

Vatsāsura - Harmonist

He represents evils that are peculiar to boyhood. The neophyte is extremely susceptible to such evils. They can only be eliminated by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. If one engages in Kṛṣṇa's service they will be completely eradicated at an early stage.

There is an English proverb that sowing of wild oats is inevitable at a young age. The term Puritanism was originally coined to express the protest of boys and young men against any undue curtailment of the scope of enjoyment that should be regarded as permissible to them. Boys and young men claim the right to be merry and frolicsome. There is nothing objectionable and much that is of positive value in the display of these juvenile qualities. If the attempt be made to stifle this innocent play of the boyish nature under the impression that it is an exhibition of sensuousness and for that reason is as harmful as similar conduct on the part of grown-up persons, the result is not assurance but discouragement of juvenile innocence.

There are indeed black sheep and these should not be allowed to taint the whole flock, and for this purpose caretakers with full sense of their delicate responsibility are required to keep watch over them for ensuring the innocence of boyhood and youth without killing their joys. But with every precaution it has been found impossible to attain this double purpose. The scriptures say that it is not in the power of man to ensure the immunity of boys and girls from the blight of sensuousness except by means of the service of Kṛṣṇa.

This is declared to be the only effective and natural method. Let the boys be exposed to the attraction of the Cowherd Boy of Vraja. They will soon learn to pick up His company. They will easily realize that Kṛṣṇa can alone save them from every form of danger to which they are exposed by the 'right' of their juvenile nature.

Why should this be so? There is a very simple reason. Kṛṣṇa does not limit His service only to the middle-aged and old people. The Puritanic idea of Godhead is a conception which owes its origin to persons who are elderly although honestly enough anxious to establish the Kingdom of God on this earth. But if you scratch the thin coating on the surface of their sage and sober scheme as befitting their age you only detect the rotten arrangement for securing the maximum of sensuous enjoyment for those very children who are to be brought up in this virtuous way. If the child is allowed to spoil his health in boyhood, think these righteous people, he will not be in a position later to enjoy the legitimate pleasures of the grown-up man. Unless the young man husbands his resources of sense gratification he will also be a victim of premature old age. It is a policy of expediency of postponing a small present measure of enjoyment for reaping a much larger measure of it through the long tracts of the years to come.

The spurious brahmacarya ideal as misconceived by its worldly supporters embodies this Puritanic outlook. The scriptures indeed, enjoin that everyone should serve Godhead from the womb. This is the real meaning of brahmacarya. The ascetic practices that have come to attach themselves to the conception were interpolated into the scriptures in order to ensure worldly values by this form of the empiric method. The scheme requires that the laws of the growth of the physical and mental bodies should be observed and followed. Nature is

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regarded as the kind mother who favours only those of her children who cultivate the filial habit of prying into her secrets. Nature is supposed to be unable to avoid divulging her secrets to her inquisitive children although she is well aware that her children will exploit this knowledge for troubling her by harnessing her to their service. In other words it is also assumed to be the duty of the kind mother to consent to put herself in chains in order to minister to the sensuous appetites of her worthier children. Nature is assumed to be able to do good to her children only by submitting to be the victim of their lust.

The practices of asceticism are really conceived in the epicurian spirit. The ascetic dreams of obtaining the mastery over nature by the method of controlling the senses. If the senses grow callous to the temptations of the world the ascetic thinks that he will have less chance of falling into the power of nature. He has an idea that when he will have perfected these defensive arrangements he will have become the real master of the situation. The brahmacharya, according to the ascetic point of view, is to pass through a period of training in severe abstinence with his guru in order to be fitted to discharge the duties of citizenship, which will make a great demand on his nerves and muscles with greater thoroughness. There is no reference to the service of God or to any spiritual issue.

We have had many occasions to explain that the spiritual is transcendental. No mundane consideration can form any part of spiritual training or conduct. It is not a spiritual affair to be even able to control one's carnal desires. Such self-control is indeed automatically produced by the awakening of the soul. But self-control is not therefore a function of the soul. The soul has nothing to do with the senses. The soul desires neither sensuality or sexual purity. The soul is not a mere mortal being. If brahmacharya means a method of gaining moral power it is wholly a mundane affair and is as such not only of no concern to the soul but is positively obstructive to spiritual well-being.

This is bound to be so because the point of view of the soul is all-embracing. The soul rejects nothing. He regards nothing as redundant or useless. The soul has a use for everything. But the soul sees everything as it is really related to himself and to other entities. Everything is absolutely good on the platform of the soul. The scriptural brahmacharya institution accordingly means service of the Brahman i.e., the Reality Who is always the Great and always the Help. The servant of the Absolute is always free from delusion.

Morality is a valued commodity only on the plane of delusion. But it has no locus standi on the plane where the conditions of existence are perfect.

Till the service of Godhead is realized it is impossible to be really moral in the sense of being needlessly and perfectly virtuous. If a person is causelessly virtuous in the worldly sense he or she will be an easy subject of exploitation for all the cunning rascals of this world. This is so because morality as conceived by the empiricist has a reference to the physical body and the changeable mind and is therefore liable to change so long as the conditions are not radically altered.

