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THE Bharata Dharma

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

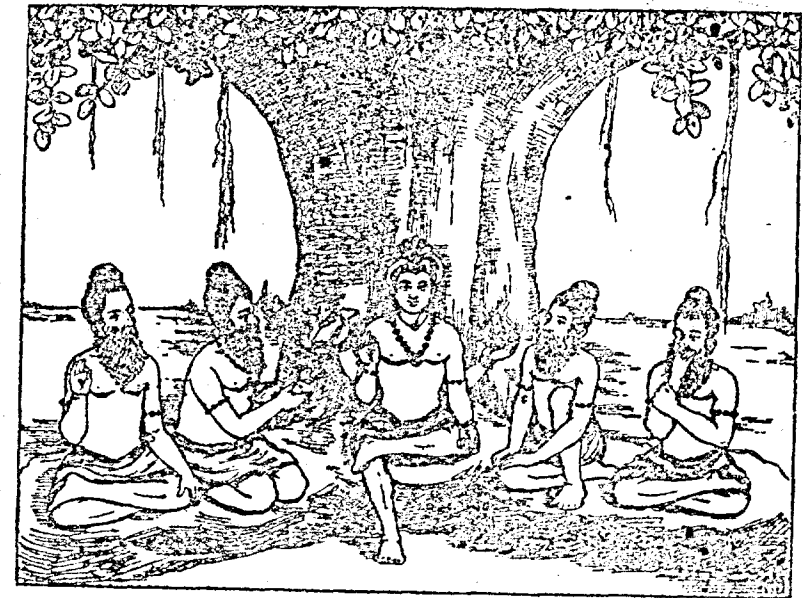
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The wonder under the Banyan tree ! A young teacher and old disciples. The teaching is silence and the disciples' doubts are cleared.

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THE Bharata Dharma

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VOL. XX]

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SOLACE IN SORROW

By

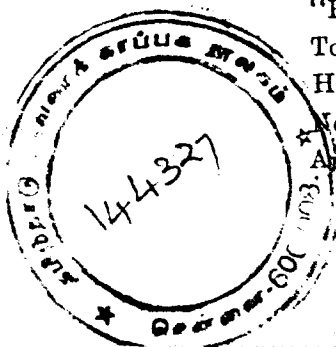
SWAMI ASESHANANDA.

Truly has the poet said :—"Our sincerest laughter with some pain
 is fraught". There is an undercurrent of sorrow in our enjoyment of
 mirth. There is no permanent pleasure in our multi-coloured experiences
 of life. Now we are tossed upward by a high wave, but the next moment
 we are thrown down into the abysmal depth of despair. However we may
 try, we cannot make pleasure sustained, continuous and long-abiding. It,
 no sooner, passes away giving rise to grief, in some form or other. Even
 a hero like Arjuna was overpowered by the slough of despondency in
 spite of his martial strength, penetrative intelligence and dogged
 determination. He quailed before an inscrutable destiny which grinds
 all people mercilessly in this phantasmagoria of the world. He lost all
 confidence in himself and was bewailing like a forlorn child. His hairs
 stood on end, limbs gave way and body trembled like a reed moved by
 the wind. His mighty bow 'Gandiva' slipped from his hand and his
 head was reeling as a man stunned by an unseen blow. He felt excru-
 ciating pain and a terrible burning sensation all over his body. Like
 one smitten by a scorpion he was overwhelmed by poignant agony. Un-
 able to stand, unable to keep the balance of mind, in sheer exasperation,

he fell down on the floor of the chariot saying, "I see adverse omens all around, Kesava. My heart is stricken with depression. My mind is perplexed as to whether there is any higher purpose in life. I am confused about my duty, and so I ask Thee. Teach me, for I am Thy pupil and have taken refuge in Thee". Arjuna is the symbol of suffering humanity. He represents the pitiable condition of a mortal man. His grief is the echo of the tormenting feeling that throbs in the heart of a heavy-laden soul, in his day-to-day activity. Sri Krishna stands for the teacher who feels for the miserable condition of the frail human bark. Like a good physician he wants to eradicate the very root of every sigh that rises from the deep-seated breast of man. The lesson he imparted is well-suited to all care-stricken mankind although Arjuna was the pivot round which all his instructions centred. He diagnosed the disease and prescribed a solvent remedy to heal his wounds. To counteract the onslaught of the ailment which was corroding his heart, the Master exhorted Arjuna in the following terms:—"Yield not to unmanliness, O Partha. Ill doth it become thee. Shake off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O Scorcher of thine enemies; uplift yourself from the quagmire of dejection by your own independent effort. Do not debase yourself by falling a prey to pernicious melancholy. For you yourself are your friend, you yourself are your enemy".

Similar predicaments occur in the life-history of every man. In the midst of delightful enjoyment, all on a sudden, a crisis comes in the form of an earthquake, a cyclone or a cataclysmic war. From the crest of a high wave we are thrown down into the depth of a chasm, a wide yawning hollow. We are engulfed and mercilessly battered by the splash of waves. Being in the vortex of suffering we do not know how to find way for escape and get deliverance. The last ray of hope disappears. We feel that we are about to be drowned and no possibility of help from any quarters. The whole world seems to be dark, dismal and dreary. We are plunged into heavy despair and mortal fear wrings our heart dry. What a tragic picture we draw on the lines of our face can more easily be imagined than described! The words of Mathew Arnold ring clear in our ears and make us a stubborn pessimist.

"For the world, which seems
To lie before us, like a land of dreams,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here, as on a darkling plain



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Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

Misgiving sways our mind. Agnosticism pervades our being. We become seriously doubtful of the existence of a kind benevolent being, whom the theologians designate as God. Where is the proof? On the other hand the boat of life seems to be drifting in a shoreless ocean without rudder, without helmsman. It is a vain utopia, a mirage and a figment of imagination to think with the poet that there is an all-loving Power, an almighty Providence at the back of the universe and this, his great master-piece, is progressing towards that—

"One far off divine event

To which the whole creation moves."

We are living in an enigmatic world. Everything is shrouded in mystery. To unravel it by intellect and logical understanding leads ultimately to atheism. The problem becomes more complicated when we view the dark episodes, the hell of suffering which good and righteous people have had to suffer in their lives. We find that a saint, a Mahatma, the very salt of the earth is visited with trials and tribulations of a Himalayan magnitude. A holy man whose whole life has been a poem of sacrifice and a consecrated service at the door of the poor, miserable and down-trodden has been scorned and vilified and assailed by troubles of a colossal nature. Why should he be, of all men, the target, who is child-like in simplicity, pure in transparent sincerity and overflowing in love even for the murderous opponent who has attempted on his life? A hard problem indeed!

Apparently the question remains insoluble, a puzzle which baffles the keen intelligence of the highly scholarly and erudite philosopher. But the gate can be opened by the knock of the awakened soul who brings humility of spirit and a devout heart to bear on the subject. To his clear thinking and unblurred vision, suffering is a blessing in disguise. It is like a strong medicine which may be bitter to the taste but wholesome to the soul. The blows to the faithful are messengers from their beloved. They are like sirens to call them back from mad pastimes of the world to the true refuge in God. Troubles draw out their latent energy and invigorate them to fight through the battle of life single-handed but with His names on their lips which give them more power and vigour than a whole regiment of mechanised army and forces. Like the mother of the Pandavas they smilingly meet dangers in the face. Adversity cannot beguile them from the path. Even in the cataclysm

of woes the name of the Lord becomes their food and drink. However grim and terrific the face of difficulty may be, they do not lose heart and confidence in a merciful God. They court suffering instead of worldly pleasures since in suffering alone they can constantly think of Him. They take courage from the words of Sri. Krishna to shake off all doubts and disappointment from the furthest corner of their mind—"I bear the burden of those that worship Me with single-minded devotion by providing them with what they need and supplying them with the power to gain the new and preserve the old. Even if the most sinful pray to me with undivided heart soon he becomes a righteous soul by the transforming touch of my grace. Proclaim it boldly from the top of your voice, O son of Kunti, that my devotee never perishes."

