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

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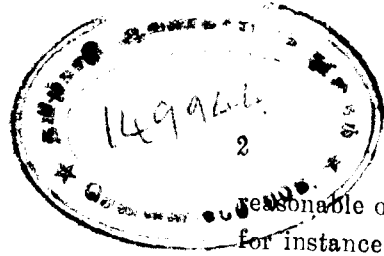
“ASANGA”

SIR P. S. SIVASWAMI AIYER, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., LL.D.*

The subject of my second lecture is Asanga or ‘non-attachment’. The English word ‘attachment’ is the equivalent of Sanga. It connotes a deep-rooted desire or even devotion. The absence of Sanga or attachment is not an end in itself but is only a means. What is the end or purpose for the attainment of which it is recommended? Is it a temporal or a spiritual purpose? Even from the point of view of the worldly-minded man it has a high value. The regulation and control of desires and instincts has an important place in any rational scheme of life. Any such scheme would include education, physical as well as mental, the development of one's faculties and aptitudes, the attainment of culture, the cultivation of an equable frame of mind and the fulfilment of one's duties to society. Such a scheme of life would not exclude a desire for the pleasures of life in moderation and with a sense of proportion as between competing objects of pleasure with due regard to a proper scale of values. Atyāsakti (अत्यासक्ति) i.e., undue desire carried to the extent of passion, addiction or devotion to any particular object of desire, is bound to cause harmful consequences and is likely to interfere with one's peace of mind, equanimity and happiness.

Does the doctrine of non-attachment involve, from the worldly point of view, the negation or suppression of all desires for pleasures or only some? There are many innocent pleasures and activities to which no

* Besant Memorial Lectures delivered under the auspices of the Madras University on the 3rd December 1940.



reasonable objection can be taken from a common-sense point of view, as for instance, love of knowledge and scientific research, love of nature and scenery, love of literature and the fine arts, love of the pleasures of social converse and friendship, love of travelling and love of games and sports when not carried to the extent of becoming a passion. Patriotism or the love of one's country may be carried to the degree of attachment or devotion and may even be regarded as a matter of duty so long as it does not lead to activities inimical to the welfare of other nations and countries or to an encroachment upon their rights and liberties.

From the spiritual point of view, Asanga has a much higher importance as a means to the attainment of Moksha which, according to all orthodox Hindus, is regarded as the summum bonum. Moksha or the release from the bondage of Karma and Samsara or the cycle of births and deaths is not regarded negatively as a mere release from pain and suffering. It is regarded as a positive condition of supreme and ineffable bliss in comparison with which all other pleasures and happiness count as nothing. Karma denotes action generally, whether in the present birth or in previous births, and I have explained my views on the doctrine in my Kamala Lectures on "The Evolution of Hindu Moral Ideals." No other doctrine has obtained such a hold upon the Hindu mind or penetrated so deeply into Hindu Philosophy and Religion. I hope I may be pardoned for quoting a passage from my lectures on that subject.

"The doctrine of Karma is based upon the following beliefs and assumptions:—

(1) that every act or deed must necessarily be followed by its consequences which are not merely of a physical character, but also mental and moral. It produces an effect upon the character, disposition, instincts and tendencies of the agent. The word Samskāra or Vāsana indicates the physical, mental and moral traits with which a person is imbued and which emanate from previous experiences or actions. They form part of his personality and are borne by him in his lifetime and carried into a future existence;

(2) that the consequences of a person's acts not being fully worked out in this life, they demand a future life for their fruition;

(3) that the inequalities between men in worldly position and advantages and the apparent discord between their characters and their happiness or sufferings, their good or ill-fortune, conflict with our sense of justice and our conception of the benevolence of God and call for an explanation compatible with the moral government of the universe;

(4) that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul which justifies the belief in a future existence of the individual soul equally justifies its pre-existence; and

(5) that, while the happiness or suffering of a person in this life may not always be due to his own good or evil deeds in a prior birth, but may be due to the operation of circumstances beyond his control, or his actions in the present birth, the possibility of his own good or ill desert in a previous birth as the cause cannot be ruled out.

(Kamala Lectures on "Evolution of Hindu Moral Ideals."
Pages 134-135.)

According to the Hindu theory, the chain of Karma is considered to be Anādi i.e., without a beginning. But it can be snapped or destroyed by Jnana or realised knowledge. Do all kinds of actions have the effect of adding new links to the chain of bondage? Actions performed from a pure sense of duty without any desire (*Nishkamakarma*) would not have any such effect. Even actions performed from desire but without any wish for a personal benefit and free from any taint of egoism would have no binding effect. It may be urged that no human being performs any action without some desire or other. But desire need not be egoistic. It may be for *Lokasangraha* (लोकसंग्रह) i.e., the benefit of society or the world at large.

The spiritual discipline required for the removal of the impediment caused by Karma is far more rigorous and exacting in the case of the *Mumukshu* or the aspirant to salvation than in the case of others. The *Mumukshu* or *Sādhaka* is a person who has chosen the *Nivritti Marga* or path of renunciation of worldly activities. In the case of those who have not adopted this path but continue their worldly activities and have adopted the *Pravritti Marga*, the restrictions imposed upon desires and activities are of a less stringent character and dictated by considerations of a worldly character. The *Dharma Sastra* of Manu deals far more extensively with the *Pravritti Marga* than with the *Nivritti Marga*. It is intended to regulate the conduct of life by those who wish to remain in the world as members of society. The division of man's life into *Asramas* or successive stages is based upon the recognition of the needs of human nature and the necessity for the maintenance of society.

अकामस्य क्रिया काचिदृश्यते नेहकहिंचित् ।

यद्यदि कुरुते किंचित्तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम् ॥

(Manu, Adh. II, sloka 4.)

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कामात्मता न प्रशस्ता न च वैदास्त्यकामता ।

काम्यो हि वेदाधिगमः कर्मयोगश्च वैदिकः ॥

(Manu, Adh. II, sloka 2.)

"Not a single act here (below) appears ever to be done by a man free from desire; for whatever (man) does, it is (the result of) the impulse of desire." (Buhler's Tr.)—Manu, 11, 4.

"To act solely from a desire for rewards is not laudable, yet an exemption from that desire is not (to be found) in this (world); for on (that) desire is grounded the study of the Veda and the performance of the actions, prescribed by the Veda. (Buhler's Tr.)—Manu, 11, 2.

It is only in the fourth stage that Samnyasa or complete renunciation is contemplated. During the stage of studentship and that of a householder there is no obligation to renounce the pleasures of the world. The gratification of Kama or desire including love and the enjoyments of the senses in a manner not contrary to the precepts of Dharma (*Dharmaviruddha Kama*) is allowed in the case of the house-holder, who is required to follow the family life. He is also allowed to acquire wealth which is necessary for the purpose of enabling him to discharge his duties as a house-holder. A house-holder is under an obligation to perform certain acts of a religious character. Failure to perform which is considered sinful. If these religious duties are performed with an expectation of enjoyment of celestial pleasures (*Svarga*) those who perform them are not released from the bondage of Karma and they reap only the reward of celestial pleasures. But if these religious acts are performed without any desire or expectation of heavenly reward they serve the purpose of purification of mind and character. In respect of matters which are not the subject of specific religious injunctions or duties the Manu Smriti allows great latitude and shows a spirit of accommodation to human nature. Actions of this character may be called *Udasina* Karma i.e., Karma of a spiritually indifferent character. They carry no spiritual or religious consequences and are usually preceded by desire. They may be merely moral or non-moral. There is no objection to the desire for the enjoyment of the fruits of such actions. Sanga or attachment to the objects of desires falling in this category is not sinful. The advice of the Gita, in my opinion, in regard to these matters is not the abandonment of *Phaleccha* i.e., the desire for the fruits of actions. What is really recommended is the avoidance of undue attachment carried to the extent of passion or addiction. The restraints upon conduct in this class of cases are those imposed by the spirit of moderation or prudence, a regard for the just claims of others

and a sense of proportion between competing objects of desire. The inhibition of desires and activities beyond these limits is impracticable and would make too great a demand upon ordinary human nature. If, however, a person chooses to abandon the desire for the fruits of his actions there is no objection to his doing so and if he practises such renunciation he may be treated as preparing or qualifying himself for the career of a mumukshu. I have already referred to some examples of innocent human activities which may afford pleasure and enjoyment and which it is neither necessary nor even wise to reject. No higher or more beautiful ideal has ever been placed before humanity than that set forth by Valmiki in his picture of Sree Rama in our national epic. Valmiki's conception of him is that of the hero as the perfect man. (see Cantos 1 & 2 of the Ayodhya Kanda in Valmiki's Ramayana.)

धर्मकामार्थतत्त्वज्ञः स्मृतिमान्प्रतिमानवान् ।

लौकिके समयाचारे कृतकल्पो विशारदः ॥ २२ ॥

श्रेष्ठं शास्त्रसमूहेषु प्राप्तो व्यामिश्रकेषु च ।

अर्थधर्मौ च संगृह्य सुखतन्त्रो न चालसः ॥ २७ ॥

वैहारिकाणां शिल्पानां विज्ञातार्थविभागवित् ।

आरोहे विनये चैव युक्तो वारणवाजिनाम् ॥ २८ ॥

(Ramayana, Ayodhya, i. 22, 27 & 28.)

Rama was master of the principles of Dharma, Kama and Artha, was possessed of an excellent memory, a ready and resourceful intellect and was versed in the customs and conventions of the world and skilful in observing them. (i. 22.)

Deeply versed in the Vedas and Vedangas, in poetry, dramatic literature, poetics etc., he indulged in pleasures only after attending to the claims of Dharma (Duty) and Artha (the acquisition of wealth), and was never given to sloth. (i. 27.)

He was a connoisseur of the fine arts and knew how to spend his money with discrimination; was an expert rider and trainer of elephants and horses. (i. 28)

सम्यग्विद्याव्रतस्नातो यथावत्सांगवेदवित् ।

गान्धर्वं च भुवि श्रेष्ठो बभूव भरताग्रजः ॥

(Ramayana, Ayodhya, ii. 35).

The elder brother of Bharata had gone through a regular and systematic course of learning and had acquired a knowledge of the meaning

of the Vedas and their angas (auxiliary sciences) and had a profound knowledge of the science of music. (ii. 35)

कच्चिदर्थं च धर्मं च कामं च जयतां वरे ।

विमज्ज्य काले कालज्ञ सर्वान्वरद सेवसे ॥

(Ramayana, Ayodhya, Sarga 100, 64.)

Rama asked Bharata :—"O, best of conquerors ! do you divide your time between Dharma, administration and conjugal pleasures with due discrimination?" (100-64)

In the case of the Mumukshu, an aspirant to Moksha, the Gita prescribes two paths. One is called the *Karma Yoga* and the other is called the *Jnana Yoga* or the Sankhya Yoga. Whether these two paths are parallel, whether they are of equal value or whether one is superior to the other and if so which, have been the subject of acute controversy in Hindu Religion and Philosophy from ancient times. Sri Sankaracharya is the great protagonist of the view that Jnana Yoga is the better path and that Karma Yoga is only subservient to the other. In his masterly treatise on the Gita Rahasya Mr. Tilak has argued with great learning and subtlety that Karma Yoga is at least of equal value, if not actually superior to the Jnana Yoga. He is of opinion that the view of Sankaracharya and those commentators on the Gita who have followed him is the result of a desire to support a doctrine to which they were inclined. It would be rash for me to express any definitive conclusion upon this point. It seems to me that Mr. Tilak's opinion is more likely to be acceptable to the modern mind than the other view which leads finally to quietism and complete renunciation of the world, indifference to its affairs and a condition of stolid apathy. Mr. Tilak's view is more in accord with the modern tendency to activism. On the merits of the controversy I must confess to a strong leaning in favour of Mr. Tilak's conclusion which is well supported by authority and reasoning. It will be sufficient for me to refer to the very able and elaborate discussion by Mr. Tilak in the chapter of the Gita Rahasya dealing with Renunciation or Karma Yoga. The Gita itself declares that both Sankhya Yoga and Karma Yoga lead to the same goal.

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।

तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात् कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥

यत्सांङ्ख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

एकं साङ्ख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥

(Bhagavad Gita—Chap. 5-slokas 2 & 5).

"The renunciation of works and their selfless performance both lead to bliss. But of the two the performance of works is better than their renunciation." (Gita, V-2.)

"The goal which is reached by men of renunciation is reached by men of action also. He who sees that the way of renunciation and the way of works are one—he sees indeed." (Gita, V-5.) (Tr. by D.S. Sarma.)

The Sadhaka who has chosen the Karma marga has also completely to give up Sanga and engage in Karma purely for the purpose of mental purification. The method of preparation and discipline and acquiring steadiness of mind is practically the same in both the paths. When one has passed the stage of the Sadhaka and become a Sthita Prajna or Siddha, he is, while alive, called a Jivanmukta. He is under no obligation or compulsion to do anything. But as a result of his arduous process of spiritual education and discipline, he has already attained a spiritual poise, equilibrium and stability, and his conduct, if he does anything at all, instinctively conforms to the highest ideals of altruism and he is guided solely by a regard for Lokasangraha or universal welfare. According to Mr. Tilak's view the Jivanmukta will continue to work for universal welfare and will not give up his altruistic activities. Though actions are generally preceded by desire, abandonment of the fruits of action is sufficient to prevent any fresh bondage to Karma.

Is the ideal of abandonment of all desire for the fruits of action possible for a person who is neither a Sadhaka nor a Siddha? We are familiar with cases of the disinterested performance of duties. It is being done today under war conditions. But is it possible for the bow to be always kept strung and in a state of tension? Can men devote every minute of their lives to the performance of altruistic duties to the exclusion of all desires for pleasures and with an exclusive regard for the pleasures and happiness of others only? The ideal preached by the Gita is undoubtedly lofty. But it is very much like an icy peak of perfection which cannot be scaled by ordinary mortals.

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।

यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥

(Bhagavad Gita, VII—3.)

"Among thousands of men scarcely one strives for perfection ; and of those who strive and succeed scarcely one knows me in truth."

(Tr. by D. S. Sarma.)

Though the Gita constantly lays emphasis upon renunciation of desires, it would, I think, be more reasonable to hold that it does not forbid any entertainment of desire at all but aims at their regulation and control and that it preaches equanimity of mind without allowing oneself to be enslaved by the senses. One must be neither elated by success nor dejected by failure, neither sanguine nor pessimistic. One must be prepared in mind to take the chances of success or defeat, and must be neither overjoyed by pleasant experiences nor depressed by unpleasant experiences. Psychologically desire is a necessary preliminary to action. Even the performance of a duty is preceded by desire for action. It is, of course, quite conceivable that a man may renounce egoistic desires for the enjoyment of the fruits of action. Let us remember that in describing Himself, the Lord says,

बलं बलवतामस्मि कामरागविवर्जितम् ।

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥

(Bhagavad Gita, VII—11.)

"I am the strength of the strong free from (excessive) Kama and Raga; I am also the spirit of Kama so far as it is not contrary to Dharma."

