

## On the Bhagavad-Gita

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In studying the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* it must not be treated as if isolated from the rest of the *Mahâbhârata* as it at present exists. It was inserted by Vyâsa in the right place with special reference to some of the incidents in that book. One must first realize the real position of Arjuna and Krshna in order to appreciate, the teaching of the latter. Among other appellations, Arjuna has one very strange name - he is called at different times by ten or eleven names, most of which are explained by himself in Virâtaparva. One name is omitted from the list, viz., Nara. This word simply means 'man'. But why a particular man should be called by this as a proper name may at first sight appear strange. Nevertheless herein lies a clue which enables us to understand, not only the position of the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* in the text, and its connection with Arjuna and Krshna, but the entire current running through the whole of the *Mahâbhârata*, implying Vyâsa's real views on the origin, trials and destiny of man. Vyâsa looked upon Arjuna as man, or rather the real monad in man; and upon Krshna as the Logos, or the Spirit that comes to save man. To some it appears strange that this highly philosophical teaching should have been inserted in a place apparently utterly unfitted for it. The discourse is alleged to have taken place between Arjuna and Krshna just before the battle began to rage. But when once you begin to appreciate the *Mahâbhârata*, you will see this was the fittest place for the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*.

Historically the great battle was a struggle between two families. Philosophically it is the great battle in which the human Spirit has to fight against the lower passions in the physical body. Many of our readers have probably heard about the so-called 'Dweller on the Threshold,' so vividly described in Lytton's novel, *Zanoni*. According to this author's description, the Dweller on the Threshold seems to be some elemental, or other monster of mysterious form, appearing before the neophyte just as he is about to enter the mysterious land, and attempting to shake his resolution with menaces of unknown dangers if he is not fully prepared.

There is no such monster in reality. The description must be taken in a figurative sense. But nevertheless there is a Dweller on the Threshold, whose influence on the mental plane is far more trying than any physical terror can be. The real Dweller on the Threshold is formed of the despair and despondency of the neophyte, who is called upon to give up all his old affections for kindred, parents and children, as well as his aspirations for objects of worldly ambition, which have perhaps been his associates for many incarnations. When called upon to give up these things, the neophyte feels a kind of blank, before he realizes his higher possibilities. After having given up all his associations, his life itself seems to vanish into thin air. He seems to have lost all hope, and to have no object to live and work for. He sees no signs of his own future progress. All before him seems darkness; and a sort of pressure comes upon the soul, under which it begins to droop, and in most cases he begins to fall back and gives up further progress. But in the case of a man who really struggles, he will battle against that despair, and be able to proceed on the Path. I may here refer you to a few passages in Mill's autobiography. Of course the author knew nothing of Occultism; but there was one stage in his mental life, which seems to have come on at a particular point of his career and to have closely resembled what I have been describing. Mill was a great analytical philosopher. He made an exhaustive analysis of all mental processes,— mind, emotions, and

will.

I now saw, or thought I saw, what I had always before received with incredulity - that the habit of analysis has a tendency to wear away the feelings, as indeed it has when no other mental habit is cultivated. \* \* \* Thus neither selfish nor unselfish pleasures were pleasures to me.

At last he came to have analyzed the whole man into nothing. At this point a kind of melancholy came over him, which had something of terror in it. In this state of mind he continued for some years, until he read a copy of Wordsworth's poems full of sympathy for natural objects and human life. "From them," he says, "I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life should have been removed." This feebly indicates what the chela must experience when he has determined to renounce all old associates, and is called to live for a bright future on a higher plane. This transition stage was more or less the position of Arjuna before the discourse in question. He was about to engage in a war of extermination against foes led by some of his nearest relations, and he not unnaturally shrank from the thought of killing kindred and friends. We are each of us called upon to kill out all our passions and desires, not that they are all necessarily evil in themselves, but that their influence must be annihilated before we can establish ourselves on the higher planes. The position of Arjuna is intended to typify that of a chela, who is called upon to face the Dweller on the Threshold. As the guru prepares his chela for the trials of Initiation by philosophical teaching, so at this critical point Kṛṣṇa proceeds to instruct Arjuna.

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* may be looked upon as a discourse addressed by a guru to a chela who has fully determined upon the renunciation of all worldly desires and aspirations but yet feels a certain despondency, caused by the apparent blankness of his existence. The book contains eighteen chapters all intimately connected. Each chapter describes a particular phase or aspect of human life. The student should bear this in mind in reading the book, and endeavour to work out the correspondences. He will find what appear to be unnecessary repetitions. These were a necessity of the method adopted by Vyāsa, his intention being to represent nature in different ways, as seen from the standpoints of the various philosophical schools which flourished in India.

