

31. The colleges we need

THIS day marks a significant and sacred stage in the history of Ananthapur. It is also a great day for those who yearn for the revival and growth of *Bhaaratheeya* culture. The people of India are now giving themselves, through their Government, vast opportunities for the development of education, and of medical facilities, and the promotion of schemes for the provision of vaster quantities of food grains and drinking water. These will raise the standard of living of the millions; more houses are built; more schools, more hospitals, more factories, better farms, more trade--these are being planned and established. This is all desirable, no doubt. But, along with these, and even more than these, plans have to be devised and executed for guaranteeing for the millions security, contentment, equanimity and peace. These are inner accomplishments which will ensure a stable, satisfied community, which can embody the real culture of India and reveal its strength-giving qualities.

It is indeed surprising that neither the rulers nor the ruled have yet tried to diagnose the prevalent discontent, the recurrent waves of hate and misunderstanding that disturb the peace, the anxiety and fear that undermine social peace. The causes for these maladies are to be sought in the realm of the spirit, rather than in the economic, political or intellectual, scholastic or social fields. It is indeed deplorable that the education of the spirit has been totally neglected while attention is devoted to the training of skills and to gleaning and garnering information.

***Sahana* gives peace, removes hatred**

This College and other such colleges which I am establishing in every State of India has as one of its purposes, the demonstration to the people and the Administration, the urgency of this task as well as the ways in which it can be fulfilled. My Sankalpa (plan of action) is to provide the youth with an education which, while cultivating their intelligence, will also purify their impulses and emotions and equip them with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in their own hearts. Their higher natures will have to be fostered and encouraged to blossom, by means of study, prayer and saadhana, contacts with the sages, saints and spiritual heroes and heroines of their land, and place them on the path of self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice and self-knowledge.

The heart of man which is now allowed to lie fallow has to be ploughed by spiritual exercise like japam (repetition of sacred word) and *dhyaanam* (meditation) and (Chanting Lord's Name); then, when the seeds of prema are sown and fertilised by *shraddha*, and the crop protected by Thithiksha (vigilance), the harvest of sahana (endurance) can be gathered. Sahana gives shaanthi(peace), and removes hatred and anger. Sahana is the richest treasure of man.

To understand aright the culture of Bhaarath, people have to study the Puraanas (spiritual legends), which are the *Praamaanas* (authority) and the *Shaasthras* (spiritual sciences) which are the *Nethras* (eyes). Both these are designed to elaborate and simplify the profound teachings of Vedhaantha, and so, they can be called "popular manuals of spiritual science."

These *Puraanas* and *Shaasthras* stress the role of women as mothers and extol the mothers, who instilled high ideals in the minds of the children of the land. The Vedhas speak of Maithreyi and Gaargi as great scholars and spiritual heroines. Gaargi was revered in the assembly of *Vedhic* Pandiths for her mastery of the abstruse problems of the spiritual voyage into the heights of self-realisation. In historical times, we have the mother of Shivaji who fed him on the epics and Putnam, and brought him up as a brave representative of the best in Hindu Culture.

India should get back the status of Guru for mankind

Dharma for the Hindu, the adherent of Sanaathana Culture, is as near and as dear as his own body. To save it and it, he was prepared to face exile, torture, death. Dharma was also the land whereon he lived, the breath wherewith he drew his vitality. He never cared to reside in a land where Dharma was not practised; he felt suffocated, when he had to be in an atmosphere that was polluted by A-dharma (life, contrary to the principles of Dharma). In the A-dharmic land, he can exist only as Seetha did in the Ashokavana of Lanka, breathing the ozone of Raamanaama and ignoring the entire environment.

Bhaarath can never find real happiness, except in the atmosphere of devotion and dedication to God; God is so much inter-twined in every word, act and thought of the people. Dams, factories, universities-these too will prosper, and attain the targets, only if the men and women involved in them and benefiting by them have the earnestness, the sincerity, the humanity and the reverence which Bhakthi(devotion) can build into them. It is only by this means that Bhaarath can, once again, attain the status of *Guru* (spiritual precept) which she had won and retained for centuries, the *Guru* for all mankind.

This college will be run by the Sathya Sai Trust, which has as advisers and associates a number of distinguished sons and daughters of India, full of the spirit of *yoga* (spiritual effort) and *thyaaga* (sacrifice) which are the distinct features of Bhaarath. They will foster the nobility of the Mother in our society and culture, and try to nourish in this institution the ideals which strengthen and support the educated, compassionate, cultured, loving, unselfish Mother, the Inspiration for the Dharmic (virtuous) life in this country.

The Trust does not look forward for any help, fin dally or otherwise from the citizens of Anantapur. It is satisfied when they derive Aanandha, watching the Aanandha of the Trust, its associates, the staff and the students of the college, the parents and the families of the students in the years to come. This college is not only for this town, but, it has to be a model and an eye opener for all who are interested in the education of women and the uplift of our culture, through the mothers of the land. There is even a thought lurking in my mind to make Ananthapur the Centre of a University, perhaps a Women's University.

I desire that the relationship between citizens be founded more and more on Love, and that unity will establish itself more firmly, removing all traces of malice or envy or pride. Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal *Aathma*, which is reflected equally in every being--and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths. I bless that this college will be an example of the triumph that Love and Reverence can win. Let it be an inspiration to workers in the field of Women's Welfare and National Progress, in every State. May the college educate generations of noble mothers who will live Dharma and raise heroes surcharged with devotion and dedication to God.

Ananthapur: Foundation laying ceremony of the College by the Vice-President of India, 7-11-1969