This message of hope and cheer is the sustaining power to all contrite souls even though they are placed in the wilderness or in the wide desert away from friends, away from sweet relations and their dear beloved kith and kin. In one of his letters Swami Vivekananda pertinently writes: "Often and often, we see that the very best of men even are troubled and visited with tribulations in the world, it may be inexplicable, but it is also the experience of my life that the heart and core of everything here is good, that whatever may be the surface waves, deep down and underlying everything, there is an infinite basis of goodness and love; and so long we do not reach that basis we are troubled, but once reached that zone of calmness, let winds howl and tempests rage, the house that is built on the rock of ages cannot shake".

May the sufferings and blows which we may receive from this cold, relentless world draw us closer and closer to that Being who will never let us down with calm submission and perfect resignation. "Not 'I' but Thou my Beloved. Let Thy wish be fulfilled in all the thoughts and deeds of my life"—be our constant prayer.

"Thou art my mother, Thou art my father, Thou art my friend, Thou art my companion, Thou art my knowledge, Thou art my treasure, Thou art my all-in-all. Oh! My Lord of Lords!"

Om Santih.

THE FLOW OF COSMIC STRENGTH IN THE INDIVIDUAL

By

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

The Hindu conception of the cosmos and his relation to it is, so unique and absorbing that he is invulnerable and he challenges the might of mighty forces and the legerdemain of conspirators and designers. He knows everything, the cause of the rise and fall of empires, the blinding effect of lust and dishonest combinations, the sin of secret conclaves and combinations to thwart the legitimate ambitions of individuals and race. Man-made laws when they stultify them, suffer deliberate opposition in favour of rights gifted by life in harmony with the cosmic forces. It is after all these that alone bring victory. For, the truth is that man is moved to life and living in time with cosmic forces. No body can defy them.

Man is not alone. He is the creature of the play of cosmic forces, which govern the Sun and the Moon, the animal and plant, and in short all the elements. Science confirms the truth in its own specialized compartments. If this is understood there is no basis for wars and inequities of any kind. There is not merely inter-racial and international inter-dependence, but there is also intra-cosmic dependence.

Giving an account of the constitution of man the following summary is given out by Gowan Whyte:—

Ordinary matter is really very extraordinary. Living matter and dead matter are made out of the same thing. Dead matter is not actually dead. Even in solid things like metals particles are always on the move. In liquids they move more freely and in gases they dash about with the speed of bullets

Even so man is shaped into being and is continually affected by the same elements of Nature that play upon, energise and give form and life to the plants, animals, and what we wrongly style inanimate world.

This is impressively made out in the Vedas and Upanishads. We are required to sense the truth as we think and act. That gives special value to the Hindu teaching.

The Sun is the source of all light, life, and living. This is an unquestioned postulate. Food, breath and water which are all regulated, so also the powers of the mind and the condition of the heart have to be

regulated by the Sun the laws of the Seasons and vibration of rays. Now electrons are created every moment in the cornea of the Sun (science has recently demonstrated it). Benefit accrues to man by his wise response and receptivity to cosmic forces. Regulation and control of the breath is necessary for strength in action.

The Chandogya says: "Whatever actions there are that require strength are all performed while one is neither breathing out nor breathing in." Even that is possible by the solar forces acting upon us.

The moon is the lord of all the stars. The earth is our universal support. The breath is our deity, the sun and the food are our deities.

At each stage of the solar cycle of movement different existences are affected differently. Animals derive their succour at sun rising, man after sun rise, birds after the rays are shot down, the Devas at noon and the germs thrive at afternoon. All about us are interwoven. Clouds and seasons, the ocean, the sky, the quarters and the animals etc.

The Upanishad says "One who thus knows this same as interwoven in everything becomes everything." The individual naturally is reverently able to say "I am everything". That means humanity is knit together. If so, should one part of it be the oppressor and the other oppressed? Should one's ability be tied down to the yoke of another? We say nonsense. The rule of equality and freedom of the individual is universal once it is realised. Either Fire or Death cannot destroy them. The Hindu alone born of such a culture can realise it and realising get inspiration for swift, strong action; for he is born and bred up in the most universal and catholic system of thought and belief. It is pride, blind-folded urge of power-seeking passion, the intoxication of sovereign state, that drives out wisdom but cosmic forces would soon destroy them.

This is proved in the same upanishads that light which shines above this Heaven, above everything, above all, in the highest worlds beyond which there are no worlds, that is the same as the light within man. Further proof—it is thus visible as when, in the body, we know the warmth by touch. It is thus audible as when on closing the ears one hears something like rumbling or bellowing as the flaming of fire.

The understanding of the cosmic inter-relationship and integral action and force takes *Economics and Ethics to a higher standard than hitherto*. It is not race or nation or the pigment in colour that truly matters. So long as they mattered the world was growing under iniquity exploitation and brutalism of one set of people over another. The world

still suffers and nemesis would lash itself upon the sinners who had till now minded more racial and national superiority. Abjure politics, for it is power-stricking poison; dwell more and mainly on the social dynamic of human brotherhood and fellowship and *we then begin to develop cosmic consciousness*. This truth was transmitted from generation to generation by Brahmins with, in the words of Sir Richard Temple, "an almost ineffable dignity".

Cosmic forces are both negative and positive like-attracting and unlikes distorting all in accordance with fulfilment of cosmic purpose of realisation of ineffable bliss. In the course of destruction evil is transmitted into a potent force for good with the zeal of a novice. That follows from the elements gathered to do evil and when they are destroyed, naturally they reform purged of evil combination and create beautiful creatures. Tataka killed by Rama rose into a beautiful Yakshini, went to Rama, saluted him and ascended into heaven. So were Vali and Viradha. Our receptivity to cosmic influences depends upon our capacity to maintain silence (2) to feast our Being on stillness of Nature (3) to admire ungrudgingly and (4) value qualities, features and utility at their true value (5) to detect the essence of everything that counts in the search of peace and tranquillity. The Japanese poet Noguchi for example said in Benares this "Though I am a reverent admirer of Nature, I cannot now admire nature's dynamic beauty as before. My delight is in its still aspect. Facing nature at 60 I surrender to silence. What I have learnt at heavy experience, through half a century is but one word "Silence". My adoration of nature begins and ends with the Fuji mountains. The modern craze for speed and racing competition destroys the receptivity to cosmic influence."

These cosmic forces manifest in their interference whenever things go awry and when they interfere they would shock complacency (a new current in Biological theory). Be it noted "Nature" must be taken to mean and include whole of nature including man, and his sociological and moral functions. The cosmos in the Upanishads is dealt with in this fashion and that very elaborately.

The war has crippled our capacity to receptivity to the cosmic forces, mellowing, sobering, illumining and integrally unifying human nature. The spirit of our solar influence was revealed to us in the songs and hymns found in the Aditya Hridayam which was repeated to Sri Rama. The adoration to the Sun God was carried by ancient Hindus to Siam, Malaya and the regions of the rocky mountains of West

America. The civilisation of the Incas was founded on worship of the Sun God. In essence the cosmic spirit was carried through for enlightenment of humanity by protagonists of Hindu culture. Temples of Sri Rama have been discovered in far off remote places of the world. It is however recently the Westerners have discovered the truth about the cosmic influence. G. Hodson in a Christian Weekly would have it "perhaps the most arresting statement with which at once we are met is that the whole universe physical and metaphysical is contained in man, that the sun, planets, satellitic powers, beings, kingdoms of nature and order of life are all represented in every human being. Man is regarded as an epitome of the whole universe, a reproduction in miniature of the whole of nature, visible and invisible."

