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JAFFNA, FRIDAY OCTOBER 29, 1971

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Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar

(1822 - 1879)

By

V. MUTTUCUMARASWAMY

The Ceylon Govt. is issuing a stamp in memory of Navalar's 150th Birthday Anniversary on 29-10-71.

Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar was the most dynamic national leader of the Tamils in the 19th century. Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, a national leader of the 20th century, hailed Navalar as the Champion Reformer of the Hindus. Great writers in Tamil acclaimed him as the father of modern Tamil prose.

Parents

Arumugam born at Nallur on December 18, 1822, of a family which was noted for its education, wealth and official position. His father was Kanthapillai; his mother was Sivakamy.

When Arumugam was nine years old, his father, a playwright, died. Ratnavilasam, the unfinished drama written by the father was completed by the son - Arumugam. This literary performance of young Arumugam was a surprise to his brothers - for Arumugam seemed to be a genius.

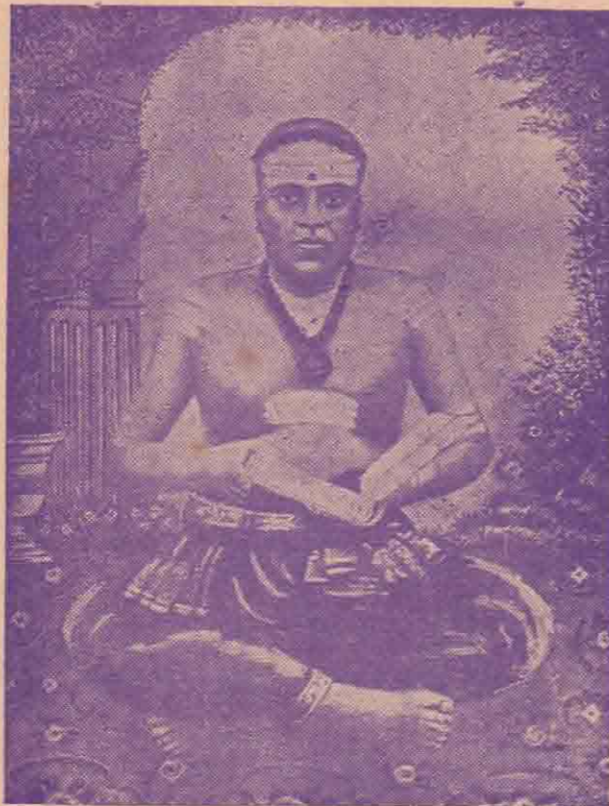
His brothers decided to send Arumugam to the best Tamil Scholars. Senathirayar and Saravanamuttu scholars of repute were entrusted with the education of the young genius who took infinite pains in his studies and acquired a thorough knowledge of Tamil literature and Tamil grammar.

Education

Arumugam was sent to the Wesleyan Central School, Jaffna, at the age of 12. The Rev. Peter Percival, who was the Principal of that School, perceived Arumugam's ability in Tamil and avidity to study English, asked him to teach English to the lower classes and Tamil for the Upper classes. Arumugam left school at the age of 18.

Vocation

Two years later in 1841, Arumugam was appointed Percival's Tamil Tutor. Percival, a scholar in English and Tamil, was entrusted with the task of translating the Bible into Tamil by the Wesleyan Missionary Society at Madras. Arumugam was his Assistant. This work of translation, comparison with the original and so forth, went on for six years from 1841 and in the sixth year Percival and Arumugam devoted six hours daily to this undertaking. When the work was finished, Percival took Arumugam to Madras, in order to give the translation the finishing touch and sent it to the Press. This work was referred to a Joint Committee of the Jaffna Bible Auxiliary Society and the Madras



SRI LA SRI ARUMUGA NAVALAR

Bible Society, and in 1850, it was published by the American Mission at Madras as the Union Tentative Edition.

