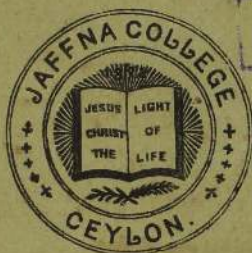


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Jaffna College

MISCELLANY



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Vol. XXVIII

July, 1918

One Rupee
Per annum

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Editorial Notes

Owing to unavoidable circumstances, the present number makes its appearance
 Ourselves somewhat late. We hope, however, to bring out two more numbers, as usual, during the year.



The article about Manikkavasagar will, we hope, be very interesting to our readers.

Tamil Saints A great Indian Judge says that in order to understand the real heart of India, one ought to go to the writings of the Bhakti Saints, and not to the works of Philosophers. Consequently, those who wish to influence the religious thought of India cannot afford to neglect the study of its saints. If some of our readers will come forward to write on other Tamil Saints, we will gratefully publish their articles. Platform oratory in Jaffna asserts *ad nauseam* the glory of Tamil Literature, but very few people come forward to stimulate interest in it. We hope that our appeal will not be in vain.

Why America is at War with Germany

By Rev. J. Bicknell B. A., B. D.

America's entry into the great world war was a portentous event. We may be sure there was some mighty motive to stir to unified action a nation of 100,000,000 people of such varied nationalities,—an action so contrary to their accepted creed of non-interference with European affairs, so fraught with possibilities of danger and so sure to call for supreme effort and sacrifice. It is good that Jaffna as well as other parts of the world should realise something of this event. As a year has passed since America's entry into the war, we may understand her action better than at the start. President Wilson has in that year given forth notable utterances in which he has set forth the motive of this action and the response of the people to these utterances has been so enthusiastically unanimous, we must believe his voice has been theirs.

What does Mr. Wilson say America is fighting for?

To "make the world safe for democracy."

To "crush the German power, a thing without conscience or honor or capacity for covenanted peace.

To "establish the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments."

For "the rights and liberties of small nations."

For "impartial justice—justice done at every point and to every nation that the final settlement must affect."

For "peace by the overcoming of evil, by the defeat once for all of the sinister forces that interrupt peace and render it impossible."

To "base peace on generosity and justice to the exclusion of all selfish claims to advantage even on the part of the victors."

For "a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."

How much will America do to gain this end?

Let us quote from two of the President's speeches.

"To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her she can do no other."

"Let there be no misunderstanding. Our present and immediate task is to win the war, and nothing shall turn us aside until it is accomplished. Every power and resource we possess, whether of men, or money, or of materials, is being devoted to that purpose until it is achieved. Those who desire to bring peace about before that purpose is achieved, I counsel to carry their advice elsewhere. We will not entertain it."

It will be seen from these quotations that America believes so thoroughly in the cause in which she has unsheathed the sword that she will give all to attain it. And if there be any thought that these utterances made in the year

1917 may have expressed a purpose in which America will grow faint as the stern realities of the war come home to her, let us quote once more from a speech made May 19, 1918. The paper reports as follows.

Speaking *extempore*, Mr. Wilson said, "There are two duties with which we are face to face. The first duty is to win the war; the second duty, which goes hand in hand with it, is to win it greatly and worthily, showing, not only the real quality of our people, but the real quality of our purpose and ourselves. Of course the first duty that we must keep in the foreground of our thought until it is accomplished, is to win the war. I heard a gentleman recently say that we must get five million men ready. Why limit it to five million? I asked Congress to name no limit because Congress intends I am sure, as we intend, that every ship that can carry supplies shall go laden upon every voyage with every man and every supply she can carry; and we are not to be diverted from this grim purpose of winning the war by any insincere approaches upon the subject of peace. I can say with a clear conscience that I have tested these intimations and found them insincere. I now recognize them for what they are, namely, an opportunity to have a free hand particularly in the East, to carry out the purpose of conquest and exploitation."

Remember these are the words of one who exercised for two and a half years an almost incredible patience; that they come from a man who reaches conclusions with careful consideration, and then you can realize the intensity of the feeling and the strength of the purpose in

the heart and soul of the people of that great country. And this purpose instead of becoming more sordid, as the war goes on, becomes more and more exalted, for in the same speech he says:

"If you could read some of the touching despatches which come through official channels, for even through those channels there come voices of humanity that are infinitely pathetic, if you could catch some of those voices that speak of the utter longing of oppressed and helpless peoples all over the world, and hear something like the Battle Hymn of the Republic, hear the feet of the great hosts of Liberty to set them free, to set their minds free, to set their lives free, to set their children free, then you would know what comes into the heart of those who are trying to contribute all the brains and power that they have to this great enterprise of Liberty."



Saint Manikkavasagar

By A. Abraham B. A., F. R. A. S.