Even Janaka, the philosopher-king, who is generally referred to as the example of one who had attained Siddhi by Karma and become a Jivanmukta, led a family life and had a wife and child. Is it possible to hold that he became a father without any appreciation or enjoyment of the pleasures of conjugal life? The sage Yajnavalkya had two wives. He appreciated the joy of argumentation and controversial victory and the worth of large herds of cows. Have our great sages been free from a passion for the pursuit of truth and a desire for the propagation of truth as they conceived it, i.e., their own opinions and systems? Are the pursuit and the love of knowledge to be confined only to the domain of religion and philosophy and not allowed in the field of scientific research? Is Lokasangraha or the welfare of society to be regarded as not comprising the advancement of human knowledge? Are the great poets to be regarded as not having made any valuable contribution to human happiness? Are the achievements of creative genius in the fields of literature and the fine arts to be neglected, despised and discarded? Is there any sharp division in the sphere of ultimate reality between spiritual truth and truth in the external world? Is it only the founders of religion who have penetrated into the mystery of the universe or have other truth-seekers been

also able to lift the veil and obtain glimpses into the great mystery? The glory of Hinduism is that it preaches the identity of the human soul or Jiva with the spirit and soul of the universe. Is it not a fragmentary view of the universe to hold that it contains no room for the treasures of the human mind which have been won in the course of the ages by assiduous effort? Whether the self or Ātman is part of the Universe or identical with it, it can participate in all the good which may be comprised in the sphere of universal welfare. Mr. Tilak observes that 'the doctrine of the Gita, is, that instead of killing desires of all kinds, one should only give up attachment to the objects of desire, and go on performing all actions. (See Mr. Tilak's Gita Rahasya, Vol. I Page 446.).

He observes also that the ultimate and most comprehensive interpretation of the canon of Self-identification is, that the highest idea of manhood and the most complete fructification of the arrangement of the four states of life consists in: (i) realising that family life is but the first lesson in the science of Self-identification, and (ii) instead of being continually engrossed in the family, making one's Self-identifying Reason more and more comprehensive, by substituting one's friends, one's relations, or those born in the same gotra (clan) as oneself, or the inhabitants of one's own village, or the members of one's own community, or one's co-religionists, and ultimately all human beings, or all created beings, in the place of one's family, thereby realising that that Ātman, which is within oneself is also within all created beings, and that one should regulate one's conduct accordingly." (Mr. Tilak's Gita Rahasya, Vol. I, Page 544.)

In a later passage Mr. Tilak says that 'as there is one and the same Ātman in all created things, everyone has an inherent natural right of being happy in this world; and no single individual or society in the world can ever ethically acquire the right to cause the detriment of another individual or society by disregarding this universal, important and natural right, merely because the one is more than the other in numbers, or in strength, or because the one has a larger number of means than the other for conquering the other.' (Mr. Tilak's Gita Rahasya, Vol. I. Page 559.)

Mr. Aldous Huxley is a recent advocate of non-attachment with all the enthusiasm of a convert. In his book on "Ends and Means" he observes; 'The ideal man is the non-attached man. Non-attached to his bodily sensations and lusts. Non-attached to his craving for power and possessions. Non-attached to the objects of these various desires, Non-attached

to his anger and hatred; non-attached to his exclusive loves. Non attached to wealth, fame, social position. Non-attached even to science, art, speculation, philanthropy. Yes, non-attached even to these. For, like patriotism in Nurse Cavell's phrase 'they are not enough'. Non-attachment to self and to what are called 'the things of this world' has always been associated in the teachings of the philosophers and the founders of religions with attachment to an ultimate reality greater and more significant than the self. Greater and more significant than even the best things that this world has to offer. Of the nature of this ultimate reality I shall speak in the last chapters of this book. All that I need do in this place is to point out that the ethic of non-attachment has always been correlated with cosmologies that affirm the existence of a spiritual reality underlying the phenomenal world and imparting to it whatever value or significance it possesses.' (Page 3-4.)

It is not possible for me to follow him quite so far. I will only observe that he does not carry his principle of non-attachment to the point of asceticism.

REVIEW

The Hindu Theological High School Magazine.

VOL. X, No. 2, DECEMBER 1940

Post Jubilee Number

We are glad to acknowledge the receipt of this Magazine and to note that both in quality and matter its reputation is even higher than what it was before. The contributions to this number naturally centre round the review of the work of the Institution and the impressions of the Golden Jubilee celebrations. The management and the staff of the Hindu Theological High School have every right to congratulate themselves upon the success that has been achieved by their efforts and which has made the Institution one of the model Institutions in the Presidency. This is indeed a great achievement. The staff of the Institution have spared no pains to bring about this consummation and in doing so, they have set an example to other Institutions.

THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN LIFE.

K. V. S.

Never was the power of prayer and the belief in prayer put to so severe a test as it is being put to during these days. Is there not a God of Peace and Goodwill over-watching the Universe? Are there not men and women in the world who live and work in such faith? Are not the forces of good more powerful than those of evil? Why is it then that we have the present catastrophic suffering and destruction in a manner that could not be even fully realised and is beyond comparison greater than the sufferings inflicted by former wars on this planet?

These are legitimate questions. The fact that many in this world can ask them is by itself a sign of the moral evolution of man to a higher conception of international ethics than at any time in the past. Men did not worry themselves about such questions till very recently. Unprovoked aggression, and devastation and destruction of neighbouring peoples were taken as normal episodes in the life of the peoples of the world. Slowly, and largely as a result of the rapid development of the means of transport and of communication of ideas, a new conception of human relationship arose, transcending the barriers of race, place and culture. Men acquired the vision to see humanity as one and men and women as members of one family. It is true that that vision is at present the privilege of a few. But even those who have not seen it are willing to subscribe to its possibility and to do a little to promote its growth.

But along with the development of this consciousness, there has also started a reaction. A new cult has arisen which looks upon such conceptions as unnatural and impossible of realisation. The struggle in the world at the present day may be said to be a struggle for the preservation of this new acquisition against the forces of darkness.

How has this vision and this new value come to us? Largely by the power of prayer. Men and women of prayer gradually gained the capacity, to think beyond the barriers of time and clime. As result of the prayers of several generations and in the fulness of time this vision suddenly dawned upon mankind. Otherwise how can we explain the rapid diffusion of this conception of humanity as one family and the acceptance of its validity by earnest groups throughout the world? It has met with no serious opposition in the world of thought. On the other hand it has been eagerly welcomed as an event to which humanity has been looking forward a long time.

That there are more people in the world today who see this mutual destruction in its true colour may be said to be a fulfilment of power of prayer and of the faith in prayer which has been cherished by the major portion of mankind from time immemorial. We are able to see evil as evil wherever it is. That is a great gain. The next step is to harness the power of prayer to destroy this evil. We may wait in faith that this also will be accomplished in time.

Let us just look a little further into the place of prayer in life without going into the realms of world federation and internationalism. What is prayer? What is the place of prayer in individual life? How does it fulfil its purpose? What are its limits? What is its structure?

The basic idea in prayer is the surrender of human personality into the hands of God so that it may grow more and more into the perfection of Godhead. This may not really explain much beyond the fact that the ultimate goal of prayer is the perfection of human personality. That perfection is achieved not all on a sudden but in slow and almost imperceptible degrees. Each forward step is a complex process involving many factors which may be grouped as mental, emotional and physical. Each of these factors is again dependent upon a variety of circumstances. It is not possible to define exactly these factors in any particular case. Even the individual concerned does not know fully what is best for him. But one thing is certain that everyone wants to grow—the nature and direction of the growth depending upon his personality and environment. All desire good things—the good things of this world or the good things of the other world or the good things of both the worlds together, even in circumstances when one cannot have them. We often ask for things that are not needed and for things which are really harmful and which may mean a set-back to our progress. The underlying conception however is one of stretching out one's hands for what is felt to be the need of the hour.

The structure of prayer is faith in the goodness and the greatness of God and absolute reliance that one will get all that one needs if only he prays enough and rightly. It is in that faith one approaches the presence of God. This by itself is a purifying influence and often times acts as a strong deterrent against bringing improper requests into the Divine presence. It is not unusual however for one to so persuade himself that an improper request is a proper one. Even these get their reward though it turns out afterwards to be most unsatisfying. The following steps may be seen in a normal prayer. (1) The affirmation of the intimate relationship between

God and man. (2) The faith in direct contact as a fulfilment of that relationship. (3) The gains of such contact by the purification, growth and strengthening of one's personality and (4) the obtaining of the right kind of environment that is needed for further growth.

That is not all. Many men come and ask of God many necessary unnecessary things, many good and harmful things. And it does apparently happen that the good things are refused and the harmful things are given, that prayer is not always answered immediately, and that sometimes the immediate result is just the opposite of what has been asked for. Again the question arises whether a man can get all that he wants even though he has not deserved them. In other words is there favouritism on the part of God? And further whether it is proper to trouble God with the petty needs of our daily lives.

We shall consider some of these questions in the next article.

T. L. VASWANI : A MYSTIC OF THE MODERN WORLD. (A. Thumb-nail Sketch.)

BY P. V. JASHAN.

The sweet fragrance of Vaswaniji's pure, gentle life attracted me many years ago. And as the poet has sung : "The first love hath no end," my love for him, too, is endless and has multiplied with the passage of years.

He was Principal of a First Grade College in the Punjab. There was a brilliant career open to him. He could have made money,—heaps of money. But he said to himself : "Life is not given to make money ; let me live a life of service and sacrifice : "They asked him : "What is the purpose of life?" And he replied : "To dedicate it to Love Divine : to serve and be poured out as a sacrifice !"

He loves to call himself a farmer,—a farmer who scatters the seeds of *shakti* in the hope and with the aspiration that the seeds may bear fruit some day. For one of the dreams in his eyes is "to see planted, throughout the length and breadth of India, Youth-Trees, the fruit whereof will be *seva*, service of our Adored Mother,—India."

A child of silence, in silence Vaswani scatters the seeds. He travels from place to place, from village to village ; he meets young men and women ; he speaks to them in his sweet way, he looks into their needs ; he stirs up the youths of India with a cry for *shakti*,—dynamic vitality.

"Build up your manhood!" his words ring clear and sharp. "Petitions and paper resolutions will not give you the Liberation you want. Liberation is through *shakti*." He wanders with this message seeking opportunities to scatter the seeds which the Master has given him. He moves from town to town in the faith that some of those who are young may develop strength for the service of India and Humanity.

The best years of his life, he has spent in awakening the "eager youth",—the youths of today who will be the builders of the destiny of their Motherland tomorrow. And so this Sadhu-Singer takes his stand on the highways and market places and sings his song, as he says,

"Not so the proud and strong,
Not to traffickers in titles and fame
But to the eager youth whom I have loved."

And he sings to them of a Dreamland.

"Where glory crowns the lowly and the meek,
Where freedom lives without fear or vice,
Where love is not lured by pleasure or gold,
Where faith hath no need of rites or priests,
Where the Gods give worship to the Flame of sacrifice."

What an ecstatic ring palpates in every word! No poet's songs were more beautiful than his own mind. And these lines portray the heart of one who is an eternal pilgrim on the world's way.

Who is this man?—this singer of songs, this farmer, who, undaunted and undepressed, goes his way sowing his seeds in love and faith. Who is he?

In actual physical make-up he is a man whose likeness you can see many times a day in this country. But no one who looks into those large, serenely lit eyes of his can ever pass him by.

He is of medium height; his body is solidly built. His head is massive, with thick, curly, dishevelled hair. And these hair, these thorny curly hair together with his large, serenely lit, mystic eyes have often reminded me of a picture of Jesus Christ on the Cross with a crown of thorns adorning his sacred head. Abroad nose just fits in with his large ears. His features are regular and in their totality present a face, soft and tender, telling of a peace won by years of *sadhanas* and suffering but glowing for ever with a gentle, irresistible smile. The stately simplicity of his bearing radiates all around him a spiritual quality. Such superficially is Sadhu Vaswani whom the Irish poet, Dr. Cousins, greeted many

years ago as India's "modern mystic," "a forerunner of the New Age", "a thinker and revealer of the deep truths of the Spirit."

People come to Sind Hyderabrd—his headquarters—from various parts of India and the world with the sole purpose of meeting him. They come without any previously fixed appointment, and when they knock at his door, they are promptly told that Vaswaniji is "with himself." What that "with himself" means, is always a mystery. But it serves its purpose well inasmuch as everyone knows that if Vaswaniji is "with himself", the doors are barred; he is not to be disturbed. So that in the evening, when he emerges from his room, he sees a number of visitors who may have been waiting for as many as five, six, seven hours to have his *darshan*. There is one thing he has not been able to understand, he says: and that is this idea of people coming in multitudes for a *darshan*. They come not to ask anything, not to discuss any problem, not to talk over any matter, but they come only that they may have the privilege of sitting in his presence for even a few minutes. And for this they have to wait for hours together in sun or shade, in heat or cold,—how strange! And yet how significant! They come to him, the people,—young and old, rich and poor,—they come to him from farm and factory, from College and Universities, they hail together from the very remote corners to offer their fragrant flowers of reverence and affection, to pay the homage of their hearts to him about whom Miss Martha L. Root, the distinguished international Baha's teacher and representative of the "World Order" recently wrote: "To meet a soul like Vaswani is worth making a journey across the seas."

Vaswani's name brings before my mind the picture of what he himself has called a "Child-man"! Sixty-one years old and yet so young in spirit! His outlook so broad, his mind ever open to new ideas, new aspirations, new influences!

His child-like soul rose above the bondage of "experience." Just think of it. A man of wealth and position, giving up all and accepting hunger, starvation, pain! How unlike an "experienced" man and yet how like a child!

Vaswani preaching that "to lose money is to be purified!" And "if thou wouldst enter peace, pray for Pain!" And again, "they who suffer, win!" How far removed from "experience"! Vaswani sitting in company and all of a sudden going into a mood of lyrical and rapt ecstasy! How like a child!

And in his heart there is such tender love for the poor! He serves the lepers and the lunatics and believes that "in the lunatic and the leper, too, is an Image of the Lord!" He feeds and clothes the poor.

And he is a man of tremendous faith. Money matters have never troubled him. "The Great Power will always keep me above want," he often says. He started a School—St. Mira's High School—with but two copper coins. And many laughed at him. But the School has now grown into a big institution with four branches, having its own building, a College, a library, a laboratory and a hostel.

A poor man once came to him for blessings. "Mere blessings," Vaswani said to himself, "is not what this poor man wants. What he badly needs is bread." And immediately he parted with his last ten-rupee note. He forgot that he had to pay his boarding charges! "If ye have faith," said Jesus, "ye can move mountains!"

Simple, transparent, he is free from the crookedness of the "clever", from the show and ostentation of the proud "scholar." Did not Reumer, the great German theologian, remark that the great secret of the saints is humility? And humility is the real secret of Vaswaniji's life. "In my hermit heart," he says, "there sings again and again, a little song:—'May I be as Thy little ones.—the rose, the leaf, the lisping child!'"

They call him a *Sadhu*: but he says:—"I am not a *Sadhu*, but a servant of the *Sadhus*, the Rishis and Saints." They call him the "Emerson of India." But he says:—"I know not much. I only know that the longing in me grows, day by day, to be consumed, more and more, in the Flame of Sacrifice to Him Whose Beauty blooms in all the worlds, and Whose Love I see shining, shining everywhere."

Vaswaniji's dialectical powers are great, but greater far are his will-power and power of *tapasya*. Inspiring as are his speeches and writings, Vaswaniji's true greatness does not lie in them. The world has produced many writers and orators. But Vaswaniji's secret lies in this: he has trained himself in a school of *tapasya*. He is a worshipper of the Cross and he is a disciple of the Flute; and his repeated teaching is:—"Love life: and spread the sunshine of joy."

His heart rises in reverence to all saints and prophets of East and West. His life is filled with the rapture of the vision of the unity of all races and all religions in the One Spirit.

Vaswaniji, to my mind, is a symbol of the *real* India which stands for the supremacy of the Soul, the *Atman*. We talk today of institutions and organisations. Institutions and organisations, it is true, have their

place in life. But more than institutions and organisations we need, at present, the inspiration of lives at once rich in renunciation and radiant in sacrifice.