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The empiric contriver of juvenile welfare strives to produce conditions that will favour the growth and continuance of the empiric moral aptitude. These artificial conditions are confidently enough expected to be likely to prove of permanent benefit to those young persons who are brought up under these improvised conditions. But the brand of morality that has to be produced by the artificial manipulation of the natural environment is likely to prove of little value when the props are withdrawn. The analogy of needed protection for the growth of delicate plants does not apply as such plants are always exoterics. Hot-house morality is thus a misnomer and a delusion in relation to the soul.

Brahmacarya fully embodies the substantive ideal of spiritual purity distortedly reflected in the empirical ethical conception. Brahmacarya means service of the absolute. Juvenile innocence is not the monopoly of juvenile persons, any more than juvenile naughtiness. They are both animal entities, corresponding to analagous spiritual qualities. The spiritual activities are perfectly wholesome. They include all value and harmonize all disruptive conflict both of which are so utterly wanting in their mundane perverted reflections to be found in this world.

It is not to be supposed that everything is done by Kṛṣṇa and there is nothing to be done by ourselves in any matter. As a matter of fact there is a division of parts to be played in functions that relate even to ourselves as between us and Kṛṣṇa. Certain duties are allotted to us. Certain other functions are reserved to Kṛṣṇa. Vatsāsura cannot be killed by us. He is too strong for us. This is in keeping with the experience of most educationists. Juvenile innocence is a necessity for both young and old. One cannot acquire it by any artificial process. No person can also ordinarily retain it after boyhood and youth. This is the real tragedy of human life.

Juvenile innocence is desired on account of its enjoyability. But it should properly be desired only for the service of Kṛṣṇa. The parent can have no higher duty than to employ his boy in the service of Kṛṣṇa by putting him under the proper teacher, the pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. No parent is entitled to undertake the charge of spiritual training of his own boy. He is unfitted for the task by his mundane relationship. Once such relationship is grasped to be an obstacle in the way of juvenile training the necessity of sending the boy at the earliest opportunity to the proper teacher becomes self-evident. If the parent continues to retain his parental interest in the boy after he has been put into school for the above purpose he will only be standing in the way of the boy's progress. The training is not for the boy only, but it is a training for his parents as well.

Boyish naughtiness is apt to be overlooked, nay encouraged, under the impression that it is nature to be naughty. This opinion overlooks the all-important factor that the training is intended for the welfare of the soul of the boy and not for the juvenile body or mind. The soul does not require to be treated with indulgence. He is neither young nor old in the worldly sense. The body and mind of the boy have to be employed in the interest of the soul. Boyish naughtiness and boyish virtue are alike unnecessary for the soul. It is necessary for the soul to be freed from either form of worldliness. The mundane nature of the boy is no less a

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clog to the wheel of spiritual progress than the adult nature of the grown-up worldling. The process of training is identical in the two cases as the soul is neither young nor old.

Much irrational pity is wasted on boys who are employed from early infancy in the full-time service of Kṛṣṇa, on exactly the same terms as grown up persons. Persons who affect much kindness of disposition towards juvenile frailties profess to be unable to understand why juvenile offenses are taken as seriously in spiritual training as those of adult persons.

But the teacher in charge of the spiritual training of boys can perform his duty by them only as the special agent of Kṛṣṇa. If such a teacher chooses to confide in his own devices he is bound to be undeceived at every step. What he has really to do is to use the boy constantly in the service of Kṛṣṇa. For this purpose it is necessary for the teacher himself to be a full-time servant of Kṛṣṇa. It is only by abstaining from anything that is not distinctively commanded by Kṛṣṇa or His real agent, the guru, that the spiritual teacher of the boys can hope to be of any help to his pupils.

The so-called science of pedagogies requires to be thoroughly overhauled in order to afford a free hand to the bonafide devotee of Kṛṣṇa in managing young persons. The present arrangements based on the experience of this world and on the hypotheses of an absolute causal relationship connecting each phenomenon with the rest, by leaving out the reference to Kṛṣṇa can only realize the tragic part of a quack lightly administering all the wrong drugs to a parent smitten with a mortal illness.

The King of atheists, Kaṁsa, is always setting the demon Vatsāsura to corrupt and destroy the boys. The teacher of the young employed by the atheistic society is verily the agent of Kaṁsa. The atheist is afraid lest the boys are employed in the service of Kṛṣṇa. He is naturally anxious to prevent any acquaintance of the boys with Kṛṣṇa. But if a boy has really found Kṛṣṇa the nefarious activities of the empiric teacher are powerless to destroy his innocence. If such a teacher perseveres in the fruitless attempt he will thereby quickly bring about his own utter moral degradation and his sorry trick will also be fully exposed. Because in this case it is Kṛṣṇa Himself who opposes his wicked activities on behalf of his protigī.

As a matter of fact the concern of empiric educationists for ensuring immunity of boys from the blighting effects of precocity is altogether hypocritical. The empiric pedant only wants the boy to grow a body and mind that will ensure greater and longer scope for their worldly use. He does not want that the worldly use of his body and mind should be curtailed in any way. In other words he is on principle opposed to the employment of the healthy body and sound mind for any spiritual purpose. But why does he want a healthy body for his nasty purpose? Is it only in order to be able to have the pleasure of a more prolonged wastage and the rake's progress in downright earnest? A sickly body is not really harmful to a person who has no higher object in view than undiluted sense gratification.