

THE ²⁹¹
Bharata Dharma

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

—The Official Organ of the Arya Mata Sabha—

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'The wonder under the Banyan tree! A young teacher and old disciples. The teaching is silence and the disciples' doubts are cleared.

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SERVICE*

BY SWAMI RAJESWARANAND.

Service is a state wherein one tries to outgrow his or her individuality into the realisation of universality. Service is a manifestation of one's sincere love unto others, fencing not oneself in and thus fencing not others out. In the universe 'Pull' alone is the watchword, but one misreads it and begins to 'push', knowing not that the centre of gravity is within. Service is worship of the one in the many and not even help, as commonly understood. Service is self-sacrifice to the last degree. It is a means to make one realise God in the temple of one's own soul and thereby in the temple of the whole universe.

There is an Indian parable of two boys who began to fight over a basket of fruits and as they were struggling to snatch it from each other's hands, the fruits dropped into the ditch and they went on quarrelling over an empty basket. A passer-by seeing them, said : "Why are you quarrelling? The fruits have fallen into the ditch. Why should you fight over the empty basket?" And this is often the case in the world. People forget the essential and waste their energies disputing over the non-essentials, whereas service necessitates a man fostering inter-communal interests. It makes every one raise unitedly a sincere voice of protest against all social injustices. It is a power and force in itself. It deals a death blow to the silly notions of privileges and prejudices that wall between brother and brother. One has to learn the lesson of serving without any ulterior motive. Service always bears fruit. It always creates.

* A public lecture delivered at Kinema Central, Madras.

Every act of our life can be done in such a way as to uplift us or to drag us down. It is not what we do, but how we do it that determines the merit of each action. A worthy lover of mankind is like a flower, which gives its fragrance whether we place it on our head or trample it under our feet. His nature is to serve (give) without any regard for his own personal gain or loss. It is indeed a rare blessing that we have in our midst our beloved and blessed Mahatma Gandhi whose actions speak louder than words. He practically teaches: 'That which makes a man forget his own little self for others and leads him towards his Ideal of Service is his highest duty'.

It is a vain glory to say that our Rishis of yore were great and then go to sleep. It is nothing less than foolishness. And we say: "We are proud of our Rishis." But ask yourselves: "Are the Rishis proud of you?" So, you see, let us begin from the very beginning by purifying our instincts. Make them pure. Let instincts impel, impulses ideate, ideas act, actions habituate, habits characterise and character achieve the Goal of life. Then will you be true sons and daughters of India and builders of the coming temple of Liberty, waving the flag of Freedom, Peace, Unity and Love, here, there and everywhere. We will then be rising above all communal dissensions that take toll of the peace and progress of the country at present. Because, one cannot but help or hinder under the Cosmic Law, as there is no stand-still in nature. Activity is inevitable, whether of body or of mind. Each action produces its result. Such results ought to harmonise with the highest ideal of our life. In this great workshop of nature every one is active, one way or other. But be not affected by external appeals. Be not led captive by circumstances and events. You do not show your strength when you swim smoothly with the tide. Be powerful to cleave the resisting current. So also you do not show your virtue when you are carried along in a pleasant stream of happy conduct from outside. Stand firm and calm in the midst of adverse conditions, in times of opposition, temptation and persecution. Manifest the Divinity by knowing Thyself as supreme and serene. Let the Light of Self shine. Become aware of the drama played on the stage of the world. Do not be a mere ignorant spectator of it. Know your part and act it, not automatically but consciously, to the best of your abilities. It is then you live your life nobly and well. Never be so foolish as to think that you are a real prince or a page, though you might seem to be so acting your part. The worldly scenes of sensual shows will surely cease to tempt, touch and taint you, if you but consciously realise your birthright, your inner

nature of immortality and infinity. Your face ought to shine. Your spirit ought to be tranquil. Your eye ought to be clear. Your nerves ought to be steady. With these, press through the tasks of your commonmost day. Live just as purely and beautifully in private as in the open glare of the world's noon. Train yourself to work under the divine eye and stand the divine inspection. Put beauty into life and let it begin to stir from the innermost depths. Build it bit by bit, and moment by moment, to ably pass through thick and thin, fire and ice and thus reach its destination in the pilgrimage on earth. Be original in everything. The dynamic force of originality lies latent in you. Kindle it up. Blaze your own way instead of trying to walk in old paths or the beaten tracks. Have something new to give to the world. Enlightened seers and saints of yore sounded the Note of Freedom by their unfoldment of originality.

Service spells rhythm. Rhythm spells harmony. Harmony spells beauty. Beauty spells joy. Joy spells love. Love spells unity. Unity spells Truth. Truth makes you live in the Supreme Self. You can thus keep your head in solitude with your hand in society. Further service makes us secure a common and broad platform on which a Hindu, a Christian, a Mohammadan, a Buddhist, a Jew, a Parsi, a Jain, and one and all can stand and embrace one another as members of the great family of humanity. And we realise thereby the Universal Unity underlying the diverse faiths in the world. Service lifts us up above all petty differences and distinctions. It knows no bargain.

Let us awake and arise and gird up our loins before the sunset of our lives which may come at any moment. No more shall we be deluded with the material glamour and hunt after the vaporous birds in the sky all through our lives or try to catch the fabled bag of gold at the foot of a rainbow like children! Let us make delusion to delude itself; let us step from the ephemeral into the Eternal and toll the death-knell of empty prejudices, meaningless divisions and apparent differences. Let us sing the song of Love sitting on the Throne of Truth. Let us thus with one heart and soul live together. Let us be as broad as the sky, as deep as the sea, as bright as a star, as universal as the sun, as free as ether, as clear as crystal, as cool as the moon, as firm as Meru, and as fragrant as a flower. This is the Note of Peace and Service not only of the individual and the nation but of humanity as a whole. Thus we meet on the common ground which forms the basis of solidarity,—a solidarity that will not break in any age or clime. And it is thus that every one of us can become a living embodiment of Harmony, Love and Service.

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF A BHAKTA ; II—ALAVANDAR

S. K. Y.

An attempt was made on a previous occasion to study the mental working of a devotee as revealed in the literary expression of that mind and its mood and *Mukundamala* and its author Kulasekhara were subjected to that study. We attempt in this article a study of the famous *Stotra-ratna* which is more familiarly known after its great author as *Alavandar Stotra*. It is a great classic and is held deservedly in very high esteem by the Vaishnavites. The non-Vaishnavites stand to lose much if they don't study this great devotional classic which is a literary masterpiece as well.

Alavandar or Yamunacharya was the grandson of Nathamuni and the predecessor of Sri Ramanuja in the Vaishnavite *guru-parampara* and hagiology. He formulated and popularised the Visishtadvaitic doctrines in his works. This system like any other Indian system deals with the three entities, matter, Jiva and Iswara, their characteristic, salvation and the method of obtaining it (verse 4).

The core of the system, as far as a non-initiate can understand it, is the peculiar relation between God and the individual soul. God is *Adhara*, (the support) *Vidhayaka* (the ordering person) and *Seshi* and the individual is *Adheya* (the supported) *Vidheya* (the ordered about) and *Sesha*. God is to the human soul as that soul is to the living body. The way to salvation is *Prapati* or complete surrender to the Lord as taught in the Gita (Chapter XVIII verse 66.) This ideological background has to be understood before the *stotra* could be fully appreciated.

These *stotras* of our land cannot be called prayers. A prayer, as ordinarily understood and practised by Christians, is a communion with God, of short duration; it consists of adoration or glorification of God, repentance and plea for forgiveness and supplication for favours, 'give us this day our daily bread' or to be saved. Most of our *stotras* contain these three phases; but they contain one thing peculiar not to be found in the prayers of other theistic religions like Christianity and Islam and that is a glowing description of the *saguna* aspect of the Lord, a description which enables the devotee to conceive of his *Ishta-devata* in some concrete form for his *Dhyana* (contemplation) and his *Upasana* (worship).

Another feature of these devotional hymns is the tendency on the part of the author to take for granted the *Paramya* (the supremeness) of his *Ishta* and proclaim its superiority over other forms of manifestation.

A Vaishnavite looks upon Siva and Brahma as inferior to Vishnu, a Sivaite regards Vishnu as inferior to Siva and Sakta would regard both Vishnu and Siva to be on a lower level compared with Sakti. This tendency, however deplorable from a modern point of view, is inevitable and has to be condoned by a modern student.

With these preliminary observations, let us turn to the poem itself. It consists of 65 verses written in different metres. There is, however, no bewildering variety as you find in *Sivananda-lahari* (in its latter half) or monotony as in *Soundarya-lahari* or in *Siva-mahimna Stotra*; but the verses are composed in the well-known and popular metres, *Vasanta-tilaka Upendra-vajra* or *Vamsastha*. There are six well marked sections and we shall consider them in the order of occurrence and study their thought sequence.

Section I. Verses 1-9. Introduction.

According to the time honoured practice, Acharya begins his *stotra* with salutations to his spiritual Guru and grandfather, Nathamuni (verses 1-3). Verse 4 is a salutation to the sage Parasara, the reputed author of Vishnu-purana, one of the authorities or source-books of Vaishnavism. Verses 5 and 6 are salutation to the Lord Narayana Himself. The seventh verse is a curious one; it is a salutation to his "shameless self" that ventures on this bold task of praising the Lord. Verses 8 and 9 compare the author with others like Brahma etc. engaged in the same task of praising the Lord and establish the author's superiority over them; because though both be unsuccessful in understanding the Lord or His characteristics, the author being a mortal easily gets tired and hence deserves the compassion of the Lord more than the immortals!

II Section. Verses 10-20. God's qualities.

There is a polemical tinge about this section especially in verse 11. The author tries to establish that Vaishnavism is based on the Vedas with its implication that those who do not accept Narayana are *Veda-bahya*. In verses 12, 13 and 14 the author adopts the well-known rhetorical principle of interrogation in preference to a mere indicative statement and enumerates His characteristics. Incidentally we find in these the peculiar feature mentioned above as characterising these hymns, i.e., the exaltation of the particular *Devata* above other forms of God. Vedas just begin to lisp about His greatness (verse 19). He is the ocean of all desirable qualities (verse 18).

III Section. Verses 21-29.

Surrender and supplication to be saved.

There is a characteristic outburst in verse 21 followed by self-humiliation in verses 22 and 23. Verses 24 and 25 can be parallel from similar devotional compositions. The devotee tells the Lord, "None so competent as Thou to save me and none so fit to be served by Thee as myself." The greatness of a Physician consists in taking up a case given up as hopeless by others and curing him; so also the devotee imagines himself to be the least deserving of salvation and yet appeals to the Lord to demonstrate His greatness by saving him, even him the most hopelessly lost soul. Verse 25 is very touching. "What suffering am I likely to get now that I had not before? I shall endure everything. I am accustomed to it; but if I am not saved it means a defeat to you which is quite unbecoming to You". In verse 27 the author affirms his unswerving loyalty to the Lord.

Section IV. Verses 30-45 An attempt at visualising the Lord.

This is a poetic masterpiece. In words that echo the sense the Lord is visualised as He is in Vaikunta sitting on the bed of Sesha with His consort Lakshmi and His vehicle Garuda and all the paraphornalia. The description may be considered to be anthropomorphic; but it is inevitable.

Section V. Verses 47-60. Supplication for grace.

After the grand outburst of devotional fervour and poetic beauty wherein the devotee expresses his longing for the grand vision there is a change. He suddenly realises his unworthiness to have the vision and to be counted as one of His followers and condemns his audacity. (47). He completely surrenders himself and seeks the divine grace (48). He compares himself to one who has lost his way on a dark and rainy day and prays for the saving glance of the Lord (49). In verses (50) and (51) the author reverts to the old idea of their mutual fitness, the Saviour and the sinner to be saved. He places himself and all his unreservedly at the disposal of the Lord (52); he corrects himself in verse (53) with the thought 'What have I to give You which is not already Thine?' He prays (54) for the boon of *Bhakti* and would prefer to be a worm in the house of the Lord's devotee to being Brahma in another place (54). As a preliminary to *Bhakti* he prays for *Sat-sanga* (56) or the company of devotees and wants nothing but *Seshatva* (57 and 58).

Section VI Verses 61-65. Conclusion.

The last few verses form the concluding part as noble as the introduction. Again there is self-humiliation with quite characteristic exaggeration of his own sins; (61 and 62) but all this is only to

throw into relief the saving power of the Lord who in his incarnations as Rama and Krishna saved even those who opposed Him (63). Verse 64 is most touching. The devotee reminds the Lord of His oath recorded in Ramayana that he would protect any one who surrenders himself to Him and declares himself to be absolutely His. "This is my principle" said Rama and the devotee asks quite innocently, "Am I to be the only exception to the rule?" Even this great combination of poetic beauty, fervid devotion and human touch is outdistanced in the next verse with which the hymn concludes. "Forget my conduct; remember only your true devotee and my grandfather Nathamuni and save me at least for *his* sake" (65).

This classic deserves to be studied not only by the Vaishnavites among whom it is traditionally popular; but amongst all lovers of Sanskrit, nay among all true devotees of the Lord to whatsoever denomination or religion they may belong.

Basic English and basic Sanskrit:—The remarks of the Dewan of Travancore at the University Buildings at Trivandrum on the occasion of according welcome to Mr. Adolph Myers echo the universal belief that the South Indian Youth has a unique gift of memorising in the matter of learning. But for the lure of English as the bread winning lever, there is no reason to suppose that the Indian would not have revived Sanskrit classicals both for inter-provincial conversation and for a speedier renaissance of the ancient Hindu culture which are enshrined in the glorious Hindu and Vedic culture. Basic Sanskrit is more befitting for Hindu resuscitation than basic English. Leaders of Hindu thought would do well to strive in that direction. Indeed no codifying as in Basic English is necessary. We have by our own Pandits the famous *Amarakosa* the dictionary of Sanskrit of about 10,000 words which serves as an example as to how one can spread the knowledge of the language. Similar codifications might be added in order that they embody the language that understands new thoughts, new theories of science and new concepts about the realisation of God, new aspirations to realise and knowledge and power, that when acquired would shun all other mean voluptuous desires and attractions.

IS "RAMA RAJYA" A MYTH?

BY

P. P. SARADHI, B.A., B.L., *Sub-Judge, (Retd.)*

An interesting and impressive speculation is the sensational work of *Olaf Stapledon* "Last and First men". The writer pictured himself to be an inhabitant of the very remote future. He calls himself one of the "Last Men" species and his pages of work are intended as an address to the present generation—the "First human species".

The predictions of what man would be like thousands of years hence have necessarily a bearing upon the present tendencies in human nature. Something like a construction in imagination of the future man, corresponds to the reconstruction by the archiologist of the remote past. This latter is probably less open to criticism, than the former which has several unexpected avenues and side-tracks evading accurate measurement. "The Romance of the far future, then is to attempt", he says, "to see the human race in its cosmic setting, and to mould our hearts to entertain new values." Similar to some extent is also the *romance of the remote past*. *Valmiki's Ramayana* is the greatest of the world's epic poetry; for it has given visions of *Rama Rajya*. Though now India is bereft of the glories of Rama's and Dasaratha's reign, we find still the fundamental theistic and social philosophy even now observed by the masses and their tenacity defies drastic innovations. The Sanathana Dharma, embracing Varnasrama Dharma, is the most pertinacious of India's systems. We have besides many an insight into the other social conditions, the beauty of the Hindu family, the relationship and filial faith predominantly in vogue, the qualified liberty which women were enjoying and so on.

But what is more important is the tracing out of the idea of narration to God Brahma, through him to Sage Narada, and through Narada to Valmiki. The ideology of the Epic has been so impressive and acquired such abiding characteristics during aeons of human evolution, that it was impressed with the seal of approval of and revelation from the Godhead. In this sense it may be said that legendry has woven itself around the epic and it is therefore surcharged with *Mythological import*.

If however the Hindus cherish the belief, that there are fully redeemed Beings, the "*Nitya Suris*", guiding the destinies of humanity *even now* including the *Rishis* (Narada being most vociferously acclaimed as one

such) then we have the setting pictured to us, of the universe having been the arena of direct personal contact and inspiration of the Devas and the Godheads. If so it could not have been any false myth that Devas, Kinnaras, Kimpurushas had descended to this earth for helping humanity that they possessed marvellous powers which strike us as miracles. A true myth pictures in language eloquent, the phenomena and the environment accompanying them as far consistent with the limits: of the prevalent working conditions, as possible, with the culture and dynamic capacity of the people then living. If Valmiki could write poetry pregnant with various suggestions (*Dhvani*) of the interpretation of which volumes have been written, and it is clearly demonstrated that the Divine choice has fallen upon the *most qualified genius then living*, it shows it is not a legend that such a personality did exist; and if he could compress volumes of suggestive ideas in four lines, there is no logic in supposing that he could have prostituted his talents to mere frothy fairy tales. Tradition has already located the blessed spots of the Divine Rishis and of the wanderings of Sri Rama; God incarnate whose purpose was to evolve humanity inspired with great spiritual motivation. Why? even now these traditions are repeated and we believe India is the blessed country for God's incarnation, that another is due, we believe with solemnity. Witness the Premier of Madras stating that the Sanathana Dharma is the greatest thing in the world, and referring to Madura stating that God had appeared in the form of a labourer, and allowed himself to be beaten in order to establish the dignity of labour. Thus the appearance of God on earth by way of exemplary conduct for the uplift of the passion-ridden, is a popular belief and it accords with the working of Nature's self adjustment principle. If in the days of Sri Rama, Mantras (secret code occult power-winged hymns) were common in use for their unfailing potency and Viswamitra taught them to Sri Rama—Dharma pasam, Kala pasam, Varuna pasam, Narayanastram, Agneyaasttram and numerous others—if the Devas and Apsaras could change their form, or make themselves invisible, fly in the heavens, cross oceans, they must have been Beings of a very high order—*supremes* in fact. They had possessed Herculean powers, but they did not use them for *adharmic* purposes.

If we could then picture this world of ours as in those heights of mighty powers and capacities, is it not justifiable to suppose that in one or other general terrestrial and heavenly catastrophies, reactions occurred [and Analote France has pictured a revolt of Angels]? God made the

world and could He not re-make it and again re-remake it for His is activity, intelligence and bliss? Even the best of earthly conditions creates a peculiar insatiety, struggle ensues, and that is how nature keeps life dynamic.

The world's face and the ideal world-state that there was then functioning have been effaced by the blight of Nature's crises, man's decreasing efficiency and vitality, and it was millions of years ago. Events must be judged with intervals of millions of years, by which long periods of apathy, neglect, and want of prescience, they lost the riches of knowledge, arts and Sciences that had been vastly developed. The pioneers of one period were survivors of the cataclysm of the previous age or ages, representing the the most experienced, wise and astute class of intellectuals. India has suffered these periods of ruin and disaster; still the pioneers preserved portions of the knowledge of the past, and it was a hard struggle with the masses of the humanity to carry to effect the said knowledge and experience for further fruition and development, because of struggle incessant with adverse environment. During those periods, small military tyrants rose and fell and no permanent unity of control could be maintained over a wide region. There was no surplus wealth for establishment of settled government, or for the creation of the means of enjoyment of luxuries, and so age succeeded age, carrying forward memories and traditions, customs of the bygone ages, through the best of the population who became teachers, the pioneers and explorers and adventurers. The occasional finds of remains and tablets of the past afford scope for reconstruction of the long past. We do not therefore in view of drastic changes that had occurred, disbelieve the Ramayana episodes or that men lived ideal conditions pictured therein, that there was longevity of life that Dasaratha lived and reigned Sixty thousands of years or that Sri Rama lived eleven thousands of years, after he was enthroned.

