

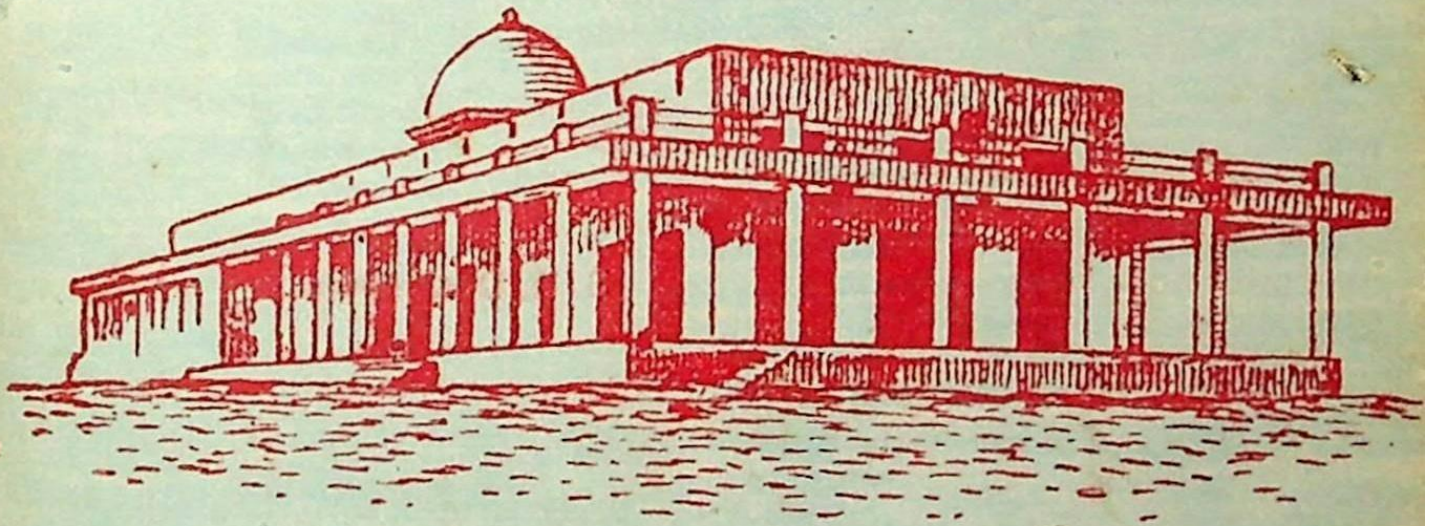


Pathway to God

A Quarterly Journal Dedicated to Philosophical Study
And
Moral Regeneration



आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः । श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ॥



Sri Gurudeva Mandir, Belgaum.

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October 1979.

PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

— Editor —

Shri. G. D. Khare, B. A (Tilak University)

Vol. XIV

October 1979

No. 1

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Pathway to God

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PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

“ One God, One World, One Humanity ”

Vol. XIV

October 1979

No. 1

कस्त्वं शूली मृगय भिषजं नीलकण्ठःप्रिये ऽहम् ।
केकामेकां कुरु पशुपतिर्नैव दृष्टे विषाणे ॥
स्थाणुर्मुग्धे न वदति तरुर्जोवितेशः शिवायाः ।
गच्छारण्यं प्रतिहतवचाः पातु वश्चन्द्रचूडः ॥

This is a prayer to Shiva based on an imaginary dialogue between Shiva and Parvati which is conceived as having taken place when Shiva wants to enter his abode, and Parvati, standing at the door, feigns not to recognize him and asks him who he was. Shiva tells her his well known names like शूली, नीलकण्ठ, पशुपति, स्थाणु, etc. But Parvati makes a pun on his every name, and proves that his coming to her house was meaningless !

The double meanings of his names are as follows :-

शूली- One having a triple spear; i. e. Shiva or -
One, having a head-ache or stomach-ache.

नीलकण्ठ- God having a blue neck, or A peacock.

पशुपति- God Shiva who has mastered his senses, or The King of bullocks.

स्थाणु- The Self-composed God Shiva,
or A tree

शिवायाः जिवितेशः - Master of Parvati's life, or the
husband of a she-jackal.

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Shri Gurudeva Dr. R. D. Ranade



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Editorial -

The ' Vicious Circle '

In a Spiritual Career !

It should be noted at the out set, that the words ' Vicious Circle ' here do not refer to any corrupt conduct. They refer here to a situation in the course of events, in which the prior event depends on the subsequent event, and the subsequent event depends on the prior one.

For instance, the case of a person gone mad for want of marriage, is a case of vicious circle. For, his madness is due to want of marriage, and the impossibility of marriage is due to his madness !

Many an aspirant generally experiences such a vicious circle in his spiritual career. The main requisite of a spiritual career is concentration of mind — may be on the idol of one's favourite God, or on some abstract principle like soul, universal energy (चिच्छक्ति), etc.

But when an aspirant begins to concentrate his mind on any such thing other than the objects of senses, it at once escapes his grip and rushes back to its familiar sense—objects, due to its prolonged contact with them through his several previous births.

On the other hand all the scriptures, moral sciences, and spiritual stalwarts unanimously declare, that the fickle mind will not yield to the aspirant's control until it is made to relish the peace that results from concentration on a spiritual goal. Thus, want of attachment to sense — objects is the cause of spiritual concentration, and concentration on spiritual goal is the inevitable source of freedom from attachment to sense — objects. This phenomenon of mutual causation and resultantship, is the 'vicious circle' in a spiritual career, which thwarts the progress of an aspirant like a labyrinth (चक्रव्यूह) designed to kidnap an enemy. Majority of aspirants fall a prey to this labyrinth, or maze, and get completely disappointed to the extent of regarding themselves unfit for a spiritual career. Instances abound wherein they even make bold to declare, that, meditation, constant repetition (जप) of God's name, performance of physical penance, are all humbugs !

Are such people hypocrites ? It would be a grave injustice to them, to say so. Many of them may have started on their spiritual career with utter sincerity. But they must have been baffled by the 'vicious circle' mentioned above.

What is the way out of this vicious circle ? It is the element of Faith in the Grace of God. Intellectual argument may lead some aspirants to a stage some what higher than that of a sceptic ; but the ardousness and zeal requisite for exquisite concentration and deep meditation cannot be reached without the encouraging force of Faith in God's Grace. Shri Krishna has stressed the same point in the last verse of the sixth chapter of Bhagavad—Gītā, viz —

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।

श्रीद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥

(“ Out of all meditators, the one who surrenders to me with his mind solely intent on me, is in my opinion, likely to attain the highest attunement. ”)

Intellectual and mental convictions, though considered to be firmly stable, are likely to change through lapse of time. So, to secure progress through the two opposite equal forces of sense-attachments and spiritual goal, the third force of ' Faith in God's Grace ' is essential.

— G. D. K.



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(भगवत्-गीता)

THE SAGE OF KANCHI

N. Anantharaman

In this Bharat, God has incarnated in several forms during several periods of history for the uplift of Dharma when it appeared that the forces of Adharma were gaining ground. The Avatārs of Rāma and Krishna are well known— But these were before the advent of Kaliyuga. In Kaliyuga the development and growth and spread of Adharma are rapid. Adharma assumes several forms. Because the meaning of Dharma itself gets blurred, people have a tendency to name some forms of Adharma itself as Dharma. Hence the job of the Avatārs of God has been strenuous and the Avatārs have also to be numerous and not once or twice in a thousand years. Dharma itself has to be pulled out of the morass of Adharma and ignorance, and it cannot be achieved by killing one or two ringleaders of evil.

We have had several great avatārs in Kaliyuga, notably Adi Shankarāchārya, (who dominated the Indian Scene more than 2000 years ago). He resuscitated Hindu Dharma and weaned it away from the influences of atheism on the one hand and superstitions and ignorant practices on the other.

All this he achieved in a short span of 32 years of earthly existence. He toured the length and breadth of this country and established several mutts in various places to propagate the upanishadic teachings and thoughts. Notable among these "mutts" which have gained prominence over the years are five viz, the mutts at Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Sringeri and Kānchi. Adi Sankara ascended the Sarvajna Peeth (सर्वज्ञ पिठ) at Kānchi and established the Kāmakoti Peetha. He also attained final samādhi at Kānchi.

In this hallowed place Vedic thought and learning have flourished under the enlightened and ennobling guidance of a line of Achāryās who came in the direct Sishyaparamparā of the great Adi Sankara himself. Over the centuries the great Sankarāchāryas of the Kānchi and other mutts have endeavoured to perform the difficult task of preserving and nurturing the Vedās and Dharma. Still living amidst us and revered as a great sage is the incomparable Jagadguru shri Chandrashekharendra saraswati wSāmi, who retired from the Peetha a few years ago as the 68 th Sankarāchārya of the Kānchi Peetha coming in the direct line of Sishyaparamparā of Adi Sankara.

His Holiness Sri Chandrashekharendra Saraswati Swāmi was born on Sunday, the 20th May, 1894 in the asterism Anurādhā at Villupuram in South Arcot District in Tamil Nādu, as the second son of Subramania Shāstri and Smt. Mahālxmi Ammal, a Kannada Brahmin Family settled down in Tamil Nādu and following the Rig - Vedic traditions, Subramania Shāstri who was at that time an Inspector of schools, named him "Swāmināthan". Subramania Shāstri had, besides Swāmināthan, four sons and one daughter. Swāmināthan grew-up to be an extraordinary child. He learnt under

the special tutelage of his father and mastered many subjects. He had a prodigious memory and things once mentioned were retained. In due course the upanayanam, or sacred thread investiture ceremony, was performed and Swāmināthan was initiated into the study of the Vedas as was customary in those days in Brahmin families. He also received music lessons and attained a certain degree of proficiency,

Thus passed the first eight years. Swāmināthan was then admitted to the second form in the American Mission High School at Tindivanam where Subramania Shāstri happened to be working at that time. It was not difficult for Swāmināthan to come out first in the examinations and he bagged many prizes. He bagged the first prize for proficiency in the Bible too. He took part in school dramas, notably Shakespeare's plays, and received high praise.

In 1906, when swāmināthan was studying in the fourth form, the 66th Peethadhipathi of Kānchi, also named sri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swāmi, was touring Tindivanam and neighbouring places in south Arcot District. The 12-year-old boy attracted the special attention and received blessings of the Achārya, and he made kind enquiries of Subramania Shāstri about his son and showed great interest in his studies and development.

Early in 1907, a telegram was received by Subramania Shāstri requesting that Swāmināthan should be brought immediately to His Holiness Chandrasekharendra Swāmi's camp at Kalavai, 30 miles from Kanchipuram. When Subramania Shāstri and his wife reached Kanchipuram with their son, Swāmināthan, the Mutt authorities at Kanchipuram arranged for a special transport for Swami-nathan alone to travel to Kalavai. The parents followed and reached Kalavai

later. When the telegram had been despatched from the sankaracharya's camp, the Achārya was actually seriously ill and before Swāmināthan reached Kalavai, had passed away. It had been his desire that Swāmināthan should be installed as Sankarāchārya after him. But since before he passed away the initiation could not take place, he had initiated one of his disciples, by name Laxmikanta a youth of 18 years who became the 67th Sankarāchārya of Kānchi. But within 8 days of his initiation Laxmikanta also passed away because he had contracted the same illness due to infection. This was very unexpected and sudden. Before he passed away, however, having regard to the wishes of his own Guru, he suggested that Swāmināthan should be given the initiation as the next peethādhipathi. The parents of Swāmināthan took the vital and momentous decision to allow Swāmināthan to accept sanyās with great trepidation and mental anguish. But there is no doubt that the erudition and great mental powers their son had shown, and the confidence they had that he will hold such a high position which demanded exacting penance, dedication and rigorous discipline with dignity and honour, and probably their own son's assurances in this regard must have persuaded them to give their consent. On 13th February 1907, when he was hardly 13 years old, Swāmināthan was initiated into sanyāsa and became the 68th Achārya of the Kānchipeetha under the same titular name as that of his Guru - viz, Shri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati. It may be mentioned here that the Peethādhipathis of Kānchi have to be of "Rig Vedic" tradition and should be Brahmacharins.

