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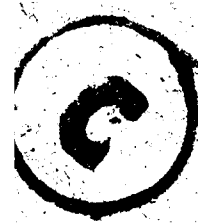
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THE
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A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

—The Official Organ of the Arya Mata Sabha—

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चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुर्बुधा । गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः॥

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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RABINDRANATH TAGORE—A TRUE HINDU

By

Mr. K. CHANDRASEKHARAN.

Once the Poet met two ascetics of some religious sect in a village and asked them the question, 'Can you tell me wherein lies the special feature of your religion?' One of them hesitated and replied that it was hard to define, while the other opined that it was simple to express. "Then why don't you preach the doctrine to all people?" the poet asked him to which came the ready reply, "whoever feels thirsty will of himself come to the river". 'But', asked the poet, "Are they coming?". The ascetic said with a gentle smile betraying no impatience or anxiety, "they must come, one and all". (Sadhana pp. 32, 33.)

This conclusion is inevitable and is at the back of the Indian mind from ages past. The progress of the human soul points to the ultimate realisation of the oneness of all life. This also, according to the Hindu, is the realisation of his immortal self. For this self-realisation the Hindu sages from the times of the Upanishads have shown the way. Only, in the ceaseless activity of self-aggrandisement to which the modern man is becoming more and more a prey, the vision of the more beautiful life that comprehends universal love is lost sight of. At the same time India cannot be said to have ignored the values of things that are not the same, for she knows that it would be making life impossible. The place occupied by the human being in the scale of creation is not

(They who having attained the supreme soul in knowledge were filled with wisdom, and having found Him in union with the soul were in perfect harmony with the inner self; they having realised Him in the

heart were free from all selfish desires, and having experienced Him in all activities of the world, had attained calmness. The Rishis were they who having reached the supreme God from all sides had found abiding peace, had become united with all, had entered into the life of the Universe.)

Mahatma Gandhi is a Hindu out and out, and his mind, reflected in his numerous writings and speeches as well as his actions, has convinced the world of his claim to be a Hindu *par excellence*. If the Mahatma is a true Hindu, it is not far to seek to establish that the Mahakavi Rabindranath is also a true Hindu. For there are many points of similarity between the two in their universal love and spiritual outlook. Moreover a poet in Sanskrit is called कवि, which when analysed gives the meaning as कान्तदर्शी (one whose sight is far-reaching). To take the very passage quoted above from Tagore, we find him even before 1914 when the world war began, almost prognosticating the way in which the western nations would increase their armaments and clash against each other. Again, according to the Sanskritists, a poet is fit to be called a Mahakavi only when all that is best in thought and life is mirrored in him. They would go even to the extent of disputing the dictates of Sastras as sanctionless if the words of a Mahakavi are directly to the contrary on a particular matter. It proves, therefore, beyond doubt that a great Poet is one whose claim to our reverence is much because he typifies everything that is ideal and best in a civilisation and culture.

In every one of his books and songs, Tagore shows to his fullest ability the Hindu thought and aims. The Gitanjali is a nosegay of choice songs that have for their parallels, in thought and spiritual urge, only the utterances of our ancients who laid the foundations of our philosophy. Says the Upanishads:

एषवेदो विश्वकर्मा महात्मा सदा जानानां हृदये सन्निविष्टः ।

हृदा मनीषा मनसाभिव्यक्तो य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥ श्वेताश्वतर, 4 अध्याय, 17 श्लोक

(The God who is Knowledge itself and who is manifesting himself in the activities of the universe always dwells in the heart of man as the supreme soul. Those who realise him through the immediate perception of the heart attain immortality).

Sings the Poet in his song with the music and word-picture that are his own creations thus :

"The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow.

I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages dancing in my blood this moment (Gitanjali 69) "

In art our ancients have codified laws for aesthetic aims and maintained standards to follow, which have been adopted by the modern Indian Poet in every one of his story, song and play. There are new forms also engrafted by him upon those of the old. The interpretation of reality and not the mere reproduction of it actuated our ancients in architecture and painting, in dance and drama. Tagore always interprets what he sees. His meaning of existence is totally different from what strikes the normal mind as real. It is what the man of spiritual vision alone can observe. To him the experience of a spiritual soul is as follows: "The water does not merely cleanse his limbs, but it purifies his heart; for it touches his soul. The earth does not merely hold his body, but it gladdens his mind; for its contact is more than a physical contact—it is a living presence" (Sadhana p. 8). Poetry enshrines this spirit and embodies in language the heart's longings. The highest function of poetry according to our Alankarikas is suggestion. Suggestion is more comprehensively described as ध्वनि in Sanskrit. The ideal in all arts must be, according to Ananda Vardhana, the author of "ध्वन्यालोक, सङ्ख्यलोचनामृतं तत्त्वान्तरं किमप्यन्यदेव । (1. उद्योत, 4. श्लोक) "

(The inner truth is something else which, however undefinable, gives enduring delight to the eyes of the enjoyer of beauty). Tagore will be nothing to us if he is not suggestive in whatever he touches. Sometimes the extreme suggestiveness of his art-manifestations makes the common mind baffled in its attempt to grasp him. The complaint then gets louder that Tagore is unintelligible to the average reader. The difficulty is not with Tagore's writings but with the so-called average reader, who thinks it his birthright to enjoy every form of art without a cultivation of its peculiarities. In art, simplicity which is the crowning virtue of its expression, will not be in the thought but in the language. It should never be considered that poets are born to tell us the obvious and the unhidden. If Tagore pictures the child's mind in

his Crescent Moon, it is not the result of musings of a simple mind but of the profound and varied experiences of a life richly lived, which have crystallised into songs, simple yet unapproachably beautiful of thought. Let us listen to one such song called 'The Beginning' (Crescent Moon.)

'Where have I come from, where did you pick me up?' the baby asked its mother.

She answered half crying, half laughing and clasping the baby to her breast,—“You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my darling.

'You were in the dolls of my childhood's games; and when with clay I made the image of my God every morning, I made and unmade you then.

'You were then enshrined with our household deity; in his worship I worshipped you.

In all my hopes and my loves in my life in the life of my mother you have lived.....

When in girlhood my heart was opening its petals, you hovered as a fragrance about it.

Your tender softness bloomed in my youthful limbs, like a glow in the sky before the sunrise.....”

Indeed no child asks such penetrative questions of its mother and no mother answers them so wonderfully. But the simplicity of the lines consists only in the simple words used and not in their meaning or their suggestiveness which satisfies the aesthetic demands of only a maturer mind.

Similarly, in his conception of womanhood Tagore has placed before us the type of ancient India, which proved the husband's helpmate in his responsibilities of life and not a mere toy for his idle hours. In his 'Chitra', after all the 'dalliance and wit' between Arjuna and Chitra, there is a passage put in the mouth of the heroine. She says: “The gift that I proudly bring you is the heart of a woman. Here have all pains and joys gathered, the hopes and fears and shames of a daughter of the dust; here love springs up struggling toward immortal life.....If you deign to keep me by your side in the path of danger and daring, if you allow me to share the great duties of your life, then will you know my true self.” These words, proud yet dignified in love, proffer the best in woman to man. It is also the true spirit of womanhood according to our ancients.

Again, embedded in this higher love is the sacrifice that love alone is capable of in order to fulfil itself. If Kalidasa's Sakuntala passes through suffering and pain, it is a suggestion of the mastermind, that

her love born is of the flesh has to be purged of its dross before it becomes a thing of the spirit and lasting. We understand that the first attraction between the King and Sakuntala has to be considered lower than the pure one which binds them permanently after their second meeting in Maricha Ashrama. In all our Sanskrit dramas which deal with love as the prime theme or *rasa* there will be a separation between lovers or a disappointment in the consummation of their loves, only to enhance the value of their attraction to each other and to install love finally on the throne of steadfastness. Maybe the Sanskrit drama appeals less to educated minds of modern India than the Western plays portraying tragedies and comedies, whose range and variety are bewilderingly on the increase. But if the purport of true art, according to the Hindus, is understood as not copying mere life but interpreting it, then there can be no ground for depreciating the merits of the Sanskrit drama. Tagore is a devotee of this great function of art and his novels and short stories too reflect this aspect in spite of the portrayal there of actual life.

Art and life, therefore, have their consecration to spirituality according to us. Nowhere in Tagore could be scanned any trace of mere external beauty or the sensuous enjoyment of life. Every little bead in the garland of his poesy sparkles with the inner glow of the spirit. He compels us not to be passive observers of nature but to penetrate it deeper in order to reach the other end of it which is the beginning of eternity. Deliverance for him is not in renunciation which completely shuts out the best in life. For he says: “Deliverance is not for me renunciation. I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight.....

No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delights of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.”

This aspect of his philosophy has come in for criticism at the hands of some scholars as differentiating his from the philosophical concepts that some of our greatest thinkers have preached. It is not fair to the genius of Tagore to take out a passage here or a song there and say either he is self-contradictory or going against the current of philosophical thought that is orthodox. He himself says:

“That I should make much of myself and turn it on all sides, thus casting coloured shadows on thy radiance—such is thy Maya” (Gitanjali, 71). Tagore is clearly aware of the impermanence of things material. But he cannot be said to be a victim to his sensory attractions when he expresses his freedom in a thousand bonds of delight”,

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि मुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥

(Bhagavad Gita 15 अध्याय, श्लोक 10)

(When He departs, or stays, when He enjoys or is in contact with the dispositions of Nature, the deluded do not perceive Him, but they who have the eye of wisdom perceive Him). It is the same thought which permeates many of Tagore's utterances and it is this wisdom that teaches him to say : ' the delights of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.' He is not at all abjectly following where his senses lead him. He knows ' Life is Maya, as moralists love to say, it is and is not '. He more vividly describes Maya thus : " It is the same with the rose. In the pulp of its petals you may find everything that went to make the rose; but the rose which is Maya, an image, is lost ; its finality which has the touch of the infinite is gone ". (Religion of the Artist: Contemporary Indian Philosophy p. 38.)

Finally, we cannot ignore the fact that Rabindranath Tagore's family was nurtured always in Upanishadic thought. His father, the Maharishi, created for him an atmosphere which breathed of the old Hindu India. If in his early prime he fed upon Kalidasa and Valmiki and the Vaishnava poets of Bengal, he turned them to good account in his own lyrical moods. But the art-creations of a true artist partake of truth, and with the truth of his expression the artist also grows in truth—an ideal much in unison with the Hindu view of life. It is here also that Tagore has shown us the way as a Religious perceptor.

In objective life also his Gurukulam conception for an educational institution has found expression in his Santiniketan. Everything belonging to ancient India, without eschewing at the same time the best that other nations could give us, is preserved there. More than knowledge, the vision behind this edifice of Visva-Bharati is worthy of only a great Hindu philosopher. To understand Tagore we need no more introduction than his own words : " It is not as ether waves that we receive light : the morning does not wait for some scientist for its introduction to us " (Religion of the Artist p. 33.) In the same way, we can touch the infinity of his mind within us only when we feel the greatness of his universal love and goodness, and not through the explanations of critics of his works, nor even through the erudite discussions of his philosophy and Religion.

THE HOPE OF TOMORROW.

By

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

The law of the jungle prevails today. So people dissatisfied with the world of today, long for the world of tomorrow. People who wistfully long thus, have not realised why Buddhism was preached to the countries of Asia encircling India on the north and Christianity to Europe? The reason will reveal the remedy to the ills of today.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA.

Hatred and violence are the root causes of world's misery : for man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn. Five centuries before the birth of Christ, Gautama Buddha forsook a throne to wander through village and town to soften man's inhumanity to man by his four truths and eight-fold path. Buddha's teachings, were not so much the preaching of a new religion as the preaching of a way of living. In their essence, they were a system of self-restraint and self-culture. They taught man how to live a holy life on earth through love, service and non-violence. So Buddhists believed that each generation is the heir to the consequences of the virtues and sins of the preceding one and that in this sense a nation reaps as it sows.

In those far off days, upper Asia was the home of violence. It was from there that tribe after tribe issued forth east, west and south to maraud and plunder cities and kingdoms that lay in those regions. So the missionaries of Buddha went to the countries encircling India on the north to soften their hearts with the precepts of their Master. And the efforts of those missionaries of peace lingered for long ages in those parts, as will be apparent from many a Chinese emperor bestowing on his subjects titles such as the " General who cherishes virtue ", the " General who cherishes civilizing influence " etc. and from Indo-Chinese nations settling their national quarrels not by bloody war but (as Sir Arthur Phayre points out in his History of Burmah) by contests of peace like building of pagodas or other religious fabrics. The spirit that animated the people of those parts, as a result of the preaching could be seen by their building viharas on cliffs " which in Europe would have been selected for a strongly fortified castle " in the words of James Fergusson the eminent writer on eastern architecture. Peace

not war therefore was the ideal to which men moved in those days. Destruction thrives on hatred: cooperation on love. Asia consequently became the home of culture and civilisation and above all of spiritual values. But the roll of time has obliterated the spirit of Buddha's teachings from the minds of men now.

JESUS CHRIST.

Peoples of Europe proclaim themselves Christian and call Jesus Christ their Lord. But have they realised what he taught and why instead of dying on the bed at home he chose to die on the Cross at Golgotha? Five centuries after Buddha had preached in Asia, Europe was the home of violence. Imperial Rome through the march of her cohorts enslaved people after people and exploited them for her benefit and luxury. Roman peace and prosperity were expensive: they were built on militarism and slavery. The unity of the empire was maintained by force of arms: the creative work was mostly done by forced labour: neither was grounded on consent and both were accompanied by great economic losses. The conception prevailed that the provinces were the estates of the Roman people and the wealth and luxury of the capital therefore were legitimately derived by the systematic exploitation of the provinces. The burden of Roman rule consequently lay heavily on the peoples under her yoke.

To see others suffer is to suffer along with them. Jesus was above all a spiritual being and it was his spirituality that impelled him to enter to political life of Palestine to spiritualise it and lift it to a higher plane through a change of people's hearts (metanoia) to make the world of his day a better one. Brotherhood of man, love, service and non-violence were the corner-stones of his teachings and he laboured ceaselessly to establish the Kingdom of God (Dharmarajyam) in Palestine by making the hungry and the poor feel that man was made in the image of God and the world in the pattern of heaven. But the establishment of such a kingdom in Palestine by Jesus meant the death-knell to Roman imperialism. So the Roman governor crucified Jesus Christ. Consequently his followers set up Christ's Church in imperial Rome to spread his Gospel of peace over Europe. If Jesus Christ had not been crucified—yes, if all events that had happened had not happened, how much better the world might have been. But what is the use of vain regrets, for while repenting old sins, we commit new ones and the finger of God writes and moves on.

MAHATMA GANDHI.

