

# THE BRAHMAVADIN

“एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति”

“That which exists is one : sages call it variously.”

*Rig-veda. I. 164-46.*

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## HUMAN EXERTION AND DIVINE DESTINY

Not as a matter of speculation but as the fruitage of moral struggles in life, the greatest problems stand revealed to the Hindu mind. Momentous questions are solved as they occur, as they hinder or help the journey of life. Metaphysical problems are born of practical life. Every problem shines in its own proper setting. Theories are only added as the flower is sometimes added to adorn the fruit. This is the peculiar feature of Asia. This is the secret of that power and fascination of its thought, its simple and unsophisticated solutions.

The central theme of the Mahâbhârata is to make man realise the proper relation between the Divine Will and the human will, *Karma* and *Dharma*, Destiny and Exertion. The fitting environment in which the soul will struggle to unravel this mystery is in the immediate presence of a great action. In the field of Kurukshetra, the hero of that battle was seized by such a paroxysm of the

soul, a fit of moral confusion. When life is intense there seems to be a suspension of animation. Similarly, after the battle, when the happiness of imperial sway was looming large before him, Yudhishtira was overtaken by stupefaction. A sort of moral epicurianism threatened to overpower him. "Fie on the usages of Kshatriyas, fie on might and valor, fie on wrath! Blessed are forgiveness and self-restraint and purity with renunciation and humility, abstention from injury, and truthfulness of speech, practised by forest recluses", cried the greatest emperor on earth. "This empire soaked in the blood of kith and kin, of those dear and near to us no longer gives me happiness. I have resolved to retire into the forest; with matted locks, living on roots and herbs practise asceticism and seek emancipation; abandoning the whole of my kingdom, escaping from the ties of this world, from grief and affection, I will follow the path of renunciation" said Dharma.

This is the great mood, the agony of soul, in which one can best realise the glory of human effort and its relation to God. All the greatest men and women of the age, mighty men of action, profound thinkers and spiritual giants, are brought together to discuss the question, and to dissuade Dharmarâja from a life of negation and to raise him out of the mental stupor, born of self-reproach.

Walk along the path of Duty *Dharma*, says Arjuna. In this world there is no such thing as absolute righteousness. Right and wrong-in all acts something of both is seen. Righteousness is not a matter of speculation. Virtue and knowledge are two different moods of the soul. Virtue does not depend on the intellect but on the will. It lies in moral strength, in action, in victorious contest. There are two things, inaction or renunciation which avoids the evil and right action which seeks the good. Of these the latter is

the better especially for a Rājanya. If destiny is inexorable, then the negative morality 'of endure and abstain' is inferior to the positive one of 'labor and toil'. Doing one's duty as ordained in the Scriptures is the best reconciliation with destiny. The religion of royalty, lies through wealth, sacrifice and wielding the rod of chastisement. A Rājanya's emancipation lies through an extended social life—a life which widens the horizon of his duties and affords him alone the opportunity of practising the aristocratic virtues of liberality and of upholding justice—Dandaniti. Heart-freezing renunciation can really bring no peace. Peace is only found in reconciliation with destiny, when that destiny seems good. One can never live on negations. There must be something positive to work upon ; for the soul will never submit to its abandonment. One may break his old idol but one must have some other one. Besides, by a contemplative life a king incurs positive sin. For, a state without the rod of chastisement is a moral chaos. The king is burdened with the sins of his subjects. Therefore give up this mental inanition and fulfil thy destiny by action.

Bhima, the mighty man of labors, argues it out from a different point of view. For a man of action to condemn action is censuring the Supreme Ordainer Himself. It is infidelity. Human freedom is always expressed in terms of necessity. Freedom consists in knowing the limitations of one's own nature and the performance of all ones (*functions*) Duties. This is to live in harmony with the Divine Will. It is in the nature of all creatures to seek happiness. Happiness derives its value not from itself, but from its union with the mind. True renunciation is freedom from the yoke of passion and not the abandonment of action. Not to suffer in body, to be untroubled in mind is the religion of healthy-mindedness. There are

two diseases viz. physical and mental. Each breeds the other. When the bile, wind and phlegm are in equilibrium the body is said to be sound. The harmony of *sattwa*, *rajas* and *tamas* is mental peace. As a disillusioned man you must conquer your mind, not by barren renunciation but by lawful action, consistent with your nature as a wise and great emperor.

The sage Sahadeva, brought his spirituality to bear on the question. By casting off all external objects alone, by casting off even mental attachments, the attainment of success is doubtful. None can break the law of necessity. Therefore, it is our duty to live in harmony with this Supreme Law of nature. This is achieved by an ethical life. Inspired by a high sense of duty, we flow smoothly along the current of destiny. The whole of ethics is summed up in two words *mama* (mine) and *namama* (not-mine). *Mama* is sin and *namama* righteousness. Virtue is in no sense a personal thing or the pursuit of individual perfection. One must convert the latent energy of the soul into potent power for good. Spiritual life is to live more and more in the universal; it is to make the universal end one's own. By the immolation of our selfish will and the sacrifice of binding desires the individual will becomes a part of or a true reflection of the Universal Will. Living for self is evil; living for others is virtue. Willingly accepting one's lot in life and freely submitting to espousing the destiny assigned to us, in short, joyfully doing one's duty as ordained in the Scriptures, is the highest form of life. The identification of the individual good with the social is the very essence of the duties of a Râjanya. By widening the area of one's self one's will become identical with the Universal Will. We become one with Brahman. "Behold, O Bharata, the hearts and the outward forms of all creatures to be but manifesta-



tions of thy own self." Dissolve thy self in the larger self of the nation. Believing in the immortality of the soul, free from attachment a king must exert. The highest religion of self-surrender is his duty, his means and his end.

The best life is the strenuous life, said Vyâsa, the Rishi and soul of the epic age. Doing one's *Dharma* is the safest path. Any other duty but that of wielding the *Danda* judiciously and ruling the subjects is a wrong path for a Kshatriya. Any course of conduct impelled by individual fancy or delusion is not the means to emancipation. It is only the tyranny of capricious desire and passion. Duty is Divine. It angelises man. It must be performed not according to one's fancy or desire but to the best of one's powers. Our tasks fail or succeed through destiny. If however, exertion, be applied sin would not touch the king. Failure to accomplish an end cannot be called a trespass. Right action protects us from sin in the operation of destiny. Sin touches a man when he considers himself to be the doer. No man can acquire any thing by his own acts or by sacrifice or worship. Time it is that does everything. In reality no one slays or is slain. Death and destruction is in the very nature of things and sorrow comes with attachment and desire. A *gnânin* must cast off both sorrow and happiness and act. It beloveth thee not to indulge in grief.