[Part of a paper read before the Round Table]

We will now proceed to consider Manikkavasagar as a Poet, Reformer, Philosopher and Saint. As a religious poet Manikkavasagar is unrivalled. This is what Dr. Pope, the Oxford professor, says about him. "There are indeed but few poems in any language that can surpass Thiruvasakam or the Holy word of Manikkavasagar either in profundity of thought, in earnestness of feelings or in that simple child-like trust in which the struggling human soul with its burdens of intellectual and moral puzzles finally finds shelter. The constant mixture of loftiest aspirations, tenderest prayers and sublimest adoration, with wild legends and with symbolism, much of which

must seem to us (Europeans) uncouth, repellant, unworthy and degrading, makes this Saiva Psalter intensely fascinating. The influence these poems have on posterity is remarkable."

The name Manikkavasagar means Ruby-like utterancer (மாணி க்கம் + வாசகர்) or he whose words are sweetest honey (மாண + இக்து + வாசகர்.) The common proverb "திருவாசகத்தி னுந் தான் மற்றொருவாசகத்து முருகான்," (he who is not melted by Thiruvagasagam can not be melted by any other utterance,) proves the paramount excellence of Thiruvagasagam as a heart-melting work. No work is held in higher esteem by the Tamils than the lyrics of Thiruvagasagam which is as dear to the Saivites as the Psalms are to the Christians.

As a reformer, Manikkavasagar had great success. He appeared at a time when Saivism seemed to become almost extinct and Buddhism and Jainism threatened to take its place in the Tamil land. He went about preaching the tenets of Saivism not only in the Chola and Pandya kingdoms but throughout the whole of South India and Ceylon. In Ceylon Buddhism was the prevailing religion and was supported by the State. When Manikka visited Ceylon he was taken to the presence of the king and his chief priest. The latter after putting some insulting questions said that he would go to Chithamparam to establish Buddhism; there seems to have been a great expedition of the king of Ceylon with the double object of establishing Buddhism on the continent and paying his respects to his paramount Lord Chola. There arose a great dispute in Chithamparam within the temple enclosure. The Chola King, his courtiers and Saint Manikkavasagar were on one side while the king of Ceylon his attendants and the Buddhist priests were on the other. The whole discussion turned at length upon the argument which Manikkavasagar urged with great force, that in the teachings of Buddhism there can be neither God, nor soul nor salvation, because, according to Buddhist philosophy, "all apprehension is transitory and momentary and there can be no real knower or knowledge or thing known". The Ceylon king and his attendants are said to have admitted defeat, being convinced by Manikkavasagar's arguments and overwhelmed by his miracles. Saivism was revered and from this time dates the foundation of that vast multitude of Saiva shrines which constitute a peculiar feature of the Tamil land. Manikkavasagar seems to have re-converted some Syrian Christians of Malayalam. One Mr. Ittoop, a native author of Travancore says, "About the year 270 A. D. a man

who was named Manikkavasagar, came from the Chola country, preached sorcery, healed diseases of man and beast by means of his incantations, instructed people in the use and efficacy of the sacred ashes, the five letters or Pancharcharam and Panchakavviam—the five products of the cow, and established a separate community called the Manikiramagars." There are stories to the effect that Saivism was revived by persecutions carried on at Manikkavasagar's instigation, but these, Dr. Pope thinks, belong to a later period and it is his own personal devotion and fervour of spirit that made him an altogether irresistible apostle of his own faith. He went about testifying to the world that he had seen Sivan in Perunthurai and had then and there passed from darkness to light. He thus declared to all what he fully believed himself to have seen and handled. He was an enthusiast, but absolutely sincere.

As a philosopher, Manikkavasagar is the fountain head of Saiva Siddhantam, a philosophy peculiar to Southern India. The doctrines he taught appear plainly in the dispute he had with the Buddhist priests. In the words of Dr. Pope, Manikkavasagar "taught the people that there was one supreme personal God, no mere metaphysical abstraction, but the Lord of Gods and men. He also taught that it was the gracious will of Sivan to assume humanity, to come to earth as a Guru and to make disciples of those who sought him with adequate preparation. He announced that this way of salvation was open to all classes of the community. He also taught very emphatically the immortality of the released soul, its conscious immortality, as he said that the virtual death of the soul which Buddhism teaches, is not its release". It will be seen how very near in some very important respects Saiva Siddhantam approaches Christianity.

After all, what interests us most in the life of Manikkavasagar is not his poetry or his philosophy or his success as a religious reformer, but his spiritual history, the experiences through which he passed as a seeker after God. These experiences are written not in the legends that have gathered about his name but in his own poems. These are hymns of the heart and are often unconsciously autobiographical. His spiritual history, says Rev. Goudie, conforms most strikingly to the Christian type, in that it gives the same well-marked steps of progress from darkness to light from bondage to freedom. There is in it such an approximation to Christ-

ian experience and Christian expression as is hardly to be found in the whole range of Hindu literature outside the Saiva Siddhanta system.