The spread of Buddhism and Christianity over the regions mentioned above was not an accident therefore. Now when a religion becomes static, that is when people stick to the letter as against the spirit of its teachings, decay inevitably sets in. The peoples of upper Asia might be Buddhists and worship Buddha, but they have forgotten the spirit of Buddha's teachings. The peoples of Europe might be Christians and worship Christ but they have forgotten the spirit of Christ's teachings. So the law of the jungle prevails today. "Not by hatred, my dear Dighavu, hatred is appeased. By love, my dear Dighavu, hatred is appeased" taught Buddha to his monks. "Put up thy sword again in its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" said Christ on a memorable occasion. World betterment can be only through moral regeneration. If a warring world is to have peace, it can only be through love, service and non-violence, for these alone by morally regenerating man give moral re-armament to the world. Nations reap as they sow. If the world of tomorrow is to be better than the world of today, it can only be by going back to the teachings of Gautama Buddha and Jesus Christ. What Gautama Buddha preached to Asia, what Jesus Christ preached to Europe, Mahatma Gandhi preaches to the world today. He is the hope of tomorrow.

MOTHER LOVE

All love is blind—is mad! and what of love
Sees Royal cygnets in unlovely ducklings,
Golden, sweet-throat cuckoos in
Her uncouth croaking Raven's chicks?
Blindest, Maddest Love of all
Is wondrous Mother-love!

T. P. K.



ANTI-DOWRY LEGISLATION

[Reply to Mr. K. S. Ramabhadra Ayyar By K. Viswanathan].

Sir,

I read with interest the article "A growing menace—Need for legislation" by Mr. K. S. Ramabhadra Ayyar, B.A., B.L., published in the August issue of the *Bharata Dharma*. I am one with the writer so far as the evil is concerned and the necessity for removing it. But I don't support the remedy he suggests. Let me make some observations.

Craze for legislation shows a cowardly and pessimistic mind—just as young children come crying to the elders that some one in the street or neighbouring house beat them. For social evils there should be no legislation. The remedy through legislation is worse than the evil. The principle of law is that hundreds of the guilty may escape, but one innocent should not suffer. By legislation in such cases the innocent suffer, the rich culprits escape. Legislation should be circumspect and after great deliberation, not hasty.

Every act of the legislature will be violated more and more, unless the people are educated to that level. I illustrate. In Europe and America, gangsterdom, banditry, racketeering go on in spite of all legislation. India is comparatively crimeless in that way. The only law that Hindus bow to is what the scriptures say.

Before the advent of the British in India, crimes of any sort were almost unknown. The word of a man was sufficient. Social evils too were few. I attribute all the evils of the present day India to the advent of the British—social evils not excepted. The Britisher for his good introduces many things among Indians, and later criticises them for the same. Before his advent toddy-tapping was unknown. To provide employment for Englishmen he introduced tapping of date and cocoanut trees; when people took to it he charged for tapping and to supervise and administer men were employed and thus opened the Excise Department. Similar is the case with coffee and tea. He forced opium on the Chinese for his gain.

The education we receive is to blame for the evil. Will Mr. Ramabhadra Ayyar introduce legislation to stop coffee drinking?

I am against legislation for social evils. They should be removed by education and propaganda. If our society is to exist and continue on

legislation for everything, then good bye to society. It will be no society then. Once the principle of legislation is accepted, that is the thin end of the wedge for uprooting society. Have not men the liberty to do what they like in their private life? These days people talk loud of democracy. Is it only democracy for one group or nation and submission for the other? I quote the famous words of Voltaire: "I detest every word of what you say, but I will fight with my life for your liberty to say so." That is democracy seal.

Before the advent of the British, such questions were dealt with effectively by the village *panchayat*. And what did it do? Excommunicate the one who violates the rule. In the north of India it is called *hooka-pani-band*. That is more effective to bring round the recalcitrant even today than hundreds of acts of the legislature. *Hooka-pani-band* is a greater humiliation to one than imprisonment; it is worse than banishment; every one points his finger of scorn at him. The mercantile community all over India today punish the one who violates the *samaj* rule by fining and distributing the sum among the members and never go to the court or legislature.

If it is said that education, propaganda and village panchayat are not able to bring about the desired result, it only argues inefficiency of those who do it, and that wrong persons are put in. It is like a bad workman quarrelling with his tools, or a police officer, unable to catch a thief, complains that laws are not sufficient or that people are bad. If people are good and the thief surrenders himself and delivers the goods to the victim, what is the need for the police?

Mr. Ramabhadra Ayyar does not like marriages with dowries. I do not like it too, but my objection is against legislation for stopping it. He quotes one case of excessive dowry and how one gent was victimised and humiliated. I give the following: There was a South Indian young Brahman in Poona. He was a dutiful son and his father in the South had arranged a match for him and the marriage was settled. A four figure dowry was fixed and even paid. The young man refused to accept it saying that he was not prepared to sell himself and be the slave of his would-be father-in-law. He chose a young lady from the Madras Widows Home and married her without any dowry. A second instance I point out is this. A similar case to what Mr. Ayyar quotes occurred. The would-be son-in-law refused to tie the *tali* unless some condition was fulfilled. The girl's father was humiliated and in a fix. But he was resourceful. He asked another young man in the assembly

to tie the *tali* and married the girl to him. Men want things both ways. That is the cause of the trouble.

I know of many cases where ills of the society have been remedied without fuss by the village elders. If in the cities such things can't be done, it is a shame on the citizens and their boasted education and civilisation. I would not put a personal question to Mr. Ramabhadra Ayyar.

Varasulka is bad. But the cause for it is the present education. People want educated men to be husbands for their girls. A poor man educates his son by borrowing and naturally that money has to be paid out of the *varasulka*. The bid goes like that. A poor man is cheap. But my daughter must be married to the heir to a legacy. I have to pay a big sum as dowry. An uneducated man is cheap. It is a question of simple economics which Mr. Ramabhadra Ayyar does not seem to follow, or understanding argues like a lawyer that he is. Indian goods are cheap. One is not satisfied with it. Foreign goods are costly on account of import duty which a benevolent government imposes. Either you must be satisfied with the cheap Indian goods or pay more for the foreign ones. No amount of legislation can compel the shopman to sell the goods he imports at the same rate as the cheap Indian ones.

Formerly Nair girls were to be given presents before marriage by the bridegroom and his party. On account of education in Cochin and Travancore the case has taken a serious turn. Matriculated girls are available for the asking, and are married sometimes to non-matriculate men and a big dowry is offered. Christian girls of Lucknow are so much educated that it has become a problem, with the various Missions, how to get them married. A mechanic is offered such a girl and he asks how he can afford her the clothes and shoes she puts on.

Comparisons are odious and distinctions invidious. Ramabhadra Ayyarval does not like marriages with dowries. Govindaswamy Ayyar does not like the long coat and turban of Madras. He hates it. He wants legislation to prevent it, and compel all to put on tail coat and top hat, or a lounge suit and a velour, or plus fours and a Tyrolean hat. I cannot compel all men to put on a panama because I don't like Christy's Cap. Will Mr. Ramabhadra Ayyar like it. Umadevi does not like the graceful sari of the Indian ladies and calls it a social tyranny, and introduces legislation compelling women to put on sleeveless low-necked blouse, or a jumper short-skirt and high-heeled shoes. How does

it appear? Will our sisters submit? How will our men look at it? Or again Sasikanta Rao does not like the *iddili*, *neyyappam*, *payasam*, *murukku* and other dishes and wants legislation to stop them. Food is one's private affair one will say. Some time back some persons in the U. P. wanted a bill to stop betel chewing, as U. P. people are notorious *pan* eaters; some enthusiasts mooted a bill in the legislature, but it had as hasty an end as the beginning, not being allowed to go beyond the circulation stage. Mr. Ayyar will argue personal freedom in these matters.

Instead of wasting breath and going after the shadowy figure of legislation, a better, surer and solid piece of work will be to educate the people on the lines that will yield the desired result. When people realise the evil, they will stop it. Till then no amount of legislation will be effective, whatever one may argue.

I remember girls of my province were married even in the cities at the age of 11, 12 and 13 some years back. Now I see girls of 16 and above unmarried even in the remote villages. What is it due to? Mr. K. S. Ramabhadra Ayyar and others may pride themselves and boastfully say it is due to the Sarda Act. Nothing of the kind. It is time and education that did the thing. I can say that in communities and places where education has made no headway, the Sarda Act is still violated easily and girls of 10 are married to boys of 14. The Government report is, of course, eloquent that the Act is working well and no violation of great degree is found. Similarly for the other evil too. The rigour of untouchability is lessening not because of legislation but due to the time spirit and education. Drinking is lessening not because of legislation but due to education and propaganda. See what happened in America. Prohibition resulted in smuggling and violation of the act. The act was repealed. Drinking has lessened and smuggling is unknown.

When and just after the Civil Marriage, and Inter-caste Marriage Acts were passed, how many such marriages took place? Now it is increasing. Is the increase due to the Acts? Now-a-days inter-communal marriages are not rare. The courts and legislative acts cannot compel a man to do anything against his wish. Without my giving names, people in Madras know what happened when a lady sued her husband for restitution of conjugal rights and the High Court passed an order in her favour. Perhaps the gentleman would have given better facilities if she had not gone to the court. It is better to appeal to the

good sense of the opponent than square the witness—as the tamil saying goes : சாதிக்காரன் காலில் விழுந்தால் சண்டைக்காரன் காலில் விழுந்து நலம்.

So I would ask Mr. K. S. Ramabhadra Ayyar not to be impatient and to run after the will-o'-the-wisps of legislation for every social evil, but wait for time to bring about the desired change. As a lawyer Mr. Ramabhadra Ayyar can show better how to evade the provisions of the Act, and violate the Act without any penalty.

He writes of the Sind-Dowry Act. Has he cared to study the effect of the working of the Act, not as given in the usual routine government report, but actually in practice?

THE HINDU MARRIAGE DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL

By

MR. K. S. RAMABHADRA AYYAR.

I respectfully agree with His Holiness Sri Sankarachariar's opinion on both aspects of the Bill. The proposed legislation in respect of "Sagotra" marriages goes against the very grain of the Brahmin community and an enactment of this kind is a virtual abrogation of a fundamental maxim of the Hindu Social Code. Not merely from the religious point of view but from eugenic, rational and social points of view, wholesome restrictions on marriageable limits have been the chief distinguishing features of human groups in every Society from time immemorial and distinguish man from beast, even amongst which, there are believed to be in practice great restraints.

The law relating to Civil Marriages in India gives ample scope for dissenters and men of extreme views and the proposed Bill is hardly necessary for people who have no respect for *Sastraic* injunctions.

A *hybrid* legislature like ours is hardly the forum for deciding these vital issues that would affect the well-being of Hindu Society for generations to come.

In the West, everything is now in a fluid state and the time is not far distant when the western races will be anxious to learn from us some of the fundamental truths which are embedded only in our religion, philosophy and ancient social codes.

BRAHMIN HOMOGENEITY.

By

MR. P. P. SARADHI, *Retired Sub-Judge.*

PART I

In the Vortex of evolution, as in a torrential flow of waters good bad and indifferent all jostle with rub, efface, one another altering color and complexion in such a way that the resultant is something which cannot be identified with any of the contributory elements.

Despite adherence to avoidance of promiscuity and fond adherence to some exclusive and selective spirit in matters of marriage, matrimony, food and worship, we find growth of liberalism in the latter two matters and growing scepticism of reform in the former, in the Hindu Community. Attempts made during the last one century to efface caste exclusiveness and effect inter-relationship among all the castes have ended in utter confusion and degradation in moral and intellectual fibre.

The Hindus require to be reminded of the Bhagavat Gita discourses on this matter. Dr. Bryce in his Roman lectures had stated that admixture in the long run tends to diminish the wealth of character and the potency for civilisation which human communities possess. "Although the weaker community may gain a little in quality and in vigour by its admixture with a comparatively stronger one, the latter loses a great deal more by its correlated admixture with the weaker one. The loss of the stronger community being more than the gain of the weaker community, such admixture is clearly not desirable in the interest of the progress of humanity as a whole. That is why there is a dread of unsuitable racial intermixture.

We cannot discount the force of heredity in mental and moral plane. Whatever be the force of environment and the pressure of economic conditions, rational nationalism would closely follow this principle.

We find however that every caste has its own sub-divisions and sub-sects. The Brahmin suffers from these sub-sect existence. The Vaishnavite, the Saivite, the Madhwa have each a number of sub-sects. Should these sub-sects and divisions be maintained or should they be effaced? This problem if properly solved would hold the pivot of rational reform. It has been substantially established that the Acharyas corresponding to the three sects of the Brahmin community

never intended to create such divisions in that manner. There was only a difference in their commentaries on the Vedanta, and in their interpretation of the relation of individual Soul to Parabrahman—purely metaphysical. His Holiness Sri Swami Vaidyanathenthra Bharati Sankaracharya of the Chamundi Hills Mysore is reported to have declared :

“ Before unity can be effected among the different communities in the country, it is necessary that the slogan “ *Brahmanam Anekattvam* ” should go and the Brahmins should learn to give up their sect prejudices and the Trimata of Saiva, Vaishnava and Madhwa cults should be blended into one homogeneous Brahmanism. The original intentions of the three great Acharyas were forgotten by their followers in the latter days.”

This is a matter that needs no fuss, no ostentation. The intense realisation by one of the fate that has befallen to the community is enough to effect the reform which by the way is more easily effected because of the smallness of the community.

Miserably small, unessential, trivial matters strangely enough, have hardened prejudices—the sectarian mark, the form of the women's vesture, the *Moorthi* that is uppermost in worship are, randomly picked up, some of the grounds of the sectarian prejudices. Sometimes an aggressive parade of the caste mark is indulged in. The younger generation is far wiser than the older. They are openly cosmopolitan in this respect than the older who betray fastidious differences in private social circles more than in public places and offices. The younger generation's tendency in this respect is a healthy portend of the reform that is in the making. But they follow at times the meanness of their parents. Degeneracy has fast attenuated the reputation of the community. They have lost their soul force and determination. They value the prospects of life, prosperity mainly, if not exclusively, on the secular material and economic gains for themselves. They have neglected their religious ablutions, worships and even tarpanams to their ancestors. Pomp and vanity or fear of evil consequences following neglect of ceremonials, now govern their samskaras and not reverence and regardful love to them. Most banal degradation have Brahmin marriages and matrimonial advertisements descended to. What secular advantages would they fetch is the only matter anxiously thought of and schemed after. The so-called astrological consultation of horoscopes is only to appease the God

of Fear. Naturally the astrologer pronounces his verdict in accordance with the obvious inclination of the consultants. Economic struggle for existence and the high demands for a fashionable modern life have vulgarised marriages. Marriages are delayed to bide the best chance of getting large dowries. Domestic virtues, simple, honest and noble living have been replaced by vain-glorious fussy and fashionable standards of life.