Arumugam's knowledge of Sanskrit which he learnt by himself in order to master the tenets of Saiva Siddhanta, was commendable.

As a speaker, Arumugam, soon became popular. His first lecture which was at the age 25, at the Sivan Temple, Vannarpannai, was a first rate orator and was highly appreciated.

A Saiva School at Jaffna

Arumugam gave up teaching under Percival and started the Saivaprakasa Vidyalaya, Vannarpannai, Jaffna, Ceylon, in 1848.

It was a formidable task to run a School. One day he was so overwhelmed with deep feelings, that he shed tears before the "Shiva lingam" and prayed for help; if help was not forthcoming, he was prepared to die for his cause. As if in answer to his prayer, Nannithambi Mudaliyar, the father-in-law of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, sent a contribution of Rs. 400/- to Arumugam. With this money he acquired shop buildings the income from which by way of rent he utilised to pay the staff. As a teacher, his services were free and extended throughout the day and even night.

Arumugam was keen on the exposition of the Periya Puranam - which consisted of the biographies of 63 Saiva Saints.

There were no suitable text books for Saiva students at that time. Arumugam felt that he should establish a Press and purchased in Madras a printing machine and equipment in 1849; and established the Press in the premises of his school at Vannarpannai in the same year.

Title of "Navalar"

It was on his way to Madras that Arumugam was honoured by Subramania Thesikar -

(Continued on page 6)

Jaffna Sports Gala

Services of St. John Ambulance Brigade Highlighted

The members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, under the direction of Dr. R. Thirunavukarasu toiled hard during the three days of the Sports Gala in Jaffna, moving from place to place - Central College ground, Stadium, the Open Air Theatre and even the Lagoon - where large crowds congregated, and rendering First Aid to casualties. The Ambulance and Nursing Divisions covered all points of activity from morning till late at night carrying the exhausted, nursing the injured etc.

The Ambulance Van that followed the competitors in the marathon race on the last day, had thrills and trying experiences. They had to deal, inter alia, with the injured in a motor cycle accident, where the rider was thrown off the cycle and became unconscious with a bleeding head injury. Dr. Thirunavukarasu took charge of the situation, pacified the excited crowd, prevented the bleeding and rushed to Hospital the casualty in a critical condition. The injured cyclist regained consciousness after about a day and is said to be out of danger now.

The promoters, the participants and the public have thanked the Area Commissioner, Muhandiram Rasiah for arranging "On the Spot service" by skilled and trained personnel of the Brigade from the Lanka Ayurvedic Medical College, Tinnevely. Y. M. H. A. and Thavaday Sports Division, etc.

Return to Sanity

The People's Republic of China has been seated in the U. N. on its own right. As a corollary Taiwan had to walk out, laughed off and held to scoff and scorn. Congratulations are, therefore, due to the U. N. for its return, though belated, to sanity.

THOUGHTS TO BE TREASURED

Sri-la-Sri Arumukha Navalar was born at a propitious hour. The Shaiva Religion was panting for him. The Tamil language was thirsting for him. Jaffna was longing for him. The Shaiva Religion had been in the strangle-hold of alien forces for two centuries. Tamil Literature and Grammar were gaoled in palmyra leaves. Jaffna had no leader and was groping in the dark. Navalar came, saw and gave them all relief.

— Shivapadasundaram.



சுவாமிநாதர் அவர்களின் நினைவு
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Mindu Organ

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1971

HONOUR UNTO WHOM HONOUR IS DUE

It is a matter of gratification that the Government of Ceylon is issuing special Revenue Stamps in honour of Sri La Sri Arumuga Navalar and Dr. Ananda K. Coomarasamy two of the foremost figures among distinguished Tamils whose names occupy a permanent place in the life of Tamilakam. The recognition of the patriotic services of great men indicates the place they occupy in the history of a country. No history of Lanka will be complete without the mention of the life and works of Navalar the Great and Dr. Coomarasamy, whose intellectual distinction and capacity for true contribution to the progress of the nation stand reflected in their speeches and writings.