From 1909 to 1914, for five years and more, the young Achārya received intensive education in the Vedas and the shastras etc. He found time in these years to come across

variety of scholars of great repute and erudition from various parts of India who all came to Mahendrs-mangalam,, a village on .the banks of the Kāveri where temporarily the Adhārya had settled down for educational needs. He not only mastered sanskrit and Tamil but also Marāthi religious literature. He learnt French too. At such an young age, these studies were not academic but with deep inslght and spirit of quest. Learned discussions among scholars took place in his presence on many topics. In fact, Mahendramangalam became a centre of pilgrimage for the time being to learned scholars. The banks of the Kāveri were suitable for meditation, art and architecture, especially the ancient, astrology and astronomy, mathematics, music, photography, numismatics archaeology, were subjects which interested him. His knowledge of astronomy and mathematics and his interest in re-searches in those subjects evoked great respect from several experts in these fields.

The affairs of the Mutt were looked after, during the minority of the Achārya, by the Court of Wards and the management was vested in the Achārya when he completed 21 years of age in May, 1915.

From the time He ascended the Kānchipeetha, till now the Achārya's has been a ceaseless effort in the cause of Dharma, relief of suffering, promotion of Vedic learning and traditional arts and architecture etc. In 1919 His Holines, began a historic extensive tour of the country, mostly on foot, visiting thousands of villages and hunderds of towns and blessing millions of people who would not otherwise be in a position to meet him or even see him.

Starting from Kumbakonam, he toured extensively in

Tamil Nādu, and in May 1927 he crossed over to Kerala and began a tour of Kerala. It was during this time that a historic meeting with Mahātmā Gāndhi, who was also touring the country to propogate the Congress ideals, took place. The meeting between Mahātmā Gāndhi and His Holiness took place on 15-10-1927 in a shed specially prepared in the camp of His Holiness at Nellichery village in Pālghāt district of Kerala. The great importance that Gāndhiji attached to religion and religious matters and the attention with which Gandhiji listened to the Achārya, were indicated when Gāndhiji was reminded towards evening on that day by Rājāji that it was time for him to take his food before darkness set in, and Gāndhiji replied, 'To day my food is the conversation and dialogue with Swāmiji.'

By 1928 June, His Holiness reached Kanyākumāri. Re-entering Tamil Nadu after a few days, he began his tour towards the north, going through Tamil Nadu once again. In March 1932 the Achārya reached Kalahasti and touring widely in Andhra Pradesh reached Hyderābād by March 1934. He visited the historic city of Nagpur on 5th June and after a stay of 2 weeks there and travelling through difficult terrain in Madhya Pradesh reached Jabalpur in the first week of July. Thence he proceeded to Allahabād and Banāras. There a great Vidwat-Sadas of learned scholars was convened in March 1935 when His Holiness graced the occasion. Continuing his onward journey via Patnā and Gayā and other places, by July 1935, the Achārya reached Calcutta. Leaving Calcutta in October 1935 and travelling via Midnāpur, Kharagpur, Tātānagar and other places he crossed over to Orissa and visiting various religious centres there, as well as in eastern Andhra Pradesh, he completed his tour in 1939. During this marathon cross-country as a pilgrimage to Kāśi and other holy places'

thousands had opportunity to meet him and at least see him and receive his blessings. They had occasion to see him offer worship, to listen to him on various topics, to get guidance, advice and solace, encouragement and appreciation as the case may be. This work of the Acharya continues.

Numerous temples have been renovated and restored at his instance and by his guidance, especially ancient and historic temples which have acquired renown over the ages for their sanctity as well as art and architecture.

Apart from renovation activities, a great contribution that the Acharya has made is in the field of spreading the knowledge about Adi Sankarācharya and his works by building shrines at various important centres in the country and requesting scholars to undertake study of Śankara's works and philosophy. Notable among these shrines in honour of Adi Śankara are the ones at Ramaeswaram in the south, Badrināth and Rishikesh in the north, Banaras, Śri Śailam, Triambak Kurukshetra and at Rāmnapur in Nāgpur.

The sage of Kānchi has given encouragement and guidance to various organisations which have aimed at spiritual and religious renaissance in India and has initiated several schemes in this regard :

1. The Advaita Sabhā Kumakonam (established in 1805) devoted to prohagating Advaita philosophy
2. The - Veda - Dharma - Sastra - Paripālana Sabhā) (वेद-धर्म-शास्त्र-परिपालन-सभा) started in 1942 to promote Vedic studies and proper observance

of Vaidic karma and samskāra, through discourses, low priced editions of important books etc.

3. The Veda - Vidya- Trust - established in memory of our Achārya's Paramaguru, devoted to establishment of Veda - Pāthasālas.
4. The Shashtiabda Poorthy Trust established in 1954 to mark the 60th birthday of His Holiness and having as its object the spread of the knowledge of Veda Bhāshyas and giving encouragement to Vedic Scholars by granting suitable incentives including cash payment.
5. The Veda Rakshana Nidhi Trust established in 1963 to promote Vedic studies in the traditional way by giving assistance to institutions and persons engaged in imparting Vedic knowledge. It may be mentioned here that some traditional and ancient branches of Atharva Veda and Sāma Veda which were becoming extinct because of lack of students and teachers, have been revived by deputing students from the south to Baroda and teachers to Bengal to train students there, etc. As a result of this, Pāthasālas have been established at Baroda, Calcutta etc.
6. The Kanyakādāna Trust to help in meeting marriage expenses in deserving cases, and help fight the evil of dowry system.
7. Free Upanayana Scheme—To encourage timely investiture of sacred thread for eligible boys and initiation into study of Vedas.
8. The Amara Bhārati Parikshā Samiti founded in 1955

to hold examination in Sanskrit and providing assistance for private study of Sanskrit.

- 9 The Thiruppavai—Thiruvembavai movement intended to promote Bhakti-Mārga by encouraging widespread recitations of Bhakti stotras composed by the saints and sages in Tamil.
10. The Jivātmā Kainkārya Sangam (established in 1942), an organisation started at Kumbakonam to help in the conduct of funeral rites for persons who cannot afford to incur any expenditure because of poverty, and also to undertake disposal of unclaimed bodies of Hindus who die in hospitals, prisons etc., who have no relations to perform funeral rites.

These are some of the organisations and activities that have received inspiration, encouragement, guidance and assistance from our Achārya. The noble causes he has been promoting and helping are too numerous for detailed mention here. Enough to say, that his is a ceaseless striving in the cause of Hindu Dharma and the Vedas.

To quote the late Justice Chandrasekara Ayyar : “ His Holiness is a very remarkable person.....Though austere by himself and immersed in penance and fasting and vigils, puja and contemplation, his accessibility to all who go to him for advice and guidance is well known... Stern in his own habits of orthodoxy he is broadminded and catholic in temperament. Sages like him, who see far and beyond what they see around them, are the very salt of the earth ”

His luminous eyes, benign smile, unruffled composure, prodigious memory and learning, practical common sense,

analytical approach, steadfast faith in Dharma, devotion to Hinduism, accessibility, unpretentious and simple nature, all these have given him a unique stature, importance and esteem. So much so, anybody who has had the privilege of seeing him or meeting him considers it an unforgettable moment. No wonder he is considered by many as the greatest living sage.

This year his devotees and admirers will be celebrating his 86th birthday all over India. May he live long to guide us as a beacon light and to show us the path of Dharma and Truth.

The Acharya has found a noble and fitting successor in His Holiness JayendraSaraswati Swami to continue this great work. Jagadguru Shri Jayendra Saraswati Swami is the 69th and present Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha.

I must acknowledge here my deep gratitude to Brahmashri Sambamurty Sastri Ramchandrapuram whose biography of the Jagadguru of Kanchi in Tamil has furnished me the material for this article.

सद्गुरुचरणारविन्दाभ्यां नमः ॥
श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणानामालयं करुणालयं ।
नमामि सद्गुरुं सर्वलोकशङ्करं चद्रशेखरम् ॥



THE SPIRITUAL NIGHT OF THE SOUL.

Ey : Savitribai Khanolkar

Mystics call the night dark because the mind meanders in an interminable labyrinth of darkness. Progress ends abruptly and the usual indications of well-being and beacons that seemed to shine on the way also cease to exist.

The Sādhaka is perplexed and wonders why his Lord actually came to abandon him in a morass of confusion, without support, help or encouragement.

The devotee pines for God. He cries for light while he is smothered under heavy black clouds of apprehension and suffers in his estrangement, yet God gives him no answer nor the slightest sign of hope.

At this point, many give up and return to their worldly ways, blaming God for their fall or inability to emerge from the cocoon of an aborted sādhana. Spiritual life was not for them. When the great Saint Tukārāma went through that ordeal, he had to bear torments that left him bereft of sense and consciousness. His anxiety at such times invaded his heart like a raging fire and his longing for God became all the more intense. He raved against God like a child who rightly cries that its mother has let him down! – Yet he never ceased loving him. To these, doubtlessly, the blissful Lord vouchsafes his vision, as He did to Tukārāma who henceforth swam in a sea of Love and Bliss.

The dark night of the soul is something akin to an ordeal by fire where the higher mind tries to reassert itself against the easy-going, pleasure-loving and weak lower mind. The Lord causes our trials to be engineered by that lower mind, which has to be controlled by its higher counterpart. Swāmi Abhedananda, the blessed apostle and disciple of Shri Rāmakrishna, used to say: "The higher mind has to fight the lower mind from birth to birth until it wins." and so it is.

Those who love God unceasingly from the very depth of their heart, come rain, come shine, place their whole Burden at His Feet. In fact, they surrender completely to His Will and emerge cleansed and pure, as if bathed in eternal Bliss. Having the Lord Infinite as their parent, Friend and protector, they know no fear.

Whatever obstacle they encounter is overcome without hesitation, with a firmness rooted in faith and completely free of pride and selfishness.

The darkness of the soul is a misnomer as the soul is self-effulgent. What is referred to is the mind. It should at any rate never deter us from the purpose of our sādhanā. The devotee must continue his set disciplines, disregarding of the handicaps imposed upon him. Much depends on what and how much the devotee set himself to achieve at the beginning.

For those lukewarm sādhakas whose sole aim is to be free of troubles and lead a comfortable and pure life, the repetition of the Name is sufficient. They are not likely to be faced with harrowing trials either. It would be of great benefit to them if they refrain from interrupting their japa,

devoting time to it twice a day at least, morning and evening.

But for those who aim to transcend and cross the barrier of time and space and the pairs of opposites to merge in the pure consciousness of the Self, the task is not so simple. They will have to face the fire and storms of lust and anger and the mire of ego which makes things much harder.— Teachers demand little from a K. G. child but exact a high price in work, determination and concentration from a to graduate. Do we not sit and study for hours at a time, day and nights, month after month and year after year, in our eagerness to win a degree? — Why then, are we surprised when estst start coming our way in our spiritual life?

The mind harbours deep within its closed recesses a maze of dormant samskaras, waiting through the quiescent past for an opportunity to rise up to the consciousness and create such havoc as may lead the sādḥaka on the road to insanity.— Since those samskāras are not related to our present life, they succeed in confusing and give birth to unknown desires and fears.— This is tantamount to torture of the mind.

The only remedy therefore is to submit to the Source of all Consciousness, to the Doer and Creator of the Universe itself, and relax. The infinite who abides with and without form, suffers no such anxieties, and to that True self alone our being must relate and to no other.

On the one hand, the darkness is usually created by the sub-conscious which harbours the awakening of these past inhibitions, desires and fears, and on the other hand has already begun the struggle unknown to us against that overwhelming tide. The sādḥaka is not aware of

it but feels confused as if chained by unknown powers.— He doesn't realize they are all his own — The effect on the conscious plane is more or less as if everything is blanked out. He searches in vain for a sign of progress. His meditation leaves him frustrated and restless. — His dreams are unhealthy and he wavers before temptation of the senses. — Like the Pāndavas who never gave up their love and adoration of Shri Krishna even though He was unable to prevent the destruction of their children and relations, the devotee indeed must never give up his or her search for Truth, nor his love of God. — We should not despair.

