

TAYUMANAVAR - HIS LIFE, TEACHINGS AND MISSION.*

[* A paper read before the Saiva-Siddhanta Conference at Ramnad, 1910. - Ed. L. T.]

1. HIS LIFE.

Not very long ago, at the close of the seventeenth century of the Christian era, when the old and once powerful kingdoms of Chera, Chola and Pandiya were in their decline, there reigned in Vijayanagaram¹ of the Chola country Tirumalai Nayagar, a chief of princely repute. [¹ This was apparently the name of a principality bordering on the environs of Trichinopoly. There is a place called Vijayapuram near Tiruvalur, Tanjore District - Ed. L. T.] Much is not known of the history of his line or of his contemporaries; but his grandson Vijayaranga Sokkanatha Nayagar who is said to have reigned between A. C. 1704 and 1731 had the good fortune of having under him a minister, born of a line of reputed statesmen in the sacred town of Vedaranyam, and a Vellala by caste. The minister's spotless character and great piety won for him the favour of his Chief who entrusted him with all the responsible duties of the State. Kediliyappa Pillai (that was his name) was a household word in the country and as the name signifies he was the flawless or the sinless squire of the land. His only son Sivachidambaram Pillai was allowed to be adopted by his paternal uncle and the home of Kediliyappa Pillai was without the charms and joys of a babe. To call back his son from the home of his brother would have been heart-rending to his brother and on that account he sent up his supplications to the Blissful Lord of Trichinopoly, Tayumanesvarar*, for the boon of a son. [* The name of the Divinity us really Matribhutesvara which phrase is aptly rendered into Tamil as Tayumanavar or Tayumanar. - Ed. L. T.] And before long he was blessed with a son who was named after the Lord who listened to his prayers தாயுமானவர் (Tayumanavar).

The joy of the parents knew no bounds and the boy grew திருமறைக்காடு (Tirumaraikkadu³), his birth place, under the kind care of கெஜவல்லியம்மை (Gajavalliammai) his mother, and under the wings of தாயுமானேஸ்வரர் (Tayumanesvarar) the mother of all.

[³ This is Vedaranyam. We chance to know the place and its traditions rather intimately, as we hail there from. According to the prevalent information on the lips of very oldish folk at Vedaranyam, to which we must attach great importance, in the absence of other sources of reliable testimony, Tayumanar's mother was a native of Vedaranyam. Tayumanar's childhood and early boyhood were spent at Vedaranyam. The only surviving, prominent member of his mother's family, and hence related to him, in a measure, by blood-ties, is Mr. Appakuttiya Pillai of Vedaranyam, who is the Manager of the Devasthanam Office attached to the Vedaranyam Temple. If we remember correctly, Mr. Appakuttiya Pillai's father was the grand nephew of Tayumanar's mother. Mr. Appakuttiya Pillai is, we fancy, blessed with children, and there is hence every chance of the future perpetuation of his line. Ed. L. T.]

At the age of discretion he was schooled under proper guidance and became proficient in literature, both Sanskrit and Tamil, and above all, in the study of Jnana Sastras, the sciences

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of wisdom of the Great Masters. By now the temporal life of Kediliyappa Pillai was coming to an end and when he breathed his last, to the great regret of the Chief, Vijayaranga, the lad of barely sixteen, was called to fill the gap caused by his father, in the position of the Chief Minister of State. It was no surprise that he filled the place worthily to the satisfaction of his master and the people, and although his attention was engrossed in the duties of the State, his spirit was hankering after the Bliss of Peace and eagerly looking for a Master and a Guide, who will initiate him into the mysteries of the Spiritual Realm. With a view to hit at the proper Master he would, at the risk of being arrogant, question every Jnani whom he came across and discuss with him the knotty problems of Religion and Philosophy. He was a frequent visitor at the temple of தாயுமானேஸ்வரர் (Tayumanesvarar) and one day he saw at the entrance to the shrine of தக்ஷிணாமூர்த்தி (Dakshinamurti), a Sage in deep meditation prepossessing and graceful. He approached him with great obeisance and fell a victim to the spiritual glance of the sage. With quailed heart and shrunken mind, he stood motionless, unable to collect himself to put his usual questions. His nerves failed him and he fell, prostrating at the Holy feet of the Sage. Not a word passed between them, for, the lad was almost dumb-stricken and the Sage was the Speechless Master மௌனகுரு (Maunaguru)*.