And yet how cruel, mean and rapacious are some races in their treatment of and relation with others!

DICKENS AND KALIDASA

BY

MR. Y. MAHALINGA SASTRI M.A. B.L., *Tiruvallangadu.*

The greatest of poets is a seer; one who realises the Truth which philosophers seek to ascertain through mazes of argumentative literature. He sees truth during his passionate gaze on beauty in its perfection. For him beauty is truth. The conviction of the truth is a matter of self-realisation with him. He knows not the path and the boundaries, nor any part of the definition. He knows truth as a fact and pauses not to support his conviction by circumstantial evidence. One of the greatest of Kalidasa's verses contains such a realised truth.

रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य शब्दान्
पर्युत्सुको भवति यत् सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः ।
तच्चेतसा स्मरति नूनमबोधपूर्वं
भावस्थिराणि जननान्तर सौहृदानि ॥

—Sakuntala Act V.

"Upon seeing beautiful object and hearing sweet sounds, an individual, though apparently happy, is plunged in a deep contemplative mood. This matter of experience is undoubtedly due to his re-collecting in his sub-conscious mind, quite apart from any intellectual comprehension, fond associations of a former life engraved deep in his soul."

Dickens portrays the same sublime thought in some of his lines. When two great men of genius so wide apart by traditions and culture

and chronologically too, approach each other so astonishingly on this subject, should we not pause to consider the mighty import of the revelation? I quote from *Oliver Twist* :—

"A strain of gentle music or the rippling of water in a silent place, or the odour of a flower, or the mention of a familiar word, will some times call up sudden dim remembrances of scenes that never were, in this life; which vanish like a breath; which some brief memory of a happier existence, long gone by, would seem to have awakened; which no voluntary exertion of the mind can ever recall." Chap. XXX

"Beneath all this there linger in the least reflective mind, a vague and half-formed consciousness of having held such feelings long before in some remote and distant time." Chap. XXXII

Can there be a more powerful elucidation of the thought enshrined in Kalidasa's lines!

It is not also improbable that Dickens had some notion of Kalidasa's thought in this respect, as during the 19th century the *Sakuntalam* was popular in the West through many translations. A poet unravelling the mystic thought of another of his angelic order, indeed, does his work with nearly as much creative genius as the original author evinced.

THE POLITICAL DEADLOCK IN INDIA.

By

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

The debates on India in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords have come and gone. Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery have spoken. Mr. Wilkie has made his incisive broadcast. The British Press which ignored the repeated and well-reasoned demands of the Indian Press now feel that something should be done to put themselves right in the eyes of American public opinion. The Tory politicians solemnly assure that if all the political elements in India come to an agreement and send up their united demand His Majesty's Government will be pleased to consider the same. At the same time when these assurances were being given in London by spokesmen on behalf of His Majesty's Government their august representative in India found it impossible to allow access to the imprisoned Congress leaders formally applied for by recognised leaders of the Hindu Maha Sabha, which, if it should be

regarded as representing 300 millions of Hindus in the country, cannot be brushed aside as an unimportant element in India's national life. Mr. Jinnah is not tired of repeating his claims for equality with the Hindus in the matter of places in the National Government that is contemplated though the proportion of Muslims to Hindus in the population is only nearly 1:4. Not only that. Even if a war time provisional national government should be formed putting all controversial questions in cold storage, Mr. Jinnah would insist upon everybody conceding the principle of breaking up the political integrity of India as it is, with its magnificent God-made natural frontiers. Nay more, Mr. Jinnah would go to the extent of advising His Majesty's Government to compel the Hindus to accept a decision based on the vivisection of India and the extravagant over-representation of Muslims in the Executives and in the Legislatures. On this simple question of India becoming what other big civilised nations are, hundreds of newspapers' editorials have been written and thousands of words have been broadcast from the radios of all the nations and yet nothing has been done, nothing has been accomplished. In the meanwhile the Japanese have been, if reports are to be believed, accumulating men and material on the Eastern Frontiers of India, apparently not with very friendly intentions. The German press has begun to write on the route to India through the Caucasus. The issues involved are so simple and the solution is so easy and the perilous dangers to be averted are so imminent that many wonder in the Old World and in the New World why nothing has been done and nothing has been accomplished except throwing into the air a spate of words, interminable words.

There is a tendency on the part of some people to imagine that the beginning of the Indian deadlock dates from the landing of Sir Stafford Cripps, on Indian soil. Such an assumption would lead only to the blind alleys of Tory complacency and political ineptitude. The national demand on behalf of India may have been put forward from different platforms in different terms and with differing emphasis on diverse points. It is not necessary to trace historically the evolution of the national demand put forward on behalf of India and the cobwebs of counter arguments that have been woven from time to time to meet the flowing tide of India's political evolution. The issue is very simple. The details may be many and the phases may be multiple, but the single and central fact of the Indian national demand is that India should have the same freedom to shape her own political and economic

arrangements as other nations have. Whether we call it Dominion Status of the type contemplated in the Statute of Westminster or independence as claimed by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League, the substance is the same. A free India in view of her past evolution and future requirements must necessarily be in friendly alliance with every member of the British Commonwealth of nations. This will be recognised on all hands to be as much in the interests of India as in the interests of every other member of the British Commonwealth. It is this freedom that was guaranteed to all the nations of the world by the Atlantic Charter though Mr. Churchill adroitly attempted to exclude India from its scope by mis-describing it as a domestic concern of the British Empire. But Mr. Wilkie whose political position in the United States of America cannot be ignored, pointed out that India must be declared authoritatively to come within the terms of the Atlantic Charter. Mr. Roosevelt seems to have endorsed this opinion.

I would still prefer to use the term "Dominion Status" as understood in the Statute of Westminster in preference to the term "Independence" which even the Congress leaders have limited by conceding that British armed forces may remain in India for the purpose of defence during the duration of the war. Sir Stafford Cripps announced at the end of his talks that the Cripps offer was withdrawn. But recently Mr. Amery stated that the Cripps offer stood. The section of British opinion which is keen on an immediate solution of the deadlock considers that a parliamentary guarantee of India's independence after the war is necessary. Everybody concedes that India should have independence after the war within a defined or undefined time limit.

The question then is why not reconcile India by granting *now and at once* what is promised after the war and having for the duration of the war transitional arrangements sufficient to guarantee the maximum war effort, which transitional arrangements will automatically come to an end on the cessation of hostilities, so that India will participate in the peace discussions on the same terms and with the same status as South Africa, Australia and Canada? Some people in India and abroad ask why can you not trust England? Cannot the same question be reciprocated? Why not trust India?

Are not the proposals put forward by the Hindu Maha Sabha very reasonable and fully assuring the maximum war effort? If the whole of

the demand cannot be conceded because of the intransigence of the Congress or the Muslim League, why not grant now and at once a little less and fully implement what is granted?

What is wrong in Indians desiring that the representation of India in all diplomatic offices and in international relations should be by representative Indians who can truly claim to be the representatives of the people of India? What is wrong in Indians asking that India should be governed hereafter by her own chosen representatives honestly and truly in the interests of the people of India? What prevents the complete Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council? If some of these main points are conceded it will go a great way to bring about a reconciliation. Repression without reconciliation can do no good. No friend of India can support the acts of destruction and hooliganism which unfortunately have taken place all over the country. But can the Government say that they have discharged their duty simply by preventing such acts, doing nothing tangible to acquire the goodwill of the people at large? Should not His Majesty's Government and the Government of India demonstrate to the people of India and to the world at large that they respect the public opinion of India as manifested by responsible Indian politicians and political parties?