Over and over again are my eyes lifted up to such souls in this world grown sick and weary. We drink, we eat, we dance,—and to all appearances are happy. But where, where is true happiness? These things are external. They satisfy the senses;—yes, but they wound the soul and leave it emptier than before. Distractions are multiplying. Attractions are fast increasing. The epidemic of gaining "fame" and "name" is victimising more and more every day. Young men and women have been intoxicated by the alcohol of "Ambition". There is chaos and confusion in India. Bertrand Russel spoke some time ago of "moral bankruptcy and psychic disintegration." "*Civilisation*" is going bankrupt! An urgent need of the world is *God-consciousness*. To this ideal Vaswaniji has borne witness from the beginning of his days. And as I have studied him, as I have thought of episode after episode of his life beautiful in *brahmacharya* glorious in *gnan*, shining with sacrifice, radiant in love, I have recalled to myself his own words:—"Can life hold a higher privilege than this,—to be broken in the service of the Lord?" Homage to him!

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WOMAN IN MODERN INDIA*

MRS. A. S. P. AYYAR.

What do the women of India want? First and foremost, they want to be economically independent. "The whole world revolves on the belly" said Chanakya. So, nobody living in the world can be really independent without the means to fill the belly unaided. In my opinion, that is all that old Manu meant by saying that a woman could never be termed really independent since her father had to maintain her as a child, her husband as a young woman, and her son as an old woman. It seems to me to be absurd to inveigh against Manu's maxim, which is only an expression of an economic and social *fact*, without any attempt to make woman economically independent. It might have been all right, in Manu's days to give the property to men, and only maintenance and *stridhan* to women. The strong arms of men were required in those lawless days to protect property and *stridhan*. Jewels were also many. Now, jewels are few, and law and order much more rigidly enforced. So there is no reason to continue the old Hindu law of inheritance on intestacy. This law must be changed, and men and women put on an absolutely equal footing. Widows should get a share like the sons, to do what they like with; daughters, too must get a share like the sons. Till the laws are changed, wills to that effect should be made by Hindus as regards their self-acquired properties. It is amazing how few wills are really executed not even one Hindu in a thousand caring to do so. Propaganda is required in this respect.

But to achieve the object in view, something more is required than merely changing the law of inheritance. For, often, there is in this poor country, nothing to inherit or divide. So, every woman must try to earn something, either by some cottage industry, or by being a doctor or schoolmistress or insurance agent for working among women. Incidentally, every wife should try to induce her husband to insure his life for a modest sum in a reliable company and to assign the policy in her name. Of course, unmarried women and widows can also qualify for and become whole-time government servants or lawyers and earn an independent income. Once the women become economically independent, they will automatically take their proper place in society. So, all well-

* Presidential Address delivered by Srimathi Vedanayaki Ammal (Mrs. A. S. P. Ayyar) at the Tamil Nadu Women's Conference, Karur.

wishers of India, and especially workers for the uplift of women, should keep this as the foremost plan in their programme.

I may add here that workers in the past knew this well. Vignaneswara, the great author of the *Mitakshara*, tried, at one stroke, to extend *stridhana* to all kinds of property known then, whether acquired by partition, inheritance, gift, adverse possession or purchase, and to make woman the absolute owner of all those properties. But, unfortunately for women, the Privy Council, in days when women in England too had not got full rights in property, curtailed this right, and held that *stridhana* would include only the ancient and insignificant kinds of property named specifically by Yagnavalkya and that the ownership in these too would not be absolute but only a limited estate for life. Now the women of England have got full rights, and yet Hindu women suffer from the above rulings.

Marriage is now almost obligatory for every man and woman in our land. This rule is, on the whole, quite sound. To make life complete, one must be married. Exceptions there may be, for lifelong ascetics or the incurably diseased. Hinduism therefore gave each woman her innings, and asked her to stand by for the rest to have their chance. That, it seems to me, was the genesis of enforced widowhood. The thing became monstrous because there was no enforced widowerhood. Otherwise, it would have been a just rule though operating harshly on some.

Some marriage reforms are essential. Polygamy, which has been greatly extended by the interpretation of British Indian courts, has to be put down with an iron hand. The marriage of girls below 16 or of boys below 21 ought also to be made illegal and void. Half measures are no good. We ought to have the courage to imprison all polygamists and to declare all marriage of children absolutely void. The *Sarada Act* ought to be amended in that direction.

Divorce is a minor question. It will always be repugnant to Hindu women. In this land of Sita and Savitri, women will prefer to nurse back to health even their incurably sick husbands than rush to courts to get a divorce for their own selfish satisfaction. Once child marriage is abolished, and polygamy wiped out, even the advocates for divorce may have little enthusiasm left to proceed with Bills for securing it.

Bride prices and bridegroom prices are terrible evils, but are more fit to be dealt with by public opinion than by legislation. There will always be people who marry for wealth of family or high connections, just as there are people who marry for beauty. This is only natural, as

some of us love to look at the sky of the stars, some on the mud which grows the crops, and yet others at the flowers and fruits. No doubt, no court should enable anybody to recover bride or bridegroom price. But that is the case even now. We must always remember that a land with too many laws will be unpleasant to live in, and that laws should be enacted only where unavoidable.

Women should adopt a sane attitude to changing fashions. That Time should bring about changes is only natural. Indeed, it is also desirable. The borings of noses and ears are not necessary for beauty. That earrings are worn in some western countries too is no proof of their necessity. While earrings come on the borderline, noserings must certainly go, the sooner the better. Nobody will regret the disappearance of the heavy gold ornaments worn by our grandmothers, though they served to train them to carry weights, and also to have reasonably secure banks for their savings. But, let us not congratulate ourselves too soon. New fashions, like smoking, eye-brow plucking, etc., have to be guarded against. Let us not exchange King Log for King Stork! That some fashions are necessary and will persist, it is idle to dispute. Occasional changes too are welcome. A drab uniformity is unthinkable in this land of brilliant sunshine and rainbow and multi-coloured stars. Beauty and aesthetics require something beyond mere utility. The stars burn out valuable energy only to make the sky beautiful.

Children are the flowers in the garden of life. There is nothing which can compare with the love of the mother and the child. "Heaven lies at the mother's feet" says a Sage of our Tamil country. The great Napoleon and Chanakya were largely shaped by their mothers. Unfortunately, in modern India, many mothers are not able to leave any indelible impressions on their children. The reasons are obvious, namely, lack of education, economic dependence and growing bewilderment of western ideas. All this can and should be remedied. What availeth a Mother if she gains the whole world but loses the affection of her child? So, education must proceed apace and the future mother enabled to understand and guide her child.

Women must also give up many meaningless rites and ceremonies. Even the Emperor Asoka said more than two thousand years ago "The woman-kind perform many manifold trivial and worthless ceremonies" (Rock Edict IX) and urged the abandonment of useless ceremonial and the performance of the really useful and noble ones, like rites of charity and hospitality. A reasonable belief in the mysterious and the unknown

may be natural, and the belief in the supernatural and the divine is essential for peace of mind, harmonious development and salvation. But ceremonies to propitiate serpents, demons and the small-pox goddess must be dropped once and for all. So too death pollution, birth pollution and similar meaningless things.

I think that women should also take a keen interest in all kinds of social, municipal and rural reconstruction work. Purdah must go, and child welfare and maternity centres and sanitation leagues started everywhere. Women in the mass will never care to fight and kill like men. The mother of the race has little interest in such human sacrifice to the demon of War which is a thousand times more odious than the goat sacrifices at the temples of village goddesses and at devil shrines, though sometimes inevitable for preserving Dharma, like the Mahabharata War.

Woman's role in the social polity is bound to be different from man's. Manu has said that a child gets from its father its bones, sinews and marrow, and from its mother its skin, flesh and blood. This symbolical distinction, in my opinion, represents a real distinction between the contribution, of the two sexes. All stern, violent and strenuous action needed for the upkeep of society, like defence, mining, mountain-climbing and polar exploration, must depend on man; all gentle, softening, harmonising action like creating sweet homes, an enjoyable civilisation and palatable meals, must depend on women. In other words, without woman, civilisation cannot exist, without man it cannot be protected. Woman cannot fight battles like man; nor can man nurse the sick and heal mental and spiritual wounds like woman. Man represents Siva, woman Sakthi, but in the benign aspect of Parvati instead of the militant aspect of Durga. The difference between the sexes is fundamental, and cannot be eradicated so long as mankind continues to exist. Both are necessary and complementary, like two semi circles facing different directions or the concave and the convex in different aspects.

It follows that the same kind of education for both the sexes is not desirable if we are to get the best results. In my opinion, the education of boys and girls till they are ten may be the same. Indeed, they should be educated together in the same schools, preferably by women teachers, as in advanced western countries. From the age of ten till the end of the matriculation or school-final class, boys and girls should have different schools and courses. The girls should pay more attention to religion, ethics, music, cooking, house-hold economy, hygiene, first-aid, needlework, painting, and embroidery than to the languages, mathematics

elementary science, geography and history, though these too should be compulsory. In the college courses, while there should be provision for allowing such girls as desire it to join men's colleges, there should be separate women's colleges after the model of the Lady Irwin College at New Delhi (but thoroughly nationalised and culturised) to train our grown up girls to be ideal wives and mothers and to run their own households. For, the ambition of every woman all over the world, and more so in our country, is to have her own house where she can reign like a queen, instead of hankering after ordinary jobs and be somebody's servant. To keep the home fires burning, to maintain a cultured atmosphere at home, to take an intelligent interest in social and welfare work, to form correct opinions on problems of national or international interest, to be able to shoulder the responsibilities of running the home economically, efficiently and cheerfully, with the undying faith which comes from a living religion, these are the ideals to be kept in view for the women of this ancient land. A knowledge of poetry and drama, astronomy and mathematics, politics and law may add to the zest in life, if added to these, but will be like rains in the Sahara desert without the above things. I would certainly advocate also that at least women's institutions in our hot country should work only in the morning and evening, and that music, cooking, needlework and hygiene should form the four pillars of the edifice of secondary education for women, the floor being ethics, and the roof religion. Then alone will India regain her lost soul.

A CONFESSION OF FAITH

By

THE RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P.C., C.H., LL.D.

A profound Indian thinker is of opinion that the age of stark unbelief has passed away, and that leaders of modern thought are swinging to some form or other of theism. Many signs of the time no doubt point in this direction, but one cannot be sure that the great religions will ever re-establish themselves in men's hearts. Certain eminent men of science with a gift of eloquent expression have cast doubts on the ability of experiment and discovery to give a final and satisfactory answer to the riddle of nature and proclaimed the necessity postulating some ultimate intelligence which defies definition or approach. The prevailing unsettlement of the affairs of mankind and the harrowing tribulations under which it groans today have induced a feeling of uttermost despair, from which the only chance of escape seems to lie in the simple faith of the old time, which threw itself on an extra-cosmic principle regarded as benign even if inscrutable. The bewildering variety and discord of the numerous individual credos that have been recently given to the world only serve to show that neither philosophy nor science nor the two together have penetrated the great mystery around us, that their quest will last for ever and be marked alternately by advance and reaction, though on examination the advance and reaction will disclose more comprehension of phenomena than before. Men have always tended, when the old house threatened to crash about their ears, to fly to the nearest available shelter without pausing to ascertain how sure their safety was or how long it would last. This tendency explains the readiness with which society in general welcomes any legislative or administrative proposal which offers to cure social maladies proved to exist, and the confidence with which it goes to sleep as soon as the supposed remedies are set to work. These, however, belong to the sphere of concrete phenomena which lend themselves to expert study and ameliorative action by concerted endeavour. Errors and mischances, on the contrary, in speculative thought and the inadequacies that time and increasing knowledge disclose in the customary solaces of life and the accepted means of salvation cause acute anguish and wreck the inward peace of the soul. "Faith is dead, long live faith"

seems too facile a comfort for the earnest-minded men and women who can no longer worship the old deity and will not rest till they have found anchorage in the haven of certitude.

The high position assigned to religious toleration distinguishes modern communities from their predecessors of a century ago. Free-thinkers are no longer hounded or banned. Those that reject the authority of orthodox churches and defy the jurisdiction of their dignitaries live their own lives and avow their own convictions without fear of the stake or social ostracism. Excommunication has lost its terrors and has been known on occasions to recoil on the irate religious potentate. Even pious people recognise that the cardinal virtues and indeed the finest fruits of religion are as well exemplified in the lives of laymen as in those of priests and purohits. The natural result is to invest the confessions and credos of eminent persons in any walk of life with a degree of edificatory importance not known to an earlier day when the direct service of God in the well-worn grooves was held indispensable to the development of those virtues which are summed up in the word goodness. Not alone hagiology, but all biography which studies human greatness is potent to elevate and chasten character.

This is true even when the careers chosen for instruction are rendered imperfect by serious blemishes of nature and conscious misdirection. On a long view it is no disservice to the cause of education in the highest sense to show how defects of character may diminish, but cannot destroy, achievement, and how indeed perfection does not exist in the entire range of humanity but is only approached slowly through the subjugation of one imperfection after another. Infinite are the varieties and gradations of excellence. Individuation of character has grown by leaps and bounds with the extension of tolerance and freedom; and, however difficult the task, the student will be not merely assisted but rewarded by the attempt to group biographies into types. These types will be innumerable, even if we limit our vision to small circles, where, broadly speaking, the conditions of life are homogeneous. Take for choice the men of our province who, belonging to the generation now passing out of view, received the full benefits of modern education. What influences played on their early upbringing? How were their traditional views of the ultimate problems of philosophy and religion affected by the touch of science and methods of comparative study? What is their contribution to the vast and intricate mosaic of Madras life today? Even so narrowed, the theme is hopelessly beyond

my puny capacity and diminutive knowledge. If I could persuade a few selected contemporaries of mine to write about themselves, the literature so produced would afford some material for the historian of moral and religious ideas. He would also need to know the physical surroundings, the public institutions of the locality, the religious thought and practices, and the newly-awakened desires and aspirations of society. The unit of material, however, would be the biography or autobiography of an individual who imbibed the subtle influences of the time and became somebody.

II

The gear must now be changed. I have drawn the net round myself and cannot escape. All my life I have, with maidenly shrinking, avoided self-exposure. One's own self is the most difficult subject for one's pen. Sufficient knowledge there is, both of the outer and of the inner life. But can there be sufficient detachment? How can I avoid self-love and self-despising, both springing from the same root but flowering in opposite colours? In the book before me there are twenty-three self-sketches of entrancing interest. I envy the writers their cold-blooded objective laboratory attitude. I do not hope to attain it, but promise to do my best, ever bearing in mind that truth is paramount.