The dark night is not eternal. It may last for days or decades. Yet we ought to remain unconcerned, having left the sails of our being in the hands of God who surely knows best.

The wind of His Grace will bring the boat safely to port.— The root of all confusion, retardation and suffering is selfishness. The sādḥaka scared to lose the little he thinks he gained, withdraws like a tortoise into his shell and closes all avenues to further progress, thereby preventing even the Inner Light from shining forth. Knowing that the Brahman is the only Reality, where can there be fear, doubt, pride, lust and anger?

So let there be night or let the sun brighten the path. The Inner Guide takes charge. The Light of Love and wisdom will cancel both past and present and carry us beyond the relative Creation to the unchangeable, blissful Self.

The ego is an illusion. The darkness therefore is another illusion. All that exists is the Light Infinite and impersonal, all encompassing presence of the self no one can describe.

THERE IS A METHOD TO MAKING
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AND WE HAVE QUITE A FEW METHODS

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An Estimate of
Dr. R. D. Ranade's Exposition
of Super-Moralism in the Bhagavadgita.

By : S. K. Gupta, M. P. C. College, Baripada

The Bhagavadgita abounds in mystical experience. Therefore its interpretation by a non-mystic is necessarily inadequate. Rānade being a mystic, his interpretation of the Gita has wonderful illumination which appeals to one's intellect and teaches one's heart. Supermoralism is moralism in its higher form. It is exemplified in higher stages of morality involving mystical experience of God. Niskarmya Siddhi, Nistraigunya and Sthitaprajnā are Super-moral stages to which moral progress leads. These conceptions occur in the Gita. Rānade brought to light their inter-connection and arranged them in ascending order of mystical experience. (1). First let us take the conception of Niskarmya Siddhi. Niskāma Karma or doing one's duty without attachment to its consequence when consistently performed over a long period of life, generates complete detachment involving ... attainment of God. Such a person has full control over his self and he is free from all worldly desires,

(1) The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-Realisation
P. 215.

Asakta-buddhiḥ sarvatra, jitātmā, vigatasprihaḥ
Naiskarmyasiddhimparamām sanyāsenādhigachhati

Gita – XVIII. 49

This state of Naiskarmya siddhi or complete desirelessness can be attained only after vision of God.

Viṣayā Vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinah
Rasavarjam rasopyasya param driṣtvā nivartate.

Gita II. 59

The flavours of worldly objects remain in our minds even though we may not run after the objects. Only through the vision of God this flavour leaves the mind and makes one completely detached and desireless. Vision of God makes a man superman, whose morality is super-morality. He does his duties without any attachment whatsoever. Naiskarmya siddhi in this form is advocated by activists or Karma-yogis like Gandhi and Tilak. For them the transcendence of actions which Naiskarmya siddhi literally implies, does not mean renunciation of action but of worldly interests, desire and attachment. It is “renunciation in action” as stated by prof. M. Hiriyanna. Bhakti-yogis mean by Naiskarmya siddhi surrendering all actions to God. Fruits of actions are automatically given up when we offer the actions to God. All actions are to be performed taking resort to God.

Sarvakarmāṇyapi sadā kurvāṇo madvyapāsrayah.

Gita XVIII. 56

We are free from the effects of our actions if they are done taking resort to God. Jñāna Yogis interpret Naiskarmya siddhi as rising superior to karmas. In this state duties outgrow their utilities. Śāṅkara defines Naiskarma as Niskriya Brahmātma-Śambodha or Niskriya-ātma, Svarupasthāna.

Experiencing God within, one remains engaged in it. He is exempted from all worldly duties. He becomes Niskriya or actionless. God is above action, The vision of God in Niskarma siddhi makes man God-like. Being God-like one rises above actions. When the seer of self rests in his own form he need not perform any physical action. Station in ātma-Svarupa is Niskriya.

Rānade is a mystic of this type. He believes in " Powerlessness of actions before God-vision and God-enjoyment " 2), In support of his view he quotes from the Gīta -

Jñānagnihsarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt Kurute tathā IV, 37

The illumination of God-vision puts a stop to actions and their effects. Action is a hindrance to God-vision. After attainment of God-vision the mystic proceeds further. There is constant enjoyment of Divine Bliss, Any action of the world disturbs such enjoyment, In Chapter XVIII verse 66 of the Gīta Srikrishna says : Sarva Dharmān parityajya māmekam saraṇam vraja When we take shelter in God there need not be any worldly duty. They may be discarded. Similarly we are told that actions come to an end for a man who is merged in the beatific enjoyment of God, (3)

Yastvātmātirnera syat-atma triptascha manabah
Atmanyeba cha Sanuvasta tasyakāryana vidyate III. 17

One who enjoys God, for him there is no action or duties. (tasya kāryanavidyate). When the final end of duties is attained they outgrow their utilites. Once Rānade was deeply engrossed in meditation. The ruler of Jamkhandi

(2) Ibid-Page-205

(3) Ibid-Page-205.

paid a visit to his āshram at Nimbāl. He had to wait for several hours before he could get the darshan of Sri Gurudeva. Here it is to be noted that Rānade integrates Jnāna with Bhakti, Jnāna intensifies Bhakti, Taking shelter in God, and enjoying Him is at once Jnananand-Bhakti.

NISTRAIGUNYA

Nistraigunya is also a state of super-moralism. It implies rising above the three gunas – Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. It is transcendence of gunas.

Traigunya Viṣayā Vedā nistraigunyo bhavārjuna
Nirdvandvo nityasattvastho nirयोगक्षेमा ātmavan.
II. 45

It is a state where all oppositions or dualities are resolved. The knowledge of self or Brahman dawns and continues to exist. One becomes God-like and like Him is free from the influence of the three gunās. The transcendence of the three gunās can be achieved in two ways. First the evils of Rajas and Tamas are to be checked by sattva and remain constantly in the Sāttvika state. But this is not the end. One is to proceed further. Sattva guna also is to be transcended. This can be done by destroying sattva by itself. Sattva guna gives us knowledge of God. Continued concentration on such knowledge intensifies it and ultimately results in intuitive experience of God. In that state sāttvika knowledge disappears. The three gunās are transcended. The second way of transcending the gunās is avyabhichāriṇi bhakti, or one pointed and unswerving devotion to God.

Manchayo avyabhichāreṇa bhaktiyogena sevate
Sagunān samatityaitān brahmabhuyāya kalpate.

XIV-26.

Sincere devotion to God is essential for rising above

the gunas and become God-like. Nistraigunya is placed after Naiskarmya-siddhi by Rānade in Karma-Yoga of his Dhvānagita (4), as well as in his book 'Bhagavadgītā as a philosophy of God-realisation.' (5) It is apparent that the former is of higher mystical order than the latter. In Naiskarmya-siddhi-state the attachments resulting from the gunas are checked, but also transcended. One rises above attachment and detachment. In this state the devotee comes nearer to God.

STHITAPRAJNA

The highest moral ideal according to the Gītā is the state of sthitaprajna. Super-moralism progresses from the stages of Naiskarmya-siddhi and Nistraigunya-to the state of sthitaprajna. In this state there is anāsakti or detachment as in Nāiskarmya-siddhi, and there is transcendence of the gunas as in Nistraigunya. Over and above a sthitaprajna is a Kootastha. Koota is the top-most part of the brain and kootastha remains there with the realisation of soul or God. This is of higher mystical order than Naiskarmya-siddhi and Nistraigunya. In this state there is not only vision of God, within but also outside.

Abhito brahmanirvāṇam vartate viditātmanām. V. 26

In the words of Rānade "You can see God inside, outside, to the left, to the right, above, below and every where..... When you can see God in such a manner then alone you may be entitled to the name of a sthitaprajna." (6). Such a person is always in an equanimous state of mind

(4) Dhyanagita-Page. 62.

(5) Bhagvadgita-Page. 216 (6) Ibid page-222.

and has equality of vision (samadarṣaṇa), everywhere.

Vidyāvinayasampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni Chaiva śvapāke chapanditāḥ samadarśinah V. 18

Human beings high or low and even animals are seen as equal. The same God is present in all of them. In Sthitaprajna there are elements of moralism also. Such a person withdraws his senses from their objects. The senses have no influence over a poised mind which is engaged in enjoyment of God. In the conception of Sthitaprajna there is moralism in the form of sense-control, there is super-moralism in the form of poised mind, and equality of vision due to experience of God within and outside. Also there is Beatificism or enjoyment of God as implied by Brahma-Nirvāṇa.

According to Rānade "to have a correct statement about the sthita-prajna, the beatific element must rank the highest" (7). Mysticism is subject to progress. Enjoyment of God is the highest state of mystical realisation. The vision of God attained in Naiṣkarmyasiddhi and Nistraigunya stages is intensified and made continuous in sthita-prajna state. Ultimately the enjoyment of Divine Bliss sets in. According to Rānade, Beatification is the crown of Equanimity (8). A calm desireless mind can enjoy the Divine Bliss which is different in kind from physical pleasure and rational contentment. Rational contentment is superior to physical pleasure, and Beatification is superior to rational contentment. Beatificism has three stages. First the Blissful touch of God (Brahma Samsparṣa) is felt. Next the saint has the Blissful

(7) Ibid Page. ... 223.

(8) Ibid Page. ... 222.

experience of identity with Brahman (Brahma-bhoota) Lastly the saint feels that not only he is Brahman, but also the Bliss, he is enjoying is Brahman and he is absorbed in the Bliss. He loses his personality. He is merged in the Brahman. Rānade's analysis of Beatification is wonderful. Only a God realiser can systematise the various statements of Divine experience in the Gitā, into an inter-connected whole. Fānade has made the study of Gitā wonderfully significant and fruitful.

Beatificism as the highest element of Sthitapranjna, reconciles the other two elements of moralism and super-moralism. Enjoyment of Divine Bliss involves sense-control and also rising above the senses. Duty and no-duty lose their significance. They along disappear with the ego. What remains is PURE BLISS.





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Ranga Avadhoota-The Saint of Nareshwra

By:- Umā. S. Deshpande, Baroda.

His Holiness Shri Ranga Avaddhoota Mahārāj of Nāreshwara was not only the author of profound philosophical treatises, not only the propounder of metaphysical, ethical and spiritual values of life, but also an alleviator of thousands of people suffering from various mental, physical and worldly stresses and strains.

There was a family called Valūme in a small village-Devale, in Ratnāgiri. In that family there was a learned man Jayarāma Bhaṭṭa who had a son Viṭṭhala. From the very young age Viṭṭhala was an ardent devotee of God Viṭhobā and was not at all interested in the material gains. He left the house when he was a young boy and went to Pandharapura for doing incessant worship of God Vithoba. In this way many days passed in the service of God. And then one day God Vithobā said to Viṭṭhalā Bhattaji in the dream - " I want to come to your house. How shall I come ? ". This was repeated second night. " I want to come to your house. " God said to him. Again third night God Vithobā appeared in the dream of Viṭṭhala Bhattaji and said - " I want to come down in your house. Go home, Get married. There is a girl named Kāshi in the family of

Moghe living in the village Pali. She is the appropriate match for you.”

Accordingly he went home and with the consent of his parents got married with the girl Kāshi, who was renamed as Rukmiṇi after marriage.

One day a friend of his father named Sakhārāma Potdār from Godharā came and requested him to send Viṭṭhala for rendering service to God Vithobā in his small temple at Godharā. Viṭṭhal-bhatta got what he desired most. He and his wife went there and got engrossed in the service of the God. He was well-versed in conducting various types of sacrificial rituals; so the people in Godharā and surrounding villages were pleased and impressed by his competence and unavaricious nature. His wife was also willingly following the footsteps of her husband. Rightly it is said —

संतुष्टो भार्यया भर्ता, भर्ता भार्या तथैव च ।
यस्मिन्नेव कुले नित्यं कल्याणं तत्र वै ध्रुवम् ॥

(Where husband feels satisfied by his wife and where wife gets content by her husband, there, in that family, always an eternal Bliss exists).