Valmiki wrote the Epic just when Rama was installed on the throne after the destruction of Ravana and his country. The ideal state in the Rama Rajya as depicted therein requires an earnest study at least, for the ideal to be kept in view for the development and culture of society. We are tempted by the genius of Valmiki's poetry and we refer only to one *Sloka* to illustrate the point that it was the result of the Divine mandate of Narada who carried the message from the great father Brahma. It is to us a religious duty to revive the glory of Rama Rajya in this Kali Yuga. To the learned of our country we appeal to follow the

excellence of Valmiki, in that the stanzas reveal that they contain implications of the highest significance and spirituality.

Mā nishāda Pratishtam Twām āgama Shastwatī Samā.

Yath Krouncha Mithund Ekam Avadhi ! kama Mohitam. (Bala Kanda. (2—15).

There are millions of our countrymen making Ramayana—*pārāyanam*. Hours can be spent however on the literary excellence of *this sloka*.

The episode of the hunter killing a bird, thus causing bereavement to his spouse gives the occasion for the curse contained in the stanza. The Rishi feels sad for the incident and it is then, Narada orders him to compose the verses on Ramayana. The stanza is to the effect that the hunter be cursed to the fate of restlessness for having caused death to the bird love-conditioned to the spouse. This is the first stanza recited by Valmiki and it contains the quintessence of the whole epic—one is "thou art lost to Ma-Latchmi", and so thou shall not stay in any one place. *Two* thou art become too old having lived in one place. May thou cease this killing in future. *Three*. Did you not enjoy your lives as husband and wife? Why should then cause harm to the birds similar conjugal bliss? *Four*. As a vocative "Oh, ye the abode of Latchmi (meaning Srinivasan) You have killed Ravana who was blinded in his passion by Kama (cupid) and broken the tie between him and Mandodari, and so thou shall reap the best of *glories* and enjoy long life and prosperity.

Five. The whole Ramayana story is condensed thus in a single sloka "Manishada"—upto Sita Kalyanam.

"Pratishtamtvamagama"—Ayodhya Kanda.

"Saswati Samā"—Aranya Kanda.

"Crouncha gaticeti" (a) refers to enticement of Sugriva's wife by Vali (Kishkinda Kanda)

(b) Separation of Sita and Rama (Sundara Kanda).

In this style Valmiki composed every word in its place and every word so chosen cannot be displaced by any other. May Sri Rama purify our hearts and be installed on them!

MY RECENT PILGRIMAGE TO MADURA.

Madura the ancient capital of the Pandians has once more become famous as the first place in our Province to admit Harijans into its temple. Naturally, there are two versions about the immediate consequences of this great step. One section of our people proclaims, "The temple is desecrated; the Goddess has gone out of it. It is practically deserted." The other section flatly contradicts this and tells us that the temple is thronged with pious crowds, especially of the people who have acquired newly the right of entry therein and worship. I wanted to see the thing for myself and I had an opportunity last month when I had to go to Halasya on some business of my own.

On two nights I went to the temple. The first was a Wednesday and then on the subsequent Friday. I may add parenthetically that it was not mere curiosity that prompted me to visit the temple. Ever since 1905 when I first visited Madura I have always availed myself of any opportunity I might get to worship Sri Meenakshi and Sundareswara. I am a firm believer in temples and in temple-worship and I have not reached that stage in spiritual development when temples could be dispensed with.

At first, I could not notice any change. The same din and throng, the same shops and lights; there was no indication that a great change has been effected. On going in, I noticed the absence of the crowd of Vaidika Brahmins that would invariably be found near the temple of Vinayaka in the S. W. corner of the Golden Lotus tank. Then again, among the hundreds of worshippers that went in and came out, one section of our population that one used to see invariably and in pretty large numbers, the pious old Brahmin widow with her tonsured head and with *Vibhuti* and *Rudraksha*, she was conspicuous by her absence. Barring these two items everything else struck me as quite normal. There was a small group of temple-officers, perhaps, and Congress volunteers standing at the main entrance where the famous parrot cages are. This was also a new feature.

Inside the temple, I was glad to notice that every body was kept outside the *ardha-mantapa* and good arrangements were made to give proper facilities for ladies to stand and get *Darsan* of the Divine Maid. I saw, as usual, some people sitting at the foot of the huge pillars in the outer corridor and performing *japa*. The crowd was quite respectable.

On Friday when I went again, the number of men and women that came to worship had, as might be expected, considerably increased. I was delighted to find ladies coming in hundreds; but the *smarta-Brahmin* ladies, *sumangalies* especially, not to speak of widows, were not to be seen in large numbers. I saw just three or four.

All these, regarding externals. I do not know whether it is fair to speak of subjective experiences; but I have to, as some people in their wisdom and knowledge of book-learning say that the temple has been polluted and the Goddess has disappeared from its holy precincts. I have said before that I am a believer in Temples and Temple-worship. Ever since I was a little boy of ten or twelve when I worshipped in the famous temple in my own village (Suchiendram in South Travancore) I have been feeling a sort of spiritual ecstasy when I worship in the great temples of this holy land. Madura, Chidambaram, Srirangam, Thiruvannamalai, Tirupati, Kalahasthi and Ramaswaram, I have gone to all these shrines and to many over and over again; and always I found temple-worship exalting me and making me spiritually the richer. It may be due, partly to the proper attitude of receptivity that I have trained myself to adopt, but largely due to *Sannidhyam* of the presiding Deity of the temple. I feel it my duty to record my humble experience that on the two occasions I went to worship the Mother I found the *Sannidhyam* not in the least reduced, but considerably increased if such a thing be possible.

When after worship I was doing the *Pradakshina* or circum-ambulation along the corridor I tried to visualise, as a humble student of history the great changes that the shrine must have witnessed, from its humble origin in hoary antiquity through successive stages of growing importance in the days of Pandiyans to the glorious days of the Nayaks. I imagined the days of Sambandhar who sang the famous verse 'மந்திரம் ஆவது நீறு' and vanquished the Jains, the days of Saivism growing powerful in the land, the days when miracles were believed in and the faith of the people was strong and unshaken. I thought that opening of the temple to Harijans was the Lord's sixty fifth *Leela*; that the last Chapter of *Halasya-mahatmya* has not yet been written and something has been done here and now which deserves to find a place in that record of Madura's glories. I tried to visualise the pageant of the successive stages in the growth of Hinduism, how time and again, when its enemies thought that it was dead and were ready to give it a decent burial it emerged afresh with added strength and disappointed them; and how, now, under the inspira-

tion of a great leader who seems to be the very embodiment of Hinduism the hoary religion is attempting to purge itself of the age-long stain of untouchability. With thoughts like these in my mind and with tears of joy trickling down my cheeks I left the temple with a firm faith in God and in the future of Hinduism.

S. K. Y.

REVIEW.

Kalyan Gita Tatvanka Bhagavat Gita.

EDITED BY H. P. PODDAR AND C. L. GOSWAMI, M. A. SHASTRI.

Printed and Published by Ghanashyamdas Jalan at the Gita press, Gorakhpur, U. P. (India) Price 9sh. Province 10sh.

The Kalyana has brought out this beautifully illustrated volume at an appropriate time. If there is one book more than another which promises to become the gospel of new India it is the Sri Bhagavad Gita. This ancient and sacred scripture has been taken out from the treasure sanctuaries of Pandits and Acharyas and brought out into the market place for everyone to read and understand according to his understanding and capacity. It is possible that something can be said for the ancient view of restricting the study of the Gita to scholars and those who desire to accelerate their spiritual evolution by an intensive study and meditation on its teachings. It is also possible that there is an element of danger in broadcasting the truths of the Gita among all and sundry. Whatever be the merits of this controversy it is impossible hereafter to keep the Gita a preserve of the scholar world. The printing press and modern methods of publicity have destroyed all fortifications for confining knowledge to a few and the Gita has taken its place along with others in the public libraries and reading rooms. It may also be said that modern society has evolved to a stage when the evil attending a general diffusion of the teachings of the Gita is much less than before. The Gita has been expounded, lectured upon and written about during the last generation in a manner that few of the ancient Hindu scriptures have been. Any further exposition of the Gita on the lines which the Gita Tatvanga has proceeded is only bound to add to the general utility, to dispel possible misinterpretations and to clear the way to a right understanding of the Gita.

The exposition in the publication under review is simple and can be understood by the uninstructed reader. The illustrations not merely

add to the attraction of the book but are also expository of the various teachings scattered through the Gita. Illustrations to the Gita are difficult, but the Kalyana has attempted it with a fair measure of success. There are small symposia of the commentaries of the great Acharyas and other explanatory introductions. The printing and get-up are all that could be desired. The Gita Press at Gorakhpur has set an example in the quality of printing which other publications of the Indian languages may well follow.

There is a two-fold reason why this book should have a wide circulation in the Madras Presidency. In spite of opposition Hindi is making definite headway in the Presidency. This book will help to hasten the pace. There is also a grim appropriateness in the publication of the book on the eve of a terrible tragedy of war. The central exposition of the Gita is the duty to fight for a righteous cause without personal ambitions and for the establishment of righteousness in the world.

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MODERATE PRICES

ARE CASTE DUTIES PERFORMED ACCORDING TO THE SMRITIS?

BY

T. V. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR, B.A.

Manu Smrithi Rules 11 and 15 lay down that a Grihasta can never by any means follow worldly occupation but should live a Brahmana life, not crooked, pure, free from fraud, nor desire wealth by any prohibited deed, or from source not permitted, even in distress. Rule 61 says, a Brahmana may not live in the kingdom of a shudra nor in one invaded by hosts of heretics, nor in one possessed by a low-born man. Where are the so-called dvijas now living? Are they living in a country ruled by Kshatriyas? How many Brahmanas and Kshatriyas by caste are there now who are following professions not prohibited and who show the qualities of their varna? What about the Sannyasi Asrama? A sannyasi is one who completely renounces the world and its attachments, an ascetic of the fourth order. He must be free from all pride, free from possessions and must have no concern with worldly matters. There must be at least an earnest attempt to live the life above referred to. What is the object of one becoming a sanyasin? It is to meditate on the Atman, in seclusion etc., as "Immortality is not obtained by acts, by offerings, or by wealth but by renunciation and renunciation alone." Sri Sankaracharya, the great commentator, says "Renunciation of works is necessary, because moksha consists in the Realization of the immutability of one's own Inner Self". There are now some sannyasins and matathipathis who even encourage animal sacrifices and do many prohibited acts engaging in worldly matters and encouraging communal strifes. "Vajpeya Yajum" involving the killing of many goats was performed in 1934 in the precincts of the Kumbakonam Mutt. Why are these "Yajnas" performed? They are certainly not obligatory rituals. They are performed by people who think that thereby they may attain Swarga (heaven). What does Manu himself say, though He sanctioned these Yajnas? "Without doing injury to animals, flesh is nowhere to be had and the slaughter of animals is not conducive to Heaven. Therefore one should avoid flesh:" V. 53. If one reads Manu smrithi dispassionately and intelligently he will find that Brahmanas of old were eating goat's flesh and even flesh of hogs, buffaloes and rhinoceros and his object was that this practice should slowly cease

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ARE CASTE DUTIES PERFORMED

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and hence he prescribed some restrictions for the eating of animal food and not that he encouraged animal sacrifices and the performance of Vajapeya and other 'yajnas' requiring animal sacrifices. Vide Ch. III. 267-283 and V. 18-56 of Manu smrithi. He, who for a hundred years sacrifices every year with a horse sacrifice and he who eats not flesh, the fruit of the virtue of both is equal V. 53. Even animal sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas are only intended to restrict the eating of flesh. We find even in an Upanishad (vide last chapter of Brihadaranyaka) an animal sacrifice is permitted. Is it performed now? Sri Krishna refers to many kinds of sacrifices and concludes "Better than the sacrifice of any objects is the sacrifice of wisdom. All actions in their entirety culminate in wisdom. Chapter IV. 23-33. Nowhere does He say that animal sacrifices may be offered. In many places in the Gita, He distinctly teaches that love and compassion for all living beings is the highest dharma and this is Bhakti. The Head of another Mutt is engaged in forming political parties of "Sanatanists" and also fomenting the quarrel on temple-entry and untouchability questions. I have discussed above who can be called according to Manu, a Brahmana, who a Brahmachari, who a grihasta and who a sannyasin. If the test be applied, how many of the Brahmanas by caste can be called Brahmanas? And how many, sanyasins?

* * * * *

Where was the Aryan Home? Ethnologists say that the European nations and a large portion of the Americans and Indians are Aryans. The question naturally arises where was their common home? How did the Aryan Race come into existence? Traces of the domination by the Aryans of East and Central Asia and the islands from Japan to Australia are, I am told, still to be seen in these countries and the ineffaceable stamp of the Aryan blood is set upon races so primitive as the Hairy Ainus of Japan and the Australian so-called aborigines. I also understand that the magnificent architecture of the Cyclopean style as to size, but finished with great delicacy and polished to a remarkable degree, the marvellous temples whose colossal ruins are the wonder of all who have seen them at Shamballa today and the grand bridge which once linked the Sacred Island with the shore in Central Asia on the slopes of the Himalayas which may still be seen standing, are proofs that Central Asia was the original home of the Aryans. Lokamanya Tilak, I learn, has been able to find proofs in our Vedas for this statement. And I add that all Aryans—all branches of the Aryan Race—had their home in

Central Asia wherefrom they migrated to different parts of Asia and Europe, the Root-stock migrating to India.

THE BUDDHA

The Buddha was a Hindu like Sri Krishna and incarnated about 623 B.C. How was India at the time and why this Avatara? To be brief, Lord Buddha's experience was that the Brahmanas of His day did not know Dharma and that they practised horrible animal sacrifices. He retired to the forest to find out by tapas, meditation and samadhi what the cause of sorrow was, what Truth was, what Dharma was. When He rose from his meditation after some years of tapas and samadhi, the whole Solar system—(all the worlds, physical and superphysical), was an open page to Him and He saw before His mind's eye all the Laws of Nature. There are two words in the Upanishads, Satyam and Ritam and every student of the Upanishads is asked to study and understand them. The former represents the Law governing the unfoldment of Life—(the inner Law) and the latter, the Law governing the Evolution of Form, the expression of Life through forms—(the outer Law). And it is these Laws that He taught and explained in a most remarkable way so that even ordinary people might understand them. His Teachings are called the "Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path" and He prescribes also a brief daily prayer for every individual so that he might remind himself every day of his duties. He also formed a Sangha to whom He gave more detailed teachings on abstruse subjects. He never preached Atheism as the Hindus attribute to Him. The fact that He is said to have attained Maha-Para Nirvana and that He taught the methods to attain Nirvana is positive proof that He had fully realized the Omnipresence of God. He was Wisdom and Compassion incarnate in human form. Any Sannayasin who knows what Vyasa Purnima is and to whom Vyasa Puja is not merely a formal ceremony must know the greatness of the Lord and His Supreme Wisdom. In His view "Belief in God" is love to all beings without any distinction, because God is omnipresent and is in the heart of all beings; and this alone can lead to happiness and this is the first step on the Path to Nirvana, otherwise called Liberation. This is exactly what Sri Krishna also taught in the Bhagavad-Gita.

SRI SANKARA.

Let us now consider the Life and the Teachings of the great commentator—Sri Sankarachariar. He is said to have been born about 788 A. D. His life is not understood. His teachings and commentaries have

only produced intellectual "advaitins" who can argue on "advaitism" for days together repeating the arguments given in the commentaries verbatim. They do not attempt to live the life he lived. They observe certain customs, traditions etc, which have no life behind them, no bearing on Sanatana Dharma, and no influence on their conduct and life. Very few among them live the actual, spiritual life. We have at present many thousands of castes and sub-castes and sects in the Hindu fold, all mutually untouchable in respect of inter-dining and inter-marrying—a caricature of Varnadharma. Dharma unites and causes peace, harmony and right-living and does not produce hatred, jealousy etc, which are the product of Adharma. Advaitism preaches the omnipresence of God and according to the teachings of Sanatana Dharma, the whole Humanity is one brotherhood, much more so, all Hindus, as God is the Father of all and this teaching must be lived as much as possible.—vide Chapter XIV Verses 1-4 of the Gita; a depressed class Hindu is therefore a younger brother who has to be helped socially, morally and spiritually to express himself as best as he can. His aspirations for higher living must therefore be fostered and every help should be given to encourage this spirit.

But what do the "Sanatanists" composed of these "advaitins" and "mathathipathi" sannyasins do? They are exploiting the ignorant brahmanas and other caste Hindus and raise a hue and cry against removal of Untouchability and Temple-entry. They are adopting obstructive tactics and making matters complicated, instead of smoothing the way and producing comradeship in the Hindu community. Let us look at the temple-entry and the untouchability questions from a common sense point of view, leaving aside the agamas and other sastras which are a mass of contradictory, and in many cases absurd rules. While Christians, Mussalmans and other religionists and even atheists who ridicule Sanatana Dharma and the Hindu worship and their deities, are allowed to enter the temples for sight seeing etc., even wearing boots, they will not allow these depressed class Hindus who have faith in the religion and whose object is the worship of the Deity, to even pass the first gate, even though they bathe and go in with physical cleanliness and reverence. If these same depressed-class people become converts to Islam, Christianity etc., then they become touchable and can go in and go round all the "prakaras" wearing even boots. Does this not show supreme stupidity and bigotry? This is the way the orthodox sanatanists and some "mathathipathi" sannyasins act, the blind leading the blind.

SRI RAMANUJA.

Later on about 900 years ago in 1017 A. D. Sri Ramanujachariar another great Teacher incarnated in India. What was His life and what were His teachings? He was full of love and taught the way of Bhakthi. He made no caste-distinction even in his early days and it was on this account that he separated from his wife and became a sannyasin. He has thousands of followers in India. Do they attempt to follow His teachings and live His life?

LATER TEACHERS.

There were later on other Teachers also. One of the greatest among them was Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. In the beginning, it was a religious movement though later on it developed into a military organization under Guru Govind (1675-1708) owing to pressure of circumstances. I am here concerned only with the teachings and life of Guru Nanak who established Sikhism. The great religion of India called Hinduism had lapsed into lifeless formalism and ceremonialism. His movement was reformatory and pure Sanatana Dharma in philosophy, action and Bhakthi. He was one of the saintliest men and sweetest of characters. He was meditative even from childhood, quaint in many ways, sitting for hours meditating and taking no food. He was a high caste Hindu born in 1469 A.D. and lived till 1539 A.D. He was a Prophet who had realized life and His attempt was to unite Hindus and Mussalmans. He loved all men. According to Sikhism there is no difference of caste, no difference between man and man and all are brothers and equal. I shall mention only three events in His life. I am quoting here from Dr. Besant's lecture on Sikhism: "When every thing was ready and the Purohit was about to invest him with the sacred thread, Nanak turned round and enquired—'Tell me, Panditji of what use is this thread? What are the duties of a man who is invested with it? Why is it necessary to put it on?'"

Panditji:—Nobody can perform any sacrificial ceremonies without putting it on; this thread purifies the wearer and entitles him to attend and perform all ceremonies.

Guru Nanak:—If a man who has put on this sacred thread does not change his ways and leads an impure life, does this thread purify him and help him in any way in the end? Does not he reap the fruit of his actions?

Panditji:—I do not know, but it is ordained in the Shastras and we must follow our forefathers.

Guru Nanak:—From the cotton of compassion spin out the thread of

love, make knots of abstinence and truth, let your mind put on this thread; it is not broken nor soiled, nor burnt nor lost. Praised be they who have put this on.

Panditji:—You have spoken well, but look at all the expense and trouble your father has been put to, see all these friends and relations; they will all be disappointed if you don't put this on.

Guru Nanak:—I am truly sorry that I cannot oblige you; I cannot put it on, and I will advise you also to think more of the essence of things than the form. Only by true conviction one gains respect, and by praising God and by living truthfully, man reaches Perfection.

At last his mother entreated him not to disappoint her. Then Nanak simply said "mother, I obey; took the thread and put it on."