All creatures that are born display at first union and dissolution overtakes them at the end. Like bubbles in water they rise and disappear. Union ends in dissolution, life in death, idleness in misery, and labor in happiness. Friends are not competent to bestow happiness nor foes competent to inflict misery. Since, O son of Kunti ! thou hast been created by the Maker for *work* thou art not competent to avoid work. Delusion of the mind and accession

of distress are the hidden motives behind sorrow. Therefore be free from elation and depression. Health, wealth, happiness, and misery are all through destiny. Wonderful is the course of destiny. Understand with a clear mind the relation between *destiny* and exertion.

Is the Supreme Being the doer or is man the doer? Is every thing the result of chance, or the fruits that we enjoy or suffer, the results of past action? If man does all acts good or bad, being urged thereto by the Supreme Being, then the fruits of these acts should attach to the Supreme Being Himself. If again man himself be the agent of all his acts virtuous or sinful, then the Supreme Director there is none, and therefore, whatever man has done can bring no evil consequences on him. If again destiny be the result of the acts of former life, then no sin can attach to one in this life, even as the sin of cutting down a tree cannot touch the maker of the axe. If thou thinkest that chance only acts in the world, then, such an act of destruction could never happen nor will ever happen; for the universe is guided by the law of cause and effect. And there would be no question of moral responsibility at all. In whatever way considered, whether there is a 'holy will' at the root of destiny or not, *Dharma* is still the pole-star of humanity.

That greatest hero whose life is an embodiment of the essence of the Mahâbhârata, the man who is equally instinct with *Karma*, *Gnâna* and *Bhakti*, one who is great in action yet, greater in renunciation, Bhishma says:—A King by worshipping the deities and the Brahmanas with a desire to please his subjects pays off his debt to duty and morality and receives the respect of his subjects. A life of action with a view to the good of his subjects is the worship of a Kshatriya. A king should always exert with promptitude; without exertion, mere destiny never accom-

plishes the objects cherished by kings. These two—*destiny* and *exertion* are equal in their operation. Of these I regard exertion to be superior. For, destiny is ascertained from the result of what is begun with exertion. One ought not to indulge in grief if what is begun ends disastrously. For one should exert oneself in the same act with redoubled attention. Work is therefore worship. Only, truth, self-control and a sense of justice must guide the mind in the practise of *Dharma*

All the Indian thinkers deny man absolute freedom. Physical man is a tiny thing floating along the stream of Divine Destiny. But the moral man has a sort of freedom. Unlike the Western *isms* which seek in phenomena the source of the laws of spiritual life, the Indian thinkers did not deprive man of all initiative in action, of all moral responsibility. The universe is not the soulless 'material mechanism' of English thinkers. As Vyâsa puts it, phenomenal freedom takes away as much all moral value of life as, belief in the complete initiative of the Divine Will. 'The successive causality' of the phenomenal world is an apparent fact; the 'efficient causality' of the nominal world is a reality. These two are not contradictory. The one is the fruit of the other as Bhishma puts it. *Dharma*, the *categorical imperative* of Kant, reconciles the two. Absolute freedom there is none. *Dharma* has no value without the idea of freedom. Hence the Vedanta posits relative freedom to man; freedom to follow ones own *Dharma* as laid down in the ordinances and fulfil one's destiny.

The idea of *Dharma* is relative and varies with individuals; and even with the mental attitude of individuals. This ancient idea of *Dharma* as an efficient moral guide to human actions is unknown to the modern civilization—a civilization whose institutions are built on

the idea of *right*. An imperfect approach to it is found in the Greek conception of *Functions*. *Dharma* has the power of making man live in the world and yet be not of it. It is a moral necessity that sets free the soul. It is a bondage that is freedom. A right conception of duty preserves the mental equilibrium. The mind lives in the middle course between apathy and excess. Action as effect as well as action as cause cease to enthrall the soul. Past-action becomes powerless and the present ceases to forge bondages for the future. In short by right action we escape the play of cause and effect.

“By exertion the *Amrita* was obtained; by exertion the *asuras* were slain; by exertion Indra himself obtained sovereignty in Heaven and on Earth.” Verily as the Lord has declared in the Gita “To work alone we have the right and not to the fruits thereof.”

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## VEDĀRTHASĀNGRAHA

(EPITOME OF VEDIC TEACHINGS.)

*By Bhagavān Rāmānuja.*

*(Continued from page 472.)*

Again, this position is also untenable, namely, that the *Brahman* is pure intelligence devoid of attributes, and that He has His essential nature concealed by an encompassing *avidyā* (or ignorance) and (thus) sees manifoldness within Himself. Concealment is well known to be the exclusion of light; by not accepting the attribute of luminosity over and above the essential nature (of the *Brahman*), luminosity itself becomes (His) essence and hence results (by concealment) the destruction of (His) essence itself. This is childish talk, namely, that knowledge which is synonymous with light is eternal, and that light (or luminosity) is concealed by *avidyā* (or ignorance). That light is concealed by *avidyā* (or ignorance) means that there is an obstruction to the production of light, or that destruction of the light which is directly visible takes place; as light is not a product, the destruction of the essence itself takes place. If it be said that light is eternal and immodifiable, then your practical realisation to this effect, namely, that even when *avidyā* (or ignorance) is really existent, nothing of the *Brahman* is concealed (by it) and (yet) He sees manifoldness (within Himself), is certainly unworthy of being uttered in the presence of the good (*i.e.* the wise).

It may, however, be again urged (by you) thus:— according to your view also, the self whose essence is



intelligence has to be accepted, and that (self) is self-luminous; where there is false identification of itself with the material forms known as gods, &c., the concealment of the luminosity of its essential nature has to be necessarily accepted; because when the luminosity of the essential nature (of the self) exists, there cannot be the superimposition of any other nature on one's self; therefore, this mistaken notion is common to you also; moreover, in our view, the difficulty of adjustment, as pointed out by you, is in relation to only one Self; but in your view, since an infinity of selves is accepted, this mistaken notion is incapable of being set aside in regard to all the selves.

