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# OUR DUTY

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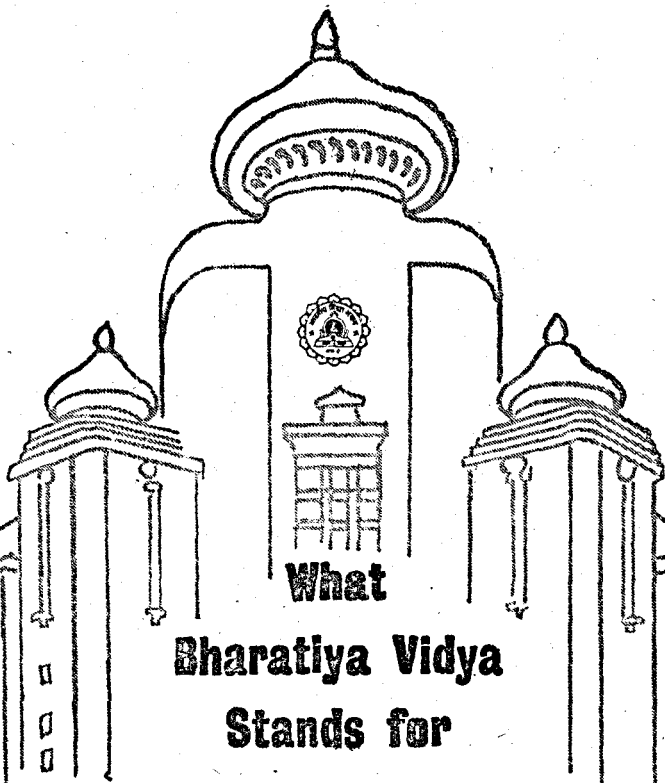
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VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY



## What Bharatiya Vidya Stands for

Bharatiya Shiksha must ensure that no promising young Indian of character having faith in Bharat and her culture Bharatiya Vidya should be left without modern educational equipment by reason merely of want of funds.

2. Bharatiya Shiksha must be formative more than informative, and cannot have for its end mere acquisition of knowledge. Its legitimate sphere is not only to develop natural talents but so to shape them as to enable them to absorb and express the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya.

3. Bharatiya Shiksha must take into account not only the full growth of a student's personality but the totality of his relations and lead him to the highest self-fulfilment of which he is capable.

4. Bharatiya Shiksha must involve at some stage or other an intensive study of Sanskrit or Sanskritic languages and their literature, without excluding, if so desired, the study of other languages and literature, ancient and modern.

5. The re-integration of Bharatiya Vidya, which is the primary object of Bharatiya Shiksha, can only be attained through a study of forces, movements, motives, ideoforms, forms and art of creative life-energy through which it has expressed itself in different ages as a single continuous process.

6. Bharatiya Shiksha must stimulate the student's power of expression, both written and oral, at every stage in accordance with the highest ideals attained by the great literary masters in the intellectual and moral spheres.

7. The technique of Bharatiya Shiksha must involve—

(a) the adoption by the teacher of the *Guru* attitude which consists in taking a personal interest in the student; inspiring and encouraging him to achieve distinction in his studies; entering into his life with a view to form ideals and remove psychological obstacles; and creating in him a spirit of consecration; and

(b) the adoption by the student of the *Shishya* attitude by the development of—

(i) respect for the teacher,

(ii) a spirit of inquiry,

(iii) a spirit of service towards the teacher, the institution, Bharat and Bharatiya Vidya.

8. The ultimate aim of Bharatiya Shiksha is to teach the younger generation to appreciate and live up to the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya which flowing from the supreme art of creative life-energy as represented by Shri Ramachandra, Shri Krishna, Vyasa, Buddha and Mahavira have expressed themselves in modern times in the life of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and Swami Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

9. Bharatiya Shiksha while equipping the student with every kind of scientific and technical training must teach the student, not to sacrifice an ancient form or attitude to an unreasoning passion for change; not to retain a form or attitude which in the light of modern times can be replaced by another form or attitude which is a truer and more effective expression of the spirit of Bharatiya Vidya; and to capture the spirit afresh for each generation to present it to the world





आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

*Let noble thoughts come to us from every side*

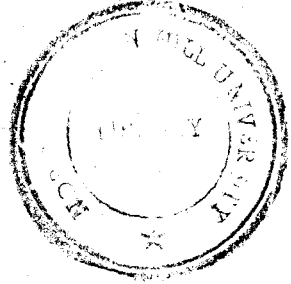
—Rigveda, I. 89. i

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SWAMI CHANDRASEKHARA BHARATI