Later on, he gives up the household life, into which he had entered, to wander seeking for God, and for the realization of His love. He travels about singing with a musician and a friend who follow him, Mardana and Bala, and He comes to a village where He needs food. There is a poor man, Lalu, a carpenter, a man of pure life, who welcomes the wandering Sannyasin, gives Him his own bed, brings Him warm food and Nanak eats. Next day, a rich banker in the town gives a feast to Brahmanas, and invites Nanak to come and eat with them. Nanak goes, but he will not take his food. Says the host:—"Why don't you take my food?" Nanak said, "Because your food is not pure, for you have cooked the food for self-glorification, it is a tamasic gift and therefore impure."

The Banker:—You call my food impure while that of the low-caste Lalu is pure. How is it?

Nanak:—You treat your guests irreverently and contemptuously; that shows your tamasic aims. I ate food cooked by Lalu, for it was cooked with love and brought with reverence, with no desire for repayment. You must learn a lesson from humble Lalu. Your food is full of blood.

Banker:—What proof have you that my food is impure?

Nanak took the banker's food in one hand while in the other he took the food cooked by Lalu, and as he pressed each, from the banker's food oozed out drops of blood while from that of Lalu oozed out milk.

The last incident is overy significant. "When He came to die after seventy years of noble life and priceless teaching, His disciples disputed as to what faith He really belonged; should He be burned as a Hindu, or should He be buried as a Mussalman? And as they disputed, one lifted the sheet over the corpse, and the body had disappeared, and He was neither burned nor buried."

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BHAGAVAT GITA

BY

N. SRINIVASA ACHARYA, B.A., B.L.

1. THE PLAN OF THE GITA

Professor Surendranath Das Gupta in his "History of Hindu Philosophy", speaking of the Gita (p. 8) observes that "it deals with moral, religious and metaphysical problems in a loose form; it is its lack of system and method which gives to it its peculiar charm more akin to the poetry of the Upanishads than to the dialectical and systematic Hindu thought". The complement is extremely unhappy, unless the learned Professor means thereby that the Upanishads and the Gita are not presented in the strict form of logical dialectics. The charm that the ancient commentators (our Acharyas) have found in them is exactly their "system and method" rather than their absence. With their guidance let us look into the plan and the structure of the Gita.

The Gita has been, from time out of memory, regarded as one of the three *Prasthanas* or courses in which the current of the Vedantic philosophy and religion has flowed, the other two being the *Upanishads* and the *Brahmasutras*. The Gita and the *Sutras* elucidate the Upanishads, the first in the form of a dialogue and the second in the form of *dialectics* pure and simple adopting the very "system and method" found in the other two. It should be remembered that *Vyasa* or *Badarayana* is the author of both. The Upanishads generally begin with the consideration of the *First Cause* of all phenomena, living and non-living, sentient (*Chit*) and Non-sentient (*Achit*) or Soul and Matter. It is Brahman or the Lord "from whom all these proceeded forth, by whom they subsist and are sustained and into whom they are absorbed in the end". The soul is then described as distinct from the non-sentient body inhabited by him, in that he is part and parcel of that Brahman who is Eternal and Knowledge and Bliss pure and simple. This life in the physical body is but a sojourn and bondage brought about by his own acts (*Karma*) and ignorance which has mistaken the body for the soul and the tiny pleasures of the senses for the *summum bonum*. He who conquers and transcends the duality of experiences such as pleasure and pain or heat and cold of the body and meditates in loving devotion to God, is restored to that *eternal beatitude* which is his own or a birthright. That such devotion may remain sustained and bear fruit, he must discipline himself by the due performance of the duties enjoined by

the Sastras his only guide regarding the life after death, without regard for their fruit but with a sense of his being bound to do them, they being the commands of the Universal Ruler and Sustainer. This discipline is necessary to purge off sin and to extricate the mind from the temptations of the senses leading to bondage and concentrate it on the Goal, the Bliss Supreme. Thus the Upanishads teach in order, the ultimate truth regarding the Self or Atman (*Tatva*), the goal of beatitude which is his own and and which he had lost (*Purushartha*) and the means (*Upaya*) which would help him to regain his estate.

In this conception, the present life is but an insignificant speck in the infinite and eternal existence of the Soul; and it follows that the course of conduct adopted now must be one that would conduce to the lasting welfare and consonant with it. All Souls are parts of same Brahman. Hence such conduct must also take the form of Universal Love and Self-Sacrifice for Universal Welfare. It means incessant action for duty's sake and not running away from it through ignorance or cowardice. (*Kurvanneveha Karmani jijivishetshatam Samaha*) (*Isha Upanishad*). When so done, the actions cease to bind the doer (*Nakarma lipyathenare*) (*Isha Upanishad*). The same plan is adopted in the unfolding of the Gita. The events that led to the discourse of the Lord with Arjuna show that such method and teaching was the only recipe which could cure the ailment to which Arjuna suddenly became victim, and every human being is apt to succumb. To understand this, it is necessary to have a view of the situation described in the 1st chapter of the Gita. Modern students do not pay adequate attention to it.

The Gita begins with the 11th chapter of the *Bhismaparva* of the *Mahabharata*. The great war is just commencing. This *Parvan* begins with the declaration of the War, the formation and the arrangement of the rival forces in their respective positions in the field and the determination for their plans of action. This is described in the Chapter preceding the Gita. After the finis of this discourse, Gita, the next succeeding chapter deals with the first movements of the battle. So it is in this interval, which was ample, that the Gita was delivered.

(To be continued)

THE WORLD CRISIS.

A Call for the Observance of an All-India Day of Prayer.

The following appeal for prayer for cessation of the war has been issued on behalf of the International Fellowship.

The world is again dragged into the fiery ordeal of a war which threatens the destruction of civilization. Nobody can estimate the material damage and the moral disaster which the present war has in store for all humanity. It seems as though all the destructive forces of evil have combined in a conspiracy to end what centuries of endeavour have built up. We believe it is a challenge to all to contribute *their* best for the creation of a just peace. This can be done only by earnest self examination and penance. For, even as individuals and nations far away from the theatre of war, we must acknowledge our share of human guilt for the injustice which results in an outburst of hostilities on this scale.

It is the duty not only of those whose nations are engaged in the war, but of all who believe in the Rule of a Supreme Power controlling all human affairs, to rely on that Power for the establishment of a Peace based on Righteousness and Justice and to invoke the aid of that Power. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

Therefore as an inter-religious body which believes in the working of a Divine in History, the *International Fellowship* would appeal to all people and organisations and especially to those in authority over all institutions in the country—Temples, Mosques, Mandirs, Mutts, Churches, Gurudwaras, Synagogues, Viharas, and other institutions of worship and prayer, and also Schools, Colleges, Hostels, etc.—to observe *Sunday the 1st. of October, 1939*, as a Day of Prayer and Meditation that the Nations may learn the art of living together as members of one Family.

Let us earnestly pray that the end of this war will find the Nations of the world regarding one another not as victors or vanquished, but as friends and brothers, and that the spirit of fellowship amongst the Nations shall replace all promptings of revenge, all desire for humiliation and punishment, all thoughts of group selfishness, all self-righteous pride. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid."

We would also suggest that a Congregational Prayer and Invocation Service be held some time during the Day in all places, when followers of

the different Religions may join together and raise their united voice in supplication to God so that the present crisis be brought to a speedy end and the earth be filled with the knowledge of His Love.

P. A. WADIA, *Chairman*.

A. A. PAUL, *General Secretary*.

N. B. A form for Corporate Prayer and Meditation Service is being prepared. Copies will be sent to those who ask for them at: The International Fellowship Office, "Maitri", Kilpauk, Madras.

LAW AS AN INSTRUMENT AND MEASURE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS.

[The following are extracts from the address of Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar, B.A., B.L., Advocate-General, Madras on the occasion of the Sri Krishnarajendra Silver Jubilee Lecture, 1939 at the Mysore University :—]

"By far the most important source of law in the present era is legislation. An ever increasing legislative activity is a special feature of the modern State, whichever be the form of government obtaining in the particular polity. According to a recent estimate, the output of legislation in the post-war period in England exceeds the output of legislation in the 19th century and is far in excess of the legislative activity of the State in the centuries that preceded it. It is a common place of politics to state that the political ideal of the age and the prevalent social and economic tendencies give the necessary direction to the course of legislation. While it is true that in Europe the introduction of democratic government was, in the early stages, strangely enough, followed up by an emphasis upon the doctrine of laissez-faire in politics, very soon it came to be realised that laissez-faire could not be a sound working rule in a democratic polity, as, naturally, the enfranchised masses began to press for the betterment of their social and economic conditions. The movement towards social amelioration is a necessary concomitant of the democratic movement. In spite of the fact that English democracy is averse to effecting any convulsive changes in society, it is common knowledge that there has been "path-breaking" industrial legislation in England which made her the pioneer of industrial law, whose example has been followed in every other country. Even a cursory glance at the statute-book will reveal that legislation regulat-

ing the conduct of industry and agriculture is expanding enormously in volume and growing in complexity, and, in accordance with modern trends, there are a large number of statutes modifying in various degrees freedom of contract. As the Lord Chief Justice of England put it in a recent case, referring to the Factory and Workshop Acts, "A large purpose of these statutes was to save workmen from themselves." There is no school of politics which does not recognise at the present day the right of the State to intervene to regulate competition, to prevent exploitation, and to exercise control over working conditions. Even avowed exponents of individual liberty and property have come to realise the need for "the State checking the blind results upon the many, of economic actions which are undertaken for gain by the few, and the legitimacy of the demand for a strong government to control economic forces with the object of giving the many, economic security." A recognition of the growing functions of the State and the regulation of economic conditions as a part of the accepted philosophy of government necessarily lead to the devolution of governmental functions upon administrative bodies and agencies under the authority of Government created for the purpose. This delegation, as is pointed out by Mr. Wade in his recent edition of Dicey, is not confined to government departments but extends to numerous statutory departments which cannot be regarded as departments of State directly responsible to the legislature.

In spite of the criticisms levelled against administrative and legislative delegation, the report of the Donoughmore Committee reveals that recent tendencies in legislative methods are inevitable and are bound to grow. All that can be expected is to give a proper direction to such methods and practices. In regard to administrative bodies exercising quasi judicial functions, while the highest court in the land has necessarily to exercise a restraining influence to see that these bodies do not overstep their jurisdiction in the interests of sound and efficient administration, the bodies themselves will have to be given a latitude and freedom of action without any sacrifice of the fundamental principles of justice. While legislation in any modern State necessarily involves a certain degree of interference with even what may be termed 'liberty of person' in the larger sense of that expression, care has to be taken that the foundations of such liberty are not sapped.

The growing tendencies in England cannot but have their reactions on the Indian scheme of government. In spite of the essentially individualistic and family basis of Indian social organisation and the village-

community system of local Government, from very early times, the State in India has taken upon itself the functions assumed by the modern State in European countries. In illustration of the above statement, I would only refer to such matters as irrigation, control of communal property, forests, and regulation of land revenue. Legislative interference for regulating and adjusting the different interests which have grown up in the land in the course of centuries has been a special feature of British Indian administration. The democratic legislatures of India under the new constitution are confronted with the problem of large-scale legislation in regard to these matters. While the interests of agriculture, as the staple source of living for the large mass of people in this country, will have to be safeguarded and fostered, and while every effort has to be made also to help the cottage industries in villages and in suburbs of towns, this country cannot be expected to keep pace with the civilized world, sustain its growing population and ensure a proper standard of living for it, unless every endeavour is made to help large-scale industrial enterprise of various kinds. A large-scale industry in industrial centres cannot but bring in its train the problem of adjustment of the relations between capital and labour according to modern ideas, the prevention of overcrowding and the ensuring of sanitary surroundings. The task before the legislator dealing with industrial problems is how to harmonise the interests of capital and labour and secure a fair deal for the labourer without destroying initiative and enterprise. In the process, the key industries of the country must necessarily come under the control of the State, if not under its direct management.

The problems that await solution call for the exercise of the wisest statesmanship. They cannot be solved by dilating on *a priori* theories borrowed from the West or antiquarian researches into the state of society in ancient and mediaeval India. There is no use of too rigid insistence of sanctity of contract or inviolability of property. Nor will slogans copied from books which have no relation to the concrete facts of the Indian situation which may result in strife, discord and misery of millions, do any good. The politician, the lawyer, and the average citizen will have to strive for a new social harmony.

I have not made any special reference to the need for change in the personal law of the Hindus, as the reform of Hindu Law including the law relating to women's rights, is merely a part of the larger problem of social and legislative changes. The process of change by textual interpretation by commentaries of acknowledged authority is no longer avail-

able, as that source is. of necessity, dried up under modern conditions. The process of change by judicial construction is still available to some extent, but the very nature of judicial process, as has already been pointed out, imposes obvious limitations on the expansion and adaptation of the law. It must be admitted that in several branches of Hindu Law, the Judicial Committee and the Indian High Courts have recently given a proper direction to the development of Hindu Law, though now and then there have been decisions which have taken the profession and the public by surprise. Piecemeal legislation has in glaring instances set right some rules of law out of tune with modern conditions and the social consciousness of the people, though such legislation has occasionally resulted in making parts of Hindu Law an unintelligible jumble. A wholesale and radical change in the very concepts of Hindu Law is demanded by one school of social and legal reformers while another set is strongly opposed to any kind of legal change, though they easily reconcile themselves to even a change decision revolutionising or making a serious inroad on our notions of the law.

Well-instructed opinion is decidedly in favour of changes in the joint family law in the interests of the growing commercial needs of the country, while, at the same time realising that in the larger interests of agriculture unless group property of some kind is recognized there may be total dismemberment of property and fragmentation of holdings in the villages. In any reform of Hindu Law, the interests of rural economy cannot of course be ignored.

The time also seems to be ripe for a codification of the Hindu Law of Succession on rational lines and on an intelligible basis without the Courts having to go through the process of calculating pindas which are never offered or a calculation of the particles of blood with reference to certain artificial rules laid down by our forefathers.

The law of adoption may be easily simplified, without the lawyer having to dissect the pronouncements or dicta of the Judicial Committee in different cases on the problem of the nature of sapinda consent that is required for a valid adoption or the limits for the due execution of an authority to adopt.

The law as to the obligation of the different members of the family in regard to debts is still in an uncertain state and makes the task of the legislator working in new fields of social and economic reform exceedingly difficult."

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'The wonder under the Banyan tree! A young teacher and old disciples. The teaching is silence and the disciples' doubts are cleared.

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NOVEMBER, 1939

[No. 11

THE PURPLE-SHIRT BAND or CONGREGATIONALISM AND ITS DANGERS

BY P. P. SARADHI, B.A., B.L., *Sub-Judge, (Retd.)*

Gregariousness is an inherent craving of man. It gives a sense of approval and security to conduct. It creates traditions in customs and fashions. It is responsible for the production of clannishness and communal bias, of communal conscience, which acts with all the force of mass courage, and the merit and value of the conscience are to be measured by the standard of the least cultured among them. It is the product of judging anything done or said by the mass. Necessarily it takes no account of those who by their special gifts and attainments demand a special treatment and regard, demand environments subtler and peculiarly fitted to their evolution. But that could not be always gained. So there is schism formed by the exceptionally higher evolved beings within the community to which they organically belong.

The congregationalists are the creatures of the above said tendency and they are promiscuous in the region of religion and worship for the simple reason, that at some time or other, after the foundation of any system of faith and religion, there is emergence of dissentients who secede and form a separate class by themselves. There could be in the nature of things and of human instinct and order, no uniformity applicable to all the people. Within the orbit of a certain religious constitution, individuals cherish their own separate methods of satisfying their religious yearnings and their spiritual ideal as they have conceived them. This is the origin of the hundreds of churches and denominations in the

christian faith, the numerous systems even among the Hindus-Vaishnavism, Saivism, Saktas and Chaitanyas, Brahmoism, etc.

Mr. Rattigan in the U. E. Journal gives the figures for the British Isles returned by the respective Churches;

Methodists 547, 587

Baptists 392, 535

Congregationalists 467, 480

Presbyterians, 17

Religious intolerance under Stuarts was responsible for swelling tides of emigration to U. S. A. and the absence of state religion in that country encouraged immigration. All these classes of sectarians settled themselves here and there, and to enhance their work and usefulness conceived evangelisation as their main activity. That helped the states already founded in those regions and there was support to their activity by the respective governments. They did thereafter and do even now pursue extensive and vigorous proselytising campaigns in India and the Dominions. *Conquest and the cross go together.* Congregational worship is a primitive form of Tribal Union in which the individual as such has no place. It is manifestation of mass-consciousness. Originally dissentients from the church, then migration or secession, and ending in formulation of evangelisation as the chief objective and machinery for additional prop, the evolution of these churches shows not that individuals were enjoying their spiritual contact with the Supreme as suits their culture, temper, and mettle but they were compelled to submerge their individual conscience to the requirements of a mass, surcharged not with the genuine satisfaction of realising their spiritual oneness with others of humanity but with swelling of their *mass content* with converts to impose upon other communities, who are bereft of independant state-support for their peaceful pursuit of their lives.

The church, whatever be the denomination has traditionally been following congregational worship and prayer, and in fact the church derived support from such mass worship. Mass worship ordains for its convenience only certain days for it. Hence Sunday church became prominent. The church became soon the arena for social gossip and for display of fashion, *there after a mere convention.* That is the beginning of degeneracy. Congregational worship has the advantage however of patronage from those who are impressed by it. But even that has of late considerably dwindled and it is not at all denied by the Missionaries of this country who have now turned to form Indian *Church Unions* and *Fellowship* in order to follow the same method. Sunday church is sought

to be enforced by an old Law in England. But the public cannot overcome the lure of the Film.

Cinema shows have been organised *now* in many churches, to attract goers. Sermons are surcharged with political and social observations and didacticism. The preacher becomes a self-styled Bishop as illustrated by the complaint of Wesley that Asbury his own disciple proved a renegade and called himself Bishop.

Congregationalists are responsible for the formation of the London Missionary Society from all denominations. They raised funds for the society and they adapted themselves to local conditions.

A seceder from the Methodist Church was William Booth the founder of the Salvation Army. The service of this organisation in the social sphere is creditable.—Criminal settlements, hospitals, elementary schools and Leper colonies, etc. But ethically their social service is defective. For the motive is evangelisation at the beginning and at the end and not *love of humanism* pure and simple.

Conversion is effected by mass contact and influence. But it is no real conversion. Nor is mass worship a true worship or prayer. It is the individual inwardness and contemplation preceded by personal practice and discipline that alone forms the true rationale for realising spiritual ennoblement. This is the principle of the Hindu system and it is hoped that the implications of this system are understood. It avoids militancy and aggression. As regards this subject one must regretfully note that in the Punjab Mr. Dewan Bahadur S. P. Singhas proposed that a band of Christians should form what is called "Purple shirt band"—(Note the Black shirt movement in Italy)—for social service. A bad workman quarrels with his tools. Is the organiser incompetent to do service without creating a separate community spelling suspicions regarding the objective? No worse idea could have been entertained than creating a new congregation in the name of doing service. This must be tabooed as mischievous; on the other hand social service does not mind the community to which the workers belong. That is real service by way of elevating oneself from the narrow spirit of community, *and others also.* It follows that as there is no congregational worship the caste Hindus cannot reasonably feel that non caste Hindus should not enter temples. There is no rule by which the language of the prayer is governed, there are no hymns to be sung in mass as in Christian churches, no choir singing. The temple should be deemed to afford a common sacred place of resort for individual prayer in the presence of the spiritualising image within it.

REVIEW

"WHAT IS HINDUISM?"

BY D. S. SARMA, M.A.

Principal, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras ;

Published by the author. Price Re. 1-8.

The author is a well-known student and expounder of Hinduism and Hindu Culture and his *A Primer of Hinduism* and *A Book of Indian Culture* have been deservedly popular. He is better known by his books on the Gita which he has studied well and popularised. The book under review is an amplification of his *Primer* on the subject which was intended for school pupils and this is intended as a text book for college classes.

