, the annual ceremonies are useless. The day should be remembered and kind and beneficent thoughts and feelings should be felt and expressed in suitable forms.

VII. CASTE

1 & 2. These questions have been answered in my memorandum.* We have only the corpse of the caste system. This farce of the caste system must go. Then the Hindu life will become pure and nobler.

VIII. ASHRAMAS

The Ashramas have no meaning at present and they are lifeless. No hard and fast rules can be laid down which can be of any use.

IX. WOMEN

1 to 4. According to the Aryan (Sanatana Dharma) ideal, the status of woman must be that of man, but it has been degraded and in most cases, a woman is not treated with any consideration and her status is very pitiable except very rarely. Both man and woman should be taught and made to understand that Jiva (life) is sexless and that the bodies (male and female) that a jiva wears during any particular incarnation are intended to make, among other things, the jivas develop life after life the noble qualities which are called divine to perfection; some of them can be developed only in man's bodies and some in woman's, and hence the necessity for the change in bodies during incarnations. In some respects, man is superior to woman and in some woman superior to man. Therefore there is no question of one sex being superior or inferior to the other. A woman must have greater economic rights and better education on the following points:—

i. How is woman supplementary to man for the proper discharge of house-hold duties?

* Not published in this part.

ii. What are the rights and duties of man and woman?

iii. How to keep a house?

X. DEPRESSED CLASSES

1 to 5. All the points raised have been answered in my memorandum.

XI. CUSTOMS AND EDUCATION

My memorandum deals with these subjects also. The Education to be given to man and woman must be suited to the purposes for which their life is intended. Boys and girls should be made to understand when old enough that they are not cogs in a machine and should not be treated as such. The education must be cultural and also such as is suited for earning bread. Mind, emotions and body must all be trained rhythmically—"The child must be helped to create with his hands, with movement, with colour, with sound, in a spirit of originality. He must be helped to create with his feelings and emotions so that his attitude towards the world around him may be creative, and where possible, original in its helpfulness and purity." Attempt should be made to develop intuition also wherever possible. Educationists who know psychology and understand human nature and also know how the koshas (vehicles), already referred to, evolve and affect the expression of the jiva through them, must frame a curriculum to suit the above purposes for the different stages from three years upwards. Children should feel happy to go to school from three years upwards and a happy atmosphere should pervade the school precincts, and the school must be located in the best available place possible with natural sceneries in every village. There must be at least one school for every village and there must be more than one, if there are more than fifty young children. Those under seven should be separated from the older ones and there should be no separation of sexes. It should be coeducation.

REFORM OR REVOLUTION ?

A plea for Liberalism in Indian Public Life.*

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

University Education is a preparation for leadership. The student of to-day will be the citizen of to-morrow, who, in a few years, whatever his vocation, will be the leader of thought and leader of public movements in the country. If he is to guide aright, he has to equip himself by careful thought and study to deal intelligently with public questions as they arise.

There is visible, in every direction, a relaxation of ideas and an impatience with existing order of things and with older disciplines and restraints. It is visible in the domain of religion, in the sphere of morals and, in fact, in every department of life. Existing social order and the social and economic structure are sought to be undermined. Vast social and economic experiments are contemplated and commended without apprehension or hesitation. Respect for human life, respect for human freedom and respect for rights of property, as they exist, seem to be losing their hold. Respect for religion is likewise affected, because, I suppose, religions support existing order and contain precepts and prohibitions adverse to the new lines of thought and the new experiments.

I do not wish to exaggerate the symptoms. What has been said applies but to a small group of people. The villages still live in the old order of things undisturbed. It is in and around the towns that these manifestations have arisen and even here it is a small class that is affected. But it is an influential class, most vocal and powerful in public life.

Comparatively small are the actual manifestations in legislative measures. As I do not desire to go into current legislative controversies, I shall be content to refer to one manifestation of it as lack of respect for property rights. Religious injunctions, municipal law and principles of legislation alike inculcate scrupulous respect for rights of property. Anxiety to maintain that scrupulous respect is no longer in evidence in the minds of individuals or of the state.