The first step in his religious experience is the consciousness of sin and a dissatisfaction with the worldly pleasures. He is made the prime minister and is held in high esteem both by the king and the people. But his mind is not attracted by the pleasures of his position. He sees evil in himself, that it is his master, and he is a bond servant to sin. This is what he says about his early life in திருக்கோத்தம்பி (The humming bee):—

பொய்யாய செல்வத்தே புகழ்ந்தி நாடோறும்
மெய்யாகக் கருதிக் கிடந்தேனை சூட்டுகொண்ட இயா.

In pleasures false I plunged and sank deep down
Each day of earthly prosperous joy, I thought it true
And thus enslaved I lay.

Again in அற்புதப்பத்து, (the miracle decad) he mourns,
வணங்கும் இப்பிறப்பிதப்பினை நனைமாய் மகனாகப் பம்மோடும்
பினைந்து வாயிதழ்ப்பெருவெள்ளத்தழுந்தி நான் பித்தனாய்த் திரி
வேனை,

குணங்களும் குறிகளுமிலாங்குணக்கடல் கோமனத்தோடுங் கூடி
அனைந்து வந்தெனையாண்டுக்கொண்டருளிப் பற்புதமறிமொனே.

I gave no thought to birth and death
I sank engulfed as in a mighty flood
He came and tenderly embracing made me his.
This miracle of grace I know not.

Again in சுண்டபத்து, (The Vision Decad') he says,

அனலில்லாப் பாவத்தாலமுக்குணடிங் கறிகின்றி
வினாவொன்றமறியாதே வெறுவியனாக் கிடப்பெனுக்கு.

Sunk here midst infinite conceits, all ignorance was I; I lay
poor empty soul, unweeting aught that might spring forth.

The recital of these mental troubles and the touching confessions of his ignorance and youthful folly remind one, as Dr. Pope says, most forcibly of the confessions of St. Augustine and we cannot help saying that in our Tamil Sage we find a spirit congenial to that of the great Doctor of the West. "Wallowing in mire and filth," "held in bond of darkness" "Tossed by the fierce waves of passion," "dog that I was," "meaner than any dog," these are the vigorous expressions in which he acknowledges his sin. Again and again is found in the poetic utterances a note of regret for acts and habits which

he felt to be separating him from God. In the wail of his penitent hymns we hear the echo of St. Paul's words, 'Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death.' Surely we find in St. Paul and St. Manikka a common divine voice that they can neither tolerate nor remove themselves the body of darkness and evil that clings to them and separates them from God.

In the next step in his progress, he appears an ardent seeker after truth. There were then in existence different heretic schools of philosophy, namely Atheism (மாயாவாதம்), Idealism (வேதாந்தம்), Materialism (லோகாயாதம்) side by side with the various religious ceremonies connected with them, but none could please and satisfy him. In பொற்றித்திரு அகவல் 'The Praise Song', he says,

விரதமே பரமரக வேதியரும் சரதமாகவே சாத்திரங்காட்டினர்
சமயவாதிகள் தத்தம்மதங்களை அமைவதாக அரற்றிமலைத்தனர்
மண்டிய மாயாவாதமென்றும் ஸண்டமாருதம்கலித்தடித்தர் அந்த
உலோகாயதனனும் ஒண்டிறப் பாம்பின் கலாபெதத்தகநிலிட
மெய்த
அதிநில நுமாயை எனைப்பல குழுவும்.

The Brahman said, the way of penance is supreme.
And others showed the law of trusting love
Sectarian disputants complacently
Discordant tenets shouted loud and fought.
Then haughty vedant creed unreal came
Whirled, dashed and roared like furious hurricane.
Lookayathan, a glistening mighty snake,
Brought cruel poisoned heresies
Whilst these delusions endless girt me round.

(லோகாயாதம் says, earth &c, the five elements are original principles, தத்துவம்; from these alone, when transformed into the body, intelligence is produced and these being destroyed, it also perishes. There is no heaven, no emancipation, nor any soul in other world.)

His mind was at last resolved upon the attainment of salvation through a deliverer. His heart was yearning for the Guru who would teach him the way of release. He sought and held converse with the professors of every Sivite school saying within his soul, "Where shall I find the spotless Guru who can expound to me the mysteries of the *agamas*?"

The next step in his religious history is his conversion. The story of his mission to Perunthurai to buy horses and the miraculous appearance of Siva to him under the Kuruntha tree in the guise of a gracious Guru surrounded by a host of disciples, presents a picture strikingly resembling the outward condition occasioning the conversion of the Apostle Paul. We cannot but believe that God has ever been found of those who truly sought him and admit that true theophanies are possible and probable outside the pale of Christian and Hebrew History. According to Manikkavasagar's own words, his experience of conversion was no gradual attainment to moral life, but was a sudden change. He was bondservant to sin held down in chains of darkness until a certain hour struck when his bond was suddenly broken and he was free. The poet's experience bears a striking resemblance to those sudden and wonderful changes of heart and life which we very often meet in Christian conversions. Like Apostle Paul or the beloved John, Manikka remembered to his last day the place and the hour when the great change came to him and he never wearied of setting it forth "that all the world might hear." His conversion was to him the dawn of a new light on his dark, troubled spirit, the revelation to him of the one true God whom it was hard for even other gods to know.