Accordingly that Eternal Bliss took birth in their family on the day of Gopāṣṭami in the month of Kārtika (21-11-1898), named pānduranga.

While quite a young child, when he saw a dead body being taken to cemetery he asked his father - ” Every body will die like this ?”

Father - ‘Yes.’

Son - "Is there any means of getting rid of death?"

Father - "Yes - chanting Rāma, Rāma, every minute of the day." Right from that day Pānduranga began to mutter Rāma, Rāma, every moment.

He lost his father when he was five and his youngest brother Nārāyana, three years old.

When he was eight, his mother took both the children to the village Devale for their Upanayana Saṁskāra. While coming back to Godharā Rukmiṇi Devi went to Narsobāwādi along with the two children. Fortunately there was H. H. Shri Vāsudevānanda Saraswati Tembe Swāmi Mahārāja. When Pānduranga saw Swāmiji he just ran to hug him and when asked by Swāmiji 'who are you?', the boy said "I am yours". Swāmiji was very much pleased with the boy and blessed him.

This incident left a deep impression in the mind of Pānduranga. He lost interest in worldly affairs. Constantly he was as if in search of Him, who is beyond everything. 'Please give me your Darshana', 'Give me your Darshana.' This was his frequent cry.

One day in his dream he heard the Inner Voice "Read Pothi, Read Pothi".

And it so happened that after some days his maternal uncle came to his mother and said- "I have to move from one place to another place and have to keep this pothi. If there is somebody who can preserve it with meticulous care and read it regularly, I shall hand it over to him." Having heard this immediately Pānduranga rushed to him and said 'Uncle please give me the Pothi. I shall read it daily'; Māmā agreed. The Pothi-Shri Gurucharitra - was given to the uncle

by H.H. Shri Sāi Bābā of Shiradi. Right from that day Pānduranga started reading that Pothi daily without fail.

While in school he was a very talented and sincere student.

In those days for their oral test at the S.S.C. Examination Prof. Robertson had come to their school, When it was Pānduranga's turn for the test there was an interesting dialogue between him and Prof. Robertson, some part of which is quoted below :—

R. :- Are you a Brahmin ?

P. :- Yes Sir,

R. :- Why you Brahmins pass through a thread—ceremony ?

P. :- May I please answer your question by a question or an answer ?

R. :- As you please.

P. :- Why do you put on a collar and a tie ?

R. :- It is an emblem of my religion—Christianity.

P. :- So is with our Hindu Brahmins.

R. :- Why this round-shaped clean shaving ?

P. :- Our country is a poor country and this sort of shaving costs only one anna, while fashionable hair—cut costs four annas.

R. :- Is there no other advantage ?

P. :- Yes, there is. By such clean shaving the brain remains cool and good thoughts get full scope.

R. :- Is it so ?

P. :- Yes sir, you get it done like this—try it. And if you do not feel coolness, you fail me.

Prof. Robertson was so much delighted that he laughed loudly and said to Pānduranga—You have passed the test with first rank.

At the time of his Intermediate college Examination he was seriously ill and had become very much pale and frail. His relatives and friends would advise him to take a "drop" that year. Similarly a Sanyāsin who was also an astrologer came to advise him-" Your stars are not favourable. Do not give examination this year; otherwise you will surely fail.'" But Pānduranga said to him- "I shall go and I will be successful in the examination. Your prediction will be false." And inspite of his weak and ailing condition he passed the examination with second class. He had imbibed the qualities of अभयं सत्त्वसशुद्धिर्ज्ञान योग व्यवस्थितः । During his college career he would sleeh early in the evening and would get up at midnight, would take bath and get engrossed in the contemplation of the Supreme. He was one of the brilliant students in the Baroda college. When he was in the B. A. Class he left the college respecting the appeal of Mahātmā Gāndhiji of boycotting the colleges and courts. Pānduranga now joined the campaign against the British rule.

One day he had a meeting with Mahātmā Gāndhiji.

G. - Where do you come from ?

P. - From Baroda college, as the representative of the students.

G. - What is the evidence that you are their representative ?

P. - This question arises only when somebody reports to you that I am not their representative. This point is irrelevant .

M. - Gāndhiji was so much impressed that he was nonplused. After sometime he remarked- " If I get such hundred young boys, Freedom would be easily acquired. "

For sometime he joined Ādarsha Vinaya Mandira as a Sanskrit teacher. He wrote the Book- " Geervānabhāshā, Pravesha " in two parts, for facilitating the teaching of Sanskrit.

Meanwhile a Sanyāsin approached him and asked " I would like to occupy the seat of Dwārakāpeetha of Shankarāchārya; would you please help me ?

P - What do you speak ? I donot understand.

S - If you would write in your own hands the prayer- " Jatādhāra Pāndurangam " written by Nārada I shall recite it for ten thousand times with devout faith and shall get the desired object with your blessings. Pānduranga wrote the prayer for the Sanyāsin and gave him the blessings. The Sanyāsin recited it with devout faith for many days and became Peethādheeshwara at Dwarka bearing the name of Swāmi Chandrashekharāshramaji.

Thus although he was engaged in different activities in the society, his soul was all the time yearning for Self-Realization. He would often implore his Guru " तू माय मी लेकरुं गुरुजी नको विसरुंरे नको विसरुं " One day Tembe Swāmiji appeared in his drem and asked him to read Dattapurāṇa for 108 times and to do. मंत्रजप.

But nobody knew about Dattapurāṇa. Many days passed and accidentally one day he got the copy of Dattapurāṇ from a desciple of Swāmi Yogānandasaraswati.

After some time he left the job in the school when there was some internal strife. But he had to shoulder the responsibility of his mother, and his younger mother, who was still studying. Meanwhile there was a need of a Sanskrit teacher for Smt. Anasuyā Sārbāhāi and Shri Shankarbhāi Banker, as they wanted to study our ancient treatiese in Sanskrit. Panduranga was appointed by them. Both of them were very much impressed by his depth of knowledge

and competence to explain the great lores to them. During these days he also edited the books—"Tolstoy and Education", "What shall we do then?" and "Dhammapada" in Gujarāṭi language.

Now his mother and other relatives began to insist that he should get married. Calmly but confidently he replied - "I have long been married to Yogashree and this Yogashree surpasses all other worldly Laxmis in every respect. Thousands of people are awaiting me. Let me leave the house and go out for practising penance. Please give me your blessings without hesitation."

When his brother passed B. A. Examination and got appointed in school, Pānduranga left the house and set out for a solitary place appropriate for the austerities.

H. H. Shri Langade Swāmi at Baroda advised him to go to some desolate place on the bank of Narmadā. Accordingly he found a solitary place near an old Shiva temple in the dense forest on the bank of Narmadā river. The place was such a deserted and dreaful spot full of wild beasts and tall trees, that even the sun-rays would not dare to enter there - what to speak of human beings? But Pānduranga came there with firm determination to perform penance in the month of Novembār - Decembar. The place was fully beset with serpents, scorpions and populated by the wild animals. Nearby there was a cemetary for the residence of the ghosts and evil spirits. Nevertheless, Pānduranga bowed down to Lord Shiva in the temple and sat down under a tree for the Anushthāna. In that biting cold he would stay there in open, without any roof on the head and gārment on the body. He would take bath at 2 - 00 a. m. in the midnight with cold water filled in the earthen pot.

In due course of time he completed 103 Pārāyanas of Dattapurāna there and then set out for the circumambulation of Narmadā as Pāranā of Anushthāna.

And when people gradually came to know about Pānduranga alias Ranga—Avadhoota they began to realize the divinity in Him. He proved to be a Kalpataru for innumerable people. For those who were suffering from incurable diseases, He was a sure saviour ; for those who had mental agonies and worries He gave motherly warmth and relieved them of their mental strain ; for those who had monetary constraint He was Kubera showering riches on them. In short—

पांडुरंग : पिता तेषां, माता, धाता जगत्सुरूद् ।

कल्पवृक्ष : स भक्तानां मुक्तिभुक्तिप्रदायक : ॥

(Pānduranga was for his devotees a father, mother supporter, the friend of all, a desire yielding-tree; in brief, giver of Moksha and worldly pleasure .)

Shri Rangāvadhoota would never touch money—no person approaching Him was allowed to offer cash gift to Him. If through oversight or ignorance somebody would offer some money at His feet, that spot would be washed clean and He would observe fast for the whole day.

Despite his resistance his loyal votaries have transformed the whole place of Nāreshwara—His penance grove. There is His Samādhi-mandir, Prayer Hall, meditation rooms, Matrumandira, and a small museum of the articles used by Him, etc.

He left this mortal world at Haradwāra on 19-11-1968. But He still exists not only in the hearts of his devotees, but also in the form of His Imperishable literature (अक्षरवाङ्मय) He was not only an erudite Pandit, but also an accomplished

poet. He has about 30 works in Gujarati to his credit. He has written about 12 books in Sanskrit. Some few books are also written in Marāthi and Hindi languages by Him. Most of them contain prayers and adorable chants to the Supreme. For a common man desirous of living a noble way of life Rangāvadhoota has given valuable, candid advice ; for an aspirant of Moksha he has explicitly expressed in His speeches and verses the Royal Path of Bhakti—unflinching devotion to the Supreme Reality. “Rangahrudayam” contains most of his Sanskrit Stotras (Prayers). These prayers are replete with ardent devotion, noble philosophical concepts superb ethical values, and excellent literary merit.

Written mainly in Vaidarbhi style , they are full of simple and lucid language, sweet diction and composed in metres that, when properly recited, a fine musical melody rings in our ears. The yearning to attain the Supreme described so graphically, takes our heart away from this mortal world and we enjoy the divine Bliss. In this respect He is next to Adya Shankarāchārya.

He addressed God Dattātreya thus —

रिक्तो गच्छेयं कदाचित्पृथिव्यां

का मे हानिर्हास्यमेवापि ते स्यात् । (आर्तप्रार्थना)

(If I go away empty handed (without your darshana) on this earth, what is the loss for me ? But you would be ridiculed).

आयान्ति यान्ति दिवसास्तव दर्शनं नो

कष्टं गतं विफलमायुरहो ममैतत् ।

आयाहि देहि भगवंस्तव स्निग्धहस्तं

त्वामेव देव प्रणमामि प्रसीद दत्त ॥ (दत्तप्रार्थनाद्वादशकम्)

(The days come and go ; your darshana is not there. Alas ! my life has been futile ! Oh God ! please come and give me your

loving hand. I bow down to you alone. Be gracious !)

And when He gets darshana of God, delightfully he says -

इति विलपितं ह्यार्तं श्रुत्वा हसन्नसूयजो
जनिमृतिहरो ह्याविर्भूतो गृणन्मधुरं गिरा ।

(Having heard this piteous cry God Dattātreya, the son of Anasoayā, dispelling cycle of birth and death, became manifest speaking sweet words).

Then, how is God Dattātreya ? He explains :-

एको बभूव भजतामभिलाषसिद्धये
योऽनेकरूप इव चन्द्रगणेशब्रह्म ।

विष्ण्वीशशक्तिप्रमुखैरिह भूरिरूपै
स्तं ज्योतिषां प्रवरज्योतिरहं नमामि ॥ (दत्तसायंस्मरणम्)

(The one who became manifold for accomplishing the desire of devotees, assuming different forms like Sun, moon, Ganesh, Brahma, Vishṇu, Mahesha, Shakti etc ; the Highest of all the lights, to Him I bow down).

He is graphically described thus :-

काषायवाससमजं कमलाक्षमेकं मालाकमंडलुधरं रमणोपलीलम् ।
गोश्वानक्रीडनपरं निगमान्तकेलिं देवत्रयात्मकमहं सततं नतोऽस्मि ॥

(I always adore that Trinity of God wearing saffron garment, unborn, having lotus-like eyes, the one alone holding rosary, and waterpot, engaged in graceful sports ; intent upon playing with cows and dogs, and one who created the Upanishads playfully (easily). Therefore—

कामं कल्पद्रुमो ह्येष साधुवृन्दानुसेवितः ।
दत्तात्रेयो महायोगी कलौ श्रीपादवल्लभः ॥

(In Kaliyuga the great Yogi Dattātreya alias Shreepādavallabha is certainly the desire - yielding tree, worshipped by a host of noble people). H. H. Rangavadhootaji was so much in tune

with the Supreme that He was totally detached and averse to the physical body and the world around. He would proclaim

दत्त दत्त स्मरन्मेयं देहः पततु निर्जने ।

चरन्तु पक्षिणः सर्वे मिष्टान्नं देहजं मम ॥

(Let my body fall down in a desolate place while uttering Datta, Datta ; Let the birds enjoy the delicacy of my [dead] body.)