[* This Sage is often apostrophised by Tayumanar in his Poems. - *Ed. L. T.*] The master now departed hence and the lad mechanically followed. On they went to a lonely place, where the lad poured out his prayers and tears to move the master to speak a word. The word of Blessing came at last, to his great joy. Thus encouraged, he put his first question - Lord! what is the book in your hand?

In short sweet words the Master impressed upon him the excellence of the spiritual experience of Sivasvanubhavam and stated that the book in his hand was the guide to such a goal - சிவஞானசித்தி (Sivajnanasiddhi) † the treasure of the spiritually inclined. After initiating him in the preliminaries, the master instructed him to pass the stage of the householder and to be 'resigned and alone-become', சும்மாயிருத்தல், before he could be led into Jnana-Nishtha, the establishment-in-wisdom. The disciple parted, with reluctance, from the Master and continued his spiritual exercises among the worries of the State. His spiritual greatness soon became known in the land, and the king or chief himself no more looked upon him as his minister, but took him for his Master. But still the Government was carried on as usual until V'ijayaranga, ripe with love and devotion, under the guidance of his Minister-Master, resigned the earthly throne for the heavenly, and disappeared from the scene.

[† This is one of the classical mystic works devoted to the Agamanata. Its Sanskrit original is prized most, but difficult to get, and we have only seen portions thereof at the hands of some of the Dikshits of the Chidambaram Temple. We are told that complete Sanskrit manuscripts of the work, written in Grantha character, exist in Chidambaram, but that their owners will not readily part with them. Of course, the only form in which Sivajnana-Siddhi is generally known, is the Tamil work bearing that name, which, in common with the Sanskrit original, is attributed to the same author who is known as Sivanandasivacharya, surnamed the Sakalagamapandita, 'the Master of all the Agamas.'—*Ed. L.T.*]

Minister of State no more, but Master of Wisdom, Tayumanasvami, was free to go on his own way. The Government now devolved on the queen Minakshiyammai, who sent for

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the Svami, with a view to insist on his continuing the ministry. She had already heard of the accomplishments of the minister, both physical and mental, but not of the spiritual. She saw the minister before her, beaming with youth and vigour, princely beauty and lovely form, and offered him her kingdom and herself ; she saw the fleshly form of the Svami through her fleshly eyes, and wished to satisfy her carnal desire by enticing him with her offers. She little knew of the spirit within the form of the Svami. With pity for the ignorance of the poor queen, the Svami left the palace, went beyond the limits of her kingdom and settled at Devanagar. His brother Sivachidambaram Pillai and cousin Arulaiyappa Pillai, having heard of the Svami's departure from Trichinopoly, called on him at Devanagar, and entreated him to return home to settle in household life. Unable to cross the wishes of his brother, and in order to fulfil the commands of his Master, மௌனகுரு (Maunaguru), he agreed and repaired to Vedaranyam where he soon tied the nuptial knot with மட்டுவார்குழலம்மை (Mattuvarkulal-ammai), a handsome maid.*

[* We shall make enquiries-about' the family whereof the bride of Tayumanar came, and acquaint our readers, in a future number, with particulars as regards the present representatives, if any, of that family. —Ed. L. T.]

The duration of his household life was but short, during which his wife was brought to bed of a son and she departed this life. The son was named Kanaka: abhapati and was looked after by the father, until he was able to take care of himself, when there appeared, again, on the scene, the great sage மௌனகுரு (Maunaguru) to shape the future of our Svami. Satisfied with the spiritual advancement of his disciple, the Master ordered him to take to ascetic life, renouncing all for the feet of the holy Lord. He instructed the Svami in the higher stage of the Yoga and the Jnana and the symbolic and the spiritual worship of the Lord, warning him not to be carried away by the great powers of Yoga that would unfold themselves in due course ; but to take to the straight and narrow, but illumining and blissful road leading to Oneness with the Consciousness and Bliss of the Supreme, The Master, after impressing upon him that to resign one's agency and to be indistinguishably absorbed in the Vast Expanse of the Blissful Sivasvarupa, was the goal of the ' initiated' and the true import of the Siddhanta Mahavakya, went his own way.