The book is divided into 7 chapters. Besides the Introduction and the conclusion, there are chapters dealing with the Hindu Scriptures, Rituals, Ethics, Sadhanas and Philosophy respectively.

The first chapter deals with the origin and growth of religions. We are glad to see that Mr. Sarma views the problem from the point of view of a critical student and hence his illuminating analogy between Religion and Language as social institutions. The plea for toleration is made and the need to look upon all religions "as allies engaged in a common cause, namely, the moral and spiritual improvement of humanity" is insisted upon at the very beginning.

The difference between personal and institutional religion and the significance of the latter and the growth of religion through an appeal to the unconscious mind of man, to his ethics, emotions and intellect and finally to his spirit are well brought out. Mr. Sarma then points out the parallelism between the experience of the individual and the race and shows how, corresponding to the religious growth of the individual, humanity has evolved Religions of various types in an ascending order of importance, Primitive, Ethical, Theistic and Mystical religions. He justly describes Hinduism as a League of Religions rather than a single religion with a definite creed.

The second chapter deals with the Hindu Scriptures. Following the accepted tradition, he classifies them under the well-known headings of *Srutis*, *Smritis*, *Itihasas*, *Puranas*, *Agamas* and *Darsanas*. The author, we are glad to see, takes care to show the inner consistency between these and their fundamental unity, all being based on the Vedas and ultimately deriving their authority from them. Incidentally the author's liberal views

find expression in such sentences as these:—"Our trying to follow the laws of Manu now would be as ridiculous as a modern Englishman's trying to follow the laws of Alfred." "Hinduism undoubtedly contemplates the advent of new avatars, as it does the promulgation of new laws and the proclamation of new gospels."

The next chapter deals with the Hindu rituals. The first part of it deals with rituals, their significance to the person observing them as well as to the society at large and their dangers. Rituals have a psychological aesthetic, moral and mystical appeal to the individual; at the same time they have a social, historical and symbolical significance. Rituals, concretising and perpetuating as they do the views and practices of an earlier age, may not be appealing to the higher emotions of succeeding generations. They tend to make religion mechanical, static and Pharisaical and above all strengthen the separatist tendencies of various religions instead of bringing them closer together.

After these preliminary remarks Mr. Sarma gives a brief account of the various rituals. Instead of following the traditional classification of these into *Nitya*, *Naimithika* and *Kamya* (which classification is referred to in the end) he classifies them under four headings, those pertaining (1) to the stages of life, (2) to times and seasons, (3) to public worship and (4) to special occasions.

Reference to Samskaras is meagre; only 5 are mentioned. There are 24 according to some and 36 according to others: beginning with *Garbhadhana* and running through every stage in the life of an individual the culmination is reached in the last sacrifice or *antyeshti*. The most important omission is marriage which is looked upon as a sacrament and not contractual.

We are glad that the author has given an exhaustive description of *Puja* as it is offered in the temples or in households. The feasts and festivals described are necessarily those obtaining in the south. The Bengali or the Punjabi for example will find many of his local festivals not mentioned. Even the Malayali in our province may complain about the omission of his Onam. Such omissions are inevitable as the author has evidently not attempted an exhaustive enumeration of all festivals observed all over India.

The next chapter dealing with Hindu Ethics is a very important one. It discusses momentous questions like *Varna-asrama-dharma* and the much maligned Law of Karma. The reconciliation of the law of Karma with the existence of an omniscient and omnipotent God is pressed home by

means of a school-master analogy. The author, though very much alive to the evils of the caste-system as at present practised, especially to the evils of untouchability, does justice to caste-system by pointing out the great service it has done us in the past in preserving the life of community in spite of the surging waves of foreign invasions which periodically submerged the land.

In the next chapter dealing with the Hindu Sadhanas, the most outstanding feature of Hinduisms, i.e. its recognition of *adhikara-bheda* (difference between the spiritual capacity and needs of individuals) and catering to everyone according to his needs instead of providing one kind of spiritual food to all, is well brought out. Karma, Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana are the well-recognised paths, all reaching the same goal. So also the equally important characteristic doctrine of *Ishta-devata* which is based on the great Upanishadic truth "Ekam sad; viprah bahudha vadanti." "That which exists is One; the wise call it by different names."

The next chapter deals with 'Hindu Philosophy' and though many names are mentioned, only the systems of vedantic thought associated with Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, and the Saiva Siddhanta system of Meykandar are elaborated. The usual condemnation of Hindu philosophy by foreigners that it takes no account of morality, that it is vitiated by the doctrine of Maya or illusion and so on, is examined critically and shown to be baseless. Vivekananda's famous statement that progress is not from error to truth, but from partial truth to whole truth is well brought out by the author.

Though the various systems are expounded with a scientific outlook and impartiality, it is not difficult to guess what the author's own personal leanings are.

The author brings his exposition of the fundamentals of Hinduism to a close in the concluding chapter with an enumeration of basic truths enunciated in modern terms and raises the highly intriguing question about the future of Hinduism. "How far will Hinduism be able in the present age and amidst new forces to preserve its soul, maintain its individuality, conserve its strength and at the same time satisfy the deepest aspirations of the modern spirit?" In India of the present day the Hindus form but one of its communities though numerically strongest, stronger (numerically as the appendix shows) than all the Muslim population of the whole world! Some would buy communal peace by relegating religion to the home and expunging it completely from public life; such a solution does not, we are glad to see, commend itself to the author. He

thinks that with a higher conception of religion "as a force that spiritualises man, that purifies and transforms society" we can hope that it would set the correct ideal and that the state can be expected to help us to realise it. Great responsibility is thus cast upon our religious leaders and Mr. Sarma concludes his book on an optimistic note that we have such a leader in Gandhiji and all would be well with us if we follow him with unswerving faith in truth and Non-violence.

The so-called orthodox, those who neglect history and its teachings and cling to the familiar as unalterable as the law of nature may not agree with Mr. Sarma with many of his views, nay even with his method of approach towards the problem and its treatment, which is scientific, evolutionary and critical. The liberal Hindu will, however, be prepared to admit the author's claim that the exposition is "orthodox in the highest sense of the term".

As the book is intended for College students the author would have done well if he had given a short bibliography at the end of each chapter so that the student whose curiosity is roused may pursue his studies further. One misses also that concession to the human weakness, an exhaustive index. We sincerely hope that the book would be largely used by Hindu under-graduates of our Universities. It is, at the same time, an excellent guide to any non-Hindu who wants to know something of Hinduism.

S. K. Y.

THEOLOGY vs. POSITIVISM

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

On this point, *viz.*, Theology vs. Positivism, a memorable episode that occurred, not long ago, at Mylapore, is calculated to throw a flood of light; and I record it here.

One fine morning, Mr. R entered the *Pooja-Griha* of Mr. K who, having bathed, besmeared his body with sacred ashes and covered it with a cartload of Rudrakshams, was about to tell his beads and mutter *Muruga, Muruga*. Just then, a three-year old child came bounce to the room and made quite a child-like demand for a biscuit. With one push, however, the exasperated Mr. K threw the child off the room and muttered, instead of *Muruga*, a horrible rubbish of his vituperative vocabulary. Suddenly seeing Mr. R enter the room and fearing that he had witnessed the *push*, Mr. K rose, took back the child, gave it a biscuit (with which it ran away with mirth and glee), and opened the following conversation.

Mr. K:—From day to night and from night to day, my brains have been racked with Law-suits. With great pains, therefore, I used to manage to get up early every morning, in order that I might, at least for the time being, cease from man, look above me, trust in *Muruga*, and meditate on Him with no interruption whatsoever. Even a child's interruption unhinges me. It is my intense love of *Muruga* that led to what you had seen. Let me not be misunderstood.

Mr. R:—The *unhinging* could have been avoided, if you had learnt to love *Muruga* less and your child more; for, loving your child is tantamount to loving *Muruga*.

Mr. K:—Do you mean to suggest that I should give up my morning meditation?

Mr. R:—Tell me, please, why you meditate at all.

Mr. K:—Because Sri Krishna made a solemn declaration that He would take it upon Himself to attend to the daily welfare of those who meditate exclusively on Him.

Mr. R:—I have been ever of opinion that that *declaration* was a standing sermon on the efficacy of the subjection of Self-Love to Social Love. But your interpretation of it has turned the order upside down.

Mr. K:—How?

Mr. R:—Let me first quote the text of the 'declaration', *viz.* :—

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

Mr. K:—Yes; that's the text.

Mr. R:—The ambiguity of the term *पर्युपासते*, found in the text, has been a prolific source of all the confusion that prevailed over the interpretation of this important ethical concept. The word *Upasana* (implied in *पर्युपासते*) means 'religious meditation' and also 'service'. Your interpretation is based on the first meaning; while mine, on the second.

Mr. K:—May I not regard both meditation and service as two independent paths, each leading man to salvation?

Mr. R:—Surely not, on the other hand, they are two beacons kindled to illumine man's journey in two different epochs. The first leads to the second; while, the second it is that forms the sole luminary across the path of the infinite.

Mr. K:—How?

Mr. R:—The primitive man was more a beast than a man, led only a jungle-life, and, as such, could not be exempt from jungle-law, *viz.*, *Might is Right*. He found, all around, only enemies not only among the actual beasts but also among his own species. *Conflict*, then, was the first order. Unless, therefore, the man, that was attacked, was able to repel or resist the enemy or unless he found any help below, his primitive mind (which had already attributed life and volition to all natural objects and made a *Fetish* of them) forced him to kneel and pray, for the time being, for help from above. But, be it remembered, the primitive man was more of action than of meditation; and therefore he resorted to meditation, if at all, only as a prelude to his action.

When, however, a concert-period displaced the previous Conflict-period, the terrible jungle-life of man became a thing of the past. Nevertheless the co-operation, which warded off the wild animals, did not at first develop itself to the extent of warding off the attack of mankind, with the result that every man conjured up a permanent haven of safety and called it *Heaven*, to attain which he once again knelt and prayed not, as before, for the time being, but for all the time of his life. Thus it was that *Meditation*, which was virtually kneeling and praying, assumed an importance and occupied a place in the citadel of religion. Thus it was that *Theology*, which was the religion of meditation, taught man to hate the earth as being full of enemies and temptations and love the heaven as being full of friends and guardian angels.

It is therefore no wonder that the renunciation of the earth and all the earthly desires, indifference to men, and adoration to God summed up the moral code of Theology. It is again no wonder that this moral code magnified the individual, made his salvation the end of life, sundered religion from society, enjoined no duty or sacrifice, heightened the importance of Feeling even at the expense of Thought and Action giving the Feeling a classical name, acclaimed that *Bhakti* alone, unaided by thought and action, would waft a liberated soul into heaven.

Mr. K:—Is not, in the life of the individual (as in that of the race) the basis of unity *Feeling*, inasmuch as men generally tire of thinking or acting but never of feeling?

Mr. R:—True, the basis of unity is doubtless *Feeling*. But, in true education as well as in practical life, the Feeling must be regulated by Thought and must ultimately result in Action.

Mr. K:—Kindly illustrate your point.

Mr. R:—A certain Blacksmith received, say, from Mr. A a diagram and a piece of iron rod and came to terms that he should, within a given time, forge the rod into the form of the diagram and deliver it to Mr. A. Now, let us closely watch what the Blacksmith does. First, he takes the diagram and studies its form in detail. Such study is the function of *Thought*. Secondly, he puts the rod into the fire and gets it heated. Such heating (the object of which is to make the rod pliable for being forged into the required shape) is akin to the function of *Feeling* (the object of which is to melt the heart into action). In the third stage, that is to say, as soon as the rod gets sufficiently heated, he proceeds to *Action* and hammers the rod into the form of the diagram. Thus, thought, feeling and action have been, so to speak, the three successive stages, along which the given rod found itself forged into the form of the given diagram.

Hence, thoughts must be systematised before feelings; and again, feelings must be systematised before actions. In fine, sound thought, true feeling, and wise action form together the core of the basis of unity among mankind—but not feeling alone, as you suggested.

Mr. K:—Why, then, is a life of pure meditation, based on *Bhakti*, held out as the highest ideal in our sacred books?

Mr. R:—I have already stated that the origin of meditation was man's first feeling of helplessness in this world and that it worked tolerably well at a period when *Conflict* was the order of the day. Our sacred books therefore were, during that conflict—period, interpreted to say—'Meditate',

satisfaction, which the Heaven is calculated to give, is such that persons of Lessing's type will go so far as to say:—"If God, holding in one hand the Heaven, and in the other the search for the Heaven, asked us to choose; we would answer Him: "O! God, keep for Thyself the Heaven but leave to us the search for it, which is the better of the two". Further, again—

"Tis expectation makes a blessing dear;
Heaven were not heaven, if we know what it were."

and

"Glories, like glow-worms, afar off, shine bright;
But look'd to near have neither heat nor light."

But is Heaven a place or a temperament of mind? Surely the latter. That was why Milton wrote:—

"The mind is its own place and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven".

Hence, the prospect of the Supernatural Religion is vague and indefinite; while that of the Religion of Humanity is definite in conception, though indefinite as regards the time of enjoyment.

I have done with the episode from which we learn that—

(1) while passive meditation is the Keystone of Theology; active service is the Keystone of Positivism.

(2) while Theology enslaves the thought, enthrones the feeling, and banishes the action altogether from its field; Positivism welcomes all the three and assigns to each of them its own function.

and (3) while Theology is a subjective system and cannot harmonize with the necessarily objective tendencies and stubborn realities of practical life; Positivism owes its origin to the very occupations of practical life.



which we learn far more than from the safe seclusion of the study or of the Mutt or Cloister. What is your other doubt?

Mr. K: Which people in the world followed your interpretation by giving up meditation in favour of service? And, again, have there been no people, who followed my interpretation?

Mr. R:—From the historical point of view, it must be admitted that the idea of serving the whole humanity has not yet materialised. But, so far as serving one's country and countrymen was concerned, we know of two notable examples. The root of the Spartan System was, not religion, but devotion to Sparta. Again, Rome was to the Romans as much a religion as Jehovah was to the Jews. Yet, both the Spartans and the Romans neither enjoyed life less nor feared death more, than other people.

But in the mediaeval and even in modern times, the people of three lands made much fuss of meditation and suffered enough for it. For each of those lands degenerated into an incoherent congeries of warring principalities and fell a prey to foreign domination. Those three lands were: (1) the land of the Pope (Italy), (2) the land of the Holy Roman Empire (Germany), and (3) the land of *Om* (India).

Mr. K:—The idea of melting all the human beings into one gigantic lump and calling it *Humanity* looks like playing 400,000,000 different, though beautiful, songs—all simultaneously. Such a mixture would not combine but would lose all. Hence service of humanity is a vague and meaningless phrase and will, in actual practice, mean no service at all. Further, as between the Supernatural Religion and the Religion of Humanity, the prospect which the former holds out to each individual is Heaven after death; while, the prospect which the latter holds out to the whole Humanity may be stated in Tennyson's words:—

“Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs;

And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns”.

It seems to me that the prospect of the Supernatural Religion is definite and attractive; while, that of the Religion of Humanity is indefinite and detractive.

Mr. R:—Common sense dictates that the term *Humanity* must be interpreted to mean ‘as much of humanity as one can reach or come in contract with’. As for the prospect of a world to come as a constituent of earthly happiness, I cannot but think that, as the condition of mankind becomes improved, as they grow happier in their lives and more capable of deriving happiness from unselfish sources, they will care less and less for this flattering expectation. Further, the fatality of the stagnant

Mr. R:—What else does the Tamil maxim, viz, அண்டத்திலுள்ளது பண்டத்திலுண்டு indicate that the Law of the Universe is nothing but the Law of the Limbs writ large?

Mr. K: Two doubts yet lurk in my mind.

Mr. R: What are they?

Mr. K: The one is with regard to the essence of the Upanished-Teaching, viz, *Tatvamasi*. This teaching consists of three monosyllabic words—*Tat*, *Tvam*, *Asi*—meaning respectively *That* (referring to the Universe), *Thou* (referring to God), and *Art* (Predicate) and virtually means: “O! God, Thou art the Universe or the Universe is Thyself, Indeed, Thou art All—All-powerful, All-seeing, All-pervading, All-wise, All-merciful and so forth. Does not, therefore, this kind of teaching point to the truth of Prior's declamation:—

“View not what Heaven ordains with Reason's eye,

Too bright the object is; the distance is too high.

Stop thy inquiry, then, and curb thy sense

Nor let dust argue with Omnipotence.

'Tis God who must dispose and man sustain,

Born to endure, forbidden to complain;”

and thereby indicate the helplessness of man and suggest that he must resignedly prostrate himself before God and do nothing else than constantly meditate on Him?

Mr. R:—Your reasoning is admirable and your conclusion is all right; but the original premises on which you based your reasoning and conclusion are wrong. Hence, the whole fabric of your position falls down like of cards. As regards the interpretation of *Tatvamasi*, both of us are agreed with regard to the two extreme words, viz, *Tat* and *Asi*. It is only with regard to the middle word, *Tvam* that we are as poles asunder. You say it refers to God; but I contend it refers to Man. Everyman must learn to address himself *Tatvamasi*. That is to say, he must speak to himself as follows!—“O! Man, you are the Universe. You are not a separate and unconnected entity but you form part and parcel of the whole Universe. Hence seclusion and cloister-life are both undesirable. It is only by mixing in the daily life of the world and taking part in its affairs that practical knowledge can be acquired and wisdom learnt. It is there that we encounter the difficulties, trials, and temptations which, according as we deal with them, give a color to our entire after-life. And, again, it is there that we become subject to the great discipline of suffering from

But now, the conflict has been partially, if not fully, displaced by the concert or cooperation. Even a third order of Sacrifice, which is yet to come, has on account of the distance began to lend enchantment to the view. Under such altered circumstances, meditation has degenerated into drowsiness. Hence the same sacred books are now interpreted to say, 'Act'.

Further, polytheism has made way for monotheism; and, in consequence of that unity of God, the unity of the human race has also been felt and admitted. The time has therefore come for man to realise the immanence of God and the solidarity of Man and to proclaim that man improves *along* with humanity and that he cannot therefore afford to ignore his fellowmen but must needs drag them along with him or march side by side with them, not in search of individual ends, but in the knowledge of one origin, one law, and one goal. There is, in fact, no place for individualistic reference, either to men or even to gods, in a social age.

Hence, service of humanity is tantamount to worshipping God. This fundamental truth, which is the basis of Positive Philosophy, Comte proclaimed in France; Mazzini, in Italy; John Stuart Mill, in England; Gandhi, in India; and, long before any of them, Sri Krishna, again in India.

Hence it was that I said that your interpretation of Sri Krishna's *declaration* marked 'meditation' as a convenient means of procuring your daily necessities and thereby enhanced the importance of Self-Love over and above Social-Love; while, my interpretation heightened the dignity of 'service' and thereby enhanced the importance of Social-Love over and above Self-Love. The two interpretations of the said *declaration* may thus be placed in a juxtaposition for our better understanding:—

Mr. K's	Mr. R's
1. God takes it upon Himself to attend to the daily welfare of those who <i>meditate</i> exclusively on Him.	1. The whole Body (Sole or Corporate) takes it upon itself to attend to the daily needs of its various parts, if those parts <i>serve</i> that whole Body by punctiliously performing their respective functions.
2. God helps those who merely <i>meditate</i> on Him.	2. God helps those who help themselves.

Mr. K:—Does not your interpretation refer only to the Law of the Limbs, while mine refers to the Law of the Universe?

A SHORT ADDRESS ON OUR DEPENDENCE ON GOD IN THIS PRESENT CRISIS. *

BY MR. S. K. YEGNANARAYANA IYER.