अमर्त्योऽहमजो ब्रह्मन्मन् मृत्युर्मे खाद्यमुत्तमम् ।

कालस्य कालकृत्साक्षी सानन्दो नाटको महान् ॥ (मुञ्चितस्तोत्रम्)

(I am beyond death, unborn, Brahman. Death is the best of my food; I am the destroyer of the Time-witness, Blissful and a great actor.)

This was His revelation out of self-realization and so shattering the fetters of physical body, he now bids adieu to himself-to His sense and organs thus—

मातः काय पितृर्मनो भगिनि हे बुद्धे सखे काम भोः

प्राणा वन्धुजनास्तु वो नतिरियं सहयो वियोगोऽधुना ।

यास्यामि त्वगमव्ययं सदसतः पारं परं निमलं

यूर्यं यत्र न नाप्यहं न चजगन्नो जन्म मृत्युत्सुः कुतः ॥ (अन्यप्रार्थना)

(Oh ! Mother-Body, father-mind, sister-intellect, Oh ! friend desire, allies—Pranas—I bow down to you all, now the separation is to be tolerated. I shall go and attain that state which is incomprehensible, immutable beyond Sat and Asat, the most pure, where there would neither be you nor I, nor world, nor birth, whence can there be death ?)

In the following verses He gives precise and precious guidelines for a common man to obtain preyas and avoid suffering as well as for an aspirant of Moksha to attain Shreyas and to get Self-realization.

आशादासो जगद्दासो निराशीरक्षणीपतिः ।

तस्माद्दयाशां समुच्छिद्य स्वानन्दे रमते बुधः ॥ (अक्षरगीता)
(One who is servant of hope is the slave of the world; the one
got rid of expectation is the king of the world. Hence renounc-
ing passion the wise rejoices in Supreme Bliss.)

औषधं भगवन्नाम वैद्यः कारुणिको गुरुः ।
संसाररोगनाशाय पथ्यं साधुसमागमः ॥ (अक्षरगीता)
(The medicine to remove the disease of Saṁsāra is the name
of God; the doctor is compassionate Guru, and that which is
wholesome is company with good people).

कर्मैव कारणं विद्धि जीवानां सुखदुःखयोः ।
सार्थं बन्धाय निष्कामं मुक्तये समुदाहृतम् ॥ (अक्षरगीता)
(Karma is the only cause of pleasure and pain of the people ;
that done with desire binds, (and) that done without desire
is said to be for the Moksha.)

फलाकांक्षा हि बन्धाय निष्काङ्क्षोऽमृतमप्नुते ।
तस्मात्कांक्षां परित्यज्य यततां लोकसङ्ग्रहे ॥ (अक्षरगीता)
(The desire for the fruit leads to bondage, but the person
free from desire enjoys Immortality. Therefore, giving up desire
one should strive for welfare of the people).

भक्तिर्गरीयसी लोके विभक्तिकभयनाशिनी ।
भुक्तिदा मुक्तिदामोघा तिष्येडत्त भवनाशिनी ॥ (अक्षरगीता)
(Devotion is the supreme thing in the world removing the
fear of separation from God, giving prosperity and Moksha, it
is destroyer of Saṁsāra in Kaliyuga).

भाषणं भषणं विद्धि चित्तस्वास्थ्यप्रहारकम् ।
सभा भाषो वृथा लोके तस्माज्जागृहि जागृहि ॥ (बोधमालिका)
(Know the speech - making to be like barking, destroying the
peace of mind. Meeting in the world is a false appearance.
Wake up man ! wake up !

आत्मा मे गुरुराख्यातो मनः शिष्यो ह्यनुत्तमः ।
उपदेशस्तत्त्वमसि सोऽहं मंत्रः सनातनः ॥ (बोधमालिका)

(My teacher is my Ātman, the best disciple is mind, the teaching is "Thou art that" and the eternal Mantra is " I am He ").

यावज्जीवं सुखं जीवेज्जात्वात्मानं परं व्रजेत् ।

जीवात्मैक्यं परं तत्त्वं यज्जात्वा नो पुनर्भवेत् ॥ (बोधमालिका)

(As long as one lives one should live happily; knowing the Self one should attain the Supreme. The identity between the individual-self and the Highest-Self by knowing which there is no cycle of birth and death, is the sublime principle).

सुगतिं समवाप्नोति गुरुभक्तः सदानघ ।

तस्मात्सर्वेण भावेन सद्गुरुं शरणं व्रजेत् ॥ (बोधमालिका)

(Sincere devotee of the Guru easily attains good state; therefore one should surrender to the Guru with all one's feelings).

प्रेमतः परमाप्नोति यस्मात्प्रेममयं बृहत् ।

सर्वात्मैक्यं हि प्रेम स्याद्देशसत्किर्तं नारकी ॥ (बोधमालिका)

(One attains the Supreme through love because He is full of love ; the unity with all the souls is called love-, not the attachment to the body which leads to hell.).



श्री गुरुदेवांच्या आठवणी

यती नारायणानंदपरस्वती महाराज (उगार खुई)

श्री जगद्गुरु श्री चंद्रशेखरेंद्रपरस्वती (कांची कामकोटी पीठ)
यांचे चातुर्मास समाप्ती नंतरचा प्रस्थानाचा कार्यक्रम ठरविण्यासाठी
मी श्रीगुरुदेवमंदिरांत उतरलों होतो.

श्रीजगद्गुरु कांचीस्वामीमहाराजांना भेटण्यासाठी रोज असंख्य
भाविकांची गर्दी लोटत असे. त्यांत देशी तसेच परदेशी लोकही
स्वामींच्या दर्शनासाठी येत असत.

दि. ९ सप्टेंबर १९७९ रविवार. त्या दिवशी सकाळी श्रीकांची
स्वामींना भेटण्यासाठी (दर्शनासाठी) पुण्याहून सी. शकुंतलाबाई
आपटे (श्रीगुरुदेवांच्या कन्या), श्री दीपक आपटे (श्रीगुरुदेवांचा
नातू), अथणीहून श्री. वावासाहेब संगोराम व श्री रामणा कुलकर्णी
तसेच बेळगांवांतोल कांही नामधारक मंडळी आली होती. त्यांना
घेऊन माझ्याकडे श्री जगन्नाथराव परळेकर (सेक्रेटरी) आले व मला
सर्वांची ओळख करून दिली. श्री गुरुदेवांची कन्या व नातू पाहून
मला खूप संतोष वाटला, आणि ३२ वर्षांपूर्वीचा तो काल आठवू
लागला. त्यावेळीं मी आतांसारखा संन्यास घेतलेला नव्हता. अर्थात्
वैद्यकीचा माझा व्यवसाय सोडून संन्यासवृत्तीने मी सत्संग मिळावा या
शुध्द हेतूने अनेक महापुरुषांच्या सान्निध्यांत जाऊन रहात असें. प्राचार्य
श्री सोनोपंत दांडेकरांच्या सांगण्यावरून श्रीगुरुदेवांच्या संगतींत कांही
काल घालवावा व नंतर परमार्थ कसा करायचा हें ठरवावें असें मनांत

योजून मी निवाळला पंधरा दिवस राहिलों होतो, सकाळ संध्याकाळीं श्री गुरुदेव बँठकी घेत असत. मी त्यावेळीं प्रत्येक बँठकीस हजर असें. माझ्याशीं श्रीगुरुदेव मनमोकळेपणानें चर्चा करीत असत, व योग्य तें मार्गदर्शनही करीत. त्यावेळच्या असंख्य आठवणी माझ्या मनःचक्षू-समोरून सरकत चालल्या होत्या. तथापि समोर वसलेल्या नामधारकांना पाहून माझे मन उचंबळून आलें, आणि कांहीं मार्मिक व मोलाच्या श्री गुरुदेवांच्या आठवणी मीं त्यांना सांगितल्या.

मी वैद्य असून व्यवसायास रामराम ठोकून आल्याचें निवाळ आश्रमांतील विजापुरच्या डॉ करमरकरांना समजलें, माझा निवाळ आश्रमासाठीं उपयोग करून घ्यावा असा विचार त्यांचे मनांत आला, आणि त्याप्रमाणे त्यांनीं श्रीगुरुदेवांना सांगितलें. त्याबरो श्रीगुरुदेव तावडतोव उत्तरले, “ छे! छे! अहो परमार्थासाठीं स्वतःचा व्यवसाय व घरदार सोडून आलेल्याला कशाला त्यांत पुन्हा अडकवताय् ? ज्यांना स्वतःचा व्यवसाय सोडणें जमतें त्यांनीं केवळ परमार्थाचीच कांस धरावी व इतरांनींही त्यांना तसें करण्याची संधी द्यावी ”. यावरून श्री गुरुदेवांना परमार्थच सर्वश्रेष्ठ वाटत असून ज्यांना संसार सोडणें जमत नाही त्यांनीं संसारात राहून परमार्थ करावा, पण ज्यांना सर्वस्वाचा त्याग करणें जमतें त्यांनीं अवश्य परमार्थच करावा असें वाटत असें.

एकदां मीं श्रीगुरुदेवांना विचारलें कीं ध्यान कशीत असतां झोंप येते त्यावर उपाय कोणता? श्रीगुरुदेव म्हणाले “ आपण आपलें जपनेमादि कर्तव्य न चुकतां करीत रहावें. त्यापुढील सर्व जबाबदारी उपास्थावर रहाते. त्याचा विचार आपणास करणें नकोच. ” या मार्मिक उत्तरानें श्रीगुरुदेवांचा अनन्यभाव मला मनोमनीं पटला. माझ्या भ्रमंतीत मी हा प्रश्न अनेकजणांना विचारलेला होता. मला कोणी ‘ झोंप भरपूर घ्या ’ म्हटलें, कोणी मला आहार मी करण्यास सांगितलें, कांहींनीं आहारांतील बदल सुचविला. पण श्रीगुरुदेवांनीं ध्यानाच्या मर्मावर नेमकें बोट ठेवलें होतें. साधकानें नेमानें, आनंदानें व सातत्यानें ध्यान करावें, मग गुरुकृपा आहेच — साधनामध्ये स्थिर होण्याचा प्रयत्न करण्यास श्रीगुरुदेव सांगत असत. श्रीगुरुदेवांचा हा

अनन्यभाव मला पूर्णपणे पटला म्हणून मी आचरणांत आणला. आतां माझा सर्व भार माझ्या उपास्यावर आहे.