Tayumanasvamigal, now the homeless ascetic, clothed in Nature's attire but for his span-cloth, proceeded on his pilgrimage visiting the famous shrines and holy waters, and pouring forth his mellifluous hymns to the glory of the Lord. While at Ramesvaram, the Svami, out of sympathy with the famine-stricken f)people of the place, is said to have caused it to rain in abundance, by singing a verse, which was to this effect :—

" If the true religion is the Saiva Religion, and
the Lord of that Religion is the moon-decked
God and if the goal is to overcome the five
senses and to be absorbed in the Blissful Peace,
Oh Ye clouds pour forth in torrents."

He was soon tempted to pass the closing days of his life at Ramnad, where he was ever in spiritual communion until he attained Samadhi in A. C. 1742 in the presence of his disciples and followers among whom was Arujaiyar, whose admiration of the Svami is expressed in a poem.

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Thus ended the Svami's corporeal life, but it would perhaps be interesting to follow his spiritual life as evidenced in his sweet soul-stirring hymns, a remarkable feature of which is his confession and repentance for his sins on the one hand and the earnest prayer for God's Grace on the other ; his censure on himself for wallowing in the world of Samsara and the examination of the evil tendencies that lurk in the heart of a Samsarin. He would, as if in a trumpet voice, declare that he has been a sinner, given up to all the five-great-sins, that his heart harbours envy, pride, selfishness and anger and that kindness and mercy, forgiveness and charity, austerity and devotion are quite foreign to his nature. He would feelingly confess that his desires and passions have enslaved him so much that any resistance on his part is out of question ; he would look back into his gloomy past and exclaim that eons and eons have passed away leaving him still a sinner, grovelling in the dark nooks of the senses, and sense objects. All attachments he would give up; woman, gold and lands have no charm for him ; transient as they are, he has seen their pleasures and knows that they press him down into Samsara, ever so much he may try to soar higher; this body, filthy pot, full of worms and disease, is evanescent as a dream. And he, once given up to egotism and pride, is but a straw at the mercy of the current having no power to act by himself, and viewed with the Universe around is but a speck on the Vast Expanse. He has come to know his smallness and dependence and renounces everything of the 'I' and the 'mine'.

Purified by repentance and fortified by renunciation he pines for the Lord. Once he would beseech Him to appear before him, call out to Him to take him on to His Realm, and to class him with His devotees; he would address the hills and vales, the sun, the moon and the stars, the wind, beasts and birds and ask them if they had seen the Lord, at whose command they all live and move. He would break out into words like these,

" O, Omnipresent Lord, does not the boundless ocean keep within a limit and millions and millions of worlds roll in space at Thy command? Did You not make a bow of Mount Meru, and swallow poison ? Haven't You infinite supernatural powers ? Is it difficult for You to devise a means to close my mind in concentration ? O Bliss of Brilliant form ! Supreme Intelligence that is enshrined in my heart, being the indiscernible Sat, many alien religionists gather round me and in contempt refer to me—behold behold, the mar of empty words. Nevertheless I call out to Thee, as the pure One, the Light, the Cause, the Lord all pervading, ever dancing, with an utterly melting heart and You see I am exhausted and my face is withered and yet You would not have the mercy to call me to You. O Inestimable Treasure of the Seekers who seek not, who taught You this coldness towards me ? O, I see the reason why, Thou art accessible to the boundless ocean of Love of Thy devotees who, their bodies withering, bones melting, tears pouring down in torrents, constantly keep in mind the attachment to You, and run to You as a needle towards a magnet, with throbbing hearts and shivering frame singing and dancing, with smile shining like the moonlight and worship Thee with their lotus hands, rising again and again singing—' O Thou, the sky of wisdom, the Blissful rain of that sky, the flood of that rain, Hail, Hail!' But art Thou accessible to me of Stony heart? But then, thou canst bring down on earth the pleasures of Svarga. Thou canst make a beggar a crowned king. Thou canst change potshred into 18 carats gold. Thou canst bear the Earth on Thy Staff, Is it difficult for Thee to melt my stony heart like wax over fire?"