As regards the moral teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, it is often asserted by those who do not appreciate the benefits of occult study, that, if everybody pursued this course, the world would come to a standstill; and, therefore, that this teaching can only be useful to the few, and not to ordinary people. This is not so. It is of course true that the majority of men are not in the position to give up their duties as citizens and members of families. But Kṛṣṇa distinctly states that these duties, if not reconcilable with ascetic life in a forest, can certainly be reconciled with that kind of mental abnegation which is far more powerful in the production of effects on the higher planes than any physical separation from the world. For though the ascetic's body may be in the jungle, his thoughts may be in the world. Kṛṣṇa therefore teaches that the real importance lies not in physical but in mental isolation. Every man who has duties to discharge must devote his mind to them. But, says the teacher, it is one thing to perform an action as a matter of duty, and another thing to perform the same from inclination, interest, or desire. It is thus plain that it is in the power of a man to make definite progress in the development of his higher faculties, whilst there is nothing noticeable in his mode of life to distinguish him from his fellows. No religion teaches that men should be the slaves of interest and desire. Few inculcate the necessity of seclusion and asceticism. The great objection that has been brought against Hindūism and Buddhism is that by recommending such a

mode of life to students of Occultism they tend to render void the lives of men engaged in ordinary avocations. This objection however rests upon a misapprehension. For those religions teach that it is not the nature of the act, but the mental attitude of its performer, that is of importance. This is the moral teaching that runs through the whole of the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*. The reader should note carefully the various arguments by which Krshna establishes his proposition. He will find an account of the origin and destiny of the human monad, and of the manner in which it attains salvation through the aid and enlightenment derived from its Logos. Some have taken Krshna's exhortation to Arjuna to worship him alone as supporting the doctrine of a personal God. But this is an erroneous conclusion. For, though speaking of himself as Parabrahm, Krshna is still the Logos. He describes himself as Âtma, but no doubt is *one* with Parabrahm, as there is no essential difference between Âtma and Parabrahm. Certainly the Logos can speak of itself as Parabrahm. So all sons of God, including Christ, have spoken of themselves as one with the Father. His saying that He exists in almost every entity in the Cosmos expresses strictly an attribute of Parabrahm. But a Logos, being a manifestation of Parabrahm, can use these words and assume these attributes. Thus Krshna only calls upon Arjuna to worship his own highest Spirit, through which alone he can hope to attain salvation. Krshna is teaching Arjuna what the Logos in the course of Initiation will teach the human monad, pointing out that through himself alone is salvation to be obtained. This implies no idea of a personal God.

Again, notice the view of Krshna respecting the Sâmkhya philosophy. Some strange ideas are afloat about this system. It is supposed that the Sûtras we possess represent the original aphorisms of Kapila. But this has been denied by many great teachers, including Shankarâchârya, who says that they do not represent his real views, but those of some other Kapila, or the writer of the book. The real Sâmkhya philosophy is identical with the Pythagorean system of numerals, and the philosophy embodied in the Chaldæan system of numbers. The philosopher's object was to represent all the mysterious powers of nature by a few simple formulæ, which he expressed in numerals. The original book is not to be found, though it is possible that it still exists. The system now put forward under this name contains little beyond an account of the evolution of the elements and a few combinations of the same which enter into the formation of the various tatwams. Krshna reconciles the Sâmkhya philosophy, Râja Yoga, and even Hatha Yoga, by first pointing out that the philosophy, if properly understood, leads to the same merging of the human monad in the Logos. The doctrine of karma, which embraces a wider field than that allowed it by orthodox pandits, who have limited its signification solely to religious observances, is the same in all philosophies, and is made by Krshna to include almost every good and bad act or even thought. The student must first go through the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, and next try to differentiate the teachings in the eighteen different parts under different categories. He should observe how these different aspects branch out from one common centre, and how the teachings in these chapters are intended to do away with the objections of different philosophers, to the occult theory and the path of salvation here pointed out. If this is done, the book will show the real attitude of Occultists in considering the nature of the Logos and the human monad. In this way almost all that is held sacred in different systems is combined. By such teaching Krshna succeeds in dispelling Arjuna's despondency and in giving him a higher idea of the nature of the force acting through him, though for the time being it is manifesting itself as a distinct individual. He overcomes Arjuna's disinclination to fight, by analyzing the idea of self, and showing that the man is in error, who thinks that *he* is doing this, that or the other. When it is found that what he calls 'I' is a sort of fiction, created by his own ignorance, a great part of the difficulty has ceased to exist. He further proceeds to demonstrate the existence of a higher individuality, of which Arjuna had no previous knowledge. Then he points out that this individuality is connected with the Logos. He furthermore expounds the nature of the Logos and shows that it is Parabrahm. This is the substance of the first eleven or twelve chapters. In those that follow, Krshna gives Arjuna further teaching in order to make him firm of purpose; and explains to him how, through the inherent qualities of Prakrti and Pûrusha, all the