In the sphere of social legislation there are two trends. One relates to the removal of existing shackles on individual freedom. Conservative thought in this country attaches great importance to these restraints as protective of social order and apprehends grave injury to society by their removal. But individuals cannot be prevented from making their own experiments with themselves. This expansion of individual freedom is

From the Founder's Day Address at the Annamalai University Chidambaram. The title is ours. Ed,

not preventable. There is another line of legislation which is restrictive of individual freedom in what is conceived to be the larger interests of the community as a whole. There is need for care in enacting this class of legislation. The freedom of the individual is not to be contrasted with public good. Individual freedom is itself an instrument of public good. A repression of it may do great harm. Power has a corrupting influence not easily resisted. Everywhere minorities plead for freedom, plead to be left alone. The majority rarely concede it. They claim to know what is good for the community much more than the minority. They claim to know what is good for the minority much more than they themselves know and must needs coerce the minority to fall into line with the rest. It is a curious manifestation of human inconsistency, and, as I say, the corrupting influence of power, that the person who pleads for freedom while he is in a minority, refuses to listen to that plea for freedom when he is in a majority and in power. The conservative and the ardent reformer are alike in this respect. It is hardly ever realised that wisdom, even more than justice, requires that what you claim for yourself you should concede to others. And that is why wise party government is not so much the government of two opposing as of two co-operating, parties. The brake-man is not an enemy but a friend of the engine-driver.

These are small local manifestations unconnected with world movements. There are vast social, political and economic re-adjustments going on all over the world. Our country is not free from the influence of these world movements. We have our different schools of thought. All alike derive their inspiration more or less from European countries.

Our political aims and aspirations come from Britain. Parliamentary form of self-government we have been agitating for, now for over sixty years. Parliamentary Government after the manner of Britain has been adopted by self-governing countries all over the world. Most people in this country are still for self-government and parliamentary democracy as in Britain. There have not been wanting people, both here and in Britain, who would prefer to say that the actual form of government suited to India must emerge in course of time and as the result of her own adventures and experiences. On the whole, I think that this desire to develop a parliamentary form of self-government still holds the field.

Most of you will remember that some time ago, there was talk of need for a dictator for India. Parliamentary form of government is now under a cloud. It is supposed to have failed all over the world. It is believed to be, comparatively, a weak instrument for public good. It is, besides, a

very slow instrument. A powerful dictator with intense conviction as to what is good for India and strong determination to carry his programme through, will compass his ends much more easily than any form of parliamentary government can do. This cry was the result of admiration for Mussolini and what he had done to make of Italy as a power in Europe. This admiration for Italy and its dictator is now on the wane. Italo-Abyssinian war and the detestation of Italy which has arisen as a consequence are not without their influence in putting an end to this light-hearted and ignorant cry for a dictator. But it must be said that it was not serious nor was it taken seriously. There is indeed no place for a dictator in present-day India.

On the other hand, the current talk of socialism or communism is more serious. There is active propaganda in its favour. It is for the moment the most popular subject of discussion in "Parliaments", Youth Leagues, and other platforms. It is the subject of heated discussions in private conversations.

It seems to me that neither Fascist Italy nor Soviet Russia can serve as a model for India. We shall have to work out our own problems in the light of our own history and in the light of our own social and economic back-ground. This deserves the careful attention and study of our Universities. The University atmosphere is best fitted for the study of these questions in the light of reason and without the strife and heat going on in the world outside.

The political and social agitator is easily carried away by the emotions of the moment. He is thinking largely of the visible and tangible and the immediate. He does not and cannot go down to the roots of things. It is the University that ought to study these complicated questions and the suggested solutions in all their bearings and in all their ultimate and inevitable, if unintended and unforeseen, consequences. It is here that sociology as a branch of study can be of great help.

Fascism and Communism have arisen on the European soil and are contending for supremacy there as the result of European conditions. Soviet Russia emerged during the war. The destruction of Czarist autocracy naturally led in a country in which there was no large or real middle-class to the enthronement of the proletariat. In constant fear of subversion and dethronement the Soviet had to be vigilant against all adverse propaganda within or without. Not unnaturally perhaps from her own point of view did she feel, in the adverse atmosphere of surrounding countries during those early years, that until other countries accepted her

ideas and organised their government along the same lines her own state organisation was not safe. The world propaganda of those first years was met in some countries by the counter-organisation of Fascism in defence of existing organisation. Where one or other party is so dominant that the other party cannot show its head or give any sign of existence, it looks as if a stable organisation holds the field. Russian organisation seems stable but doubts arise directly there is report of revolt put down by the condign punishment of death. Italian government also looks stable. But it is not without internal enemies. Only a few days ago we heard of the arrest of people who were suspected of anti-Fascist leanings and of subterranean propaganda. Where forces in favour of Fascism and Communism are more evenly balanced what the consequences will be is demonstrated to us by the happenings that go on before our eyes in Spain.