*Compiled by*

R. KRISHNASWAMY AIYAR



1964

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN

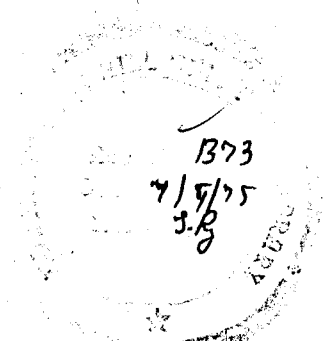
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*First Edition, February 1964*

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Price. Re. 1.00; Sh. 1/9; \$ 0.50



PRINTED IN INDIA

By P. H. Raman at Associated Advertisers & Printers, 505, Tardeo,  
Arthur Road, Bombay 34, and Published by S. Ramakrishnan,  
Executive Secretary, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 7,

## GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

The Bhavan's Book University volumes had rare success. About a million and a quarter volumes have been sold in about eleven years. However, there is an insistent demand for the stray volumes which the Bhavan has issued from time to time at a lower price. In order to meet this demand, it has been decided to issue the new One-Rupee Book University Series side by side with the Book University Series.

I hope this new One-Rupee Series will have the same good fortune which the other Series had, of being useful to those who are interested in the fundamental values of Indian Culture, and of reaching out to a wider audience.

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,  
Chowpatty Road, Bombay-7.  
*Vijaya Dashami*  
September 28, 1963

K. M. MUNSHI



## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This compilation has been made mainly from the following books and we are grateful to the original publishers for allowing us to use extracts therefrom:

1. *The Saint of Sringeri* (Sri Ramakrishna Press, Madura-1).
2. *Dialogues with the Guru* (Chetana Ltd., Bombay).
3. *The Call of the Jagadguru* (M/s. Ganesh & Co., Madras).
4. *Sparks from a Divine Anvil* (M/s. Ganesh & Co., Madras).
5. *Upadesa Ratnamala* in Tamil (Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam).



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## CHAPTER I

### PRACTICAL RELIGION

Our system of philosophy and religion is bound to attract all thinking minds. Hinduism is the name now given to it; really it has been known always as Sanatana Dharma, the Eternal Law. It does not date from any particular point of time or owe its origin to any particular person. It is eternal and universal. It has no territorial limitation. All beings born and to be born belong to it. "Fire burns" is an eternally true statement. It does not depend for its validity upon the greatness of any person who proclaims it nor upon our acceptance of its validity. It is intrinsically true. Such is our Dharma.

Take for example Christianity. If belief in the personality of Christ is a necessary condition of salvation, what is to become of those who happened to be born when he was yet unborn or happened not even to hear of him? It would be very unfair if God suddenly woke up on a particular day and prescribed for all mankind a new but necessary condition of salvation. He could not have forgotten that the people who were born in the infinite past before Jesus or in climes where his name was not known had also souls to save. The only logical hypothesis which any reasonable person can accept is that, when God created the first man, assuming that there was such a time, He simultaneously promulgated also the means of salvation for him, for even he, the first man, was certainly in need of salva-

## CONQUEST OF DESIRE

We feel happy when we get a thing we were longing for or when we get rid of a thing we were loathing. At the time of the longing or the loathing, our mind is in a state of unrest. When this state of unrest is put an end to in either of the ways mentioned above, there is a feeling of rest, peace and happiness. But unfortunately the number of things in the world which can cause unrest either by being attractive or by being repulsive is infinite. It is impossible therefore to allay our unrest by securing all the things which the mind asks for or avoiding all those which painfully disturb it. Further, it is not within our competence to secure or avoid things at our will. If we allow our happiness to depend upon them, we can never be really happy.

To call a man healthy, it is quite unnecessary to postulate of him that he had some disease before and that he is now cured of it. Freedom from sickness is a condition of health and certainly not an antecedent sickness and a recovery from it. Similarly, happiness can only mean freedom from unhappiness. And it cannot be a necessary condition of happiness that it should have been preceded by a state of unhappiness. The health which is not preceded by a sickness is more natural, true and permanent than the one obtained on the cessation of a sickness. Similarly, the happiness which is not preceded by a mental disturbance is sure to be more

## MAN'S COMPLEX NATURE

From the trends of modern society, it is not unreasonable to foresee that a man born a hundred years hence in the very place we are now will have far less opportunities for religious practices or for spiritual enlightenment. If we really believe that even the few facilities which we are now having will be wanting a hundred years hence, is it not our imperative duty to make the best use of the opportunities available now and try to escape being born again? In any case, it is necessary to equip ourselves even now to cope with the lesser facilities of a future life. The money, the lands, the houses and even the nearest kith and kin will have to be left behind when we die and the only things which accompany the departing souls are the Dharma and adharma which we have engaged ourselves in now. We must therefore accumulate as much of Dharma as we can and at the same time minimise adharma.

