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THE HINDU ORGAN.

JAFFNA, WEDNESDAY JULY 11, 1894.

THE NEED OF A BANK FOR JAFFNA.

We have ourselves and our local contemporaries have often, during the last two years, referred to the urgent need of a Bank being established here, in the place of the defunct New Oriental Bank. At no time of the year is its want so much felt as during the tobacco season. Tobacco is the staple product of Jaffna and the mainstay of its inhabitants. The annual value of this product grown in Jaffna is more than twenty lakhs of rupees, half of which goes to Travancore in unmanufactured leaves, while the other half is consumed in the Island itself. It was the existence of a Bank here, for about one-third of a century, till its collapse two years ago, that gave stimulus to tobacco cultivation in Jaffna and afforded facilities for the development of this trade. The Jaffna cultivators and merchants now keenly feel the absence of a Bank here, as they have to carry on the cultivation and maintain the trade under very discouraging circumstances. Money is not readily available here for urgent needs. Even the Chetties who are the gainers by the present state of affairs here sometimes feel themselves the need of a Bank. But they manage to raise loans from the Colombo Banks though their Agents there and get them down here by steamer. The "Lady Gordon" has, during the last three months, landed here by every trip specie of the value of several lakhs of rupees, consigned to the Chetties. Steamers from Negapatam and Madras also have brought down large sums of money for them. They now thus monopolise the whole of the banking business here, and trade in Jaffna is practically in their hands. It need hardly be pointed out that this is not at all to the advantage of the people of this Peninsula.

It is not only for the development of the tobacco industry, but also for the general prosperity and convenience of the public that a Bank is urgently needed here. Attempts have been made successively to induce the National Bank and the Bank of Madras to open a branch in Jaffna, but hitherto without success. We have reasons to believe that the Directors of the latter Bank are willing to establish a branch here, but the Government of Madras, without whose sanction they could not do so, have been in their way of coming to an relief. Having branches in Travancore where Jaffna tobacco of the value of more than ten lakhs of rupees is annually imported and sold away, and in the ports of South India where the people of Jaffna have much business transactions, the Bank of Madras is the institution which is best suited to the needs of Jaffna and which will also profit itself considerably by its connection with this District. Beyond the representation made by the merchants in Alleppy interested in the Jaffna tobacco trade, no application has, as far as we are aware, been made from here to open a branch of that Bank in Jaffna. Mr. E. B. Dawson, Inspector of Branches, Bank of Madras, to whom the representation of the Alleppy merchants was made in January last, was of opinion that a separate representation to the Directors of the Bank in Madras, from the leading merchants and residents here, would considerably strengthen their hands in overcoming the opposition of the Indian Government to the establishment a branch here. Let us therefore hope that a proper representation will be sent from Jaffna, without loss of time, to the authorities of the Bank of Madras, inviting them to open a branch of that Bank here.

The Nainativu Temple—There have been disputes since of late between some of the Managers of the Temple and the officiating priest. Both parties tried to enlist the sympathy of the Government Agent and the Police Magistrate of Kaiti on their respective sides. Both of the officials, however, declined to interfere but ordered the Headmen to see that there was no breach of the peace. The festival commenced on the 9th instant, and we understand that a new Priest not connected with either party conducted the ceremonies on the opening day of the festival. The case of this Temple affords another instance of the necessity of having some legislation with regard to the management of Hindu Temples and their properties.

—We are glad to learn that the Misses Lietch intend building a Hospital for females at Kocuvil and that a suitable site will be acquired before long.

The Jaffna Sessions—The second Criminal Sessions of the Supreme Court for the present year will commence on the 27th instant. The senior Puisne Justice is expected to preside. There are only a very few cases this time on the Calendar. Mr. Justice Laurie will come by Steamer south about holding the sessions first in Batticaloa where there are five cases for trial of which two are said to be murder cases, then in Trincomalee where there is only one case, and lastly in Jaffna which he will reach on the 27th instant.

The Registrarship of the Supreme Court—The appointment of Mr. Grenier as the Registrar of the Supreme Court and of Messrs Swan and Stork as Deputy Registrars have been confirmed by the Secretary of State. Although Mr. Casie Chitty has not succeeded in getting the Registrarship, we hope the Government have noted his claims and will give him a suitable permanent appointment when an opportunity occurs.

