

THE
"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems
from the Hindu Standpoint.

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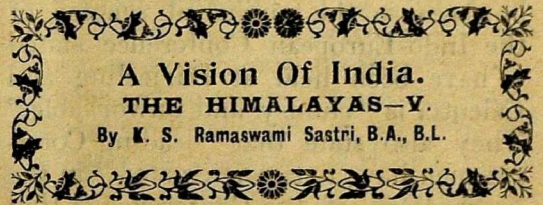
- (1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,
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- (3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,
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But Kama's shining shafts of fragrant flowers
Nor spring's new world of light and warmth
and bloom
Nor even Uma's face which did illumine
With radiance new Love's gloom-enshrouded
powers
And set the world a-dreaming through the
hours
Of regnant beauty conquering inner gloom,
Could save Love from the dire resistless
doom
Awaiting him in Himalayan bowers.
The Lord One moment turned His three bright
eyes
Upon the maiden's bashful lotus face
And from th'incarnate goddess turned his
heart
All saw from his third eye far-flashing rise
A world-consuming fire whose flaming rays
Burnt Love to death for his presumptuous
part.



The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 13, DEC. 1917.

The One Basis for an Agreement.

We have heard within the last few days of an attempt at settling the question of constitutional reform by agreement between certain leaders of the Indian and European Communities in Calcutta. Our Madras leaders have made a "prompt protest," and rightly, *not* because they object to the principle of settling by an agreement, but because the published scheme of the Indo-European Conference stated to have been held at Darjeeling and Calcutta is "clumsy and unworkable." They also state that "leading Congressmen have not participated" in the proceedings of the Conference. Had they been invited and taken part in them, the result would not have proved so abortive and unsatisfactory. We are of opinion that, if the Congress leaders and those of the non-official European Community can be induced to sit round a table, it will prove a capital method of settling the existing differences and facilitating the fulfilment of Mr. Montagu's present mission to India.

In order, however, to assure the success of such a Conference, all parties must recognise, that India must be guaranteed a constitution of which the two fundamental features are,—(1) a legislative council representative of all interests and sections within the Indian Community and possessing the power to deliberate on all affairs, purely and specifically Indian; (2)

unrestricted power of the purse, within the limits laid down by the Constitution. All other matters such as the Viceregal Veto, the composition of the Executive Council, &c. are mere details on which adjustments are possible. No tinkering is possible regarding these fundamental and central points. For, in the *first* place, India is growing daily poorer and feebler, and the longer these reforms are postponed the more difficult it will be for her to regain her lost or lessening power of recovery in industry and commerce. In the *second* place, she ought not to consent again to be the mark for supercilious contempt or insolence at the hands of the other self-governing communities of the Empire. We know, also, that she is henceforth to be admitted to every future Imperial Conference and to exercise the principle of reciprocity of treatment in her relations with all British Overseas Dominions. It would be inconsistent with this high status now secured to her that she alone should be regarded or treated as a *dependency* of the Empire. As our distinguished Bengalee countrymen, Sir S. P. Sinha said the other day at Delhi in the presence of the Viceroy himself and of the ruling chiefs of India assembled there:—"This step brings India as nearly as possible to the same position as the self-governing dominions with reference to the mother-country." Moreover, the British Cabinet have since made the memorable announcement of the 20th August last that India is to be helped to attain the goal of self-government. The *first* steps towards that goal—steps the taking of which cannot any longer be postponed—are the two to which we have just adverted above.

At the same time we quite admit that we cannot ask for what Sir S. P. Sinha described as "an ordinance making India a *completely* self-governing country at one bound." We do not seek to control our relations with foreigners, our frontiers, or our army and navy, &c. But we claim the right to decide our own economic and industrial position and our arrangements for education, taxation, sanitation, justice, police, local administration, etc,—to determine for ourselves all matters, *purely and specifically Indian*. The proposal that we should be given control over some selected department or departments at first and that others may be assigned when we have demonstrated our capacity for administering them is altogether inadmissible. For, we claim that we have already had the probation of half-a-century under our bureaucratic rulers, and a successful one too. If the present opportunity passes, we may not have another chance for another century. Mr. Bernard Houghton—once an Indian bureaucrat, a member of the Indian Civil Service—has rightly declared the present position of the Indian people:—"If the people of India are at school, it is a perpetual school, where greybeards will ever sit at the feet of youthful foreigners, where the syllabus never alters, and where the pupils will pass out at the Greek Kalends," (*Bureaucratic Government*, p. 57) The Indian Nationality ought not to consent to remain under further tutelage, to sacrifice any longer their self-respect or their power of growth for the benefit and the glorification of the bureaucratic machine or the feasting of the dragon of race-pride. Lastly, the only way to prepare us for self-govern-

ment on Colonial lines is to enable us to control and apply the resources of India for the speedy development of our people in all matters of industry, commerce, and sanitation and to make our administration of justice and revenue less costly and more efficient. Why "governments of two types must co-exist" we cannot understand. We know which of them will really rule, and so the probationary "type" of self-government will only serve the purpose of being mockingly pointed at as a monument of Indian inefficiency, and of postponing the grant of plenary self-government for ever. "The pupils will only pass out at the Greek Kalends," The only way to insure efficiency in self-government is to possess the control of the purse, so that speedy adjustments may be made as necessities arise, and there will be no need for the experimental self-governing section of the executive to go a-begging for money or to burden the people with fresh taxation. The former course must be degrading to the self-respect of the newly-created popular executive, while the latter will simply result in branding it with the stigma of inefficiency and unpopularity.