In திருத்தொள்ளைம் (Tambour song) we read:—

அரிக்கும் பிரமதும் ஆல்லாததேவர் கட்கும்
தெரிக்கும்படிதனறி நின்றசிவம் வந்து நம்மை
உருக்கும்பணிகொள்ளுமென்பது கேட்டுலகமெல்லாம்
சிரிக்கும் திறம்பாடித் தெள்ளேணுங்கொட்டாமோ,
அவமரபதேவா அவகதியிலழுந்தாமே
பவமரபங்காததென்கை ஆண்டுக்கொண்ட டரஞ்சொதி
நலமரப செஞ்சுடர் நல்குதனும் நாம் ஒழிந்து
சிவமானவாபாடித் தெள்ளேணுங்கொட்டாமோ.

"To Hari and to Brahma and to other gods, not manifested, Sivam came in presence there, melted our hearts, received our service so that all the world may hear and smile. Sing we and beat Tellanam. From sinking in the vain abyss of worthless gods from birth illusions all, the light supernal saved and made me his, soon as the new pure light was given-Now I in bliss was lost. Sing we and beat Tellanam".

The Saint feels that Sivam, the supreme, had entered the heart of his lowly follower and made his abode there. Wondrous

is the change that the new life has wrought in him. It opened his eyes, it exposed the vanity of the life in which he had been living. "They who gain these" he cries "know that naught true exists but thee." In திருச்சதகம், The Sacred Cento, he says:—

யாவர்கோன் என்னையும் வந்தாண்டு கொண்டான்

யாமார்க்கும் குடியல்லோம் யாதமஞ்சோம்

மேவினோமவனடியார் அடியாரோடு

மென்மேனும் சூழலந்தரடி யாடுவோமே.

"The king of all, he came and made me too his own. Henceforth I am no one's vassal, none I fear. We have reached the goal, with servants of his saints in sea of bliss, we ever more shall bathe."

These remind us of Paul's words beginning, "Who shall separate me from the love of Christ" &c. The depth of feelings with which he entered on what was to him in very truth a new life and the modes in which he strives to find utterance for them, says Rev. Goudie, remind us again and again of the early Methodists.

Alas! there came a change for the worse as in many others who have sought and attained to states of rapture. There came the inevitable period of reaction, a fall from this state. When he returned from the over-wrought emotion to normal mental habits with the powers of mind relaxed and enfeebled, temptations from low animal desire, rushed upon and mastered him, and the result is a piteous wail of his soul over a lost and sinful state.

I quote from திருச்சதகம் again:—

அதிலிவா வெனைப் புருந்தாண்டுகொண்டறிவனையருவிமேல்

செறிவொலாம் புலமாக்கிய எந்தையப்பந்தனை அழப்பாசை

பிழிவிவாத இன்னருன்சன் பெற்றிருந்துமாருநிபிணநெஞ்சே

செறிபெலாம்மிகக் கீழ்ப்படுந்தாய் செருத்தொயென்னைக் கெடுமாறே.

"My sire came, entered, made me his own who knew nought in mercy, taught me all, caused me to know the brighter path; he loosed my every bond. Despite the gain of changeless sweetest gifts of grace, thou art changed, dead heart, ruined by thee, to all that is false subjected, thus I ruined lie."

Yet again he bewails his utter helplessness. There is a series of alternating opposite experiences, illumination, freedom and joy alternating with darkness, bondage and sorrow. Though he was thus climbing and falling his eyes were ever lifted to the heavens beyond the hills, and the prayer for help and grace never dies upon his lips. There is no doubt that he attained

the goal for which he strove, namely:—the holy presence of the living God.

In உயிர் உண்ணிப்பத்து (Rapture of Life) he says,

வேண்டேன்புகழ்வேண்டேன்சொல்வம்வேண்டேன் மண்ணும்விண்ணும்
வேண்டேன் பிறப்பிறப்பும் சிவம் வேண்டாந்தமைகாணும்
திண்டேன்சென்று செந்தேன் மண்ணுநிருப்பெருந்துறையுறைதான்
பூண்டேன் புறம்போகேன் இனிப்புறம்போகல் ஒட்டேனே.

"Glory I ask not, nor desire I wealth, not earth or heaven I crave; I seek no birth or death; those that desire not Sivan never more I touch, I have reached the foot of sacred Peruntharay's king, I have crowned myself, I go not forth, I know no going hence again."

I close quoting two more stanzas describing his beatification. In ஆச்சோபதிகம் (The wonder of Salvation) which is the last of the 51 psalms and which was composed after his active life was finished, and when he was waiting for the great release he says:—

முத்திரெறியறியாத மூர்க்கொடு முயல்வேளை
பத்திரெறியறிவித்துப் பழம்வினைகள் பாறும்வண்ணம்
சித்தமயலறுவித்து சிவமாக்கியெனையாண்ட
அத்தன் எனக்கருளியவா ருர்அருள்வாரச்சேரவே.