माझ्या त्यावेळच्या मुक्कामांत श्रीगुरुदेव श्रीमद्भागवताचें वाचन करीत असतांना पाहिलें. एखाद्या ग्रंथाचा सखोल अभ्यास चालू असतांना श्रीगुरुदेवांची एक विशिष्ट पद्धत असे. वाचनाचेवेळीं श्रीगुरुदेव आपल्याभोवतीं आठदहा विद्यार्थ्यांना बसवून घेत. एकाकडे मूळ संस्कृत श्लोकाचें पुस्तक, दुसऱ्याकडे त्याचें इंग्रजी वा मराठी भाषांतराचें पुस्तक, तिसऱ्याकडे त्यावरील टीकेचें पुस्तक व इतरांकडे अशाच निरनिराळ्या टीकाग्रंथांचीं पुस्तके देत असत. तसेंच एकाकडे शब्दकोश व लिखाणाचें साहित्य म्हणून कागद पेन्सिल वगैरे असे. श्रीगुरुदेव प्रथम मूळ संस्कृत श्लोक नीट वाचवून घेत असत व नंतर भाषांतर व इतर टीका वाचवून घेत. शेवटीं विशेष प्रसंगीं एकास टांचण करावयास सांगत. त्यामुळे एखाद्या श्लोकाचा तुलनात्मक व अत्यंत सूक्ष्मरीतीनें अभ्यास होत असे. याप्रसंगीं श्रीमद्भागवताचें बरीलप्रमाणें वाचन चालू होतें व श्री. भिडेशास्त्री (सोलापूरचे) हजर होते. शास्त्रार्थासंबंधी विषय निघाल्यास ते त्याचा खुलासा करीत असत. घृतराष्ट्राच्या जन्माची कथा चालू होती. श्रीभिडेशास्त्री नमंविनोद करीत होते. श्रीगुरुदेव हंसतमुखानें दाद देत होते. अशा पद्धतीनें एखाद्या श्लोकांतील मर्म जाणून त्यावर तुलनात्मक टिपणें घेणें सहज शक्य होई. यापद्धतीनें सततः वरोवरच इतर दहावारा जाणाही त्यांतील मर्म कळत असे. त्यांच्या एकांतांतील परमार्था- वरोवरच असा हा लोकांतांतील परमार्थही सतत चालू असे. एकंदरीत सर्व वेळ, स्वतःचा व दुसऱ्याचाही परमार्थाकडे लावण्याचा कटाक्ष असे.

गतकाळांतील श्रीगुरुदेवांच्या आठवणी सांगत असतांना समोर बसलेले नामधारक मोठ्या आदरानें व एकाग्र मनानें ऐकत असलेले पाहून मला संतोष वाटला.



sity. In addition, he won the Jagannāth Shankar-Set Scholarship in Sanskrit. This unique success of Gurudeo convinced him at heart about the truth in the assurance of Mahārāj and the innate power in the Divine Name and its meditation. His faith in the saint of Umadi became consolidated and firm. All the teachers and relatives of Young Gurudeo were delighted at the unprecedented success of a student of Jamkhandi High School. Even the Rājā of Jamkhandi, who was, in a way, connected with the safe delivery of Gurudeo's mother, distributed sweets in the town over the hump of the Royal Elephant. Thus, his deep devotion granted young Gurudeo academic distinction. Thereafter, when he happened to go to Ramdurg he met an old Sanskrit Shāstri. The old Shāstriji pedantically questioned the Young Scholar Rāmachandra as to what exactly does he know of Sanskrit in view of his Shankar-Set scholarship. The young Gurudeo gave him a Sanskrit Dictionary and requested him to ask anything he liked, from the whole book. The old Shāstriji was astonished at his confidence, and was humbled and convinced of the greatness of Gurudeo in his young age.

Just as a Marāthi saint has said :

“ दासाचे तूं पुरवुनि काम ! दासासी तूं करिभी निष्काम ”

God is most merciful and kind to his devotee. He fulfils the worldly expectations of his devotee, and out of this fulfilment emerges an attitude of detachment for the worldly desires. Accordingly, after Gurudeo's desire to get a distinction in his examination was fulfilled, his keen intellect turned inward. Thus, when he got the fruit of academic distinction through the medium of devotion to Nāma, his sense of

Gurudeo Ranade

discrimination made him introvert and he plunged into devotion to Nāme for spiritual realisation only. One day when he was sitting on the second floor of the house of Shri Bhāurāo Apte at Jamkhandi he had the first spiritual experience of the sight of a Divine Pearl. He used to tell that his first supersensuous vision of the Spiritual Pearl was on the top of the Dargā of a Mohāmmedan saint Ajāmirāheb, which is in front of Bhāurāo Apte's house. Just close to it is an old temple of Sri Siddheswar and the Pearl was located by his sight in the sky on the top-most position of this temple & the Dargā.

About his spiritual experiences, Gurudeo, rarely used to give vent to his heart. Utmost silence and secrecy was his nature. But, on rare occasions when he was in a blissful mood, he used to tell to his close associates, some rare spiritual phenomena. After his spiritual initiation in 1901, he had some spiritual experiences, but he used to say that it was entirely due to the grace of Mahārāj, even though he did not deserve it by his spiritual meditation. In 1902 the spiritual experience constantly made its appearances, but on a very miniature and modest scale. In 1905 there was a substantial addition to his spiritual experiences. And it was in 1908 that there was a definite and a firm growth in the spiritual experience.

When he was reading the Rājayoga of Swāmi Vivekānanda, he began to perceive the spiritual form or 'Vastu' on the book. He began reading Dāsbodha also at the same time. In 1910, he could see, through the grace of his Guru and his intense spiritual meditation, the spiritual form or 'Roopa' on the Shikhar or the Peak or top of the

temple of Umā Rāmeshwar in Jamkhandi.

As per few details given in the book of Spiritual memories of Gurudeo on pages 158 and 159, he once referred to the experience of good perfume emitting from his body, as also of mellodiousness to his sound. His mother used to ask him to get early in the morning and meditate on the Divine Name, and at the end of meditation, she used to ask him to light camphor and perform Arti. Then, Gurudeo used to perceive the 'Vastu' like balls of hinged cotton (कापसाचे गोळे) moving in the sky. In the evening when he similarly lit the camphor after meditation, he perceived numerous lustrous colours and they persisted for two days continuously,

College Education

‘ It is by education I learn to do by choice what other men do by the constraint of fear ’... Aristotle.

Thus, his deep devotion to Nam not only granted him distinction in his academic examination, but also in his growth of the spiritual experiences.

As a result of his unique success in Sanskrit at the matriculation, he was awarded the Jagannāth Shankar shet Scholarship. It brought for him a substantial financial support of Rs 25/- P. M. for four years. Thus, his college expenses could be partially met out of this, and his father's anxiety to meet his college expenses was eased to a great extent.

In those old days, the most popular and advanced Centre of higher education was mainly the Deccan College

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of Poona. Naturally, the scholar like young Gurudeo was sent there for his higher education by his father, as recommended by his teachers. All the facilities necessary for efficient education and studies were available at the Deccan College. It was like a modern Gurukula. An able batch of European teachers was available in this College at Poona. There was a serene atmosphere of perfect silence and peace within the premises of the College. The residence of teachers and students within the same compound, far away from the hustle and bustle of the City, gave it the sanctity of a modern Gurukul. But, the professors were all Englishmen and the subjects were modern Sciences and languages, and the medium of instruction was English. Facilities for modern games like Cricket, Football, Tennis and Golf, and boating were available there. It was mainly a College for rich students and princes. But, Scholars like young Gurudeo, were shining in the firmament of the College like a brilliant moon in the midst of numerous twinkling stars. The young Gurudeo was practically the only student in his class to take down regular class-notes on his every day lectures. His notes were in great demand at the time of examinations, as the majority of students only enjoyed the whole year in eating, playing and boating etc. Very few like Gurudeo cared for studies and so the Young Ranade was loved, admired and revered by his College Professors and student friends.

When he left Jamkhadi for Kudchi Railway Station in a bullock Cart, early in the morning, as usual, he deeply engrossed himself internally in the Name of God. The sublime rays of morning sun peeping out of the dawn, were invigourating. Suddenly the Young Gurudeo on his way happened to see the

spiritual sight of a Chit—Surya ‘ चित्सूर्य ’ (the Mystic form of the Sun) on the peak of the tower of a temple of God Shiva. The young Rāmbhāu was delighted to be blessed with this spiritual sight of a super natural sun. This was a most auspicious spiritual beginning of his College career.

During early days in the college hostel, he used to rigidly follow the instructions of his holy mother. The impressions and injunctions of his mother to perform the daily ritualistic prayers i. e. ‘ Sandhya Vandan ’ worship of the God Sun in the morning and evening Dawns, and giving ‘ Arghya ’ meaning a respectful offering or oblation to the God of Light. ‘ The Sun-bath at the dawn of Sunrise and the dawn of Sunset, ‘ Sandhyā ’ literally means union, twilight and promise. So, this ritualistic Sanskrit regimentation of the body and the mind includes the sublime worship of the Centre of Light and Life of the Universe, the Lustrous Sun-God visible to one and all, mystics and non-mystics alike. The Central pivot of the ‘ Sandhyā ’ is ‘ Gāyatri Mantra ’ which is a sacred hymn and prayer to the God Sun. The young Gurudeo’s simplicity and purity of character and behaviour created an aura of respect and love around him. He always remembered his mother’s sentence at the time of his departure from Jamkhandi for his College Career. It was, ‘ Ninna Nijava Nee Nodo ’ (निन्न निजव नी नोडो ’). See the reality embedded in your heart. This is a Kannada mystic poem of Guheshvar. Dr. S. Rādhākṛishnan has rightly described this Guheswar as the hidden God in the cave or Guhā of our heart. The College student in Gurudeo never forgot this sublime injunction of his pious mother. He mainly utilised the time in his College

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career, for his spiritual advancement and realisation of the Self in his young days. Studies and meditation were the only two engagements in his college days. He occasionally took interest in sports like long jump. His agility and endurance were remarkable. He once stood first in the long-jump competition.

When the young Gurudeo was in his previous class at the Deccan College hostels, he lived in room No. 33 and when he was studying at the Inter Arts Class his room No. was 11. Once when he went with him to Deccan College, during one of his haults in Poona, he showed his rooms and the place where he spent his nights in deep meditation on the Name of God. He used to hang a small board in front of his room, that, "He was not there". When one of his friends asked him, why was he exhibiting this false board, (when he was actually inside the room), the young Gurudeo replied smilingly, that it was not false. It was perfectly true that he was not in the room for others. He was in the room only for himself or only for his meditation and studies.

Once on 10-1-1903, his father Dattopant who apparently had little attachment for the spirituality and devotion of his second wife and his son from her, wrote a letter to young Gurudeo to his college address in Marāthi. Its purport was:— " (Without entertaining any feeling of ego and consciousness of pride, about the splendid success you have achieved at the matriculation examination, you should study hard with assiduity and firmness.... Hereafter all my responsibility rests with you. The Almighty God is, no doubt, merciful and kind enough to protect all of us)". In this letter of his father to

Gurudeo when he just entered the College, the important note of caution is indeed typical of old generation. Shri Dattopant was no doubt quite happy at the splendid success of his Son at the matriculation examination, but at the same time he was anxious for his son's future welfare. The loving heart of the father sincerely felt that the unexpected high success at the matriculation examination, might inflate the ego in his Son and he might be a prey of pride. He was unconscious of the spiritual greatness of his young son and his noble second wife. His second sentence in the letter indicated his incapacity to meet his college expenses owing to his limited financial resources. But, the last sentence 'that the Almighty God will be the sure source of Protection of all the family', was really indicative of the innate deep and apparently unexpressed attitude of faith and confidence in the greatness and power of the merciful Divinity.

In the XIth chapter of Bhagwadgitā in verse 44, the devotee in Arjuna prays for Grace and says, 'Oh God ! bear with me as a father to his Son, as a friend to his friend, as a lover to his beloved.' In his commentary in English, Dr. Rādhākṛishnan convincingly writes that, "The Supreme is not to be regarded as a transcendent mystery, but also as close to us, as close as a father to his Son.... These human relations find in God their fullest realisation." The idea of God as a father, becomes the central concept in the teaching of Jesus. In the previous chapter I have described Gurudeo's mother in glowing terms, which she amply deserved. But, my neglect in giving the correct picture of his father is made good in this chapter. After all both the mother and the father are equally responsible to give birth to Gurudeo. God as a father

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is most familiar to a Hindu, since the times of Vedās. In Rigveda there is a prayer to God ' Be of easy approach to us, even as a father to a Son. " Do thou, Oh self affulgent Lord, abide with us and bring blessings to us." Again in Yajur-Veda the prayer is ' Oh Lord ! Thou art our father, do thou instruct us like a father '. And lastly the Old Testament uses the image of the father ' Like a father pitieth his children, so the lord pitieth them that fear Him. "

In the previous or 1st year examination of the College, Gurudeo secured the first position and maintained his distinction. Then in the Intermediate examination also, he won the first rank in Sanskrit and got the Varjeevandās Scholarship. Thereafter, at his B. A. Stage, he changed his mind and also changed his subject from Sanskrit to Mathematics. In his essay ' Evolution of my own thought ' he writes " As I have been looking at the evolution of my own thought from my early years, I cannot but wonder how the pendulum has swung exactly to the other extreme. I definitely remember the day, when, as an undergraduate, in the year 1905, who had as yet hardly passed his teens, I was inducing my nephew not to offer philosophy as one of his optional subjects at the B. A. I was myself going to offer mathematics, and why any science which was not as precise as mathematics was entitled to any serious study, was to me beyond comprehension. '

Strangely enough, the young Gurudeo, when he entered his B. A. class, showed a bit of an attitude of Hume—who writes ' If we take in hand any volume of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or Number ? No. Does

it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to flame, for it can contain nothing but sophistry, and illusion'. Another unexpressed object in his mind and that of his family members, in allowing him to offer mathematics for his B. A., was to secure the highest position at B. A. and with the help of Govt. Scholarship he wanted to try his luck at I. C. S. Examination in England, like Shri. Aurobindo. But, being destined to be a great philosopher and a mystic in the long run, his efforts were short-circuited in the beginning itself.