His appeal to the Lord is very pathetic. He sings:

"Look here, my Lord, of the different religions not one teaches alike; and the Great ones who have renounced, and are Speechless will not teach; the three-eyed Lord, who is the Teacher straightway absorbs one into Himself and instructs by intuition; then who will teach

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me in so many words that I may be free from birth and death and be in everlasting Bliss; and as the Yogis will claim ray austerities and penances as theirs, I would like to be alone by myself and be at rest, but even then you instigate the Maya of the Mind to test me, then pray tell me how is your Slave to become Bliss itself."

Thus he pined for the Grace of God, and evolved into a great Bhakta; there is not a hymn which would not impress upon us the depth of Love,—unalloyed spiritual Love—he was rolling in, and the height of True Wisdom he possessed, and the hymns are not only an index to his spiritual advancement, but also to his literary attainments. As a poet, he occupies an honoured place, perhaps unrivalled for simplicity and sweetness combined. As a Philosopher he is Remarkable for the clear grasp of abstruse doctrines and for the dexterity with which he clothed them in popular words. As a Yogi, he practised all the stages and as a Jnani, he saw and lived in the Light of Wisdom. He lived in the midst of modern surroundings and taught the truths of ancient doctrines, and by precept and example proved the truth that *Religion must be lived*. The key note of all his hymns is the same and even if all the other hymns were lost to us, the couplet,

சினமிறக்கக்கற்றாலும், சித்தியெல்லாம் பெற்றாலும்,
மனமிறக்கக்கல்லார்க்கு வாயேன்பராபரமே.

would testify to the kind of Religion he professed and practised.

II. HIS TEACHINGS.

To enter fully into this part of the subject would be impossible in a short paper, and yet it is his teachings embodied in the sweet hymns that mark him out as the popular philosopher of the most modern times. His conception of God as the Absolute Existence, Consciousness and Bliss (அகண்டாகார ச ச்சிதாந ந்தசிவம்) presses itself upon the attention of even casual readers. His God is beyond Cause and Effect, Time and Space, beyond the ken of Religions, the reach of mind and the grasp of words, still the nearest of the nearest, the innermost dweller of the heart, the Life of all that lives and moves. He is where space is not. He shines where light is not. He is the all of the Universe and yet not all. His God is not He, or She or It or That. No description will be applicable, to the Truth. சமயநெறிகாணாதகாசுதி, வேதத்திலேதர்க்க வாதத்திலேவிளங்காது, விந்துநாதத்திலேயடங்காது அந்தவான்பொருள் நாடிக்கொள்ளே. His God is not the Despotic Ruler who hurls thunders, fire and brimstone on his helpless creatures here below, who are meet only to receive His mercy but far removed from him as the poles from one another, in purity or holiness. His God is not the material Cause of the Universe, undergoing the changes^ incidental to evolution and involution. 'His God is not the Sat that throws over it a veil of its own and *seems* to evolve and involve but in truth *does not*. His God, in short is not the God of Arambavada, Parinamavada or Vivartavada but the God of Satkaryavada, who is the Efficient Cause of the Universe which evolves from its material cause ' Maya'-which is ஆகிய சற்காரிய வுகத்துக்கேற்ற அமலம்.

His Unknowable God is the Source of all Power and Light and acts through His Sakti of Grace. பரையெனும் கிரணம் துழ்ந்த பானு. This Sakti, the power He wields, His Consort, the Lady in inseparable Union, the Guna that distinguishes Him from the rest, is Chit (Consciousness), Arul (Grace), Anandam (Bliss); in one word Grace. It is this that is

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often referred to as Chitsakti, Parasakti, AdiSakti and ArulSakti. This sun of Jnanasvarupa Sivam, the greatest of the great, spreads from His unapproachable height the rays of Consciousness, Grace and Bliss, his Sakti, to reach the depths of ignorance and iniquity. As the sun is known through his rays, this great Sun, God, is known through His rays of Grace. And this Grace, like the ocean, which sustains in its womb the legions of aquatic plants and animals, extending beyond their reach, ignored by them that frolic and gambol in its very womb is the Womb of Life, of Light and of all the worlds and is the all Container, நல்லருள் உதரமாய்ச் சமைந்தோய் - அருட்பூரணத்தில் பாராதிவைத்தபதி. And this Grace is the Holy Ghost that descends from Heaven in the form of the gentle dove and broods over the waters when darkness is upon the face of the deep; the Comforter that in-dwells the heart of all to lead the straying soul to Peace and Bliss, the spirit of Wisdom that illumines us and the path into Truth. கண்ணாடி போலவெல்லாம் காட்டும்திருவருள். And this Grace is the Mother that shows the Father to the crying babe and none cometh to the Father but through her தன்னையறியத் தனதருளால் தானுணர்த்துமன், for She is the Illuminator, the Instructor and the Guide.

