

17. A prize to the prize-giver

THE College is celebrating its First Annual Day today. It is now a year-old baby. A baby that has grown one year is more difficult to manage than a new-born child! For, it starts to toddle around and is subject to slips, falls, and straying into danger spots and accidents! The mother, *aayahs* and nurses have therefore to be more vigilant hereafter. The child may wander on to the road, and get hit by scooters, cycles, cars and trucks. So too, this College may meet all kinds of distractions and diversions, like envy; pride, prejudice, which will ruin its health. The Mother (The Managing Committee), the *Aayah* (The Principal) and the Nurses (The pupils) have to be extra careful, for, any negligence on their part, any licence, will mar the future of this Institution. They have to serve the College in full co-operation with each other and with a sincere desire to build up fine traditions.

The Himaalayas, which form the bastion of Bhaarith, are symbols of its might and majesty; they remind us of the purity that we should develop in ourselves; they teach us that we should be as firm, as unshaken as the snow-clad peaks, as unaffected by the noise and turmoil of the bazaars of mankind. The Ganga that originates from these ranges is the symbol of the rectitude that is the basis of Indian culture. The Yamuna, which also rises in the Himaalayas, is the symbol for the sense of justice, that is a valuable element in its make-up; the Saraswathi is the symbol of the sincerity that is the very basis of spiritual discipline, recommended in the scriptures. The Saraswathi is the subterranean river that joins the Ganga and Yamuna at Prayaag. *Bhaarithheeya* culture will remain strong and sustaining so long as the Ganga flows. Even if the Ganga dries, the culture will remain fresh and fulfilling. For, the world needs it and it is charged with eternal values.

Character is more precious than wealth

Children of Bhaarith have a great responsibility cast upon them. The wish to develop faith in the culture and encourage its practice arose in Me recently and I felt that students have to be the pioneers in this renaissance. So, this College was founded and is being run on proper lines. Special emphasis is laid here on the fostering of character, which is more precious than wealth or physical strength or skill or scholarship. You may have millions; but that will not ensure mental peace. You may have strong physique; but, ask the sturdy men in the entourage of the Governor who is here whether they have mental peace. They will reply, no.

We are also giving in this College instruction on the fundamental principles of all faiths, from the sacred books, like the Geetha, the Quoran, the Bible, the *Dhammapadha*. The feast of *Aanandha* that is thus provided to the young minds is being relished with great satisfaction. This evening, the students are putting on stage a play from the Mahaabhaaritha, named, *Krishna Rayabaara*, the "Peace Mission of Krishna," written, taught and directed by Me, instilling in them, as well as those who witness the play, the great lesson that joy is the interval between one stage of grief and another! The grief of exile was followed by the triumph on the battlefield and that was overshadowed by the heart-rending grief of Dhroupadhi, at the slaughter of her five children by the vengeful Aswatthaama, son of the Brahmin Preceptor, who taught the Paandavas the art of archery. This is the theme of the play.

Peace springs from the heart within

Endurance, with joyful resignation, of the ups and downs of life is the royal road to peace. Every one craves *Sukha* and *Shaanthi* (happiness and peace); but there is no one to instruct youth how

to win them. The Raamaayana and the Mahaabhaaratha are reservoirs of knowledge for the seekers of peace. They are replete with examples and precepts which are inspiring and timely. By taking the teachings to heart purity can be attained. The pure heart directed towards God and reflecting His Image is indeed Heaven, Vaikuntha or Kailaasha.

It is a national disgrace if the sons and daughters of India (which was for centuries the Light of Asia and the *Guru* of the West) grope in the dark, blinded by the scintillations of the scientific inventions of the West. But Peace does not drop from outer space! It springs from the heart within.

College education gives you the chance to earn a few rupees and live thereupon. But, unless it destroys certain illusions that are nourished by the common level of mankind, your lives will not be happy. One illusion which is basically undesirable is: living under the impression that you are the body and that you are destroyed with the death of the body. Another illusion is happiness consists in accumulating money or knowledge or comforts or reputation. Trying to be happy through such accumulation is like getting into the Madras Bus and hoping to reach Bangalore. What is happiness? It is the state of mind, which is unaffected by fortune, good or bad. By systematic education, the mind can attain that state. If activity is done as worship, then, the mind will be steady and free from anxiety.