We fully concede that we, Indians, have to get on harmoniously with the non-official European Community in India, quite as much as they have to get on with us. Nothing will promote future harmony better than that the leaders of both communities are helped to come to an agreement. An attempt should, if possible, be made towards such a happy consummation. His Excellency the Viceroy commands universal confidence at the present moment. He can, if he chooses, bring about, a Conference and help it to

arrive at an adjustment agreeable to all. The leaders of the National Congress and the Muslim League will not reject the offer of a compromise or agreement, if the two fundamental conditions to which we have adverted above are conceded. If they are not conceded, no basis for a *concordat* can exist. For all the objects for which the Indian people and leaders have made their patient endeavours and persistent sacrifices for over a generation past will thereby have been frustrated. The present abject condition of humiliation and suffering will be perpetuated for the Indian people, and the present favourable opportunity will also have passed never to return.

The Convocation Address—III.

M. Martineau passes on last to the subject of "historical studies in Southern India and their value and importance for the inhabitants of this country." Till 1860, we have mainly British writers of the nineteenth century writing on India and its past,—Duff, Wilks, Thornton, James Mill, Gleig, &c. Since then, original researches and publications have begun to appear in India itself,—not only historical works like those of Talboys Wheeler, Love, and others, but the publication of archives, and records of various kinds interpreted "by the light of archæology, epigraphy, numismatics, and even anthropology." So far, however, no one has undertaken "the stupendous task" of writing "a full and rational history of the Peninsula, the object of which should be to discover the hidden causes of events and follow their essential development" But we have histories of special periods, such as those of Vijayanagar, Travancore,

the Pallavas, &c., and monographs on particular men and towns. Lord Curzon, during his Viceroyalty gave a fresh impetus to the study of Indian history and sent a requisition to local governments to promote it. Since then the publication of old records has been taken up in earnest by the Madras Government, and several volumes or pamphlets have been issued. Also, the publication of a translation of Ananda Ranga Pillay's Diary has been undertaken and is going forward rapidly. The Government of Pondicherry has undertaken similar work, as also the Mysore State, where the labour of the Mythic Society has borne valuable fruit. In Mysore, also, the wonderful work on Artha-Sastra by Kautilya has been published,—a work which, according to M. Martineau, shows that "the art of governing people remains similar at all times, even under conditions so different in appearance."

Besides all this work of Governments, Societies, and individuals in history proper, considerable results have been achieved in the sciences auxiliary or complementary to it, such as archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics, and anthropology. The four archaeological services of the Madras Presidency, the Nizam, Mysore and Travancore have turned out a large quantity of work, and the store of knowledge is daily accumulating. M. Martineau suggests to the Madras University to have a meeting once in five years to review the work done in the interval, as that would be an encouragement to many writers and enable the public to take an interest in this "privileged part of the national patrimony."

M. Martineau replies to one question

which might be asked,—Is it right to shake one's self free from present anxieties, especially in this time of universal convulsion, and live in the past? His answer is,—things go wrong because “statesmen are led too exclusively by considerations of the day or aspirations of the future, without realising sufficiently that the hour they live in is conditioned by the experience of yesterday and by the teachings of the past; and thus often the mistakes which we observe are the result of ignorance as much as of want of judgment.” We cannot agree to this judgment regarding the effects of the study of history. Nowhere has history been more studied than in the West of Europe and especially by the Germans, and yet their leaders—statesmen, authors, professors—have precipitated this horrible world-convulsion which is filling the world with incalculable misery and crime. The study of history cannot alone prove adequate to remove the ignorance and want of judgment which lead to the crimes and blunders of nations and of the statesmen, so-called, who are responsible for their guidance.

M. Martineau is of opinion that “the errors”—the *crimes*, we should rather say—of nations prevent human life from becoming monotonous and tedious. He says,—“Interest in life would vanish if regularity governed all things,” and hence the rivalries and wars among men. “Let us bow before these eternal laws, which anyhow must be true, since they outlive all periods, all philosophies, all utopia.” No doubt this is also to some extent confirmed and illustrated by the fact that the true and perfect incarnation of God himself amongst us and His gracious mission of peace failed to

prevent the great Indian War of Mahabharata,—and so the “eternal law” of battle seems to have had to work itself out. But He has re-proclaimed the long-lost law of love and the ineffable spiritual illumination to which its observance in daily life is to lift mankind. There is henceforth no excuse for us if we live the life of darkness and devilry, and spread desolation and death in God's paradise of this earth. It is certainly worth our while to learn that there is as much “interest” in living the life of love ordained for men by infinite and divine intelligence as in acting out the behests of the “hymn of hate” so dear to the devil lying deep down in the heart of the re-born savage of the twentieth century.

Of history “as it is wrote” in these days at least, we know well that it consists in what a high authority has rightly termed “systematic misrepresentation.” M. Martineau is more merciful and qualifies the stern judgment when he says,—“The facts most widely known are sometimes the most distorted.” But herein, in his view, lies also the interest of history—“for man is ever a searcher of riddles, and mysteries speak to his heart as well as to his imagination.” In reply we say, “Happy is the nation which has no history,”—history written as well as history acted. We are all mere weary pilgrims who stay here a while in our path to the home from which we have wandered, and all we want and wait for is to know again truly the loving message and the glad tidings which the eternal messenger has proclaimed of Himself and of His Heaven. It is better for both nations and individuals to be weak and wise than to be wealthy and wicked.

M. Martineau preaches that "because the dream of life lasts such a little while," we must care for "our own country," and let alone "the kingdom of Heaven." He also thinks that the Greeks "died suffocated by the scent of flowers on which they lived to lie." We are firmly convinced that they died because they only loved to gaze from the distance at the beauty of the flowers in God's garden, instead of gaining access to the Divine Gardener himself and then enjoying to the heart's full content the spreading fragrance and the entrancing loveliness of the works in his garden.

M. Martineau, in one place, counsels his audience to study history with the intention of seeking for what leads to the good and not to the perfect, to enlightenment and not to illusion." In another place, however, he wants them "to seek the continuous improvement which will lead us to the ideal of our dreams." The reconciliation, of course, can be easily effected, if we regard dreams as facts, not as illusions. In one sense, at least, dreams are also facts.