His God then has Sakti in inseparable union; and as Love and Gentleness are womanly qualities, this Sakti is appealed to as the Mother, and God as the Father. The images of Siva and Uma in our temples aptly represent this conception; and perhaps the fear that Uma seated on the left of Siva may not be a true representation of Samavaya Union, compelled our Teachers to devise the other image half man and half woman from head to foot, perhaps the nearest symbol of the Truth. To people ignorant of the rationale of symbol worship this representation may be meaningless and ridiculous but to those who understand the principle involved, it is one for appreciation, reverence and worship. Tayumanavar specially refers to this Samavaya Union when he sings - ஓயும் சன்மமினி யஞ்சல் யஞ்சலென் றுலகம் கண்டுதொழ வோரு ருவிலே, தாயும் தந்தையுமானோய் சிரகிரித் தாயுமான தயாபரமூர்த்தியே.

This திருவருள்சக்தி is the Guide from the first to the last, being the nearest neighbour the warmest friend and the patient teacher. Those great ones who by life-long austerity and renunciation are fit for Instruction, resign themselves and their actions to the Mother of the Universe and witness the workings of திருவருள். It is திருவருள் that underlies all the forces of nature. It is திருவருள் that is at the root of evolution and involution. It is that vivifies, nourishes, protects, leads, instructs and absorbs the Soul. The God of Tayumanavar is in Union with such power of Grace and Love. He is also the Form and the Formless Rupi, Rugarupi, and Arupi and beyond, குன்றாத மூவுருவாய் அருவாய்ஞானக் கொழுந்தாகி யறுசமயக் கூத்துமாடி நின்றாய். He is the seven manifestations (ஏழுமூர்த்தம்). (In passing it may be observed that the ஏழுமூர்த்தம் referred to by Tayumanavar should properly refer to those in நவந்தருபேதம், excluding விந்து and சக்தி and not Vishnu, Indra, Brahma, Upamanyu, Sarya, Nandi and Murugan, as some Commentators would have it). His God is again the Saviour of all beings, ever ready with open arms to receive them into His Grace and guiding and directing at every step till they reach their goal. His God is to be seen in the Guru, the Linga and Sangama குருலிங்கசங்கமமாய்க் கொண்டதிருமேனி His God is also referred to as the only one Existence (Sat), the *all* of the Universe, but the Svami would quickly add, to avoid a mistaking of his doctrine, that He, His God, is *not all*. This doctrine of the *all* and *not all*, had

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misled some into thinking that Tayumanasvami was a believer in the Ekanmavada doctrine and they would probably approvingly quote.

"ஆதாரவாதேயமுழுதுநீ யதலாலகிலமீதென்னையாட்டி
ஆடல்கண்டவனுநீயாடுகின்றவனுநீ யருளுநீமௌனஞான
தாதாவநீபெற்றதாய் தந்தைதாமுநீதமருநீ யளவுநீகாண்".

and similar lines where one aspect of the Godhead is emphasised from a spiritual point of view. But the solution of this question is to be found in many of his hymns which, after exhausting all things nameable as God Himself, would in the same breath during that He is one of them, and that is because to a Jnani *all is Sivamayam*. The Svami himself explains why God is *all* and *not all* சித்தும் சடமும் சிவத்தைவிடவில்லை i.e., if not for Siva, the soul matter cannot exist நீயன்றிநானார் Who am I if not for you ? Such expressions as பார்க்கின்றமலருடும்நீயேயிருத்தி சுத்தமும் அசுத்தமும் - தொந்தமும் நீர்தொந்தமும் - உயிர்நீ யாக்கையுநீ etc., should be understood as the declarations of the Seers in Spiritual Communion, who see nothing but Sivasvarupa everywhere.