entities have been brought into existence.

It is to be observed that the number eighteen is constantly recurring in the *Mahâbhârata*, seeing that it contains eighteen Parvâs, the contending armies were divided into eighteen army corps, the battle raged eighteen days, and the book is called by a name which means eighteen. This number is mysteriously connected with Arjuna. I have been describing him as man, but even Parabrahm manifests itself as a Logos in more ways than one. Krshna may be the Logos, but only one particular form of it. The number eighteen is to represent this particular form. Krshna is the Logos that overshadows the human Ego and his gift of his sister in marriage to Arjuna typifies the union between the light of the Logos and the human monad. It is worthy of note that Arjuna did not want Krshna to fight for him, but only to act as his charioteer and to be his friend and counsellor. From this it will be perceived that the human soul must fight its own battle, assisted, when once the human being begins to tread the true Path, by his own Logos.

## ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

by **Babu Saheb Nobin K. Bannerji**

THE portion of the great epic poem, the *Mahâbhârata*, known as the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* is considered by all as the noblest record left in India by the venerable sage, the holy Vyâsa, also called Shri Veda Vyâsa, or Bâdarâyana. It is held in the highest esteem by both the Hindûs and the Buddhists, and the instinctive veneration paid to it is great, though portions of it are directly opposed to the Vedâs. So great, indeed, is the respect that while almost every other book of the Hindu scriptures has been disfigured more or less by the interpolations made by various erudite ignoramuses - Pandits and Brâhmanas - and even the rest of the *Mahâbhârata*, in which it is incorporated, is so mutilated by later additions that, even in the number of verses and its division into chapters, no two manuscripts can be had in India which would tally with each other - no one has, unto this day, added to or taken away from the main text of the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* one single sentence, a word, a letter, or even a comma.

The word 'Hinduism' has now become so pregnant with various meanings that, to a foreigner, it is almost an incomprehensible term. We are all Hindus, yet our sects are many and at utter variance with each other. There are the Shaivas, the Souras, and the Gânâpattiyas - all, not only at wide variance with, but bitterly opposed to each other, and always at loggerheads.

There are the Vedântins, who include pantheists, deists, and the chârâvâkas, atheists and materialists; and yet all of them are Hindus. In short, every system of religion and philosophy, provided it does not countenance beef-eating, may come under that name. Exoteric Hinduism consists at the present time - so far as the numerous sects of theists agree with one another - in a common and profound veneration for the Vedas, the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, the Pranava, (*i.e.*, Aum), the Gâyatrî, the Ganga—(Ganges *alias* Bhâgirathee)—and Gaya. In *esoteric* Hinduism, the scriptures of every sect agree in recommending to their votaries, initiation into and the practice of Râja Yoga under competent Gurus, as the only means of attaining knowledge, and, through it, Mukti or Nirvâna. Furthermore being unanimous on those points, they all teach that there is no means of emancipation; or release from the sorrows of life; and that every man must enjoy or suffer as the case may be, the consequences of his karma, or the result of his combined actions (including thoughts), and that the latter is inevitable.

In the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, Krshna is made to say to Arjuna that He incarnates on this earth, from time to time, for the purpose of restoring the true religion:

Whenever there is a relaxation of duty, in the world, O son of Bharata! and an increase of impiety, I then manifest (incarnate) myself for the protection of the good and the destruction of the evil-doers.

Nowhere do we find Him speaking to the contrary: and yet the Pauraniks - finding that the teaching of Gautama Buddha, inculcating a religion of pure morality, threatened their pockets - spread the idea that the missions of the ninth Avatâra was to vitiate and corrupt pure Hinduism, and substitute in its stead, atheism! It is in this connection that I have a few questions to ask of my Hindû-pandit-brothers.