Sectarian exclusiveness has narrowed down the orbit of choice. False erratic notions of high and low even among the sects of the community have impeded wise discretion and the parents' arrogance has increased alarmingly.

Is there any need to perpetuate the differences? Are not all following the same Shastras, the same Vedas worshipping the same God in some favourite form or other, performing Shraddhas, tarpanams, and vratas in the same fashion? Then the answer is an emphatic NO to the first question.

Is there any justification for repeating the slogan “ *Brahmana anekattvam* ” any longer? We believe the Chamundi Hills Sankaracharya has echoed the inner feeling of all the Brahmin community. Will the Vaishnava and Madhwah Mutts follow suit? We respectfully submit that a reform in the direction of Brahmin unification is most pressing, more feasible and at present the minimum that we expect from them all. The cry that modern education is fostering irreligious attitude is bunkum if these religious Heads do not come forward and help the unification of the Brahmin community. When fashions, passions, the misery of restricted orbit of choice, the rapacity governing marriage considerations are allowed the *Laissez faire*, Brahmanism would soon be destroyed. Already there are terrible machinery of disruption working. The Civil Marriage Act, the Sarada Act are responsible for any amount of havoc—the one in loosening reins of restriction and tending to libertinism and lust, the other in compulsory delaying of marriages. Liberalism in thought and feeling would result by creating homogeneity of all Brahmins and their unification.

Brahmins despite the loss of their spiritual leadership still hold the field. They are the most and keenest intellectual beings. Nothing is too great or difficult for them. That is why they are a symbol of intelligence. They have not lost their ‘Tejas’ yet. They are therefore the most envied and suspected. “New Brahminism” is a phrase that has been coined by an eminent English Statesman to mean intelligent

appreciation of a new order of morality and international understanding and service. Brahmins united are a force by which we can challenge every evil element in the world and prevent injustice and moral degradation. The Brahmin is still a model for hard work, subtlety of thought and conception. He is imitated with gusto by all the other classes. If they are not united, disruptions would increase. Sectarianism would whet the subtlety of worldly cunning, would bring about the arts of flattery, favouritism, back-biting and scandal mongering to a noxious degree.

Homogeneity would relieve tension and break in the matrimonial conditions. It is a safety—Valve for repressed freedom of choice our young men and women would court the Brahmin environment more and more and avoid the pitfalls of conversion, of a break from the family, of consorting with non-brahmin women, of temptations to lust and unbridled libids. For sometime the customs usually followed by the sect to which the male belongs would govern the family. But later on Nature would so blend the customs, habits and the outlook of the family that a new harmony would be created. There would be no more Aiyars, and Aiyangars, and Rowjees. It is a beautiful picture. It conjures up greater and purer love, greater engenic stability and stamina, while at the same time the singing of the Vedic hymns would reach the Heavens and resurrection of the might of Brahmin community would lit up the world with spirituality.

Having fallen from their high estate and having crystallised their status as Brahmins with no more justification for Brahmin-by-birth status, they must now at least by virtue of exceptional high mindedness, readiness to serve and sympathise, act truthfully sincerely and with an eye to the recovery of prestige and honour of the community. To fight shy of calling one self "Brahmin", because in the present crooked vision of the authorities and some envy-ridden, less developed communities, it is no material advantage, causes a deep corrosion in our moral character and it is infra-dig. There must commence now self-purification and purgation so that they may become members of the "New Brahmanism", self-conscious of their ancestry of their innate genius and Tejas. The nucleus for this homogeneity should be formed by the rising generation. There is already a broad leaven of liberalism introduced by the youth, except for the fact that distinction between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin is made more and more difficult on account of universal cropped heads (sans caste mark and symbol)

of promiscuity in association and eating, of uniform type of dressing. The present tendency must wake up responsibility in those that care for the purity, stability, and honour and reputation of the Brahmin community. Is it not imperative that the Brahmin should adopt significant habits such as to mark him out from the others? Is it true that women are custodians of the Brahmin conscience? The implication that men are not leads to awkwardness for obviously even women, would on the basis of equality claim to act in the same manner. There are already numerous instances of men introducing their wives and other women to free association without reserve leading to terrible consequences. The Brahmin must therefore live the Brahmin's life more intensely than till now. Learning is respected, wisdom is loved. The Brahmin must even in the early stages of life arm himself with shastras study and maintain a history of his pedigree, avoid mendicancy, flattery, and doing anything mean, for material advantage. Let him realise man for man. The Brahmin should find a worthy person for association and alliance in another Brahmin (he be a Saivite or Smartha, or a Vaishnava or Madhwa). To look down upon any other caste person or even a Harijan is a sin. Readiness to help the ignorant is Dharma. To enlighten others with sympathy and understanding is the present need. The Brahmin should obtain (rather regain) leadership only by that method. We trust the Hindu youth would cultivate a wider outlook a far-reaching vision and organise the religious mutts to formulate a method by which the accursed sectarian differences are abolished. Let it be clearly understood that Advaitism, Dwaitism and Vishishishtadwaitism are only a matter of metaphysic and that should not stand in the way of mutual love and brotherhood between all the Brahmins. The "Anekatvam" is only in metaphysical disputes.

OM SHANTI SHANTI !

NON-VIOLENCE AND VIOLENCE

BY

MR. K. VISWANATHAN.

(Continued from page 186)

Dr. Shyam Prasad Mookherjee said in his convocation address to the Hindu University at Benares!

"A good deal of confusion prevails today about the ethical doctrine of *Ahimsa* (non-violence.) There is no doubt *Ahimsa* is one of the cardinal virtues taught by Indian thinkers of all denominations throughout the ages. "*Dharma*" consists in *Ahimsa*, proclaims the Mahabharata. "*Ahimsa* confers immortality", declares the Code of Manu. The doctrine of *Ahimsa* is a necessary corollary to the Hindu belief that the supreme spirit pervades the universe, that everything is strung on the Blessed Lord as rows of gems upon a thread, and that welfare of all beings is a sacred duty. *Ahimsa* doubtless implies abstention from selfish and aggressive violence. But does it signify inertia and pacifism under all circumstances? Did not Sree Ramchandra, so kind to righteous men and women, including even Nishadas and Savaras, wage a war to punish the arrogant evil-doer who insulted womanhood and violated the sanctity of the peaceful hermitage? Were not "*Panchajanyasya nirghosho Gandivasya cha nirvanah*" meant to strike terror into the hearts of those whose pride and conceit would not allow them to do justice and repair wrongs? Did not Sree Chaitanya roar like Narasimha to restrain the bigot and the oppressor? Did not the great Asoka himself lay as much stress on *Parakrama* (prowess) as on *Ahimsa* and declare in one of his Rock Edicts that there was a limit to his forbearance? "Should any one do him wrong, that must be borne with by His Sacred Majesty so far as it can possibly be borne with". Even Buddhist theologians prescribed condign punishment for treachery and mischief-making, typified by the career of Devadatta. Readers of the Chachnama need not be told what pusillanimity masquerading as religious quietism may do to endanger the life and liberty of a people and destroy its morale.

"If I have understood the history of my country aright, a pacifism that refuses to take up arms against injustice and makes one a passive spectator of oppression and aggression, does not represent the real teaching of India. Let us not forget that valour was greatly esteemed

by the sages and free rulers of India in olden times. When valour languished, the entire polity weakened. When the sword and the book of knowledge kept together, justice, equity and liberty ruled the affairs of the State. We want to see the reappearance of the ancient spirit of valor tempered with a spiritual wisdom with our genius and present needs, which alone can recover civilization out of the chaotic condition of the modern age.

"We live in an age when the need of *Parakrama*, ceaseless exertion, courage and valour, in all spheres of activity affecting the public weal, is more imperative than ever. The menace of invasion from without is within the bounds of possibility. Disruptive forces are at work within the country itself. A nation can only save itself by its own energy. But energy and strength hardly come to a people that does not enjoy the blessings of unity and freedom. Unity need not imply uniformity in every respect. In a country like India, with its huge extent, teeming population and diverse culture, a dull uniformity is not to be encouraged. India is traditionally a land of village republics, and local autonomy has had many noble champions whose patriotism and public spirit are beyond question. But accentuation of differences cannot make for strength. A divided India was always a prey to the foreign invader from the days of Alexander and Mahmud of Ghazni to those of Vasco da Gama, Dupleix and Clive. There is much disharmony and disunity in India today. Communal differences have taken such an acute turn that fantastic claims for the vivisection of our Motherland are widely asserted, backed by tacit encouragement of the powers that rule the destinies of India today."

These are not the words of any young unripe person, but of a sage, mature man with an amount of experience in the fields of education, law and politics. He is not carried away by flights of imagination, nor emotion.

The present need therefore is a training in the art of self-defence for all. Boys and girls, men and women, should be strong enough to defend their person and property, their homes against attack. The Japanese jiu-jitsu may be easily and with advantage copied. It is not costly and does not require elaborate preparations or apparatus. A few should first be trained at Japan or here; the cost of deputing one to Japan will not be much. He can train about 12 in 2 or 3 months. These can train further batches. In a very short time India can be on the defensive. Every town can have a jiu-jitsu club. I only mention

this by the way. Indigenous Indian arts of self-defence can be also taken up.

The Hindus were and are the gentlest of all nations. The difference between the ancient Hindus and the present day Hindus is that while the ancients were strong and gentle, the present ones are weak and gentle. The ancients were gentle by choice. One *goonda* is now able to terrorise a whole village. Dacca is easily vacated.

Person and property should be protected against invaders of any sort. Our women's honor should be safe, with non-violence if possible, with violence if necessary. We should not hesitate to strike when our reputation is at stake. Dr. Tagore, the poet, prized the nation's honor above everything. He was bitter against our humiliation. It is no life to live submitting to every indignity.

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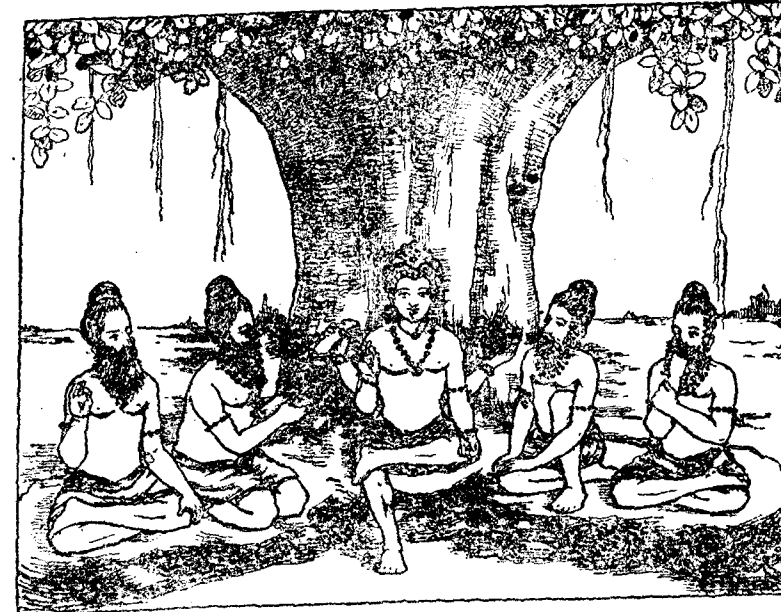
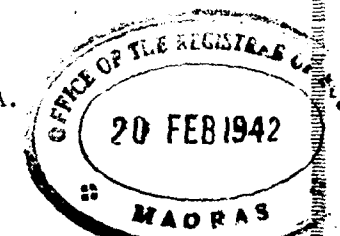
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THE MESSAGE OF RABINDRANATH

By

Mr. BROJOSUNDAR RAY, M.A., B.L.

The tributes to the memory of poet Rabindranath that are being paid throughout the world on his demise on the 7th instant, make it quite clear that he has taught some new truths that have cast a spell on all his readers, so that they have begun to call him "Gurudeva" and felt his disappearance from our midst as a calamity for the whole humanity. We want, in our humble way, to point out a few of those essential truths that constitute the burden of his song and that have startled the hearers of his Message into the exhilaration that finds expression in their offerings of gratitude. There is something in the way in which he has delivered his Message to humanity and it has appealed to them all. When Jesus preached the fatherhood of God and his love for humanity, people were surprised and said, "This man speaketh not like other men", and two thousand years afterwards, on hearing Rabindranath's Message, also, they seem to express the same wonder, because he spoke in a manner quite different from that to which men had been listening during the last two thousand years.

The Message, however, that our beloved poet has delivered in his inimitable and unique way, is the old heritage of India that he had in his blood flowing from the days of the Vaidik Rishis. He himself has

told us how this truth was revealed to him and how he realised the unity amidst the diversities. I may be permitted to quote his words in this connection :—"I remember the day in my childhood when, after the painful process of learning my Bengali alphabet, I unexpectedly came to the first simple combination of letters which gave me the words: "It rains the leaves tremble". I was thrilled with the delight of the picture which these words suggested to me. The unmeaning fragments lost their individual isolation and my mind revelled in the unity of a vision. In a similar manner, on that morning in the village, the facts of my life suddenly appeared to me in a luminous unity of truth. All things that seemed like vagrant waves were revealed to my mind in boundless sea. From that time I have been able to maintain the faith that, in all my experience of nature or man there is the fundamental truth of a spiritual reality."

This unity was a truth that was revealed to him when he was residing for sometime in a village in his zamindary. He gives us the following account: "At that time I was living in a village. The day came with all its drifting trivialities of the usual common place. The ordinary work of my morning had come to its close, and before going to take my bath I stood for a moment at my window, over-looking a market-place on the bank of a dry river bed. Suddenly I became conscious of a stirring of soul within me. My world of experience in a moment seemed to become lighted, and facts that were detached and dim found a great unity of meaning. The feeling which I had was like what a man, groping through a fog without knowing his destination, might feel when suddenly he discovers that he stands before his own house."

In the Gita Sri Krishna gave Arjun a vision of this unity as described in the eleventh chapter. After Arjun regained his normal state of mind, Sri Krishna says:

[Nor can I be seen as thou hast seen Me by the Vedas; nor by austerities, nor by alms, or by offerings; but the devotion to Me alone I may thus be perceived, Arjun, and Known and Seen in essence, and entered, O Parantapa.

He who doeth actions for Me, whose supreme good I am, My devotee, freed from attachment without hatred of any being, he cometh unto Me, O Pandava. (Dr. Beasant.)]

This unity was, in a way realised long long ago in the days of the Rig Veda, where in the X. 90. which is known as the Purusha Sukta all

castes and classes of men are described as coming out of the same personality. Again this idea of the spirituality and the unity of the material universe including all its diversities of things is stated as truth revealed to the Rishis in various verses of the Upanishads. For instance in the Taithiriya, II.