We conclude, however, by expressing our hearty concurrence with the following sentences and sentiments of M. Martineau's and commending them heartily to our Hindu readers:—"Happy are the people wise enough to remain faithful to themselves, to their past and to their tradition; happy above all are those who know how to reconcile without a break those traditions with the necessities of improvement. Fortune smiles on them and the future is in their hands"

The Present System of Education.

We invite the attention of our readers to an interesting communication from an experienced graduate and teacher on the present system of education,—which appears in this issue. The growth of national sentiment during the last quarter of a century has led intelligent and thoughtful men more and more to turn their attention to the evils of that system, and to gain a larger appreciation of the significance of the past traditions and of the mission of India in the world. Hence there is rising everywhere in a swelling tide the consciousness of the need of a more rational system of education and one more adapted to our present needs and the character and genius of our people. We have already in previous issues indicated the great evils of the existing system of education, and especially of the immeasurable evil of the present system of examinations. No doubt, when seventy years back our rulers felt the need of a supply of trained subordinates who could interpret their measures and their motives to the masses of the Indian people, a system like the present one was suited to supply that need effectively, rapidly, and with a continuity which could be relied on. But the rise of national sentiment and the consciousness of citizenship have simultaneously given birth to the feeling that the system has only too successfully injected a deadly poison into a healthy system of life and society, and that the gangrene now formed must not be allowed any longer to corrupt the national life and destroy the national vitality.

In the *first* place, we have always been of opinion that Indian youths

should not be handed over to the care and influence of foreign teachers belonging to an alien civilisation before they have had a good grounding in our own national ideals and literatures. It is owing to the want of such previous grounding that many valuable and thoughtful men who would have been ornaments of Hindu society have been exploited by foreign societies and agencies, and also some millions of the masses of Hindu people have been converted to alien faiths. We do not at all object to the study of foreign languages or literatures, especially when the object is to arrive at a healthy comparative estimate by our young men of the worth of our own literature and of its basic ideas and their ulterior purposes. But this is only possible to minds well impregnated with the ideas of Indian literature and the ideals of the sages and scholars who have inspired the energies of the Hindu Community and its leaders in the past and enabled them to maintain the solidarity of our social organism during unnumbered ages. Our correspondent rightly says that the study of foreign literatures ought to come in only as "a post-graduate course" after graduating in our own national literature. If India had not a rich national literature of its own, the present policy which has ruled for nearly three quarters of a century might have been justified. Our Sanskrit and Tamil literatures abound in immortal gems which can defy all comparison from any quarter of the civilised world. These literatures are the most suitable for our boys and youths, their natural environment and peculiar traditions and are therefore best fitted to develop their minds and form their character. When the in-

dividuality of Indian boys is thus moulded and developed in a natural way, they can easily afterwards add to their knowledge by the study of other literatures and assimilate it so as to develop further all healthy tendencies and aspirations for further improvement.

What we want from the West is science and industry. Our college course, even as matters are, may be devoted to a practical training in science and industry. Even in England, the latest Universities of the type of Birmingham devote their attention *mainly* to the acquisition of such knowledge, and pure literature is neglected or relegated to a very subordinate position.

Like a true Indian, instinct with the spirituality of his community and nation, our correspondent wants only such scientific training as can be applied to "labour-saving—hence leisure-conferring—industries" His ideal for Indian humanity is that wants should be reduced to a minimum, and leisure should be raised to a maximum. We are in thorough agreement with him when he says:—"If there is one thing more than another which is enough to damn this age, it is its unhealthy hurry, its feverish work, and its making a fetish of such work." Our correspondent's quotation from Charles Lamb,—whom he calls "the unsophisticated Rishyasringa, the child-sage of English letters,"—is a very interesting passage which is well worth marking. But, in our view, we must, while not forgetting the high ideal of our correspondent, take care to remember that the world is not ripe for it, at present, and India must not adopt it as the ideal for all, but only for those rare

and few souls who are *Yoga-bhrashtas* such as the blessed Bhagavan refers to in the Gita (VI 41-43) and who are without worldly taints or wants and care only for Yogic meditation and its fruits. The nations of the West have for centuries been solely and steadily bent on destroying the economic and political organisation of the rest of the world in order to exploit their resources and develop their own strength. The Indians—the great majority of them, we mean—must first meet them on their own ground and with their own industrial weapons, so as to make a great self-reliant industrial community supplying all its material wants and preventing, by a rational system of trade-protection, the foreign producer from intruding his wares on us. We want, and urgently too, a determined and discriminating policy of protection; and we can have it only if we secure self-government early. When we have secured the industries and agencies of production to supply what is needed for what our correspondent insists on, viz, “keeping body and soul together,” we may and can, as we ought to, secure for all the “simplicity of life and manners” which are now, as he says, not taught and therefore “at a discount.”

The *second* defect which our correspondent points out is that “neither teachers nor parents have any effective voice in shaping the course of studies.” The reason is that very few parents and teachers know the value of our national literature or care for the making of true *men*. Our University is a mere helpless appendage of Government, not a national institution. We had hoped that the Madura Tamil Sangam might be developed into a great National University with its

cultural and industrial sides working side by side and influencing the future destiny of the Dravidian people. But men of ideas are wanting among us; and their imagination is more or less grovelling and servile. The time-spirit must be fought against. Men like our correspondent must make their voices heard. We, for our part, shall ever be glad to help forward all movements started to nationalise our educational institutions.