Britain and her parliamentary government seem safe. British Labour has recently rejected Communist advances. The comparative prosperity of Britain; thanks to her early colonial and commercial expansion of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, permeating all ranks and supporting their higher standards of living and the balanced conditions of rival forces in Britain, keep the British Parliament in power. There is still the possibility of Fascism gaining the upper hand and Labour is wise not to force that result. And Britain cannot be said to be, at home or abroad, the power that she used to be.

Both Fascism and Communism are based on force. The undivided national will is not behind the state and is not working for the betterment of national conditions. The national will is divided and the people are divided into two opposite camps bent on destroying each other. One may be active and the other passive and there may be no clash for the moment, but everything is unstable and each group is in perpetual dread of the other rising and wresting power. There never can be anything like rest from this perpetual watch. If either group ever reached rest and freedom from all anxiety for the future, it can only be after many conflicts and bloodshed on the scale now openly witnessed in Spain.

By a very laborious process of national education the national will was organised behind the state so as to maintain the stability and strength of the state in the discharge of its duty of maintaining its citizens without mutual conflict. The world is now trying to evolve and organise a similar order and discipline in the international sphere. Just as within a nation the united will of individual citizens was organised to support and maintain the supreme authority of the state, the collective strength of the nations

is now sought to be effectively organised behind the League of Nations. For the moment, it has failed and the prospect of organising the international order does not look very bright but it will be attempted again and yet again until some kind of order is evolved.

Those who carry on active propaganda for rousing class consciousness and class conflict in India are working for the Spanish experiences being repeated in India. The propagandists disclaim all intention to promote violence. There is no need to question the *bona fides* of the disclaimer. We have experience as to how little the intention of a propagandist counts in the result. What we do not intend may, and often does, happen. It is not in our power then to stop it. It is easy enough to raise the ghost, but not as easy to lay it to rest.

India is predominantly an agricultural country. Its industrialisation is still in the future. It is a country of villages and small holdings. It is naturally therefore a conservative country. Admiration for Soviet Russia and her real and supposed achievements is the characteristic of a comparatively small class. At what cost what has been achieved in Russia has been achieved still remains to be calculated—in human life, in human misery and in the sacrifice of human freedom. There may be some material good. More may be produced and more may be distributed. That result will have to be purchased at the cost of much that we have learnt to value. Whether one should work, what one should produce and what consume, will all be dictated by other people. The state, that is, the few in charge of affairs, will decide what shall be produced and how it shall be distributed. Ultimately, it will be a question whether for the material good that might be obtained out of Communist organisation it is worth sacrificing the non-material and intangible spiritual good that comes out of human freedom.

Even the economic side of the Communist organisation is not, by any means, a matter of common agreement. It is still under discussion among those conversant with the mysteries of economic phenomena in the world. They suggest doubts and difficulties. Soviet Russia herself is not now so sure as when she started. She is making modifications and, in some cases, reversions. Some time ago, it was said that she was setting up a Parliament.

I do not claim to speak with full knowledge either of the present condition of Russia or of the complicated laws governing world-wide economic phenomena. I am speaking as an ordinary citizen who is

interested in human freedom. What is sure to be lost will be found to be much more valuable than what may be gained.

I am not by any means sure that there is nothing to be gained by an attempt at reforming the existing system. Every one will admit, and no one will deny, that there is much to reform and human wisdom and sagacity will be tested to the full in the devising of ways of relief and amelioration of existing conditions. Reform and not revolution is the way. Revolution must needs uproot and destroy. Reform need not. Slowly and patiently is God's work—or if it is preferable to use other words, good work—done. The ancient approved lines of work have not been fully or duly tested and rejected. Impartial judgment will, on the other hand, declare them vindicated. Every time you go off and work for impatient revolution, after a period of destruction, you will be driven back to the slow, steady, patient, eternal way of building brick by brick. At any rate, those who profess to believe that socialism is inevitable and must come on whatever you may do or may not do, need not carry on revolutionary propaganda.