- (1) Who is it who says that, in the ninth Incarnation, Buddha has inculcated a false religion?
- (2) When was it said - before or after the declaration of Krshna in the *Bhagavat-Gîtâ*, as quoted above?
- (3) Is he, who said so, a higher and more reliable authority than Krshna was?
- (4) Kapila is referred to in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* as also an Avatâra, although not as high as one of the ten principal Incarnations, one of whom was Buddha. In his *Sânkhya Darshana*, Kapila declares clearly his Îshwarasiddi, *i.e.*, the disapproval of Îshwara, or of the so-called God.
- (5) Brhaspati - the most learned of the learned and the 'Priest of the Gods,' in his Chârvâk system of philosophy, clearly set down that there is no such thing as what is popularly called God; and he goes so far as even to deny a hereafter and teach the same.

If then Sânkhya is regarded in the light of a high authority, and Chârvâk is tolerated, why should then Buddha Darsana be cried down? Is it only because the former two, while both denying the existence of a God, and a life hereafter, do not step as hard as Buddhism does upon the corns of the priestcraft by enforcing a most sublime and uncompromising morality?

Now, the fact appears to me simply this: the work of religious reform, begun by Krshna, was completed by Buddha. Any one, who will read the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, and compare it with the Buddhist *Tripitaka*, will easily find this out. Hence the value placed on the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* by the Buddhists; and the reason why they have so much less deviated from their primitive faith than we - the Hindus.

There are still Orientalists who hold to the opinion that the *Mahâbhârata* is anterior to the *Râmâyana*, for the reason that, while the latter dwells on monogamy, the former records instances of polygamy and polyandry as in the case of Droupadi. Polyandry can precede monogamy; it can never succeed it or exist in any such civilized community as the heroes of the *Mahâbhârata* are supposed to have lived in during the 'Great War' period. Polyandry, moreover, is so much opposed to the marriage laws of Hinduism that the most absurd and childish excuses are resorted to, in order to explain away the fact of the five Pândavâs having had a common wife. Such explanations can satisfy but the blind faith of a bigot. What makes the case of Droupadi still worse is that, while the wife of all the five Pându brothers, she was married only to one of them. [This is incorrect - Subba Rao.] Unexplained, the case stands as one of the greatest depravity.

Again, the despondency of Arjuna on the battlefield, when he sees the hosts of human beings assembled, his own kith and kin among them, who must all be killed and slaughtered before the kingdom can be obtained, seems but natural. This consequent resolution to live the life of an exile in the jungles forever, rather than shed torrents of blood, some of it near and dear to him, for the sake of a kingdom, bespeaks of a noble, unselfish heart. Yet he is taken to task for it. That the precept of the Yoga philosophy, taught by such a personage as Krshna, an Incarnation of the great Deity Himself, should have resulted in its moving such a grand and wise hero from his high and noble resolves, and have converted him into a selfish murderer for the only purpose of aggrandizing his possessions, seems deplorable indeed. Can Yoga philosophy be made to serve a meaner or a worse purpose than this - the Yoga whose every aphorism breathes and inculcates self-denial? If such be the consequences of its teachings - then, away with it! And that such as been its accepted interpretation *literatim* - is evident from the very fact of Krshna being surnamed the Kucharkri (or intriguer) by the Pouraniks. After such a presentation of Krshna's character, it is no more to be wondered at, that the wise interpreters should have rejected Gautama Buddha's teachings. Indeed, it would have been a wonder had it been otherwise.

So palpably absurd is the variance between the teaching and its interpretation that many a sound scholar considers the *Gîtâ* [Some Pandits also held that *Sanatsujatîyam* and *Uttaragîta* were likewise independent philosophical discourses subsequently incorporated into the body of the Great Epic Poem. - Subba Rao.] as quite a distinct work from and very injudiciously incorporated into the body of the *Mahâbhârata*. To this day, it is read and regarded by some Hindus as a record having no real connection with the Kurukshetra battle between the Pândavâs and the Kouravas; and editions accordingly compiled can be had for sale in our bazaars. [The idea of the *Gîtâ* may after all be one of the ancient books of Initiations - now most of them lost - has never occurred to them. Yet - like the Book of Job very wrongly incorporated into the Bible, since it is the allegorical and double record of (1) the Egyptian sacred mysteries in the temples, and (2) of the disembodied Soul appearing before Osiris, in the Hall of Amenthi, to be judged according to its Karma - the *Gîtâ* is a record of the ancient teachings during the mystery of Initiation. - Subba Rao.]