If it is contended that the present personnel of the existing Provincial and Central legislatures is not truly representative on account of the time that has elapsed since they were elected, the defect can be cured by holding immediate elections even with the existing constitution and enabling the formation of National Governments responsible to the newly elected legislatures and also securing for the diverse political elements in the national life of the country adequate representation in the National Governments provided that no section secures unreasonable weightage out of proportion to its population. Every friend of India and England must express clearly and definitely and even clamorously, if required, his or her conviction that in the interests of India and England alike the present political deadlock must be resolved and that everyone should promote and sustain every reasonable endeavour to achieve this result without any loss of time whatever.

ACTION, ITS BONDAGE AND RELEASE

(Karma-bandha and Moksha.)

BY

Mr. S. K. YEGNANARAYANA AYYAR

Whatever the difference between the various systems of philosophy among the Hindus all of them agree in the matter of karma. They believe the individual soul is bound by its actions. This faith is shared not only by all sections of Hinduism; but the other two great religions of India, Buddhism and Jainism also share the view. The theory of karma is merely application to the moral and spiritual sphere, the law of action and re-action which is so well-known in the material world. The physical body is looked upon as merely a vehicle for the inner soul which at the time of birth enters the vehicle and at the time of death leaves it with its subtle body carrying with it in a latent condition the result of all its actions which would manifest themselves in later births. The theory of karma therefore is inextricably connected with the theory of transmigration.

When this theory was pushed to its logical conclusion the prospect became somewhat appalling. There is a well-known popular verse which tells us that a man's action good or bad has to be endured by him and the results will persist even through crores of births. There is another well-known verse attributed to the poet sage Barthrihari where karma is saluted as the most powerful agent in the universe to whom even Gods like Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are subjected.

The theory of karma with its attendant corollary of transmigration was worked out in full and with regard to any individual occupying a particular life in the long chain this karma was divided under three categories of Sanjitha, Prarabdha and Agami, that is, (1) the karma accumulated and awaiting fruition (2) the karmas that have begun to bear fruit in this particular life and (3) the karmas that await fruition later and that are accruing in his actions in the present life. This theory left no freedom to the individual and everyone was bound to this wheel of never-ending motion. Whatever your actions, good or bad, you must reap its consequences and the chain goes on lengthening without any end.

The prospect was therefore somewhat appalling and man naturally longed for a release from this never-ending chain of births and deaths. Moksha in its original sense must have meant only this kind of release from a never-ending experiencing of the results of action, good or bad, though later on Moksha was given positive meaning by vedantins in the sense of enjoying inexpressible bliss on account of realisation of identity between the individual and the universal soul.

The Gita which is one of our great books gives some solution for breaking the chain and let us study the teachings of the Gita on this important subject.

First there is the solution according to Purvamimamsa which exalted karma to a primary position. In III-7 it is said that all actions lead to bondage except those that are necessary to yagna, meaning thereby that actions done for the sake of yagna do not lead to bondage. This theory is indicated but not fully worked out in the Gita. As is well-known, the Divine author of the Gita was not a champion of the karma-kanda of the Vedas and spoke of it even with a certain amount of disparagement (see II-41 to 45). The holy sacrifices themselves were expected to yield good results which would entitle the performer to a long or short stay in heavens as the case may be. But this stay was not permanent and the individual has to return to the earth as soon as his stock of merit was exhausted (IX-21). From this we must conclude that the solution according to the Purvamimamsa was not favoured by the author of the Gita.

Some attempt must have been made by the thinkers of those days to escape from the chain by the heroic remedy of not doing any action, not to perform any sacrifices, nay, not to do even ordinary actions conducive to the maintenance of life. Such people are referred to in the first verse of the VIth chapter as *Niragni* or one who does not perform any sacrifices or *Akriya* that is a person who does not do any action. But this line of meeting the situation was certainly not favoured by the author of the Gita. It is not possible to remain absolutely quiet doing no action whatsoever (III-5). Physical existence would be impossible without some action (III-8) and real renouncement consists not in doing no action, but in renouncing the fruits thereof (XVIII-11). In the same XVIIIth chapter the Lord tells Arjuna that any attempt at non-action is impossible and that innate nature will compel a man to do actions even if he is foolish enough to make up his mind not to do anything (XVIII-59 and 60).

This quietism is attacked on another ground also. The Lord tells us that the world is so constituted that the human and the divine elements must co-operate in maintaining each other, the human by performing sacrifices and the divine by sending down rains and prosperity. He also appeals to his disciple not to follow this barren policy by placing before him the exalted example of Janaka and other kings who were both men of action as well as knowledge and lastly he appeals to his own example, how he is above all wants and yet is busy every moment, as otherwise the world will come to a standstill. From all these things we may rightly conclude that the path of non-action, if at all it led to the goal of release from the chain of action, was not favoured by the author of the Gita. The whole matter is clinched in XVIII-3 to 6 where Krishna tells us definitely that sacrifice, gifts, and austerities have to be performed by everyone; only the wise do it without attachment to the fruits thereof.

The third solution attempted in the Gita is the vedantic solution of Jnana or realisation and not merely intellectual perception of the truth of the proper relation between the individual and the soul. We are told that even if a person be the worst sinner if he gets this jnana he crosses the ocean of all this karma as his jnana acts as a boat and all the accumulated rubbish of karma is burnt away by the fire of the jnana (IV-36 and 37). This is in perfect accord with the traditions of the Upanishads where Jnana is described as breaking of bondage. A well-known Upanishadic verse tells us "when he sees the Supreme, the knot of his heart is loosened, all his doubts are cleared and all his sins come to an end." We have, also, so many verses both in the Upanishads and in that great store-house of religion, the "Mahabharata" to the effect that jnana itself an end to all karma. We may therefore conclude that the great teacher in the Gita recommends this as a way out of the difficulty.

But the most important and significant contribution of the Gita to the solution is the famous doctrine of *Karmaphala Thiaga* or the abandoning of the fruits of action. Actions by themselves are meaningless and everything depends upon the motive and if motive which invariably consists in personal gain be abandoned, actions themselves become innocuous. The central teaching is given in that famous verse (II-44) where Arjuna is told that his right is only to do his work and not to expect the fruits thereof. The same idea is repeated in numerous places throughout the Gita (II-41 to 51; IV-14 and 15; IV-20, 21 and 22; V-8

to 12; XVIII-11). All these harp upon the same theme and this may be taken as the royal path of getting rid of the incubus of never-ending chain of births and deaths.

There is, however, a more significant way of arriving at the same results pointed out by the great teacher in his message to humanity. In IX-27 the teacher tells his disciple that whatever he does, whatever he eats, whatever gifts he gives, whatever sacrifices he makes, whatever penances he undergoes, all that may be made over to him, because, as he adds in the next verse, by this means he is released from the effects of his action, good or bad, and ultimately he reaches Him. This is certainly a pleasanter way than the previous one which would be psychologically difficult for ordinary people to practise. Human nature is so constituted that every action has to be motivated and to call upon man to do action without any desire for the consequences is to put his strength of will to a serious trial. So, the last solution suggested is to make him do the action, only, to have the results transferred over to the Lord. This idea so explicitly stated in the IXth chapter is also repeated in the subsequent chapters. In XII-6 and 7 Krishna assures Arjuna that those who dedicate all their actions to him and worship him in that way, he saves them from this ocean of death and re-birth though he adds that they have to practise it for a long time. The Lord is not prepared to give them the most coveted prize of life for the mere asking. In XVIII-56 and 57 the same idea is repeated.