In regard to this it is stated in reply thus:—The Supreme *Brahman* is possessed of an essence which is naturally the opposite of all that is evil, which is infinite and which consists solely of knowledge and bliss; He possesses innumerable 'oceans' of noble qualities which are by nature unsurpassed in excellence; He owns the infinite and great glory (of the Highest Heaven) that is untouched by any of the (evil) modifications brought about by Time whose essence consists of innumerable characteristic divisions beginning with *nīmeshas*, *kāshṭhās*, *kalās* and *muhūrtas* and ending with the *parārdha*\*, and which forms the instrumental cause of all modifications such as the origin, preservation and

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\* A *nīmesha* is a twinkling of the eye, considered as a measure of time. According to some it is= $1/18$  *Kāshṭhā*= $1/540$  *Kalā*= $1/16200$  *kṣhāṇa*= $1/194400$  *muhūrta*= $1/5832000$  day= $7/135$ th of a second, a day being equal to 24 hours; according to *Vishṇu-Purāṇa*, a *nīmesha* is= $1/15$  *kāshṭhā*= $1/450$  *Kalā*= $1/13500$  *muhūrta*= $1/405000$  day= $16/75$ th of a second. A *parārdha* is 50 years of the four-faced

destruction of all things; by reason of His being the internal controller of the totality of things which form the instruments of His sport and consist (first) of the infinite number of intelligent individual selves of various kinds both in the bound and the freed conditions, secondly, of that (material nature) which has the power of undergoing infinite and wonderful modifications forming the objects of enjoyment for those selves and which is other than the intelligent individual selves—there results to Him the condition—with which He is associated—of having all things as His modes through all things forming His body: such (a *Brahman*) is the object of knowledge; and there is the *Veda* (or the means of knowledge) which is amplified and supported by the *Dharma-Śāstras*, *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*\* that are based on the *vidhis*, *mantras* and *arthavādas*,† and have been composed

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creator *Brahmā*s life and is thus calculated: each day of this *Brahmā* is 4,320,000,000 solar years and his night also is equal to the day; 360 days and nights are equal to 1 year and 50 of these years are equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  the term of his life.

\* *Dharma-śāstras* are the sacred Law Books; *Itihāsas* like the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* are works purporting to deal with ancient history; *purāṇas* are works which treat of the five topics, viz primordial creation or evolution of matter, primordial creation of form-possessing conscious and unconscious bodies, genealogy of the gods, &c., periods of time known as the *manvantaras*, and the history of the dynasties of kings.

† The *Veda* consists, according to the opinion of the *Mīmāṃsakas*, of three parts, viz. *Mantras*, *Vidhis* and *arthavādas*. *Mantras* are sacred hymns and prayers, &c. *Vidhis* are injunctions i.e. rules laying down the performance of particular rites. *Arthavādas* are explanatory remarks on the meaning of *mantras* and the purpose of rites, and consist of

by a number of venerable sages like Dwaipāyana, Parāśara, Vālmiki, Manu, Yājnyavalkya, Gautama, Āpastamba, who are capable of directly perceiving that (*Brahman*); which (*Veda*) is real, which has an uninterrupted tradition having no beginning and no end, which has endless branches like the *Rik*, the *Yajus*, the *Sāman* and the *Atharvan*;—for us who accept them (both *i.e.* the *Brahman* and the *Veda* above mentioned) what is there that is not established?

To this effect it has been stated by the venerable Dwaipāyana in the *Mahābhārata* thus:—"Whoever knows me as the unborn, as the beginningless, as the great Lord of the world"; "there are these two beings in the world, namely, the destructible and the indestructible as well; the destructible are the beings and the indestructible is called the eternally unchangeable (self)"; "The Highest person is another; and He is called the Highest Self who, having entered the three worlds as the imperishable Lord, supports (them)"; "He (*i.e.* the freed soul) causes Fire to undergo modification there (*i.e.* in the Highest Heaven of God); Time is not powerful indeed there"; "These, my dear child, are hells, assuredly, in

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*nindā* or censure, *i.e.* controversial remarks; *Śamsā*, *i.e.* eulogium or 'recommendation'; *Purākalpa* or the account of sacrificial rites in former times; *Parakṛiti* *i.e.* the achievement or feat of another. This last comprises the stories about certain performances of renowned *śrotriya*s or sacrificial priests, about gifts presented by kings to *Brāhmaṇa*s. Under the head of *Purākalpa* come the numerous stories of the fight between the *Devā*s and the *Asura*s, as also the legends concerning the sacrifices performed by the gods. Thus *Arthavādas* include all the explanatory and eulogistic allegories, fables, &c.

relation to the abode of the Supreme Self"; "All this which begins with the undifferentiated *prakṛiti* and ends with the *Viśeṣhas*\* (or the particular modifications thereof) which are associated with the processes of modification and increase, know that to be the sport of Hari (Viṣṇu)"; "Kṛishṇa (the Lord) is indeed the source and destruction of the worlds; the whole of this universe of movable and immovable things is sprung for the sake of Krishna Himself";—the meaning of the expression 'for the sake of Krishna Himself' is 'as being subservient unto the glory of Krishna'. It has been stated by the venerable Parāśara also thus:—"O Maitreya, the word *Bhagavat* (Divine Lord) is used to denote the Highest *Brahman* who is pure and is well known as the possessor of great sovereignty, and is the cause of all causes. . . . knowledge, power, strength, sovereignty, heroism, splendour—all these are fully expressed by the word *Bhagavat*; only evil (undesirable) qualities and other such things are not. Such, O maitreya, is this important word *Bhagavat*. (It is applied) to Vāsudeva who is the Highest *Brahman*, and is not applicable to others. Here, this word, denotes by convention, a thing deserving of worship, and is not used in its secondary sense; elsewhere indeed, it is used in its secondary sense"; "The highest abode called Viṣṇu is, in this manner, stainless, eternal, all-pervading, undecaying and free from all evil"; "Time which is made up of the divisions of time known as *kalā*, *muhūrta*, &c., cannot be the cause of any

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\* *Prakṛiti* is that state of primordial nature out of which proceeds the evolution of the various constituent elements of the universe. The *viśeṣhas* are the particular elements of the universe; namely, the organs of perception, and of activity, the mind and the gross elements.

modification in relation to His (eternal) glory (of the Highest Heaven); "Listen to His activities which are like those of a boy at play." The following and other such passages are given by Manu also :—"He is the Ruler of all, and is smaller than the smallest." The following passage among others is given by Yājñavalkya also :—"The highest purity of the individual self is considered to be the result of the knowledge of the Lord." The following passage is given by Āpastamba also :—"All beings form the 'city' of Him who is seated in the 'cave'." The meaning is that all the living beings form the 'city' *i.e.* the body of Him who is seated in the 'cave' (of the heart) that is of the Supreme Self. The *living beings* are the collections of beings consisting of the individual selves.

*(To be Continued.)*



## ISOPANISHAD.

(Continued from page 459.)