"To me who toiled and moiled amid fools, who knew not the way of final peace, He taught the way of pious love and that old deeds might cease and flee, purging the foulness of my will, made me pure bliss, took for his own. It was thus the father gave me grace, O rapture, who so blest as I."

Here he addresses his master as father, while in the last stanza he addresses him as mother.

செம்மைகலமறியாத சிதடொடுந் திரிவேளை
மும்மைமலம் அறுவித்து முதலாயமுதலவன்ருன்
சம்மையுமோர் பொருளாக்கி கர்யிவினைகளுற்றுவித்த
அம்மையெனக்கருளியவா ருர்அருள்வாரச்சேரவே.

"Knew not right or good, mean, ignorant I wandered too, The First, the Primal Lord himself threefold pollution caused to cease. Even me he took as something worth, like dog in sumptuous litter borne. It was thus the mother gave me grace, O rapture, who so blest as I."

அம்மை, Mother, here means divine energy. The Siva doctrine is that the first exercise of grace on the part of the Supreme is through his ஈசன் or energy, which is personified as his inseparable bride and is the fountain of wisdom, of desire, and of action. Dr. Pope says there is an analogy here with the Christian [doctrine of the Holy Ghost proceeding forth to be the Author, and Giver of life to the souls of men.

Judged from a Christian standpoint, says a South Indian Missionary, Manikkavasagar was a devout seeker after God to whom God the one living and true God revealed himself, according to the seeker's capacity to receive. That capacity was limited in Manikkavasagar by the imperfect system of belief that lay around him. Manikkavasagar was doubtless accepted of God for the sincerity with which he sought the truth and for the loyalty to what he knew. Of all the true and noble beliefs expressed in his hymns, it is the doctrine of divine grace that brings him nearest to Christian teaching and it is this doctrine more than any other that separates him from the old teachers of the stern unbending law of karma in human life. All that is best in Manikkavasagar is so closely akin to the very heart of Christian truth, that Dr. Pope is justified in suggesting that had a knowledge of Christianity been possible to the sage he would have found his home in the Christian faith. The Sivites of today, like the Jews of old, boast of such a name as Manikkavasagar on the roll of their saints, but their lives are an open defiance of all that his life and words have taught them. What India needs most today is men of the spirit of Manikkavasagar who would know God in the holy intimacy of personal fellowship and will like Manikkavasagar sell all that they have for the truth and gladly bear all reproach and shame so that they may be true men and live true lives.



The Transfer of Mental Discipline

By Rev. J. Bicknell B. A., B. D.

The critics have been dropping bombs on the world's educational cathedral and have succeeded in doing no little damage. Many of the beautiful rose windows that come down from the Middle ages are hopelessly shattered. Two of the most prominent pillars have been seriously weakened; the pillars, Mathematics and Classics.

The problem of the importance of these two subjects is bound up with the question of the transferability of mental discipline. It is quite generally recognized that their direct contribution to the proper education of youth is not commensurate with the amount of time they take up in the school curriculum. Their direct contribution may be great enough to warrant taking as much time as at present in the case of some who are to enter work of a special kind; it is probably great enough to justify teaching all for a part of the time now taken; it is not great enough to warrant taking so much time in the case of so many. Geography, history and natural philosophy could surely put forth much stronger claims to preeminence on the ground of direct contribution. Classics and mathematics must show that they make an indirect contribution greater than the other subjects. This is their claim, that they make a greater contribution in mental discipline. This may be questioned. Does the study of geometry give any better mental discipline than the study of physics? But we are concerned not with that point just now, rather with the problem of whether, granting that they do excel in this, the mental discipline so gained is transferable.

This problem of transferability takes us into the realm of experimental psychology. Psychologists are doing something towards solving it by the laboratory method. The end is not yet. Nothing conclusive has come from this. What has come is a clearer understanding of the importance of the problem and some of the factors to be taken into consideration in the solution.

That mental discipline in one branch should help in another we should naturally expect from our modern conception of the mind. We no longer consider our mental powers "like different tanks or reservoirs with many pipes emptying into them and many draining out" and so connecting pipes. There is

no reason from this general conception to think anything other than that mental discipline gained in the study of one subject would be a discipline for all. If a student is drilled in algebra to do his work accurately we should expect it to contribute to increased accuracy in English. If the English teacher insists on neatness we should expect it to have an effect on the whole work of the pupil. The laboratory experiments show this to be the case though in a much more limited measure than we might hope. Many teachers who have striven to bring their scholars up to some standard of neatness in their work have seen the reaction of the slipshod work permitted by other teachers of the same class, indicating that there is a transfer here though the effect of their own good efforts is not very apparent in the other lines. There seem to be decided limits to the transferability of mental discipline. It is not evident that a boy who has the discipline of Mathematics or Latin is thus made competent to use his brains in all lines,

Two points should be noticed in this consideration: first, that discipline in one subject may reduce efficiency in another. The man who has been trained most carefully and for an extended time in classics may find it less easy, for this reason, to turn to science. His mind has learned to work in a different way. An illustration of such an effect that may appeal to many is the attempt of one who has grown up on base-ball to learn the game of cricket. He is able to do some things better than if he had not played any such game; other things he finds his very knowledge of base-ball hinders his acquiring. It is very difficult for him, for instance, to get the art of blocking the ball, he has been so accustomed to hitting out. How far this analogy holds good we do not attempt to discuss: it is mentioned because psychologists suggest it.