We are all children of God. It is clear, therefore, that we ought to live in harmony and peace, each nation contributing its own share to the general welfare. But what do we find today?

I look out on earth—Lo, all is chaos,

I look at heaven—its light is gone,

I look out on the mountains—they are reeling,

and all the hills are awaying!

I look out—lo, no man is to be seen, the very birds have flown!

I look out—Lo, the corn-land lies a desert, the towns all razed...!

The Hebrew Prophet Jeremiah.

Millions of people who desire peace are plunged into war. Every nation says, "I desire Peace, but other nations have forced me into war." What is the truth? Why are we forced to do what we hate and what we know is wrong? The root cause of war is the beast in man, the evil passions of covetousness and anger deep-rooted in human nature, so graphically described in the Bhagavad Gita:—

It is desire, it is wrath, begotten by Rajas (carnal principle) insatiable and full of sin; know Thou this as our foe here on earth.

The whole world is overrun by desire, as flame by smoke, as mirror by dust and foetus by membrane.

The understanding of the will is obscured by this inveterate foe, in the shape of desire, raging constantly like fire, without being extinguished.

It is said that sensations, the heart and the understanding are the organs over which desire predominates. By the assistance of these, it overpowers reason and stupifies the soul.

(Chap. 3, 37—40)

War is a horrible thing. Not only does it entail loss of life and destruction of property on a colossal scale especially in these days of scientific advancement turned to wrong use; but it generates evil passions of hatred and enmity which often outlive the war and are handed down to the succeeding generations of the belligerents. The Prophet Mohamad fled from Mecca to Medina to avoid war. The Emperor Asoka was so shocked

*Delivered at the Madras United Prayer Service for Peace organised by the International Fellowship.

by the evils of war that he resolved not to wage war any more and became a fervent apostle of Peace.

Every one would agree that civilized men should avoid settling their differences by this terrible appeal to arms. There are those who believe that in the present state of human society war is sometimes a necessary evil from which it will be cowardice for a nation or individuals to shrink. They feel that even such an evil may become an instrument for fulfilling a just purpose, provided that those who wage war are free from hatred, or self-seeking. There is a beautiful episode about Hazrath Ali, the fourth Caliph. When he was victorious, in a battle fought for righteousness and the enemy was brought captive before him, the enemy spat on the Caliph's face. His followers became enraged and wanted to cut the prisoner to pieces on the spot; but the wise Ali released him much to the surprise of his followers and said that he had fought with his enemy for a principle and conquered him. But if he punished him, then, it would be because of a personal insult which is no sufficient cause for fighting.

On the other hand, there are others who feel that all war is sinful, that war could not be justified under any circumstances and that they could not consciously take part in it.

However, we are not here to discuss whether there can be a righteous war, not to take sides with any nation or party; our business is not to apportion praise or blame. Human wisdom is inadequate to give judgment in this matter as it has proved unequal to the task of making peace.

Our task here is to admit the failure of human wisdom, human love, and human effort, and to accept and confess our share in that failure and in the desperate situation arising from it to seek God's wisdom, God's love and God's direction.

We believe in a Supreme Being who controls the world. Why then do we not give Him complete control over our conscious actions and attitudes? Is not that the real reason of our failure? All nations are dear to Him. All nations, all communities, all individuals become dear to those whose thoughts are under His sway.

Our task in this time of war, is to seek in complete dependence in God and with complete distrust of ourselves, to discover how we may become as individuals, as communities, and as nations, Peace-Makers in a world of war.

"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."

The Prophet Mohamad once said to his companions, "Shall I tell you of the deed which is better than prayers, fasting, and alms?" The

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Companions said, "Surely". The Prophet replied. "It is to make peace between men—one who creates dissensions perishes."

Omi Kulsum says, "I heard the Prophet of God say that he who makes peace between men and says a good or bears a good message of peace is on the right path." (Mishkat)

The Prophet said to Abu Ayyub, "Shall I tell you of a charitable deed which would please Allah and His Prophets? Make Peace between men when they are fighting and unite them when they are disunited."

Where there is intelligence, there is forbearance. Therefore follow the path of peace. (Mahabharatha : 2, 73, 5)

Always look upon all creatures as one's own self. Abstain totally from inflicting any kind of injury. (Mahabharatha : 12, 295, 24.)

The Supreme Lord became pleased by acts well-performed and done with perfect knowledge of duties, acts in which there is nothing of injury to any creature. (Mahabharatha : 12, 310, 5.)

He in whom there are these—Truth, Compassion, Goodwill to all beings, with him is God pleased.

The great soul in whom there is not a single act injurious to another being, and who feels kinship with all, with him is the Lord pleased. (Vishnu Dharmotharam, Chap. I, 58.)

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, Bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

If a man strikes you on one cheek, offer him the other as well.

If any one takes your coat, do not deny him your shirt as well. Give to any one who asks you, and never ask your goods back from any one who has taken them;

Lend to them without expecting any return; then you will have a rich reward.

You will be the sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. (The Gospel of St. Luke Chap. 6, 27-38.)

In such a spirit let us draw near to God, first to adore Him in whom are the destinies of men and nations, Him who called us to be His children, that our wills may be completely surrendered to His will, our minds illuminated by His wisdom, our hearts filled with His love and His peace.

Then let us face in God's presence our failure and ask that we and our nations may be changed and made to be instruments in His hands, for the coming of peace.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me."

(The Jewish Psalter)

In silence let us listen to God's voice and ask him to make us obedient.

THE STRENGTH OF THE STRONG

By

DR. V. RAGHAVAN, M.A.

"I am the strength of the strong" said the Lord in the Gita, बलं बलवतां चाहम् । VII-11. Prahlada tells Hiranyakasipu in the Bhagavata "O King, not of mine and yours only, but of the strength of all other men of strength also, He is the strength". ने केवलं मे भवतश्च राजन् स वै बलं बलिनां चापरेषाम् । —Bhagavata VII 8-8. The Bhagavata illustrates the truth with the following story in X B. 89. 22-63.

*एकदा द्वारवत्यां तु विप्रपत्न्याः कुमारकः ।

जातमात्रो भुवं स्पृष्ट्वा ममार किल [भारत] ॥

Once, in the city of Dvaraka, the male child of a Brahmana lady, just born, expired immediately after the delivery.

विप्रो गृहीत्वा मृतकं राजद्वार्युपधाय सः ।

इदं प्रोवाच विलपन्नातुरो दीनमानसः ॥

‘क्षत्रबन्धोः कर्मदोषात् पञ्चत्वं मे गतोऽर्भकः ॥’

The dejected Brahmana took the corpse, laid it at the palace gate and said this, lamenting in anguish : "By the fault of the acts of this renegade of a king, my child is dead."

तामर्जुन उपश्रुत्य ब्राह्मणं समभाषत ।

‘अहं प्रजां वां भगवन् रक्षिष्ये दीनयोरिह ।

अनिस्तोर्णप्रतिज्ञोऽग्निं प्रवेक्ष्ये हतकर्मणः ॥’

Arjuna who heard those (words) told the Brahmana : "I shall, O worshipful Brahmana, save the offspring of your parents who are grieving here ; and if I fulfil not my promise, I shall, for purifying myself of that sin, enter fire."

ब्राह्मण उवाच—

‘तत्कथं नु भवान् कर्म दुष्करं जगदीश्वरैः ।

चिकीर्षसि त्वं बालिश्यात् तन्न श्रद्धमहे वयम् ॥’

The Brahmana said :—

"How do you, out of childishness, hope to accomplish that task which is impossible even for the Lords of the universe !"

*Condensed from the original.

अर्जुन उवाच—

‘अहं वा अर्जुनो नाम गाण्डीवं यस्य वै धनुः ।

मावमंस्था मम ब्रह्मन् वीर्यं त्र्यम्बकतोषणम् ।

मृत्युं विजित्य प्रधने आनेष्ये ते प्रजां प्रभो ॥’

Arjuna replied :—

"I am the renowned Arjuna, Arjuna whose bow is the Gandiva. O great Brahmana, slight not my heroism which has satisfied the three-eyed Lord. I shall conquer death in battle and bring you your child."

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

‘अहमेव गमिष्यामि न त्वया शक्यतेऽर्जुन ।

तमसाधारणं भूतं मन्ये येन हतोऽर्भकः ॥’

Lord Sri Krishna said :—

"(O Brahmana !), I shall myself come (to your help). Arjuna, this (task) is not possible for you. I think the being who killed the child is extraordinary."

अर्जुन उवाच—

‘सलोकपालो देवेन्द्रः खाण्डवे विजितो मया ।

किरातरूपी युद्धेन तोषितश्च त्रियंबकः ।

तेभ्योऽधिकतरं भूतं किन्नु दानवसूदन ।

विभीषयसि मां कस्मादनुज्ञां देहि सांप्रतम् ॥’

Arjuna said :—

"In the Khandava forest, Indra, along with the guardians of the quarters, was defeated by me. With my fight, I have satisfied God Siva who appeared (before me) as a hunter. O vanquisher of demons, what is that being which is greater than these? Wherefore do you frighten me? Permit me now."

इत्युक्तः प्रददौ कृष्णस्त्वनुज्ञां सव्यसाचिने ।

सोऽग्रे ब्राह्मणमारोप्य तद्ग्राममभितो ययौ ॥

So told, Krishna gave permission to the ambidexterous Arjuna. With the Brahmana in front of him (on the chariot), Arjuna went to the Brahmana's village.

प्रसूतिकाल आसन्ने भार्याया द्विजसत्तमः ।

‘पाहि पाहि प्रजां मृत्योः’ इत्याहार्जुनमातुरः ॥

When (next) his wife was about to give birth to a child, that best of Brahmana became panicky and told Arjuna "Save, save my child from death."

तिर्यगूर्ध्वमधः पार्थश्चकार शरपञ्चरम् ।

Across, above and below (the confinement-room), Arjuna erected a cage of arrows.

ततः कुमारस्सञ्जातो विप्रपत्न्या रुदन्मृतः ।

सद्योऽदर्शनमापेदे सशरीरो विहायसा ॥

A male child was then born to the Brahmana lady; the child cried, died, and at once disappeared bodily along the skies.

‘धिगर्जुनं मृषावादं धिगात्मश्लाघिनो धनुः ।’

एवं शपति विप्रर्षी विद्यामास्थाय फाल्गुणः ।

ययौ संयमनीमाशु यत्रास्ते भगवान् यमः ॥

"Fie upon this liar Arjuna! Fie upon the bow of this braggart"—as the Brahmana-sage was thus cursing, Arjuna resorted to his divine powers and sped to Samyamani, the abode of Lord Death.

विप्रापत्यमचक्षाणस्तत ऐन्द्रीमगात्पुरीम् ।

रसातलं नाकपृष्ठं धिष्ण्यानन्यानुदायुधः ॥

Not finding the Brahmana's child there, he went to Indra's city, to the nether world, to the heavens, and with his bow lifted, he (thus) went to the other worlds (also).

ततोऽलब्धद्विजसुतोऽनिस्तीर्णप्रतिश्रुतः ।

अग्निं विविक्षुः कृष्णेन प्रत्युक्तः प्रतिषेधता ॥

Failing to recover the Brahmana's son from anywhere and failing to fulfil his promise, Arjuna made ready to enter fire. Krishna prevented him and said:

‘दर्शये द्विजसूनुंस्ते मावज्ञाऽऽत्मानमात्मना’ ।

इति संभाष्य भगवान् स्वचक्रं प्राहिणोत्पुरः ॥

"I shall show you the (dead) sons of the Brahmana; don't you deride yourself (for your failure)." Having said so, the Lord discharged ahead his discus.

तमस्सुघोरं गहनं विदारयन् मनोजवं निर्विविशे सुदर्शनम् ।

Tearing the terrible and impenetrable Darkness, that discus (of the Lord) which bestows great vision, crashed ahead at the speed of the mind

ततोऽद्भुतं वै भवनं द्युमत्तमम् ददर्श तस्मिन् पुरुषोत्तमोत्तमम् ॥

And in the direction of the discus Arjuna beheld the most heavenly of the heavenly mansions and in it, he beheld the Supreme Being who is supreme over everything.

ववन्द तदर्शनजातसाध्वसः स चाह भूमा परमेष्ठिनां प्रभुः ।

द्विजात्मजा मे [युवयोर्दिदक्षुणा] मयोपनीता भुवि धर्मगुप्तये ॥

Awe-stricken on seeing Him, Arjuna made obeisance. And that Infinitude, the Lord of all lords, said: "It is *by Me* that the children of the Brahmana were taken; it is *to Me* that they were taken; it is *for the safeguard of Dharma* that they were taken."

निशम्य वैष्णवं धाम पार्थः परमविस्मितः ।

यत्किञ्चित् पौरुषं पुंसां मेने कृष्णानुकम्पितम् ॥

Arjuna saw the greatness of Vishnu and wondered at that Infinite; and what little strength men possessed, Arjuna understood, was by the grace of Lord Krishna.

INDIAN PENAL CODE.

The following Bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th September 1939 :—

L. A. BILL NO. 46 OF 1939.

A Bill further to amend the Indian Penal Code.

WHEREAS it is necessary and expedient further to amend the Criminal Law of kidnapping and abduction in India; It is hereby enacted as follows :—

Short title, extent and commencement.

1. (1) This Act may be called the Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 193 .

(2) It shall apply to whole of British India.

(3) It shall come into force on.....

Amendment of section 361, Act XLV of 1860.

2. In section 361 of the Indian Penal Code, for the words "under fourteen years of age if a male, or under sixteen years of age of a female," the words "under eighteen years of age" shall be substituted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

The object of this amendment is to raise the age limit of a person, female as well as a male, in connexion with the offence of kidnapping

and abduction to under eighteen years, instead of the existing limit of under sixteen years and fourteen years in the case of a female and a male child respectively.

This reform is overdue. Experience shows that advantage is being taken of the weak intellect, immature judgment of minors, both male and female and their present day fancies and fantasies, to secure them for immoral and unlawful purposes. The age of majority, according to the provisions of the Majority Act of 1875, is eighteen years, and twenty-one, if the person is under a guardian appointed by courts. The Indian Penal Code has already been amended in cognate sections. In section 366-A, Indian Penal Code, the age of a minor girl for the purpose of that section has been raised to under eighteen years. Nowadays kidnapping and abduction of immature and less intelligent boys and girls has much increased. Therefore, there is no reason to make any distinction between the case of a male or a female child, as was formerly done.

In section 366-B, Indian Penal Code, the age-limit in the case of a girl has been raised to under eighteen years. In sections 372 and 373, Indian Penal Code, which also deal with the moral ethics of persons, the age-limit has been raised to under eighteen years. Lately some High Courts and recently the Judicial Commissioner of Sind in the "Mohini Alam Romance Case," have recognized the urgent need of this amendment.

LALCHAND NAVALRAI,

MD. RAFI,

Secretary to the Government of India.

30th May 1939.

Kidnapping from lawful guardianship.

361. Whoever takes or entices any minor under fourteen years of age if a male, or under sixteen years of age (a) if a female, or any person of unsound mind, out of the keeping of the lawful guardian of such minor or person of unsound mind, (b) without the consent of such guardian, is said to kidnap such minor or person from lawful guardianship.

Explanation—The words "lawful guardian" (c) in this section include any person lawfully entrusted with the care or custody (d) of such minor or other person.

Exception—This section does not extend to the act of any person who in good faith believes himself to be the father of an illegitimate child, or who in good faith believes himself to be entitled to the lawful custody of such child, unless such act is committed for an immoral or unlawful purpose.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BHAGAVAT GITA

BY N. SRINIVASA ACHARYA, B.A., B.L.

(Continued from page 311)

When the arrangements of the field were completed Arjuna expressed a desire to have a full view of the two armies and the persons he was destined to destroy, and wanted Sri Krishna to drive his "Great Car with white steeds" to a central situation. Arjuna surveyed far and near and cogitated within himself about the effects of the great fratricidal war that was impending—the war face to face with "fathers, grand-fathers, preceptors, uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, friends, fathers-in-law, &c." who had come stupidly to support the wicked sons of Dhritarashtra. He saw them with death writ large in their faces! He knew that with the Almighty Lord on his side their doom was certain. His heart began to falter. It was not out of despicable fear of defeat which drove the mean cowardly, covetous and treacherous Duryodhana to take shelter under his preceptor for the saving at least of Bhishma, the Commander and the life of the Kaurava hordes. Arjuna was as brave as he was pure and noble in heart. His character and that of his excellent brothers are brought out marvellously at the end of the chapter preceding the Gita, as if to lead to the mental crisis now experienced by Arjuna! The gallant Pandava Princes walked up to Bhishma, Drona and others and prostrated at their feet and obtained their leave and blessings for entering the lists. It is said there "the kings assembled in the field, Aryas and Mlechas alike, witnessed the magnanimous bearing, truthfulness and righteousness of the sons of Pandu, and acknowledged them lustily. They spoke to each other—in hearty praise, of the friendly temperament, discrete mercifulness and intense filial affection exhibited by these grand princes. Admiring shouts of "good, good!" were heard all over. Every one who saw and heard of the ways of the Pandavas was overpowered with tears and choked voice".

Indeed, the Pandavas had been exhibiting affection and grand heart towards the sons of Dhritarashtra in the ratio of of the latter's treachery towards themselves. Did they mind the attempted burning of them within the house of lac or the serving of poisoned food, or the disgracing of Draupadi, or the deprivation of property by deceitful gambling or the banishment to the wilderness or of the molestations even there? On the other hand did they not repay treachery with brotherly office as when Dharmaputra rescued Duryodhana from Chitrasena? Were they not

willing to surrender all kingdom to their greedy cousin if only he would give them each a village for maintenance? All this was wasted upon envious Duryodhana who told the Divine Messenger (Sri Krishna) that he would not yield "even a needle-point of space without war".

The weakness of Arjuna was, therefore, of a different sort. Spotless warrior as he was and filled with the supreme sense of the Dharma, for the moment he succumbed to human weakness and filial affection which overpowered him and he lost his real self. It is quite a natural phenomenon in any person of the temperament and character of Arjuna. This affection for the kindred got the better of his judgment. "He felt oppressed, and his face dried up. His body shook. The hairs stood on the end. The majestic bow (Gandiva) loosed itself from his grip. He felt burning all over the body. His feet faltered. His mind whirled in confusion" To fill the cup of grief and misery bad omens were soon in abundance. His position was like that of a judge trying a murder case, in which the accused is found guilty without any extenuating circumstances, and in which the judge hesitates to pass the inevitable sentence of death! The mind now struggles hard between the dictates of the sense of duty and embarrassment created by the weakness of affection and attachment of the flesh. It now runs in strange grooves. He would fain not do the deed if only he could grasp at a plausible reasoning and deceive himself into a sense of apparent right and omit to do the duty otherwise plain! Arjuna attempted to find a way of this sort out of the struggle. He called into service for this purpose the very Sastras which he felt bound to obey in carrying on the war, the Dharma of the Kshatriyas. It suddenly dawned upon him that the killing even in a righteous war—of his kith and kin was a heinous sin. He did not stop short of thinking with the moderns that war is at least unmoral if not immoral. It appeared to him to mar the destruction of families and family dharmas (kuladharmas) and thereby of the chastity of women and the creation of confusion of the castes. It was also treachery to friends and the kindred, and eventual denial of offerings and water to the *pitris* (manes) and hastening them too to hell. In short *all Dharma would come to end*. He was preparing himself for eternal stay in perdition by the greed for the transient pleasures of ruling the kingdom! Oh! what a huge sin I am about to commit by proceeding to kill my near and dear"—he exclaimed. Instead, he would rather 'be cut in twain while unarmed and incapable of retaliating'! He did not want kingdom or pleasures or even life. He would rather live a recluse and a beggar, if thereby he could have real peace (Shanti) and beatitude (Shreyaha).