12th to 15th Mantra. Those who are attached to the principle of *Shunya* (eternal void) which is never coming into manifestation and which always remains as the back-ground of the manifested universe which is said to be the असंभूति or that which is never manifest they enter into darkness of ignorance for they keep themselves apart from the knowledge of the Real Being who is not only a sum of negations who does not only remain ever in manifest but who combines in Himself all possible negations and affirmations which though really ever remaining beyond all manifestations is at the same time ever assuming innumerable forms. So the truth is not that the real Being is ever unmanifest but that it is both manifest and unmanifest.

To realise the truth onesidedness is to be avoided and so to be attached to the principle which is altogether different from all manifestations is a serious error and at the same time to be attached to the mere forms of the manifested appearances is still more deplorable. So the Sruti says :—Those who devote themselves to the ever unmanifest principle enter into the abyss of darkness and those who devote themselves to the ever changing phenomenal forms enter into still worse darkness of ignorance (unmanifest principle) refers to the peculiar principle of शून्यवाद Shunyavadas who think that nothing that seems to exist in the universe is real as it is ever changing and ever ceasing to be, so they give up their faith in all that seems to exist and put faith in some imaginary void which they suppose to

be only real as all that exists has to be subtracted from the universe as unreal. The residue that can be left being only eternal void. They are onesided in so far as they have been able to perceive the ever changing aspect of the phenomenal world but they have not been able to grasp the ever subsisting, the ever continuing basis of all-the essence of the eternal consciousness whichever remains the same inspite of all the fluctuations and variations of the appearances and we find it laid down that attachment to the phenomenal aspect of the universe if it is for the sake of knowledge leads to quite different results and devotion to the unmanifest principle of the universe leads to another consequence when followed in onesided manner but if both be taken together and studied in one continuous system so that the relation of each to the other might be made clear, they both lead to quite different results. The knowledge of the phenomenon as such when seen in relation to the unmanifest side of the universe will give us the assurance that there is no real death of the real life of all though the forms may go on changing as much as they like and the knowledge of the unmanifest principle in relation to the various manifestations that are supported by it, enable us to identify ourselves with the real living principle of the universe which of its own inherent nature manifests itself in innumerable forms and though the forms are in incessant flux and variation the living principle ever continues the same realising its identical life in the everchanging innumerable forms. To divorce it from the forms is calculated to make it a dead thing never capable of self realisation and self consciousness. This can only be avoided when its relation with the forms is ever kept intact, its divorce with its real unmanifest nature and complete identity with mere forms is also caculated to make it dead thing for that too would

make it incapable of self realisation and self consciousness. So life, real life, is neither mere form nor merely the formless it is that which though formless in itself is ever appearing in the innumerable forms of the universe so the shruti says :—He who has knowledge of both the *ever unmanifest and the ever manifesting form*, he crosses the ocean of death by the knowledge of the fact that manifesting phenomena have their being only in relation to the unmanifest and he becomes immortal by realising the unmanifest as the essence, the basis and the life of the ever changing phenomenal world.

15th to 18th Mantras. Thus realising this mystery the seer exclaims that the real truth is hidden under a shining golden cover meaning thereby that the truth is ever shining but it has got over it the cover of forms that are ever being projected by the ever-conscious principle behind it the cover being an idealistic cover, the cover of thought forms. So it is said to be *हिरायमयवाज्योति मय* Remove that cover, O Pushan ! the great being who supports the entire universe so that the real truth—might be seen O Pushan ! the supporter of the universe thou art the only real being, the only real seer of the entire universe (*ऋषिदर्शनात्*) Thou art the only controller or the regulator of the universe *यम*. Thou art the producer, the inspirer and the invigorator of the entire universe (*सूर्यः*) The manifested being deriving your existence from the Eternal *प्रजापति* or *परब्रह्मन्*. The entire universe of forms represent your rays, with-draw them and with draw your light so that I might see the real blissful essence that lies behind all these manifestations. Seeing that the Rishi again exclaims. “ He who is the real *पुरुष* the real life of the same. There is no difference so far as the real life is concerned. Then the Rishi turns his enlightened vision into his own subjective

self and finds in him the various principles \* of which this physical body is composed. He realises it to be भस्मान्त destined to come to an end by being burnt up and reduced to ashes and so he exclaims in disgust, " This body is nothing but ashes but behind this there is the वायु - or the प्राणमयकोष and behind this प्राण is the ever moving principle of will or मनोमयकोष here denoted by the word अनिल. Behind that again is the ever surviving, the ever continuing principle of discrimination which as an aspect of consciousness ever remains and so it is said to be Amrita. This whole mantra taken together, the प्राण, मन, चिज्ञ, or वायु, अनिल and the अमृत go to make up the कर्तु the individual जीव or the doer, the real actor in the universe is this combined entity, the embodiment of these principles. So the Rishi who has in his samadhik vision realised his oneness with the essence of the universal spirit addresses his embodied ego as something different from him and calls upon his कर्तु or his active self to remember his कृत or actions for he sees that the कर्तु is according to the actions or *kritas*. So he warns his कर्तु to beware of his कृत for कृत his actions will go on making his *kratu* after their own nature and realising the long distance that he has to travel in order to make his *kratu* one with the eternal पुरुष the real essence of the entire universe, he praises fervently to the universal spirit in his aspect of the eternal Light or Illumination to show him the path of true knowledge and lead him away from sins and inequities of the world so that the infinite spiritual Bliss of the Real Self might be realised.

MANGAL CHARAN B.L.

## \* BHAGAVAD GITA—AN ESSAY.

(Continued from page 417).

### IX. (a)

#### *Fourth Reason.*

Inasmuch as the world is of an eggregious nature, as is evidenced by what our Lord says,

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

“What the wise man doth, another doth likewise ; what law he may make, the world follows it” ; a man of special distinction ought to make it a point to set an example to the world by himself playing his part and performing all the duties assigned to his varna and âsrama. The very Lord Sri Krishna, though there is naught for Him to do, is yet ever at work. Why? The Lord replies,

यदिह्यहं नवर्तेय जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्या कर्मचेदहम् ।

संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्त्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥

“If I did not, for once, out of indolence engage in work, all mankind, Partha, will copy My ways in every way.