Some scholars are of opinion that the Gita represents a healthy reaction from the abstractions of the Upanishads. The opening verse of the XII chapter puts the question in a concrete form and the reply is equally frank and unmistakable. The average man longs for a personal God and from the colourless universal soul of the upanishads we come to a personal God in the Gita who understands you, who helps you and who is always ready to come to your assistance. Madhusudhana Saraswati, the most Important *adwaitic* scholar of post-Sankara period is reputed to be the author of a famous verse describing the personal charms of Krishna and ending with the declaration "I know of no truth higher than Krishna." This confession from the great scholar is a statement of the ordinary need of humanity for a personal God and it is this need that is catered to in the Gita. The last solution therefore of handing over the results of action to the Lord, whom we thereby worship, is the most human, the most scientific and the most satisfactory solution of this great problem of getting over the bondage of karma.

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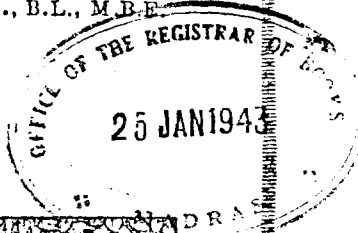
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UNIFIED AND DYNAMIC HINDUISM.*

By

DEWAN BAHADUR K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI.

Hinduism is often described as a federation of faiths rather than as
 a single unified faith, as a tangled tropical forest rather than as a
 "trim garden." But a seeming labyrinth ceases to be one when we
 know the clue. In the case of Hinduism the clue is furnished by the
 Bhagavad Gita.

Hinduism is a religion without a founder. Swami Vivekananda in
 his epoch-making address on Hinduism in Chicago at the famous
 Parliament of Religions in 1893 defined the Veda as the "accumulated
 treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different
 times". Is lack of historicity a source of strength or a source of
 weakness? A person can plead for the one view or the other according
 to his predilection. But after all the supreme tribunal which evaluates
 all religion—with or without founders—is the tribunal of the human
 soul. Hinduism claims that as God is eternal (sanatana) that the soul
 is eternal and that the religious revelation revealing the inter-relations
 of God, Soul and Universe is also eternal. The quest of the Alone for the
 Alone is not more real than the voice of the Alone speaking to the
 Alone.

*Extracts from the Address.

The eternal aspects—dogma, ritual, ceremonial, language, literary and artistic form etc.—vary from time to time and from clime to clime. But the inner urge of Grace in God and of devotion in Man is the same for ever and for ever. When Esperanto supersedes the beautiful languages of the world, a new world religion may supersede the revelations that we know. But both events are only in the land of dreams. The wiser course is to realise the core of each religion and work for a Federation of Faiths, a League of Religions. The war of ideologies in the future will be not between faith and faith but between faith and unfaith, between spiritualism and materialism.

I was reading sometime ago a very fascinating book by Sir Francis Younghusband—the Epic of Mount Everest. He says in it "Indeed the struggle with Everest is all part and parcel of the perpetual struggle of spirit to establish its supremacy over matter. The spiritual means to make itself supreme over even the mightiest of what is material. Both man and mountain have emerged from the same original Earth and therefore have something in common between them. But the mountain is the lower in the scale of being, however massive its outward appearance. And man, the punier in appearance but the greater in reality, *has that within him which will not let him rest* until he has planted his foot on the topmost summit of the highest embodiment of the lower. *He will not be daunted by bulk.* The mountain may be high. But he will show that his spirit is higher. And he will not be content until he has it in subjection under his feet. This is the secret in the heart of the idea of climbing Mount Everest. And in proving his powers man would find that joy which their ever gives". He says further "man needs some one to worship". These words *worship, exaltation and spiritual joy* are of the essence of the supra-physical quest of Hinduism for God. In this quest the average Hindu woman has been more loyal than the average Hindu man, though the highest spiritual achievements show no differences of caste or sex.

After all we must comprehend and judge and enjoy each religion by paying attention to its highest and most significant utterances. The Triratnas and Om Mani Padme Hum contain the essence of Buddhism. The Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount contain the essence of Christianity. The bold declaration of unity of God and of the Holy Prophet as His messenger and of the brotherhood of man contains the essence of Islam. In the same manner we must pass beyond the din and

clash of sectarian warfare and hear the flute call of the Vedas and especially of the Upanishads.

Swami Vivekananda said on one occasion that Europe is the birth place of politics and that Asia is the birth place of religions. It is a remarkable fact that all the great world-religions were born in Asia. Out of them Hinduism and Zoroastrianism and Buddhism were due to the Aryan genius whereas Christianity and Muhammadanism were due to the semitic genius. The former stressed the immanence as well as the transcendence of God and the concept of Ahimsa. The latter stressed the transcendence rather than the immanence of God and the concepts of brotherhood and service. It is a great fact that all of them have met in India which seems to be designed by Providence as the workshop of a new synthesis of religions and cultures, and the birth-place of a League of Religions. I take it that the function of this Federation of Religions is to hasten the advent of that consummation which is most devoutly to be wished. I believe that I am not saying too much when I say that as the result of such federation and the resultant mutual appreciation and comprehension, Christianity and Muhammadanism will come more completely under the sway of the concepts of divine immanence and Ahimsa while the Aryan religions will have a deeper sense of human fellowship and brotherhood and take more intensively than before to the service of man. Then and then alone will the kingdom of God be realised on the Earth.

Within Hinduism many protestant movements arose. Buddhism and Jainism arose as an internal protest but very soon the mother church assimilated the most valuable elements in their ideology without surrendering or sacrificing her own. When Islam came in, some protestant movements arose within Hinduism. Later on when Christianity entered India, other protestant movements arose. But the same process as set in before has been in operation in regard to Sikhism and Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj. The best in these has been assimilated by the mother church without sacrificing her essence. Thus Hinduism has maintained its scheme of moral and spiritual values and its body of vital doctrines and discipline—its ideology as a whole while lessening the rigour of rituals and sacrifices and intensifying the sense of interdependence and brotherhood and emphasising philanthropy and service. Just as she quietly added Bhakti to Jnana which she added quietly to Karma so has she quietly added patriotism and philanthropy

to them all. It is mainly of that mother church—her enduring excellences and her few deficiencies—that I desire to speak today.

Let me make it quite clear that I have no superiority or inferiority complex and that I believe in the harmony of religions and in the universality of the spiritual consciousness.

Ritual, prayer, mythology, scripture, ethic and philosophy are all essential aspects of religion but its soul is realisation. In every religion we have a harmony and fusion of moral and social and spiritual values but the communion of the soul and the oversoul (Anubhava or Vijnana) is its quintessence. "The mortals speak many tongues but the immortals speak but one".

The goal of all religions is eternal bliss and all inculcate worship and adoration and prayer as well as knowledge of God and righteousness though names and forms and modes of worship vary. All of them postulate the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man.

The Scriptures of the Hindus are called Vedas, Smritis, Itihasas, Puranas, Tantras, Agamas and Darsanas and Bhashyas. It will be wrong to regard them as being in any way mutually contradictory. Each of them consolidates, interprets, amplifies and illustrates its predecessors. The Vedas consist of Mantras and Brahmanas and Upanishads. It is also said that Veda consists of Karma Kanda (ritual) and Upasana Kanda (devotion) and Jnana Kanda (philosophy). It is wrong to say as some have done that each successor was a revolt against its predecessors. It is not possible to demonstrate this truth in any great detail here.