—We are glad to see that Police Constables have been placed at Anaipanthiyad and at Nellore. We hope the Assistant Superintendent of Police will spare no efforts to put down the growing rowdyism and lawlessness in the place.

—Mr. Kumarakulasingha Mudaliyar, the Tamil Interpreter to His Excellency the Governor, is now in Jaffna on leave having come up to celebrate the marriage of his sister with Mr. Muttiah, the Tamil Interpreter of the Supreme Court. Mr. W. G. Vallipuram, Chief Clerk of the Water works Colombo, who is the second son of Mr. J. Vallipuram, of Batticaloa and a brother of Mr. G. W. Vallipuram, Superintendent of Minor Roads, Badulla, acts for Kumarakula Singha Mudaliyar.

—We are glad to learn that Mr. D. P. Thamboo, second son of Mr. Proctor Thamboo, has been appointed Broker to Messrs Atkin Spence & Co, in succession to his late father-in-law.

LOCAL AND GENERAL.

The Weather—No rain has fallen here, though there have been indications of it since last week. Vegetation looks dry and parched up and cattle suffer greatly from want of pasture. It will also be a bad look-out for the cocoanut planters if the drought were to continue like this for some time longer.

—Mr. J. J. Casie Chitty has resumed work in the Police Courts of Pt. Pedro and Chavakkadcheri, after the short leave he has had. The three weeks' rest has done him considerable good.

—Dr. Johnson who has been appointed successor to Dr. Keegel has not arrived here as yet. Dr. Eliatamby continues to act as Assistant Colonial Surgeon, Jaffna.

Fatal Accident—A boat taking four passengers from Colombo to Poonaryn capsized on the evening of the 9th instant near the mainland. Three of the passengers swam ashore and escaped with their lives, but the fourth, an unfortunate old Brahmin priest who was on his way to celebrate a wedding, found a watery grave. Mr. Constantine, the Police Magistrate, held an inquest on the body of the dead man the next day. On account of his absence from the Police Court all the cases fixed for trial on Tuesday were postponed.

Pilgrimage—Hundreds of pilgrims have gone from here as usual to the celebrated Shrine at Chidambaram. They are expected to return in the course of the week. There is no fear of cholera being introduced here by them. South India is now free from this dire epidemic.

Puttoor—It is with feelings of deep regret that I have to announce the death of Mr. Ampalavaner Casinathar which took place at his residence at Puttoor on the evening of the 25th ultimo. He was very popular throughout the Division of Valikamam East and married a niece of the Maniyagar of that part of the Peninsula. He was very courteous, and generous to all who came in contact with him. He leaves behind him three sons, the eldest of whom is Mr. C. Muttukumaru, and a large circle of relations to bemoan his loss. At the time of his death he was 63 years of age. —Cor.

Administration Reports—We have to acknowledge with thanks the receipt from Government of the reports for 1893 of Mr. F. R. Ellis on Prisons, of Mr. Ivers on the Southern Province, of Mr. King on the North-Western Province of Mr. Fisher on the Province of Uva, of Mr. Nevill on the North-Central Province, of Mr. Hally on the Colombo Museum, and of the acting Solicitor-General and the crown counsels on Judicial Statistics.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION.

The religious liberty which we all enjoy under the British rule may be said to be the essential trait of every judicious Government—and the reason is obvious. The duty of every man is to follow the dictates of his conscience; and to impose on him a duty to act contrariwise is not only unjust but cruel. Man being endowed with a faculty which we call conscience, to ask him, therefore, to pursue a course which his conscience would not point out to him as the right one, is monstrously absurd. To follow a course as the right one, I must in the first place know it as such, and feel it as such—without such a knowledge and feeling, it is altogether impossible with me to follow that course as the right one. To force me, therefore, to do a thing which is impossible with me, and as such beyond my power, is certainly unjust and tyrannous. Faith and belief cannot be moulded as we please; but these are the outcomes of the reasons that are placed before us, the standard of intelligence we are gifted with, and the circumstances we are pleased in. While these tell me that a certain creed is not the true one, I cannot for a moment believe the contrary; and if I am forced to do so I will only do it externally; i.e., I will only pretend to believe it. So that such a force or in other words, denial of religious liberty is a fruitful source of hypocrisy and pretence which a judicious Government ought not to countenance at all, but, on the contrary, should endeavour, as far as it can, put down such practices. It is therefore highly incumbent on every just and reasonable Government, not only to allow but to encourage every man to be advised by the dictates of his conscience; and this obligation which is so essential even in a secular point of view, applies with double force to religion. It is in religion, therefore, that religious toleration must be boldly advocated and the privilege of being true to his honest conviction must be freely granted to every man.