“If I did not Myself perform work, all these worlds would go to ruin, I would be creating disorder and work-

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\* This article numbered IX (a) ought to have appeared before that numbered X in the October issue.



ing the downfall of all those creatures," Now, if all persons of light and leading betake themselves to *Gnana-yoga*, all the rest of mankind, worthy or unworthy, would likewise follow their example, not knowing that their stage was far behind that of those whom they try to follow. Hence the cardinal piece of advice given by our Lord :—

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।

जोषयेत्सर्वकर्मणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥

"Let not the mind of the unwise attached to works, be unsettled ; and let the wise heartily enter into works to encourage them",

None need fear that work brings in attachment of some kind or other and as such must be altogether avoided. The fact is that all kinds of work are born of the *gunas* of matter and the wise that know this simple truth remain unattached in the midst of their work and literally act up to the golden advice of our Lord,

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युद्धस्व बिगतज्वरः ॥

"Surrendering all actions to Me, with thy thoughts resting on the Snpreme self, from hope and egoism freed and of mental fever cured, engage in battle."

*Fifth Reason.*

The difficulties and dangers wherewith *Gnana-yoga* are attended are given below. They form, as it were, a negative reason as to why *karma-yoga* is to be preferred to *Gnâna yoga*. Habit, it is said, is second nature. A person may be admirably versed in all the Vedas and the *Sasthras* ; he may with immense facility untie all knotty points ; he may know full well that *atma* differs

from matter and that atma should form the sole object of his contemplation. He may, with all this, have allowed himself, by dint of habit, to be carried along the current of material objects. In fact, as our Lord says,

सदशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

“Even the Gnâni follows the bent of his nature.” Love and Hatred toss him here and there and hold in their iron grip the Gnâni, who would otherwise pass through the Gnana-yoga course. He is thus turned from his purpose and lost.

A question naturally crops up here. What is it that impels a person, as it were by force, into the ways of evil—who is desirous of embarking on the course of Gnâna-yôga? Very rightly, then, did Arjuna ask our Lord,

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।

अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥

“What is it, then, Varshneya, prompted by which one wallows in sin, as if forced into it against his will?”

The Lord replies :—

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणाम् ।

कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥

“Desire it is, anger it is—which is begotten of rajo-guna. This foe, here, know, is all-consuming, all sinful.”

“The Gnâna of the Gnâni, Kounteya is enwrapped by this (foe) in the guise of desire, insatiable and inexhaustible,”

What are the instruments whereby desire takes possession of atma?

Our Lord replies :—

इन्द्रियाणि मनोबुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियभ्यः परं मनः ॥

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥

“The senses, the manas and the buddhi are its seats”,

“The senses, they say, are the chief (obstacles); manas, even more than the senses; yet, buddhi, more than manas; but *that* is even more than buddhi.”

The meaning is this. While the senses are occupied with objective concerns knowledge can never develop the atma. Even though the senses may be quiescent, the manas (feelings) may be full of objective thoughts and prevent the development of atma-knowledge. Again, even though manas may be quiet, buddhi (thought) may be ill-directed and prevent the development of atma-knowledge. Lastly, the senses, manas and buddhi may all be passive and quiet and yet that foe, viz, desire, deeply rooted in the heart may assert its mastery over all and obscure the light of atma-knowledge. Steadying, therefore, the manas with the buddhi, *i.e.*, controlling feelings by thought and judgment, destroy the lust-shaped foe or desire. Such control is possible only by the way which our Lord suggests;—

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।

पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥

“By first constraining the senses, therefore, O Bharatar-shabha, do thou vanquish this sinner (desire), the destroyer of Gnâna and Vignâna,”

*Constrain the senses means make the senses busy themselves in their appropriate occupations pertaining to Karma-yôga,*

The drift of the fifth reason as to why karma yôga is to be preferred to Gnâna yôga is this:

Habit is second nature. Even a gnâni cannot easily escape from the force of habit. The path of gnâna yôga (though it is a superior and shorter one) is attended with insuperable difficulties, while that of karma yôga (though it is destitute of great virtues in it) is easy and bereft of any danger.

Therefore

श्रेयांश्चधर्मो विगुणःपरधर्मास्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

“Though wanting in merit, better is one’s own Dharma (Karma yôga) than another’s Dharma (Gnâna-yôga) well-performed. In one’s own Dharma, death is noble, other’s Dharma is danger-fraught? Hence karma yôga is preferable to Gnâna yôga.

Here the third chapter ends.

M. S. RAMASWAMI AIVAR, B.A., L.T.

(To be continued)

## JAINA CENTRES IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

Few—even among educated persons—are aware of the existence of Jainas and Jaina centres in Southern India, fewer still have any definite Knowledge about their language, manners, customs &c. It was only when, incidentally in the course of a conversation, most of my friends disclosed their utter ignorance of the Jainas and the places where they lie scattered in this Presidency, I was induced to write a short paper like the present one on the seats of the relics of an old and once powerful race who have enriched Indian literature and brought civilization in several other ways. At the present time, however, the Jainas have almost been forgotten and they are all very poor except perhaps in the Bombay Presidency where many of them are opulent and flourishing traders.

The Madras Presidency discloses vestiges of Jaina dominion almost everywhere and on many a roadside a stone Tirthankara standing or sitting cross-legged is a common enough sight. The present day interpretations of these images are the same all the Presidency over. If the images are two, one represents a debtor and the other a creditor, both having met on the road and waiting to get their accounts settled and cleared. If it is only one image, it presents a debtor paying penalty for not having squared up his accounts with his creditor. Even well-informed persons oftentimes mistake a Jaina idol for a Bauddha one. In fact, Jainas and Jainism are little known.

The first and foremost of Jaina settlements in Southern India is Śravaṇa Belgola. Its original name was Kalbappu old (kanareese) which is Sanskritised into katavaprakshetra.



The place is in the Channarâyapatna Tâlûka of the Hâssan District in the Mysore State and is reached through the Arsikere railway station *via* Chennarâyapatna wherefrom it is only eight miles. The fine, small town is situated between two hills, a furlong from each other. The hill to the north is called Chandragiri and is the smaller of the two. This hill contains on its summit the most ancient temples and monopolises all the oldest inscriptions of those temples. The oldest is the Chandra-gupta Basti <sup>1</sup> and next in importance is the Pârśavanâtha Basti which contains the beautiful inscription called the Mallîśêna epitaph <sup>2</sup>. Kattale Basti <sup>3</sup> comes next and has some very fine pieces of sculpture and fretwork in stone. There is also a huge unfinished statue of Gommatêśvara on the top of this hill. A large portion of its several inscriptions records instances of the religious suicide known as Sallêkhana committed by pious Jainas at various times. The earliest such event is recorded in the so-called Bhadrabâhu inscription. There has been a great deal of learned discussion regarding the identity of the above martyr. A flight of steps recently cut into the rock itself leads to the top of this hill.