Thirdly, our correspondent justly condemns the present system of examinations. It is this Satan of our examination-system that now dominates the minds equally of our teachers and of the parents of our youth. Had we the power, we would gladly see that system hurled wholly and quickly into the bottomless perdition it deserves to go into. In India hitherto, a man's merits for a situation or the training needed for holding it have been usually judged at first according to the estimate which the world has formed of his Guru. As is the Guru, so is the *sishya* (disciple). Our colleges and schools need only to send forth their alumni hall-marked with their certificate, and from them employers of all kinds may choose their men, and Government select and train its officials. Our University systems of examinations must be knocked on the head. It is a thousand pities that the Hindu University of Benares has not thought fit to turn a new page of India's educational history.

We will now pass rapidly over the rest of our correspondent's letter. His *fourth* point is that “individual attention” must be paid to our boys, so that each may develop according to his aptitudes. But this cannot be

done, so long as the requirements of the examination dominate the situation. His *fifth* point is that every one gets demoralised by the system. As he puts it,—“The Brahmin is made a non-Brahmin by this education; the carpenter becomes a non-carpenter; the barber becomes a non-barber; the farmer loses his farming instinct; his smithhood is taken away from the smith; men and women lose their manhood and womanhood. There is a distinct alienation of sympathy between the English-educated few, and the not-so-educated many.” His last points are that the education is too costly, and that it shortens the average duration and expectation of life.

The whole letter is admirable from start to finish. The Hindu Community must, in our view, resolve not to rest till this miserable and wicked system of education is ended or mended. How long are we to allow its de-nationalising and de-humanising work and existence to pollute the atmosphere and ruin the Holy Land and People?

Notes and Comments.

We are indebted to a valued friend for a copy of the Hon'ble Mr. V. K. Ramanujachariar's printed address at a Theosophical Conference held at Anantapur. Its object is to prove the superiority of Theosophy over Hinduism. We wish to show that the attempt, while it cannot but appear droll or drivelling to the followers of the Sanatana Dharma which has been called “the most sublime philosophy and the most satisfying religion,” proves a lamentable failure. The author, as we go on to show, labours under strange hallucinations and misapprehensions and falls into blunders which are as amusing as they are serious and inexcusable.

First, “Theosophy has come to emphasise the correct view that God is unlimited. He is described as being Unconditioned and Absolute.” But what about Hinduism? Our Hon'ble Councillor says:—“One who meditates on the *mantra* (i.e., the Gayatri) is advised to think of a body with four arms, seated on a lotus in the orb of the Sun, and adorned with various ornaments. The idea that God abides in a particular place known as *Sri Vaikuntha* and that he comes down in Avatara and goes back to it when his purpose is done has taken deep root. Image-worship is widely prevalent. Though it has its use in raising the minds of the ignorant towards the Deity, it also produces an injurious effect. It localises God in the minds of most people, and makes it difficult to realise his presence everywhere.” Truly, if Theosophy makes a man put forward such objections to Hinduism, it is difficult to see how its working and effects are different from those of Christianity. We have hitherto been of opinion that such objections are the special property of Christian Missionaries. Moreover Theosophy has always claimed the credit that it confirms every one in, and never unsettles, one's faith in one's own religion. Mrs. Besant says:—“Theosophy is everywhere the defender and helper of religions, pointing out to each man the sufficiency of his own faith, and urging him to deepen and spiritualise than to attack the forms preferred by others.” Here is our Hon'ble Councillor and Theosophist who not only fails to understand Hinduism, as we shall show, but grossly misrepresents some of its essential and peculiar and practical features. Let us hope that our Hindu brethren will be warned by his example.

We now proceed to answer the Hon'ble Mr. V. K. Ramanujachariar's objections, one after another. The *three* points above criticised by him are not at all inconsistent with the doctrine—one which has always been proclaimed by Hinduism and which we have certainly no need to learn from Theosophy—that God is unconditioned and absolute. *First*, the Hon'ble Mr. V. K. Ramanujachariar objects to the meditation on Vishnu seated in the Sun while reciting

our Gayatri and condemns it as it will prevent us from realising the presence of God everywhere. The meditation on *Aditya-Purusha* is prescribed in the Veda itself and is meant to be an aid to the spiritual development which is to lead to the realisation of God everywhere. The Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali allows us to meditate on any object we like—"अभिमतध्यानाद्वा" "By meditating on what one has a predilection for." The Sruti prescribes the particular meditation on the Purusha seated in the Sun simply as effective for the purpose of rapidly progressing towards God-realisation and Self-realisation. It is because men do not follow this method that their progress is not rapid or sure. To blame it or subject it to ridicule is to blame and ridicule the Veda itself, and also to deny the spiritual value and aim of meditation. In the *second* place, we shall explain to the Hon'ble gentleman that *Sri Vaikuntha*—to which he objects as limiting God's absoluteness—is the spiritual (or *apra-krita*) world where those who worship Vishnu as the Supreme Being go when they attain liberation from *samsara*. This, too, is not inconsistent with the idea that God is everywhere. It does not mean as he assumes, that, 'God abides in a particular place.' God is there only in his "*Para*" form. But he is also *Antaryami*—immanent and omnipresent, and he can be realised by all in their own hearts also. But when the time comes for the cessation of *samsara*, they *must* go to *Sri Vaikuntha*. *Thirdly*, the worship of god in images is also meant as an aid to concentration, and there is nothing wrong or foolish in it. This method is prescribed in our sacred books mainly for such as are in the early stages of meditation to aid their spiritual progress. But others are not precluded from resorting to it, and it is not at all just to call them "ignorant," as the Hon'ble Mr. Ramanujachariar does. The greatest teachers and saints of India—the unapproachable Alvars themselves—have worshipped *Archavataras* in our temples. The best of us now can do nothing wrong in following their example. The passage from Mr. Jinarajadasa which the Hon'ble gentleman quotes is itself a justification

of image-worship. It is as follows:—
 "Wherever there is matter there is force, and with both is life, and through all the consciousness of the Logos is flashing." Wherever, following the injunctions of the Sastras, we offer God (or the Logos) our worship or meditate on his form, we shall finally realise and reach the ineffable bliss of His supreme glory and grace.