Any doubt on this point will be removed by carefully noting that the Svami, in more than one place, has distinctly, said that the soul is not God, God is not soul, but that a relation exists as is between the letter 'அ '—the root of all sounds—and the other letters of the alphabet.

Moreover the Svami in unmistakeable terms condemns the Ekanmavada and the Aham Parama Jnana—

"சொல்லுக்கடங்காச் சுகப்பொருளை நாமெனவே
அல்லும்பகலும் அரற்றுவதென் - நல்லசிவ
ஞானமயம்பெற்றோர்கள்நாமில்லை யென்பரந்தோ
மோனமயமானமுறை".

"விளக்குந்தகளியையும் வேறென்னார் நினைத்
துளக்கமறச்சிவனென்று சொல்வார்பாராபரமே".

"வானாதிநீயெனவே வைத்தமறையென்னையுநீ
தானாகச்சொல்வாயோ சாற்றாய்பராபரமே".

"பன்முகச்சமயநெறி படைத்தவரு மியாங்களே கடவுளென்றிடும்,
பாதகத்தவரும், வாததர்க்கமிடுபடிறரும் தலைவணங்கிட"

"நாம்பிரம்மென்றால் நடுவேயொன்றுண்டாமல்,
தேம்பியெல்லா மொன்றாயத்திகழுநாளெந்நாளோ."

If any further proof be necessary for determining the Svami's conception of God, at least for clearing it from any apparent inclination to Ekanmavada, it can be seen in his

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conception of the Soul. The Soul according to him is not the part of God, or a Spark from Him apparently or really, but an entity dependent on Him for its existence and Bliss. அருளுடைய பரமென்றோ அன்று தானேயானுளன் - என்றுநீ அன்றுநான் உன் அடிமை In one respect soul and God are the same, in that they are both Conscious entities as opposed to the jada—matter of Maya; but the soul is able to know only when instructed, but God is and knows by Himself. The sun sees by himself and the eye sees when illumined by the sun ; the sun is never overpowered by darkness, in fact there is no darkness at all from the point of view of the Sun but the eye is under darkness, till illumined by the rays of the sun. அப்பொருளும் ஆன்மாவும் ஆரணநூல் சொன்னபடி தப்பிலாச் சித்தொன்றாம் சாதியினால். Referring to the soul the master instructs that it is Chit, like the crystal which takes in the colours close by யாதொன்று பற்றின தனியல்பாய்நின்று, பந்தமரும் பளிங்கனையசத்துநீ, and the Lord is the Great Instructor, உன்பக்குவங் கண்டறிவிக்கும் பரன்மையேம்யாம்.

After carefully pondering over the real nature of Atma, the Svami exclaims that it is in vain people say that the soul is Chit or அறிவு for all along the soul has been in bondage, and but for the ray of Grace it would not ' know '

"ஊனொன்றி நாதனுணர்த்துமதை விட்டறிவே
னானென்றபாவிதலை நாளுநாளெந்நாளோ".

"கொடியவாணவ வறைக்குளே, அறிவதேது மன அறிவிலாமை மயமாயிருக்குமெனை யருளினால்". God is ever free and unlimited but the soul is in bondage under the clutches of Anava. கவ்வுமலமாகின்ற நாகபாசத்தினால் கட்டுண்ட உயிர்கள் - கருமருவகுகையனைய காயத்தினடுவிற், களிம்புதோய் செம்பனைய யான். But the Svami was prepared to call the soul அறிவு as a sort of a concession to its power to 'know' when illumined— நீயுணர்த்த நானுணரு நேசத்தாலோ, வறிவென்றே யெனக்கோர் நாமமிட்டதே

சதசத்தருளுணர்த்த தானுணரா நின்ற விதமுற்று,
அறிவெனும் பேர்மெய்.

Now as regards the Universe of Maya, the Svami's conception was, undoubtedly, that it proceeds from the cause 'Maya' which exists as an entity; he was a follower of Satkaryavada which postulates the reality of the cause, as against the Idealism of Mayavada or Vivartavada. But it may be held that such expressions as, அம்மாயையில்லாமையேயாம், முற்றுமில்லாமாயை, உண்டுபோலின்றாம் உலகம், மின்மயமானசகம், அகிலமாயை, காண்முயற்கொம்பேயென்கோ, கானலம்புனலேயென்கோ, வான்முகமுளரியென்கோ, tend to show his inclination to the idealistic conception of the world. Here again it is more a misunderstanding of the true import of the words used than the ambiguity. However real the Cause may be, if the effect is subject to change, it is unreal and compared to the Never-changing Existence of God, in whom Maya and the souls are lost as are the stars in the full rays of the Sun ; the Maya of the Universe is unreal, *is not*, not that it actually ceases to exist but it ceases to *show itself*.