The southern hill is, as already stated, larger than the northern one and is known as Vindhyagiri; it is about 400 ft high and is a bald, granite rock somewhat like the one at Trichinopoly. This hill too has a fine flight of steps also cut into the rock itself. It is on the top of this hill that the famous megalithic statue of Gommatêśvara is

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1. A basti is a temple having a Jaina Tirthankara seated cross-legged with hands resting one over the other on the ankees.

2. Published in Ep. Ind. Vol. III.

3. Dark-basti; because it has in front of it the Pârśavanâtha basti which cuts off all light from outside.

set up. This gigantic piece of sculpture was executed in the reign of the Ganga King Râchamalla, by his military commander Śrî Chamundarâya (A.D. 977—84, last quarter of the tenth century). It measures 62ft in high and the following are the measurements of the various parts of the idol as taken from Mr. Riee's "Sravana Belgola". (It is interesting to note that the scale used by the artist corresponds to the modern French metre.

	Ft.	In.
Total height ... ..	50	0
From the bottom of the ear to the crown of the head, about ... ..	6	6
Length of the foot ... ..	9	0
Breadth across the front foot ... ..	4	6
Length of the great toe ... ..	2	9
Half girth at the instep ... ..	6	4
Half girth of the thigh ... ..	10	0
From the hip to the ear ... ..	24	6
From the coccyx to the ear ... ..	20	0
Breadth across the Pelvis ... ..	13	0
Breadth at the waist ... ..	10	0
From the waist and elbow to the ear ... ..	17	0
From the arm-pit to the ear ... ..	7	0
Breadth across the shoulders ... ..	26	0
From the base of the neck to the ear ... ..	2	6
Length of the forefinger ... ..	3	6
Length of the middle finger ... ..	5	3
Length of the third finger ... ..	4	7
Length of the fourth finger ... ..	2	8

Surrounding this image which stands in the open air is the Suttâlâya constructed by Ganga Raja, a military officer of the Hoysala King Bitti Vishnuvardhana. Besides this chief temple, there are two or three minor shrines on this hill.

Between the two hills on the western end of the town lies the large and beautiful tank of Belgolatîrtha (Kan. Bel-white, kola-tank) or Dhavala Sarovara. All round, this tank has graceful steps, though, of course, the water is mossy and dirty.

On the eastern end of the town is a big basti called the Bhandâra basti. It is a fairly big temple dedicated to all the twenty-four Tîrthankaras. In this temple, there is a stone which bears an inscription recording a compact entered into by the Śrî Vaishnavas and the Jainas at the instance of Bukkarâya of the Vijayanagara dynasty. The compact is for their mutual protection against the attacks and inroads of the Lingâyats. When any damage is caused to any temple, Śrî Vishnava or Jaina by the Lingâyats, the compact provides that the damage must be made good by sums of money raised from both. They must conjointly collect sufficient money also for employing men to guard the temples of both. The above document is locally known as the Śâsana of Ramanujacharya <sup>4</sup>. Opposite to it and situated at the end of a lane is another temple called the Akkana basti. It is a pretty old one of its kind. To the right of the Bhandara is the *matha* of the Jaina Swâmi whose jurisdiction extends as far north as Delhi. The name of the present Swami is Chârukîrthi-panditâchârya. This *matha* contains a library of Jaina manuscripts.

The bulk of the population of this pretty little town is of the Jaina faith. These Jainas belong to one or other of the four varnas (castes). The Jaina Brahmins are as good as the Hindu Brahmins in point of cleanliness and habits. Those that make the puja etc, and officiate as

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4. This is dated 1290 S. corresponding to Kîlaka Samvatsara.

priests in the temples are Brahmans and are called Indras.

The exclusive occupation of the Jainas of this place is the manufacture of domestic brassware utensils, the vessels that are ushered into the market throughout the Presideney under the name of "Mysore vessels" are all made here and have earned for themselves a name for durability, and good workmanship.

The next places of interest are Karkāla and Yenur (Venur) situated in the South Kanara District. They have each a colossal image of Gommatesvara, the one at Karkala is  $41\frac{1}{2}$  ft high and was erected by the chief Virapandya in 1432 A.D.; that at Yenur measures 35 ft and was set up by Timmaraja in 1604 A.D. This Timmaraja was a descendant of Chamundaraya who set up the colossus at Belgola. Pictures of these two images and that of the colossus at Belgola are given in Epigraphia Indica Vol. VII to illustrate an article by Dr. Hultzsch.

The fourth place of Jaina antiquity is Humcha (Patti Pombucha of old inscriptions) Besides the usual bastis, this place contains a *matha* which is the seat of another Jaina Swami.

Devarasamudra the Capital of the Ballala (Hoysala) Kings, which is more familiarly known as Halebid, is situated twelve miles west of Banavar Railway-station on the S. M. R. line. This was once a famous place of pilgrimage with Jainas. After the conversion to Vaishnavism of Bittideva (Vishnuvardhana) the place became one of secondary importance and has, a very fine basti which is still visited by numbers of pilgrims who go to visit Sravana Belgola.

Mudbidure, in South Canara, is another important Jaina place. The Jaina Structures of worship are unique in their style of architecture. They resemble the buildings

of the northern Jaina temples. Wood plays an important part in these buildings. There are very fine specimens of wood carving in these temples.

Besides the temples, there is here a series of tombs of Jaina monks. They are also constructed in that peculiar style which Ferguson considers distinctly northern.

Coming now to the Tamil Districts, we find two Jaina centres of note near Tindivanam in the South Arcot District. The more famous of the two places is Sirramur. It is nine miles due west of Tindivanam and is almost midway between it and the famous fortress of Gingee. This little village is situated, in the characteristic Jaina fashion, on a craggy (hilly) tract. It contains a big Jaina temple dedicated to Parsvanatha and the other Tirthankaras. This temple seems to have suffered many reverses at the hands of the opponents of the Jaina faith; for, only the platform on which the temple is reared is very old, constructed of granite. The superstructure is all brick and chunam. The much damaged base of this temple contains some faint and half-erased Chola inscriptions. The temple gate is surmounted by a fine small gopuram which is recorded to have been built by a very recent Maharajah of Travancore. Sirramur is the headquarters of a Jaina Swami, who is the spiritual head of the Tamil Jainas. When I visited the place, a certain Lakshmisena Bhattaraka was the Swami; I now hear he is since no more and that a little boy has succeeded him. The temple received extensive repairs in the regime of the old Swami who utilised the bulk of his earnings for the purpose. The mutt has a small collection of manuscripts. Besides the temple, there are two or three spacious *chatrams* intended for the accomodation of pilgrims who visit the place annually on the occasion of the chief festival of the temple. Jainas form the bulk of the



population of this village also. They do not appear to be prosperous and they support themselves by resorting to cultivation and other modes of manual labour. The Jainas do not at all compare favourably with their brethren of Belgola in cleanliness and other respects. There is a Roman Catholic church in its vicinity, busy proselytizing the Gentoos and establishing a small convert settlement.