NAVALAR THE GREAT

What is it that has made Sri La Sri Arumugam, Navalar the Great? Speaking for Tamilakam, the correct criterion for assessing the worth of the works of Navalar the Great is the usefulness and appropriateness of his contribution in writing and by word of mouth in the cause of the language that was his mother-tongue and the religion to which he belonged.

During the time of Na-

valar the Great, works of Tamil Saints, poets and writers were mostly in the original form of the traditional ola script susceptible to the threat of extinction by moth-eating or careless handling. Realizing the great worth of these works and feeling that they should be preserved for posterity, Navalar the born patriot immediately set about to put in print all these works carefully perused and edited by him. Here was an effort for which the entire Tamilakam should remain grateful to him for ever as every Tamil has been enabled to have easy access to the ancient works in glorious Tamil Literature.

Supplementing this stupendous undertaking, Navalar the Great set his attention on rendering ancient poetical works into lucid and literary Tamil. So learned in language and literature he was that he produced four readers, graded appropriately to suit students according to age-groups providing lofty lessons on morals, knowledge and practice of religion and citizenship. Himself strictly conforming to the orthodox way of Saiva living, Navalar the Great campaigned for purity of religious practice among the laity and the priests. His discourses on religion were designed to educate the people on religious disciplines. Puranapadanam was his favourite pre-occupation wherein he found the best method of teaching religion and exhorting the people to be strictly religious.

If Tamilakam in India had great admiration for Navalar the Great, it was because the intellectuals there recognized the worth of his writings and speeches and saw in him a true exponent of traditional Saivism and ancient Tamil. His oratorical powers won for him the conferment on him of the title 'Navalar' by the Thiruvavaduthurai Aatheenam.

The true worth of this really great patriot will remain. By this recognition the Government records in its history the fact that the people's wish is also the wish of the Administration. The Saiva Paripalana Sabha had been in the forefront of the agitation for urging on the Government the issuing of a stamp in commemoration of the Great Navalar. The Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar Sabha that was founded for the particular purpose of propagating the Navalar ideal ably pursued the

subject and finally saw to it that the issue of the commemoration stamp was a reality.

DR. ANANDA K. COOMARASAMY

Another intellectual who earned international repute was Dr. Ananda K. Coomarasamy in whose memory a commemoration stamp is being issued today.

Starting his scholastic efforts as a geologist Dr. Coomarasamy covered many spheres of educational research such as archaeology, philology, iconography and metaphysics. But throughout his brilliant career he showed an abiding interest in the study of religion and contributed several articles on Indian art and culture which later were published in New York in

book form.

Dr. Coomarasamy interpreted the East to the West always laying emphasis on the serenity of Eastern thought.

He was Research Fellow in Oriental Art at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston when he died (1947).

His interest in the study of Hinduism was so great and abiding that he had collected almost all the Scriptures, Thirumurai Puranas and other Hindu Literature in his library at his residence. We had the privilege of visiting his library in 1959 and were surprised to find a full collection of the Volumes of Rig Veda and several other valuable and rare books on Saiva philosophy.

The commemoration stamp may be forgotten but not the fame and name of this great intellectual.

THOUGHTS ABOUT DISTINGUISHED TAMILS

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Advocate T. Somasundaram Assumes Presidentship

UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED AT ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SAIVA PARIPALANA SABHAI

Mudlr. C. Muttutambay President of the Jaffna Saiva Paripalana Sabha presided over the Annual General Meeting of the Sabha held at the Navalar Ashrama Hall on October 24, 1971. After the singing of Thirumurai by Vidwan Thevaramani P. A. S. Rajasekaran Othuvar Moorthigal, motions expressing condolence at the passing away of the former President Siddhantha Viththakar V. Nagalingam Proctor and the former Secretary Shri A. Thanabalasingam Proctor were adopted.