From Man the Problem-Solver

By HAROLD BENJAMIN, Ph. D.

In attempting to define the limits of freedom, the practical administrator and the political theorist alike must consider the character of the population with which they deal. Certain peoples thrive under autocracy, while others appear to prefer a democracy, however inefficient, to the most benevolent of dictatorships. The history of the last six years is crowded with examples of countries which have attempted popular systems of rule only to find that the boundaries of liberty have been extended far beyond the abilities of individual citizens to profit thereby.

MARTHA AND MARY

By H. L. S. WILKINSON

These two sisters are wonderfully in evidence everywhere to-day. So much so that it strikes one rather humorously! How the gods must smile at times, when Martha is over-energetic, and Mary stumbles while gazing heavenwards! For the two are beautifully unlike.

Martha was trained in a big London hospital. She is thorough, strong and ruthlessly efficient. She does not suffer either dirt or fools gladly. She brandishes a mop and duster very vigorously, but sometimes raises more dust than she sweeps away. There is an art in sweeping away dust, and Martha is sometimes too impatient to learn it!

Martha once went out to India, to see her sister. Heavens, what a dust she raised! The way that mop and duster went flying about all through the land was something to remember! Then she wrote a book called *Mother India*, abusing her poor sister up hill and down dale. All the Marthas in England and America were immensely pleased, and the Marys in India very indignant.

The high gods smiled!

But slowly times are changing. Mary is getting uneasy, and it dawns on her that she has something to learn from Martha, so she is visiting England to learn some of her sister's methods. The learning process is painful, but still she learns!

But Martha is very impatient and almost too proud to learn—especially from her sister Mary, whom she has always rather despised. It hasn't dawned on her what a wonderful message Mary has to give. When she learns it, she will gain a new love for Mary, and a new understanding of herself. And her whole life will be enriched.

Then will the two sisters, clasping hands, carry the great British Empire to its Destiny, and a still vaster Empire will loom forth in the Womb of the Future.

God speed the day!

[From *The Liberal Catholic*.]

DEPRESSED CLASSES AND CONVERSION.*

DEWAN BAHADUR R. SREENIVASAN M. L. C.

President Depressed Classes Federation.

The subject we have before us is the Depressed Classes, their religion and their conversion to other religions.

There is a general impression in India that the people known as Depressed Classes have no religion of their own.

Many of them even in those classes do not know what their religion is and its name. Before we speak of their conversion to any other religion it will be helpful to us to understand who they are, their history, language, literature and religion.

To trace the geneology of an ancient race in South India, one has to search histories, folklores and in particular the folk talks, which are mostly true, forgotten by generations of the race, sometimes partly told even that also was exaggerated, or partly or wholly denied by those who find them disadvantageous to them. Sometimes the ancient manuscript was rewritten to suit the advantage of certain section of their race or other race and their monuments re-named or demolished. What I have gathered a portion of the Dravidian race now commonly known as the Depressed Classes or scheduled castes, let me tell you some of them as briefly as possible appropriate to this occasion.

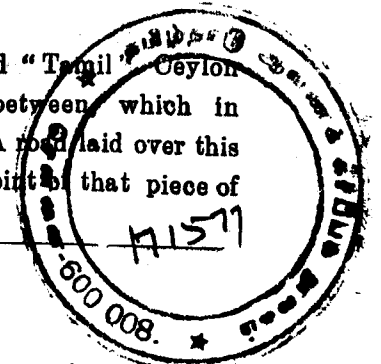
In that little book entitled "The lost Atlantis" by Capt. Scott, probably now out of print, it is stated that as the Atlantic Land merged into sea owing to volcanic eruptions, people moved from place to place, latterly they were separated and went into different directions.

The people who moved towards the land now known as India were cultured. Their language and literature was Tamil while they were in Atlantic land nearer to India. They had a Fort on a mountain called the "The Fort of Golden Gate" and aircrafts (Akasa Vimanams) fitted with tubes and worked by air power. Accounts of these can also be found in Ancient Tamil writings.

When they immigrated into India, they were called "Dravidians" the term derived from "Tiru-Tamil".