(He, i.e. Paramatma, willed—I shall be many—I shall create myself. He performed penances i.e. he thought over the things to be created. He created all things that exist after performing penances i.e. deep meditation. After creating all things, he entered into them. After entering into them, he became all formed as well as formless things; general and particular things i.e. the concepts as well as the percepts, self-dependent as well as the contrary things, living and the non-living things, the manifest as well as the unmanifest things—i.e. all that exists. The Brahman which is truth transformed himself into all things). In this way the external and material universe are merely the emanations from Brahman. We and our minds, or the subjects as well as the objects, are two ends of the same stick the Brahman which is the only reality. Rabindranath in his colloquy with the great philosopher, Einstein as given in his famous Lectures, "The Religion of Man", puts in a sentence or two our as well as his philosophical position and denies the separate existence of the external world apart from the human mind, and this the great philosopher finds difficulty in accepting and digesting. With us this is the fundamental Truth, and the whole Hindu civilisation and culture are the outcome of this sublime truth, "Servam Khalu Idam Brahma." All our Vedas, Upanishads and Purans ultimately teach this truth and all our great religious teachers lay down different disciplines and Sadhanas for the realisation of this truth.

Rabindranath in his voluminous and versatile teachings has brought out this message of men's salvation or uttered this *Muktibani*. This is the *Muktadhara* or current of freedom that is flowing through all his writings. This *Muktadhara* has been flowing in India since the days of the Rig Veda. The human soul is free. All the bonds of desires and all the limitations of time and place are nothing, they are all illusions. The different races and castes and communities of men are really the same. Hence the wide sympathy and the universalism of Rabindranath. At the same time he is fearless and humane. He does not care for any man. He sings of the lofty truths revealed to him without

caring for men's frown or favour. He goes to all countries and associates with all nationalities. He finds his brother men interesting to himself everywhere. Wherever man is oppressed, he feels for him. Wherever man does show vigour and strength he admires it. He denies the limitations of dogmas and finds truth in all religions. His is a tolerant spirit, but wrongs and falsehoods cannot mislead him. He cannot overlook the shortcomings due to men's selfishness. He cannot compromise his attitude of condemnation for injustice. He is above all smallness and meanness. Every soul is free, if it can put itself in tune with the unity of the universe. So he sings:—*Shimar Madhy Adhim Tumi Bajao Apan Sur.*

Thou art the unlimited underlying all limited things and you remain unaffected by our limitations. All limitations and dualities create troubles and therefore our endeavour should be to supersede the limitations by love and devotion to the Unlimited.

THE KERALA HINDU MISSION.

By

S. K. Y.

Report of its work for the Malabar years 1115 corresponding to (19—9—1939 to 15—9—40).

The above mission was established in 1933 or the Malabar era 1109 with its Headquarters at Trivandrum. Though as the name implies its aim is to have the whole of the Malayalam speaking area as its jurisdiction, it has been confining its activities mostly to Travancore. Dewan Bahadur V. S. Subramania Iyer ex-Dewan of Trvancore has been its President from the very inception and during the last 8 years the Mission has been doing very good work under his wise guidance. The most important piece of work for which they can take credit with legitimate pride was preparing the ground for famous Royal Proclamation abolishing untouchability in the State by throwing open all the Temples of the State to all Hindus alike.

The activities of the mission are being controlled by a Managing Committee and we are informed that the Board of Management has been recently reconstituted with a view to give representation to all the sub-sections of the Hindu population of the State. Hitherto Brahmins and Nayars had been taking predominant part in the management of the mission and there was a tendency on the part of other sections of the Hindu population to look upon it as an exclusive concern of the caste-Hindus. It was with a view to avoid this mis-conception that the Committee has been reconstituted, giving representation not only to Brahmins and Nayars but to that important community of Hindus known as Thiyas or Ezhavas who have a powerful organisation of their own known as the S. N. D. P. Yogam. Nadars, Parayas, Puliya, Kuravas and other people who have just got the privilege of Temple-entry by the gracious Proclamation of the Maharaja are given representation on the newly constituted Board so that the new management would be thoroughly representative in character. It would also give these persons hailing from various communities a splendid opportunity of working together and looking upon the problem of the mission as their own and not the exclusive problem of either the caste-Hindus or of the classes that were hitherto known as the Depressed classes.

The declared objects of the mission are :—

1. Spread of Hindu Dharma.
2. Consolidation of the Hindu Community.
3. Elevation of the backward communities.
4. Giving facilities to those of other faiths who wish to become Hindus, to do so.

The whole of Travancore is divided into six groups and each group is placed under a Supervisor or an Inspector with a number of pracharakas or organisers who constitute the field staff of the mission.

The mission authorities have been wise in not over-centralising the activity at the Head Quarters but have appointed a large number of local committees consisting of members of the several Hindu sub-communities and these Committees are invested with responsible work as detailed below :

"These Committees have to (i) supervise the work of the Organisers and Pracharakas in their locality and give them necessary advice; (ii) advise the Board of Directors of the Mission in the matter of opening fresh centres; (iii) develop the work in the locality; (iv) collect donations with a view to constituting a local fund; and (v) canvass shares from the locality."

Consolidation of the Hindu Society has always been placed in the fore-front of the mission programme of work. The mission has very wisely left politics out of its programme and they have been trying to bring all sections of the Hindu community together along other lines of activity, namely, religious, social, educational and economic. Many of the hitherto submerged communities like the Parayas, Washermen, the Nadars and the Koravas had organised their own particular caste-organisations to safeguard the interest of those particular communities and the mission is attempting to bring these sectional organisations under its control and guidance. This work of consolidation is greatly facilitated by the famous Temple Entry Proclamation which has enabled members of all sub-sections to worship together in all the State temples and thus has enabled them to come under more the forces of union than those of separation.

There are Bhajana Mandirams all through the State and we are glad to note from the report that workers in all the centres tried to hold weekly meetings, organised joint prayers and Bhajanas and took the people belonging to all sub-sections of the Hindu community in a

Bhajana procession from the Mandiram to the nearest temple for congregational worship.

The economic amelioration of the newly emancipated people have not at all been neglected. A rural development centre has been opened as an experimental measure in Central Travancore at a place called Adur with the main object of showing how the villagers can better their lives by taking to new useful activities like the weaving, poultry-keeping, bee-keeping &c. This centre has got a library, weaving school, dispensary, welfare-centre for women and children, Co-operative Society and all the other paraphernalias of such centres.

The famous Temple-entry Proclamation has allowed the same privileges to converts to Hinduism as to those who are born-Hindus and this has naturally led to many cases of reconversion from other faiths to Hinduism which during the last 8 years has totalled up to nearly a lakh. This naturally has its repercussions and some of these recent converts back to Hinduism have been harassed and persecuted and one of the important tasks of the mission authorities has been undertaking was to protect these poor innocents and assure them that the humblest and the lowliest of His Highness' subject will be protected and not allowed to be persecuted.

The President has been touring extensively throughout the State inspecting various centres and presiding at many of the conferences which were held at the time of his visit. His disinterested service is appreciated very much as is shown by the spontaneous welcome he has been receiving in all centres he has visited and by the addresses presented to him in various places. The Government of His Highness the Maharajah has been helping the mission by grants according to rules and regulations of the State for the economic ameliorative work that the mission has been doing. The sinking of wells and setting apart cremation grounds (to be used when necessary) by the new re-converts to Hinduism, has been engaging the special attention of the mission and they have done good work along this line.

It would be of great interest to your readers to know that re-conversion is not allowed to be done in any haphazard manner. There are authorised Sudhikarthas of the Mission and re-conversion is to be done in a prescribed manner by one of these authorised agents only.

On the whole the mission has been doing very useful work during the year under review in achieving the high ideals it has set before itself. We wish the mission more success in the years to come.

"GAYATRI"—THE PRAYER OF ALL PRAYERS.

By

SWAMI ASESHANANDA,

Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mysapore.

Prayer is not a petition for boons and favours from the Almighty. It is not addressed just to appease the wrath of an angry God. The purpose of prayer is to awaken our sleeping soul and to rouse into activity latent spiritual forces which would otherwise slumber and remain dormant. Like Ahalya of Ramayanam souls are tied up in an age-long bandage and prayer is the power that snaps all the meshes and set them free. It is an ennobling and chastening messenger to call the prodigal son back from undisciplined, reckless life to his parental home of undefiled purity. The prayer charges the battery our mind with electric and galvanises our activities for brave and heroic deeds. The poet has sung in a telling manner :—

No coward soul is mine
No trembler in the world's
Storm-troubled sphere
I see Heaven's glories shine
And faith shines equal arming me from fear.
O God within my breast
Almighty, ever-present Deity !
Life—that me has rest
As I—undying life—have power in Thee !

Prayer is an elevation of mind and transfiguration of personality. It is an ascent of man to the footstool of God. Not for miraculous intercession nor for protection against disease, our sanguine heart bursts forth in prayer. It is invoked when the yearning soul of an aspirant disdains all earthly pleasures and hungers and thirsts after righteousness. He becomes dead to the world so that he may eternally live in the light of God. He shakes off all vestiges of possessions and comforts and runs mad, in naked simplicity, to meet his chosen beloved—the eternal bridge-groom of his heart. It is the very soul and essence of religion. It brings the votary into living contact with the solid bed-rock of life. Its imperative need is felt when the false mummeries of the world lose all charm and the aspirant desires fervently to commune with the Divine Spirit, when the soul craves passionately to join itself with the

Over-soul and be lost in its deep embrace. A sincere devotee will not fail in the throes of suffering, in the shock of the assault and in the devastating calamities of life, to repeat the name of God, nor will he lose faith in the wise dispensation of a benevolent Power. Like Pavhari Baba, even when a cobra bites him and the body trembles in grievous pain he will utter with a cheerful face, "A messenger came to me from my beloved. What sorrow there is! It is all His gift. It is my proud privilege to bear it and to share it with joy". His Himalayan patience and adamant belief remain unshakable however ruthless and trying his tribulations may be. Onslaughts of bereavements and privations may meet him in the face. He may have to pass through the fiery ordeal of poverty, imprisonment and slanderous criticism. Still he will hold aloft his banner of courage and undying faith in an all-merciful providence with the words :—"Even if Thou slayest me or put me to dust yet will I repose my confidence in Thee".

Prayer can move mountains even in this age of doubt and scepticism. If we are unselfish to the core and childlike in purity, surely our prayers will be answered. Rightly has Jesus said—"All things whatsoever, ye shall ask for, through guileless faith, ye shall receive. For, more things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of." Through all times there have been witnesses of God who have boldly proclaimed with an emphatic and unanimous voice that there is a Mind at the back of the universe which can be visualised, there is a Heart behind the panorama of nature which can be felt, if the vision is uplifted and the screens are removed. If man addresses himself to the Supreme Deity with loving devotion and absolute trust, He will surely vouchsafe His gracious presence and confer on him lasting peace which passeth all understanding. Sri Krishna, the teacher of all teachers, says in the Gita—"A truth-seeker is required to retire to a secluded place or a solitary corner of his house and there to apply himself assiduously for divine contemplation. Sitting firm on a comfortable seat, in a clean spot, free from noise and external distractions, he should hold his head erect and perform his practices regularly without any break. Serene and fearless steadfast in the vow of continence, he should fix his mind on the Supreme Being with singleness of purpose and one-pointed devotion. He should meditate, with indrawn eyes and endeavour with zealous earnestness to enter into the realm of silence with a view to visualise the Ineffable Presence." Slowly and gradually the curtain will be lifted and the aspirant will be thrown into the ocean of bliss

away from the cares and sorrows of this vale of tears. Divine communion will put an end to all his miseries and he will be established in Truth which will bring boundless joy in its wake. Gaining this priceless treasure, which no thief can steal, no death can dispossess, he will feel no other gain as worth having. All earthly values will be considered as mere dust of the ground, too insignificant to be taken notice of. He will not be moved even by the heaviest of afflictions for he will be soaked in the perennial joy of divine ecstasy. He will live, move and have his being in God. The kingdom of heaven will be open to him where light shines for ever and darkness is no more.

Of all prayers, the Hindu prayer symbolised in Gayatri is a most significant one. It is pregnant with deep thoughts and elevated ideas. There is no ring of selfishness and bargaining transaction. The words are clothed in beautiful language and sentiments are embedded in lofty ideas of chastening emotion. It is a thanksgiving to the Universal Father through Sun, the visible symbol of God's majesty, glory and light. A true worshipper begins his adoration with external and internal purification through proper ablutions and bath and then sings his hymn of praise to the effulgent Deity in heart-felt love and unadulterated gratitude. Then he closes his eyes and reflects on the profound mystery of the world and prays for insight and wisdom that he may know Him and love Him at all times and in all struggles and vicissitudes of life. He implores Him with all humility to forgive him, to redeem him from all faults and to grant unto him the healing balm of His soothing Grace. The spiritual efficacy of Gayatri, to the Hindus, is immensely great. It is the prayer of all prayers. The thoughts called forth by this holy mantram would invariably permeate the heart of the votary through and through and purify his mind of all dross and tentacles of fleshy ties. "Dhiyo Yona Prachodayat" is the kernel of the theme, the burden of the song. "Oh Lord! I think of Thy glory. Illumine my heart with Thy blessings and guide my understanding to the proper path of Truth and righteousness."

It is not a prayer in terms of earthly values, beseeching God for giving him his daily bread. It is an invocation, a spontaneous tribute of love to the sanctum of the holy of the holies. It is a heart felt tribute of homage and admiration spoken from the depth of being for spiritual enlightenment. Some believe that a mere mechanical parrot-like repetition of these words and formulae will bring about the needful transformation and draw the sympathy of the benign Providence. Far from it! Sub-

lime words indeed Gayatri contain. But they are to be nobly uttered. They must come not from the lips alone but from the heart itself and then alone the prayer will be efficacious and the appeal will be heard. A worship that is done for acquiring the mercy of God is nothing if it does not come from the inner being. Gayatri has for thousands of years moulded the faith, inspired the sentiment and animated the vision of Hindu devotees from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin. It has influenced the conduct and shaped the lives of innumerable men and women of this great Indo-Aryan race. They may be distinct from each other geographically and divided among themselves by so many castes and communities. Yet all Hindus are united by the common bond of their ancient heritage, forged by invulnerable Gayatri, the Mother of the Vedas. It is the unperishable birthright of every Hindu to feel proud of it. It is his solemn duty to keep the tradition pure and alive by understanding its meaning and guiding his daily life according to the principles laid down in this holy mantram. What thought-provoking words they are impregnated with humility and reverence, love and faith! To conclude, let us raise our united voice to grant us the proper vision in order that we may understand Her and worship Her through serving Her children—the holy and the best—as the veritable representations of the Highest Divinity.