Mr. R. N. Sivapirakasam in proposing the first motion paid a deserving tribute to the late V. Nagalingam and said that the Sabha had enjoyed the privilege of having as its president one of the very few Saiva Siddhanta Scholars of Tamilakam

and one whose scholarship was well recognized by the Saiva Siddhantha Samajam of Madras.

Continuing Mr. Sivapirakasam referred to the efficient work Shri Nagalingam had done for the people as lawyer and lecturer.

Siddhantha Sironmani M. Mylvaganam spoke of the very valuable services rendered by Sri A. Thanabalasingam as Secretary of the Sabha for several years and said the improvements to the Sabha Navalar Hall and the inauguration of the fund to establish shrines of the Four Great Saints were due to the indefatigable efforts of Shri Thanabalasingam.

Srimathi Manonmany Arunasslam said that Shri Thanabalasingam was one of the very few who dedicated his time, money and energy to the progress of

the Sabha.

Mudlr. C. Muttutambay supporting the motions observed that two great personalities had passed away, one a Saiva Scholar another a Saiva Social Worker, both of them will be remembered as long as the Sabha existed.

The minutes of the previous Annual Meeting the Annual Report, and the Annual Statement of Accounts were approved by the audience.

Mudaliyar Muttutambay expressed the view that his old age prevented him from consenting to accept nomination for the Presidentship and stated that younger members with equal enthusiasm as he has should be saddled with the responsibility of the office of President of a very old and useful Saiva Organization that drew its inspiration from Navalar Peruman. Mudaliyar then proposed the name of Advocate T. Somasundaram Mr. R. N. Sivapirakasam spoke in support of the suggestion Mr. Somasundaram was elected President without contest.

Shri Ragunatha Mudaliyar, the Secretary of the Sabha since the passing away of the former Secretary Shri Thanabalasingam was unanimously elected Secretary and Shri C. Manmatharayan was re-elected Treasurer.

Vice Presidents Mudlr. C. Muttutambay and Siva U. Somasegeram were re-elected.

Asst Secretaries: Saiva Pulavar V. Sittambalam and Shri S. Seevaratnam.

Siddhantha Sironmani M. Mylvaganam was re-elected Religious Propaganda Secretary.

ORDER NISI

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF MANNAR Testamentary Jurisdiction No. 2754

In the matter of the intestate estate of the late K. Thanigasalam of 19/1 Chetty Street, Nallur, Jaffna

Deceased Gunapoosbanam widow of K. Thanigasalam of 19/1 Chetty Street Nallur, Jaffna

Vs Petitioner

- 1 K. Logeswaran
2 T. Vignakumara
3 T. Asokan
4 T. Mahesvaran all of do

The 2 - 4 Respondents are minors by their g - a - l the 1st Resp.

Respondents

This matter coming on for disposal before A. Vaithilingam Esquire, District Judge Jaffna on the 3rd day of August 1971 in the presence of Mr. C. T. Kumaraswamy

Proctor on the part of the petitioner and the affidavit of the petitioner having been read:—It is ordered that the 1st Respondent be appointed g-a-l over the 2, 3 and 4 minor Respondents and that Letters of Administration be issued to the Petitioner, widow of the deceased, unless the Respondents or any persons interested in the matter shall show sufficient cause to the contrary to the satisfaction of this Court on the 11th day of November 1971.

This 3rd day of August 1971

Sgd. A. Vythilingam
District Judge

109 x2 & 29

Non Violence in Action

(We reproduce below a soul-stirring article on 'Ahimsa' by Gandhiji's Secretary Pyarelal in the 'People's Action' a monthly News Letter of Sarva Seva Sangh New Delhi.)

Ahimsa or nonviolence is not the name of a particular form of action. It is the quality of our action that constitutes Ahimsa. If our action lacks that quality, it will not show the power that is nonviolence, although outwardly it may have the form of a nonviolent action. In other words, it is not the act itself but what lies behind the act that makes it nonviolent.