Secondly, we think that the Hon'ble Mr. Ramanujachariar is quite in error in holding that, because people "think there is no salvation for the human spirit without the grace of God," this notion "injuriously affects us and makes us incapable of making the necessary efforts to improve." Those who hold this view hold that they have to *earn* "the grace of God" by *Prapatti* and by other methods. It is because we know that there is a gracious and merciful helper that we make our efforts with confidence of success. If we do not believe in God and his grace, most of us will become despairing, and misanthropic. The Hon'ble gentleman says that, according to Theosophy, "we are pure, we are serene, we are strong in our own nature." The Vaishnavas and Vedantists of the school of Sankaracharya are also of the same opinion, and so they have no need to become Theosophists to learn this doctrine. But they also hold that, by committing acts which are opposed to Dharma, we have become associated and intermingled with this impurity of *rajasic* and *tamasic* body, and that, by worshipping God according to the Sastras, by relying on his grace as his *dasas* or dependents, and by gaining thereby his grace, we can again become pure and sinless and fit to take our abode in *Sri Vaikuntha* so as to enjoy divine bliss and rapture. If Theosophy says that no one need believe in God or act so as to deserve his grace, because "we are pure, we are serene, we are strong in our own nature," the earlier we discard Theosophy, the better. Whatever man may be in his inmost spiritual nature, he is conscious of his fall from his high estate. When man knows he is ill, he must seek the help of the doctor. God is the great physician whose grace we have to seek and deserve if we are to be

freed from the disease which leads to the cycle of birth and rebirth.

Thirdly, the Hon'ble Mr. V. K. Ramanujachariar is again wrong in saying that, because there are sectarian squabbles between Vadagalais and Thengalais, &c., Hinduism does not condemn the act of "identifying ourselves with our physical bodies." He says:—"The first step in spiritual progress is to remove this *ahamkara*, and Theosophy insists on this with no uncertain voice." This is in *fact*, the first lesson taught by the blessed Bhagavan in the Gita, and with an emphasis which will echo throughout the ages which are coming as it has done in all the ages that are past. We cannot understand how there is any need to go to Theosophy for this fundamental Hindu doctrine.

Again, Mr. V. K. Ramanujachariar finds fault with Hinduism for teaching that *karma* is *anadi* (beginningless) and prefers Theosophy for "according to the theosophist, *karma* has a beginning." If this is true, we ought to get rid of Theosophy without a moment's further delay. For it is *against the scientific law of universal causation*. There is, and can be, no absolute beginning. There are also other objections. How can there be *karma* without a body to perform it, and so *janma* must precede *karma*; and, again, the body is attained as the result of previous *karma*. This is known as *bijankura-nyaya* (बीजाङ्कुर-न्याय). The Hindus explain that there is a never-ending succession or cycle of *janma* and *karma* till *mukti* or release from the bondage of *samsara* is attained. This is what Hinduism means by saying that *karma* is *anadi*.

The lecture we have criticised abounds in several other errors and misapprehensions, and we feel tempted to continue our comments further. But what we have said is, we believe, enough to convince our readers of the spiritual havoc due to the failure to make in time the attempt to learn the truth regarding the eternal truths of the Rishis and Vedas, and to the looking to foreign sources for light concerning the spirit of man, and the means by which he is to attain God-realisation and self-realisation.

The Bhagavad Gita

With an English Exposition

By K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI B. A. B. L.
(The substance of the lectures now being delivered at the Students' Sanatana Dharma Sabha, Trichinopoly.)

INTRODUCTORY.

(continued)

This wonderful work, is absolutely perfect even from the point of view of poetic beauty and merit. Its predominant emotion is भक्ति (devotion) and it leads all from the plane of worldliness up the golden ladder of *Nishkama karma*, *Bakhti* and *Jnana* to Eternal Bliss. Its symmetry and loveliness are as remarkable as its purity and holiness. It has also been classed with, and described as, an *Upanishad*, a *Sastra* and *Brahmavidya*. (भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रं). The word "Gita" imports only भगवद्गीता though there are innumerable Gitas now existing, mostly written with it as their model and giving to us its great teachings in other forms. The *Gita* is in perfect harmony with the *sruthis* and *smrithis*. It harmonises all aspects of life, shows the concord between theism and monism, reveals to us the proper place of *karma*, *bhakti*, *jnana*, conveys to us the quintessence of all truth, and fits us for the attainment of God-love and God-realisation.

I do not go here into the question of the new *Gita* given to the world by the Shudda Dharma Mandalam, because it has no credentials and is opposed to the testimony of all our teachers and saints and because such a discussion will unduly swell the size of this introduction. Nor do I propose to go into the question of the date of the *Gita*, because there is no use in discussing all the contradictory dates now assigned and such an attempt is sure to make this introduction longer than it should be. No valid reasons have been shown to reject the traditional date and we should hence accept it as correct. I shall deal with this question and other questions in the appendix.