With such an outlook, he took mathematics for his B. A. and wanted to convince his criticising friends, that he was not only a scholar with a strong memory, but also a great genius with sharp and precise intellect, who would shine in his examination with mathematics as well. But, as ill-luck would have it, he could get only a second class, even though he maintained his standard of Sanskrit by getting Bhāu Dāji Sanskrit prize. This unfortunate result pained his teachers as well. They wrote letters to console him. Prof. Wodehouse wrote "Examination is no true criterion of one's calibre. From what I have known of you, I would say, if ever any one deserved a First class, it is you".

Secondly, Prof. Sharp wrote to him, "I felt very sorry that you could not secure a first class; for, that was our expectation about you. But such accidents do happen sometimes ... Ever since you came to the college as a young fresher, I conceived an affection for you. "

The young graduate Shri. Rāmbhāu, from his own point of view, recognised only two masters, and never a third. Shri.

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Bhāusāheb Maharaj of Umadi was his most respected spiritual master and Principal Bain who taught him History and Economics was his intellectual master. Gurudeo used to say ' Prof. Bain taught more philosophy than was taught by the Prof. of philosophy and more literature. ' It was from Bain alone that the young Gurudeo learnt the art of original thinking, of research, and opposing successfully a current view.

One peculiar telepathic incident happened in 1904 A. D. when he was living in Room No. 11 at the Deccan College even before his joining the B. A. class. Without any previous intimation or news about even the illness of his father, Gurudeo saw in a dream a telegram. The place from which it had been despatched was ' The land of the dead ', and the contents were ' I have arrived here safe ', and below it was the name of his father. After this dream-intimation the young Rāmbhāu went to Rāmdurg and learnt to his surprise about the death of his father.

After this peculiar event and its pre-intimation, he joined his B. A. with mathematics. He offered mathematics because of his dislike for the books prescribed for philosophy, and not owing to his dislike for the subject itself. Because, we can see further that he later studied seriously both Eastern and Western philosophy and secured first-class first at his M. A., winning the Chancellor's Gold-medal.

In the year when young Gurudeo was to join his B. A. the books recommended for philosophy were (1) Ethics of Aristotle, (2) Kant by Wallace, (3) Logic by Mill and (4) Types of Ethical Theory, by Martino.

When the young Rāmbhāu was in his B. A. Class, Prof.

Willkinson had gone on leave and Prof. D. D. Kāpādia was appointed for teaching mathematics. Prof. Kāpādia was ninety years of age. Gurudeo Ranāde happened to meet him at Sangli. Prof. Kāpādiā remembered with respect, the intellectual eminence and consequent boldness of his young college student Rāmbhāu. When Gurudeo came across with him in Sangli he expressed his deep sense of respect by greeting Prof. Kāpādiā with all humility by bending his head before him.

Similarly, his respect for Principal Bain has been very well expressed by young Gurudeo in the following words, ' He very often reminds me of the philosopher Herakleitos. He is grim in his wild isolation, but shines like a star of the first magnitude. His manners are rough, but his heart is mellow. Through the rocky valleys of his external demeanour flow the rivers of generosity and affection. The Indian ideal of a Sannyāsin, pace Mrs. Bain, seems to have caught the imagination of our worthy principal. He would be seen in the mornings in his Solitary house, clad in a robe like that of a Sannyāsin, ready to receive and exchange thoughts with his old pupils. In Mr. Bain we have had one of the best fruits of English Scholarship. I do not believe in the platitude that no man is indispensable. It would be impossible for a long time to come, to adequately fill the place of Mr. Bain. Mr. Bain has shown us the possibilities of a life solely devoted to the cause of learning. Let us receive the torch from him and hand it down from one generation to another in our dear old college. '

This feeling and admiration of young Rāmbhāu about principal Bain, speaks eloquently about his own capacity to grasp the inner virtues and greatness of anybody he came

across with. He really had similar close contacts with all the European Professors. The numerous long letters from Prof. Wodehouse and his persuasive efforts to impress upon young Rāmbhāu the importance of Theosophy, and his implicit missionary zeal to persuade young Rāmbhāu to join the esoteric circle of Theosophy, were all fruitless and futile before the keen and searching intellect and judgment of young Rāmbhāu. There is a mention some where that young Rāmbhāu was offered a post in Central Hindu College, Banaras, by Mrs. Beasant at the instance of Prof. Wodehouse. But the discriminating and microscopic intellect of young Gurudeo never fell a pray to such allurements. His deeply anchored faith, respect and trust in the spiritual greatness of the saint of Umadi was never shaky. Finally, Prof. Wodehouse wrote to Gurudeo on 4-11-1903, "I think you are perfectly right to abide absolutely by the wishes of your Guru and to remain an outside friend of the T. S. (Poona-dated 4-11-1908). [T. S. Theosophical Society]

The Triple Holy Confluence :

The life of young Rāmbhāu was like a pilgrimage to Eternity. In this spiritual pilgrimage he had the rare opportunities of bathing himself in the triple confluence of spiritual bliss. The main purifying current of the holy Ganges in the form of the spiritual grandfather of Gurudeo, Shri Samarth Guru-Ling-Jangam Mahārāj of Nimbargi or Shri. Nimbargikar Mahārāj, as he was popularly known, had his spiritual birth in a small cave in Siddhagiri near Kolhapur. Shri Nimbargikar Mahārāj has stated in his poem that he got the spiritual seed of Divine Name from an unpopular mystic Saint ' Muppin Muni ', an old mystic in the tradition of the Siddhās.

From Devotion to Distinction

The adjective 'Kappu-Korala' 'कप्पु कोरळ' indicates that the old Kād-Siddha who initiated the young Nimbargikar maharaj at the age of twentyfive, was like God Shiva. His 'Korala' i.e. the neck was blackened by the deadly poison. So, he was like Neelakantha or Kappugorala. The holy Ganges descended on the head in the locks 'Jatā' of God Shiva and the deadly poison took its resort in his throat and the spiritual symbol of the moon shone on his forehead 'Bhālachandra' 'भालचंद्र' and thus made God Shiva as a Central Deity of the spiritual confluence. The holy Ganges, the deadly poison and the spiritual moon constitute the personifications of purity of heart, the darkness of calamity in life and the lustrous peace and bliss of the soul. From such a powerful spiritual source the spiritual heavenly father of Gurudeo, Shri. Bhāusāheb maharaj of Umadi, received the spiritual current of the Divine Name through the worthy medium of Shri. Raghunāth Priya or Shri Sadhumahārāj in 1857 A. D. A unique and an inexplicable coincidence in the birth of the third great spiritual master in the line Shri Amburāo Maharaj at Jigjēwani in the year 1857 only, is like the birth of holy Jamuna River, And to give sanctity and strength to the process of coincidence of spiritual accidents, the year of birth of Gurudev Rānade in 1886. A. D. was co-existent with the fact of spiritual initiation of Shri Amburāo maharaj at Nimbargi at the hands of Shri. Bhāusāheb maharaj through the medium of Shri. Savalsang maharaj. Thus, we can observe the continuity of the spiritual Current. At the stage of Gurudeo the original current of Shri. Nimbargikar maharaj went under-ground like the hidden and invisible current of Saraswati. Shri. Bhāusāheb maharaj and Shri. Amburāo maharāj had ample spiritual company and holy

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contact with Shri. Nimbargi maharaj. Shri. Amburao maharaj was staying at Nimbargi with his uncle Shri. Bāpurāo, who was initiated by Shri. Nimbargikar maharaj.

The primary education of Shri. Amburāo maharaj was completed at Nimbargi only. It is on account of the great devotion of Shri. Amburāo maharaj, that the spiritual remains of Shri. Nimbargikar Maharaj were brought to Inchageri by Shri. Bhāūsāheb maharaj in 1903.

I have in short given this spiritual geneological background of Gurudeo at this stage only, because the life of young Gurudeo was on its first stage of spiritual ascent; with peculiar and uncommon deadly difficulties like the tuberculosis of brain, though accompanied with rare spiritual experiences. Shri. Bhāūsāheb Maharaj was under direct protection and in the holy company of Shri. Nimbargikar maharaj till he was fortytwo years of age. But young Rāmbhāu was only twentyeight when Shri Bhāūsāheb maharaj left the world and Gurudeo was getting inspiration and guidance from the holy company of Shri. Amburāo mahārāj, his spiritual brother.

After his initiation in 1901, the Young Gurudeo concentrated his energies on spiritual meditation at the Deccan College in 1905 and 1906 with intensified devotion. In his letter dated 28-7-1906 to Shri Bhāūsāheb maharaj the young Rambhau writes from Poona that-“ I strongly feel that hereafter I should devote my entire life to meditation and Divine Name, and in the holy company of saints. I pray Thee, to make me worthy of this. I am much worried by the woes of my family life. With this growth of devotion and dispassion in

my heart, kindly see that I am on the path of right knowledge under your protection. I have no other shelter than the grace of the spiritual master.” The young Rāmbhāu has written this letter to his spiritual master when he was only twenty years of age. In this letter itself he has written a few Abhangās, feeling in his young age fancy that the poetic inspiration has emerged from the Grace of maharaj. The saint of Umadi who was ‘ Dhīr, Udār & Gambhīr ’ ‘ धीर, उदार and गंभीर ’ i. e. resolute and enduring, noble and bountiful, and grave and considerate, respectively; in his rational approach to Spiritual life he was never sentimental or emotional in his realistic and balanced approach to genuine spiritual life. He never encouraged such poetic fancies, as they might lead the aspirants on the wrong path. Gurudeo used to say that Shri. Bhāūsāheb maharaj told on a few occasions that thousands of inspiring Abhangās composed by saints like Shri. Dnyaneshwar and Tukārām are lying uncared for and unread and unheeded; then who would read our poems? Nothing but one pointed meditation on the Name of God was the only thing he stressed. Still, I am giving below a prose translation of the poetic lines of young Gurudeo in Marāthi, written in his letter of 1906 and sent to maharaj. This can be an eye-opener to modern young devotees who are inclined with such poetic fancy- “ The Spiritual Name is really an Abhang, because it cannot be destroyed. It is the Divine Name which uplifts all—including ladies, merchants, low-class labourers and Brahmins alike. All castes and creeds have free access to the Divine Name. This has been proclaimed by the saints and sages. The saints have been telling that there is no distinction of small and great, low and high, child and aged, in the spiritual pursuit. Always remember the Name

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of God for securing real happiness and bliss. The quibbling of words and thoughts is not a real knowledge. I am not a man of knowledge and wisdom. I feel that my master orders and inspires me. But, I also am inclined to feel that there is always something wrong with me. Hence, I pray to Thee Oh God ! to kindly show me my faults and shortcomings and take me into the company of Saints. I don't seek any other boon, excepting the company of Saints. Peace of mind is the real happiness. If you order, I shall describe. ”

The Spiritual Awakening through Dreams

The genuine and unparalleled spiritual greatness of the Saint o' Umadi, can be perceived through numerous following events, incidents and teachings of his, to Gurudeo Rānade. He never allowed a weed to grow in the spiritual garden of Gurudeo's heart. He was perfectly rational, undogmatic and non-superstitious in his spiritual pursuit, both for himself and for his disciples. He was a perfect disciplinarian like Samarth Rāmdās. We might observe that Shri Bhāusāheb Mahārāj was born on Rāma Navami like Rāmdās in the year 1843 A. D. He was also a great devotee of God Hanumān in his childhood like Samarth Rāmdās. Just as Samarth Rāmdās has established eleven centres or temples of God Bajarangbali (वजरंगबलि) at different places, Shri. Bhāusāheb mahārāj gave eleven shoulder-bangles with eleven imprints of God Hanumān on each bangle of Gold and Silver bangle, which can still be seen with one of his old devotees Shri. Hanmantrāo Kannur (in Bijāpur District).