Four miles to the southwest of Tindivanam is the second place mentioned above—Perumandur. It has three old Jaina Bastis with a few inscriptions of the Chola Kings here and there. The Jaina population here is small,

Tirumalai near Polur is also an important station ; it is in fact one of the oldest Jaina settlements and has very valuable, old inscriptions which, it is a pity, have not been completely examined by the authorities employed for the purpose. The Jaina Swami of Sravana Belgola is almost invariably chosen from the Tamil Jainas of Tirumalai. This shows the ancient prestige of Tirumalai and the nature of the Belgola settlement.

About fifteen miles from Tirukovalur (Tirukkkoilur) Railway station is situated the village Tirunarurikondai, another important Jaina centre. It is known as Jaina Tirupati. The temple of this place is located on the top of a small hill about 60 or 70 ft high. The temple is reached by a flight of broad and beautiful steps which led directly to the entrance gopuram. The temple is enclosed in a substantial prakara which is at present in a bad state of disrepair. To the north of this hill, there is a natural pond which supplies potable water to the village. The image of this temple is, in conformity with the old custom, carved in relief on a rock and represents Gommatesvara. Apart from this principal shrine, there is a later construction in the same temple and is dedicated



to an earlier Tirthankara. This temple is a fairly old one. The great Rajaraja I, his son Rajendra Chola I, and Kulothunga I, among the Cholas and Sundara Pandya among the Pandyas figure in inscriptions as donees to the temple. It was of importance even in the days of the great Vijayenagara King Krishnadevaraya who has given rich grants to it. Whatever might have been its prosperity in times gone by, it is now almost in ruins. The two poor remnant families of Jainas are still faithfully clinging to the temple, carrying on the puja &c, with the rent they get from the few acres of land the temple is now the happy possessor of.

There is a tradition current among the Jainas of this village that Manikkavachakar the Saiva Saint, came here to destroy this temple and that, as he ascended the steps, his sight began gradually to fail till atlast he completely lost it as soon as he reached the topmost step. Then, the story goes, he prayed that his sight might be restored to him on condition that he interfered with the Jainas and their temples no more. This is purely the Jaina version of the tale and there is nothing to warrant the above either in the Saiva or in the Jaina works. The poor Jainas of this place also believe that a slab of stone with a badly damaged inscription on it, which is set up at the beginning of the steps proclaims the pitiable fate of Manikkavachakar ; in other words, that it is a Jayasthambha set up by the Jainas in honour of their victory over the Saivas. The saivas, of course, hold just the contrary view. But, after all, the fact is that the stone record gifts of land made by Sundara Pandya for the celebration of a festival in the temple in honour of his visit to it.

The next Jaina place of importance is Depangudi, a village four miles from Tiruvarur (Tiruvāḷur) Railway

station. It has a big Jaina basti and is an important place of pilgrimage with the Tamil Jainas.

In Mannargudi there is a Jaina settlement with a small modern basti. There is in this place a street of twenty households, the members of which are all engaged in petty trades.

Similarly at Kammulattangudi, a suburb of Tanjore, there is also a Jaina settlement with a substantial temple of modern construction and a tank belonging to it, surrounding it, there are a dozen or more Jaina houses.

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## "GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA"

(BY K. VYASA RAO, B.A.)

*(Concluded from page 479.)*

Although such an ideal as this has been embodied in the Vedantic doctrines of the Hindus for centuries past, Ramkrishna Paramahansa has a distinct individuality in the presentation of such an ideal, because believed the ideal he preached, not out of sight in a mountain fastness, but in the midst of the throbbing world. Nor did he detract from the full grandeur of that doctrine by claiming vulgar powers in the way of showing miracles. In two other respects also he has a broad outline of his own. He did not seek to account for differentiation by postulating Maya but said it had a deep meaning which cannot be fathomed. He would have said breaking the fetters is the problem of a man who is bound and not an inquiry into the origin of the fetters. In the next place, he does not allow holding of course that realisation of God is the transcendental problem of human existence, that one conception of God is better or worse than another or that one form of worship is more or less efficacious than another, so long as in each the same intensity of faith is present. God knows, he says, the worship is for him and the only question is does it proceed from the fullness of the heart, from the overflow of devotion and faith? is idol worship, worshipping the idol or worshipping God? No body will worship a lamp post as such, but if you conceive it as God, you worship it,

and through worship in any form and in any manner you ultimately realise God by *bhakti*. Such was the teaching of one who sought to realise God as Christians do, as Mohamodens do, as Hindus do and above all as is given to a very few in an age, by surrendering the consciousness of self in the consciousness of God. This teaching he communicates with a wealth of parables of striking appropriateness, without a trace of bigotry in anything that he says, and with such deeprooted faith in all that he says that his sayings seem to appear as the very foliage of the tree of faith that has grown in him.

It is at the feet of such a man that Narandranath had sat, as an impressionable youth, full of the spirit of inquiry, at a period of life when the soul yearns to abandon itself for something great beyond the experience of others. As has been observed so often there is something in the time and stage of our lives when we come across a book or come under the influence of a man. Narandranath was not only of proper mettle to come under Ramakrishna Paramahansa's influence, but he came under it at the proper time, before, as the great Master said, he had come under the influence of woman and gold. He used to compare Narandranath to the young of a bird by the name Homa, mentioned in the Vedas, which flying in the far off distance of the azure sky would lay its eggs in the open heavens. The eggs would be hatched in the course of their descent before reaching the earth and the young ones, lest they be destroyed by touching the ground from such a distance, would shoot up in the sky. Of such spirit should be made the spirit of renunciation, he used to say; and he found it in Narandranath; but that spirit of renunciation received its momentum from the teachings and the personality of the great guru.