The question now arise: Was Vyâsa Deva so short-sighted as not to have foreseen the dead-letter interpretation? Would he have so carelessly incorporated so sacred a book in so ill befitting a place of his great work, without any motive? Or was it done designedly and by some one else? As I have just shown, it seems so.

I, for one, believe that it was done after mature deliberation and that, therefore, the place and time assigned to the *Gîtâ* are both appropriate and opportune. The reasons are briefly as follows, and they are gathered from esoteric teachings. [The *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, in its present form, *i.e.*, *minus* the explanatory key which gave the correct interpretations to the Initiates, was incorporated after the rise of Buddhism, and when it was in the interest of the Pourâniks to conceal the great similarity of thought between Buddha's and Krshna's doctrines. Until then, the sacred writings were entirely in the hands and the safe keeping of the Initiated Brâhmana alone, and remained, therefore, unknown to the multitudes. But when Gautama Buddha - whose object was to throw open the doors of the Sanctuary to all those who were found deserving and worthy of the initiation into the Great Truths, irrespective of caste, wealth, or social position - partially revealed the secret in his public teachings; then his bitter enemies, the Brâhmana immediately after the death of the sage, destroyed and hid the key - the very kernel of the doctrine - and abandoned, to the masses, the husks. That key, contained in a work thrice as bulky as the *Mahâbhârata*, is said to have been carried away by the Buddhist Initiates into their exile; and even now the Kandy

temple at Ceylon is reputed to possess a copy of it. - Subba Rao.]

Although the five Pândava brothers - Yudhishtira, Bhîma, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva - are known as the sons of Pându, whence their name Pândavâs, every one of them has in reality a father of his own. The *Mahâbhârata* also makes each brother the representative, or, in its peculiar phraseology, the "incarnation of his respective Father". Thus it speaks of the eldest brother Yudhishtira as the son (and also the incarnation) of Dharma. Bhima is the son (and incarnation) of Pavana. Arjuna is the son and the Avatar of Indra. Nakula and Sahadeva are the sons (and incarnations) of the Aswini Kumârs, *i.e.*, the 'sons of the Sun'. Again, each of these personages represents some peculiar element of which he is said to be the presiding deity. Thus, 'Dharma' represents Endurance and Forgiveness, and stands for Earth; 'Pavana' is the presiding deity of the air and represents power; 'Indra', that of Âkâsha (Astral Light, Ether) which represents the soul; while the two Aswini Kumârs preside over and represent, respectively, Fire and Water, the two remaining elements. Thus we find that the five brothers or the five Pândavâs represent in reality the five elements, [In the real esoteric explanation given *only to Initiates*, the *five Pândavas* represent the *five Prânavâyus* (the five vital airs). The author of this article will do well to take up the clue and investigate all the facts given in the *Mahâbhârata* carefully. - Subba Rao.] which constitute man or rather Humanity, each element being anthropomorphised into an individual. In like manner, Droupadi, their wife, though shown as the daughter King Drupada, and so named after him, is, as we find in the same *Mahâbhârata*, not Drupada's daughter at all, but another mysterious personage whose parentage is quite obscure. The fact is that, like the Pândavâs, she too is a personification; that of Yoga-Mâya or the Yoga-Illusion, and so, necessarily, is made into and becomes the common property of the five Brothers, the Elements, with their innumerable illusionary effects; while Krshna, representing the Spirit, (Paramâtma) completes the group of seven.

The summary of the above is that four of the five brothers comprise the physical or the visible gross body of man. Arjuna (the Astral Principle) is the soul and jîvâtma, the life-soul, or vital principle; and Krshna, the Spirit. The Soul and its consort Mâyâ, being always nearer to the Spirit than the rest, Arjuna, and Droupadi are represented as the bosom friends of Krshna in preference to the rest.

And now comes the question: Who the Kouravas - the foes of the Pândavâs, and especially those of Arjuna - are. Bearing in mind that those enemies are also most of them related by blood to Arjuna, we have no difficulty in pointing them out as the woes and evils to which humanity is subject, and most of which have their origin in the blood or the physical organism of man himself. The Kouravas, are therefore, no other than the evil propensities of man, his vices and their allies. The philosophy of Krshna teaches Arjuna that he must conquer these, however closely related to him they may be, before he can secure the 'Kingdom' or the mastery over SELF.