In view of the confused mental state of young Rāmbhāu as expressed in his poetry in marāthi and the dormant sense

got of ego in the underground cellar of his heart, Shri. Bhausaheb maharaj of Umadi, who had reached the acme of Self-Realisation and had attained the Divinity in life, as unequivocally expressed by Gurudeo Ranade himself in his letter to his Guru sent on 8-3-1912 Shri. Maharaj arranged to appear himself in the four dreams of young Rambhau in this period and set right his mental structure by the following subconscious process-

In the first dream Shri maharaj gave young Rambhau a garland of marigolds or Zandu flowers, and asked him to wear it on his neck. The young Gurudeo refused to do so in the dream. In the second dream, Shri. Maharaj asked him to apply a brow-mark of Sandal paste or Gopi-chandan on his forehead, to which also young Rambhau declined in his dream. Thirdly Shri. Maharaj appeared in the dream and asked him to read the Pothi or the prescribed book of Dāsbodha and Rambhau did not comply with it. Finally in the fourth dream the direction of the Saint of Umadi to Rambhau to stand as a porter (चौपदार) at the gate of God with a silver-stick in his hand, was not obeyed by young Gurudeo. This peculiar procedure of guidance in dreams is really a very sound method to tackle the subconscious mind and inject a basic change in the sub-conscious inveterate ego, through repentance and remorse in wakeful state after getting out of sleep. Every next morning of the dream with his introspective sense of asserting disobedience to his spiritual master, continuously in all the four consecutive dreams, made the young Rambhau restless and repentant in his wakeful state and he consciously confessed and expressed his gratefulness to his Guru. in the latter period

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of his life, that, “ My very delinquencies became instrumental in taking me to the presence of God, my sins -(indirectly)- contributed to my spiritual advancement ”

Shri. Maharaja's Prophecy :

Thereafter, in the year 1907, Shri. Bhausahab maharaj happened to camp at Jamkhandi for his spiritual week (Saptaha) in the house of Shri. Dadasahab Apte, with all his senior disciples and devotees. The Saptah was observed with great intensity in meditation on Divine Name, in three sittings (Trikal-Sadhana) in a day, with utmost regularity and discipline. To contribute to the depth and intensity of devotion to Nam Shri. Maharaj used to perform along with all his disciples devotional Bhajans and give discourses on the Dasabodh thrice during the day. The young Rambhau took a keen interest in this spiritual programme and attended it most regularly. Every day Shri. maharaj used to ask somebody amongst the devotees present, to read the ' Pothi ' Dāsabodh. One day, Shri. maharaj unexpectedly asked young Rambhau to read the Pothi. This sudden suggestion from Maharaj, made young Rambhau nervous, and out of a feeling of shyness, he faltered and sat silent.

After some time, when Maharaj repeated his request and urged young Rāmabhau to read Dsbodh, he expressed, his ignorance of the verses sung as a prelude to reading the Pothi. Shri Mhraj said that he would arrange for all thathe but compelled him to read the main ' Pothi ' Dsbodh. Beingt intelligent, honest, devout and a critical observer, he read Dasboth in the familiar style and tone, like his seniors. All the senior devotees of Shri Maharaj were immensely pleased

with his mellodious, clear and uninterrupted flow of reading on which Maharaj gave his discourse and expressed his satisfaction to Young Rāmbhāu. The young Gurudeo being sincerely happy and joyful at heart, owing to the satisfaction of his spiritual master, returned to his residence with contentment and peace.

After all had dispersed, the grandson of Shri Nimbargikar Maharaj Shri Nagappa, took an opportunity to inquire with Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj the reason for pressing young Ranade to read the Pothi that afternoon, even when he was so-very reluctant and halting. At this query, Shri. Maharaj became rather serious and grave and said ‘ Do you know why I asked and forced the young Ramrao Ranade to read pothi today ? This young boy though quite unimpressive now from his stature, in future he will convey the glory and greatness of your grand father Shri. Nimbargikar maharaj to the world. He will certainly be responsible for spreading the spiritual fame and teachings of Shri Nimbargi maharaj in foreign countries, crossing the boundaries of nation and seas ! I insisted on his reading the ‘ Pothi ’ only to eliminate his sense of ego and fear ‘ said Shri. Maharaj. Thereafter the young Rambhau took leave of his Guru and returned to Poona to attend to his duties.

The Changing Assignments :

After his B. A. examination in 1907, the young Rambhau was appointed as a Dakshina-Fellow in 1908 at the Deccan College. He remained in this job for two years at the Deccan College. During this period he also worked as a Superintendent, of Deccan College-Hostel, as Principal Bain gave this

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appointment to him. He was really a loving colleague of all the students in the Hostels. As a fellow, he had also to teach at the Deccan College. He taught Sanskrit Dramas. Since his appointment as Superintendent, he came in contact with a number of students in the hostels. All were happy and satisfied during the period of his Superintendentship. The main reason behind his popularity was his straight forward nature and simplicity of behaviour with one and all. And because the college was away from the Poona city, somebody who took personal interest in the welfare of the hostel-students and one who looked to their needs and requirements, both material and intellectual, became a friend of all; and thus, the Daxinā Fellow and the Superintendent of the hostel, really became a 'fellow' of all, in the real sense of the term. All the students in the hostel felt attached to Rāmbhāu with the spontaneous feeling of 'my'ness. He practically became an elder brother to all the students, and colleague. The letters of his students given in the beginning of this biography under the caption "Meet Gurudeo" will prove the truth of this statement.

Another striking event in this year of 1908, was his visit to Benaras at the behest and persuasion of Prof. Wodehouse. Once in 1908, Shri. Gurudeo, Prof. Wodehouse, Shri. Bhadbhade, Shri. Vishnupant Karandikar and Prof. R. P. Parānjape were discussing in the bungalow of Prof. Wodehouse, about Carlyle's 'Sartor Resartus'. At that time, Gurudeo once casually peeped out of the window in front of him which was towards the direction of the holy place of Alandi of the great saint Dnyāneswar. Just then he perceived a huge column of Light, extending high up in the firmament! Suddenly he got up from the chair, and consequently and reflexively all others also

up from their chairs. All the others could also see the column of light. And all were looking at it for nearly two or three minutes. Later the light gradually became faint and disappeared. Prof. Wodehouse, then expressed in emotion 'Today my spiritual life began! '.

While talking about it later, Gurudeo said 'I was not meditating then for a long time. But, the quality and the softness of ' Bhāvā ' (भाव) of my heart had improved genuinely. The incarceration or imprisonment of Lok-manyā Tilak and the turbulent political atmosphere, etc. had agitated the heart. This must have caused the vision ' (L. L p. 161)

We have earlier referred to Gurudeo's visit to Benaras with Prof. Wodehouse. There, young Rambhau met Mrs. Beasant and had an intimate talk with her about his spiritual experiences. Then Mrs. Beasant asked Rambhau whether he has got a photo of his Guru, and the young Gurudeo who was then always trying to remember his Master and his Divine Name, took out the photoprint of the saint of Umadi from his pocket and showed it to Mrs. Beasant. She looked at it and remarked with a flowery face 'You are in Safe hands!.' The young aspirant in Rambhau was happy. Then, he was presented with some important books on Theosophy and also given a photo of Mrs. Annie Beasant, at the special request of Rambhau. Thereafter he returned to Poona and then immediately went to Inchageri to meet his spiritual master and communicate to him all the details of his visit to Benaras. He had brought the photo print of Mrs. Beasant and the book ' First Steps in Theosophy ' to Inchageri.

Thereafter, the saint of Umadi casually asked Rambhau

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if he has brought the photo of the lady, and on seeing it said that ' The venerable lady had indeed worked hard in Yoga ! ' (वाई योग माड्याळ!) Thus, there was a reciprocation of mutual confirmation about the greatness and spiritual achievement of each other. During his stay at Hinchagari. Rambhau was one day reading the book on Theosophy. Shri. maharaj asked him as to what he was reading. The young Gurudeo replied that it was a book in English on Theosophy. Shri. Maharaj asked him to read out a paragraph, and after listening to it he gave a correct summary of the passage. Rambhu was then astonished to know that his Guru knew English. At that Maharaj smilingly remarked that all languages emerge from God, and when one is able to realise God fully, he can understand not one but all the fifty-six languages on earth. Thus, the saint of Umadi curiously and cursorily gave a little inkling of his great spiritual powers to his beloved and promising disciple. This book ' First steps in Theosophy ' by Ethmel M. Mallet (Mrs. Herbert White), third edition published in London, which the great saint of Umadi saw with his spiritual eyes and gave the meaning of a passage in English, is fortunately with me at the time of writing this biography. At certain places the great Gurudeo has marked and underlined certain sentences. In the chapter on ' rebirth ' Gurudeo has written in pencil ' Vāsāṅsi Jīrṇāni ' (' वासांसि जीर्णानि '), meaning ' the wornout clothes ' in the margin. It is an impressive book with coloured pictures and nice printing on featherweight paper.

During this period the young Gurudeo had completed the reading of Rāj-yoga of Vivekānanda and was already blessed with mystical experiences of Reality.

From Devotion to Distinction

The numerous letters from Prof. Wodehouse, and his missionary zeal to win over Young Gurudeo from Devotion to spiritual Name from the saint of Umadi to Theosophy, were all futile and ended in his despair. Owing to the inborn greatness of Gurudeo and his innate conviction and mystic experiences about the towering spiritual personality of Shri. Maharaj, he never succumbed to the views of Prof. Wodehouse. Even though Prof. Wodehouse had affection and regard for the young scholar and the honest devotee in Rambhau, his consciousness as a servant of British Empire was alive. Once he gave expression to his views regarding the fiery patriotic speeches of Lokmanya Tilak, rather criticisingly, and the patriotic upsurge in the younger generation to which the young Gurudeo reacted sharply, he expressed his dissent in clear terms. Already, in a similar context, I have referred to a letter from Prof. Wodehouse dated 4-11-1908 from Poona, regarding his appreciation, submission and consent to the grit and tenacity of young Gurudeo to stick firmly to his path of devotion to his Nām and his Guru.

But, Principal Bain was altogether a different and a great man of principles and ability. While returning to England after retirement he left all his library in India, but took with him all the essays written on Greek philosophers by young Rānade. When Prin. Bain remarked to Gurudeo that in India there are not even five or ten persons who can understand Gurudeo's pamphlets on Greek philosophers, the young Rambhau immediately replied that he had written them only for these five or ten persons ! Principal Bain, at the time of his departure to England, gave a very rare volume containing all the writings of Aristotle in one book, to young Rambhau.

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the Sun as the centre of the planetary system, so do they try to find the Centre of the Universe. As in the former cases, they give the centre a definite position in space, even so do they consider that the Centre of the Universe is restricted by space. And herein they are mistaken. The centre of the Universe is either Nowhere or Everywhere. '

" You will now ask me what is my own philosophy of the Centre of the Universe, The old Archimedes said that if he could get a fulcrum for the Earth, he could lift its whole weight with the least effort. I say, in a similar style, that If we can come to know the Centre of the Universe, we shall have solved the problem of problems ! The questions that can be asked about this centre are the ' where ' and the ' what ' ; and the ' where ' determines the ' what '. Where is the Centre of the Universe ?

" I summarily answer ' Everywhere ! '. Man is but a speck when compared to the Earth, the Earth is but a speck when compared to the Solar system, and the Solar system vanishes before the Universe ! "