If we see things in their true light we shall find that Hinduism is the only religion that grants this privilege. It is one of the important features of that religion, that every man, whatever his religious belief may be, will be rewarded according to the merits of his deeds, if he be only true to his convictions. It is not to be understood by this, however, that all religions are true religions. Hinduism, though exceedingly tolerant, will not for a moment connive at such a statement. Hinduism may be found to declare in most unmistakable terms (1) that all religions are not true religions and (2) that every man will be rewarded according to the merits of his deeds. It will be interesting to see how these two statements are maintained and reconciled by that religion.

(I) Religion is our guide to Heaven, and without this guide we can never expect to reach that goal; the Divine Providence was therefore graciously disposed to grant a religion whereby we may be enabled to approach that goal; and that Providence therefore would not have given us the several religions which are conflicting with each other for the same purpose. God being immutable in nature, the Heaven wherein we enjoy Him will be equally immutable, and our path to that Heaven must likewise be immutable. Hence it is apparent that the several religions on the face of the earth which are at broad variance with each other cannot all be our guide to Heaven. It has also to be observed that it is only through the true religion we can have a correct idea of God, and without this correct idea—or with the erroneous ideas inculcated by false religions—we cannot expect to be fit subjects for the Heavenly enjoyments. (This

arguments can only be best understood by forming an idea of what true salvation is—of which we shall speak on another occasion.) At any rate if we consider for a moment, the wide gulf that exists between God and man and the inherent weakness of the latter that disables him to approach the former without his help, it would be apparent that the bliss of Heavenly enjoyment can only be secured by the means provided for by the all merciful God, i.e., the true religion. So far as regards the first statement. Let us now turn to the second statement.

(II) We see that men do not all follow the same religion, and this state of things is not intentional on their part. They follow different creeds and entertain different opinions in consequence of a natural order of things, which is beyond their power and control. Men are not all of the same spirit or of the same mental capacity, and the intelligence they are gifted with varies to a considerable extent both in quality and quantity, and this, I should say, is the secret of the difference of opinion that is generally found among them. The family in which a man is born and the circumstances under which he is placed greatly, if not wholly, contribute to the formation of his ideas and opinions, and this is the reason why the same religion—I mean the true religion—is not followed by all alike. It is therefore clear that men follow different religions owing to a natural order of things, and they cannot be punished, therefore, and that too by a God who Himself decreed that order. All that is expected of man is that he should do what is right according to the standard of knowledge he is endowed with; and it is most unreasonable to punish him for following what in his opinion was the right course.

It has again to be observed that religions worshipped in whatever form or manner it may be, is wholly intended to God; and if any object is paid such a worship it is with a *bona fide* belief that the object is the true God; so that, it is evidently a worship to the true God combined with a certain amount of misunderstanding. In any case the Divine Providence is worshipped by the people of all creeds, but in wrong places and under wrong forms by those of the false creeds. That therefore God will punish the followers of the false creeds on the plea that they did not serve Him at all is inconsistent with Divine justice.

To punish them again for their mistaken ideas is equally unjust. Punishment can only be meted out when one commits an act with a knowledge that that act is an offence. Here the ideas held by the followers of the different creeds are honest and conscientious and they are in their opinion correct and true ideas. To punish them for adhering to what in their opinion is not only true but proceeded from God directly would certainly be unjust.

It is thus far clear that the followers of the different creeds cannot be punished on account of their respective faith, and it is equally true that all the religions on the face of the earth cannot be our means for the true salvation. These two stern facts may be found satisfactorily reconciled in Hinduism; for, according to the tenets of that religion true salvation can only be attained through Hinduism, while the followers of the other creeds will be rewarded according to the merits of their deeds and will ultimately be led to embrace the Hindu religion. This spirit of Hinduism seems to have been greatly misunderstood and misrepresented by some as if it laid down that every religion is a path to Heaven. This is far from the true spirit of Hinduism as we have already explained.