आयातु वरदा देवी अक्षरं ब्रह्मसम्मितम् ।

गायत्री छन्दसां माता तूदं ब्रह्म जुषस्वनः ।

"May the Goddess Gayatri the giver of all boons be pleased to come to us and reveal to us the Imperishable Lord spoken of by the scriptures. May, the Devi, the mother of all the Vedas, enlighten our hearts so that we may realise the Eternal Truth. Oh Gayatri! Thou art the source of all strength. Thou art the Power that chases away all my enemies. But for Thee nothing can happen in this Universe. Oh, Mother Divine, come to my succour, purify my heart and make me wise." "Om Santi"

THE DOWRY EVIL :—A REJOINDER.

By

MR. K. S. RAMABHADRA IYER.

I have read with considerable amusement the delicious reply of my friend Mr. K. Viswanathan and if I were to adopt his elegant language, I am afraid I would be abusing the hospitality of the columns of the "Bharata Dharma".

I cannot conceive of a more effective reply to my friend than that which has already appeared under my name, as if by way of anticipatory answer to some of the veiled insinuations in which my friend has unwittingly indulged, under the heading, "The Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill" which the Editor has kindly published alongside his article.

Let me make a confession of Faith. I claim to be an humble votary of our ancient Dharma and I believe not only in its glorious past but in its being the only panacea for the growing evils of modern civilisation into which we have also been plunged,—thanks to the advent of the British in India.

The future happiness of the world depends, in my belief, upon the extent to which it is able to assimilate the essential truths than have been guarded to us through our sacred literature.

My critic need not therefore be under the delusion that I belong to the communist brand or club me with the worshippers of the Sarada Act.

If my friend agrees with me "so far as the evil is concerned and the necessity for removing it" and also concedes that it is becoming more an economic than a mere social problem, as he seems to do, can he honestly tell us that, during the past forty years, there has been any organised attempt to check the evil?

I am as anxious as my friend to avoid legislation in respect of social evils, especially through the present legislatures. But if the disease is chronic, even desperate remedies sometimes become inevitable and it is only in that sense that I threw out a suggestion for legislation.

In a public debate, we have to be careful in the use of our words and I do not know if my friend would pride himself on his performance, on a re-reading of my original article and his copious reply.

BRAHMIN HOMOGENEITY.

Part II.

By

MR. P. P. SARADHI, *Retired Sub-Judge.*

If the Brahmin community should improve their status and assume leadership in thought and action, they must aim at the standard of culture and character that gave them power before.

1. There should be a systematic study of and research into the sociological features of the Brahmin community.
2. Every Brahmin family should maintain a true historic record of the pedigree and the traditions of the family, which should be handed down as the heirloom to the succeeding generations. (This is being done in England and Ireland at present).
3. Let every Brahmin refuse to do any ceremony or ritual without understanding the rationale of it. While it is impossible any further for all Brahmins to follow or revive and follow the professional Dharma as traditionally laid down and followed in ancient times, the present day Brahmin must insist on engagement of those purohits alone who could explain the rationale of the *Kriya in all our samskaras*.
4. Let there be no materialisation or secularisation of any religious function by presents or other monetary gains.
5. Avoid or expunge Kamam (Lust for sensual enjoyment, money and power) Krodham (anger and jealousy) Lobham (meanness). They are the three robbers lurking in our personality trying to steal the gem of Gnana. (Sankaracharya).
Inter-caste matrimonial alliances are eugenically harmful. Intersect alliances are not. Let it be clearly realised that liberal as Brahmins should in their thought and feeling be there would be terrible loss if their significant talents would be lost by professing liberalism to the extent of liking inter-caste marriages.
6. The Brahmin must turn a new leaf in his life and conduct. He must become a creative genius. Knowledge and research into science would enable him to attain a high pedestal. He can become an Acharya in science and religion again. He should not be content with service and the pittance of salary that offers him mere living.

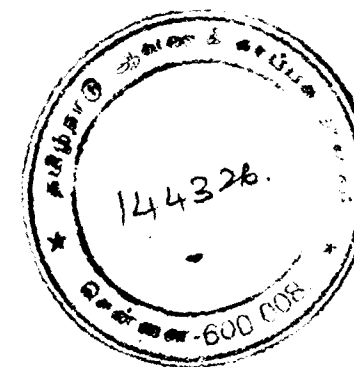
Unification of the Brahmins cannot be effected unless there is positive effort to understand that in essence they are one though in non-essential (of some routine acharas) there are some differences. As far as possible even these differences must be minimised and neglected leaving it to individuals to practise what is wholesome and convenient for the present days. The older generation may stick on to the differences. But the youth would resolutely burke them.

Let it be understood that caste marks were not worn by the Rishis and Seers who dictated the Dharma and we find it stated that during the Sutra period the Sishyas of every one of the great Rishis sat before them with or without any caste mark and all Sishyas accepted the Sutras as binding upon all. The marking of the forehead with this or that symbol was entirely optional as suited to the idiosyncrasies of the Sishyas and nothing was based on that. It is a colossal blunder that the marks on the head should have differentiated the Brahmin community in the manner now current. The trend of the present generation is undoubtedly to efface differences between the sects: witness the readiness of numerous individuals to intermarry among the sects. The folly of choosing a mate beyond the Brahmin caste lies in the certainty of courting disaster and degeneration. This is prevented by widening the choice by destroying the difference between the sects. There is no rationale for sectarian difference. Simply do not mind what sect mark one chooses to wear. The more one is particular about it, the more persistent would be the differences in the sect marks noticed. The *Yagnopavitam* is the most sacred symbol of the Brahmin. The wearing of the sacred thread must act as a perpetual reminder of the high pedigree the Brahmin possesses and of the unswerving loyalty to the Dharma—*Satyam Vada, Dharmam Chara*. The need to perform daily ablutions is not merely to keep one sect pure in body and mind but to think and act righteously. The wearing of the sacred thread is the most simple, potent and universal symbol for the Brahmins. That alone should mark out the Brahmin, never mind what sect.

Brahmin degeneracy it is that created numerous other castes. Anuloma and Pratiloma marriages led to unaccountable and unwanted children and they in accordance with the law of preservation and struggle for existence led to the formation of numerous new castes—creating more unhealthy competition among Hindus.

Therefore Brahmins should re-model themselves on the basis of *Gunas* and on that basis only shed all temptations of lust and greed, and

live a life model for all the world morally and spiritually no less than intellectually. It is unfortunate numerous instances of prostitution of intellect and talents have occurred and there is a slur on the community. A reaction should occur with redoubled intensity to deepen our foundations of moral and spiritual conscience. Persons guilty of moral turpitude should be banned till they repent and feel remorse. Wise reforms would take conditions as they are as the starting point.



RAMA AND JESUS.

By

MR. K. S. RAMABHADRA IYER.

Rama is our ideal King and Hero and he typifies all that is noblest and best in an embodied being. Whenever evil predominates, virtue is likely to be eclipsed; and to prop up virtue, so to say, God manifests Himself in human form to spread the Light and establish Truth. "Why is evil manifest in this world?" is a pertinent query. The simple answer is that it is inherent in creation, inasmuch as the created thing is a degree less than the Creator and is only a reflection of His Power and Glory but is not exhaustive of it. All forms and names, therefore, are dependent on qualities which are respectively called Satva, Rajas and Tamas. The permutation and combination of these different qualities result in varied forms and grades but they are kept together by the Universal Bond of Love which transcends them all and which alone attests His soul and Goodness. While, therefore, God is the only symbol of Peace and Love, the manifested Universe represents the Law of Harmony and Growth; and the conquest or conversion of evil into Good is the highest work (or Leela) of God.

Rama represents the conquest of evil and the consequent enthronement of Virtue while Christ represents the conversion of evil into good. Both are philosophic entities embodying high truths and their recorded doings and sayings, though valuable for all time, have a special significance at this period of human history.

No rational mind today denies the Gospel of Love. Similarly, no philosopher today can ignore the field of action. To bring harmony out of existing disorder and chaos may be a Herculean task; but more difficult tasks have been accomplished in the past and they are our safe guide for the future. If we combine heroism with love, courage with honesty, truth with active work and go about our task in faith and vigour, we are sure to succeed in our endeavour and the example of Rama and of Jesus can make heroes of us all. We shall dauntlessly conquer evil wherever found and substitute the Kingdom of God and the Reign of Law in the place of suspicion, mistrust and fear; and leave the world better than we find it to-day.

This is how I understand the life and story of Rama as well as of Jesus and to me, they convey only different aspects of the same Truth.

The Western nations to-day need all the strength of their Gospel while we Indians can have no better example than the achievements and sacrifice of Rama to guide and console us in the very difficult task of re-discovering our lost soul and placing it in the service of mankind.

THE NELLORE INCIDENTS

By

MR. E. VINAYAKA ROW, B.A., B.L., *Advocate, Mylapore.*

The people of Nellore, of whom undoubtedly a vast majority are Hindus, are still in a sad plight on account of the disturbances in Nellore reports of which have appeared in the press. Unfortunately two distinct issues have got mixed up in the matter and unless the issues are clarified and the relevant evidence available is understood specifically with reference to each of the two issues it will be difficult to appraise fairly the present position and the background against which the unfortunate incidents have happened. The first issue is the simple question whether the Hindus of Nellore who have obtained a Civil Court Decree declaring their rights as against the Muslim community of Nellore are not entitled to enforce fully and without any diminution the rights so declared in their favour, and whether the Muslim community can be permitted to render nugatory the decree of the Civil Court by threatening a breach of the peace if the lawful rights of the Hindus as declared by the decree should be sought to be enforced when occasion for such enforcement arises, and further when on account of any such threat on the part of the Muslims an apprehension is caused in the minds of the Hindus that they may not be able to enforce their lawful rights, is it not the duty of the Executive to come to the assistance of the judiciary and use all the resources of the state, if necessary, to see that the declaration of such rights by the judiciary is fully enforced? This issue which has to be considered under three heads as aforesaid is fairly simple and there cannot be much difficulty in dealing with it.

The second issue that arises from the evidence available in the columns of the newspapers is the question of Police firing on an alleged unruly mob, the quantum of minimum force that could be employed for the dispersal of crowds, and the procedure including previous warning, firing of blank shots, and a previous firing order by a competent Magistrate on the spot to be followed before firing is resorted to. This issue is of general public importance from the point of view of law and order and every citizen, whatever may be his race or creed, is interested in a proper definition with full details of the procedure to be adopted and such procedure if and when defined being scrupulously adhered to by the

authorities responsible. In this matter from the days of the Jalianwalah-bagh incident attempts have been repeatedly made, with a fair measure of success, for an authoritative statement of the procedure to be followed in such cases. The procedure followed in England is supposed to be a model to be followed in India as well. I believe there are executive orders regarding this matter. I fully realise that when passions run high it will be very difficult to keep these two issues meticulously separate and deal with each of them on the merits.

On the same materials made available to the public two different responsible persons have come to diametrically opposite conclusions. It is reported that on 27-10-1941 the Council of the All-India Muslim League which met at New Delhi passed the following resolution relating to the subject:—

"This meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League deeply deplores the serious riots at Amraoti and Nellore, which clearly indicate that they were not merely the outcome of sudden communal outbreaks but were the result of calculated design to undermine the morale of the Muslims in areas where they are in microscopic minority. In view of these riots and several others in other provinces, the Council urges the Government to forthwith devise strong measures to check the growing tendency of lawlessness and terrorism of the Hindu majority and to afford effective protection to the Muslim minorities in the provinces."

On 29-10-1941 the President of the Hindu Maha Sabha is reported to have sent the following telegram to His Excellency the Governor of Madras:—"I urge your Excellency to afford protection to the Nellore Hindus to exercise their rights held even by law courts as justified. Nothing can endanger justice, peace and order more disastrously than allowing the local executive to flout and compel law courts to confess their helplessness to get their decisions executed." The President of the Hindu Maha Sabha is also reported to have said in the course of his appeal to Hindus as follows:—"Let Hindu leaders and workers from all parts of the Presidency visit Nellore in their hundreds and extend every legitimate moral and material support to our brethren there. Let the whole press and platform, whether Hindu, Christian or otherwise, throughout the Presidency come out to support the cause of civic liberty which Nellore Hindus stand for. The case of Nellore Hindus is a test case of All-India significance."

And what is the right in question? This is best stated in the language of such a responsible body as the Bar Association of Nellore. The Bar Association of Nellore in the course of their memorandum to Mr. G. W. Priestley, I.C.S. when he was holding the enquiry into the Nellore incidents referred to the decree of the Nellore District Munsif's Court in O. S. No. 980 of 1917 confirmed in appeal, giving rights to the Hindus to take out processions and alleged that the magistracy and the police systematically resorted to Sections 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code and 30 of the Police Act to nullify the decree by prohibitory orders. Even this year on behalf of the decree-holders, viz., the Hindus of Nellore an execution petition was filed in the Nellore District Munsif's Court for enforcement of the matter and the Munsif has, as he was bound to do, granted the reliefs prayed for in the execution petition. How the decree can be enforced while the order under S. 144 passed by the executive is in force raises the most important constitutional issue as to which is to prevail, whether the judiciary or the executive, in the matter of declaring and enforcing civil rights. Mr. V. D. Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Maha Sabha issued a statement on 1-10 1941 wherein he is reported to have said as follows:—

"I congratulate the Hindus in general and the Hindu Sabhais in particular at Nellore on the boldness in asserting their civic and religious rights which were held up even by the law courts in spite of the high-handed and iniquitous ban put on their exercise by the local authorities there. The highest law courts have laid it down again and again that it is the duty of the Government to apply the Section 144 against those who threaten to commit criminal assaults and break peace to prevent law-abiding citizens from exercising their civic rights. But to-day all over India it is the law-abiding Hindus who are being prevented under this section 144 and similar other sections everywhere from observing their civic, religious and legitimate rights under an excuse which is humiliating and discreditable to the Government. Such a policy amounts to putting a premium on goondaism. The Governmental forces are there to maintain the exercise by the public of their legitimate rights and to punish those who hold out criminal intimidation against that exercise."

"But when and if the Government fails to act up to this basic principle of giving effect to legal rights and even clear decisions of the law courts, it is the inevitable duty of the Hindu public to come out boldly to assert their legitimate rights as best as they can. The Hindu

Sangathanists all over India are therefore thankful to the Hindu public in Nellore for facing untold suffering, lathi charges, prosecutions and persecutions to defend the honour of the Pan-Hindu Flag.

"I urge the Government of Madras in the interest of public order and peace to call to book the local authorities responsible for the iniquitous and preposterous steps they have taken against the Hindus at Nellore, allow the Hindus to exercise their legitimate rights unmolested and use the Governmental forces to suppress goondaism which intimidates the exercise of civic liberty and rights sanctioned even by High Courts, instead of suppressing these rights to placate goondaism."

I trust that in asking the Hindu public "to assert their legitimate rights as best as they can" Mr. Savarkar does not support any direct action in defiance of the law or in defiance of any prohibitory order while it is in force, however erroneously and improperly such a prohibitory order may have been issued.