Of Brahmana parentage in the Tanjore district, I was born in poverty, but inherited a good brain. My parents pinched themselves hard to keep me at school and college. My father was of the priestly class; but, having no regular clientele, had to forage far and near for bare subsistence. My mother, born in a secular family, was proud by nature and, as soon as I could understand, used to confide to me her humiliation at the privations which he endured and the insults which he submitted to from the well-to-do. She had a melancholy and pious disposition and, by unwearied resort to street expositions of scripture, garnered a vast deal of mythological lore. She found in me an eager listener. I remember my father often saying to me; "Go in and ask that shrew, she knows more than I." Pushed before my time into the dark mysteries of sin, hell's torments and the malignancies of devils, I heard with trembling a course in Seshadharma, where the author sets out a fully elaborated table of man's transgressions of the eternal law and punishment for each transgression. To drive home these lessons, I was taken to a temple on the walls of which were depicted in lurid colours the scenes of hell with sinners undergoing tortures calculated to make the spectator's flesh creep. The horror of the pictures has not yet wholly

faded out of my mind. At seventy-one the night still has fears for me. For several years, while in the forms of the high school, I scarcely slept without a prolonged nightmare in which horrid goblins danced weird dances and made faces at me. Relief would come only in the morning when I work with my young body perspiring and unrefreshed. Life, however, is not without compensations. Some dreams, not many alas, were comforting and reassured me. One in particular gave me an ecstasy of religious satisfaction, so much so that I did not expect a sympathetic hearing from any one and would not share it even with my mother. It goes on record now for the first time. As I lay asleep praying in a boy's way for salvation, the sky was suffused with a soft glow, out of which the eye glimpsed parts of a divine figure, filling the firmament, recumbent face earthward. The outline filled in quickly, the light became brighter, and the form of Maha Vishnu, with majestic beauty, disclosed itself to my enraptured vision. He lay head north and feet south. To the right and left were ranged gods and goddesses and munis familiar in our story. At the same time the splendour of the great one increased beyond description. But, I knew not how, my eye, more fortunate than Arjuna's, could gaze and adore and not be blinded. At the culmination the effulgence seemed, as I recollected the trance in later years, to admit of only one description, if description it may be called. Let the reader turn to the twelfth sloka in the Gita chapter of the All-comprehending Form. "If a thousand suns could be conceived to blaze together in the sky, the united brilliance might approach the resplendence of the Supreme."

Though brought up on inadequate nutriment, I was a strong boy and spent many hours, out of doors, mingling in the street and river-bed sports and excelling in several of them. By this means the gloom of my inner life was held in check, and I grew up a healthy though delicate lad, maintaining a balance between seriousness and self-indulgence. In my teens, owing to the acquisition of a modern outlook, my mother's influence waned. Taken altogether I was a favourable specimen of the early products of English education. I lost faith in the accustomed rituals and ceremonies. Religious thought, however, was sustained by an indefeasible longing for salvation. The personality of Jesus Christ fascinated me. But my peace of mind was shattered. Life's integrity could not continue in the growing dichotomy between belief and practice. This phenomenon is common in all educated communities, but at that time was stigmatized as the peculiar curse of new India by

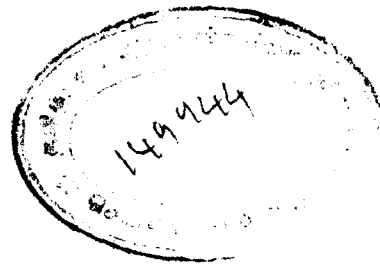
Christian missionaries zealous to increase their flock. Gradually I was attracted to the experiential school of philosophy, which I blended in a manner peculiar to myself with the pessimism of Buddhist teaching. Life took on a sombre hue. Moral judgments stiffened to the point of severity. Pleasure and laughter seemed illegitimate and were always dogged with remorse. Speech too was an indulgence next door to sin and must be limited to necessity. The doctrine of Karma held me in the grip of its logic. I was a determinist and had no doubt whatever that free will was a delusion and a snare. Samsara could be transcended only by a rigidly practised contraction of activity ending in its complete annihilation. The Gita precept of action without attachment came later, and though I have welcomed it with open arms, has not succeeded in establishing itself as a guide to practical conduct. Works are idle without efficiency; efficiency is, at the present stage of man's evolution dependent on combination, perseverance and zeal; these seem hardly possible without careful calculation from time to time of the result of effort. Is all this attainable without *sanga*? I would fain believe it, but reason forbids. My heart revels with ineffable rapture in the last eight verses of the *bhakti* chapter. Their melodious rhetoric haunts me. Their lofty idealism penetrates my soul through and through. I do not believe that, as a compendious code of ethic, it can be paralleled in the world's literature. When, however, I try to get hold of the various precepts, they fly heavenward and leave me disconsolate and prostrate. So I shift like a drifting log, between resolution and paralysis of will, between hope and blank despair. The struggle between the head and the heart, described with self-revelatory pathos in religious writing, rages perpetually within me. It is only my lifelong practice of self-control that cloaks the gnawings of my inmost being behind a bland expression of face.

T. H. Huxley, J. S. Mill and Herbert Spencer emptied my mind of its slight doctrinal equipment. Many agnostics attain a tranquillity of spirit which I envy. I am hagridden by the idea of nothing after death. I long in my inmost being for some experience, some revelation, some authentic sign to bring the consolations of religion within my reach. George Eliot somewhere portrays the content and the certainty of the uncultivated mind and asks whether it is not a blessing when compared to the desolation that is created in our heart by the wisdom of science and philosophy. Negation has unspeakable terrors for the likes of me. There are moments, let me confess, when I should answer in the affir-

mative the rhetorical question of the philosopher, "Will you prefer the contentment of the pig in his sty to the agitation and turmoil of the inquiring mind?" But a wise poet has said that there is more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds. To believe what is not proven to one's satisfaction is to abdicate the sovereign quality of our kind—reason.

The years have wrought a slight change in me. It is perhaps unusual. Instead of hardening, my nature has softened a little. Travel in lands where they make more of life than we do in India has tinged the austerity of my youth with hedonism. Intraversion has lost a little ground, and extraversion has gained it. Laughter and enjoyment are no longer taboo. I don't judge my brethren nearly so harshly as before. Charity, the greatest of the great things of life, informs my thought and deed more than ever. Action, not inaction, is my principle now, alas too late. I try, following the Gita up to a point, not to be excessively elated by success or cast down by defeat. Moderation is still to me the silken string that runs through all the virtues. I would print in large capitals the 16th sloka of the 6th chapter of the Gita, in which the aspirant to yoga is enjoined to shun over-eating and fasting, oversleeping and vigil alike. Bacon too in his worldly wisdom was a lover of the golden mean. From a boy slogans and panaceas have left me cold. Only the highways of philosophy for me. Swamis and yogis, givers of the sacred ash and whisperers of miracle-working mantras, have never allured me. The new and shortlived isms that infest this fair home of genuine speculation and philosophy and promise us shortcuts to salvation have passed by without quickening my spiritual pulse. I cannot sign away my judgment in any sphere to another, however great and worthy.

(From The Indian Review.)



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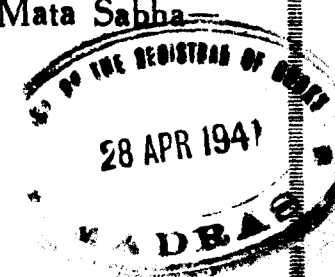
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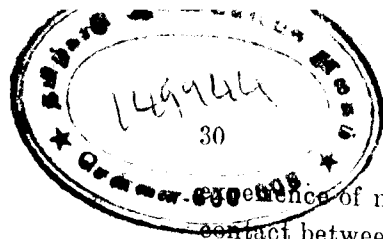
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THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN LIFE

II
 K. V. S.

Looked at from any point of view, prayer fulfils an essential pur-
 pose in life. If it does nothing else, it at least lifts a man above him-
 self. It generates an urge to reach up to something beyond. That is
 the beginning of self culture. The person who prays views himself and
 his life with a certain amount of detachment and as an object which
 can be shaped and disciplined for definite ends. A person who intense-
 ly desires an object and prays for it must necessarily put forward every
 effort for the attainment of that object. Where the prayer portion of
 it comes, is in the addition to this desire of the invocation of a higher
 power to help him in getting it. A new life starts with the perception
 of the human personality as an objective instrument and with the
 acquisition of the faith that the higher power is intimately interested
 in human life and willing to assist it in attaining its object.

Not all prayers are fulfilled, nor are all objects gained. The non-
 fulfilment of prayer and its ineffectiveness for some of the objects for
 which it is used are themselves parts of the process of the growth of the
 personality. Introspection begins. Further questioning about the
 causes of the non-fulfilment results in a better understanding of one's
 needs and of one's place in the system of things. Very rarely does it
 result in the disbelief in the existence of the higher power or in the
 ineffectiveness of prayer. If there is one fact verified by the universal



presence of mankind through all the ages, it is the intimacy of the contact between God and man and the reality of the Divine presence in times of need.

We may look into an aspect of prayer which is sometimes not fully understood. Are we justified in asking God for the little things which our body needs? Are we entitled to ask for material comfort, for secular pleasures and for all the things that are associated with earthly joy? Such questions proceed from an imperfect apprehension of the nature of prayer. Prayer is a spiritual exercise by which man becomes gradually less imperfect by intimate contact with God. The improvement of the physical conditions and of the physical body is as much part of this process as the growth of the spiritual part of man. There is no need to identify a prayer with asceticism and with an aversion to the good things of life. Is there anything inherently sinful in secular happiness? It is true that excess of it may be harmful, especially when that excess is obtained and retained by the denial of a just share of it to others. That is so with respect to all things. Excess of asceticism is as undesirable as excess of material comforts. Both can be snares. Both can lead to dangerous developments. There is much more to be said for a planned strengthening of the personality both in body and in mind than for the growth of the mind at the cost of the body. It is in the fitness of things that we should desire those material things and that kind of environment which will enable us to function with efficiency in the physical body.

Again so long as a person lives on earth he does need a minimum of earthly conveniences. He does desire it. Which is then better? To desire these things and cling to them without thinking of their proper place in one's life, or to realise that they also are part of the gifts of God in the living of the better life which prayer signifies? Indeed both the Bhagavad Gita and the Christian Gospels are explicit on this subject. We should first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness and *all these things* (viz., the good things of life necessary for a righteous life) *will be added unto us*. In the Ramayana we are told that both Artha, Kāma and Dharma come to a man who pursues Dharma. The Gita is unsparing in its condemnation of a man who desires the good things of life without putting forth any exertion for getting them. Such a man is called a hypocrite. "But one who, controlling the senses by mind, engages in action without undue attachment is superior."

It is distinctly better to feel that we get the good things of life not entirely by our *deserts* but largely by the grace of God under whose direction the whole Universe is functioning. If we look a little further into the circumstances under which we get all that we need for the living of an efficient life we shall see what tremendous sacrifice on the part of others is involved in the process. The good things of the world are the products of the toil of an infinitely large number of living beings. Far from there being anything inappropriate in recognising that they come as part of the gifts of God it is absolutely just and correct that they should be so viewed. The gifts are thus sanctified by our prayer.

The conception of work as prayer embodies the same idea. A person who believes in prayer cannot be idle. He must be actively working for the betterment of himself and his surroundings. Indeed the verse above quoted from the Gita tells that the life of the man who believes in prayer has to be one of continuous activity in body, mind and spirit. How can one have the products of the labour of others without giving back in his turn? How can one, merely by desiring and asking for things, justify the taking of the products of the labour of others without himself giving back the best of which he is capable. Work therefore is part of prayer. And a life of prayer is largely a life of incessant work done as sacrifice. The Gita conception of work is a stern one. "He who enjoys the fruits of the sacrifice of the Dévas without making a return is a thief." The underlying idea is that it is the sacrifice of the Dévas that keeps the Cosmos functioning and causes all good things in the world to come into existence and grow. When a person takes them he must put back into the store from which he has taken at least a portion of what he has absorbed. That applies of course to a person who takes what is another's property without paying for it, by work, sacrifice or service.

Moderation in the desire for secular life has an undoubted place in spiritual growth. While the physical comforts of life need not be discarded as wholly evil, one should not get lost in the mazes of exuberant physical life. That is what the Bhagavad Gita urges when it insists upon detachment from objects of sense and on discipline and control of the senses. Those statements are in the nature of propaganda. Non-attachment to objects of sense is difficult to attain. Even in the case of the wisest and most earnest of persons, the senses rush

away with the reason. Restraint is therefore insisted upon as a necessary qualification for spiritual progress. At each stage the soul has to transcend its environment, outgrow the dependence on some of the things held to be essential for its life and gradually become self-sufficient. This emphasis will acquire an added significance when it is remembered that the pleasures in the higher levels of spiritual progress are more tempting than those in the lower levels with which we are familiar. They are by-products of spiritual growth. Powers come by which a man can create for himself a pleasant environment. But says the Srimad Bhagavata "They are really snares. One should not stay long among them." The safest thing therefore, is to acquire moderation and balance. Their degree will vary with the stage of spiritual growth and the environment of each individual. Each must decide for himself when and how he has to take the next step in the ascent.

We may sum up the position like this. Prayer is the normal expression of the aspiration of the soul for growth in the fullest sense. It is the surrender of the human will into the hands of God. Through that surrender comes purification, strength, resistance, the desire for the right things of life and the willingness to pay the price for what is wanted, in fact, all that is essential for the growth of personality. This spirit gradually permeates the whole life. One learns to look upon his life as dedicated for carrying out the will of God.

We may close this article with two familiar prayers, one in Hinduism and the other in Christianity. We had already occasion to write about the Lord's prayer in a former issue of the Bharata Dharma. It is impossible to say that it is an exclusively "Christian" prayer in the narrow sense. It was revealed to the world merely as a pattern for prayer. Jesus said: "*After this manner* pray ye!" In some respects it is the highest pattern of prayer which has been revealed to the world. Non-Christians need not be afraid of using it. There can be no monopoly in this prayer for any community. It may be that it is more effective when a large congregation joins in it under proper conditions. In a short compass the Lord's prayer contains all that one could desire in a prayer. The approach to and surrender into the hands of God, the purpose of that surrender, viz., the promotion of good and the diminution of the evil in oneself and others, and the ultimate goal of the association between God and man, viz., the glory of God. Indeed nothing that one could think of as necessary in prayer is left out in this short but powerful prayer.

The literature in Hinduism relating to prayer is as is to be expected immense. Among them however we may choose two as illustrative. One of the most sacred is the traditional Gayatri Mantra that is invoked and chanted by the twice-born classes every morning and evening. Gayatri is an invocation, the recitation of which protects the reciter. The effect of the Gayatri is to shield its reciter from evil and to surround him with good influences. The meaning of Gayatri is this. The person who invokes it focusses his mind upon the Intelligence that guides the Universes and stimulates the intelligence of all. This prayer may not comprehend all the aspects of life. It is however not less powerful on that account. The line of development for mankind is in the development of mind. Mental vision has to expand and mental power grow so as to comprehend the correct line of progress for the individual and for society and to enable all to tread it. The stimulation of understanding is possibly the highest ambition that mankind can have and the promotion of understanding one of the greatest services which can be rendered to humanity. Gayatri does it. The generation of power in the recitation of Gayatri really illumines the mind and radiates currents of understanding which cannot but benefit to the world at large.

A more homely Hindu prayer is that which everyone who lights the sacred fire recites towards the end of the ceremony. "Oh! Agni, lead us by good paths to prosperity. Thou knowest all the paths which men can tread. Take away from us the sin of greed. We do unto Thee many prostrations." This verse may be taken as summing up the best that every man and woman can desire. By good paths to prosperity! By paths not involving excessive strain, not liable to setback, neither steep nor difficult, but just suited to the capacity of the individual for the time being, ever ascending and never exposed to danger or back-sliding.

If only we would realise the gradeur of this thought! May our faces ever be set forward without looking back! May we be blessed with that understanding and that strength to ascend steeply or gradually, according to our strength and capacity! If we learn this we really shall have understood the secret of life.

As the Buddha has said:

"Manifold tracks lead to yon sister peaks
Around whose snows the gilded clouds are curled;
By steep or gentle slopes the climber comes
Where breaks that other world.

"Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which storms,
Soaring and perilous, the mountain's breast;
The weak must wind from lower ledge to ledge,
With many a place of rest."

Let us hope that the new year will see the dawn of a fuller and more cordial understanding between man and man and that men all the world over will learn to co-operate for the destruction not of one another but of the forces of evil, a task which needs the united effort of men and God for its fulfilment. May the world see a new humanity marching onwards to the throne of God!