There is no use in complaining that the times and circumstances are bad. When the sun sets and darkness envelops the land, we do not lie down immediately to sleep but we light a lamp and get on with our normal activities as far as we can get on with that lamp. Sometimes our urgency makes us walk miles and miles during the darkest of nights guided by the flickering light of a torch. We do not wait for the sun to rise. If similarly we earnestly and keenly feel the urgency for escaping

## CHAPTER IV

### MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

That alone is entitled to the name of knowledge which makes clear to us the nature of the Self and gets us the everlasting bliss of freedom. The learning which sharpens our intellect without helping us to attain such freedom is no better than proficiency in some art. It can help us only to give us intelligence enough to get on in the world and perhaps escape a few of its troubles. The kind of education imparted in schools and colleges in these days falls only in this category. Even if we resort to such education for getting some facility in worldly intercourse, we must ever bear in mind that to attain the highest good it is necessary to seek and obtain the knowledge that will lead to permanent happiness. Such knowledge is quite unlike other kinds of learning and the method of obtaining it also differs vastly from others. Mere sharpening of the intellect will not do. It must be made pure and clear and capable of receiving and assimilating the highest knowledge which will dispel all ignorance and secure to the Self freedom from all bondage. To ensure such purity, it is first necessary to get rid of the impurities which cloud our intellect. This can be done only by carrying out steadfastly, scrupulously and with faith, the duties prescribed for each one of us by the Sastras with due regard to our competence and station in life. After thus clearing all the impedi-

## FATE AND FREE WILL

The so-called problem of the conflict between fate and free will is really no problem at all if we bear in mind that they are not different things. Fate is nothing extraneous to us but is the sum-total of the results of our past actions. God is but the dispenser of the fruits of past actions and does not impose the fate upon us. Fate is thus only freewill exercised in the past and we confine the term "freewill" to what is being exercised now. Really both are freewills though they differ in point of time. There is of course this difference that Fate being past freewill is not now perceptible. It is rightly called Adrishta "Unseen", though it may be perceptible to a few highly advanced souls. Our ignorance of it is really an advantage. If we happened to know all the limitless varieties of results which we have accumulated by our actions in this life and in the countless lives that have preceded it, we will be simply staggered at the magnitude and number of such results and will give up in despair any attempt to overcome or mitigate them. Similarly, the divine spark in us is ever bubbling with hope and makes it possible for us to confidently exercise our freewill. Forgetfulness of the past and hope for the future are really two boons which the merciful God has been pleased to bestow on us.

It is not correct to think that fate places any obstacle in the way of freewill. On the other hand,

## THE SUPREME FRIEND

If a man is suffering from acute poverty, is it of the slightest use to him to know that another man who is quite unconnected with him is rolling in wealth? On the other hand, such knowledge may have the effect of making him feel more keenly his own poverty and intensify his grief. If a man who is unable to digest even a morsel of food hears about another who can eat well, his grief will only get accentuated. If a miserable man meets another who is equally miserable, the poignancy of his own misery will be reduced; if the other happens to be more miserable than himself, he will even feel that he is relatively happy. In any case, it is not possible for a man in misery to find any consolation at the sight of a happy man. When therefore we, the individual souls, are endowed with little knowledge, little capacity, limited and unhappy, what benefit can we possibly derive from knowing that there is an Entity called God who is omniscient and omnipotent, infinite and blissful? Such knowledge will only emphasise our littleness and helplessness. It would seem therefore reasonable to conclude that it is far wiser to remain in complete ignorance of such a God.

Even if a man is very poor and is suffering a great deal, he feels glad to know that his son, a near relation or a friend of his is occupying a high position in life, is rich or is famous. It will gladden him more to know that that relation or friend is

## CHAPTER VII

### THE INNER SELF

Knowledge can be defined generally as that which dispels ignorance. The number of things in the world of which we are ignorant is limitless. We do not ordinarily lose anything by being ignorant of most of them nor do we really gain anything by having such ignorance dispelled. We are really concerned only with that kind of ignorance which is harmful to us and lands us in pain and sorrow and by the removal of which alone we will become free and happy. Such ignorance is ignorance concerning our own self. Some thinkers do not accept ignorance as the cause of bondage, but say that such cause is the mistaken identification of the self with the body etc. which are non-self. If we know the true nature of a thing, we cannot possibly mistake another thing for that thing. The cause of the mistake being the ignorance, it stands to reason that ignorance is really the prime cause of all our troubles.