In response to a public demand from various quarters for a full enquiry by a High Court Judge on the Nellore incidents the Government of Madras thought it sufficient to appoint Mr. G. W. Priestley, I. C. S., who is now First Member of the Board of Revenue, to hold an enquiry and make recommendations *inter alia* (1) on the policy to be pursued by the Government and their local officers in regard to the exercise of those rights of the Hindus which have been established in Civil Courts and (2) whether there are any genuine grounds for the various complaints made by the public and the Hindu Maha Sabha in regard to the incidents of this year. The scope of the enquiry will naturally be with reference to the two central issues as defined above. It would have been better if instead of appointing an executive officer even of such high rank to hold the enquiry, the Government had entrusted the task to a Judge of the High Court. Mr. Priestley has just completed his enquiry and his report is awaited with interest.

If any one suggests that while a duly promulgated prohibitory order under Section 144 is in force any section of the public, whether Hindus or Muslims, would be justified in disobeying the order on the ground that it is erroneous, no arguments are necessary to point out the untenability and impropriety of such a suggestion. In the present case the legality and the propriety of the order of the executive under Section 144 was examined in a Revision Petition by a learned Judge of the Madras High Court. The learned Judge felt that as a matter of law such an order should not have been passed by the executive. He was however

unwilling to set aside the order as, this year on account of the special circumstances that supervened, and the communal tension that has arisen it would not be expedient to set aside the order at that stage.

In any sphere, direct action followed by any section of the public is likely to encourage opposing sections also to follow the path of direct action. On account of direct action so often practised in various spheres by different groups the efficacy of direct action as a solution is apparently securing a larger measure of support. This is undoubtedly not in the interests of law and order, and sooner or later the public will realise that it would be in the interests of the general public and good Government, whatever Government may be in office, that respect for law and order is always maintained and the supremacy of the judiciary as against the executive in the matter of declaration and enforcement of civil rights is maintained unimpaired.

The Muslims in the Madras Presidency constitute nearly 7% of the population and in the town of Nellore they must be in really a microscopic minority. Still they have made it difficult for the Hindus of Nellore to enforce a right declared by a decree of Court in their favour in 1917 except on one occasion when no less an officer than the Deputy Inspector-General of Police had to be on the spot to permit the exercise by the Hindus of Nellore of the rights declared by the Civil Courts in their favour. As to who is on the aggressive, the facts point to the inevitable conclusion that the Hindus find it unable to exercise their rights, certainly not on account of their aggressiveness against the Muslims. Besides the usual difficulty of music before mosques there is, in this case, the added difficulty of tiger disguises. The Muslims claim that wearing tiger disguises is the exclusive privilege of the Muslims and that if Hindus wear such disguises they are preventing the Muslims from the practice of their religion. It is common knowledge that His Exalted Highness the Nizam, whose solicitude for Muslim religious observances cannot be questioned, has prohibited in his own State the wearing of tiger disguises in connection with the Muharram. There is no evidence that, in other Muslim countries outside India, there is any such practice of wearing tiger disguises by Muslims. A Muhammadan witness giving evidence before Mr. G.W. Priestley at the enquiry is reported to have said "that Muslims had a special reverence for the tiger and had strong religious objection to the wearing of tiger disguises by non-Muslims." So if the Hindus have reverence for the cow, the cow should be an element in some Hindu-Muslim quarrels and the Muhammadans should evolve a sudden reverence for some other member of the

animal species for a similar end. It is some consolation that no scriptural text is quoted and no Moulvi's Fatwa is relied upon in support of this new discovery of a place for the tiger in an ordinary Hindu-Muslim dispute.

Before Mr. G. W. Priestley the Hindu Maha Sabha let in evidence and cross-examined witnesses on behalf of the Hindus, and the Muslims were similarly represented. Curiously the Government officials were also similarly represented by counsel and everyone of the three groups cross-examined the witnesses for the other two groups. Naturally the Government were anxious to see that full opportunities were given to the Government officials on the spot as serious allegations were made about their acts of commission and omission which ultimately culminated in Police firing followed with loss of lives. We shall have occasion to revert again to this topic when Mr. Priestley's report and the Government order thereon are made available to the public. We trust that those interested in the strict maintenance of law and order as indispensable to national progress, will do all that is necessary to maintain the supremacy of the judiciary unimpaired and make it incumbent on the executive to use all the resources at the disposal of the State in upholding and enforcing the final decisions of the judiciary. It is also equally necessary that, whatever be the personnel of the Government in office, the public should discourage direct action in any form especially when the contending parties are at variance over delicate questions. If a wrong order is made, the proper remedy will be to get it set aside in the appropriate appellate forum. If the final verdict of the judiciary is against any person, he must submit to the decision and obey it, subject only to the verdict of an appellate tribunal if any. If the interest of a large section is involved and the parties are aggrieved by a final decision of the highest appellate tribunal the proper remedy will be to alter the existing law by suitable legislation and not by rendering the decision of the judiciary nugatory by resorting to direct action.

LIBERALISM IN RELIGION AND IN POLITICS

By

Mr. K. V. S.

In a former issue of this Journal we had occasion to say something about the the Bharata Dharma as the exponent of the principles of Liberal Hinduism. We explained how in spite of the stagnation of thought in Hinduism for a long time and in spite of the revolutionary character of the present tendencies against religion in general and Hinduism in particular, Liberalism was the only course suited to the present conditions of Hindu society.

This Journal is not a political Journal. But often times when policies and programmes are urged that involve revolutionary changes in the structure and outlook of Indian political institutions, one often feels whether the pace is not being rushed and whether Liberalism has not a place in political life just to the same extent as it has in the social and religious spheres.

It will be more readily conceded that in normal times liberalism is the best course for any country or society. Liberalism stands for ordered steady and continuous movement. Society and State move forward with the changes of the times and conditions. In this way their organic integrity and affiliation to the past are maintained, and at the same time the vision is focussed on the future. Liberalism is the negation of stagnation and self-complacency. It is equally the antithesis of sudden and revolutionary changes.

It is sometimes urged that Liberalism is unsuited to the conditions which India is occupying just now. It is said that India has to come up with some of the most advanced countries which have undergone slow changes for centuries. The example of countries where there have been revolutionary changes is cited in support of this. It is stated that nothing short of revolution will do for this country. There may be something to be said theoretically for such a contention. But it ignores the tremendous difficulties in the way of adoption of radical changes in a country so compositely constituted as India. Indeed revolutionary changes by their failure and by the exhibition of their weaknesses produce more of reaction than of progress. We are already seeing this in some of the revolutionary programmes that have been tried.

Therefore while the pace has to be hastened there is no meaning in trying untried programmes which however great may be their excellence from the academic point of view, have not yet proved their worthiness in actual tests.

Liberalism has got many phases and need not always be equated in terms of slow change. It is better defined as the negation of sudden and radical transformations and of a thoughtless plunge into an unknown and an untried future without safeguards. It is also the negation of stubborn refusal to change and to respond to the urge of the times to the extent to which such response is necessary. Indeed Liberalism may be said to be the embodiment of the doctrine of Dharma, that is to say the embodiment of the great forward urge in thought and life, and in social and political structure which leads humanity in its eternal pilgrimage.

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चित्ते बटरोर्ध्वे दृष्टः शिष्या गुरुषु । गुरोस्तु मौनं व्यवहृत्य दिव्यस्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ॥
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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THE HINDU VIEW OF PRAYER.

By

MR. S. K. YEGNANARAYANA AIYAR.

A talk given to the International Fellowship assembled at Mahabalipuram on Saturday, 2-8-1941.

Every thoughtful Hindu when called upon to say something about his religion asks himself the question, "What is Hinduism?", a question more easily asked than satisfactorily answered. The mood of hesitancy is strengthened when one remembers that the religion has had an unbroken history for 30 centuries at least during which period it spread itself over not only the whole of the subcontinent of India, but was carried by the Indian conquerors to the "Greater India" on the North and East. Moreover "Religion" has always meant more to the Hindu than to others. My remarks would be applicable more to what is called the Theistic Hinduism of the present day, the religion of the masses who worship God as Shiva, Vishnu or the Holy Mother; and in the case of Vishnu more commonly His incarnations as Rama and Krishna.

Two general remarks have to be made before we go to the subject proper; one is that the present day religion, though in many respects different from the religion of the Vedas and the Upanishads, is still an offshoot thereof and is based on them. Secondly, in spite of apparent diversity in outward forms and non-essentials this Puranic Hinduism is

fundamentally the same all over India and a pious Hindu whether he hails from the South or Cashmere, from Bengal or Kathewar feels himself quite at home in all holy places at Rameswaram, Pandharpur, Nasik, Dwaraka, Hardwar, Benares or Puri.

Coming to the subject proper a Hindu again experiences another difficulty regarding the subject. The word prayer is very rich in its connotations and it is very difficult to find an Indian equivalent with the same connotations. Does it mean *Japa* (repetition of holy *mantras*) *Dhyana* (meditation or contemplation) *Tapas* (performance of penance) *Stotra* (Praise of God in one's own words or repeating the well-known praises sung by others) *Prarthana* (asking for favours)? Prayer as I understand it, has something in it of every one of these and yet is different. The typical Christian Prayer, the famous Lord's Prayer is said to contain the three essential characteristics of a prayer and they are glorification of God, request for forgiveness of our sins and thirdly supplication for boons. These features are to be found not in any one prayer commonly used by us; they are to be found if we take a *Stotra-mala* or a garland of praise of which I shall give some examples later on.

Instead of generalising about prayers in the abstract let us take some specimens and try to find out their common features. Here are some very old Vedic prayers; they are used by us even today when the Upanishads are being studied and are uttered before the study begins and when the study closes.

1. May Mitra do us good; may Varuna do us good; may Indra the Great Lord do us good; may Vishnu of the mighty steps do us good.....may He protect me, protect the utterer om, peace, peace, peace.
2. O God! let us hear good things through our ears. Performing sacrifices, let us see good things by our eyes. Living with bodies endowed with strong limbs let us spend the life allotted to us by God.
3. Let him protect us; let Him own us; let us grow strong together; let our studies prosper and let us not quarrel with each other.

The first is obviously polytheistic when our Vedic ancestors believed in Mitra, Varuna, Indra, Vishnu each as a powerful god worthy to be propitiated. The second is optimistic in a very healthy way and gives the lie direct to the view that the Hindu conception of life is basically

pessimistic. There is a pessimistic strain in our religion and many a great man has prayed fervently to be liberated from the misery of *samsara* and to be given *Moksha* or release from the bond of life; but this pessimism is one phase and is not of the essence of our religion, at least was not, in Vedic days. The last portion of the third prayer gives us an insight into the life of *Gurukulas* or the residential schools of the forest. Human nature was the same in those idyllic days as today and the Teacher thought it worth his while to pray for harmony of relationship between himself and his pupils!

Mantra-japa or repetition of certain mystic combination of words is practised by every Hindu. The most famous of these is *Gayatri* which can thus be literally translated:—

Let us contemplate the great glory of *Savitṛ* who would strengthen our intelligence.

For centuries this mantra has been repeated by pious Brahmins all over the land and the Aryasamajists teach this mantra to every new convert to their cult. Of a more pronouncedly theistic nature are mantras like '*Panchakshara*' and '*Ashtakshara*' which mean the mantra of five letters or of eight letters. The former is the mantra of Saivites and it means "my salutation to Siva"; the latter is held in great reverence by the Vaishnavites and it means "my salutation to Narayana". Similarly, the other cults have their mantras of which the most popular in this Province where alone Subrahmanya is worshipped is *Shadakshara* or the mantra of six letters. Orthodox people repeat these mantras hundreds of times a day.

When we come down to the days of Puranic Hinduism or popular Theistic Hinduism of the masses we have many fine specimens of *Stotras* or collections of hymns. These dwell on two main topics. First the ravishing beauty of the god or goddess that forms the subject-matter of the verses. The author goes into raptures in contemplating the inexpressible beauty of his Deity limb by limb. Such descriptions are called the "*Kesaadi pada varnana*", literally head-to-foot-description. Here is a specimen. Describing the feet of the Lord the poet* says:—Thy feet are the sweetest of Thy limbs to the yogins who contemplate Thee; it is the seat of those who have attained Moksha; it is the tender shoot of the *Kalpa-vriksha* to the devotee. May Thy feet

* This is from *Narayaneeyam*, a poem of over one thousand verses on Krishna of Guruvayoor (Malabar Dt.) by a poet also called Narayana.

ever remain impressed in my mind, O Lord of Guruvayoor! O! Ocean of Mercy and remove all my ills and give me happiness.

Secondly, we find the exploits of Gods as described in the Puranas form a never-failing source of subject-matter. The destruction of Daksha's sacrifice, the destruction of three cities, Brahma and Vishnu going in search of the head and the foot of Siva, these are constantly referred to in Saivite verses. The exploits of Vishnu especially in the two well-known incarnations as Rama and Krishna are freely drawn upon in the Vaishnavite stotras. So also in the verses about God as Holy Mother, the many episodes of the *Lalita purana* are dwelt upon. Interspersed with these we come across many a gem of literary beauty where the devotee lays bare his heart and expresses his inmost convictions.

I shall take just a few examples and illustrate my point. Among the Vaishnavite collections I shall take *Mukunda-mala* and *Alavandar-stotra*. *Mukunda-mala* is considered to be the work of Kulasekhara Alwar, one of the Vaishnavite saints who was the King of Calicut. He composed many excellent verses in Tamil also and they are included in the Vaishnavite collection called "*Nalayira-prabandham*" or the book of four-thousand verses. The royal devotee praises the Lord and pleads for His grace which according to his faith is the most effective instrument for Salvation.

The stotra by Alavandar one of the Acharyas of the South Indian Vaishnavism is a classic that deserves to be better known among the non-Vaishnavite Hindus than is the case at present. Besides a beautiful description of the Lord it contains some fine verses. In one of these the devotee addresses the Lord thus:—I cannot get a better Saviour than Yourself; nor can You get a better object of Your grace than this humble individual. We are thus luckily brought together." In another verse the author though he led a pure and austere life bemoans himself as a hopeless sinner guilty of all possible transgressions and yet ventures to appeal to the Lord for mercy, because therein lies the efficacy of His grace. Lastly he appeals to the Lord to save him if not on his own account, at least for the sake of his grandfather *Nathamuni* who was a famous devotee of the Lord.

Mooka-panchacati and *Soundarya-lahari* may be taken as typical stotras of Devi or God worshipped as Mother. The latter is supposed to have been composed by Sankaracharya and contains many doctrines of the cult which only the Initiated are conversant with. The former is a collection of 500 verses supposed to have been composed by one

who was deaf-mute and who was given back his power of speech by Mothers' grace. He made use of his newly got power of speech in the glorification of Mother.