The magical word that runs like a golden thread through all these sources of the Hindu Religion is Dharma. We may say of it in regard to them what Sri Krishna says of himself in relation to all creation. Even the Rajya (the state) must bow to Dharma. Dharma is hard to define. It means that which sustains and unites. It unites man through his body to the universe and through his soul to God. It is either Pravritti Dharma or Nivritti Dharma (out going or extroverted activity or ingoing or introspective or introverted activity)—as Sri Sankaracharya convincingly points out in his famous introduction in his Bhagavad Gita Bhashya. The body and the mind are made of the three *gunas* (poise, activity and inertia) and our outgoing activities are determined by the ascendancy of one or other of the *gunas*. But the soul transcends the *gunas* and the bliss of self-realisation is infinite and

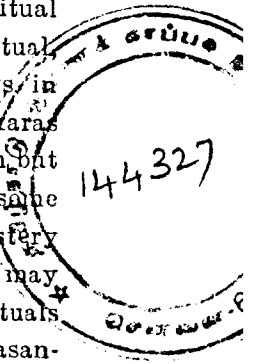
eternal and supreme. Dharma will bring to us happiness here as well as hereafter (*abhyudaya* and *nirarasya*).

It is from this angle of vision that we must comprehend and evaluate the Hindu rituals and the Hindu ethics and the Hindu sociology. The Hindus of today are not taught and do not know the meaning and value of rituals. The forty *samaskaras*, the institution of pilgrimage, cow-worship, the external aspects of *puja* and *parayana* at home, temple worship and festivals in temples—all these are not only symbolic but are also purifactory and fit us to realise God.

If Christians believe in baptism and transubstantiation and the Muslims believe in circumcision and namaz why cannot the Hindus believe in their sacraments? We consider especially sacrosanct our *shradda* ceremonies which link the generations each with each. Our fasts and our feasts have inner meaning and spiritual efficacy. But Hindu seers always felt and declared that ritual, important as it is, is less important than Ethics. Gautama says in his Dharma Sutras that if a person observes all the forty *samaskaras* but is deficient in the eight Atma Gunas he will not attain heaven, but would attain it if he had all the Atma Gunas but was deficient in some of the *samaskaras*. Ritualism by itself would over-concretise the mystery of things and routinise our life and mechanise the souls. It may become degraded into the Tibetan prayer wheel. Further some rituals may well be altered in the light of modern knowledge. Our *mahasan-kalpa* is a mass of wrong cosmogony and erroneous geography. We can and must modify it without affecting its ethical and spiritual appeal. In our temple we can introduce new festivals conveying a visual appeal in respect of sublime episodes in our Itihasas and Puranas. We have the Kailasa Vakana with Ravana prostrate below it but we have no Vibhishana Saranagate festival. We have the Krishna Gopi festival but not the Gita festival. Individual morality is of the essence of Hinduism.

The Gita urges that a person must be of a pure and controlled mind and senses and that the individual soul must feel itself to be the soul of one and all. The excellence of Hinduism is in its clear enunciation of *Punya* (virtue) and *Papa* (sin). Nay it reveals the essence of both.

It reveals also the real basis of love for one's neighbour because it shows that one's neighbour is in essence one's self. The Ramayana teaches that Kama should be subordinated to Dharma while Mahabharata teaches that Artha should be subordinated to Dharma. The



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Hindu doctrine of the Purusharthas is clear and comprehensive and valid for all time. The supreme ethical concept in Hinduism is that of Ahimsa. (Ahimsa paramo dharmah). But Hinduism especially in the Gita knew and said that himsa for defending national freedom and women's honour and the lives of the helpless is but a mode or *Vibhute* of Ahimsa. The cardinal and universal virtues are thus stated by Manu. *Ahimsa satyam astheyam saucham indriyanigraha*, (non-injury, truth, non-covetousness, purity and control of the senses). Abstention from meat and wine is advised and commanded to fit us for our spiritual destiny. The Asrama ideal is a noble ideal though it may not be fully alive today. The Hindu concept of *Rina* is also important and emphasises the fact that a man must discharge his debt to his ancestors and to the Sages and to the Gods.

In the same way we must comprehend the Hindu social concept also. The ideal caste system is a co-operative endeavour in carrying out the will of God, it is based on duties and not on rights, it is based on fellowship and mutual service and it does not involve the notion of superiority and inferiority but only the notion of psychic independence and social interdependence and divine dependence. The caste system brought order if not progress, stability if not efficiency. It has enabled India to achieve racial and religious synthesis. It gave to each profession and fine art and industrial art a pride in its work. Even today India treads the way of a fine balance of agriculture and industry and yearns to harmonise handicrafts and cottage industries and factory industries, so that we may not have the evils of western industrialism and commercialism viz., drudgery and over-production and dumping and cut-throat competition. We ought to modify the rigidity of caste occupations and we must remove untouchability which is a historical legacy rather than a malevolent oppression. But the main features of Hindu Social life can and will and must persist for ever.

Hinduism teaches that a person purified by rituals and ethics can take to the higher *sadana*—Karma Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga. Hinduism allows full latitude to each person to take to any of these and to adopt any form of worship (*Ishtadevata*) according to his taste and temperament and inner urge (*Adhikara*) because all paths eventually lead to God.

Discipline is more important than mere doctrine, conduct and culture and character are more important than creed, and realisation is more

important than ratiocination. We must remember also the concepts of Nirguna Brahman (the absolute) and Suguna Brahman (God) are not destructive of each other but are complementary concepts. God viewed out of any necessary relation to the universe and in Himself is the Absolute. The Absolute viewed in relation to the universe is God. Hinduism believes in the incarnations (avatars) of God. The Universe and the soul are both only emanations from the Oversoul. God is immanent as well as transcendent. He is Infinite Eternal Supreme Bliss. (*Sachchidananda*). Creation is due to His infinite power (*Maya*). *Maya* is not illusion but creative power. When oneness with Brahman is attained we are above the tangled variety of creation and attain infinite eternal changeless bliss. The realisation of our oneness with Brahman and the realisation of God in paradise are two types and not two grades of infinite bliss.

I may say a word here about a few special *differentia* of Hinduism—the doctrine of Karma, image worship and reverence for the cow. The law of karma has been described as implying an unending procession of unnumbered souls taking unending births to reap the unending fruits of unending actions, But it means only law of causality, the law of action and reaction. It need not cause any mood of fatalism at all. It does not say that we are driven by a relentless destiny. As the spirit is omnipotent and we are the architects of our destiny. The law of Karma is inspired by a buoyancy and a sense of our life being an adventure. Karma is potent but God is omnipotent and He can if we love Him sever its bonds. We are in a cosmos governed by time as well as by Law. The goal of human life is not endless *samsara* but infinite and eternal freedom and bliss. Image worship is valuable as it concretises the abstract and helps concentration and is a channel for the inflow of grace. A person who venerates the cross or the church or the mosque or is prepared to die for a flag (which is but a diversely coloured cloth) need not laugh at images. The Hindu worships not the image but the infinite in the image. Let us not forget that the excavations in Harappa and Mohenjo Darao show that iconography is very old in India and that it is not a recent superstition. The cow-worship is not merely reverence for the cow as such but also compassion for the entire animal creation. The cow is in itself the embodiment of ahimsa and service. It gives us the products—milk and ghee—needed for offerings to God. Even from a merely low economic point of view the other religions and races should learn cow protection from Hinduism and the Hindus.

I wish to urge also that the right minded Hindu is not a pessimist or a defeatist or a retreator from reality or a shirker of the battle of life. He knows that terrestrial life is a commingling of joy and sorrow due to the intermingled effects of punya and papa, that it is not wise to be a laughing philosopher or a weeping philosopher, that as the souls' nature is infinite freedom and bliss we must express and affirm its true power and glory in all our acts. He belongs to

"The type of the wise who soar but never roam

True to the kindred points of heaven and home".