Sri Sankaracharya prefaces his holy *bhashya* to the *Gita* by saying that the Lord had taught the *Pravritti marg* adn

the *Nivritti margā* and that as the Dharma consisting of these two paths became less potent and widespread owing to the energy of *adharmā* consequent on lessening discrimination and unselfishness which themselves were caused by selfishness and desire, the Lord incarnated as Sri Krishna to establish Dharma and preserve the brahminhood of the Brahmins, because if these were taught to tread the right path they would see to the Dharma being observed by others. This incarnation of the Lord was due to His Infinite Love and Compassion. He taught the two aspects of Dharma to Arjuna to enable him to reach the shore of grief and illusion and chose Arjuna as the recipient of His gracious doctrine and message because what a great man learns and does in the world will be followed by all. Sri Sankara says further that the holy goal of the Gita is the highest bliss which is consequent on outsoaring the cycle of *samsara* and which is attained by *nishkama karma, bhakti and jnana*. अम्यु-

दयार्थोऽपि यः प्रवृत्तिलक्षणो धर्मो वर्णाश्रमांश्चोद्दिश्य विहितः स देवादिस्थानप्राप्तिहेतुरपि सन्नीश्वरार्पण- बुद्ध्याऽनुष्ठायमानः सत्त्वशुद्धये भवति फलाभिसंधिवर्धितः । शुद्धसत्त्वस्य च ज्ञाननिष्ठायोग्यताप्राप्तिद्वारेण ज्ञानोत्पत्तिहेतुत्वेन च निःश्रेयसहेतुत्वमपि प्रतिपद्यते ।

Sri Ramanuja, prefaces his holy *bhashya* by saying that the Supreme Lord who is beyond all words and thoughts incarnates in the various worlds to enable the souls to look up to His lotus feet and attain the fruit of life and incarnated as Krishna to show His Infinite beauty and grace to the world of men, the ostensible object being to remove the sorrows of the earth भूभार and taught, for showing to all the means of true salvation, the Bhaktiyoga with jnana and karma as angas, under the guise of inducing Arjuna to do his duty.

पाण्डुतनययुद्धप्रोत्साहनव्याजेन परमपुरुषार्थलक्षणमोक्षसाधनतया वेदान्तोदितं स्वविषयं ज्ञानकर्मानुग्रहीतं भक्तियोगमवतारयामास ।

Sri Madhwacharya prefaces his holy *bhashya* by saying that Vyasa, an incarnation of the Lord, composed the Bharata to convey the Vedic truths to all and that the Gita is the essence of the Bharata. तत्र च सर्व-

भारतार्थसंग्रहां वासुदेवाजुनसंवादाख्यां भारतपारिजात- मधुभूतां गीतामुपनिबबन्ध ।

I do not think that it is necessary to deal *in extenso* with the ideas of others as these are only amplifications of the above views. We can well realise how all of the above views are noble and true and enable us to have a free access into the heaven of Sri Krishna's gracious message.

Nilakantha well says :—

भारते सर्ववेदार्थो भारतार्थश्च कृत्स्नशः ।

गीतायामस्ति तेनेयं सर्वशास्त्रमयी मता ॥

(To be continued)

Pencilings by the Way—VI.

BY S. P. THIAGARAJAN.

The Varnasrama Dharmi seems to have fallen on evil days. There are many in this land at the present day who look forward to a democratic form of government as a happy and lasting state towards which the moderns are being impelled by the ideas and manners of the time. We trust that these men are sincerely desirous to prepare men to be free. When these men want to overturn the Dharma, and march on its ruins to Democracy, they obey their passions to the lasting detriment of their true interests. As a man of genius has said, despotism may govern without faith, liberty cannot. There are others in this land who look upon democratic institutions "as a temporary means of power, of wealth and distinction; men who are the *condottieri* of liberty, and who fight for their own advantage, whatever be the colours they wear." It is natural that such men should attack the Dharma with relentlessness. Both these sets of men, starting from opposite points of view, converge at the point where they attack the immemorial Dharma and abuse the religionists as the enemies of liberty. Into the broad question of the attitude of Varnasrama Dharmis towards the democratic movement in modern India, I cannot enter here and now. For reasons, which are conclusive and shall be dealt with next week, the Varnasrama Dharmi ranges himself alongside the democratic move-

ment. He has no quarrel with the message, though, as I shall show, he has a deadly quarrel with the messengers for the method of the deliverance thereof.

I wish briefly to refer to those who base their opposition to the grant of self-government at the present day,—whatever that may mean—on the argument that it will “take India and its people back to the dead past,” and “reproduce the ancient and exploded inequalities, perhaps in a more aggravated form.” I do not know if going “back to the dead (?) past” is in itself so formidable a thing. I may tell the critic, however, that there is nothing either in nations or in individual like simply going back or going forward—mere retrogression or mere progress. The expressions, themselves, are absurd and contrary to all nature. Epochs sometimes occur, in the course of the life of a nation or a community, when the only way of going forward will be going back. Whether the present be such an epoch may well be a matter of opinion. But when the critic goes on to charge the Past, in effect, as having perpetuated inequalities he has in our opinion laid down a proposition alike contrary to truth, justice and experience. We maintain—and we have the authority of eminent political thinkers in the West—that inequality is the very condition of society and contributes to the well-being of the state. This passion for equality is a low vice of modern democracies. As a brilliant writer of the last century has observed, democratic institutions awaken and foster a passion for equality which they can never entirely satisfy. This complete equality, says he, eludes the grasp of the people at the very moment at which it thinks to hold it fast, and “flies,” as Pascal says, “with eternal flight.” The people is excited in the pursuit of an advantage, which is more precious because it is not sufficiently remote to be unknown, or sufficiently near to be enjoyed. The result is:—The lower orders are agitated by the chances of success, they are irritated by its uncertainty; and they pass from the enthusiasm of pursuit to the exhaustion of ill success, and lastly to the acrimony of disappoint-

ment. Whatever transcends their own limits appears to be an obstacle to their desires, and there is no kind of superiority, however legitimate it may be, which is not irksome in their sight.” Students of modern European democratic movements, not even the latest excepted, will admit the truth of the above delineation of the horrid effects of the revolutionary doctrine of equality, and will be thankful to our ancients for the wisdom which has handed down to us a stable social order.