They were also called "Dramula," "Damila" and "Tamil." Ceylon was a part of India. The river "Kumari" ran between which in course of time was inundated by sea and widened. A road laid over this portion still remains over which train runs now. A point of that piece of land is known as the Cape Comarin.

*Opening Addresses at the Inter Religious Conference.



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People immigrated into South India cleared jungles, cultivated lands and built towns. They were highly religious and peace loving. They followed their elders who were highly cultured and religious and recognised as Perumans (Lords) such as Mallia Peruman, Ambuli Samanda Naraina Venaga Peruman, Cheruman Peruman and others. They granted lands as endowments to some of the temples, now in the enjoyment of the Caste Hindus. Some of the Dravidian race are said to have immigrated to further North of India and settled there. They speak Tamil.

Among the great Peruman that lived in Southern India, monuments of whom as temples still remain to be seen. Mariamman, sister of Tiruvalluvar in Tanjore, Sambuva Samban (Jambukesvar) in Trichinopoly, Piravida Samban (Piratheswara) and his wife Perianayagi in Tanjore and Thyaga Samban (Thyagaraja Perumal) in Tiruvarur. These temples were built over the cremated ground of the respective Sambans by Chola Rajahs.

There were events indicating that Sambans were civilised, intelligent and had moral courage even long after Aryan invasion. Ravana, a peruman, in Ceylon took Sita in the absence of Rama. The lamentations of Rama reached Mallia Peruman a very influential lord and Sambuva Samban who was a good friend of Ravana. They took compassion on Rama, brought pressure to bear upon Ravana and restored Sita to Rama. There was no army of men or monkeys nor had Ravana ten heads.

The temple of Thiagaraja Perumal at Tiruvarur was built over the cremated ground of Thiaga Samban, whose daughter consented to marry a Chola Rajah on his promise to build the temple.

A fort built of magnet stones by Kamalas, who played havoc in its neighbourhood where there was a Rajah and his peasants, was destroyed by a Princess by covering it over with straw in a night and setting fire to it.

Currency was known at that time. A Rajah known as Tholkasu Nandan cut leather into shapes of coins impressed his name on them and used them as currency.

There was a ruined Fort till recently near Kumbakonam known as Fort Nanda.

In literature Tamil works such as Naladiar, Tholkapiyam and many other ancient works were in Southern India long before the Aryan invasion and introduction of Sanskrit. Tradition refers to the commencement of literary activities in Tamil Country to Agastya Muni, Kural, Gnave

and other great works by Trivalluvar and by one of his sisters, Auvai, the Authichoodi and other works on morals are of Tamil origin. The Tamil is so noble and rich a language that it has not been in want to take any help from Sanskrit.

It is very common among Caste Hindus to ignore the existence of any eminent men or women in the Sambava community (the Depressed Classes) and claim them to be of Brahmin or any other origin. The story is told and written that Bhagavan a Brahmin, met Authi a pariah woman in a chatram (rest house). They together wandered over the country and brought forth children some of whom were Tiruvalluvar, Auvai and Mariamma. The story is also told that Authi, mother of Tiruvalluvar, was a daughter of a great land lord in Karur known as Karur Perum Parayan. He could not have allowed his daughter to go to the forest and fetch fire wood and kept unnoticed her absence. Bhagavan her husband should have been a highly cultured man. To say that he was a Brahmin is a myth. Mariamma is generally known as Karur Mariamma. It is obvious that she and her brothers were born in Karur where their mother Authi was born.

Nanda (Thirunalapovar) was a peasant and a great devotee. He prayed for access into Nataraja Temple. He was permitted. Instead of speaking of the virtue of the saint the caste Hindus in their kalakshepams, dramas and talkies show only the vices of the community he belonged to, in order to further degrade these innocent and helpless people.

Their religion is known as Tamil Marai (Tamil religion) Uthara Veda (highest religion) Pothu Marai (that which may be shared by many) Poya Moli (true precepts). The religion was founded after ten thousand years of research by three Sangams (Societies) one after another formed of eminent poets and philosophers to establish a real religion to all beings in the world. Tiruvalluvar produced the kural which was accepted as complete and final. Immediately thereafter the sangam was dissolved. It has been accepted by great and learned men that in no religion such complete precepts for human beings in spiritual and material moral matters exist. The Aryan religion and Tamil Marai were so blended by Aryans and Aryanised Dravidians as to be called Hinduism. Swami Sahajananda may throw some light on this subject.