Let us take the recent peace march in Calcutta. If we rely upon strength of our numbers but do not have that love in our hearts and faith in God and in human nature, such a march will not be a demonstration of Ahimsa but only our show force which is another form of violence. Indeed show of force has most of the drawbacks of violence without its efficacy, like hiss of serpent that has lost its fangs, which serves only to bring upon it reprisals without conferring the capacity to strike back. That is why Gandhiji, when he sent his co-workers on their "do or die" mission in Nonahali, insisted on posting not more than one worker in a centre. "God with one makes a majority", he said "On the other hand, if you are even 1,000 strong but do not have a living faith in God, it will not avail you much."

What is Ahimsa? It is the power that manifests itself in us when we develop an awareness of life. It cannot be taught by word of mouth. But it can be communicated by the personal example of one

Sri La Sri Arumuga Navalar

(Continued from page 5)

the Head of the Thiruvavaduthurai Mutt — with the title of "Navalar" which means the Orator — as he was much impressed by Arumugam's oratorical powers and his discourses on the Saiva religion.

Author

Soon afterwards, Arumuga Navalar (as we shall now call him) wrote a series of Readers for children and published them in 1850. He published the Periyapurana Vasanam in 1852 — dictating to the compositors his sentences, the "Suppara Potham" in 1853 and the "Saiva Thooshana Pariharam" in 1854. He found that he had to reply to the numerous attacks upon Hinduism and therefore published tracts attacking Christianity. If we read the "Morning Star" from 1845 — 1855, we will find much reference to Navalar as well as letters and articles penned by "Arumugavar".

Press at Madras

Navalar realized that he should have a big Press, possible at Madras. So he went to Madras and, bought one in 1860; and housed it at 300, Mint Street, Madras; the Press is known as "Navalar Vidyavanapalana Press". His beloved disciple, N. K. Sathasivampillai, a bachelor like Navalar, was his assistant and supervisor-in-charge of the publications of Navalar. Two important classical works in Tamil, which were formerly Ola Books, were published by Sathasivampillai. One was Thirukkural by Thiru; valluvar, with notes by Parimelalahar in 1860 — the other was Thirukkovaiyar by St Manickavasagar with notes by Navalar in 1861.

Founder of a School at Chidambaram

Sri La Sri Arumuga Navalar had a deep yearning to establish a Saiva School at Chidambaram — which is the "Mecca" of Hindus. It is a very sacred city. In 1862, he convened a public meeting at his Vidyalyaya in Vannarpannai, appealed for funds and collected a good sum. Similarly he held a public meeting at the Siddhi Vinayagar Temple, Pt Pedro and collected necessary funds.

On his way from Jaffna to Chidambaram he was feted at Ramnad, Madura, Thiruvannamalai and Kumbakonam. Navalar's orations thrilled his listeners; here was a man of unflinching will and an erudite scholar. He established the Saiva Tamil School at Chidambaram in October 1864. This became known as Arumuga Navalar High School. There is also a Primary School. Mr. K. Rajeswaran, is the Trustee of this School and of Navalar's Press at Madras (at present).

Navalar went to Madras, established a Thiruthondar Punniya Sabha and organised a series of stimulating talks on Hinduism.

While at Chidambaram, Navalar had noted that some of the priests of the temple officiated as priests without having obtained "Siva Deeksha". He heard that goats were being sacrificed at this temple. He was pained at heart and not only did he convene a meeting but also condemn this practice, and issued a tract against this.

The priests of Chidambaram were angry with Navalar. They set up one Ramalingapillai of Karunguli to abuse Navalar. When Navalar heard about this he filed a case at Manchukuppam Court. As a result Ramalingapillai denied abusing Navalar; The chief priests of Saba Nadesar temple were fined Rs. 50/-. Navalar had gained a moral victory.