In that admirable volume on which his claim to be ranked as a genius so justly rests, Dr. Tocqueville says: “No political form has hitherto been discovered which is equally favourable to the prosperity and the development of all the classes into which society is divided. These classes continue to form, as it were, a certain number of distinct nations in the same nation; and experience has shown that it is no less dangerous to place the fate of these classes exclusively in the hands of any one of them than it is to make one people the arbiter of the other. When the rich alone govern, the interest of the poor is always endangered; and when the poor make the laws that of the rich incurs very serious risks. The advantage of democracy does not consist, therefore, as has sometimes been asserted, in favouring the prosperity of all, but simply in contributing to the well-being of the greatest possible number,” and a little further on, he says:—“If a legislative power would be so constituted as to represent the majority without necessarily being the slave of its passions; an executive, so as to retain a certain degree of uncontrolled authority; and a judiciary, so as to remain independent of the two other powers, a government would be formed which would still be democratic without incurring any risk of tyrannical abuse.” Judged by these tests, it will not be difficult to demonstrate that the ancient Hindu polity, in its classical days, was the best example we have so far had of a perfect democracy free alike from the horrors of democracy and the still greater horrors of that kind of tyranny to which democracies are most liable, free from the muta-

bility of the laws, an evil inherent in modern democracies and free also from those violent convulsions of society which are the accidents of such mutability of the laws. These notes, as they proceed, will elaborate this theme.

Correspondence.

The views of our contributors and correspondents do not necessarily reflect the policy of this Review—Ed.

The Present System of Education.

An experienced graduate and teacher writes to us from Mayavaram on the 18th November 1917:—

I hope you will allow me the liberty to inflict this rather lengthy, digressive, and hastily and crudely cast letter on your precious time and patience.

For some years past the problem of giving suitable cultural education to the children of this land, especially to those destined to be the leaders of their generation in years to come, has been exercising my mind, the more so now that my boy has attained the school-going age. For truly it is only when the head is turned (not absolutely, but) in the right direction that the feet can take the right direction.

All my objections to sending him to a modern English School may be briefly summed up under 2 main heads:—

1. The absence of any real sympathy between the teachers and the taught in such schools.

2. The wastefully and woefully false nature of the ideals placed before him there—ideals unsuited to our country's history and traditions, unsuited especially to Aryan youths.

In the *first* place our boys begin to study English Literature without learning to appreciate our own national and vernacular literatures. I admit that a study of Literature to be fruitful must take the form of a comparative study of at least two thoroughly different literatures. But the first place in any such scheme should be given to your own national Literature; Other things can

come in only "as a post-graduate course." Not understanding ourselves is no qualification for better understanding others. How can Satan's address to the Sun got by heart help our boys when they find neither time nor opportunity to go even cursorily through Aditya Hridayam. (आदित्यहृदयम्). There is no dearth of splendid Literature in this land. India need not go a-borrowing to the West in the line of Literature. What she wants from the West is only a knowledge and training in the methods of modern science especially as applied to labour-saving—hence leisure-conferring—industries. Mark the word labour-saving; not industries tending to multiply the wants of men in the name of satisfying them, creating wants where there was none before, persuading men that they want this and that, and thus keeping them always in want of one thing or another, because of the absence of any limit to the numbers of things wanted—but industries so applied and adapted that man need pay less attention to and spend less time over the economic aspect of life, that man may command more leisure, may be his own master for a greater part of the day. I verily believe with Charles Lamb, the unsophisticated Rishyasringa, the child-sage of English letters, that "man is out of his element so long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. I am Retired Leisure. I would christen my son Nothing-to-do." Industry's crown of industry will be when it eliminates itself. The number of hours of leisure out of 24 hours which the age confers on the average individual is a decisive and unerring index of the civilization of that age. If there is one thing more than another which is enough to damn this age absolutely and irrevocably, it is its unhealthy hurry, its feverish work and its making a fetish of such work. Nothing is work, in its definition, which is not directed towards keeping body and soul together, and, when that end is achieved, keeping the mind drifting, gently and pleasantly tossed, in a sea of vacuity or inanity. And leisure, in my definition, is time *not spent in such work*. Multiplication of the means of life is not synonymous with enrichment of the contents of life. Life is an end in itself. Everything which is an end, is, by that very nature, unlimited and can afford to be viewed and treated

as such. But the means to that end must always remain limited—limited by that very end—and cannot afford to be viewed or treated otherwise with impunity. The teaching given in our modern schools puts simplicity of life and manners at a discount. The boy learns to spend Rs. 20 per month before he has learnt to earn Rs. 10 per month.

Secondly, neither teachers nor parents have any effective voice in shaping the course of studies. I am to compel my son to learn something, not because I wish him to learn it nor that he has the aptitude for it, but simply because somebody is available for teaching it or somebody is interested in making him learn it. Verily, there is a woman ready to bring forth a child, because dried ginger is immediately available.

Thirdly, I do not want my son to grow under the shadow of examinations, whose tyranny has assumed such proportions in this country that they are made a fetish of and credited with the virtue to make or mar the whole life of a student.

Fourthly your school takes away your children from under your guidance and control and is not competent to bring them under the control or guidance of the so called teachers to any good purpose, all because of the teacher's inability, for various reasons, to pay that individual attention to each pupil which is undoubtedly his due.

Fifthly, a boy who has gone through this mill of Western Education in this country is, for some occult reason, generally found to be unfit for the ordinary duties pertaining to his station in life, and is unable and unwilling to mix or converse freely with his non-educated friends and relations or even to look them squarely in the face. The Brahmin is made a non-brahmin by this education; the carpenter becomes a non-carpenter; the barber becomes a non-barber; the farmer loses his farming instinct; his smithhood is taken away from the smith; men and women lose their manhood and womanhood. There is a distinct alienation of sympathy between the English educated few and the not-so-educated many. Any apparent mutual regard or social intercourse between the two classes is only *apparent*. Each is ready to laugh at the other in its sleeve—the advantageously-placed party often dispensing with the sleeve.

Sixthly, look at the costliness of it—this education is decidedly *not* for the poor, in whose number I count myself.