I wish to speak out of my mind about a very urgent matter which concerns equally our political welfare and our religious welfare. I know that many of my compatriots wish to secularise politics altogether. But life is a unity and cannot be put up into watertight compartments. Unless we spiritualise politics, politics will be mere intrigue and opportunism. But what we see to-day in India is not the spiritualisation of politics but the theologisation of politics. I wish to sound the note that religion must submit to the test of fervent and non-militant patriotism just as patriotism must submit to the religious test. Bharata Mata subject to Iswara is as important a deity in the pantheon as any other divinity and no one has in the name and under the cover, of any religion, any right whatever to injure her integrity or her purity or her glory. No religion has a right to claim that it is an end in itself quite apart from its effect on the prosperity of the country and the happiness of all its children. An anti-national and un-patriotic religion is but a pseudo faith just as patriotism which does not recognise the higher loyalty to God and cannot or will not reconcile it with the loyalty to the motherland is only pseudo-patriotism and nothing more. If religions quarrel with one another in the name of God, they are disloyal to Him. If they seek to override the national welfare as an equally primary duty along with piety and devotion, then they are equally to blame. Every religion if it is really true to itself, must be equally true to the other religions and to the motherland and to God.

That only is a true religion which feels and says that it is one of the ways of God-realisation and which honours the other religions also and which teaches us to harmonise our duty to our motherland and to God.

I feel strongly that the time has now come as it came in the time of the Gita to re-synthesise Hinduism and to proclaim and broadcast basic Hinduism, because though it is unsuitable that there should be

differences of opinion and hence sects would naturally arise, it is equally inevitable that they should be reabsorbed in a more inclusive faith. Let us remember how Japan is now engaged in the liquidation of various sects of Buddhism and in their amalgamation into a solid unit free from dogmatic doctrines and narrow sectarianism and in a return to the unembellished teachings of Lord Buddha (Vide the Hindu of 9th November 1940). The battles of Karma and Gnana were terrific till Sri Krishna proclaimed the truth of Nishkama Karma.

Equally terrific was the battle between Karma Karana (doing Karma) and Karma Sanyasa till Sri Krishna reconciled them by the great doctrine of Nishkama Karma.

He reconciled also Saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman though the battle started once again afterwards and is going on even today. I venture to submit also that he anticipated the later battles about Bhakti Jnana, about Bhakti and Praptti, about Jivanmukti and Videhamukti and Kramamukti etc. Later on Buddha set right the tilted balance about ceremonialism but overdid his attack on caste and ceremonial and on the reality of the Atman and of the world. Sri Sankara set right the balance in his own way. But very soon his doctrine of Maya and Mithya was regarded as the doctrine of unreality and illusion and a tendency began to exalt the ideal of ascetism over the ideal of duty for duty's sake and the ideal of devotion. Nay a lamentable tendency arose to exalt one or other (Vishnu or Siva) out of the Trimurtis (triple aspects of the saguna brahman) one over the other and there was a waste of human energy and ingenuity on this point and Vyasa's object in writing Saiva and Vaishnava Puranas was forgotten. It was also a pity that the aspect of Brahma (or the Creator) was neglected. Battles started again with Sri Ramanuja as to whether the soul is atomic or infinite, though there is not much difference between an atomic soul with infinite effulgence and an infinite soul with an infinite effulgence. Sri Madhwa brought in his theory of infinite gradations in bliss though all bliss is an absolute and eternal negation of pain. We are now lost in a quagmire of logomachy and angry disputation. The time is now ripe for sincerely and eagerly and passionately searching and discovering and proclaiming a reintegrated resynthesised unified vibrant dynamic Hinduism by means of a new manifestation of our genius for reconciliation and inclusiveness. Go back for God's sake! Go back to Sri Krishna and the Baghavad Gita.

In medieval and modern times Hinduism has exhibited some defects and weaknesses and these have to be remedied and set right hereafter. It showed indifference in the matter of opposition to conversion. Believing as it does in its own unique value and having as it has an inclusiveness which includes the other religions as aspects and modes of itself and regards them as members of its own family, it should have offered a firm and continuous opposition to proselytisation not only because of the consequent possible social discord and political weakness and downfall but also because of its own self-respect and the divine command to reserve itself and perpetuate itself to establish the Kingdom of God on earth especially in India the chosen home of its revelation. Hinduism has hence to become a missionary religion though not with the object of re-conversion out of political motives or of general proselytisation. If social or economic or political motives play any part in any conversion it is an outrage upon the soul of man. Hinduism is not out for general proselytisation because it does not confine heaven to itself and offer only hell for others. But surely it is an act of solemn duty to take back her own children to her bosom if they wish to come back out of genuine conviction. Millions who became converted to Buddhism came back to Hinduism. Further, Hinduism which learnt the lesson of the superiority of ethical conduct and ahimsa and compassion from her own daughter Buddhism must learn a few vital lessons from Christianity and Islam. She must learn church organisation and organised philanthropy and social service from Christianity and a deeper and wider sense of brotherhood from Islam. She must unify her sects once again and affirm and spread basic unified dynamic Hinduism. Where are the Hindu schools and hospitals and orphanages and homes for the blind and the deaf and the dumb and the destitute? Echo answers Where? The Hindus are torn by social feuds, linguistic feuds, sectarian feuds and what not? Will they learn to unite and live or must they disintegrate and die? I passionately believe in a unified and dynamic Hinduism.

I have thus spoken freely and fully and frankly about Hinduism. I shall conclude with two beautiful verses from the Tiruvachakam that supreme gem of Hindu devotional literature—because they express perfectly the “clamant inner urge of the Indian mind towards God and the perfect peace that passeth all understanding.” which comes when we attain communion with God.

எய்த்தேனா யேனினியிங்கிருக் ககில்லேனில்வாழ்க்கை
வைத்தாய் வாங்காய் வாநோரறியா மலர்ச்சேவடியானே
முத்தா வுன்றன் முகவுளி நோக்கி முறுவன்னகைகாண
வத்தாசால வாசைப்பட்டேன் கண்டாயம்மானே.

இன்பம் பெருக்கி யிருளகற்றி வெஞ்ஞான்றுந்
துன்பந் தொடர்வறுத்துச் சோதியா—யன்பமைத்து
சீரார் பெருந்துரையுடையா நென்னுடைய சிந்தையே
பூராகக் கொண்டானுவந்து.

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REVIEW.

'Valaya Vikrayam'

or

The Sale of Bangles.

Kulapati P. A. SUBRAMANIA IYER.

This Story is in 'Halaysa Mahatmyam'. It is thus. Formerly God Somasundara went to the *Rishipatnis* at *Devadaru-Vanam* in the guise of a beggar and begged alms of them. The wives of the *Rishis* fell in love with Him, ran after Him, and gave Him food, ornaments and other things. The *Rishis* thought that their wives had fallen from virtue and cursed them. So in their next birth they became the daughters of rich *Vaisya* merchants in Madura. One day Lord Somasundara came in the guise of a seller of bangles to their street, adorned the wrists of the infatuated *Vaisya* maidens with His bangles and then disappeared.

The interpretation of the Story.

In the hymns of the *Vaishnavaites* Alwars, certain words are used in two senses—the apparent meaning and the hidden significance (வாயு தேசம் or உள்விடைப் பொருள்). Below are some such words taken from Nammalwar's *Tiruvaimozhi* (திருவாய் மொழி).

Words or Phrases.

Swapadesam.