Navalar at Jaffna

(1870 — 1879)

Navalar returned to Jaffna in 1870 and was welcomed warmly by the people.

He published the "Yalpana Samaya

who has him self experienced it. We may take the example of Shri Viswaranjan Sen who exemplifies in his person its power. His Ahimsa has enabled him to overcome the prejudice and dispel suspicion of the Pakistani officials so that they helped him to come to

(Continued on page 8)

Nilai 1872" in which he lashed out at the social vices of his age.

Another tract he published on the Nallur Kandaswamy Temple in 1875, in a scathing exposure of the non-agamic practices in that temple.

Arumuga Navalar was a "Hampden" fighting for the rights of his people. In 1848 a great famine stalked the land. The Government established dispensaries to give free medicine and distribute food. But there were no proper officials to attend this work. It was at the time when Twynam was Government Agent of Jaffna. He was Government Agent from 1867.

Twynam, the Government Agent, turned a deaf ear to the people's appeals. The people appealed to Arumuga Navalar, who convened a public meeting at the Saivaprakasa Vidyalyaya, Vannarpannai, Jaffna and deplored the attitude of the Government. Navalar drew up a petition in English and sent it to James Longden the Governor. Soon after, a Commission was set up to investigate the corruption of the administration.

But the lesser officials of the time saved Twynam. The "Morning Star" (English) attacked Arumuga Navalar; but articles published in "Ilankai Nesan" and "Udaya Bhanu" two Tamil publications in 1877 supported the cause of the people. Navalar continued his agitation. Eminent leaders such as Chellapapillai (Chief Justice of Thiruvananthapuram, Tranquebar), Coomaraswamy Mudaliar and Ponnambalam Ramanathan, sent a joint petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the United Kingdom. But the Colonial Office heeded not.

Twynam was not able to curb the independent spirit of Navalar who fought for the vindication of justice. In the end, he had fathomed Navalar's mind. Such was the regard for Navalar that all officers in the Kachcheri attended Navalar's funeral in 1879.

Navalar was a seer. He had the foresight to know that Ponnampalam Ramanathan was going to be the leader of the nation. He presented a memorandum to James Longden the Governor stating among other things that Ramanathan was a fit man in every respect, a patriot and scholar and one who would be of service to his country and people. He went from village to village in support of Ramanathan. On the 22nd of May 1879, Navalar organised the public meeting at Saivaprakasa Vidyalyaya, Vannarpannai and supported Ramanathan's candidature to the Legislative Assembly, which was vacant owing to the death of Sir C. MuttuCoomaraswamy. C. Brito, Advocate sought nomination in contest against Ramanathan. Ramanathan was Nominated Member by the Government.

Navalar died in 1879 at his house in Vannarpannai.

Navalar was the first Saivite to establish a Printing Press in Jaffna, and counter Christian propaganda. He was one of the earliest to publish classics which were in Ola form, preserved zealously by Heads of Mutts, which only a few privileged people were able to see.

Navalar was one who expected each religionist to follow his religion in the proper manner, and exhorted the Saivites to be good practising Saivites.

His influence has remained. The Saiva Paripalana Sabha was established in 1888. The Jaffna Hindu College was established in 1890; the Jaffna Tamil Sangam was founded by Navalar's sister's son T. Kailasapillai in 1899. This Sangam held examinations in Tamil and awarded Certificates in Tamil. The Victoria College, Chulipuram was founded at the beginning of this century and the Hindu Board of Education was started in 1924. It was he who pointed out the greatness of Thiruketheeswaram to the Hindus. It was due to his efforts that the Sivan Temple at Keerimalai was rebuilt. He was indeed a peerless man, whose fame has grown with the passage of time. A bronze statue has been erected by a grateful public, at Nallur in 1969.