It was at this juncture that the Lord Sri Krishna chided Arjuna's attitude as a 'nasty weakness of heart unbecoming him (of all people)'; it was at once 'nauseating, out of place, inappropriate to nobility and destructive of Swarga or beatitude in the life to come'.

Arjuna's compassion was misplaced and ill-timed. It was a disease of the mind to which he became a sudden prey and to which his judgment succumbed.

Then there was a pause and the rebuke began to have effect. Arjuna now found himself in utter confusion. He confessed he was in delusion regarding the *Dharma*. He knew not which would bring him lasting good and peace, (Shreyaha), fighting or receding from it. Sri Krishna, the Lord and the Internal Director and Controller of all beings was before him. Unto His Grace and at His Feet Arjuna surrendered himself and prayed for being told what the Lord resolved upon as to what he should do—to fight or not to fight.

What should the Lord teach Arjuna now? He was an *asthika* (believer of the Vedas) of the first kind. He believed in the Atman, which is different from the body it inhabits; but he identified it now with Bhishma Drona and the rest in their physical forms! He had faith in a life after death when the fruits of deeds—good and bad done now, should be enjoyed; and so in the necessity of doing or refraining from doing things that would conduce to lasting happiness or misery in the next world. He knew that in such matters, he must be guided by the Sastras but misunderstood and misquoted them in his anguish. Although fighting in a righteous war (Dharma Yuddha) is the royal path to glory and peace (Dharma) for a Kshatriya, he mistook it for a sin (Adharma). His faith now trembled in a balance and threatened to forsake him. The only way of rescuing him was to impress upon his mind clearly that the Atman is eternal, indestructible, unassailable and is knowledge and bliss unalloyed and not the physical forms (such as Bhishma and Drona) standing in front of him; and that lasting good and peace is in the realisation of the atman through constant meditation on its glory by releasing the mind from the shackles of sensual feelings of pleasure and pain and dualities of that kind which are unavoidable so long as it inhabits the fleshy body and which therefore must be borne with fortitude. They are merely ephemeral and come and go. He must find the solace and peace he wanted in the state of mind called *Brahmsthithi* (i. e., stand in the pure atman) in which one is absolutely unmoved and unaffected by the operation of the senses, in spite of one's continuous activity in this life of pleasure and pain.

(Chapter II). It is attained not by giving up of one's duties (such as fighting by the Kshatriyas) like truant boys, but by scrupulously discharging them through thick and thin, without reference to their results and with a firm faith that the Lord has deigned to make use of him as His instrument for the doing of that action for His divine purpose. Even Yogis who having completely discarded the world and subdued the senses and revel in the communion with the Atman, cannot give up action in the intervals of Yogic meditation when they are face to face with the experiences of the body such as hunger and thirst. (Chapter III). This is *Karma Yoga* or Karma (Action) done with a *Yoga Budhi* or an understanding which heeds not the dualities—such as pleasure and pain, success or loss involved in the doing. Conduct thus disciplined and thought thus concentrated on the true aspect of the Atman in relation to the world (*Gnana Nishta* or *Gnana Yoga* or *Sankhya Budhi*) is the surest way to lead to the realisation of the Self and communion with it (Yoga-proper). It is this which finally leads to the *summum bonum* and Eternal Bliss (Chapters IV, V and VI) when connection with this perishable body ceases. Individual efforts without divine help seldom succeed. Hence Bhakti Yoga is next taught with all its concomitants in Chapters VII and VIII to XII. Bhakti Yoga is loving and single-minded devotion to God prompted by the contemplation of His great auspicious qualities and transcendental glory (Chapter XII). In other words, it is the experience of the Communion or Yoga with God in transcendental love. The rest of the Gita is devoted to the expounding the various details, such as the body, soul and God, the three tendencies or qualities (Gunas) which often supply the motive power for action, the two natural divisions of men with divine and devilish impulses, the necessity for looking to the *Sastras* for light in discriminating the right from the wrong, and so on. Chapter XVIII is taken up with an analysis of all things, including food which are necessarily involved in a spiritual life of Yagna, Dana, Tapas, Sanyasa, & c. with reference to the three *Gunas* (the *Satva*, the *Rajas*, and the *Tamas*) and concludes with an exhortation to remember always that our action is guided and controlled by the Lord (in accordance with our Karma), that we must, therefore, develop the Satvic (divine) quality by all possible means and that we must scrupulously discharge the duties laid upon us (Varnashrama Dharma) without any expectation but with the supreme sense of its being the worship of the Lord. This is the essence of the teaching of the Gita Sastra.

(To be continued)

The significance of Travancore Temple-entry Proclamation.

Address of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar at the function of the unveiling of the Statue of His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore.

The Proclamation issued by His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore on the 12th of November 1936, throwing open the temple controlled by the Maharaja and the Government to all Hindus by birth or religion without any distinction was an event of far-reaching significance, and marks an epoch in the history of social and religious reform in India. The spirit of reform was the result of the impact of western education and culture, and the contact, often aggressive, of proselytising religions. The desire for a reform of Hinduism from within has often manifested itself in the history of India. The Brahma Samaj movement which was started by Raja Ram Mohun Roy about a hundred years ago, the Arya Samaj movement which was started by Swami Dayananda Sarasvati in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the movement which owed its impulse to Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda, all owed their existence to the spiritual urge for reform. One of the most powerful factors for reform has been the remarkable influence exercised by Mahatma Gandhi and his movement for the removal of untouchability and the uplift of the Harijans or the excluded classes. Reformers sometimes secede from the parent fold and start new sects. The recent tendency in India, however, has been to promote the consolidation and unity of the Hindu community. It is a sign of a living religion to adapt itself to new conditions and forces. The vitality of Hinduism is evidenced by the growing desire to abandon the spirit of exclusiveness, to spread a knowledge of the fundamental principles of the purest form of Hindu faith and to throw open the house of God to all who share in the Hindu faith. Those who agitated for the removal of restrictions upon entry into Hindu temples had to contend against deep-seated sentiments, prejudices, customs and traditions. Those who are acquainted with the history of church reform in other countries will not wonder at the slow pace of progress achieved by religious reformers in this country. It is important to remember that no reform of a character worth having or likely to yield permanent results can be achieved unless it carries with it the majority of the people in the country. The autocratic ruler of an Indian State is in a position of advantage as compared with British India in introducing social and religious reform. He too has to take into account

the public opinion of the State and has to exercise a wise judgment as to the character and extent of the reform and the appropriate time for introducing it; but he is not hampered by the conditions for the alteration of laws which exist in British India. His Highness the Maharaja took a most momentous step in deciding to abolish all restrictions on temple entry and to throw open the State temples to all Hindus. That this great reform should have been introduced in a country like Travancore which has long been the home of the most exclusive orthodoxy will be a matter for marvel. But the Maharaja of Travancore has the virtues of faith, vision and courage, and in the great step he has taken he has had the sympathy and encouragement of his wise mother and the statesmanlike counsel of his illustrious Dewan, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar.

The Proclamation electrified the whole of India and has induced the rulers and peoples of India to attempt a similar reform. The impetus given by the proclamation to the temple entry movement all over India has been very far-reaching, and the movement has now acquired the force of an avalanche. Differences of opinion are bound to exist and have given rise to much exacerbation of feeling. In a controversial matter of this kind we cannot expect any expression of opinion from your Excellency, which is liable to be misunderstood by one party or the other.

The gracious proclamation of His Highness the Maharaja was hailed with joy and enthusiasm in many parts of the country. At a public meeting held in Madras on the 9th of January 1937 it was resolved to commemorate the proclamation by the erection of a statue to His Highness the Maharaja in some prominent part of this city. Steps were taken to carry out this resolution and subscriptions were collected from a large number of people, and a commission was given to Mr. M. S. Nagappa, the well-known sculptor of Madras, for the preparation of a statue in bronze. How well the commission has been carried out and how faithful a likeness the Statue is of His Highness the Maharaja, Your Excellency will be able to judge when it is unveiled. We are indebted to the Government and to the Corporation of Madras for having assigned a prominent site in the city for the erection of the statue. We are deeply grateful to Your Excellency for having, in the midst of your numerous engagements, so readily and graciously complied with our request to unveil the statue.

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WILL COMMUNISM SUCCEED IN INDIA?

P. P. SARADHI B.A., B.L., *Sub-Judge Retired.*

Revolutionary ideas have had a lure to the masses in the history of the world, and if they had not changed the face of society, it is because tradition and the inertia of public and private peace and tranquillity, most precious in the family unit and community—gave no scope for the practical application of the ideas. *Laissez faire* policy is another pragmatic conception resisting storms and stresses inevitable in all revolutions—Society and therefore the State would adjust themselves to the exigencies of fresh demands is a faith potent enough.

Marxian doctrines on which communism has been founded, ardently followed and raised to a fetish, as the only panacea for all the ills the world has been and is alleged to be suffering from even today, have created by the sheer force of an utopian fancy, and the apparent promise of unalloyed happiness, a ferment, a restlessness all the world over. But the Marxian doctrines have been emphatically repudiated as founded on neither logic nor sense nor on true human instinct and destiny.

Two protagonists of communism only need be referred to at present, Stanley Jevons and Henry George. The latter says "To extirpate poverty to make wages what justice commands they should be, the full earnings of the labourer, we must therefore substitute for the individual ownership of land, a common ownership. Nothing else will go to the cause of evil—nothing else is there the slightest hope. This is the remedy for the unjust and unequal distribution of wealth apparent in modern civilisation, and for all the evils which flow from it. Make land common property". But

while he rightly observes, that progress lies in association and co-operation he errs in laying down an assumption, that equality that unexplained vague and mischievous notion, is a necessary condition and by equality is meant something more than equality of opportunity to rise in capacity to know and acquire. Inequality is the basic truth about humanity due to numerous inherent causes. If acquisition is the very purpose of the individual existence and *motif* it is useless to ignore its weight and bearing. Acquisition leads to self-respect and gives the *motif* for work, service, co-operation, and association for co-ordination. Acquisition would operate as an abiding force, only if what is acquired by the individual, is guaranteed possession. Here lies the hollowness of the argument, if this fact, the source of inspiration, aspiration and social service, is knocked out as the root evil of all evils of civilisation.

Communism creates a new authoritarianism and is ruinous to individual growth and evolution. It sets up an abstraction as an authority, as an end in itself; while sane democracy takes the state and all groupings as only means to an end—the end being the happiness of the individual (see the discussion by Leonard Woolf in his “After the Deluge.”)

Further, while communism leads to an insensate, illogical, and irrational authoritarianism, it is democracy, that while guaranteeing voluntary co-operation and co-ordination of talent and labour, opens the most splendid vistas for individual evolution. Says Woolf, Democracy had its roots in the awareness of individuality, in the consciousness that in a civilised community every one should be treated as an individual. From this consciousness sprang, the primary democratic doctrine, that the individual should be the social and political unit in that sense and only in that sense does democracy imply and require equality. When it is a question of law or social opportunity or welfare or privilege or political rights, the democrat regards each man as an individual, and therefore equal from the point of view of value. To the Hindu, each individual has a Dharma to discharge—to evolve, to work, to serve to help, and elevate the society and the nation. Destroy the individuality of the individual the whole structure falls to rioting and ruin.

Stanley Jevons also beats the same drum as Henry George. In his elaborately discussed thesis “economic equality” he discusses practical measures to achieve socialism in his *communist* sense. He advocates separate colonists groups in a communist organisation. They run each a small *common wealth* for itself.

“Society must be prepared to accept a novel incentive to work, it must suffer a thorough destruction of its foundations and recast and lay down new ones”.

Egoistic incentive is the most sustained incentive. The altruistic incentive is inherent in the sense of humanism in man. This latter is very much emphasised as *Dharma*. State control of certain public services does not necessarily involve violation of individual and private property for the free will and liberty of the latter is the most precious gift which it is unwholesome to meddle with. So there is no rationale for the abolition of private property though the public ownership of land and some ear-marked funds and contributions can be and must be recognised for the benefit of the community. Health, Sanitation, Museum, Parks and Afforestation, and the like. No socialist state can thrive without due recognition of the unequal earning possibility which is coeval with inequality of the talents and capacity of turning out useful and productive work.

It is equally futile to suppose that it is good or practicable to order the handing over of all possessions to the state (communist state) and again seek to redistribute property or (rather the means of comfortable living) according to the needs of the individual who is expropriated of the property. There would be endless rancour on account of the inherent impossibility of accurately measuring the actual proper measurable needs of the individual, the destruction of the family as a unit and the allocation of family maintenance as a responsibility among the earning member and the state. The individual would become a mechanic, his soul would become a wooden non-entity and the family lose the pride of emulation and success. So whatever preparation in slow or quick pace Mr. Jevons would recommend for bringing round the classes (the middle and the intelligentia) and the masses, enlisting non-profit making concerns and agencies even the working amongst capitalist businesses and labour classes, eliminating profit making by capitalists and compel them to accept fixed interest and no more, starting co-operative colonies, without the ghost of capitalists (of which it is admitted many that had been started came to ruin and were dissolved) there can be no doubt that it is impossible to reconcile ourselves with the proposal to abolish money as a token value.

There are other proposals, state protection of citizens after retiring age or when declared mentally or physically unfit, provided they hand over to the state on an appointed day all possession of all their property.

Property personal household goods and furniture shall be used till

the life time of the individual, after which the state would take possession of them. Enrichment by personal property would be prohibited.

All money ceases to be legal tender, and becomes the state property. All buying and selling for money is illegal. All trade and traffic in goods or services, whether for exchange for other goods or services or for credit at the public stores will be prohibited.

This is but a skeleton of the quixotic utopia of socialism in the form of communism. India is a respecter of property-right, of personal liberty and freedom, the glory of individuality and her spiritual wisdom enjoins upon all acquisition of righteously acquired property (Artha) morally enjoyed pleasures (Kama) and unselfish attainment of redemption (redemption not to one self only but to all.)

Therefore no shadow of hope would be entertained by interested propagandists that communism would find in India a fruitful soil. All the same the public cannot be supine in their attitude. People with superfluous wealth must invest their capital in Nation-developing industries and accelerate employment. The employers of labour should cherish a more human attitude to the labourers and contrive by all possible ways to make them happy, consider them not as mere wage earners, but entitled in return for their enthusiasm and work to some share of the profits in the shape of bonus, provide old age pensions, life insurance against accidents, healthy and sanitary habitats and cheap medical reliefs etc.

The U.S.S.R. is not what we had hoped it would be, what it promised to be, what it still strives to appear. It has betrayed all our hopes. If we cannot resign ourselves to losing them altogether, we must place them elsewhere.

But we will not turn aside our eyes from Russia, glorious and ill-fated Russia, who still contrives to instruct us, who, if at first she served as an example to be followed, now, alas, gives us warning of the quicksands in which a revolution may be choked.

Afterthoughts on the U.S.S.R. by Andre gide.

THE LION OF TUPPUL.

BY

Pandalgudi Bharadhwaja Madapoosi

R. TIRUMALAI AYYANGAR,

Secretary, The Triplicane Tamil Sangam.

Nammazhwar, the cloud, coming in close contact with Nathamuni, the mountain, rained cats and dogs. The seasonal rainfall poured itself as two waterfalls Uyyakkondar and Manakkal Nambi and joined Alavandar, the Mahanadhi, which emptied itself into sea-like-broad tank Ramanuja. It therefore became the bounden duty of a true Sri Vaishnava to provide this big tank with sluices, culverts and drains so that the nectar of Bhakti contained therein may reach the young plants, the Jeevatmas, which take in slowly the amrutha and make themselves fit in order to carry on perpetual Kaikarya to the Lord of the Universe, the Paramatma, the object of devotion and veneration. In the Vaishnava Acharya starry mandala there flourished a great sage, the Pole Star of that shining illustrious Loka. In his intellect he excelled Sankara and in his Bhakthi and Vairagya he can be said to have surpassed Sri Ramanuja Muni. He was no other personage than Sri Vedanta Desika, the Lion of Tuppul. This Tuppul is a suburb of Kanchi. It is described in ancient works of Sanskrit and Tamil as "Himopavanam", "Tiruthanka", and "Ampunthenilancholai" and the reigning Deity is Deepaparakasa. Nammazhwar and Tirumangaimannan in their immortal prabandas have unmistakably foretold the birth of Sri Venkatanatha in this sacred place in Thondaimandala.

The legitimate successor of Sri Ramanuja of Sriperumbudhur in his character as head of the Sri Vaishnavite community is said to be Kuruksa (Tirukkuruhaippiran pillan), a disciple of Ramanuja, and the author of a commentary on the Tiruvoymozhi known as "Arayirappadi". Another of his pupils, Pranatartihara of the Atreya Gotra was a beloved nephew of Ramanuja himself, and a great scholar to boot. The guru-bhakti he evinced was so great that even Tirukkoshtiyur Nambi, one of the Acharyas of Ramanuja, extolled him for his devotion and sincerity. The said Pranatharthihara was also known by the name of "Kidambi Achan". He had the sole charge and privilege of the preparation of Ramanuja Muni's daily food,—a function which, as Ramanuja was a Trithanda sanyasin could not be discharged by any one indiscriminately

and no doubt it was the rare Kaikarya for a true sishya. In course of time this Achan had a great grandson Ramanuja or Appullar by name. Varada Vishnu Acharya was another of Ramanuja's pupils whose grandson Varadacharya became an undisputed scholar of great repute. The latter studied under one Vishnuchitta of Tiruvellarai and a Solia Brahmin pupil of Kurukesa and the author of a learned commentary on the Vishnu-purana, the well-known work of Sage Parasara, beside other works. Under Varadacharya whose work Tatvasara is now extant and who was popularly known as Nadadur Ammal, studied the Ramanuja of Atreya Gotra already mentioned. Sudarsana Batta, a great-grandson of Kurukesa, Ramanuja's disciple and friend, also studied under Nadadur Ammal. He is the author of "Srudaprakasika", the well-known commentary on the Sri Bhashya of Ramanuja Muni. It is modestly named 'a transcript' of his master's notes although he was also of considerable learning and polemic ability.

One day, in the lecture-hall of Varadacharya which spot is even today held in high veneration in the sacred Hastigiri, Atreya Ramanuja made his appearance accompanied by a young and attractive lad. Struck by the wonderful Tejas in the boy's face, the guru asked his disciple who that young boy was. Appullar modestly replied that he was his nephew. The lecture stood stopped on the advent of this illustrious figure of about five years of age. All present then fixed their eyes and thought on the luminous person so much so that when the Acharya resumed his discourse no one including himself was able to recall to memory the passage last touched upon. The boy then as if in evidence of his great genius recited instantaneously the very passage which the whole concourse of scholars was trying in vain to find out. Deeply impressed by his powers of retention and extraordinary intelligence Varadacharya blessed him as the future acharya who would rightly establish the Visishtadwaita siddanta by learned refutations of the tenets of every system other than his own. This blessed boy was Sri Nigamanta Maha Desika.

The boy, as he grew up, was duly instructed by his uncle Appullar in all the usual learning of the Vaishnava Scholars. He became proficient and was well versed in all branches of learning even before he was twenty. He, very early in his life, impressed his contemporaries with his greatness and vast erudition. All earnestly looked forward to the day when he would become the real head of the Sri Vaishnava samubham. Remaining for a time at Kanchi and Tiruvahindrapuram near Cuddalore,

he composed many works and completed a good many on various topics in defence of his philosophy and a great many Stotras before attaining thirty years of age.