Coming to Saivite collection of hymns we have the *Siva-mahimna-stotra* by an author commonly known as Pushpadanta, a Gandharva or semi-divine being. This contains about 40 verses. Some of these refer to the well-known exploits of Siva already mentioned. The following verse reminds one of the Gita-doctrine that all religions lead up to Him.

There are different paths of realization as enjoined by the Vedas, Sankhya, Yoga and the Pasupata and Vaishnavite schools. Persons following different paths—straight or crooked—according as they consider them best due to temperamental difference, all reach Thee alone just as rivers enter the ocean.

The Upanishadic doctrine that God cannot be fully comprehended, though he is everything is well brought out in this.

The wise hold this limiting opinion about Thee—that Thou art the Sun, the Moon, Fire, Air, Water, Space, the Earth and the Self (in every individual). But we do not know that thing which Thou art not.

We shall now take up *Sivananda-lahari* a collection of one hundred verses by the great Sankaracharya. Its literary excellence is of a high order. It is written in a variety of metres and reflects many moods. The relative importance of the proper attitude of the mind in prayer and worship compared with the externals is well brought out in the following verse:—

The fool goes into deep lakes, into the interior of the uninhabited jungles and over mountains in search of flowers (to worship the Lord). Oh! Consort of Uma! He does not know that he can sit quiet (and avoid all these troubles) by placing at Thy feet the lotus of his heart.

There is a real human touch in the attitude of playful banter adopted by the poet:

My mind is a monkey always wandering in the forest of greed, playing on the hillocks of women's breasts, jumping from the branch of one desire to another and ever wandering hither and thither. O! Mendicant with a skull! please bind this ever-fickle monkey with rope of devotion to Thee and make it Thine.

[It is difficult in a bald translation like this to bring out the poetic beauty of the verse containing a fully worked out simile. The idea

suggested is that a beggar is likely to get more alms if he has a monkey than if he goes alone.]

In another verse the poet makes use of the tradition that Siva is a wanderer over the hills.

You knew that I would be born, that I would be a hard-hearted fellow and yet I would request You to come and take Your abode in that hard place. You prepared Yourself for it by a rehearsal as it were by walking on the hard stony hills.

In the following verse that well-known exploit of Siva, His having drunk the deadly poison at the time of the churning of the milky ocean, and some characteristic peculiarities of His life such as His having serpents as ornaments and an elephant skin as clothes and a bull as His vehicle are made use of for a banter.

Your food, poison; serpents are Your ornaments; skin, Your dress and an old bull Your vehicle. What can You give me? What is it that You have got? I require only devotion to Your lotus feet.

Having been a schoolmaster all my life I like to imagine God as a Teacher and Siva as Dakshina-moorthi is looked upon as the Great Spiritual preceptor. In one of the verses of this collection which verse is my favourite one, the devotee asks for the spiritual illumination which would bring him peace of mind.

I worship Your lotus feet; every day I think of You. I seek with my mind refuge only in You the supreme Lord. If asked what I want I would say "You" only. O! Sambhu! Teacher of all the worlds! Cast on me that look of Yours full of pity eagerly prayed for by the celestial ones and teach me that thing that would give my mind peace.

I should like to conclude this brief talk by two observations on certain aspects of our prayer which are generally misunderstood. Most of our prayers are individualistic but the social sense was never absent. No religious function or even semi-religious function would be complete without the Asirvadam or the pronouncing of benedictions and the last portion of this is "*Sarva janah sukhino bhavantu*", i.e., may all people be happy or its variant "*Lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu*" i.e., may all the worlds be happy. Secondly, it was considered to be a low form of devotion if one asked for this or that blessing in one's prayer. There is a verse where such people who pester God with requests for this or that favour are compared to bleating sheep; the Sanskrit equivalent of "for me" is *mè* (pronounced as may) and it resembles sheep's bleating.

PRAYER

By

MR. K. S. RAMABHADRA IYER.

Prayer is the Source of Life,
Prayer is the Source of Joy,
Prayer is my daily duty,
Prayer is my constant friend.

Prayer conquers all wants,
Prayer eliminates hatred,
Prayer enlightens my soul,
Prayer kindles my thoughts.

Prayer unites me with Love,
Prayer rouses me to work,
Prayer lulls me in sleep,
Prayer possesses me all day.

Prayer is my Dharma,
Prayer is my solace,
Prayer is my shield,
Prayer is my Atman.

Prayer sustains every being,
Prayer springs from God's Mercy,
Prayer levelleth all persons,
Prayer sweetens all life.

Prayer is the common heritage
Of monarch and saint and peasant,
It is the one universal treasure
That equally extends to all mankind.

charity of feeding a hungry mouth or offer a handful of rice or a pie to the beggar; not to be taken away by these catch phrases and victimise thousands so that a few lucky dogs may enjoy leisurely and lead lazy lives—really on the innumerable stricken—collecting in their names. It will be a greater charity to feed the hungry than to support these refined and parasitic beggars. It is real Christian charity as we understand.

OUR COMMON DESTINY.

By

MR. K. S. RAMABHAI IYER.

Religion is Realisation or, as I would call it, self-expression. If this truth were generally known and accepted, there would be no conflict of religions and every one would be aiming at finding out his true self. Peace or *Santih* is the basis of all life; and to be at peace with ourselves is our highest Dharma, civic, religious and social.

It is a mistake to suppose that there are gradations of social well-being. Each unit of society is a limb of our Common Maker and performs his or her part in striving to be at one with Him. The only fundamental Law is the Law of Peace and Harmony and we should all be wedded to it, just as we cleave to our own body. The dignity of the human soul will be revealed and a true perspective will present itself. A common tie will be created between ourselves and our Maker; and man will shed all fear, jealousy, hatred or malice and become a huge constructive apparatus where sublime truths are enunciated and Supreme Bliss is every minute generated.

Man will then find his real self and ever strive to promote the well-being of all his fellows and he will come across wondrous treasures which will aid him in his task and carry him forward from labour to labour and from success to success. The brute in man will have disappeared or have been utterly crushed; and the Divinity in him will stand resplendent, ever stirring him to incessant activity and healthy and all-round progress. This, I conceive, is our common destiny and no power on Earth can deprive us of our heritage.

WHY SHOULD WE PRAY?

By

MR. P. P. SARADHI, *Retired Sub Judge.*

No apotheosis for prayer would have been necessary in this paper but for the sarcasm indulged in by a writer in the "Literary Digest", against John Gordon, Editor "Sunday Express" who supported the theory *Destiny comes to those who pray*. Why should this idea be a Red-rag to the Literary Digest-essayist? It only implies that he is so ego-centric that there is nothing, no entity or force which is not in his control. But no sane individual is in such a mighty pedestal. It is probably thought there is something ignoble in prayer attitude or that in making prayer he foregoes any of his self-possession. Prayer is nothing more than a well recognised super-physical entity whose co-operation and help is sought in the shaping of one's destiny. It is a sincere realisation that however righteous or noble is the objective pursued, man deems it true that some superior force an intelligent omniscient entity pervades through every atom and all of our being, which can alone make or unmake our efforts. Invocation to that spirit (which the wise call cosmic) is a sure step for encouragement to man in all his efforts and pursuits of Life.

There are obviously numerous strata in the degree of talent, capacity, and pushfulness and enterprise. We freely recognise that "A" "B" "C" "D" are superiors to "E". This recognition helps us in seeking instruction and guidance from them. But superior to A.B.C.D. there are entities seen (and it is reasonable to admit) "unseen" whose grace is immensely coveted. Without ardent genuine respectful seeking man cannot obtain grace. Raise to the power of infinity the entity, that is permeating all beings, man, animal and others. The prayers of an unrighteous being would be futile just as no wise man would help an evil doer. But to the righteous being, prayer would be responded to, not because the man prays but because the cause is hitched to a noble purpose. The Vedic hymns show that hymns of prayer were intended to be sung only by righteous beings. The efforts of righteous beings alone succeed and deserve to succeed, because they do the service or work without any intention of serving the self's interests. Naturally the superior beings are attracted by self-denying beings. The very prayer-attitude of man indicates that the labours should receive fruition



INDIAN CHARITY.

By

MR. K. VISWANATHAN.

Charity requires no publicity nor any organisation. We have no glamour for the western trade unions and other associations ostensibly meant to guard the interests of the worker, but which in practice are often huge frauds played by the capitalist on the innocent and ignorant worker. If one is ready to do disinterested service, there is no need for such organisation. Writing of this we can't help mention one item. "Don't encourage begging....." is all an eye-wash. We would request all to quietly put a pice into the beggar's hand than pay the association which wastes a bigger sum on its establishment, advertisement etc. and gives the bigger next to nothing. Quite charity is nobler than all such noise.

The western method of an association for everything and registering it under some act with a President, Secretary and Treasurer, and a committee of members is a fraud on the public. The Red Cross Society and others do some good work, but at what cost? What is the need for a Secretary drawing hundreds and travelling first class to help a poor man with a dose of medicine or a pound of milk? The association is a bigger and costlier beggar than the street one but its begging is refined and camouflaged.

The village guild was doing work without any cost. Now with the British Government, an I.C.S. drawing Rs.2,000 is the I.G. of panchayats. Is the work done better and for the benefit of the village?

Every temple was offering charity in various forms. Truly the left hand did not know what the right hand gave. Under the British regime a Religious Endowment Board with a president on Rs. 2,000 is required to disburse another's charity!

There is no end to such associations. From scavengers' association through coolies' and clerks' to officers' association we have each registered under the same act and having more or less the same objects. The pity is that the same person is the President or Secretary of many of these. We can't understand why a lawyer, a High Court Judge or some big man should be the President of a coolies' association or a barbers' association. The professional man should be there. A lawyer secretary

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for a lawyers' association is understandable. The one saving clause about these is that the public in general are not affected.

But with the charitable association the case is different. The charitable association does everything but charity—unless we take the office bearers to be beggars deserving of our charity. A poor patient was given milk worth 14 as. by a red cross branch after collecting nearly Rs. 200 in a year. In another year the same branch had a funny way. The secretary of the society wanted to give some help to a patient but the committee should sanction the expenditure. Anticipating such sanction the secretary gave milk and some clothing. The committee refused to accord its sanction to that item of expenditure, and the secretary paid the money out of his pocket. In another case the secretary waited for the sanction of the committee and circularised the members, some of whom were out of station. By the time the committee met the patient was beyond their charity, looked after by a kindlier Providence. Where is the charity we would like to know? When the man pays out of his pocket, what is the necessity for the society?

Jesus Christ said, "Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick", but we don't know if he meant organised charity of the type given by these associations. Perhaps Christian Europe may need an association for everything, but Hindu India does not require such, nor need she copy Europe.

Some say that indiscriminate charity and individual charity defeats the purpose of charity. On the other hand organised charity defeats the purpose. "Don't encourage begging.....". Is not the society the biggest bigger then? The office bearers want to enjoy at the cost of the poor beggars who starve. The tragic part of some of these is that the one who wants to take advantage of it must become a member first of the association by paying its membership fee. If he was in a position to pay subscription, will he beg? This is what many fail to grasp.

Indian charity is characteristically to call a starving person and offer food without any fuss. In spite of the bleeding that is going on in India, the inhabitants manage to live on account of this proverbial charity. The moment this is stopped India will be off wiped off as a nation. That is what the Englishman and other foreigners want so that they can occupy India as Australia and other countries were occupied. We would therefore urge on the Indians not to stop their proverbial

not because he does it, but because his labours being for the good would naturally receive the blessings of Great Beings. His prayers do not utter "he did this or that". But that he has been merely instrumental in carrying forward a good cause.

"A" would say "I do this not for me but for the folk I am leading". It is for their happiness. But if in doing so, he does wrong to another or to another group of beings, his act is vile and vicious. Even he prays. But his prayer would not be of any avail. The *Thugs* prayed before a Goddess. But they were exterminated. The Nazis appeal to God for success. But they are bound to fail. Prayer necessarily implies the existence of a *virtuous cause*.

Whatever conduces to the happiness of all beings, is alone righteous whatever is not is unrighteous.

It is often said "nature" works and "why should there be prayers done?" In relation to man, an intelligent scrutinising being, Nature cannot be understood as functioning without a rationale or irrespective of any moral order governing morality. Nature must be understood as objective manifestation of a superior Almighty, Intelligence. Is there a design? Orderliness, mathematical, predictable working of nature's phenomena is itself a design, or the manifestation of design. Nature working in humanity carries with it a moral back ground also. Morality is as inviolable as nature. The Laws of morality are intended to secure humanity's well being and unhappiness and they are based on natural laws similar to those of Nature. Nature works the same way with us morally, intellectually and physically—action, absorption, assimilation, strength and reaction, wear, diffusion and expulsion etc.

"*Swabhavastu Pravartate*" It means the being surcharged with Satwa, Rajas and Thamo Gunas from the beginning must so shape the operation of the gunas, as would give him ability to adjust oneself with environment and shape his destiny. If well known principles govern Nature, there is a superior Force (a cosmic intelligence) the invocation to whom or to which is necessary not merely because our object is virtuous but also because we are carrying out as an instrument, the object which is declared worthy of response in fruition. We love the object pursued, the consummation of that object and the unseen Force that we believe, will bless our efforts with success. That is prayer which nobody can belittle. Nature is a mystery, man's life is a mystery and so *prayer is essential*. It is human inborn nature to seek the highest for help. What is the prayer? In common it is an appeal to the Higher

Force (called God) to bless us. The Vedantic conception of the Almighty and the prayers sung for Him are far superior and most pregnant with philosophic ideals. The Hindu conception is this.

It is a Being, hidden in every creature
Pervading all (philosophy of all sciences)
He is the watcher over all our acts
He abides in all created things
He is the witness, the Heart, the Absolute
We see Him enthroned within our Atmic
Sheaths (the result of true introspection)
We sacrifice the self for Him in order to obtain
His blessings.

The Zoroastrian's prayer beseeches of Thee (Mazda) "that our actions towards all may be performed in the spirit of righteousness";

The Jain prays for destruction of the brood of all blemishes and sins and for removal of all sense of harassment, for the crossing of the terrible and endless sea of worldly life (to be obtained by Yoga)

The Hebrew for removing us from every evil inclination and cause us to adhere to the good.

The Buddhist seeks refuge in the Buddha, in the Law, and in the Brotherhood.

The Muhammedan seeks guidance on the path of righteousness (self-determination).

The Christian prays for guidance to his nation, through its leaders for peace.

The Hindu has perfected prayer with all its accompanying and ancillary qualifications by way of marvellously developed systems of Yoga.

I repeat "Destiny comes to those who pray".

A TEXT OF THE GITA

Every student of Indian Philosophy, whether he be a Hindu or not has attached great importance to the Gita as one of the standard texts of that philosophy, sharing that honour with the Upanishads and the *Brahma-Sutras*. These three constitute *Prasthana-traya* (the threefold paths). The authoritative exponents of the various Vedantic schools of thought have all commented on the Gita. The importance of the Gita has therefore been universally acknowledged.