Seventhly, this education is getting, and is bound to get, more and more into disrepute so long as it persists in not yielding place to anything better. Witness the recent strikes, assaults, Court scenes and other choice bits of sensationalism, and the generally false and overstrained relations between the teachers and the taught all over the land.

Lastly, the average duration and expectation of life among the educated classes seem to be shorter (does it matter quoting statistics?) than among the un-educated masses, their ignorance of the laws of health and life notwithstanding. Where ignorance is bliss, it is of course folly to be wise. The present education can rightly be termed a short-lived education in more senses than one.

A reformer is the last sort of animal I should like to resemble. I wish to act purely in a selfish sense, merely in self-defence. Let others do as they think best. I view the problem only as it affects me and my children. In the absence of anything better I am teaching my boy at home what little I know. I earnestly solicit your kind and expert help in tackling the problem.

Indian Post-War Reform Scheme and Orthodox Hinduism.

I. We believe that Hinduism is the most perfect Synthesis of Science, Philosophy, Religion, Sociology and Politics.

II. Hinduism is consistent with Modern Thought, as its Keynote is Federalism which it applies alike to Religion, Sociology and Politics, while the West is just applying it to Politics alone.

III. The Soul of Hinduism is Varnashrama Dharma i. e., the hereditary fourfold Varna or caste system with its spiritual fourfold Ashrama discipline.

THE HINDU MESSAGE will be posted regularly every week to any address in India, Burma and Ceylon on payment of Rs. 6 only per annum; For all foreign countries within the Postal Union it will be despatched on payment of 10s. 6d. per annum. All subscriptions are payable in advance and should be remitted to the Manager. "The Hindu Message", Srirangam.

IV. Varnashrama Dharma is the logical corollary of the Law of Karma and Reincarnation, a fundamental doctrine of Hinduism.

V. Western education with its peculiar culture and the absence of Hindu Religious Instruction in Schools and Colleges have combined to upset the faith of many an English-educated Hindu, in the Varnashrama Dharma.

VI. Hence the attack of Varnashrama Dharma by English-educated Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, as well as Panchamas and by Social Reformers, Theosophists and the so-called liberal Brahmins.

VII. Of late there has been a rational revival of Orthodox Hinduism and Varnashrama Dharma.

VIII. Communal representation in the Indian Post-War Reform Scheme is bad on principle and especially so, when it is to be given to Non-Brahmins, who form the majority of Hindus.

IX. It is no doubt proper that the interests of different communities should be safeguarded in the Indian Post-War Reform Scheme.

X. Religious Toleration and Neutrality have been, till now, the safeguards of Orthodox Hindu interests which would have suffered other-wise, to wit, the Civil and Post-Puberty Marriage Bills and the Baroda Caste Usages Bill, which would have been passed into law but for the Government's policy of Religious Neutrality.

XI. We are anxious that in the coming Reform Scheme, religious toleration should be maintained as heretofore i. e. that none should suffer any secular disabilities by reason of his religion.

XII. No doubt, religious neutrality may be the policy of a foreign Government, but with the gradual transfer of Government to the people, it is but proper that religious and social legislation should be also vested in their hands.

XIII. It is but natural to fear that religious and social interests would suffer at the hands of those who do not believe in that religion or who believe in no religion at all.

XIV. The Hindu social system is but an integral part of their religion and religion and society are not divorced in Hinduism as in other religions.

XV. We believe that orthodox Hinduism with its pre-puberty and single marriage ideal, especially for Brahmin Girls, hereditary caste system, prohibition of inter-dinner and intermarriage between the different castes of the Hindus and between the Hindus and the non-Hindus and of foreign travel, especially for Brahmins and of conversion from other religions as well as reconversion of Hindu converts to other religions and insistence on Samskaras, is quite consistent, nay, alone consistent with true national progress.

XVI. Owing to the heterodox majority of English educated Hindus, the Orthodox majority of Hindus in general fear that Orthodox Hinduism would suffer if it is not specially safeguarded in the reform scheme.

XVII. We believe therefore that separate Orthodox Hindu representation is necessary in social and religious matters.

XVIII. The same principle applies to other religions also, as will be evident from the demand of the Indian Christians that the Legislature should not be allowed to legislate in social and religious matters.

XIX. Provision must be made for legislation affecting Hindu religion and caste customs, that if there is any objection from the communities concerned, the matter should be dealt with by a special body in which the large majority are members of those special communities.

XX. What we now insist on in the coming Reform scheme are:—

(1) Religious toleration i. e. that an Orthodox Hindu should not suffer in secular matters by reason of his Orthodoxy.

(2) Religious and social legislation affecting Orthodox Hindus must be left to a separate Orthodox Hindu legislative body and not to the ordinary mixed legislative councils and

if (2) is not feasible,

the present policy of Religious neutrality should be maintained by excluding religious and social legislation from the Indian Home Rule Legislature.

N. K. RAMASWAMI.

THE ORTHODOX HINDU CREED.

I. Hinduism is the most perfect and Universal Religion and its tripod are the Unity of Nature Solidarity of Man and the Immanence of God.

II. Varnashrama Dharma is the Soul of Hinduism and the Synthesis of Science, Philosophy, Religion, Sociology and Politics.

III. Federalism, which is now being recognized by the West in Politics alone and which is the Rationale of the New Spirit of Indian Nationalist and Home Rule Movement is the Keynote of Hinduism, which applies that Universal Law of Nature alike to Science, Religion and Sociology.

IV. Bhagavad Gita—the Gospel of Hinduism and the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Sociology, deals with the Margadyaya or the Twofold Path of Salvation, Tatva Traya or God, Man and Universe and Bandha-Moksha or Bondage and Liberation.

V. Sandhyavandana—the Brahmin Daily prayer—is the Synthesis of the Physical, Super-Physical, Mental, Moral and Spiritual and of the Gnana, Bhakti and Karma and the Hata and Raja Yogas.

N. K. RAMASWAMI.

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