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APOSTLE JOHN'S VAISHNAVA NAMAM

By

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

BIBLICAL REFERENCE TO NAMAM.

The last book of the Bible is the Revelation. Now Revelation III. 12: VII, 3—8: XIII, 16, 17: XIV, 9 and XXII, 4 refer to some kind of religious marks that were marked on the forehead and hands of devotees in the time of Christ. Some of these were orthodox marks and some unorthodox ones. What marks were these, at all events the orthodox ones? In the present contribution I shall confine myself to one of these religious marks that mentioned in Rev. XXII, 4. That verse is as follows:—"And they shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads".

Commentators say that the forehead mark of Rev. XXII, 4 is the same as the one mentioned in Ezakiel IX, 4, 6 of the Old Testament. The mark of Ezakiel IX, 4, 6 is generally known as the Tau mark. Tau is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet and its shape is more or less like the capital English letter U inverted. The Hebrew Tau has no connection or resemblance to the ancient Phoenician T the shape of which was a cross mark. Now the cross came into prominence only after the death of Christ, because he was crucified upon a cross, but Ezakiel lived some centuries before Christ. Ezakiel therefore could not have spoken about the Cross. However since Christ was crucified upon the Cross, since early Church Fathers tried to read prophecy in Old Testament books to show that the crucified Christ was the promised Messiah and since the Phoenician letter T looked like a Cross, scholars like Jerome thought that the Tau mark of Ezakiel IX, 4, 6 must be a Cross, though there was not the shadow of reason for coming to such a conclusion. Following blindly ancient Churchmen, modern commentators too say that not only the Tau mark of Ezakiel IX, 4, 6 but that of Rev. XXII, 4 also was a Cross. Piety and zeal more than knowledge and reason are responsible for this conclusion of the Christians. Theologians have realised neither the precise shape of the mark of Rev. XXII, 4 and Ezakiel IX, 4, 6 nor the true meaning of Tau of Tau mark. What were these marks, what were their shapes and what was the meaning of Tau of Tau mark?

The discoveries it has been my luck to make, shed new light upon Biblical problems. The articles that I have been contributing to the Madras Press would show that Palestine was an Indian colony, that Jesus Christ was a Tamilian and that Christianity was a Tamil Reformer's sect. Ancient Palestine may be dead now but it still lives in Modern India, for unchanging India was the back ground of lost Palestine. In these circumstances to know what these religious marks of the Bible were, one must turn to our land. The moment he turns thither, unexpected light will be found to be thrown upon the problem on hand.

The story of words may be less interesting than the story of nations that made them but it is equally instructive and to those who are inquisitive enough to question them, words tell the tale of forgotten past. Numerous religious marks are in use in our country and they have different names. One particular kind of mark—that used by the Vaishnavas—is called Namam and its shape is like this . Namam though a Sanskrit word has got into Tamil usage and it means Name. The Vaishnava forehead mark has got the name of Namam because I suppose it represents the name par excellence of God. The Vaishnava mark hence is a symbolic representation of the name of God. Since India according to my discoveries was the ultimate source of Christianity and Judaism, let us see if the Vaishnava symbol and its name will help us to determine the forehead mark of Rev. XXII, 4 and through it that of Ezekiel IX, 4, 6, as Westerners say that both were the same.

It is thought by many scholars that the Book of Revelation like the other books of the New Testament was originally composed in the Greek language. As it will serve no useful purpose now to dispute their views I shall accept them for the present. Since the Book of Revelation in the opinion of scholars was originally written in Greek, we must take Greek words (not English) for purposes of our discussion. The Greek word for the English term Name is Onoma. Just as Sanskrit word Loka (world) becomes Oloka in Tamil, so Sanskrit word Nama becomes Onoma in Greek and the Tamil term for the same word, as the reader has been told is Namam. The moment the Biblical verse is rewritten with the English, Greek and Tamil words as well as with the Vaishnava symbol, the reader will be startled at the results and he will find that the Book of Revelation is really a revelation to him.

ENGLISH.

"And they shall see his face and his *Name* shall be in their foreheads".

GREEK.

"And they shall see his face and his *Onoma* shall be in their foreheads".

TAMIL.

"And they shall see his face and his *Namam* shall be in their foreheads".

VAISHNAVA SYMBOL.

"And they shall see his face and his *Namam* shall be in their foreheads".

The English Name, the Greek Onoma, the Tamil Namam and the Vaishnava symbol are synonymous so to say. Because Namam was the name of the Vaishnava symbol and because Christianity was a Hindu sect, the Greek text has Onoma in the Biblical verse and because Onoma occurs in the Greek text the English verse has Name in Rev. XXII, 4. Very simple is it not when one holds the thread of secret in one's hand. Philology and symbolism may give us this solution but does pictorial representation exist to support such a conclusion the reader may ask and he will be right in putting such a question. The answer is in the affirmative. But before I come to mention that picture in which an Apostle of Jesus wears the Vaishnava Namam let me state a different fact that will lead to it.

THE NAMAM OF THE ANCIENT PICTURE.

The Holy Bible tells us that the Book of Revelation was written by Divine John and long standing tradition identifies this Divine John with Apostle John who leaned on the bosom of Christ at the Last Supper. Now Polycrates, a Christian Bishop of Ephesus, has informed us that John who reclined on the bosom of the Lord at his Last Supper was a priest who were Petalon. What this Petalon is, is a puzzle to theologians and different scholars have interpreted it in different ways. One of them, Rev. Burney, Canon of Rochester translates it as "sacerdotal frontlet". In one of my published articles I have said that this Petalon is not Greek but the Tamil Patalam (படலம்), forehead mark. The Book of Revelation speaks of the use of religious marks by devotees on their persons in the time of Christ and Polycrates says that John the very writer of this book himself were Petalon. In these circumstances would not the Petalon of Polycrates be the Name, Onoma, Namam, *Namam* of Revelation XXII, 4?

Now primitive Christians of Europe loved to paint on the walls of their houses of prayers, various scenes connected with their Master.

Such pictures have been unearthed by archæologists from the soil of Europe. One of these ancient pictures recovered from the Catacombs of Rome is now in the museum of the Vatican, it belongs to 2nd century A.D. and it represents the Last Supper that Jesus had with his disciples. In that picture Apostle John is shown as sitting next to Jesus and as wearing the Vaishnava Namam on his forehead. That Namam has no middle line. Such a Namam is called Urdvapundram and it is the same as that seen on the forehead of the Great God at Tirupati. The picture I am speaking of is reproduced in Sir Wyke Bayliss' "Rex Regum". In another representation too of the last Supper recovered from the Roman Catacombs again, this same John is shown as wearing a Vaishnava Namam with three lines like the one commonly seen on the foreheads of Vaishnavas in Southern India now. This picture too is an ancient one and it is reproduced in De Rossis' Roma Sottarrnea. Rev. XXII, 4 should be understood in the light of these pictures and these pictures should be seen with Rev. XXII, 4 in hand.

Theologians say that the marks of Rev. XXII, 4 and Ezakiel IX, 4, 6 are the same. If the former is a Vaishnava Namam, what is the latter? A Vaishnava Namam of course. But why, while the mark of Rev. XXII, 4 is called the "Onoma mark", that of Ezakiel IX, 4, 6 called Tau mark? What does it signify? Now Tau is Hebrew. I have already said Hebrew is more ancient and Aramaic is less ancient Tamil. A reference to Tamil Dictionary would show that Thoo (ஊ) is both a letter and a word of Tamil. The word Thoo (ஊ) means white colour. The Vaishnavas use white chalk for making their religious marks. That is why while John speaks of forehead mark *Namam* by its Name, Onoma, Namam, Ezakiel speaks of the same mark by its Tau, Thoo (ஊ), white colour. John and Ezakiel refer to the same religious mark but from different angles of view. Very simple is it not when one holds again the thread of secret in one's hand.

FURTHER PROOF.

Before concluding let me give some more significant facts to show that my identification is correct. Didron the eminent French antiquarian of Christianity says that Tau mark was put on the lintels of the doors of early Christians of Europe. Is not this the same as the Vaishnava practice of putting on Namams on the lintels and doors of their houses? Rev. VII, 3, 8 refer to some kind of seal with which the Biblical marks were impressed on the bodies of early Christians. The seal referred to in the Bible is the same as the one from which

Vaishnavas receive Mudradanam. Scholars have been struck by the similarity in thought that exists in John's Gospel and in the Bagavatgita. They have been discussing for over a century whether Christianity influenced Bagavatgita or whether Vaishnavism influenced John's Gospel to produce this similarity in thought. There is no question of influence at all here. Similarity in thought exists because Christianity was a Hindu sect and because Apostle John was a Vaishnavite. And because he was a Vaishnavite, he in his Gospel (XIV, 16 Vide Greek text) refers to Paracletos (Paraclata i.e. Prahlada). Further proof is unnecessary.

Europe and India met in Palestine nineteen centuries ago and Europe crucified India's noblest Son there then. To expiate her crime Europe became his devoted slave and made him her own. And when these Christians of Europe and the Hindus of India met again afterwards in Europe and Asia, nineteen centuries had thrown over the veil of Maya over the world and they have not yet recognised each other, forgetting the words of their crucified Avatar. And

"Wider yet in thought and deed

Diverge our pathways, one in youth".

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THE MOTHER WE ADORE.

BY SWAMI ASESHANANDA

Worship of God as Mother is a special legacy of India to the culture of the world. It is a peculiar characteristic of the Hindus that they will never cry down any discipline which engenders sublimity and purification of the heart. The genius of the nation has carved, manifold paths through the vista of ages for an easy ascent of the aspiring soul to the shining Temple of Wisdom. The main current through which the devotion of its votaries has found expression can be briefly stated as the twin conceptions of the fatherhood and motherhood of God. The pre-eminent trait of the Semitic races is to view the supreme being as the ruler, protector or father. Social and political conditions have made them conceive a militant God, a patriarch who judges with a sceptre and punishes with a rod all the delinquents and stragglers in the path. Having been nurtured in that atmosphere and imbued with such a disposition they have shown nothing but scorn and derision and vehemently castigated the idea of God as mother. In their opinion to think of God-head as a female principle is blasphemy—utterly superstitious and extremely derogatory. Even such a great poet like Milton could not rise above the tradition of his country and has not the proper vision to mete out justice to the fair sex as was revealed by his remarks "Woman then, a fair defect of nature!" But to the Hindus such treatment is most unfair and horribly unkind. Truth cannot be the exclusive property of any sex or sect. Divinity is at the back of all. Perfection is the common heritage of all. A man or a woman is equally fit to attain spiritual wisdom and realise truth in this very life. Nowhere else excepting in India has womanhood been accorded such a high place of esteem and regard as can be testified to by the noble sentiments expressed by Devi Mahatmyn "*Striay Samasta Sakala Jagats*"—All women are thy parts, O, Mother! No matter whether a woman is a Hindu, or Muslim, a Jew or a Christian they are veritable forms of the universal mother. They are the walking goddesses on earth.

A noble feature of the Indo Aryan religion is its spirit of catholicity. The keynote of Hindu philosophy is unity in the midst of multiplicity. Rigveda Samhita, the most ancient literature in the world rightly puts it "*Ekam Sat Vipra Vahuda Vadenti*"—God is one but people call him by various names. The spirit of broad minded toleration pervades through and through all the scriptures of this hoary civilisation which had to face the onslaughts of invasion and buffets of many catastrophes and cataclysms in its chequered history of centuries and millenniums. The seers

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THE MOTHER WE ADORE

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of the Upanishads and the incarnations of God have time without number laid emphasis on this fundamental point that religion is a way of life and not a matter of profession and there should not be any bickering and hot blooded animosity between followers of one particular creed and another. They not only practised but actually demonstrated this sublime gospel in life and showed how man can raise himself to the footstool of God by fellowship and mutual co-operation. A genuine follower of those ancient masters is asked to shed all sectarian and communal bias and pin his faith on a principle which is as wide as the sky and as deep as the ocean. He must not think that Shiva is greater than Vishnu or Devi is superior to Shiva and fight with one another to swell the number. What an amount of wrong has been done in the name of religion by proselytising propagandists who have disturbed the peace and created havoc in so many homes with no scruple of conscience! By whatever name you may call him God is one without a second "*Ekemava Advitiyam*." In whatsoever form you may worship Him He will respond to your quest and vouchsafe His kind presence according to your needs and temperament. If the call is earnest and the prayer sincere He will undoubtedly appear before you to soothe your grief and heal your wounds. As a recent composer says in a language which is noble and at the same time highly liberal, "He who is worshipped as Shiva by the Shaivites, as Brahman by the Vedantists, as Buddaha by the buddhists and as Arhat by the Jains—May that great Lord grant us the light of knowledge and the vision of true understanding.

God according to Hinduism is both father and mother of all mankind. It is difficult to trace with accuracy the origin and development of mother-worship in India. The germ of it can be found even in the vedas. Vak or Gayatri the goddess of speech, Sri the goddess of learning and Saraswaty the presiding deity of all arts crafts and knowledge, were adored by the Vedic Aryans with deep veneration and soul stirring inspiration. The hymns they chanted are no mere figures of speech but genuine and spontaneous outpouring of the heart. Kenopanishad gives a fine picture as to how the boasting of arrogant Gods was quelled and the divinity appeared as Uma Hamevate to awaken India from the stupor of false pride and vain egotism. The sacred and much valued book of the ardent and exclusive devotees of the mother known as shaktas is Devi Mahatmyam. The incidents portrayed in this scripture are highly illuminating. Two depicted souls the king Suratha and the merchant Samadhi were extremely perturbed by the inhuman and unkind treat-

ment of their own people. Treachery, hypocrisy and malicious propaganda of their servants and near relations made their life too hot and miserable to stay in the family. Being sorely disgusted and disappointed at the ingratitude of his kith and kin whose vile machinations and sinister plots were too hard to bear they could not but make their forceful retreat to the forest, the hermitage of a sage.

The sage received them cordially and asked them the purpose of their coming. Finding a good shelter in him they laid open their hearts and narrated their sad tale of agony and unmitigated suffering at the hands of close relations in whom they placed their absolute confidence and trust. With the gentle touch of his hand the sage first tried to console them and heal their lacerated and bruised soul. Then he recounted the glory and majesty of the divine Mother and the value of her worship in uprooting the evils which hover like a dark cloud in the life horizon of man. He exhorted them to propitiate Devi with earnest devotion saying "Without adoring Sakhti none can attain mukhthi. She is the storehouse of all energy and power. She bestows knowledge and spiritual insight on those that worship her and surrender themselves to her omnipotent will. Knowing this, approach the mother with all humility and resignation. As instructed by the rishi they made a clay image of the Devi and performed to her puja with fasting and vigils. For three consecutive years they continued their service with strict vigilance and meticulous precision. How austere was their worship and how self immolating was their observance can be envisaged from the following fact recorded in the treatise.