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Those Jnanis who are the privileged ones to see the Sivasvarupa through the Grace of Siva everywhere and in everything, again and again declare that the world is nothing, is nought before their gaze, and in their conception. The Svami himself seems to have anticipated such misunderstanding of his views and has emphatically said in what sense முற்றுமில்லாமாயை etc., are to be understood.

வருவான்வந்தேனெனல் போல்மன்றியழியுஞ்சகத்தை
தெரிவாகவில்லையென்ற தீரம்பராபரமே.

It is therefore, the insignificance and the invisibility that is referred to as 'nought' by the great dues, insignificance when compared to the Vast Expanse of Sat and the invisibility, when seen with the illumined eye of Divine Grace.

The way of Salvation in which the Svami believed, is strikingly efficacious and simple, மூர்த்திதலம்தீர்த்தம் முறையாய்த் தொடங்கினர்க்கு, வார்த்தைசொல்லச் சற்குருவும் வாய்க்கும்பராபரமே.

The worship of the Manifestations of the Lord, and the pilgrimage to temples and holy waters are a preparation to receive the Holy word, from the Master. The Svami's Combat is with the mind; his frequent reference is to the 'turbulent and mischievous mind (பொல்லாதமாமர்க்கடமனம்) which would not give him a moment's peace to rest in the Lord, கொள்ளித்தேள் கொட்டிக்குதிக்கின்ற பேய்க்குரங்காய்க் கள்ளமனம்துள்ளுவதென்கண்டே. As a result of the poison of Anava the soul seeks to assert itself 'I' 'I', and there lies the cause of all this manifold manifestations; add to this the traitorous mind which ever carries the soul away from the true path, and the senses that are entangled in the objects of pleasure ; no hope for the soul to be free from these and to know itself or the Lord. Therefore, all measures are to be directed towards the tutoring of the mind in order that it may prize what is advantages to higher life. Be above the ties of the world, says the Svami, purify the mind by austerities and penances, kindness and Love, renounce all as evanescent till the mind takes delight in things Spiritual. To stop the Modifications of the mind is the next step and this is achieved by being the witness of things மனமாயைக்குடிகெடவேண்டிற் பணியறனின்றல் and ceasing to assert ones individuality as distinct from the rest, then ceases the dual relation of subject and object, முன்னி உலச்சட்டு ஒழிதல் rest from speech and action is thus gained (மோனம்) which is the prelude to the incoming ocean of Jnana. By whatever path one may go, the last step is Jnana, and Jnana alone (ஞானமலதுகதிகூடுமோ) where the soul stands serene as consciousness undefiled by the touch of Maya. (அசையாதிருந்துகொள் அறிவாகிறெஞ்சே). There flows the Grace of God, absorbing the illumined soul into its very Being. (அடியிணைக்கீழே யடக்கிக்கொண்டாண்டி). The goal is thus reached என்னைத்தானாக்கிக்கொண்டசமர்த்தைப்பார்தோழி. To describe this state of Perfect Bliss is to misrepresent it. சொல்லாலே சொல்பபுடும்மோ, சொல்லுந்தன்மை துரும்பு பற்றிக்கடல்கடக்கும் துணிபேயன்றோ. It is beyond speech and individuality, beyond time and space, not limited by day or night, endless limitless Expanse of Bliss. முற்றும் ஆனந்த நிறைவு யான்தானென்னதோன்றாது எல்லாம்விழுங்குஞ்சொருபம்.