Vedanta Desika started on his inevitable northern tour. He first visited Tirupati, the Tirumalai according to Sampradaic dialect where he composed and dedicated to Lord Venkateswara the work called "Dayasataka", resounding the all mercy of Bhagavan the omnipotent and all pervading. Thence he proceeded northwards through the site of Vijianagar. Vidyaranya, the author of Upanishad bhashyas, and a prominent Adwaitin, and Vedanta Desika, met on the banks of the Tungabadra. Great scholars as both of them were, though of different sampradhayas, appreciated each other very fully. From Vijianagar, Desika proceeded to Muttra and Brindaban and on his return way stopped at Ayodhya, Benares, Puri, Sri Kurmum, Ahobilam and Tirupati. He reached Kanchi after this prolonged tour of some years. While at Perumalkoil, Vidyaranya who became then the Prime Minister at Vijianagar sent word to Desika who was always reputedly poor and who rather courted poverty most heartily, that he could introduce him to royal patronage, if so desired. The reply of Vedanta Desika which was short, simple and complete was in the form of five stanzas better known as "Vairagya Panchaka" breathes his utter independence and wonderful callousness to the charms of wealth. This proves that this acharya cared not for riches or for the favour of kings. He carried on life with "*unchavritti*." It is recorded that some one without his knowing placed a gold coin along with the Tandulam and on perceiving it Vedanta Desika did not even touch it with his pure hand but threw it out with the help of a short stick. It is therefore no wonder that he did not respond to the kind invitation of Vidyaranya. "While the stomach will be full by a handful of grain and a clear water of the running brook men live by the side of kings, the dhurjanas. We cannot praise kings who reign over territories which are but a corner of the vast world. We are determined to worship the Almighty, Sri Lakshmipathi. We do not possess even a little which can be called paternal or which is our own. But the heritage of the ancestors is at Kanchi". This was the essence of the reply to his friend.

Vedanta Desika had now a call from Srirangam, the citadel of Sri Vaishnavas and rich with the holiest associations as the scene of the labours of Acharyas from Nathamuni down to Ramanuja. The leading scholar Sudarsana Bhattar already mentioned was getting old at this

religious capital known to fame as "Bhuloka Vaikunta" and the splendid doctrines of Sri Vaishnavism badly wanted a defender richly learned and highly powerful. The person with all these requisites was only Desika at that time. He gladly complied with the call and proceeded to Sri-rangam which he conceived as a celestial theatre for pious souls to dance with joy and also as a theatre for the dance of the Divine Muse and where the inner jyotis (light) become seeable. As he neared the sacred place and had the Vimanaseva from a considerable distance he spontaneously composed the following Tamil verse and singing the same approached the city of Sri Ranga Raja with unspeakable joy and fervent devotion.

“ஆராதவருளமுதம் பொதிந்த கோயில்
அம்புயத்தோன் யோத்திமன்னர்க் களித்த கோயில்
தோராத தனிவீரன் தொழுத கோயில்
துணையான வீடணற்குத் துணையாங் கோயில்
சேராத பயனெல்லாஞ் சேர்க்குங் கோயில்
செழுமறையின் முதலெழுத்துச் சேர்ந்த கோயில்
தீராத வினையனைத்துந் தீர்க்குங் கோயில்
திருவரங்க மெனத்திகழுங் கோயில்தானே.”

This stanza is considered to be a master-piece of Desika and shows clearly that its author was well-versed in Tamil. There is no parallel to this in the entire Tamil literature. Recognised Tamil Scholars have admitted this fact. The word கோயில் (koil) primarily and principally applies to Srirangam. In this stanza this word appears eight times to connote that the Lord of the place is Bhagavan who is realised through Tiruvash-takshara japa. He is called Enkunathan (என்குணத்தான்) possessing eight spiritual qualities. It must be borne in mind that the Jeevatma also is an Enkunathan and he is ordained by the spiritual science to prostrate before Lord Sri Paramatma eight times and the special vrittam employed in this stanza is, "Enseer" (எண்சேர்க்கழிநெடிலாசிரியவிருத்தம்) and that this particular pasuram used to be chanted by the Sri Vaishnavas as soon as Sri Ranganatha was taken out of the inner shrine of the Lord during festivals. Sri Desika took up his residence at this holiest centre of learning and piety. He entered upon a vigorous career of instruction and further composition and produced innumerable scholarly and philosophical works expounding clearly the visishtadwaita doctrines and combating the views of other schools. His granthas, lectures and upadeshas through his simple yet almost ascetic life gradually attracted all, and

his gnana, vairagya and anushtana captivated even the worst sinner to his fold. He is said to have expounded the Sri Bhashya of Sri Ramanuja for the Bramma Sutras of Sage Vyasa thirty times and on the twenty eighth occasion of his lectures composed the "Tatwatika", a lengthy commentary on the Sri Bhashya. "Satadushani" containing a hundred objections to the Advaitic views, "Tatwamukta Kalapa" a development of the doctrines of the visishtadwaitic system and "Nyaya Sidhanjana", a text book of general philosophy in prose from the visishtadwaitic point of view were composed by Sri Vedanta Desika while at Srirangam. He also wrote the "Tatparya chandrika" a simple and extensive commentary on the Gita Bhashya of Ramanuja. "The Adhikarana-saravali" next composed is a series of Sanskrit verses in long metre summarising the discussions on the various topics of the Vedanta Sutras. Thus, it will be seen that Desika fortified and strengthened the fortifications of gnana of Ramanuja viz. the Sri Bhashya by his unassailable works. It must not be omitted to be mentioned here that Vedanta Desika produced excellent works exceeding a hundred in number both in Sanskrit and Tamil on a variety of topics.

His great ability in composition and disputation acquired for him the title of "Kavi-Tarkika simha," the lion of poets and logicians. The title of "Sarva-tantra-Swatantra," or expert in all arts was bestowed on him on account of his extraordinary skill in all arts and handicrafts. His wonderful ability and unquenching powers of exposition in the Vedanta won for him the title of "Vedantacharya" or "Vedanta Desika". It must not be forgotten that Vedantacharya is the name of the Lord Sri Narayana and the word cannot connote any one besides Bhagavan. The Guruparamparas proclaim that this last title and the preceeding one were bestowed on him by Lord Ranganatha and Ranga Nayaki and the first mentioned one was by the literate in adoration of his exquisite learning and mighty powers of exposition.

Vedanta Desika, it must be rightly said, had wonderful admiration and bhakti towards Azhwars and their imperishable Prabandas. In a neat Tamil Verse he beautifully mentions all the Azhwars and asserts that by studying their grand works which are but the outpourings of their crystalised hearts having enjoyed God in an unmeasurable depth of devotion we understand those parts of the Vedas which are not as clear as the Azhwars' productions.

“பொய்கை முனி பூதத்தார் பேயாழ்வார்தன்
பொருநல் வருங்குருகேசன் விட்டு சித்தன்

துய்ய குலச்சேகர நம் பாண நாதன்
தொண்டாடிப் பொடி மழிசை வந்தசோதி
வய்யமெலா மறைவினங்க வாள்வேலெந்து
மங்கையர்க்கான் என்றிவர்கள் மகிழ்ந்து பாடும்
செய்ய தமிழ் மாலையன் நாம் தெனியவேந்தித்
தெனியாத மறை நிலங்கள் தெனிகின்றோமே.”

is the stanza referred to.

The “Abhivadhanam” of a Brahmin mentions his gotra, shaka and his sharman (Abhivathaya...gotraha...shakadhyayee...sharmanamaham). In his Tamil work “Prabandasara” Vedanta Desika calls himself as Tamil maraiyone belonging to Visvamitragotra and known as Vedantha guru. “Dramidashakadhyayee (சச்சமிகு தமிழ் மறையோன்), Visvamitra gotra (துய்யமெலா நாம்) Vedantacharya sharmanamaham (வேதாந்தகுரு). Can there be a clearer proof than this to show his zeal and admiration for the Dravidopanishad, the teachings of Azhwars? His praise of Azhwars is unprecedented. About Nammathwar he says “சக்ஷதயென தின்ற தனித்திருமால் நாளிற்றில் வைத்தே தாஞ்சாடேநாபனருளினாலே” (It is Satakopan's unbounded grace that made us bow our heads at the lotus feet of Tirumal who always stands as a father). Tiruppanazhwar is spoken of as “பாவளரும் தமிழ் மறையன் பயினை கொண்டபாண் பெருமான்”. (The perumal of panar kalam, the assimilator of the quintessence of the poetry-growing Dramidopanishad).

His deep learning and unshakable piety, his absolute un-selfishness and wonderful meekness of character ensured the love of his followers and the high respect even of those who differed from his views. It is but natural that even in those days there must have been at least a few who should have been jealous of him and we are told that they, with the intent purpose of harassing him, caused their shoes to be tied in front of his residence in the roof. While coming out, these sandals touched the head of our Desika. As one who has thoroughly expelled Raga and Dwesha he was calm and collected and wearing those very shoes on his head he exclaimed “Many in the world seek gnana and karma to obtain salvation but we stand firm sticking to and holding the Padharakshas of Sri Vaishnava Bhagavathas on our pure head.” The miscreants stood baffled and those who came to scoff remained to pray.

His acharya bhakthi knew no bounds. He calls Ramanuja as the “Vallal of Perumbudur” the word vallal (வள்ளல்) meaning one who gives without limit. “Yathiraja Saptati” is a work of seventy slokas which depict the greatness of the Acharyasiromani. “The intellect we possess

is to benefit all” thus exclaims Vedanta Desika. The entire world is the body of Iswara and any good we do to the world will be pleasing to Him. The Jeevanadi of the Sri Vaishnava sampradhaya is Prapatti, Saranagati or Complete Surrender. In these days of *Kali* it is not easy to practise the Bhakti and other yogas to reach God. There may be some who are “adhikaris” in this respect but their number can be counted on our fingers. There are shastraic injunctions for the Bhakti yoga but Prapatti knows no such barriers. The loftiest Brahmin and the lowest chandala can perform this upayam and the result is the same to both. Repentance is the primary thing that is needed. He who repents for his past misdeeds and falls at the lotus feet of Mukunda in *Nirveda* is sure of getting immediate salvation from the bondage of samsara. He who has recourse to Prapatti will be like Kakasura who, having roamed about the entire universe and not got protection fell at the feet of the same Sri Rama who aimed the Brahmastra for his unspeakable mischief. See how wonderfully our Acharya expresses this point in two lines in the course of a stanza

“பத்தி முதலாம்வற்றிற் பதியெனக்குக் கூடாமல்
எத்திசையு முழன்றோடி யிளைத்துவிடும் காகம்போல்.”

No other acharya has expressed the view so forcibly as Vedanta Desika. He says very beautifully and majestically,

“அந்தணரந்தியர் எல்லையினின்ற வளைத்துலகும்
நொந்தவரோ முதலாக துடங்கி அநந்நியராய்
வந்தடையும் வகை வண்டகவேந்தி வருந்திய நம்
அந்தமிலாதியை அன்பர் அறிந்து அறிவித்தனரே”.

The Anbar (அன்பர்) referred to is Sage Visvamitra. In one of his masterpiece Desika alludes Ramanuja as Visvamitra and himself as his disciple Rama. There is much fuss nowadays about nothing. Desika has solved this nasty and naughty problem about seven centuries ago in a very practical and fruitful manner. It is he therefore who deserves to be worshipped in temples and this is no doubt being done by his adherents and admirers.

Sri Nigamantha Mahadesika's Tamil Prabandas number twenty four following the sankya of Azhwar Prabandas and are about five hundred. The collection of these pasurams goes by the name of Desika Prapaudam which has been extolled by eminent Scholars of Tamil Nad as Desika malai (தேசிகமலை). If eminent Pandits and Patriots like Sri Ramalinga Swamikal and Sri Muruhadasa Swamigal have held the works of our

Vedantacharya in high esteem and veneration there needs no necessity to lay special emphasis on the importance and greatness of Desika Malai which must be closely studied by every true Tamilian and real Tamil Lover. A panel of six similies is flowing in a single stanza :—

“அடலுரக முண்டுமிழந்த வருக்கன் போல
வழுக்கடைந்து கழுனிய நற்றாணம் போலக்
கடலொழுதுகி கரைசேர்ந்த கலமேபோலக்
காட்டுத்தீ கலந்தொழிந்த களிதேபோல
மடல் கவரும் மயல்கழிந்த மாதர்போல
வன்சிறைபோய் மன்னர்பதம் பெற்றார் போல
உடல் முதலா வுயிர்மறைக்கு மாயை நீங்கி
யுயர்ந்தபத மேறியுணர்ந் தொன்றினைமே.”

Really Desika was the Lion of Tuppul nay Lion of the Bharata Varsha. May his works continue to flourish and prosper !

Free criticism, liberty of thought—these in the U.S.S.R. are called “the opposition”. Stalin will bear nothing but approval; all who do not applaud him he considers his enemies. It often happens that he adopts as his own a reform proposed by someone else; but if he adopts the idea—in order to make it the better his own, he first suppresses the proposer of it. That is his way of being right. Soon then no-one will be left about him but those who cannot put him in the wrong because they have no more ideas at all. That is the characteristic of despotism—to surround itself with men chosen not for their value but for their servility.

If any workers, whoever they may be, are brought for any reason, be it what it may, before any tribunal whatever, however just their cause, woe betide the advocate who defends them, if once the authorities desire them to be condemned.

After thoughts on the U.S.S.R. by Andre gide.

SANYASINS AND TEMPLE ENTRY OPPOSITION.

By

M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, B.A., M.R.A.S.

The “Hindu” of 17-11-1939 reports the speech that His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya of Jotirmatam made at Rao Sahib Sri N. Natesa Aiyar's bungalow at Madura. The Hindu reports that “Regarding the question of offering Satyagraha, the Swamiji said that it could be done if the non-brahmins showed their earnestness after all other ways had been exhausted. If Satyagraha was to be carried on, he added, it should be left to Sanyasins and not to Grihastas or house-holders”. The Swami is apparently against Temple entry by certain classes of Hindus and would further like the Sanyasins to join the Sanatanists and prevent through their Satyagraha the prohibited classes entering temples to adore God.

“*Aham brahma asmi*”, “*Tat tivam asi*”, “*Sarvam khalu idam brahma*” proclaimed the Rishis of old from the depths of forests. But worldly attractions lure a man's mind and prevent him from realising the universal in himself. So the thinkers of old devised Sanyasam to wean man from these distracting attractions. A Sanyasin is so called because he casts off everything from him—property, family and race, so that realising the universal in himself, he may work to make humanity grasp the truth. The moment a man becomes a Sanyasin the mighty and the lowly, the rich and the poor, the hale and the sickly are the same to him, for they are he. A Sanyasin's calling is a high one, for he leads humanity to its goal by the very way of his life through love, sacrifice and service.

Man's injustice to man makes countless thousands mourn. The tendency is to repel injustice through violence: but violence breeds bad blood and bad blood leads to violence again. So Jesus Christ told his followers “Be angry and sin not” through violence in putting down injustice. Translated in Indian language this sinless anger means the same as Satya—Agraha. Centuries afterwards again Mahatma Gandhi tells his followers to “hold to truth” (Satya-graha) without violence in putting down injustice. Satyagraha (whether in Jesusian or in Gandhian sense) is a holy weapon not to be used lightheartedly except for a high moral purpose, for that weapon is wrought out of love, sacrifice and service.

Owing to historical and political causes, dominating and dominated classes exist everywhere in the world from long ages past and the dominating classes make rules that are unfavourable to the dominated. But

unselfish souls have ever laboured to remove the inequality. If Smritis and Agamas differentiate between class and class, it is because of the historical conditions that prevailed in India at the time of the origin of these Smritis and Agamas. The differentiating rules of Smritis and Agamas therefore refer to the conditions of 2 or 3 thousand years ago and not of today. People who want to enforce these old obsolete rules are like the rules themselves sediment of a bygone age. The exhilarating air of the changed condition of modern times has not stirred them. It is the duty of every-one to intensify and spread Deiva bhakti and Temple entry is one of the methods of spreading Deiva bhakti. The Temple entry question therefore is a moral one. Vested interests may do many things for their purpose. But when Sanyasins are Atyasramins, could they join vested interests and propose to obstruct through Satyagraha people from entering temples to adore God? Would they not thereby bring a high calling into low repute and misuse a holy weapon for an unholy purpose? It is for Sanyasins to ponder over.

“The religious houses became places of refuge, where men of noble birth, Kings and queens and emperors. Warriors and statesmen retired to lay down their splendid cares and end their days in peace.”

L. A. Froude, Time of Erasmus and Luther.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BHAGAVAT GITA

BY N. SRINIVASA ACHARYA, B.A., B.L.

(Continued from page 342)

The foregoing description shows that the plan and method adopted in the Gita closely follows that of the Upanishads and necessarily so. Sri Krishna's divinity apart, He and Arjuna are historic persons taking part in the war of the Kurukshetra. The mental trouble of Arjuna arose in the field of battle and it was, as already pointed out, a struggle between the promptings of duty dictated by firm faith in religion and weakness resulting from filial affection, the sense of spirituality and religious—duty supremely swaying the mind sub-consciously all the while. The love of the kindred shadowed the understanding for a while; and even attempted to reconcile the breaking of the law, which Arjuna would not otherwise consciously and willingly do, with the spirit of the law itself. So the only means of rescuing Arjuna from the pitfall he ran after, lay in the clear unravelling of that very law, bringing out prominently the essence of all things—the fate and the goal of all action free from the clouds and smoke that threatened to envelope them, as found in the fountain head of the Upanishads in a manner adopted to the situation. To Him, to Arjuna, and the rest of them at Kurukshetra, the Vedas furnished the philosophy of life and the commands of religion regarding duty and sin, right and wrong and so forth. *Varnashrama Dharma* was to them inviolable.

The ideas above summarised are pithily brought out by Sri Sankara in his introduction thus:—“The Lord thought these two Dharmas of the Vedas to Arjuna who was then immersed in the ocean of grief and delusion”. Sri Ramanuja amplifies it thus:—“The Lord expounded to Arjuna the *Sastra* relating to the *Atman* because he found that Arjuna had lost his true Self between the horses of a dilemma being overpowered by affection and pity entirely misplaced and ill-timed. On the one hand he thought quite mistakenly that the great Dharma of the Kshatriya, viz, fighting, was the negation of Dharma; and on the other, he took refuge at the Lord's feet and prayed for Dharma being taught. He could not recover from his dark delusion unless he was convinced, through a proper exposition, of the truth about the *Atman* (soul) and that the fighting done without regard for the fruit and as a duty imposed by divine command, was the only means of obtaining

(3) how are we to accomplish our end in view? In answering these questions, we shall not claim more for the Gita or the Upanishads than that they offer the best answers that have yet been given for them.

The Vedantic conception regarding them is already briefly stated in the beginning of the last section. In the Gita they are expounded in a more popular form, and portrayed in the Viswarupa disclosed by Sri Krishna to Arjuna. (Chapter XI).

(1) Buddhism denies Soul and God. Christianity and Mohammadanism speak of the soul in a vague manner as 'spirit'. They do not clearly differentiate between *Atman* (Soul) which is immortal and the *body* which is perishable. When Christ ascended from the grave on the 3rd day of His Crucifixion, his body was not there. Evidently with the body he went up. The Mohammadan idea too of *soul* is singularly vague. Granting that there is a life or existence other than the present one, and that the present life in the body must come to an end and the enjoyer in future of the consequences of his deeds in this life, must be different from the body that is burnt or buried at death and who survives it. Who is he? What is his nature? The Gita says at the outset, He is the *Atman* and is immortal and eternal like God himself. The body is to him like a garment which when worn out is replaced by a new one; and the *atman* goes through the several births, as he passes childhood, youth, adolescence and old age in the same birth. This journey through them and bondage therein are determined by the deeds (good and bad) previously done by him. To escape them he has to understand the truth about his own self, and discharge the prescribed duties and bear the temporary but unavoidable experiences of physical pain or pleasure arising in consequence thereof, and thus get rid of the factors that make for bondage. But in himself the soul cannot be destroyed or molested any wise. Whatever may happen to the body in which he resides for the time being; he survives it. He is infinite bliss and knowledge and absolutely unchangeable (Chapter II). His *Antaratman* or inner life or the supreme Self is Brahman or God Himself (Chapter VI, XIII and XV).