What then is the Self? The word "Self" is no doubt a very simple and familiar one, but many a doubt arises when we seek to arrive at its exact significance. It cannot be gainsaid that everybody, from the lowest to the highest of living beings, has unbounded love for himself. If he loves anything other than himself, it is an object of love only so long as it is agreeable to him; it ceases to be so when it is not. The love for one's self, however, is ever present and never ceases to be. All thinkers

## CHAPTER VIII

### SINCERE BELIEF

The doctrine of the oneness of the Absolute Reality which is the substratum for the entire universe of names and forms is enunciated by our religion from a plane which ordinary people cannot aspire to for very many births to come. As at present situated, most of us are far, far below that stage and quite incompetent even to touch it. Frankly speaking, it may take many more births for some of us, who are so engrossed in the world that they have no time to think of the soul at all, to attain even the stage of the materialist who thinks about it but comes to the conclusion that the soul is no other than our physical body itself and that God as the intelligent cause and ruler of the universe is an unnecessary hypothesis. Consider for a moment the attitude of the modern man, however educated he may be and however much he may disclaim to be an atheist. Does his daily conduct bear out that he believes in a soul which takes another birth or goes to another region of experience on leaving this body or that he believes in the existence of God? Why does the craze for pleasure increase day by day as if all enjoyment must be had now or never? How is the belief in a future state of experience consistent with the growing neglect of Dharma? What justification is there for the increase in courts and registration offices if people believe in God, the Eternal Witness of all their

## CHAPTER IX

### INHERENT BLISS

If the world that we see around us ever had a beginning, it must have had a single undifferentiated cause from which it took birth. Even those who believed that the cause was a nebulous mass of atoms now realise that the atom itself is only a gross form of the infinite energy inherent in it. As energy can be transmuted, there is no reason to suppose that the primal energy in one atom is of a different sort from that in another. It must therefore be conceived of as common to all atoms, homogeneous and infinite. This infinite Energy or Force may be taken to be the prime causal *material* of the universe. But the universe is not mere matter. You and I exist. Apart from our physical bodies which are, of course, matter, there is in each one of us a spark of intelligent consciousness which cannot come under the category of matter. That also has to be explained if a complete explanation of the universe is attempted. Adapting the same reasoning as before, we must postulate the existence of a primary causal Intelligence responsible for the world of infinite souls, as there is no reason to assume that a soul bereft of the extraneous things which endow it with individuality is different in essence from another soul. When we thus arrive at the conclusion that there is a primary causal Energy responsible for the world of matter and that there is a primary causal Intelligence for the world of souls, our hypothesis will

## CHAPTER X

### STRIVE HERE AND NOW

Man claims to be, and is certainly, the noblest creation of God. When God created other creatures, He did not feel satisfied but when He created man, He said to Himself "Well done." So says the Upanishad. Wherein lies this unique greatness of man? Taking his body of flesh, blood and bone, there is nothing at all there to boast of. His skin is unfit even for making shoes. The skins of sheep furnish useful leather and the skins of the deer and even the tiger are considered pure enough to sit upon for doing Japa. The hair on the body of the sheep is useful for making shawls and other woollen clothes. The human hair is very impure and, if one touches it, he has to wash his hands. The nails of man are equally impure, but the claws of the cruel tiger are made into ornaments even for the deities in the temples. The teeth of man are most impure while the tusk of the elephant is valued very high. Even the urine of cows has medicinal properties and their dung is a great purifier. What is there in the body of man of which he can be really proud? Is his physical beauty a matter of pride? We have seen peacocks, parrots, even lions and tigers, considered as objects of beauty, but no man or woman is kept anywhere as a proper object of sight-seeing. Can he boast of his strength? Most animals are stronger than he is. If his eyes see far, the vulture sees farther. If his ears are sharp, the serpent's ears are

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His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati was the Sankaracharya who adorned the Sri Sarada Pitha of Sringeri in the Mysore State. It was the first seat of Advaita Philosophy established by Sri Sankara. His Holiness was a saintly personality of great spiritual eminence and profound scholarship in the *Sastras*. A *Brahmajnani* of rare excellence, he was frequently lost in Advaitic experience in periods of *Samadhi* when the luminous glow in his countenance proclaimed his *Brahmanubhava*.

His Holiness's discourses on Hindu Religion and Dharma, which were simple in language and lucid in exposition, were punctuated with homely illustrations, and had the power to convince the doubting, and convert the sceptic. Coming, as he did, in the succession of authentic tradition, his is the classical view of Hindu Dharma in its pristine purity. Some of His Holiness's teachings, faithfully gathered in this book by one of his devoted disciples, have a special value in the context of ignorance, misunderstanding and bewilderment that assail us at the present time, both as individuals and as a society.

His Holiness, reverently adored as a *Jivanmukta*, occupied the Sringeri Pitha for 43 years from 1912. Like a true yogi that he was, he abandoned his body at the end of his life in 1954 in the sacred waters of the Tungabhadra.