Mind control is the fundamental need of everyone

The Governor of Mysore was saying just now that students must keep away from the controversies of politics and not get distracted from studies by them. I advise you to concentrate on study; for, politics at present and perhaps always is a sordid game, where passions run high and prejudices are cultivated, as a respectable policy! *Raajakeeya* is the word in Thelugu for politics; but, it is more correctly described as *Raaja-kayya*, *kayya* meaning "factional right!" You must all learn to become a new type of leaders, leaders who have passed through the crucible of *Seva* (selfless service) as *Saadhana*; leaders who have passed through school and college and mastered the problems of the present and future, in the light of the past; leaders who appreciate the traditions and culture of this country.

This is the job for which you have to prepare yourself. The Thelugu word for job is *Udhyoga*. Mark the word *Udh-yoga*; 'ud' means upward, rising, emergent. So, it is the progress in *yoga* that defines the nature and purpose of the job. And, what is *yoga*? *Yoga* is, as Pathanjali says, *chiththa vriththi nirodhah*---the control of the agitations and anxieties and fears of the mind. The people in charge of administration are devising various controls and conducting propaganda for popularising them. They have Food Control, Gold Control, Birth Control and various other plans, but, the most fundamental thing needed, namely, Mind Control is absent! You may sit in an air-cooled room, but if your mind is agitated by anger, envy, greed or fear, you will find the room pretty hot.

Dress should be decent, not outlandish

Education must also remove hatred between the pilgrims on the various roads to God. There is only one God, one Goal, one Law, one Religion and one Reason. You have come to Kadugodi, from a hundred different villages and towns, but you have all come to have *darshan* of one Swaami (Baaba).

This College will pay attention to providing a complete education, namely, *Karma maarga*, *Dharma maarga* and *Brahma maarga* (path of dedicated action, of righteousness and of

spirituality), all three. You may continue in this College or join some other College later on or go home after finishing your studies, but, wherever you are, you must shine forth as recipients of this special attention. You are sure to inspire others by your example of integrity, sincerity and spiritual yearning. Dr. Gokak mentioned externals of modern living like foppish shirts and sidebums. Yes; I like simplicity, I like dress that will not discourage people from approaching you for a kind word, a bit of service, a helping hand. It must be clean and decent; not outlandish and queer. It should not be worn to attract attention.

Just as you desire to wear clean comfortable clothes for the body, desire also clean consoling exercises for the mind, like *japam*, *dhyaanam* (repetition of holy word and meditation), etc. Use the eyes to watch wholesome things, the feet to proceed to the House of God, the hands to serve the embodiments of God moving around you as men, the tongue to soothe pain, praise virtue, and glorify God. Do not use the eye to vulgarise your brain, the feet to stand in queue for deleterious films. You saw now Suddhir, the blind boy, carrying away a number of prizes for his pre-eminence in studies and in general performance at College. Blindness has deprived him of one route towards degeneration. Of course, I do not say that one should lose his eyes in order to be perfect. The greater heroism is to have eyes and not use them for one's downfall.

The fault for students vagaries lies with elders

The arrangements for the College Day were all made by the boys themselves; they have been at it for days; and, today, they have not had a moment's rest; though I asked them to take an hour off for lunch, they said, they would much rather finish the decoration on the dais and keep the area clean and charming. Boys are really good, willing to do their duty and shine well in studies as well as in the field of service. The fault, for their vagaries and waywardness and for their occasional sprees of indiscipline, lies with the elders who set before them poor examples of truth and self-control. Urged on by the atmosphere of false values and fake activities, they become infected. The boys of this College will exercise a healthy influence on their kith and kin, as well as on the villages to which they belong. The towns have become, as a result of the incompetence and intrigues of elders, hotbeds of restlessness; that is why this College has been established in rural surroundings.

Character is the most precious gift of education. I consider gratitude as the chief component; gratitude above all, to the parents, for this gift of life. Revere the parents, who are sacrificing their comforts in order to give you this College education. If any parent bewails, "I sent my son to Sai Baaba College and, he has turned against me, he has no respect for my wishes, he is as good as lost to me," it will cause the College great grief. If on the other hand the parent says, "I sent my son to Sai Baaba's College and my son is now so obedient, so willing, so eager to respect my least wish; of course, my wish is ever his prosperity. But, yet, previously he used to grumble a lot, and do things under protest and in a half-hearted way," this will be the prize you give to the College.

You got prizes today from the College for proficiency in sports, studies, elocution, essay writing, etc. You must give the College a prize, and do you know what that is? When your parents shed tears of joy when they see you healthy, happy and good, that is the prize the College gets, leading useful honourable lives, they are full of joy. That joy is the prize you give your College!

Kaadugodi 23-7-1970

Medicine and hospitalisation are for those who doubt and hesitate and argue about this doctor being more efficient than the other, this drug being more powerful than the rest. For those who rely on the Supreme Doctor, His Name is enough drug.

Sathya Sai Baaba