The second point is the possibility of increasing the extent to which transfer takes place by conscious efforts. May it not be possible to make the transfer much greater in amount if there is some conscious effort to do so. May we not lay the pipes between the mental departments or rather may we not help to form the nerve connections. The modern ideas of relating the studies so that what one reads in the English class is a contribution to the history lessons and the history a help in lesson of essay writing; the Latin lesson a help in understanding English and mathematics an assistance in geography should test whether there is this transfer.

Granting that there is this transfer of mental discipline, we must consider whether the loss in the transfer is so great as to make it better to make the transfer unnecessary. We know that in the transmission of electricity there is much loss, even with the best of insulation, in case the distance is very great. Is there such a loss in the transmission of mental discipline? If so how great is the loss? If it is very great, we should judge it better to develop it nearer the place it is to be used. But this involves the possibility of its development at the place needed and also the question of the possibility of developing it as easily as at the other centre. Niagara Falls is such an efficient place for the development of electricity that it is transmitted from that centre to great distances: even with the loss entailed this is regarded as better than to develop at less advantageous centres. Now the question is raised whether mathematics and classics are Niagaras for the development of mental discipline so they can supply the whole field. Are they so much better in this respect that we should depend on them for this? The war has shown many countries that they can produce what has heretofore been produced by Germany. For example, to-day, the United States is producing large quantities of potash and dye stuffs upon which Germany had a monopoly. If Latin was dropped from our curriculum, or from the important place it now occupies and the time given for some other subjects, we might find them equally valuable in this matter of formal discipline.

We might find them much more valuable; for there are other less formal and dry subjects that awaken the interest of the pupil to a far greater extent and thus are better in the training of judgment and attention.

We have been speaking of transferability in the restricted realm of the school curriculum of studies. Far more important is the transferability from the curriculum to the life of the student as he lives it outside school. John Dewey, the great leader in the development of modern ideals of education in America, is constantly reiterating that the school is too isolated from life. He says that with our present system "the child is unable to utilize to any extent in school the experience that he gains in life, and in life the experience that he gains in school. The child has a concrete mind, but the school deals mainly with abstractions, so that the child has to leave his mind at home." We need to get the point

of contact between the school book and the activities or extra school hours and the years to follow schooling. The school is to fit for better living. This conception leads us to the conclusion that we should give prominence in the curriculum to the subjects closely related to life. Madame Montessori has this point of view in her artificial devices used by the small children. Dewey would go one step further and have, not artificial devices, but real things. He would have the children get the approach to science through cooking, and have the pouring over of prescribed daily lessons only a part of the curriculum. Such schools are being started in America and more will follow. These are not vocational schools but schools for general education in which boys use a saw not to fit themselves to be carpenters, but to train their minds to get mental discipline. The remark of a dean of a college that as a boy he spent three months of the year in school and the other nine in getting an education, shows a growing point of view. There is an educational value in the doing of the things one is called to do in the occupations of ordinary life. The school is seeking to introduce such valuable educative activities for children who do not have them in their home life.

Such a conception appears to make it harder for Latin, for instance, to maintain its former prestige. It will be compelled to yield a part of its territory not only to history, geography and the natural sciences, but also to manual training. We in Ceylon are feeling the pressure in this direction through the compulsory introduction in all Secondary Schools of some manual training. If there is need of this in America where boys have so much outside the school in the way of educative activities, how much more is its need in Ceylon where a boy, or most of our school boys, have very little of this.



Why ?

VI

What is honesty? Jestling Pilate asked a similar question about truth, and would not stay for an answer. You know, dear reader, how incapable I am constitutionally of jesting, and however great my shortcomings may be, I am tremendously in earnest when I ask a question. No, as to myself, I will gladly wait for an answer. This question has puzzled me a good long while, and yet as I was afraid that a man who could not think straight on such a fundamental virtue would be considered unfit to be in the society of respectable people, I kept quiet. But now that the depths and shoals of my ignorance have been fully sounded, I do not see that I have any reputation to lose, and so I ask the question boldly.