It is for this very reason that the battle-field is chosen as the scene wherein knowledge is imparted. The despondency of Arjuna is an allegory to show how often, at the very threshold of knowledge, the human soul allows its worst feelings to get the better of his reason, and that, unless he can rally round his best allies, he is lost.

The ratha (car) or war-chariot of Arjuna is being driven by the charioteer - Krshna. Ratha means, in Samskrt, the 'human body' as well as a vehicle need hardly be mentioned. In the present case it is intended to signify that should man become determined to achieve a conquest over his own passions

and evil inclinations and to secure mukti or bliss to his soul, he must first listen to the whispered advices of his Spirit, whose voice is heard in the very midst of the battle that is constantly raging round him, even while the soul and the Spirit are seemingly riding in the same ratha - or body.

As a confirmation of the above interpretation, I may also remind the reader that, in their ascent to heaven, Droupadi - the Mayâ - vanishes and disappears the first, and Yudhishtira - the earth or the gross principle of the body, the last. Does not all this clearly show that there is perfect harmony between the several parts, that the whole thing has been beautifully conceived and is fully worthy of its author; that there is, in fact, no polyandry preached in it, nor any real deviation from a noble course of life toward selfish ends.

The chief difference between the Vedic and the *Gîtâ* teachings lies in the following: While the Vedâs deal with the Adwaita and Dwaita questions, *i.e.*, whether the universe or man consists of Matter and Spirit, or only of one of these two principles, [Wrong. The main point of difference between the two doctrines is this: Adwaitis hold that there is no real difference between the individual Spirit (Jîvâtma) and the Universal Spirit, (Pratyagâtma); while the Dwaitis hold otherwise. Again, the former hold that *Spirit* alone is Sat, and everything else is Asat, or the outcome of Illusion, while the latter refuse to recognize the existence of any Illusion or Mâyâ in the Universe. - Subba Rao], the *Gîtâ* clearly inculcates three in one, *i.e.*, matter, soul, and Spirit, and terms them Kshara, Akshara and Purushottama. [Not so. - Subba Rao.] Hence - the temple of Jagannâth at Pooi is known as the Purushottama Temple, because of its three idols - Subhadra (female), Balarâm (male), and Jagannâth or Purushottama, the sexless, Spirit, literally signifying the superior male, but *de facto*, the pure Deific Principle. This representation is also known as the 'Buddha Avatâr,' a name arising from the fact that the Buddha taught the same mystic Trinity expressed to this day in Tibet by the words: Om, Han, and Hoong, or, in Samskrt Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The female idol has hands and feet, while the two males have neither; denoting thereby that the first or inferior man has to depend upon his gross, physical body as tools in life, while the superior man is moved to action by his soul and Spirit, and, therefore, needs no help from his physical self. So holy is that famous temple that, within its precincts, all distinction of caste disappears, and every pariah and outcaste becomes equal to the highest Brâhmana. But the discipline in it is very rigorous; no animal food or spirituous drinks being permitted to cross its threshold under any condition.

The occasion of the celebrated Car Festival is the period when pilgrims from all parts of India thickly crowd the place. The popular saying "He, who can catch a glimpse of the dwarf (meaning Jagannâth) on the car, will have no more re-births" brings, on that day, hundreds of thousands of worshipers. I have already stated above that this car is but an allegory, meaning, in reality, the human body. The true significance of the verse, therefore, is that he who can see or find the Spirit (Jagannâth, or the dwarf) enthroned in his body will have no more re-births, since he may be sure then of finding himself emancipated from sin. [Those, who have denounced for over two centuries, the 'Jagannâth car' festival as a 'heathen devilry,' an "*abomination* in the sight of the Lord" - the ignorant, but ever traducing Padris - might do worse than ponder over this explanation. - Subba Rao.] Similarly, from a crude and fanatical notion that one who gets crushed under the wheels of Jagannâth's car is saved, men had been, from time to time, throwing themselves under the sacred vehicle. The blame for so many lives lost must be laid at the door of the Brâhmanas, who, from selfish motives, had thrown away the key to the *esoteric* meaning of the sacred allegory; the real signification being that while the Spirit, Jagannâth, is driving in the car or body, if once can crush and destroy his animal soul or ego and so assimilate his spiritual Ego to the Spirit or seventh principle, he is saved.