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கூடுதலுடன்பிரித லற்றுநிர்த்தொந்தமாய்
குவிதலுடன் விரிதலற்றுக்
குணமற்றுவரவினொடு போக்கற்றுநிலையான
குறியற்று மலமுமற்று
நாடுதலுமற்றுமேல் கீழ்நடுப்பக்கமென
நண்ணுதலு மற்றுவிந்து
நாதமுமற்றவகைப் பூதபேதமுமற்று
ஞாதுருவின் ஞானமற்று
வாடுதலுமற்றுமே லொன்றற்றிரண்டற்று
வாக்கற்று மனமுமற்று
மன்னுபரிபுரணச் சுகவாரிதன்னிலே
வாய்மடுத் துண்டவசமாய்த்
தேடுதலுமற்றவிட நிலை. That is his goal.

III. HIS MISSION.

It is needless to emphasize that this great Personage had a Special mission to fulfil by his advent in the most modern times and the question would be to correctly delineate the mission and its scope from what can be gathered from his life and utterances. By his life, he taught an object lesson to men of the world that it is possible in all walks of life, to be in the world and to be out of it; whether as a student or householder, as a father or husband, as a master or servant, one can, in the midst of duties incidental to the particular station of life, fix his attention on the true object of life (ஞானம்) வந்தவரவைமறந்து, மிக்க மாதர் பொன்புமி மயக்கத்திலாமும், இந்தமயக்கையறுக்க.

He taught also that all stages of life, Brahmachari to Sanyasi, can be successfully passed in these days of materialised activities, if one is fortified with the purely religious qualities of the heart. He emphasised and exemplified that it is not learning but living that brings Peace and Bliss and that to be above the desires of the flesh is to plant one's feet firmly on the Spiritual ladder. He had proofs that the man who would go forward into the realm of the Spirit must renounce all of the flesh, by firmly rejecting the overtures of a queen of beauty and glands, for he knew that he who would see God must not interpose between himself and God, the putrid flesh of Maya. They see God, who do not fall a victim to the side glances of tempting women. What a great gulf between ourselves, who with lustful eyes, gaze at a passing dame, and the great one who, with watchful eyes, escapes from the snares of the woman's glance. This was his great strength in life, and he, by example showed the world the secret of one's greatness.

But these are, it may be said, features to be found in the lines of all true Jnanis. His special feature was the bridging of the yawning gulf between practical religion and abstruse philosophy. He gave Life to philosophy in order that it may appeal to the heart and be inviting to the thirsty soul. Dry Philosophy blossomed forth, at his hands into the cool shade of the Grace of God and the life-giving *nectar* of Bliss, to ease the weary pilgrim of Life. In short he was the popular commentator of the Higher Truth of Existence as postulated in the noble Saiva Religion. His Mission was to redeem Saiva Religion from the crude Siddhantists who would drag it into dualism and the erring Vedantists who would push it into monism to cut the golden mean of Vedanta Siddhanta—the Truth. His mission was to hold up the path of

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jnana as the portal to Bliss Everlasting and to point out the greatness and the glory of the Saiva Religion which recognises the workings of the Grace of God, at all times and climes, in all religions and creeds.

வேறுபடும் சமயமெல்லாம் புகுந்துபார்க்கின்
விளங்குபரம்பொருளேநின் விளையாட்டல்லால்.
மாறுபடுங்கருத்தில்லை முடிவின்மோன
வாரிதியினதித்திரள்டோல் வயங்கிற்றம்மா.

His Mission was the rousing of the Spirit of Tolerance, so that Love which is the Being of God Himself may be felt and tasted even in this life amidst the diversity of minds and hearts. And finally to receive all with open arms into his household to enable them to taste of the Ambrosia of Siva Bogam without restriction. He called to the world to lose no time in the lower stages of thought but to come straight away into the path of the Saiva Religion and partake of the over-flowing Bliss of Sivasayujya; indirectly commanding his followers to go forth and preach the noble Religion to all those who have ears to hear காகமுறவு கலந்துண்ணக்கண்டிர் சேரவாரும் செகத்தீரே.

To pay a fitting tribute to this great Saint, Poet and Philosopher, my words are feeble. To love him and honour him, and to spread the Light he lit, is the duty of those who meet at this spot Sacred to his memory. He lives here and elsewhere to inspire and instruct those who would continue his mission. Frail mortals know not his power, but those with the divine spark shining within, will feel the working of His Spirit, unified in the Great Being; Glory to the land of his birth; Glory to the land of his Samati; Glory to his Religion, the Vedanta Siddhanta Saivam.

OM-TAT-SAT.

R. S. S.