What is honesty? I will have none of your dictionary definitions; they will not help me. What I want is a definition that will cover our practical everyday understanding of the term. I will now tell you why I find the term 'honesty' such a hard nut to crack. I have a shrewd suspicion that with many, many good people, honesty consists in acting or speaking, rightly or wrongly, *without being caught*. With them the dishonesty comes in when a person is caught. So long as one can evade discovery, there is nothing the matter with one. I have read somewhere that in a certain country in ancient times stealing was not considered to be wrong in itself. The wrongness came in when the culprit was caught red-handed. The stealing was regarded as a clever act and was applauded, but the foolishness of allowing oneself to be caught—that was an unpardonable crime. A man might be a thief, but what a disgrace that he should be a fool! So after the lapse of centuries the evolution of moral ideas has not made much headway with many good people! You think I am exaggerating. Here is an officer who systematically plunders public money. You can find out his income from the Civil List, and by a simple process of arithmetic compute the amount he has earned since his appointment. Compare this amount with his bank account and the value of the property he has acquired either in his or his wife's name, and, I can assure you, the results would be simply startling. Do you require any better proof of the man's dishonesty? And still, he passes for an honest man—in many cases more honest than the minister or teacher who has

neither the opportunity nor the temptation to be dishonest. But let this man be caught—ah! that is altogether a different matter. He is a disgrace to the community to which he belongs, and so on and so forth. What wonder, then, that my poor brain is puzzled.

Again, honesty and dishonesty seem to depend upon the persons concerned. Here is a poor devil who has stolen the coconuts of his neighbour to feed his starving children. This fellow is a rascally thief and must be sent to jail. But the man in high place, who is in receipt of a fat salary, but who cannot be approached without a bribe, *he* is a gentleman and you must select him to preside over your public functions and give him a hearty vote of thanks for condescending to do so. Here, again, is a servant who cheats his master in trivial domestic transactions; he must be whipped for his dishonesty. But his master's life-work is to teach people how to prevaricate and lie. The two cases are altogether in different planes, and therefore cannot be judged by the same standards! Some good people say that, as you ascend in the spiritual plane, you can with impunity commit immoral acts. Has this doctrine anything to do with there being one standard for the low and another for the high?

There is a certain variety of honesty called business honesty which complicates matters for my poor brain still more. They say, "All is fair in war and love", and I see that this saying is brought up-to-date by including business, and it looks as though all is fair in business too! There is nothing wrong, for instance, in a business man buying for a song a house property which is mortgaged to him by a widow with seven children, and then selling it at an enormous fancy price to some one to whom it is indispensable. That is business, don't you see? With many of these business people the war covers a multitude of sins, and they feel they are at liberty to charge any price for their articles. Pure business! An auctioneer employs some people as his confederates in raising the price of a thing he sells, in order to inveigle some poor fool to buy it at an abnormally high price. There is nothing wrong about it! The lying advertisements in respectable newspapers is another instance of business honesty. Merchant princes have them written, and high-souled editors print them. Excuse me, I am not condemning anyone; I am only asking questions.

One more puzzle, and I have done. The white man has a secret feeling that he is superior to his brown brother in

honesty. That depends. If by honesty is meant accuracy, promptitude, and business ways, I am not disposed to dispute the statement; I leave the task of disputing to others. No wonder that to the white man accustomed to shop-keeping for centuries, these characteristics are the very breath of his life. But the oriental, to whom time is not money, who loves to revel in hyperboles and poetical exaggerations, and who has not been caught up in the hurry and worry of Western civilization, has not had opportunity to cultivate these admirable traits. If he promised to go to you on Monday and turned up only on Wednesday, don't you put it down to his lack of honesty. He does not realise how precious time is to you, not having been accustomed to catching trains and trams; he chews his betel and arecanut leisurely and takes a nap and sees no reasons in the world why he should hurry up. Having not lived in an atmosphere of scientific thinking and acting, he may pay little attention to facts, if the ends of truth are served all right. By saying all this, I do not mean to exonerate him altogether; my point is simply that he should not be charged with downright dishonesty. Nor do I say that there is no lying and cheating on this side of the globe. There is plenty of it, I admit; but when comparisons are instituted, I am driven to say with Antony, "So are they all, all honourable men."

I wish to go one step further. If proverbial sayings are any index to the ideals of races, I make bold to say that the oriental ideal seems higher. Whereas the English copy-book maxim says, 'Honesty is the best policy', the Tamil maxim, for instance, says, *செல்லம் நன்செறி*, 'Honesty is the best morality.' Whereas the one recommends honesty as the best way of getting along in the world, the other insists upon its being an integral part of character.

Honesty is derived from the old Roman word, *honestus*, honourable. The Englishman somehow or other has come to think of truthfulness as the very soul of honour, and has narrowed down the meaning of the word honesty, to speaking and acting the truth. I like the larger significance of the word. I dislike the policy honesty that is prompted by the fear of being caught; the business honesty which can show no mercy and like Shylock insists upon the pound of flesh, because 'business is business'; the corporation honesty which acts without a soul; and the national honesty, which like that of the Germans, treats treatises as 'scraps of paper.' To

me honesty must be purity and uprightness in motive, action and speech ; in short, it must be synonymous with honourableness.