It gives us infinite delight to understand that the Government of Ceylon has decided to issue a stamp in memory of the great Navalar on the occasion of the anniversary in October 29, 1971

Non Violence in Action

(Continued from page 7)

India to meet his old ailing mother in spite of the fact that not very long ago he had been black-listed and was even jailed on suspicion. We should learn from him the secret of its power and how to cultivate it.

Nonviolence or Ahimsa is soul force as opposed to physical force or brute force, and superior to it. It is at work everywhere every moment even in nature in the raw where the law of the jungle is supposed to prevail. It is the law of our being. We have all experienced it one time or another. We have the simplest instance of it when a little child exasperates its mother by its persistent demand for something. In her irritation she slaps it, But instead of retaliating, it runs to her and clings to her for protection. That simple act converts her anger into love so that she covers it with kisses and satisfies its wish. Here is an example of the power of non-violence in action. The frail little child's love prevails over its mother's superior physical strength.

To cultivate the power of Ahimsa we need to have the innocence of a child, the purity of heart like a child's, a child's unsophisticated faith in its mother.

There is, however, one difference. In the case of a child its innocence is its unerring guide. But we, who have eaten the fruit of knowledge, need knowledge, for our unerring guidance. Man is an odd mixture of the angel and the brute. Love that serves not the highest in us but our lower nature is not love but infatuation—blind love. It degrades both him who gives and him that receives it. Knowledge is that which enables us to know the angel from the brute in us. A mother that foolishly pampers her child renders it ill service. A wife that panders to her husband's vices serves ill both herself and her husband and the society. That is why one of the greatest of our sages, Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, said that no one can truly serve man unless he has learnt to know and love the God in him.

True Measure

To cultivate the power of Ahimsa we have to identify ourselves with all that lives to make the joys and sorrows of others our own. We must feel

the good or harm done to ourselves. And this awareness should be so keen that when they suffer we actually suffer with them just as the whole body feels the pain when any member of it is bruised. When they go hungry we should feel the pangs of starvation. Conversely, when they are fed, we should feel as if we had a feast, even though our stomach is empty. We cannot be said to love others if we allow ourselves enjoyment of luxuries when they lack even bread; if we use our talent and energy in the pursuit of our physical, mental or even intellectual satisfaction, when it is needed for service or for acquiring fitness for it.

Self-denial, joyous and joy-giving that our love for others can evoke in us is the only true measure of our love. All the rest is solemn humbug. The five basic spiritual disciplines truth, non-violence, i. e. returning good for evil, non-possession or voluntary poverty non-stealing, and complete self control i. e. dedication of all our senses and sense organs to the service of God through the service of his creation, are thus five corollaries of the law of universal love, otherwise known as Ahimsa. They are also the test points on which our practice of that law is tested. Ceaseless practice of these spiritual disciplines constituted Gandhiji's striving or tapasya for Ahimsa. He was himself out in the service of the destitute and the oppressed denying himself even rest and sleep; he practised abstemiousness, self-discipline and self-control to make and keep himself physically, mentally and spiritually fit for service; he denied himself what could not be shared with others, used every moment of his waking hours either for service or for gaining fitness for it. He suffered when others suffered, with the result that when he suffered they all suffered with him.

In the olden days Rishis used to perform tapasya for the succour of the distressed. But Gandhiji felt that for our times this was not enough. In our era of the common man tapasya needed to be democratized so that millions could participate in it. To this end he devised his constructive programme. Constructive

programme is tapasya reduced to the terms of the masses. It consists of clothing the spirit of selfless love, informed with knowledge and an awareness of the goal to which it is directed.

Gandhiji never wearied of proclaiming that it was best symbolised by the orthodox cottage charkha certainly not a power driven Ambar Charkha—or better still, takli, because it can be plied by a child of six or seven, as well as by illiterate women occupied in their domestic chores, and decrepit old men, even the lame, and answers a universal basic need as nothing else. That is why he never missed his daily sacrificial spinning, no matter how tired or heavily preoccupied he was or even when he was fasting or was confined to his sick-bed. It was the means and measure of his identification with the destitute millions of India. This was the secret of the willing allegiance of India's masses that he commanded so that at his bidding they were prepared to face hardships; sufferings, loss of earthly possessions, even death itself in our struggle for independence.