It is indeed an unpardonable blasphemy to say that God will punish us for following the dictates of our conscience, and the force of this argument has of late so much affected the hearts of the non-Hindus that it has wrought out a change in their opinion. They are now willing to grant that every man, whatever his creed or faith may be, will be entitled to salvation if he is only true to his convictions. But this I should say is not compatible with the spirit of religion. If a conscientious walk of life alone is sufficient for true salvation there is no need for a religion, and all our anxiety to propagate our faith is useless and unnecessary; it will besides launch us into an anomalous conclusion that believers and unbelievers will be equally saved and admitted into Heaven. Hinduism, however does not promise the true Heaven to non Hindus whose honest career will only entitle them to grades lower than true Heaven, and will ultimately lead them to Hinduism. This forebodes the theories of Transmigration and Karma which are quite unknown to the non-Hindu systems.

The Hindu Theory, therefore, that every man will be rewarded according to the merits of his deeds appears to be just, and equitable to all intents and purposes, and this we find is confirmed by our experience. While in this world we find that people of every creed are more or less rewarded according to the merits or demerits of their deeds we find no reason to doubt the same course being adopted in the world expected also.

And we have a practical lesson to learn from this. This equitable policy of religious toleration must recommend itself particularly to the promoters of the different creeds; and they should not in their endeavours to advance their respective cause encroach upon the rights and liberties of each other. We find that the various Governments on the face of the earth take particular care not to encroach upon the liberties of each other and they are extremely anxious to rule in harmony. But it is saddening to find that our religious sectarians should clash in with each other and shew much of intolerant spirit. They may do all in their power to promote their respective cause but all what I say is that they should not have recourse to undue means which may tend to interfere with the religious freedom of any man.

K. D.

EXTRACTS.

HINDUISM AS A RELIGION.

The paper read by Swami Vivekananda at Chicago before the PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS.

(continued from our last issue)

RECALLING THE PAST.

This is direct and demonstrative evidence. Verification is the perfect proof of a theory, and here is the challenge thrown to the world by our Rishis. We have discovered the secrets by which the very depths of the ocean of memory can be stirred up—follow them and you will get a complete reminiscence of your past life.

So then the Hindu believes that he is a spirit. His sword cannot pierce him, the fire cannot burn him, the water cannot melt him, the air cannot dry. The Hindu believes that every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere but whose centre is located in a body, and that death means the change of this centre from body to body. Nor is the soul bound by the conditions of matter. In its very essence it is free, unbound, holy, and pure, and perfect. But somehow or other it has got itself tied closely to matter, and thinks of itself as matter.

Why should the free, perfect, and pure being be thus under the thralldom of matter? How can the perfect soul be deluded into the belief that he is imperfect? We have been told that the Hindus shirk the question and say that no such question can be there. Some thinkers want to answer the question by the supposing of one or more quasi perfect beings, and use big technical names to fill up the gap. But naming is not explaining. The question remains the same. How can the perfect become the quasi perfect; how can the pure, the absolute, change even a microscopically small part of its nature? The Hindu is sincere. He does not want to take shelter under sophistry. He is brave enough to face the question in a manly fashion. And his answer is, "I do not know." I do not know how the perfect being, the soul came to think of itself as imperfect, as joined and conditioned by matter. But the fact is a fact for all that. It is a fact in everybody's consciousness that he thinks of himself as the body. We do not attempt to explain why I am, why my soul is, in this body.

SOUL IS ETERNAL.

Well, then the human soul is eternal and immortal, perfect and infinite, and death means only a change of centre from one body to another. The present is determined by our past actions, and the future will be by the present. The soul will go on evolving up or reverting back from birth to birth and death to death. It is like a tiny boat in a tempest, raised one moment on the foaming crest of a billow and dashed down into a yawning chasm the next, rolling to and fro at the mercy of good and bad actions—a powerless, helpless wreck in an ever-raging, ever-rushing, uncompromising current of cause and effect; a little moth placed under the wheel of causation which rolls on, crushing everything in its way, and waits not for the widow's tears or the orphan's cry.

The heart sinks at this idea, yet such is the law of nature. Is there no hope? Is there no escape? The cry that went up from the bottom of the heart of despair reached the throne of mercy and words of hope and consolation came down and inspired a Vedic sage, and he stood up before the world and in trumpet voice proclaimed the glad tidings to the world: "Hear, ye children of immortal bliss, even ye that reside in higher spheres, I have found the ancient One, who is beyond all darkness, all delusion, and knowing Him alone you shall be saved from death again." "Children of immortal bliss, what a sweet, what a hopeful name! Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name—heirs of immortal bliss—yea, the Hindu refuses to call you sinners."

(to be continued)