Sometimes with no food, sometimes with a little food, with an ever alert mind deeply absorbed in contemplation, the two offered the very blood of their bodies as sacrifice to the deity. At last their prayers were heard and the curtain rolled up. Mother appeared before them and granted their respective appeals. The dethroned king got back his lost kingdom as desired. The merchant realised the falsity of earthly values and the evanescence of the world and turned his back against the fleeting shadows of life. He craved for true knowledge which abides with man perpetually, for ever and anon. His yearning was for permanent freedom which thieves cannot steal and death cannot snatch away. According to his wishes his desire was fulfilled. By the blessings of the gracious mother he earned victory over all enemies external and internal. From long ages the Hindus have been adoring the divine Mother—Mahasakthi, the repository of strength and fearlessness. But why are they weak and down

trodden, poor and starving? Do we not see how miserable her condition has become at the present day? She has fallen from that high pedestal of glory and power. Socially, economically and politically she has become crippled. In spite of high philosophy and invigorating scriptures, she is groaning under a heavy weight. The causes of her downfall are not far to seek. The Hindus have worshipped the Mother only in temples and images and not in society and home. The masses have been neglected and her womenfolk have remained uncared for. She once rose to the zenith of her power by honouring the divine womanhood in the forms of Sita and Savitri. In the heyday of her mighty civilisation, she produced such heroines as Gargi and Maitrayi and earned the esteem of all other nations. If she wants to rise again and recapture her lost kingdom, she must improve the condition of her earthly mothers and sisters by giving them proper education, comfort and freedom. The great law giver Manu says—"Women must be honoured and adored by their fathers husbands, brothers and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare. Where women are respected there the gods dance in joy. But where they are treated otherwise, no sacred function yields any fruit. The tears of a woman call down the wrath of heaven. Pitiable are they that make them fear." The word "*Saha Dharmini*", spiritual helpmate is pregnant with deep meaning. It will be a power, when it is translated into practice. A wife should be an active partner and participate in the spiritual life of her husband. She should be allowed to co-operate and have her say in all family matters freely. The joys and sorrows of life will then be reduced and the realisation of the highest ideal will not be a far off distant end. Pointed are the words of the following:—

A wife is half the man, his best friend
A perpetual spring of virtue, pleasure, wealthy,
A companion in solitude and a father in advice
A mother in all seasons of distress and
A rest in passing through life's wilderness.

The next vital move to be made towards the regeneration and revivification of India is by annihilating the demons of hunger and illiteracy from the hovels and hamlets of her teeming millions. Sustained and consolidated work has to be undertaken and a regular campaign has to be launched for ameliorating their miserable condition by silent and earnest work in the field. The barriers that stand in the way must be knocked down and all possible help must be rendered towards their all round improvement. Those that are well placed in life should sincerely feel for the poor and the lowly and work strenuously for their social and

economic development, Young educated men should come forward to participate in their weal and woe and awaken them from their stupor of defeat and despondency. All facilities should be given so that they may breathe the pure air of freedom. The dark night will then pass away and the dawn will usher in a new era of hope and victory when the suffering children of the great mother—the so called depressed outcaste people will be called back to their ancestral home and treated with due respect and homage without any reservation whatsoever.

The real emblem, the true symbol of the Mother is our thrice blessed punyabhumi—the sacred Bharatha Varsha. Poets have sung, philosophers have dreamt and patriots have laid down their lives at her hallowed altar. One of her worthy sons who sacrificed the last drop of his blood for her emancipation speaks in clear and emphatic tones the track that the children of the soil should follow. "Oh India; forget not, that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri, Damayanthi: forget not, that the God thou worshippest is the great ascetic of ascetics, the all renouncing Sankara, the Lord of Uma; forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for sense pleasure—are not for thy individual personal happiness: forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the mother's altar; forget not that thy social order is but the reflex of Infinite universal motherhood; forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers.

Thou brave one, be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian. Proclaim at the top of thy voice—"The Indian is my brother, the Indian is my life, India's gods and goddesses are my gods, Indian Society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred heaven the Varanasi of my old age. say—" The ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, the Brahmin Indian, the Pariah Indian is my brother". Say, brother—"The soil of India is my earthly heaven, the good of India is my good" and repeat and pray day and night—"O thou Lord of Gouri, O thou mother of the universe vouchsafe manliness unto me! O thou mother of strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness and—Make me a man!" To conclude:

" Ya Devi Sarvabhuteshu Saktirupena Samsthita

Namastasyai, Namastasyai Namastasyai Namonamah

She who resides in all beings as universal energy, we bow down to Her, for light and guidance, again and again.

CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM

BY

GANAVISARADA SRI. M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR B.A., B.L., L.T.

In his *Lectures on Comparative Religion*, Mr. A. A. Macdonell observes: "The Chinese System means the morality of the school of Confucius only, for there is no other system in China," though he subsequently made reference, passing through, to other systems that "had taken their place beside Confucianism as religions, viz., the native Taoism and the exotic Buddhism. As a matter of fact, all these "three schools", jointly and severally, contributed to moulding the Chinese nation to what it now is.

We shall deal with Buddhism in a separate article but shall now confine ourselves to the two native religions of China, viz., Confucianism and Taoism.

The life of Confucius (the Founder of Confucianism) need not detain us, for it can be soon told. He was born in 551 B. C.; became a Teacher in 530 B. C.; met Lao-Tzu (the Founder of Taoism) in 517 B. C. began in 501 B. C. to govern a small town in his native state of Lu; and, leaving that governorship in 496 B. C. took to a wandering life for thirteen years; entered in 483 B.C. into a retired life which he led for five years; and, at last, died in 478. B.C.

His long life of 73 years, if scrutinised, will be found to fall into four periods, viz., the *period of Teaching* (530 to 501) when he prepared himself for his life-mission; the *period of Governorship* (501 to 496) when he put his mission into actual experiment; the *period of Wandering* (496 to 483) when he taught it to the various princes he came across; and the *period of Retirement* (483 to 478) when he reduced it to writing for the benefit of his posterity. Thus, he figured himself as Teacher, Governor, Counsellor, and Author and tried to serve his fellow-men in these various capacities.

To realise the nature of Confucius' love of, and service to, his fellowmen, we must first understand his own nature as well as the nature of the state of his country at the time of his birth.

His own nature is revealed by himself. "I will not be grieved," he once said, "that other men do not know me; (but) I will be grieved that I do not know other men". To know—you know—is to love; and,

again, to love is to serve. It was therefore clearly the nature of Confucius to grieve, if he failed to know, love, and serve his fellowmen. In order that he might not fail to do so, he began from the outset of his career to observe the conduct and character of his fellowmen around him and, in the reforming zeal of his younger days, fondly cherished the idea of treading in the footsteps of the famous Chou Kung and seeing his principles and institutions brought into general practice.

But, to his utter disappointment, he found the condition of his times quite unfavourable to carry out his projects and naturally exclaimed: "Alas! what a falling-off is here! Long is it since I dreamt of Chou Kung." What is the *falling-off* referred to? This takes us to the study of the condition of China at the time of his birth and younger days.

The feudal system, established several centuries ago by the founder of the Chou Dynasty, was showing unmistakable signs of disruption and decay. The central government lost all effective control over its unruly vassals and the various states were soon embroiled in perpetual feuds and struggles among themselves, besides being usually at loggerheads with the parent dynasty. To make the matter worse, everyone of such warring states was itself threatened by the lawless behaviour of its own officers.

It was in the midst of this prevailing disorder that Confucius comforted himself with an admirable mixture of dignity, tact, and outspoken courage. He opposed the dangerous tendency to decentralisation, upheld the supreme authority of the Emperor as against his too powerful vassals, disapproved of the illegal usurpations of the dukes that preyed upon one another, and boldly expressed his disgust in unequivocal terms.

But his protests ended in smoke. He did not, however, lose his courage but set out to resolutely study the politics of his country and be useful to the people, in that direction, if a fitting opportunity came. That *fitting opportunity* did come in 501 B. C. when he became Governor of a small town in his native state of Lu. He was then 50 years old. The reforms he effected were so eminently successful that they would have made that 'small town' a model for the whole country, if within five years of his office he had not resigned his post in disgust on account of the infatuation of Duke Ting of the Lu state, whose Counsellor he was, in accepting from the scheming Rulers of the neighbouring Chi the

insidious gift of a band of beautiful women and in allowing his mind to be distracted from the cares of the state.

This lurid picture of China is, I trust, more than enough to indicate why Confucius' mind worked in the line of Politics to the extent of making even his Ethics rally round it and why he eschewed religion and metaphysics from his consideration and also why he advised his friends to treat all supernatural beings with respect but keep aloof from them.

The charge that he disrespected religion or metaphysics is unfounded. For, see how once he swore a solemn oath: "In whatever I have sinned, may I be abominable in the sight of God"; and how, when his friend Yen Yuan died, he cried: "Alas! God has forsaken me, God has forsaken me."

The reason, then, why Confucius did not want to speak to the people about religion and other high topics is that he deemed his contemporary countrymen to be but children of larger growth, naughty and haughty, who should therefore be cajoled or cudgelled to do and die, but not to reason why. Here indeed, are his own words on the point: "the people can be made to follow a certain path; but they cannot be made to follow the reason why." Further, unlike the so-called sages who would start with grandiose ideals and high-flown utterances in order to attract attention, he made it a point that, in the study of virtue, he should "begin at the bottom and tend upwards", for the reason that one might "speak of higher subjects to those who rose above the average level of mankind but not to those who fell below it."

Hence when Chu Lu inquired concerning men's duty to spirits; Confucius replied: "Before we are able to do our duty by the living, how can we do it by the spirits of the dead?" When the same Chu Lu went on to inquire about death; the reply was: "Before we know what life is, how can we know what death is?"

To Confucius, religion had a place though in the background, though he did not speak about it to the world at large. "To divine wisdom," he said, "I lay no claim (to teach); and all that can be said of me is that I never falter in the course I pursue and am unwearied in my instruction of others." In fact, he deemed Ethics, as Plato and Aristotle did, to be a part of Politics and therefore concentrated all his efforts to educate the Rulers in the hope that their example would inspire to regenerate their subjects.

Further, a sort of conviction grew upon his mind that man's nature was originally good and required only cultivation on right lines to bring it to its highest perfection and that virtue begeth virtue. "Virtue," he said, "cannot live in solitude; neighbours are sure to grow up around it." It was this conviction that, when some one asked him, "How can you settle among the savages!", made him reply: "If a higher type of man dwelt in their midst, how could this savage condition last?"

The tenability of Confucius' position may here be questioned. Politics and Ethics, though they both deal with human conduct and character, differ—as law and morals do—the former having to do with conduct in its external consequences and the latter taking account of the inward motive. Children and children-like men and women have plenty of bad impulses and bad tempers which would assert themselves, if not resisted in time. A force is needed to resist, and finally remove, those bad impulses and tempers. An *outer* force is first applied by the parents and the guardians in the case of children and by the powers—that be in the case of children of larger growth. Such an 'outer' force is, in the very nature of things, temporary; for, as soon as it is removed, the delinquents would find it convenient to resume their tortuous ways. The need of an *inner* force, which is calculated to be permanent, came to be more and more felt. Such an 'inner' force is self-control. Politics, which forms the outer force, gives only a temporary check; while, Ethics which forms the inner force gives a permanent check.

Of this difference between Politics and Ethics, Confucius and the Greeks were, alike, ignorant and therefore confounded both of them with each other. Confucius confessed that his teaching made no headway and bitterly remarked, as against the ill-behaved Duke Ting of Lu, "Rotten wood cannot be carved".

Be this as it may, confucianism had a posthumous, and miraculous success; for, after Confucius' death, it established itself permanently in China and continued to be popular for generations and its doctrines, besides being inscribed on hundreds of thousands of scrolls and tablets in every corner of the Empire, were learnt by heart by students and adults alike and were even prescribed as texts to be studied for degree examinations.

It only remains for us to make a detailed study of some of the more important precepts and doctrines of Confucius, which made him so popular and transmitted his name from generation to generation down to our own day.

(To be continued.)

TRUTH NAKED

With apologies to Dr. Tagore's *Cleanser*.

(HARIJAN NO. 1.)

We call thee brother Scavenger
We lie, believe us not
Would we dare set our kindred on
The task that is thy lot.

We call thee Friend, Oh Scavenger
We lie, believe us not
Thy home reeks ranker than latrines
And we reck not a jot.

We call thee Hero Scavenger
We lie, believe us not
A soul that conquers flesh is not
A carrion feeding sot.

Until we callous, callid brutes
For dread of wrath Divine
Desist from crime of coz'ning thee
To play the human swine

Until thy sodd'n eyes do wake
To thine own manliness
Our cant of Hero, Brother, Friend
Is balderdash no less.

NOTES

Religion and Race Problems

In the path that men tread on their way to the homeland of human souls there can be no distinction of race. All are accepted. All are invited. Accidents of birth have no place. The heritages of tradition of culture may help or hinder the march. But they cannot bar entry into this pilgrimage. Differences in climatic conditions and of economic influences cannot stifle the fundamental human aspiration for the realisation of a better life or to divert the spirit from the unceasing quest for God. But they may obscure for a time the real issues involved in the struggle of infant humanity emerging into adolescence after a childhood of pleasant dreams. In the Kingdom of God and in the scale of religious values there is no discrimination, prejudice, or partiality based upon the particular form of the physical vesture worn by the soul.

Why is it then that we find today humanity, Indian humanity in special, gathered into groups of mutual exclusion, mutual suspicion and internecine war? Why is it that we have today in India an unprecedented recrudescence of group consciousness and a plethora of movements and organisations of doubtful utility, and of great potency for mischief? Let us look at the genesis and history and progress of these movements.

Not the least conspicuous and disconcerting of many of these movements are those organised by special groups for preserving emphasising and advancing their peculiar group interests which are imagined to be jeopardised by the changes of the present time and by the progress of other communities. These group movements have many similarities in common. Nearly all of them begin by drawing attention to the divine origin of their groups. Then they dwell on the glories of some period of their history representing the high watermark of the community's achievements. Regret and disappointment are expressed at the present "fallen" condition of the community and upon the absence of enthusiasm for communal loyalties. Finally an exhortation is made to explore all means of reviving the group consciousness and for the promotion of group interests as against the domination of competing groups. It is needless to add that great stress

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is laid upon the distinctiveness of the group's culture and upon its value in the scheme of life in India at the present day.

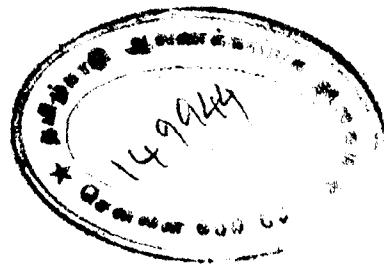
A reassuring feature about these organisations and their propaganda is their genuine attempt to relate themselves to the broader currents of national life and to strengthen their affiliations to the general programme of nation building now in progress. With negligible exceptions all of them recognise the inevitability and even the need for political advancement. But they are fearfully anxious to preserve to and proclaim their communal integrity in future India and carve a place for their group in the future political organisation.

In so far as these movements are protective in their aim and afford a banner under which the constructive energies of particular groups can be conveniently marshalled, they are exceedingly helpful. They stimulate awakening among the masses. If the higher objectives of national endeavour are not lost sight of, group movements can become praiseworthy. The difficulty arises on account of the aggressive programmes of these movements, from their harking back to the days of a divided and warring India and in their arousing unpleasant recollections of unsettlement and strife. It is not long before suppressed memories are revived and antagonisms are aroused based on forgotten differences.

What is the answer of religion to this state of things? Is it going to countenance, and encourage a spirit which is in some respect the very negation of religion. Is it going to condone and justify social developments which must mean sooner or later the utter annihilation of the religious spirit in the right sense of the term? Or are we going to read the lesson of history aright, realise the full implications of these sinister developments and cry halt before it is too late? One thing is obvious. We shall really despair of a remedy for healing our communal sores if religion fails us. Where shall we obtain inspiration the urge for human brotherhood and cooperation, for social justice and for collective righteousness, if we do not find it in religion. In the recognition of the bond of a common fellowship, of a common quest and of a common goal lies man's prosperity here and elsewhere.