Faith in God

It is not merely what we do but what we are that makes for the power of Ahimsa. If we are truthful, pure-hearted, self-disciplined; if in our heart there is love even for those who may have ill-treated us, if we present a model of cleanliness—individual and corporate—punctuality, abstemiousness and physical and mental health; above all, if we embody the spirit of selfless service that comes from a living faith in God we will be able to draw the people to us and command their spontaneous obedience. They will of their free will then do for us what no reward of punishment by the most ruthless of dictators could exact from them.

School of Satyagraha

To illustrate, Gandhiji went to Champaran to fight a century-old oppression. In pursuance of his plan he sent out women inmates of his Ashram, like Kasturba Gandhi, Mrs. Mahadeo Desai and Mrs. Narhari Parikh to serve the men and women in the Bihar villages. They took with them only three drugs—quinine, castor oil and sulphur ointment. But

with these and with simple nature-cure methods they were able to provide medical relief to thousands of men women and children suffering from a multitude of common ailments, due to ignorance and neglect, which exact such a heavy toll of suffering in India's countless villeges. None of them had received any formal education. But they had received education in the school of Satyagraha. It consisted of the Ashram way of life. It enabled them to go and work freely among utter strangers. They were not afraid of the police or other Government officials; they lived simply like the village folk, could make do with whatever plain fare the locality provided and keep themselves in health on balanced diet conservatively cooked. They dressed in coarse hand spun, were unsophisticated in their deportment and speech, used no cosmetics. Their faith in God and in prayer enabled them to endure physical discomfort and face dangers and difficulties cheerfully.

They taught the villagers the three R's and set an example in cleanliness, efficient selfless service and personal courage. Above all they knew and told them how one could fight oppression, injustice and wrongs with self-suffering. In incredibly short time they became the focus of a new awakening among the village folk of Champaran, who began to look upon them as their true friends and guides, whom they could trust always and whose behests they were ever ready to carry out.

The same was repeated in Bardoli. The example set by constructive works in various Ashrams with which the taluqa was dotted became a most potent educative force. Service through constructive activity created a bond of mutual trust between them and the villagers. The opportunity for day-to-day communion which this provided strengthened and sustained that

bond. It became the base of nonviolent organization of the Bardoli peasantry which no governmental repression could break. It made successful Bardoli Satyagraha possible.

There is none of us, I believe, who, if he looked around him, would not find some one less privileged and less able to face life and its problems than he. Let every Shanti Sainik make it a point to look up one such and try to make his today better than his yesterday, his tomorrow better than his today. Did he have his rice at midday without any vegetables or salt? He can be helped to add salt and some greens to his evening meal. Has he had a cut or a bruise? He can be given an antiseptic dressing of ashes of burnt paper or a cold compress or an earth poultice for immediate relief. Is he suffering from dysentery, scabies or worms? One can cure him in a week's time. Has he dirty clothes because he cannot afford soap? He can be taught and helped to improvise a detergent from the ashes of plants, without any cost to him, to wash his clothes with.

Burning Earnestness

Is some one depressed or in difficulty? A word of sympathy, and right advice can perhaps brace him up and lighten his head. Each little step taken in this way will indicate the next and clear the way for it. Their camp life should provide the sainiks training in the simple life, economical and health giving; in individual and corporate cleanliness, punctuality, thrift, mutual help and cooperation. The regulation of relationships among the sainiks in their camp or in their own homes can serve as a university par excellence for the cultivation of the power of Ahimsa. Shanti Sainiks must make a close study of the problems of social injustice and the root causes of the people's sufferings, and give proof of their burning earnestness not by words only but by their deeds—for the removal of the same.

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