The spirit of renunciation was ignited in him at a time of life when the fire once lighted would be proof against wind and rain. He had, besides, his own splendid powers of exposition, his no mean stock of learning, his own striking personality and above all that strong love of country which no philosophy could soften and which no garb of renunciation could conceal. He had his weakness no doubt for fame. Who at that age and with such a combination of qualities will not have? Is it a wonder that when he appeared at the Parliament of Religions, the words in the New Testament could not but suggest themselves as being specially applicable to him:—"the lightning cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West" And is it a wonder also that when he came back to India he felt strong enough to bring about an Indian Revival, that he spoke of the *geetha* as the Nazarene had spoken of the prophecies, that he spoke of making Brahmans of Pariahs as the Son of Man had spoken of the down-trodden as his own flock to be gathered by him, that he reviled his countrymen, not indeed as a generation of vipers, but as a generation of imbeciles; and preached to them "believe you are strong, you shall become strong." Between such a disciple and such a master there is all the difference between a radiant sheet of uprising flame and the soft all pervading breeze. Still, the flame is partly the evidence and partly the consequence of the breeze that plays upon it. The fact is, although Narandrauath caught the spirit of renunciation from Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and although he was completely overcome by the fascination of the Vedanta as conceived and presented by his Master, still he widely, almost radically differed from his Master in the uses to which he put his renunciation and his Vedanta. He renounced the world as much for its

unrealities as for being free and unencumbered in designing a great career consecrated in the service of his motherland; "Revivalism" was the result of this noble ambition. He employed the doctrine of Vedanta as a potent lever in bringing about this revival and in raising the political status of his country. The Vedantic doctrine is, it is ignorance, it is want of faith in oneself that keeps one down; and he harped to his countrymen so long as you believe you are weak, you shall be weak; so long as you believe you are divided, you shall be divided.

Believe you *are* strong, believe you *are* united, 'believe you are invincible, you shall become strong, united, invincible. That is the spirit that runs through all his lectures and there is no question he has infused a great deal of national self-confidence. But the movement of Revivalism which he initiated was born with a seed of decay in it, as all such movements are in India. He wanted to bring about by "Revival" what the social reformers desired to achieve by social innovation. Reform pronounced as Revival may no doubt be the employment of a more flattening term, and in reaching the ears of an individual it takes no doubt the line of least resistance; but the difficulties in the path of both are the same, call the movement of re-adjustment by what name you will. It was this fact he failed to realise at the beginning, in the enthusiasm of youth and the buoyancy of success.

The effect is revivalism stands where he left it. That word alters no doubt our point of view, but whatever be the point of view from which you have to give up baby marriages and caste barriers, you have to give them up; and it is in the giving up the difficulty comes, and not in the point of view from which you desire to



give them up. He, a *sanyasi* from youth, an idealist and a preacher, he had no sufficient experience of Hindu society, of its immobility and its deep laid structures and persuaded himself into the belief that the magic word "revival" from the lips of a graduate sanyasin would transform a society such as the Hindu society has been and is. He thought he could save the qualms of the orthodox section of it, and at the same time change the existing order; that if he only opposed the secularist reformers, the Hindu community, at any rate the educated and the vast number of admirers that thronged his lecture halls would accept reforms from one who wore the ecclesiastical costume and called reforms by the name of revival. In this he sadly miscalculated the forces of resistance he had to deal with and to this extent it seems to us, although it may appear a heresy to say so, that he failed to understand the genius of Hindu Society. Any how the fact remains that Revivalism has gone the way of all verbal make shifts and what now endures as a permanent factor is his righteous and indignant upbraiden of his countrymen for their being content to be what they are. These words of his have sunk deep in their hearts; and the application of the Vedanta to politics has caught like wild fire. Bengali politics has derived not a little of its nourishment of late from this fascinating application of the Vedanta. If to day Mr. Bepin Pal roars "it is *Maya*, *maya maya*", analysing the constituent factors of the British supremacy in India, he is only applying the method and phraseology of the Vedanta to politics. There are people in India who are so strongly inclined with the Vedanta that they again and again revert to the question "is the Vedanta false or is our weakness false?" The answer that suggests itself as often is, "no, the Vedanta is true, it is we who are false and weak" with them the feeling

appear most is 'they who have the truth cannot be always in bondage' and they believe there is no truth higher than the Vedānta. On the side of religion, therefore the movement of revivalism has been more fruitful in giving a powerful impetus to the doctrines of the Vedānta, not as philosophical speculations, but as a dynamic force in society. Evidence of this has been forthcoming in the application of the Vedānta to politics and if through political aims and endeavours, social transformations are also effected! it will be but a repetition of some old chapters of Indian history. The greatness of man in himself asserted on the side of religion in passionate attachment of man to God has always led in history to far-reaching changes in the body politic and if there is to-day so much of what is known as the New Spirit it is, in some respects to the reflex action of the change on the side of religion. National upheavals begin from the centres of national life and in Indian life, religion is at its centre. The Vedānta, not in the pure heatless form of light as taught by Ramakrishna Paramahansa, but in its applied form as handled by men who are primarily politicians, may very likely therefore possess formidable vitality yet. The fact almost seems to be howsoever high may be an idea it must first serve man in his mundane existence, even if it be an idea that goes against the grain of mundane existence.

However these indirect consequences may be, which are due to Ramakrishna Paramahansa fulfilling one of the functions of great men in giving Vivekananda the momentum of his upward career in life, in the evolution of great teachers of religion, Ramakrishna Paramahansa seems to stand out as the heir of all those who have gone before him. If he is not as prominent as any of them, it is to the fact that he aimed at no social reconstruction,

that he did not seek to displace one faith by another, that he claimed to being neither the scroll of immortality in which the names of the faithful will be entered nor the sword of everlasting destruction for those that followed him not. In the progress of religious thought the need for such prophets grows less and less until the highest stage is reached when God is preached not as Father of a particular tribe or race, or as Father of all tribes and races, but as the *only Reality* behind the phenomenal universe. There is no chance of such a teacher being crowned with the hallow of martyrdom. Take away the crucifixion of Christ from his life and take away the persecution of mahomet from his life, how much poorer will they not appear as preachers of their own gospel! Ramakrishna Paramahansa cannot therefore shine on the firmament of prophets and teachers with the same refulgence as those who have borne the cross for the sake of their fellowmen. But he will be the pole-star to which all will have to look in crossing the ocean of life, small and unpretentious, even the same to all, the one reality as it were amidst the shifting movements of the orbs, by which one can keep his course safe and steady. That there have been others of the same mould in the land of his birth, does not take away from the fact that he is to us a great modern authority as strikingly original as any of his predecessors. We wonder whether all of them possessed the art of imperceptibly seducing the human mind to that remarkable extent to which he possessed it, so apt and so entertaining in the method of his teaching, as he was almost irresistible in the conclusions he drove home. The gospel of his Vedantic teachings imbedded in a wealth of Hindu legendry, is bound to inaugurate on a broader scale than it has done already an era of liberalism in thought wedded

to faith in God and faith in man, in the place of infidelism especially in religion and politics wedded to distrust and intolerance. Such a gospel as this is a national treasure trove and for a Hindu to deny it to himself will be to forego his heritage, while to all readers it will be as great a classic as they can lay hands on in the English language in the realm of religious thought.