அடிசில், Food

The Holy Names of the Lord

கெய், Ghee

Songs of the Lord

பால், Milk

Bhakti

தூணை முலைகள், The Two breasts

Bhakti and Gnanam

கலையும், வலையும், The dress and bangle

Ahangkaram and Mamakaram—
i.e. I-ness and My-ness.

தேஜமான அணிகலன் Shining

ornaments.

Bowing with folded hands.

With the help of the above, let us try to understand the significance of the important passages in the original Sanskrit.

Passages.

Significance.

Katorakuchabharasthak :

The ladies whose Bhakti

The ladies whose breasts were

and Gnanam were

full-grown.

ripe.

Galitha Valayambara Kuntalah :

The ladies whose

The ladies whose wristlets and dresses

I-ness and My-ness

slipped from them and whose

slipped away

hair got loose.

from them.

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Kaschid Bhiksham Daduh :

Some gave Cooked rice.

Kaschid Abharananicha :

Some gave ornaments.

Payas, Ghrutam, (Daduh :))

(They gave Him) Milk and Ghee.

Pratighrannantu

Mat Sad Valayani

Accept the good bangles from Me.

Some uttered His Holy

Names.

Some bowed to Him with

folded hands.

They showed their Bhakti

by singing songs.

Receive from Me

Ahangkaram and

Mamakaram turned towards

Me, your Lord, and therefore
good for spiritual realisation.

Mahyam Deheeti Kanyakah Prahu

'Grant me those good bangles',

said the maidens.

'Make us Thine. Oh Lord, by

making our I-ness and My-ness

turn towards Thee' said the
maidens.

Punascha Tat Karasparsa Lobhat

&c.—Some maidens desirous of

enjoing the touch of the Lord

again broke the bangles al-

ready given and went to Him

again. And He, secretly pleased,

gave them His good bangles

again.

Some maidens who were fit for a

higher form of Grace begged

saying, 'Bind us closer to Thee

Oh Lord', and He did so.

"How shall I a habit break?"

As you did that habit make.

As you gathered, you must lose;

As you yielded, now refuse.

Thread by thread the strands we twist

Till they bind us neck and wrist;

Thread by thread the patient hand

Must untwine ere free we stand."

—O'Reiley.

With acknowledgments to the Christian Esoteric.

GOD'S NAMES IN THE GITA

By

MR. S. K. YEGNANARAYANA IYER, M.A.

The Upanishads say that the Ultimate Fact cannot be described except by the negative method; the utmost that has been said about It is that It exists, and that It is Knowledge and Bliss.

When we come to the lower planes and view the question from a theistic point of view we find whatever other religions may say, that Hinduism attaches great importance to the Divine Names and recommends their repetition with *Bhakti* and *Sradha* i.e., devotion and faith.

We have therefore a large number of collections of names, one hundred and eight, three hundred or a thousand as the case may be (i.e., *Ashtothara*, *Trisati* or *Sahasranama*) and we have such collections about the various aspects of God, Siva, Vishnu, Lalita and others.

In all these collections deliberate attempts have been made to record and glorify the various characteristics of the Deity concerned as well as to enumerate the exploits of the Deity in the particular incarnation.

The Gita, however, contains quite a large number of names by which Krishna the incarnation of Vishnu is addressed. We shall make a study of them.

They may be broadly classified under the four following headings.

- (i) Arjuna calls Krishna by particular names.
- (ii) Sanjaya the narrator refers to Krishna in various ways.
- (iii) Arjuna praises Him, saying "You are such and such."
- (iv) Krishna Himself declares occasionally that He is so and so.

The whole of the Gita is in the form of a dialogue between Arjuna and his Divine Charioteer Krishna together with short narrations by Sanjaya and therefore names coming under the first two categories mentioned above are likely to be more. In the opening chapter and in Chapter XI (Cosmic Vision) the dialogue proceeds pretty rapidly and hence most of the names under category one are to be found in these. In the other chapters we get just a few in the questions addressed by Arjuna to Krishna. Some chapters there are (IV—XII) in which Arjuna addresses questions, but does not call Krishna by name. In some Chapters (VII, IX, XIII, XV and XVI) there are no questions and hence no names.

Some of the names are repeated and hence the list of names given below is not equal to the number of times He is addressed.

The names under classes I and II are given below (arranged alphabetically). The numeral against a name denotes the number of times the particular name occurs.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Achyuta (3) | 21. Krishna (12) |
| 2. Akshara (1) | 22. Madhava (2) |
| 3. Ananta (1) | 23. Madhusudana (4) |
| 4. Arisudana (1) | 24. Mahabahu (3) |
| 5. Avyakta (1) | 25. Mahatma (4) |
| 6. Bhagavan (2) | 26. Mahayogeswara (1) |
| 7. Bhutabhavana (1) | 27. Parameswara (1) |
| 8. Bhutesa (1) | 28. Prabhu (2) |
| 9. Deva (3) | 29. Purushottama (4) |
| 10. Devadeva (2) | 30. Sahasrabahu (1) |
| 11. Devavara (2) | 31. Varshneya (2) |
| 12. Devesa (2) | 32. Vasudeva (1) |
| 13. Govinda (2) | 33. Vishnu (1) |
| 14. Hari (2) | 34. Viswamurti (1) |
| 15. Hrishikesa (7) | 35. Viswarupa (1) |
| 16. Jagannivasa (3) | 36. Visweswara (1) |
| 17. Jagatpathi (1) | 37. Yadava (1) |
| 18. Janardana (6) | 38. Yogeswara (3) |
| 19. Kamalapatraksha (1) | 39. Yogin (1) |
| 20. Kesava (6) | |

There are twelve names of Vishnu recited every time water is sipped for purification. Of these seven names appear in the above list i.e., Kesava, Madhava, Govinda, Vishnu, Madhusudana, Hrishikesa and Damodara. The following five names are not to be found:—Narayana, Trivikrama, Vamana, Sridhara and Padmanabha. The omission of Narayana is somewhat striking; in fact the word does not occur at all in the whole of the Gita though that is the very first word of the Mahabharata:—

Narayanam namaskritya etc., Parameswara has by usage been associated more with Siva than Vishnu. Others are self-explanatory

I FOLLOW THEE!

BY

MR. T. L. VASWANI.

And in this night of sorrow, gloom,
And darkness which from land to land
Doth spread, I still do see Thy Hand;
And 'mid the thorns Thy Rose doth bloom:
I follow Thee!

The Sindhu flows against the tide,
The birds do sing their morning song.
I hear Thy Flute: it asks, "How long
Wilt thou the Inner Splendour hide?"
I follow Thee!

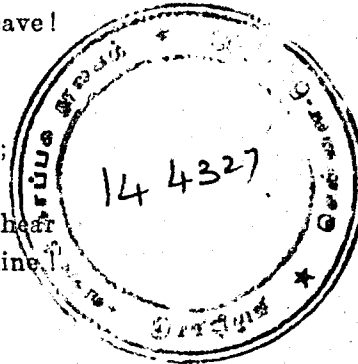
Beyond the night I see the Light
Of a radiant and redeeming morn:
I see a new bright age is born:
I see the coming of Thy Might:
I follow Thee!

Thou callest me: I shall not stay:
All links of kin and home, I leave:
To Thee alone, O Lord, I cleave!
dieu to all! Thou art the Way!
I follow Thee!

I cast off, Lord! all that is mine;
I come, Beloved! to be near
To Thee, to see Thee and to hear
Thy Song of Love: I still am Thine.
I follow Thee!

I know not much: I only know
That work without Thy grace is vain:
Thou wilt make life's dark riddle plain:
I long to lose me in Thy glow:
I follow Thee!

I know Thou art within my heart:
And Thou wilt give me key to ope,
That I in darkness may not grope,
But see in depths of Death Thou Art!
I follow Thee!



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