The body which he takes at birth is made up of non-sentient matter *Prakriti*, composed of the five elements, water, air, fire, earth and ether. It is the combination of Jiva and *Prakriti* that constitutes creation or birth; and it takes place by the will of God (Chapter VII).

Both of them are inseparably associated with God and acquire function through His Will. He pervades and sustains them and His Omnipresence is recognised, e.g., in the taste of the water, the glory of the sun and the

moon, the *Pranava* (the all comprehensive syllable) of the Vedas, the holy scent of the earth, the eternal life of all beings, the wisdom of the wise, the power of the great & the desire based on Dharma. All beings good bad and indifferent get their intelligence, wisdom and even unwisdom from Him (in accordance with their karma); and in their states they are sustained only in and by Him; but *He* does not depend upon any of them for anything. Men do not realise this, being deluded by the three qualities of matter through their Karma. The only means of recovering from the delusion is by the understanding of truth about Self and God and surrendering unto His Grace. Wicked men do not seek Him; but knowing men do "The Great Soul who realises *Vasudeva* (i.e., the All pervading-Brahman) in everything is extremely difficult to find "(*Vasudevassarvamithi samahatma sudurlubhaha*). VII. 19.

The above conception of God, Man and World has no limitation of dogma or place or time. It sees divinity in all and in everything. "All things-moveable and immoveable-are in God and there is nothing which stayeth not in or by Him". Ch. X. 39, (*Nathadasthi vina yathasyath maya bhutam characharam*). Real life and real beatitude, therefore, are infinite, untrammelled, and unconditioned bliss-pure and simple and free from the contamination of the dualities, and in a state of inseparable union with the Glory of God. The world is otherwise only an experience of limitations of all sorts, distracting and blinding the judgment, and miserable in the main. This is Gita's answer to the 1st question.

(2) The second question is virtually answered by the foregoing disquisition as to the true nature of the ultimate facts (*Tatvas*). In shaping the conduct here we are to look beyond this life not merely to avoid the judgment of the Almighty Ruler, nor even to obtain unsullied and infinite pleasure in the midst of *houries* and the like; and certainly not to see only final void of everything (*Sarva shunya*); but to realise and experience the hitherto small self glorified and merged in the *Infinite Self* which is all light and all bliss, and fulfil the purpose of being the part thereof. That is attaining to Brahman, the Supreme Existence i.e., the reality and the fulness of the Soul in itself. The world and the physical body is a Soul in itself. The world and the physical body is a miserable jail and cellar confining it, but still a place which affords facilities which, if well utilised would enable you to deliver yourself from bondage and attain to eternal freedom (Chapter XIII).

(3) The answer to the third question by the Gita is equally grand. Prayer and supplication to the superior Power for forgiveness by the

latter is known to all religions, great and small, refined and superstitious. Prayer and meditation in the Gita are not directed by fear of punishment or prospect of reward, but are corollaries following from the very constitution of God and Man. Says the Lord 'I am the inner soul residing in the heart of all beings, the beginning, the middle and the end of all'. In fact 'He sustains the whole universe by a bit only of His Infinite Self' (Chapter X). After the seeing the Lord in His Universal Aspect (Viswarupa) Arjuna wonders why people do not realise 'the grandeur of the Great God the first creator of even Brahma', the resting place and the support supreme of all' and concludes that the Lord is aptly and literally 'the father of all, moving and unmoving'. His prayer is like that of a Son unto a father (for his share of the patrimony), of a friend to a friend, and of the lover to the sweetheart (Chapter XI). God's bestowal of grace and man's seeking of the same are necessary and natural consequences of the essence (Swarupa) of their mutual connection, and the inherent dependence or existence of the Soul in God.

The presentation of these great and universal truths in the Gita is, no doubt, coloured by ritualistic notions, and habits of life, familiar to the Vedic Aryans. But the truths themselves shine forth and exhibit themselves in the Gita in a manner which can hardly be said to have occurred to the authors of the Bible and the Koran or to the Buddha or to protagonists of any other known religion. They are available to all and are comprehensive of all codes of morals and faith. We can, therefore, say in speaking of the Gita what Arjuna told the Lord on seeing his universal figure (Vishvarupa) 'Sthane hrishikesha tava prakirthyat jagatprahrishtat yamurajyate cha (Ch. XI. 36) O! The Vanquisher of all sensual tendencies (Hrishikesha) 'is it meet that the world is lost in the admiration of Thy glory and enjoys it to its fill'? And so it is the Gita to this day holds up its head high over the religious literature of the world.

III. THE GITA AS A GOSPEL TO HUMANITY

We have seen that the discourse of the Gita was delivered in the midst of the din of a terrible destructive war, when Arjuna of spotless character faltered at the prospect of an almost universal annihilation, though it was a retribution for and avenging of heaps of heinous wrongs on the part of his treacherous and greedy cousins and their supporters. He was in deep embarrassment of the human heart which revolts at the infliction of *present* death irrespective of any other consideration. Sri Krishna appealed to the sense of the higher and universal aspect of human-

ity which had not yet been altogether erased from the mind of Arjuna by "the sorrow misplaced or ill-timed", and impressed upon him that the demands of duty towards such humanity were supreme and imperative; and that the weakness of yielding to the mean and petty dictates of ephemeral pleasure and pain, the great deluding impediment in the path of progress should be overcome by a correct understanding of man and his function in relation to the universe. It has also been pointed out that this aspect of Gita's response to the innate spiritual craving of man, that has given it the position occupied by it among the world's spiritual literature. It, therefore, leads us further to look into the message of the Gita to man in general.

All teachings tend towards inducement to action. Arjuna who first said "I shall not fight (Na yotshyeh), after hearing the Gita exclaimed "My delusion has vanished; I have recovered my senses; and I shall do thy word" (Nasht moha smritir labdha karishye vachanam tava (Ch. XVIII. 73) and proceeded to fight. His resolve now was the result of his understanding the true nature of the individual the small self (on whose behalf he stupidly grieved) as part and parcel of and inseparable from the Great *Universal Self* full of glory and bliss. His erstwhile narrow vision was the result of the association of the true self or Atman with the *prakriti* (body) encaging it. Such realisation comes by *Yoga* practice. The several steps in its attainment are explained in Chapter VI. The final stage in that understanding is the realisation that the selves of the *Atman* in all men are of one individual character, namely, *Intelligence* and *Bliss*; consequently the view of differences resulting from the variety of the Karmic physical bodies worn by them and the qualities of *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* induced by them is now eliminated (Chapter VI. 29). By such realisation the weakness of character begotten upon selfness (*Ahankara*) and greed (*Mamakara*) arising from the narrow outlook for physical pleasure and pain, is seen in its true colour and got rid of as darkness is by the sunrise. At the next stage the Yogi 'sees God in everyone and everyone in God, with the result that God is never absent to him and he is never absent to God'. (Chapter VI. 30) In other words, the realisation that the Atman is one uniform entity of intelligence and bliss, leads to the further experience that such intelligence and bliss is but part of an eternal and 'infinite existence, intelligence and glory' which illuminates and guides all beings and sustains all things. The Yogi now like Prahlada sees only God in everything and everyman. To him all is one in Him; and there is no friend or foe; and there is nothing which he

distinguishes as *his* or *not-his*. A further step in the Yoga is the elimination of the lower *self* altogether and visioning *only* God the *Supreme Self* in every being, the internal Ruler and sustainer from within of all (Chapter VI-30). It leads to the realisation of the only 'one true existence without a second.' External objects make no impression whatsoever on the Yogi at this step. This again was the case with Prahlada when he was stung by the fierce serpents *Vasuki* and *Takshaka* at the instance of his demon father. His mind was all the while enjoying the bliss of communion with Sri Krishna within him, his own self and enveloping body being completely lost to thinking and feeling. This Supreme Beatitude may be enjoyed in this very life by stern and constant practice of Yoga, with a pure and disciplined mind. The next and the highest stage of Yoga is described in the next verse (Chapter VI-31). It makes one a *Jivan Mukta* or one who is like a released soul in the midst of this very turmoil of *Samsara*, the life of sorrows and miseries. He experiences, that what make for his own pleasure and pain do the same for others too and for God who is himself and all beings, and resolutely refrains from doing harm to any one by word, thought or deed and exerts his best to do only good to all by all possible means. His Dharma of *Ahimsa* rises to its height and so his God-vision and that of Moksha! (Sri Sankara). So far as his own self is concerned, he takes 'the greatest pleasures like the birth of a long prayed for son or the keenest pangs of pain like the death of such a dear one, in a spirit of absolute detachment, as if they happened to someone else' (Sri Ramanuja). That is, they make as little impression on him as they make upon a stranger. This is the ideal that should be kept constantly before the mind's eye in the daily conduct of man in relation to the rest.

(To be Continued).

RELIGIOUS HARMONY.

BY SWAMI RAJESWARANAND.

The world we live in is a cosmos and not a chaos. It is a uni-verse and not a multi-verse. The Cosmic Heart does equally throb in the soul-temples of one and all. The One White Flame of Truth does always shine in all the multicoloured lamps of various teachings. The One Divinity does impartially dwell in all the churches, mosques, temples and tabernacles of the world. Such a religious consciousness of harmony is as broad as the sky allowing all luminaries to shine in its spacious amplitude. It is free from any dogma or dry forms of ritualism, any fossilized traditions or conventions, any dubious uncertainty of philosophical speculations or logical abstractions.

Science is making the world a single unit. No longer can the different nations keep aloof from one another. Humanity is now linked up together. Life has become, as it were, a world-broadcast. Along with the unification of the physical side of man there has not progressed spiritual integrity and mutual understanding among men. Science has also brought power and speed to the earth though only a little science has been obtainable at present. We must get deeper into science or knowledge for more science and more knowledge and not less. If there is science of matter, there must be science of the mind. If there is science of mind, there must be science of Truth, the Absolute Self. The spiritual should be the dominant force. It is only when the science of Self, the unitary principle of existence, is known, there can be peace and good-will in all spheres of life.

It is encouraging that attempts have been and are being made to spread mutual understanding and peace among mankind. The League of Nations is the first secular institution that was established as one of the fruits of the great war to bring different nations under one common organisation and to settle all disputes by arbitration instead of through force. But we are seeing how it is failing at each step. Peace-pacts do, of course, remain only as scraps of paper and products of mutual distrust and rivalry. We hear now of a World Brain Trust through which the scientists hope to come together and resolve not to make their knowledge an instrument of destruction. And we are also familiar now with Parliaments of Religions and Fellowships of Faiths. The leaders of thought are trying to bring about harmony and reconciliation based on common

interests. They realise that the real problem of the world demands a solution not only on the economic, social and political lines, but mainly in the spiritual way which is religious harmony.

It is no wonder that there are some people who are sceptical about this spiritual way. They want to wage war against God. The no-God movement seems to be cropping up here and there. But all this is born of a misunderstanding of the truths of religion and not because religion in itself is baneful to the progress of the individual and the race. Religion should not be condemned simply because some of its followers and institutions are found wanting. Churches may come and go; priests may not live up to the ideals of the message of the prophets. The priests may try to crib, cripple and cabin religion into narrow groves, though it cannot be made particular and parochial. But the prophets preached religion as having universal application, freed from its accretions and superstitions. Provincialism in truth is a contradiction in terms. Religion cannot be used more or less as an 'opiate' for the masses. It cannot bribe you and me and any body else with a promise of heaven or a threat of hell. Many meaningless do's and don't's go under the guise of its injunctions and create anachronisms to-day. If religion could be realised in its unfailing expression of the oneness of life and existence, troubles, national, international, social, political, industrial and also religious, will soon see an end and toll a death-knell of themselves. Religion is the most vital, the most permanent and the most determining element in human life. In fact, it is a civilizing force. It awakens man to the underlying unity of the Self, while science and philosophy coldly assure.

It is however harmful to make a mess of all the religions and call it religious harmony. A tendency is noticeable to bring together truths from different religions and call this new product universal religion. This will result only in adding one more faith to the existing ones. Nor will it in any way make for religious harmony to promote any one of the existing religions to the position of being universal. Men's minds are not commodities turned out of a machine. There are differences in temperament, outlook and development. What is meat to one may be poison to another. The extremists once proclaimed in their jubilation that religious unity meant one creed, one scripture, one form of worship and that humanity must be alike everywhere under one banner. One church and one religion for humanity, I suppose you agree, it is impossible to achieve. In fact there are as many religions as there are human beings. Though each is born in a religion, yet each is born for a religion, the manifesta-

tion of Unity everywhere. Our daily life is our temple and our religion, in the midst of richness of variety and manifoldness of diversity. Religion is written in the life of every individual and one has to study it there. It is only for the sake of convenience that we give one single name to the beliefs of a group of persons, either on account of the place they live in, or due to the book they live by, or perhaps, they have common allegiance to one prophet. We know how the followers of one and the same prophet differ among themselves in their interpretations of the very same words of their master. This is inevitable and is but natural. We cannot help having varieties of religious experiences. Wisdom guides the great man, reason the good man, experience the ordinary man, necessity the ignorant and nature the beasts. In our scheme for religious harmony let us bear this in mind.

We should establish a broad, cultural and religious basis showing the centre to which all the radii of different doctrines come and converge. We should bring together all religions and cults like beads on one string and revitalise them for individual and collective needs. We should touch the fundamental ideals taught in all the great religions and philosophies of the world. We should create not a creed or a cult or a sect but include and transcend every sect and creed. No sect but a synthesis, no church but a university of spiritual culture, is the need of the day to lead humanity on to freedom. The harmony of religions ought to be synthetic and not syncretic, vital and not vague. Its conduct has to be shaped in accordance with a sublime ethic of love and sympathy. Proselytising is not manly. In religion there can be no compulsion, condemnation, calculation and constraint. There is room for every sail on the sea, for every wing in the air, for every star in the sky. Each one has to grow in the soil most suited to his soul.

The ideal of religious harmony should emphasise quality rather than quantity, the individual rather than the mass. The individual is the key to life's problem. Man needs now not mere learning but wisdom, not mere societies but unity, not mere nations but humanity, not mere doctrines but religion. True religious harmony is not mechanical or miraculous, not the self-sufficiency of organisation, not the happy-go and luck-go conviction or civilization, not international ceremony and sentimentality and the like. Nature's plan is unity in the midst of diversity and its law is balance in life. The universe does not allow its equilibrium to be destroyed. 'Each for all and all for each' sums up the rule of adjustment. This synthetic view of life will show the way to the Reality of all reali-

ties, the Religion at the back of all religions. It will lead to the ideal of oneness of the human race, be the individual black or brown, white or yellow. For though a man differ from his neighbour as Mr. so-and-so, he is one with him as a part of humanity. Though he seems to differ from the animal and the plant, yet he is one with them as a living being. There is but one soul throughout the universe, all is but one existence.

The course of life is from the lower truth to the higher truth, from the particular to the universal, from the known to the unknown. There is the innate hankering of the human soul for something that is superphysical which will help man transcend the limitations of life; and this instinct of man to transcend his limitations has urged him on to different phases of religion. All religions clearly show that the Supreme Reality which is unconditioned by time, space and causation, is the basic principle of the universe. It is the realisation of this principle that makes man play his part, prince or page, not as an automaton but as a self-conscious being, to the best of his abilities, in the drama of life on the stage of this world, but at the same time realising that he is not of it, though in it. Thus it will be seen that universalism is no empty abstraction or limited comprehension. It is an expression of itself in particulars just as the Infinity expresses itself in the finite. It does not spring up or sprout from the spheres of any society, sect, church, cult, creed, colour, community, country and the like, since it cannot be institutionalised. Much less is it a vain void difficult to divine. The beauty of its expression and experience consists in its being felt, realised and declared in, through and beyond everything.

It will be interesting to note that religious unity is not outer uniformity. Uniformity is not universality. Universality is not the totality of all individuality. Individuality is not a mixture of complexity. The true individual is the universal. The true universal is unitary and the only individual. True unity is the Reality. Man is an expression of God and God is the reality of man. Every human being is a moving temple of the Infinite. Infinity alone is Bliss.

Let religious harmony establish human life on broader and better foundation and bring one and all on common and cultural basis to make them embrace one another as members of the great family of humanity, realising the universal unity underlying the diverse faiths in the world and welcoming and honouring truth whatever quarter it may come from, and beholding the splendid sight of the many-coloured lights blending into one Supreme Radiance.

NOTES.

Another 'birth right' denied to the Hindus :—Neither sense nor justice would justify the refusal of the Bengal Government to accept the donation of Rs. 50,000 made by Lady J. C. Bose for founding two research scholarships in Botany in the Presidency College, Calcutta. That the lady made it a condition of acceptance, that the scholarships should enure only for the benefit of Bengal Hindus, is absolutely no ground for refusal. It is the birth right of the Hindus that they should adopt what ever means are available for the improvement of the Hindu intellectual advancement and there is no question of partiality, if the offer was accepted. The Lady's offer must act as an example for other communities to emulate. Such donations are profusely made in all civilised countries and are heartily accepted even though they are hedged in by conditions of a more drastic type. Research in Botany is a field where Indian Medicine is vastly interested. It redounds to the economic amelioration in a branch of industry which has been exploited by foreigners. There is no question that the results of botanical research would be available to all India if not to all the World also. Knowledge cannot be hidden in a bushel. The impression created by the refusal of the offer is, that the Bengal Government is chary of any attempts even of non officials and public spirited citizens to improve Hindu culture. It cannot be pretended that the Bengal Government is ignorant of the high value attached by the Government of India to research in Botany. For they have directed the Inter University Board to grant facilities for exploration of the flora in each province by the Universities.

* * *

A Bishop on Intuition :—Referring to the keen disappointment and disillusionment caused to those had been fooled to belief, that war would not break out and that it would be averted by the eleventh hour, Mr. F. W. Pigott in the notes to the "Liberal Catholic" rightly emphasises the principle that one should rely upon one's own reasoning supported by such intuition, as one has out developed, and giving that intuition the opportunity it needs for its further developments and not turn to teachers and writings however honest and inspired for certainty about matters which lie outside the range of ordinary human Knowledge, though one may fairly acknowledge, that much of what they say or write may often be inspired in a general sense. True intuition springs from the bed of

pure conscience : it is nurtured by distilled experience, and inspired by the examples of noblest beings. This is called the religion of experience by the Bishop Pigott.

For the play of intuition one has to avoid inhibition created by dogmas and traditions theological or social. The doctrine of primordial sin, that of vicarious atonement, that of invocation to the spirit of this or that being, that of the fall of Adam or the Victory of restoration of Adam etc.etc. Mr. Pigott dubs those dogmas as "outworn lumber" and he adds "Rational man no longer regards the scheme of salvation as presented from the time of St. Augustine onwards with any other feeling than those of disgust." It follows that all that hinders the illumination of intuition has to be discarded. One such hindrance that has stupendous potency is Egoism that veils the light and the individual creates mists of obsession and illusion by ignorance and passions and the sap derives a *self sufficiency* in the play of those obsessions and illusions or as Berry calls it "inter play of Shadow with Shadow."

* * * *

Not meek but aggressive : Hinduism has long since given up its attitude of isolation. It has been legitimate enough to remain so because it is founded on an infallible unassailable logic, philosophy and conduct practised not as mere experiments and expediency but as determined for all ages to come on fundamental truths discovered by the seers of India. Dr. Moonji declared at the Hindu Provincial conference that the old communal award passed by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald cannot be accepted by the Hindu as final. Now that interested and ambitious persons assail the integrity and strength of the Hindu community, Hinduism is bent upon foiling the aggressors. The Hindu Sabah presses that it alone can deliver the goods on behalf of Hindus.

To implement the demands for securing her rightful place and status in India, Dr. Moonji made an appeal for the foundation of a militia of a lakh of persons in the Punjab. He appealed to the Arya Samajists to develop their sword as they had developed their Vedas and asked them to take a vow to organise the militia.

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