Since the Aryans came to South India, introduced their method of administration and caste system, peace, tranquility, devotion to God and observance of precepts of Tamil Marai, were disturbed; people were divided, bigoted, hatred of superiors and inferiors prevailed. Those Dravidians who were not Aryanised and declined to accept caste system were oppres-

beat of tom-tom in the vicinity of the temple and in the village of Veerasingampettai. At about 2 p. m., on March 26, it was alleged, a mob of about 300 persons belonging to an adjacent village came to the temple for fulfilling their vows. The police warned them. Some members of the crowd protested; stones were thrown at the police. The Magistrate gave orders to open fire, which was done and two persons, as a result, died. There was a lull in the situation though stone throwing continued which compelled police officials and the Sub-Magistrate to take shelter in the temple. The mob rushed in to the temple and it was alleged, beat the Sub-Magistrate, the Sub-Inspector and police officers and men indiscriminately with sticks and stones. Several police constables, who received injuries, fled from the place. One of them ran to Tanjore and gave information to the police. Police help then arrived and the Sub-Inspector, who was injured seriously, was removed to hospital, where he died. The Sub-Magistrate and a head-constable died of injuries. The police after investigation charged 55 persons for rioting, murder and causing hurt. The accused were all committed to the sessions and the Special Sessions Judge acquitted 19 persons. Of the remaining 36, 19 persons were sentenced to transportation for life and four to death, and the remainder to varying terms of imprisonment.

Against their convictions and sentences, the accused preferred appeals to the High Court and the Government also appealed against the acquittal of some by the Sessions Judge.

Their Lordships discussed the evidence in detail, and referring to the question of common intention, stated:

"We do not think that the evidence shows the rioters to have had any other common object than that of flouting the Sub-Magistrate and the police. When the police opened fire, and killed two persons and wounded four others, the situation was immediately changed. Thereafter, some of the rioters were determined to wreak vengeance upon the Sub-Magistrate and the police. But we do not think the evidence shows that all were equally resolved to go to any lengths. Some were bent upon killing the Sub-Magistrate and the police, others cannot be said to have been proved to have desired to do more than beat them. It is impossible to hold that the murder of the Sub-Magistrate, the Sub-Inspector and the Head Constable and the beating of other police men were committed in prosecution of the common object of overawing the Sub-Magistrate and the police. It is not possible even to hold that these were such offences as the mob knew to be likely to be committed in prosecution of that

common object. When the Sub-Magistrate and the police had been scattered in various directions, the common object of overawing them had already been achieved. We think, therefore, that if the police and the Magistrate had been put to flight from the alagumedai, the only persons who could be convicted of the offences which happened subsequently are those who took part in them. We cannot agree with the Sessions Judge that everybody who is proved to have beaten a police man must be held guilty of all the offences, namely, rioting, murder and voluntarily causing hurt.

Sentences

It remains to deal with the question of sentences. After careful consideration we have come to the conclusion that this is not a case in which any one should be sentenced to death. The Sub-Magistrate, the Sub-Inspector and the head-constables were beaten to death in a brutal manner and for crimes of that kind, the extreme penalty of the law is ordinarily the only appropriate sentence. But this is not an ordinary case. It has to be borne in mind that the people of the class to which the accused belong held the ceremony of alagupiercing to be a matter of high religious importance. Many of them had made actual vows to perform the ceremony, had made all the preparations for it and nobody had any idea that there would be any objection to it raised by the authorities until the very morning of the last day of the festival, the day on which the vows were to be performed. In such circumstances, it is easy to understand, we do not say to excuse, the state of indignation and wrath into which the people were thrown by the sudden prohibition. They determined that on that occasion, at any rate, they would go on with the ceremony, order or no order. The riot began and then the shooting and killing of two men further inflamed passions already blazing and certain members of the mob proceeded to excesses which were far from any one's thought when the riot began. Moved by considerations such as these, we have decided to set aside the sentences of death passed upon four persons by the learned Sessions Judge and to pass upon all those whom we hold guilty of murder the sentence of transportation for life. The sentence of rigorous imprisonment for 13 months which the learned Sessions Judge imposed for the offence of rioting is, we think, proper and we confirm it in the case of those whom we hold to have been rightly convicted on the first charge. We do not, however, agree that the sentences of fine passed upon eight of the accused are appropriate and we set them aside,

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The sentences of rigorous imprisonment imposed by the learned Sessions Judge for particular offences under Sections 332 and 333, Indian Penal Code are, in our opinion, proper sentences and we confirm them.