I will not apologise for starting to ask questions and ending by delivering a homily, for the simple reason that I am only an

Ignoramus.



College Notes

—Mr. S. J. V. Selvanayagam who has been a Science Master in the College for over a year has severed his connection and gone to Colombo to prosecute his studies for the B. Sc. His work as a teacher was very satisfactory and his influence in the Boarding has been most helpful. We hope that he will choose teaching as his life work and come back to us after obtaining his degree.

—Mr. A. Kathiravalu and Mr. C. Thuraiatnam Chelliah have passed the London Matriculation Examination.

—An Inter-Arts class has been started.

—The roof of the Science Building is nearing completion and the building will be ready for occupation in a short time. Owing to the difficulty of procuring iron girders, the work of the upper floor will remain unfinished for sometime.

Rev. G. G. Brown, our former Principal, has been doing excellent religious work among our students. He preached an effective sermon to the boys on Sunday June 23rd. Mrs. Brown read a paper at one of the Round Table meetings on the Columbia University, especially pointing out how the University educates those who are not students by means of extension lectures. Mrs. Brown's practical suggestion, that members of the Round Table should do a similar work in the American Mission, was accepted and a committee was appointed to organise lectures to be delivered in Tamil at various centers.

Alumni Notes

Mr. K. T. Kanagarayar, Acting District Traffic Superintendent of Railways, has been promoted District Traffic Superintendent.

Mr. A. S. Vanigasooriya has passed the Intermediate Examination in Arts of the London University.

Mr. V. Varitamby of the Anaicoddai Church has been transferred to North Erlalai field.

Rev. F. Anketell of the Uduppiddy Church has been transferred to Varany.

Mr. T. C. Rajaratnam, Proctor S. C. was married to Miss Gnanamany Muttiah at the Jampettah Church, Colombo, on the 18th March 1918.

The Marriage took place on the 15th March 1918 between Mr. Hudson Tambirajah Proctor s. c. and Miss Ariammah Danforth.

Mr. R. C. Carpenter came out successful in the last Proctor's Examination.

Dr. George Mather has been appointed Registrar of Births and Deaths of Locality No. II, Jaffna Town.

Dr. J. M. Somasundram has been transferred from Kandy to Tissamaharama.

Mr. A. S. Parairavar who passed the Clerical Examination, has been appointed a Clerk in the Inspector General's Office, Colombo.

Mr. J. I. Christmas Pillai B. A., Tashildar of Vellore, who has been honored by the Indian Government with the title of Rao Sahib, has been appointed manager of Arni Estate, a Zemindari.

Mr. K. S. Kanagayar Proctor s c. was married on the 20th May to Miss Thavanayaki Tambiah at Tellippalai.

Mr. P. Vaitilingam B. A. has been appointed Commissioner of Requests and Police Magistrate Point Pedro and Chavagachcheri.

Rev. S. R. Hitchcock. Pastor, Navaly Church has been transferred to the Church at Uduppiddy.

Mr. G. D. Thomas of Moolai Church succeeds Mr. Hitchcock at Navaly.

An Appeal

Jaffna College, Vaddukoddai,
July 30, 1918.

Dear Friend:—

The Annual Meeting of the Jaffna College Alumni Association held on the 20th ult. was well attended and the special feature of it was the unveiling of the portrait of the late Mr. Samuel Hensman who served the College for over twenty eight years. Toward the Hitchcock Prize Fund was voted a sum of Rs. 33 which brings up the total to Rs. 150. It is proposed to complete the Fund by adding another Rs. 100.

The next Annual Meeting will (D.V.) be held on June 3, 1919.. We would gladly receive suggestions from you with regard to the programme.

It was unanimously decided at the Annual Meeting that the membership fee should be raised to Rs. 1.50 per annum so as to cover the cost of the Annual Dinner, and a special committee, with Mr. S. M. Thevathasan as Chairman, was appointed to arrange the dinner.

As we find our list of Alumni incomplete and the addresses uncertain, we would ask you to help us to complete the list by kindly filling the attached slip and returning it to us as early as possible. Do you know of any one who has been overlooked and would like to be recognized as an Alumnus of the College?

We should be glad to see our Miscellany enlarged and grow in usefulness. We cordially invite your suggestions as to the lines of development, and your contributions to its pages.

Don't you think it would be a good idea to start our Alumni Fund so as to insure our interest in the Alma Mater and further the cause of education in this land. If you would start making an annual contribution, we might realize a large amount in a few years. In 1922 we ought to celebrate our Jubilee. Shall we not round out these fifty years with a big sum for the development of the institution.

With best wishes for your success,

We remain,

Cordially yours,

Pres.— John Bicknell

Sec.— Chelliah Cooke

Treas.— S. M. Thevathasan

} Special
Committee
on Membership.

Name

Address

Business

Years in Jaffna College