Upto recent times there has been no controversy regarding the text of the Gita. Students of Shakespeare would remember what a thorny problem the text of a play presents with the different versions of the Quarto and the Folio; but the text of the Gita presented no such problem. Every one accepted Sankara's version as the authoritative one and except for very minor variations of grammatical forms of certain words, too insignificant to be taken notice of, the text of the *grantha* was accepted as containing 700 verses. Some give the following additional verse at the beginning of chapter XIII bringing the total to 701.

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च
एतद्वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं च केशव

Excepting this there has been no variation at all in the text of the Gita.

There has been, however, a theory that the Gita contains 745 verses and the following verse to be found in some editions of the *Mahabharata* is quoted in its support.

षट्शतानि सविशानि श्लोकानां प्राह केशवः
अर्जुनः सप्तपचाशत् सप्तषष्टिं तु सञ्जयः
धृतराष्ट्रः श्लोकमेकम् गीताया मानमुच्यते

According to this the total of 745 is made up as follows:—

Krishna	spoke	620	verses
Arjuna	„	57	„
Sanjaya	„	67	„
Dhritarashtra	„	1	„

Total ... 745

The *Sudha-Dharma-Mandal* of Madras published an edition of the Gita which contains more than the 700 verses of the authorised version; but this edition has not been taken up seriously by Indologists and the

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textual problem discussed on that as basis; but since Dr. Schrader propounded in 1930 his theory about "The Kashmir Recension of the Gita" scholars have been busy about the text of the Gita. Some there are who hold that there is no such Recension.

The publication, therefore, of the text of the Gita as commented upon by a Kashmir scholar Ramakantacharya in his *Bhashya* called *sarvatobhadra* is welcome and we are indebted to Dr. T. R. Chintamani of the Sanskrit Department of the Madras University for this timely publication.

This Kashmirian text does not, however contain 745 verses. It contains just 13 verses* more than the authorised version. But for this, it is like the popular version except of course for slight grammatical variations already referred to.

The special significance of the commentary is that it is by one who was a follower of the Bheda-abheda school of Vedanta associated with the name of Bhaskara. Each commentator interprets the Gita in support of his own philosophical system. The *advaitin*, the *Visishtadwaitin* and the *Dwaitin* reads the tenets of this system into the Gita and strengthens his system by this biased interpretation. To the faithful followers of the various schools of Indian philosophy the interpretation by their *Acharya* is the correct interpretation and others are misleading and incorrect.

The value of the Gita consists, however, in the fact that it is a treasure of spiritual truths of universal application. Hence its telling appeal to the enlightened followers of other religions as well and its growing popularity. We welcome the publication of its interpretation from another angle, from the Difference—non-difference point of view. The real point of divergence among the various schools of Hindu Philosophy has been the ultimate relationship between the individual soul (Jeevatman) and the Universal Soul (Paramatman). The *Dwaitins* hold that they are essentially different; the *Advaitins* hold that they are ultimately identical and identifiable; the *Visishtadwaitin* holds an intermediate position. Something not radically different from the last is the view held by the followers of this Difference—non-difference school. As Students we all welcome the new publication.

A STUDENT.

* 2	Verses in canto.	II
5	„	III
1	„	VI
5	„	XI

THE LORD'S HYMN.

The Cosmic Sacrifice.

K. V. S.

Let us go back for a little while to the Lord's Hymn (Purusha-sukta). What is the vision of creation and the sustenance of the world which it unfolds to us? How did creation become possible? It is stated that the Devas conducted a great sacrifice, (in Time). The sacrificial animal was the Purusha or the Lord. From that sacrifice participated in by all and conducted in Time came into existence all the created things. From that sacrifice came the Rig and the Yajus (all skill and knowledge.)

How are we to interpret this vision? Are we not led to think that here is unfolded to us the great cosmic sacrifice which took place in astronomical and geological Time through which evolution took place and the Universe became what it is today? The Cosmic activity energised by the Purusha goes on without beginning, intermission or end. In its course it has brought into existence species and forms in the infinite variety that the study of evolution reveals to us. Indeed the hymn of the creation is really the song of the evolution of life and form and the glorification of law of sacrifice which underlies that evolution. It will be enough if we remember two great conceptions that permeate this hymn. The first is the Immanence and the Transcendence of the Logos. The second is the great cosmic sacrifice that has gone on in which the Devas themselves have participated and in which the sacrificial object is the Logos himself. Through his energy creation was and by his energy creation is maintained. All that lives is a manifestation of his energy. By the use of that energy Devas built up new lives and new forms.

Why should we think that this sacrifice took place at a given moment or that it is over. *It is a continuous sacrifice through Time not in human reckonings but in the calculus of the Devas and of Brahma whose day extends over thousand yugas.* It is a sacrifice that takes place in time calculated in astronomical measure.

All this, staggering as it may be, need not frighten us. It is by that sacrifice we are living. That sacrifice will go on whether we consciously participate in it or no. Lucky are they who can consciously participate in it. By such sharing shall one be purified and release more and more of the Divine Life through his actions.

ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

Madras Constituency, 1941.

RESOLUTIONS.

GENERAL.

1. Peace:

a. While the Conference expresses its whole-hearted sympathy for all victims of the War, it calls upon all women to work towards the establishment of a new world-order, surmounting all barriers of race, creed, caste and nationality, and thus bringing about a spirit of true patriotism and love of humanity, necessary for international fellowship, goodwill and lasting peace.

b. This Conference believes that a change of heart in people and in nations is the fundamental need of the world. This is the time for every woman and particularly each member of the Conference—with God's aid—to begin to tackle the selfishness, apathy and pride, so common in us all, and to break down the social and racial barriers in everything that touches her life.

2. Communal Harmony:

Realising that women have a responsible part in bringing about communal harmony, this Conference appeals to all women to work earnestly for such a unity, so that this communal problem would not continue to be an impediment to India's national progress.

SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

1. Beggar Problem:

This Conference congratulates the Corporation of Madras on the steps taken to establish a Home for the diseased and disabled beggars. It further urges the Corporation to establish an Industrial Home for the able-bodied beggars, so that begging may be completely stopped in the city of Madras.

2. Swadeshi:

This Conference emphatically reiterates its previous resolutions that it is essential for the industrial and economic development of the country to encourage indigenous industries and enjoins the public in general and members of the Conference in particular on purchasing

and using Swadeshi articles, specially with regard to the handloom textiles.

3. Village Work :

This Conference views with grave concern the increasing poverty and difficult social conditions in the villages and appeals to all its members to heartily co-operate with the Special Committee on the Village Re-construction scheme of the A.I.W.C. and to undertake some such constructive programme to improve the general life of the villager in the Province.

4. Educated Unemployed :

This Conference is of opinion that the relief of the educated unemployed men and women, which is developing into a grave problem should immediately invite the serious attention of the Government of India and Provincial Governments to formulate a comprehensive scheme for the amelioration of this evil by opening more Vocational Training Centres and Industrial Institutions and by exploring various other avenues, which would absorb at least some of the educated unemployed for the present. This Conference also exhorts the Public to fully co-operate with the Government in finding a practical solution for this ever-increasing problem. It also draws the attention of the Government to the fact that the gravity of the situation is likely to be greatly accentuated after the War.

5. Anti-Tuberculosis :

This Conference requests the Government to hasten their contemplated scheme to combat the spread of tuberculosis in a more efficient and extensive scale. It also calls upon the educated men and women to come forward in large numbers to take up the anti-tuberculosis drive as a career of social service.

6. Vigilance :

1. This Conference emphasises the need for further extension of the Madras Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act in the Presidency in the coming year and to facilitate the conduct of rescue work in the areas where the Act is in force.

2. In view of the growing importance and usefulness of the work done by the Central Rescue and Training Home in Madras, this Conference urges the Government and the public to make larger contributions towards the maintenance of the Home and to provide the Institution with a suitable permanent building.

3. This Conference urges the Government to ask the Municipalities and local bodies in the Province to open shelters so as to render the Act effective. It also requests the Government, Municipalities and the public to give greater support to the shelters, already opened in the Presidency.

4. Considering the large and growing demand for trained workers in the field of Vigilance, this Conference suggests the establishment of a Training Centre in Madras.

5. This Conference is of opinion that Vigilance work has now become a recognised line of social work, and it, therefore, recommends to the Government that it may be raised to the status of all other Government service, with provident fund or pension benefits.

7. St. Ambulance Nursing :

This Conference while expressing its great satisfaction at the solid work, already done in the field by the Nursing Division of the St. Ambulance Association, Madras, reiterates its former resolution urging upon more girls and women taking up this training.

8. W. A. R. P. C.

This Conference looks to the women of Madras to support the W.A.R.P.C. (Women's Air Raid Precautions) classes, in the best interests of the safety of the homes.

9. Children's Act :

1 (a). This Conference calls upon the Government to amend the Madras Children's Act of 1920 so as to penalise the following: (a) parents who neglect and illtreat children, (b) persons who are found drunk in public places in the presence of children, (c) adults who give intoxicating liquors or drugs to children, and who incite children to gamble, (d) adults who exploit deformed and diseased children for the purpose of begging. To empower the Police to confiscate tobacco and drugs found in the possession of children.

(b). This Conference also urges the Government to extend the Children's Act to other parts of the Province and start more Juvenile Courts and Children's Aid Societies, so as to put a stop to juvenile begging, and juvenile crimes which are becoming an ever increasing and painful problem.

EDUCATIONAL.

1. *Adult Education :*

This Conference stresses the importance of continued efforts towards the spread of adult education and urges upon everyone of its members as well as other social bodies organising classes and centres for the promotion of literacy. Further, it calls upon the Municipal and local bodies to encourage and aid all such enterprises. This Conference deplores the attitude taken up by the Madras Government on the Adult Education Scheme. It strongly feels that Mass Literacy is an essential factor in the progress of India.

2. *Montessori :*

(a) This Conference considers the presence of Dr. Montessori in Madras as a special privilege and urges all those women, interested in child education, to get into contact with her so as to be inspired and benefited by her experience. (b) This Conference realises the value of the Montessori method, which is recognised to be one of the successful experiments in the education of pre-school child, and calls upon the public to avail themselves of the opportunity of being acquainted with this method.

3. *Women's Education :*

This Conference places on record its deep appreciation of the remarkable achievement of the Department of Public Instruction, in this Presidency, in the sphere of women's education, which is shown by the fact that literacy among girls has risen from 2.5 in 1931 to 6.3 in 1941, an increase of 150 P. C. and by the expectation of a still further increase in the near future.

4. *General Education :*

1. This Conference records its appreciation for the opportunity that was given to women representing all types of educational work in the Presidency to meet the Director of Public Instruction at an enlarged meeting of the Women's Advisory Council on October 25, 1941.

2. This Conference strongly supports the appeal made by the Director of Public Instruction at that meeting, urging women to further the cause of education among the poor and backward rural communities, by their personal interest and by their gifts. The Conference draws the attention of its members to the action of the Ernakulam Branch of the A.I.W.C., which has provided mid-day meals for poor children in certain village schools in that district.

5. *Medical Inspection :*

This Conference urges the Government to give effect to, at any early date, the proposal, sent up from the Department of Public Instruction to have Medical Inspection in all Elementary Schools, as this is an imperative need.

6. *Muslim Education :*

1. This Conference expresses its regret that Muslim girls are not included in the Scheme of Compulsory Elementary Education in Madras. It appeals to the Government and the Corporation of Madras to show no further distinction between Muslim girls and others in the matter of Elementary Education, in all the areas, where this scheme is in existence.

2. This Conference emphasises the need for more Training Schools of the Higher Elementary grade for Muslim Women, so that more trained Muslim Women Teachers may be available for Village Schools.

3. The lack of hostels for Muslim girls in the Madras city and in the Districts being a serious handicap to their Education, this Conference calls upon the Government and the Public to fulfil this much needed want and thus facilitate their educational progress.

4. Realising the importance of training Muslim women as Nurses and Midwives, this Conference appeals to the Government to take steps in imparting such training through the medium of Urdu.

7. *Domestic Science :*

This Conference urges the School Authorities that adequate provision for special instruction in Hygiene, Domestic Economy and mothercraft be made in all Girls' Schools in the Presidency.

8. *Physical Education :*

Realising the necessity of Physical Education for all young people, this Conference thanks the Government for introducing Physical Culture as a part of the curriculum in all Girls' Primary and Secondary Schools. But it calls upon the Authorities concerned to provide such schools with Playgrounds, as far as possible.

9. *Special School :*

As there is an urgent necessity for a Special School for the mentally Defective Children in the City of Madras, this Conference recommends the opening of such schools, with Teachers, specially trained in this field.

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10. Safety First :

Realising the importance of the activities of the Safety First Association, this Conference requests its members and the Public to support the efforts of the Madras Branch in its various aspects, with a special reference to the Health and Safety of the Home and its food supplies.

LEGAL RESOLUTIONS :

I. This Conference places on record its deep sense of appreciation at the Government of India appointing a committee to examine and report upon Hindu Law.

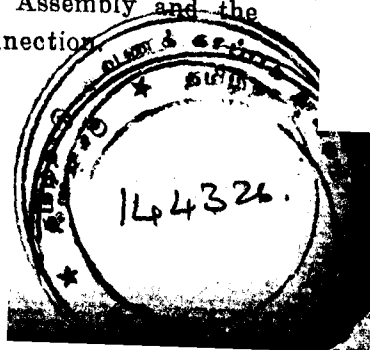
(a) It regrets, at the same time, that the resolution passed by the A.I.W.C. at its 15th annual session, asking for the inclusion of at least two women on the panel of the committee, has been overlooked and it again requests that the Resolution may be given effect to, at least at the Committee's next session.

II. This Conference expresses its approval of the general trend of recommendations, set forth, in the Rao Report. In accordance with the Resolution, passed at the last Annual Conference, this constituent Conference feels that although comprehensive legislation in Hindu Law is absolutely essential the question of Divorce, Separate Residence and Maintenance, being of very urgent nature, should be tackled in the first instance.

III. This Conference expresses its deep regret and disappointment at the circumstances, which led to the withdrawal of Dr. Deshmukh's Motion, referring to the Bills on Divorce, Separate Residence and Maintenance, before the Central Assembly, in October.

IV. This Conference urges the Governors' Provinces to enact parallel legislation with reference to agriculture lands and having retrospective effect, in order to give Hindu widows the full measure of the benefit, undoubtedly contemplated by the framers of the Act XVIII of 1937, as amended by Act XI of 1938.

V. Polygamy. This Conference reiterates its former demand that the Practice of Polygamy should be eradicated from our Society and request the Government, members of the Central Assembly and the Public to support pertinent legislations in this connection.



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