As regards the sentences, on the charge of rioting, the appeals preferred by accused 4, 24 and 33 who were dead, abated. The fine imposed upon accused 24 was set aside. The appeals preferred by accused 14, 25, 30, 36, 47 and 55 were allowed and their convictions and sentences were set aside. The convictions of accused 1 to 3, 5 to 13, 15 to 19, 27, 29, 37 to 40, 44, 46, 48 and 52 on the charge of rioting were confirmed. The fines imposed upon accused 1, 2, 3, 7, 19 and 39 were set aside.

On the charge of murder, the appeal preferred by the Government was allowed against accused 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 15, 19, 22, 27, 39 and 53 and these accused were sentenced to transportation for life. The appeal of accused 16 and 18 who had been convicted of murder was dismissed but the sentence of death passed upon them was commuted to one of transportation for life. The convictions and sentences of those who had been convicted of voluntarily causing hurt to a public servant were confirmed. The convictions and sentences of the accused under the charge of constructive liability under Section 149, I. P. C., for all the offences, were set aside.

From The Hindu.

Education for Leisure.

Contemplating the enormous effort of human energy that would be released under (shorter hours of work) an appalling prospect rises up when we think of it as all expended in a quest for external excitements, thrills, stimulus and ready made pleasures.

(There is no warranty for believing) that the masses of the people if endowed with sufficient leisure and income would spontaneously make use of both for the cultivation of their souls or the study of their social duties.

NOTES

Gandhi and Besant:—Not many public workers have served and enriched India as these two great personages whose birthday the country celebrates during this month. To Dr. Besant India owes more than it has cared to remember. For over fifty years Dr. Besant thought and felt for India as few patriots had done. She devoted the best part of her life and energy to propaganda for India's uplift, and in championing India's cause in the lecture halls of the civilized world. She was the very embodiment of India's aspirations. Her affection was rooted in firm loyalty to India's past. Her vision ranged over the whole field of possibilities of India's greatness in the future. To her labours on India's behalf she brought all her marvellous powers of organisation. She spent her resources in service for India with unsurpassed generosity. Neither difficulty nor failure, neither the apathy of friends nor the hostility of opponents, made her deviate from her great career of service.

Of Gandhiji it is difficult to speak without reverence and love. If any single person can be said to have raised the stature of India before the world it is Gandhiji. He has helped India to find its soul. He has discovered and propounded the Dharma of India's progress along lines which combine practical wisdom with moral exaltation. He has himself lived the dedicated life. The Gandhian epoch is a landmark in India's history.

Government and the Depressed Classes:—In a recent review the Government have enumerated the work that has been done for the Depressed Classes these many years. That work is quite encouraging as a beginning but inadequate in comparison with the need. Making up for lost progress is very difficult. In these days of social plans, the depressed classes are entitled to ask for an intensive scheme for their elevation which will bring them into line with the other communities of the country within a definite period. It is probable that with increased representation in the new Madras Assembly the scheduled castes will be able to procure for themselves those facilities which will enable them to discharge the duties of Indian Citizenship on an equal footing with others.

Reform or Revolution? :—Elsewhere in this issue we have published extracts from the Founder's Day address of Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri at the Annamalai University. At a time when the atmosphere is resounding with revolutionary slogans shouted without adequate apprehension of their implications, it is a relief to come across helpful thinking on the issues which face the country. Those who speak of revolutions imagine that it is all going to produce an Utopia of which they have been forced to dream by the pitiable conditions in which the average Indian has to live. But revolutions, even successful revolutions, have never produced Utopias. Instead, they have generally raised more problems than they solved. In some cases the last stage has been worse than the first. Apart from the terrible price that has to be paid for them, it is questionable expediency to preach it to a country where the people have had no long political training and where experience in democracy and representative Government is only being acquired. From one point of view it looks doubtful whether any government however efficient and well intentioned can provide for the requisites of full life for a population of 350 millions which increases roughly at the rate of two millions a year.