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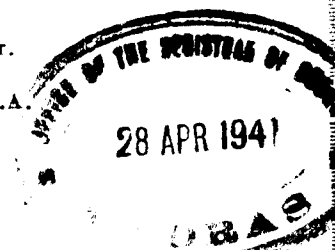
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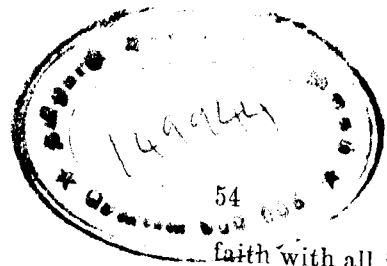
MARCH, 1941.

[No. 3

SAINTS OF THE TAMIL NAD.

BY C. NARASIMHACHARIAR, B.A., B.L.

According to the authority of "Tholkapyam" the earliest available Tamil work, the Tamil Nad or country extended from Cape Comerin in the south to the Tirupati Hills on the North. There can be no doubt that from the earliest times known to tradition and history, the Tamil Nad was the seat of profound Sanskrit scholarship side by side with Tamil learning. In ancient days the sanskrit literature was enriched by the Pandits of the Tamil Nad some of whom migrated to the North and adorned the states there either as ministers of the royal family or as professors of Universities under the patronage of the rulers of Northern India. Kanchi or the modern Conjeevaram was for several centuries the centre of sanskrit and tamil learning. It is referred to by Patanjali, the great sanskrit grammarian about 200 or 300 years before Christ and also by Varahamisra, the astronomer of Northern India. It is reputed to be the birth-place of Chanakya, the Indian Machiavelli. Kautilya, the author of the "Artha Sastras" is a native of Conjeevaram. Dharmapala, the great metaphysician who preceded Silabadra as the head of the University of Nalanda is said to have been born at Conjeevaram. The first four Vaishnavite Saints of the Tamil Nad are all said to have been born in and around Conjeevaram. The two Chinese travellers Fa Hian and Hiuen Tsang refer to it as the centre of all religious lore and the capital of the Pallavas. The Vedic



faith with all its ramifications flourished side by side with Buddhism and Jainism. Hiuen Tsang found in that city about 100 Sankramas and 10000 Buddhist monks whose religious lore is entirely in sanskrit or Prakrit. Nevertheless the country was known as "Dravida" even in the days of Hiuen Tsang. The racial distinction now sought to be made out between "Aryans" and "Dravidians" was unknown. "Dravida" merely indicated the country and "Arya" the race and culture. An attempt was recently made by an eminent professor that the existence of "Manipravala" style in the Malayalam literature shows that there were two cultures, Aryan and non-Aryan and they were blended together in ancient days. More than the Malayalam language, the "Manipravala" style is rampant in the Vaishnavite Tamil religious literature and the authors are all Brahmins well-versed in both the languages, Sanskrit and Tamil. When the ideas in the Sanskrit literature were translated into Tamil they naturally used a number of Sanskrit words with certain etymological modifications. Far from its showing any cultural difference, the "Manipravala" style only emphasises cultural unity. The racial distinction now sought to be made out is opposed to all literature and history. "Agastya" the supposed founder of the Tamil language and the author of "Tholkapyam" are Aryans by race and Dravidians by residence.

I have already dealt with the first four Vaishnavite Saints of the Tamil Nad or country. Next in order of line comes Sri Satakopa, otherwise known as Nammalwar, the greatest of all the Saints. It is said that he rendered the Sanskrit Vedas into Tamil (வேதம் தமிழ் செய்த மாறன்) and his works are considered to be the Vedas in the Tamil language while the works of all the other Saints are only auxiliary or explanatory.

One remarkable feature of the works of all early tamil poets, both Vaishnavite and non-Vaishnavite is that several of them were deeply versed in Sanskrit and freely indented on its religious lore. It is admitted on all hands that Satakopa is a Tamil Poet of a very high order and his devotional and philosophical thoughts can compare favourably with similar writings in any other language. There can be no doubt that he was a profound Sanskrit Scholar. I have often pointed out that in his works we often meet with literal translations of the Vedic texts and the Gita. At the risk of repetition let me quote one or two instances of such pieces of literal translation.

(Veda) Sanskrit—	Tamil. (Tiruvoyimoli)
Dahram—	மன்னகம்
Vipapmam—	மலம் அற
Yatpundarikam—	மலர் மிசை
Puramadhyha Sagotham—	எழுதரும்
Aprapya Manasa saha	மனன் உணர்வு அளவில்
Ajayamano Bahuda Vijayate	பிறப்பில் பல பிறப்பிப் பெருமான்.

It is impossible for anyone who read his works to come to any other conclusion except that he understood the significance of the vedic precepts much better than the Vedic commentators and reformed the then ritual-ridden religion into one of service for Universal Welfare. He abhorred animal sacrifices. He hated pretenders. He gave an orientation of his own to the principles and precepts enunciated in the three classics of religious lore in sanskrit, the Vedas including the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma Sutras. He reduced the upasana of the Vedas, the four Yogas of the Gita and the philosophy of the Sutras into disinterested service and established for all and for ever that service to man is service to God. To him service or "Kainkarya" is the aim and end of human existence. In disinterested service the "upasana" or concentration plays its part and the methods of Karma, Gnana, Bhakti and Prapatti are synthesised and turned to the most useful purpose. Upasana or concentration by itself will only lead to quietism and an aversion to all that is good in and to the world. Similarly "Gnana" or knowledge pure and simple leads us nowhere. Knowledge must be yoked with action and have the necessity to synthesise Gnana Yoga with Karma Yoga. Bhakti and Prapatti only lead to mental purification and can be said to be part and parcel or adjuncts of true knowledge. But when Gnana Yoga is combined with Karma Yoga or action it will necessarily lead to disinterested service or "Kainkarya" theoretically to God but in practice to man or to His devotees. There is a famous passage in "Tiruvoyimoli" where Sri Satakopa begs of God not to make him commit the sin of worshipping Him but allow him to serve His devotees.

உறுமோ பானியேனுக்கு இவ்வுலகம் மூன்றும் உடன் நிறைய
சிறுமாமேனி நிமிர்த்த என் செந்தாமரைக் கண் திருக்குறளன்
நறுமாவிரை நான்மலரடிக்கீழ் புகுதலன்றி அவனடியார்
சிறுமாமனிசராய் என்னை ஆண்டார் இங்கே திரியவே.

O God! Can this sinner get unto those great devotees and serve them abandoning the worship at your feet.

One of our "acharyas" has developed this idea and says that God was the eternal enemy (கித்யதே) of saint Satakopa because he was afraid that the glory of God might detract him from serving His devotees which he regarded as the be-all and end-all of existence. To Saint Satakopa, the devotees are his God or "tatwa" the thinking and acting in terms not of I and mine but in terms of me and ours is his means or "Hita" and service to His devotees in his salvation or "Purushartha".

THE ARYA MATA SABHA (Regd.)

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PAKISTAN

BY

MR. E. VINAYAKA RAO, B.A., B.L., *Advocate, Madras*

The question of Pakistan is of special interest to the readers of Bharata Dharma, which is an organ devoted to the cause of Liberal Hinduism. The cry of Pakistan sponsored from influential quarters is bound sooner or later to come into direct conflict with the ideas and ideals of Liberal Hinduism, nay, Hinduism of any variety either orthodox or heterodox. The influential public meeting of the Hindus of Calcutta presided over by Sir N. N. Sircar to protest against the remarks and the policy of Mr. Huq, the Premier of Bengal is an outstanding piece of evidence of the extent to which enlightened Hindu public opinion is agitated over the cry of Pakistan and its repercussions in our social and political life. The Premier of Bengal has apparently threatened the Hindus of Bengal with the bogey of Pakistan. He seems to have said that if the Hindus of Bengal annoyed him by protesting against his anti-Hindu policies he would bring Pakistan into Bengal meaning thereby that he would openly support the Muslim League propaganda for Pakistan. Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan the Premier of Punjab not long ago openly repudiated the ideal of Pakistan. However when the Working Committee and the council of the Muslim League met to deal with the question of Pakistan Sir Sikandar seems to have kept himself in the background and permitted the aggressive elements in the Muslim League to demand categorically support for the Pakistan scheme. Be it remembered that in Bengal there are Hindus in the cabinet which is supposed to be a coalition cabinet. Equally so in the Punjab there are two Hindu ministers and one Sikh minister in the cabinet which is a homogeneous cabinet consisting of members belonging to the Unionist party in the Punjab on which ticket they won their elections.

It is undoubtedly a point for much regret that the Premiers of two important provinces like Bengal and the Punjab should be dallying with the idea of Pakistan without denouncing it and keeping the Pakistan spirit outside their respective provinces. Though the Premier of the Punjab protested against the idea of Pakistan he has permitted the Muslim League delegation to tour round about Peshawar to enlist

support for the Pakistan scheme. Referring to the Muslim League and the Hindu conferences held in the Punjab recently the Premier observed that these communal conferences added much bitter poison.

In Sind the supporters of the Muslim League threatened the other day to have a demonstration in front of the Secretariat to mark their disapproval of the policy of the coalition cabinet. Subsequently dramatic developments occurred and the Sind ministry has resigned. It is too soon to say what pattern will be presented by the next turn in the Sind Kaleidoscope.

Mr. Jinnah proposes to pay a visit to Lucknow in order to do propaganda for the Pakistan idea. The last meeting of the council of the All India Muslim League has called upon the Muslims all over India to celebrate the Pakistan day on 26th of March every year. That same day will be also utilised to have meetings when speeches will be made in support of the Pakistan idea and there will be also a drive for membership of the Muslim League all over the country.

When Mr. Jinnah was faced with several proposals published in the press as emanating from a sub-committee of the Muslim League to deal with the Pakistan question he adroitly met the criticisms by the statement that they were only proposals emanating from a small group that constitutes the sub-committee and that all that was meant was general support to the Lahore resolution of the Muslim League. It may be said in fairness that they were only newspaper reports and were said to be proposals formulated by the sub-committee.

Whether they were authoritative proposals submitted by the committee which will be accepted or not by the Muslim League the general position is clear that the Pakistan idea will not be lightly abandoned by the aggressive elements in the Muslim League. It is one of the tragedies of public life in this country at the present day that some prominent Muslim politicians who express themselves against the idea of Pakistan on public platforms are not prepared to fight their colleagues in the party meetings of the Muslim League and its committees and other responsible bodies.

Though the cry of Pakistan is raised repeatedly in different parts of this country and the Working Committee of the Muslim League has apparently dealt with the matter no concrete proposals have been authoritatively put forth by Mr. Jinnah himself or by any responsible committee of the Muslim League publicly and openly in order to submit those proposals to public criticism by Hindus and by Mussalmans who

are no less interested in the elimination of the Pakistan idea as an idea fraught with grave consequences for the peace and well being of millions of Hindus and Mussalmans in this country.

Assuming that the Pakistan idea is mainly one of giving a separate zone for the Muslims of the Western Punjab where they are in numerical majority and a separate zone for the Muslims of East Bengal where they are in a numerical majority and making these two independent Muslim units coalise into one federation on the hypothesis that the Muslims are a nation, the sponsors of the scheme would add also Sind and Baluchistan to the regional zone of the Punjab. This is in so far as the British Indian provinces are concerned. They would also treat the Nizam's dominions as a Muslim zone although the Muslims form a small fraction of the population, and make the states of Hyderabad and Bhopal distinct units federating with Western Punjab cum Baluchistan cum Sind and with Eastern Bengal as the other federating units. We leave out of account the other reported proposals such as the retrocession of the Ceded Districts of Madras Province to Hyderabad and inviting the Sikh states of Patiala, Naba and Jind to join this Muslim federal state on the basis of regional affiliation.

The Pakistan scheme has been vehemently condemned by the Hindu Maha Sabha at its Madura session. The Indian National Congress has already condemned it. The session of the National Liberal Federation of India which met at Calcutta in December last has condemned it in terms no less strong. But mere condemnation from the platform of the annual conferences will not meet the situation. Even as the sponsors of the idea are carrying on well organised agitation all over the country continuously from day to day those who are opposed to the idea should also carry on equally unremitting and continuous educative propaganda against the scheme. If wrong ideas are given a start they will work a great deal of mischief before right ideas catch them and neutralize them.

The theory propounded by Mr. Jinnah that the Muslims of India are a separate nation and the Hindus of India constitute a separate nation and that it is only on the recognition of this factor that the further political edifice of India has to be built is a position which cannot be and ought not to be conceded. Add to this the further statement made by Mr. Jinnah as an essential part of the Pakistan idea that he is not a believer in democracy. Mr. Jinnah has been re-elected as President of the Muslim League for another year after his open pronouncement that he is not a believer in democracy and that any rapprochement between

the Muslim League and other political elements in the country can be found possible only on the basis that Mr. Jinnah's theme that the Muslims form a separate nation and the Hindus form a separate nation is conceded. This will involve further a breaking up of the geographical unity of India as a political entity. The further embellishments proposed to the scheme will mean a violent departure from the course of historical evolution which has been witnessed in the last 100 years and more.

Bengal is the province which has been hardest hit by the communal award. The Huq Ministry has been following an administrative policy which has given acute dissatisfaction to the Hindus of Bengal and has created in their minds grave misapprehensions about their future cultural, economic and political progress. The Hindus of Sind are in no happier position. The Hindu agitation for reforms in Hyderabad State lies dormant in the hope that the promised reforms would be implemented. We are still unable to see when and in what way the promised Hyderabad reforms will be implemented, unsatisfactory as they may be from the Hindu point of view. The Hindus all over the country must unite and take the necessary steps to meet in time this organised propaganda in favour of Pakistan. The Hindu Maha Sabha has a peculiar obligation to discharge in this matter and we have every reason to believe that they will rise equal to the occasion and they will receive country wide support in meeting the Pakistan agitation.

From the point of view of the Hindus as a community the Pakistan idea will lead to disastrous results. This the Hindu Maha Sabha has adequately realised. We trust the steps that they take will be also equally adequate to meet the situation.

From a national point of view which is a point of view common to Hindus and Muslims alike and to the British and Indians alike the Pakistan idea is equally objectionable. Firstly for the last 100 years British and Indian statesmen have worked with the single idea of the geographical unity of India as a single unit embracing within itself British Indian provinces and Indian states with the boundaries and frontiers that obtain to-day. The entire political and economic structure of this country has been built on the foundation of a single India with its frontiers as they are to-day. The federation envisaged by the Government of India Act 1935 is on the basis of the political unity of India with its present frontiers as a single federation. If and when Mr. Jinnah and his friends condescend to go into concrete proposals bereft

of platform rhetoric they will discover innumerable practical difficulties even in making concrete proposals for two federations in India consistent with the political and economic requirements of the people of each federation. Secondly the idea of Western Punjab, Baluchistan and Sind forming a Muslim buffer state between the independent Muslim territories on their west and the predominantly Hindu territories on the east is simply impossible as there will be no natural frontier between the proposed Muslim state and its eastern neighbours. The military and economic problems that each of the states will be called upon to consider will be too burdensome to be sustained by the new proposed federations. Further it will run counter to the history of the people of those provinces for more than 100 years now. Thirdly the foreign relations between the new Muslim state as a Muslim power and the array of Muslim states on the west will lead to problems which cannot be permitted with equanimity by either the British or by the remaining parts of India as new and difficult questions will emerge which it may be very difficult and expensive to tackle. In no scheme will it be possible to have an integration of purely Muslim areas without a substantial Hindu minority being incorporated in such a state. This will again lead to complicated problems in the political relations between the proposed Muslim states and the rest of India the consequences of which will be difficult to envisage at this stage. Lastly the new world order that is bound to come after the War will be based undoubtedly on the basis of integration of smaller units to make a bigger unit so that the political and economic advantages of a bigger unit can be made available to the integrating small units. When states geographically marked out as separate areas will be coming together for political and economic reasons it will be a reversal of modern progress if a territory like India geographically marked out to be politically a single unit is split up into two separate units. Such separation is bound to react most unfavourably on the political and economic evolution of the divided units. We trust people in this country will realise what a serious political blunder we shall be committing if we permit the idea of Pakistan to gain ground anywhere and in any province in the Western or in the Eastern parts of this great country. In resisting and neutralizing the Pakistan idea by adopting all available means we shall be only discharging our barest obligations to the motherland and safeguarding the happiness and the welfare of the future generations of all sons of the soil whatever may be their religious persuasion.

CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM

II

BY

GANAVISARADA SRI M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, B.A., B.L., L.T.

It is said of Christianity that 'Loving God' and 'Loving one's neighbour' formed the two Commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets. Full five centuries back, Confucius promulgated *his* two commandments on which hang his one single principle running through all his teaching, viz., Loyalty to oneself and Charity to one's neighbour.

The second Commandment being practically common to both Confucius and Christ, a fundamental difference between them arose with regard to the first Commandment. While Christ, according to the spirit of his times, stressed, love to God Confucius, according to the spirit of his own times, retained it in the background but gave prominence to what was more practical and what, twenty centuries hence, Shakespeare worked up into a gem-like piece of advice, viz.

"This above all—to *thine own self be true* ;

And it must follow, as the night the day,

Thou canst not then be false to any man."

The term *Charity*, that occurs in Confucius' second Commandment, was explained by himself by expressing Christ's golden rule in a negative form, viz., "Do unto others what you would they should do unto you". This virtue seems to be ingrained in man ; for, as Pope observed,

"In faith and hope the world will disagree

But all mankind's concern is Charity."

It therefore needs only to be developed so as to grow to its full height and make every blessed man that walketh on the earth come up to the description by Henry IV of his own son, Henry V, viz. :—

"He hath a tear for pity and a hand

Open as day for melting charity."

This virtue of charity is spoken of as Benevolence which, along with four others, viz., Righteousness, Propriety, Wisdom and Sincerity, is quoted as forming the *five* Cardinal Virtues of Confucius.

Here one may note that, as between the cardinal virtues mentioned by Plato and Confucius, the latter omitted Temperance and Courage.

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CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM

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But we may supply them or bring them under the category of one or more of the mentioned virtues; or again, we may presume that Confucius' 'five virtues' were not exhaustive but only illustrative.

The more we think about ethics, the plainer the truth comes out that it is not possible for any philosopher to present to the world any cut-and-dried rule or rules of conduct for the guidance of our daily lives and that all that ethics can do is to tell us, not indeed the particular virtues whereby our lives are to be guided, but what is of infinitely greater practical importance—the spirit in which our lives are to be lived.

We shall study the *five virtues* of Confucius a little closer. First, *Benevolence*. There is in the first place a danger for this virtue of charity to degenerate into a mechanical outward act done with a view to cover a multitude of sins. Charity, it is said, sometimes proceeds from vanity. I myself know of an instance in which a son, who grudgingly gave his living father a starvation-allowance, spent for that father's funeral ceremonies hundreds of Rupees only to dazzle the eyes of the surging crowd of his relatives and friends that were present in the cremation ground.

Hence it was that Confucius rightly insisted that charity (benevolence) should be founded on filial piety and fraternal submission and should also bear a ring of sincerity.

His idea of a *benevolent* Government consisted in enriching the people, providing them enough food to eat, keeping enough soldiers to guard the State and (mark) winning the confidence of the people. In fact, the Government should be so good as to attract even those who live far away. "A bad government," it is said, "is worse than a tiger," whereby hangs a tale.

Confucius travelled in the District of *she* with his disciples, when he came across a woman weeping and wailing beside a grave and inquired the cause of her grief. "My father-in-law," replied the woman, "was killed here by a tiger; after that, my husband; and now my son has perished by the same death." "But," queried Confucius, "why do you not go elsewhere?" Her crushing rejoinder was: "The Government here is not harsh". At once the Master turned to his disciples and said: "Remember that; a bad government is worse than a tiger."

Charity speaks in the name of the whole. Its right "to be all" is founded on its representing the underlying desire of the community as

a whole for the welfare of its parts. If therefore it arrogates to itself any private sphere or claims and private merit, charity forfeits its ethical right and therewith loses all its grace. Another defective feature of charity is that it is identified with mere giving, irrespective of the effect upon the character of the individual helped and upon the community at large. The justification of the gift is the maintenance or furtherance of the citizen spirit in the recipient. Hence the *ill-conceived* charity of Bhasa's *Charudatta* and Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* has become deservedly proverbial as having produced none but deserted parasites, affable wolves, meek bears, and trencher-friends.

In fine, Christ's golden rule, which Confucius turned into its negative form, furnishes the secret of Confucius' virtue of *Benevolence*.

Secondly, *Righteousness*. This means and includes justice, duty, and even law and order. "A man of high station", observed Confucius, "who has courage without righteousness is a menace to the State, while the common man who has courage without righteousness is nothing more than a brigand". The courage, here referred to, is mere *physical* courage which even a bull-dog has in plenty. But the courage that is calculated to help the growth and development of righteousness is *moral*. It is this 'moral courage' that displays itself in silent effort and endeavour and that dares to endure all and suffer all for the sake of righteousness and duty.

There is scarcely a righteous act but has had to fight its way to public recognition in the face of detraction, calumny, persecution, and even death. Rightly therefore did Heine observe that wherever a great soul gave utterance to its righteous thoughts, a Golgotha arose there. Look, again, at the fate of Socrates, Bruno, Moore, Galileo and Harvey—not to speak of our own Mahatma.

This irony of fate attending upon righteous men, Confucius recognised and predicted that such a righteous person as Yu (*alias* Tzu Lu) "would not come by a natural death." The prediction came to be true. When a revolution was in progress in Wei, Tzu Kao saw that matters were desperate and made his escape; while Tzu Lu (*alias* Yu) would not forsake the Chief who had treated him well but threw himself into the melee and was slain.

It should be noted, here, that Confucius spoke of Righteousness more from the Ruler's standpoint than from that of the Ruled, for the reason that he was a political, more than a religious, reformer and that all the various topics he touched upon were intended to converge on his

one central problem of how to "restore the country of China to the happy condition in which the Duke of Chou left it."

"Do your duty," observed he, "as a son and a brother and these qualities will make themselves felt in the government." Again, in answer to Duke Ching's query on the art of government, he replied: "Let the Sovereign do his duty as a Sovereign; the subject, his duty as subject, the father, his duty as a father; and the son, his duty as a son."

Further, Confucius was a firm believer in the universal human proneness to imitation. Knowing, as he did, that personal example was the most effective way in which a father could teach his sons what was right, he unhesitatingly attributed the same powerful influence to the personal conduct of the Sovereign and went so far as to declare that if the ruler was personally upright and righteous, his subjects would be also righteous and do their duty unbidden. "The virtue of the prince," he said, "is like unto wind and that of the people like unto the grass. For, it is the nature of the grass to bend when the wind blows upon it."

I said that righteousness included law and order. Accordingly, levying of taxes comes under this category. Confucius was of opinion that any imposing of burdens on the people should be in the right time accompanied by right means so that none could grumble.

Thirdly, *Propriety*. The Chinese word for it is *Li*. It had first sole reference to religious rites, whence it came to be applied to every sort of ceremonial, including the ordinary rules of politeness, the etiquette of society, the conduct befitting all stations of life and (mark) the *state of mind* of which such conduct is the outcome.

This 'state of mind' is one of equally adjusted harmony and self-restraint; and it is in this sense of an inward principle of proportion and self-control that the word is frequently used by Confucius in his *Analects*. "High station," said he, "occupied by men who have no-large or generous heart; ceremonials performed with no reverence; duties of mourning without sorrow—how could I look on, where there is this state of things?"

Propriety is thus a personal virtue having immense power of influencing others.

But Dr. Legge complained: "Propriety was a great stumbling-block in the way of Confucius. His morality was the results of the balancings of his intellect, fettered by the decisions of men of old, and

not the gushings of a loving heart, responsive to the promptings of Heaven and in sympathy with erring and feeble humanity."

This *complaint* of the Christian Missionary who went to China only to teach and not to be taught, is unfounded; and the hollowness of his remarks has been powerfully exposed by Mr. Giles, in his learned Introduction to the *Sayings of Confucius*:—"It is high time that an effective protest should be made against such an amazing piece of misrepresentation. With bitter truth we may retort that 'propriety' has indeed been a stumbling block, not so much to Confucius as to Dr. Legge himself. The whole tenor of the Master's teaching cries aloud against such wilful and outrageous distortion. Anyone, who reads Confucius' *Sayings* carefully, will soon discover that this accusation is not only libellous but also grotesque in its remoteness from the truth. If there is one thing more than another which distinguishes Confucius from the men of his day, it is the supreme importance which he attached to *Jen* (the Feeling in the Heart) as the source of all right conduct, the stress which he laid on the internal, as opposed to the external, and even on motives rather than outward acts. Over and over again, he gave proof of the highest and noblest moral courage in ignoring the narrow rules of conventional morality and etiquette, when these conflicted with good feeling and common sense, and setting up in their stead the grand rules of conscience which, by asserting the right of each individual to judge such matters for himself, pushed liberty to a point which was quite beyond the comprehension of his age.

(To be continued.)

THE PLACE OF SANSKRIT IN THE PROMOTION OF HINDU UNITY.

K. V. S.

One of the significant facts in these times is the awakening of Hindus for defence against unprovoked attacks—social and otherwise. Hindu India feels as one in this respect in spite of strong internal cleavages. Perhaps the most powerful of the causes that are operating to weld Hinduism and Hindu society into a unit is the political. Much as one may disprove of Hindu India as a separate political entity, the fact remains that the communal award has brought it into being in some form. Hindus have been compelled to think and feel as one and obliged to function separately for political purposes—thanks to the agitation of other religious communities. The separatist tendency now operating among Muslims and to some extent among Christians is accelerating the pace of the solidification of the Hindu community. The result cannot be deemed to be wholly evil though it may postpone national unity for a time. There are a few societies that are so subject to attack as the Hindu society. The weakness of Hinduism is unique. It is only just now that some of the thoughtful leaders of the community are awakening to the implications of this danger and devising steps to counteract it.

It is impossible in a short compass to unravel the tangled roots of Hindu society and explain how the entire Hindu society is bound together by common bonds of identity of religious beliefs, traditions, culture and social objectives. In spite of the different historical developments to which the different parts of India have been subjected, Hindu India has managed to preserve the essentials for the welding of a Hindu India into a unit. Part of this success must be attributed to the caste system. Though it has been rightly subjected to criticism from several quarters the caste system has largely helped in the maintenance of Hindu traditions and culture. It was a sort of hollow square with which Hindu India fought the ravages of time through the centuries.

All Hindus are the heirs of a common religious heritage, the products of a common socio-religious culture and the seekers after a common objective.

The store house of that culture and heritage is the Sanskrit literature. In it are found conceptions of human origins and goal, the evolution of human society in an orderly manner whose unique grandeur compel the admiration of discerning thinkers. The basic laws of social righteousness, the reality of the unseen world, the close cooperation between the seen and the unseen evolution of life, the immanence of God and the brotherhood of man, the doctrine of the Atman, the endless evolution of the soul through successive life cycles, the harmonising of separate group cultures with the general social progress the aspects of God as a personal and as an impersonal entity, with "moksha" or liberation from the cycle of births and deaths as the ultimate goal of human evolution, these are some of the great conceptions which have saturated the soil of Hinduism. Though their dynamic value is only being gradually realised by the advanced representatives of Hindus, they are part of the matrix of Hindu thought.

Right through the ages these outstanding ideas have moulded the destiny and aspirations of generations of Hindus. Right through the ages has the highest ideal of life been that of the Rishis, the great men who scorned delights and lived laborious days, who controlled their senses and perceived and pursued the ultimate goal of human effort through all hindrances and dangers. I am not for saying that the types of individual excellence which this country has furnished in the past are the only ones possible or that they cannot be rivalled or surpassed in the future. But they are the ones that have made a permanent appeal to the Hindu mind.

The unity that binds together the Hindu of Nepal with his co-religionist of Madras, that links up the average Hindu of today with his ancestor of the pre-historic past is largely a cultural unity. The origin and development of that culture are in Sanskrit. The full introduction to that culture and its assimilation are more easily possible through Sanskrit. It looks like a truism to say that Hindu unity is fostered by emphasising similarities between the diverse peoples that profess that religion. Among those similarities nothing is more striking than their kinship through Sanskrit. Through that language has flowed streams of culture big and small that have irrigated and fertilised the language and literature of scores of vernaculars. Great geniuses have no doubt flourished who have brought over into the vernaculars the spirit and the ideals of Sanskrit thought. But a direct access to those ideals is

calculated to give a fresh orientation to one's thoughts regarding Hinduism. It will illumine one's faith in Hinduism.

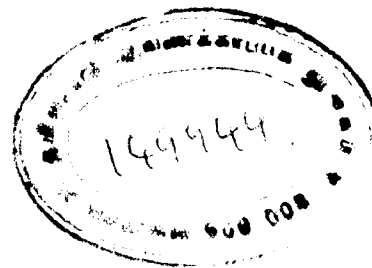
In the Sanskrit language are stored the great intellectual and spiritual treasures of the Hindu race. It is that language that furnishes us the key to the chamber where the library and cultural heritages of Hindu India are stored. A knowledge of that culture unfolds to us the wonderful panorama of thought that has flourished in this country under the great banner of Hinduism. It forges a powerful link knitting us with the past. It grafts us right on to the genuine and parent stock of Hindu civilisation and makes it possible for the old but still vivifying sap to flow through our minds.

A study of Sanskrit is likely to be corrective to communalising and fissiporous tendencies of the present day. A great deal of misconception exists as to what each community did to perpetuate its domination and aggrandisement, which a more direct and first hand knowledge will dispel. A great deal of communal acerbity is due to the mistaken impression that there has been an abuse of power by certain persons entrusted with it. A closer study of the ancient books will however reveal the great emphasis that was laid upon duties and disabilities and of the real anxiety to organise society on a basis most conducive to its general welfare, material and moral. It will reveal to us how our ancient Law-Givers, and Kings honestly grappled with the difficult problem of social organisation and strove their best for achieving social balance of power, by an appropriate distribution of rights and disabilities. It will reveal to us some of the high levels of individual and social achievements that were possible under that scheme. We can acquire a true idea of the moral and social readjustments that have been attempted in the past and how these attempts have fared through the subsequent ages. The importance of these lessons cannot be ignored. Sanskrit is still the language of religion and of devotional literature. It still exercises a powerful charm in moulding the spiritual life and aspirations of the people of this country.

It is impossible to comprehend the past without an adequate knowledge of Sanskrit. It would be difficult to appreciate or appraise the development of Hindu polity without knowing Sanskrit. It is impossible to rise to full Hindu manhood without it. It is impossible to effectually utilise our national heritages without a knowledge of the language in which the great thoughts of this country have been thought, thoughts which though conceived at times when the larger part of the world

was steeped in intellectual darkness still shine as beacon fires in the path of human progress.

In short it can be claimed legitimately for the study of Sanskrit that it revives and intensifies our affiliations to the past and makes that affiliation a living reality. In that affiliation is the bond of Hindu unity. It co-ordinates the progress of the various Hindu communities at present. It is an antidote to the fissiporosity which is so distressing a spectacle of the present times. It is a powerful help in the overcoming of doubt and disbelief in the high destiny which belongs to the Hinduism of the future.



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