* * * *

This picture and that :—"The existence of the untouchables is a standing challenge to Islam. No true Muslim can rest so long as a single human being remains untouchable". So spoke a Muslim speaker at a recent public meeting. That is the voice not merely of true Islam but of true religion. No sincere lover of God can rest till equal opportunities of religious service are given to every human being.

Compare with this the attitude of some Sanatanists who say that the removal of untouchability is a peril to Hinduism. They seem to suggest that the safety of Hinduism depends upon the maintenance of untouchability and that with the disappearance of the last untouchable Hinduism will collapse. What a sad spectacle?

* * * *

"Do these children belong to the Depressed Classes" ?—That was the remark made by a friend about the boys and girls who had gathered in the Servants of India Society on the anniversary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. It was just a year or two of care and culture that has been bestowed upon these children by the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the result

has been to transform them to a condition though not of equality at least of similarity to the children of the caste Hindus. When the children sang and danced it was not different from that in a caste Hindu institution. In discipline and restraint the children were distinctly better. Though in the case of some children there was an appearance of excessive resignation and submission, the whole atmosphere was one of joy and liveliness.

* * * *

The Elections :—The election atmosphere is already upon the country. In spite of occasional reference to principles, personal and communal issues figure most prominently in the election campaigns of the parties. The Congress focusses on independence. For the Congress the current administrative problems of the country are of secondary importance and are to be subordinated to the struggle for Swaraj. The Liberals desire to combine both programmes and are on that very ground denounced and discredited by the Congress as people in whom the fire of patriotism does not burn strongly enough. The Muslim and Justice groups are more concerned, with the agitation of communal grievances and the securing of communal advantages, than with the progress of the nation. The Scheduled Castes cannot be expected to lead in the subordination of communal to National outlook. One notices with sadness the entire absence of a practical and constructive programme, on the urgent problems that confront the country and the dangers that menace it from many sides.

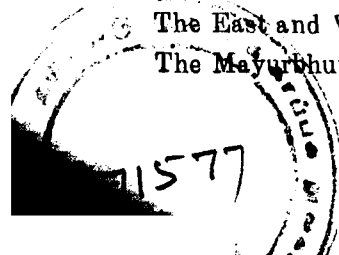
At the same time one sees and hears from many quarters the swelling figures of election expenses. Some of them run into ridiculously excessive sums of many tens of thousands of rupees. They have one result. They effectively shut the door of the legislature against the poor but honest section of sincere public workers. These have to be content with being hangers-on on their more lucky and enterprising rivals and with carrying out their schemes of public improvement through the successful candidates a course which is uncertain and unsatisfactory. Another result is indeed suggested though in whispers. If candidates have to spend wholly disproportionate amounts for a share in shaping the destinies of the Country is it not likely that on occasions when their duty conflicts with their self-interest they will be subject to an extra strain on their moral resistance?

* * * *

Will Hook Swinging Cease:—Self-torture for worship strikes some of us as a contradiction in terms. Contact with divine presence stands for the full life, physical and mental. That in such presence it should be thought right and even meritorious to indulge in gruesome self-mortification can only be ascribed to the deadly persistence of primitive ideas. In India such survivals are not merely tolerated by the indifference of the intelligentsia to its prevalence, but even encouraged by the attitude which Hinduism adopts to inferior forms of worship. It is possible to argue in its defence as it is possible to argue in support of other undesirable customs which conscience condemns to be wrong and time has consigned to oblivion. What is really useful however, is education and propaganda for generating the urge for better forms of worship and for the transmutation of religious zeal into the nobler forms of sacrifice. It is to be sincerely hoped that with Veerasingampettai rioting we have witnessed the last of these unsightly rituals and that the religious energy of the worshippers who resorted to it till now, will enrich the country by flowing into new channels of worship.

Our Exchange Table.

The Indian Mirror	The Liberal Catholic
The Dharmarajya	The Indian Educator
The Indian Theosophist	The Scholar
The Health	The Christian Esoteric
The Vision	The Tamil Pozhil (Tamil)
The Ardra	The Kalaimagal (Tamil)
The Meher Gazette	The Lokamanya (Tamil)
The Federated India	The Stri Dharma (Tamil)
The Hindu Theological School	The New Outlook
Magazine	The Sadhana
The East and West	The Visva Bharati News
The Mayurbhanj Chronicle	



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