

weighty and valuable contribution in the sphere of philosophy.

2) *Theme of the Gītā.* It has been mentioned above that the Gītā forms chapters 25-45 in the Bhīṣma Parva of the Mahābhārata. The subject-matter of each chapter of the Gītā is given below.

Chapter 25. Arjunaviśāda yoga:—Both the armies take positions in Kurukṣetra. At the sound of the conches Arjuna becomes dejected and sorrowful at the prospect of killing relations, preceptors and Kinsmen.

Chapter 26. Sāṁkhya yoga:—The greatness and majesty of the Sāṁkhya and the Karma yogas.

Chapter 27. Karma yoga:—The need for action according to the Jñāna and the Karma yogas.

Chapter 28. Jñānakarma Vibhāga yoga:—Power of Saṅga Brahma (Brahma with attributes), Niṣkāma-karma yoga (Action without an eye on the result) spiritual greatness of various yajñas.

Chapter 29. Sannyāsa yoga:—Sāṁkhya yoga, Niṣkāma-karma yoga, Jñāna yoga, Jñāna yoga with Bhakti.

Chapter 30. Ātmasaṁyama yoga:—Niṣkāmakarma yoga, Ātmodhāraṇa, Jñānayoga.

Chapter 31. Jñāna yoga:—Jñānavijñānas, origin of the world, the Daiva and Āsura aspects of Īśvara, worship of other Devas.

Chapter 32. Tārakabrahma yoga:—Seven questions of Arjuna about Brahma, Ātmatatva and Karma. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's answers thereto. Bhakti yoga, the Śukla and the Kṛṣṇa mārgas.

Chapter 33. Rājarāja guhya yoga:—Jñāna and Vijñāna, origin of the world, Īśvarasvarūpa, Sakāmaniṣkāmo-pāsana, Bhagavadbhakti.

Chapter 34. Vibhūti yoga:—Bhagavān's Vibhūti (Divine attributes), Bhakti yoga.

Chapter 35. Viśvarūpa darśana yoga:—Arjuna's prayer to be shown Viśvarūpa (cosmic form), description of viśvarūpa by Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Sañjaya, Śrī Kṛṣṇa reveals viśvarūpa to Arjuna; fear-stricken at the sight, Arjuna sings the praise of Kṛṣṇa.

Chapter 36. Bhaktiyoga:—The great benefits of worshipping God with form and without form.

Chapter 37. Kṣetrakṣetrañña Vibhāga yoga:—Description of Kṣetrakṣetrañña with Jñāna, and of Prakṛti and Puruṣa.

Chapter 38. Guṇatrayavibhāga yoga:—The greatness of Jñāna; world's origin from Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the three guṇas, sattva, rajas and tamas; means to attain god; marks of Yugātītapuruṣa.

Chapter 39. Puruṣottama yoga:—Essential principles of world and life, attainment of God, relationship between Jīvātmā and Paramātmā, principle and theory of kṣara puruṣa and akṣara puruṣa.

Chapter 40. Daivāsura sampadvibhāga yoga:—Good actions, evil deeds, scientific actions and unscientific actions.

Chapter 41. Śradhātrayavibhāga yoga:—Descriptions of Scientific tapas, diet, yajñatapas and dāna. Interpretation of Om.

Chapter 42. Mokṣasannyāsa yoga:—Tyāgam, Sāṁkhya theory, Varnadharmas, jñānaniṣṭhā, Niṣkāmakarmayoga with bhakti and the greatness of the Gītā.

(For another story about the greatness of the Gītā see Duśśāsana II).

BHAGAVATĪ. The words Bhagavān and Bhagavati mean Paramātmā (universal self) and Prakṛti (Nature

and its modifications) respectively. Prakṛti is also called by the name Śakti. The following elucidation once given by Mahāviṣṇu about Bhagavān and Bhagavati is greatly illuminating.

Time, space, atmosphere and the universe (Brahmāṇḍam) are, just like Paramātmā, eternal. This is the truth and reality. Below this eternal Gokula exists Vaikuṇṭhaloka, which also is, like the former, eternal. Just like this, Prakṛti, which is a sport to Brahmā and is also without beginning or end (Sanātani) too is eternal. In the same manner as flame exists in fire inseparable from it, moonlight in moon, beauty in the lotus flower and brightness in the sun, so does nature exist in soul inseparable therefrom. In the same way as the goldsmith cannot make gold ornaments without gold and the potter cannot make pots without clay, the Paramātmā will not in the least be able to function unaided by Prakṛti. Prakṛti (Nature, Devī) is all powerful. 'Para' becomes powerful enough to do everything when he joins the Devī.

The sound 'Śa' means welfare and good fortune, and the sound 'kti' means prowess. Hence "Śakti" means the embodiment of welfare and prowess or she, who is the giver of welfare and prowess. Bhagavati combines in herself knowledge, affluence, riches, fame and strength. As the Paramātmā is always with and inseparable from such Bhagavati he is called Bhagavān also. When Prakṛti and Paramātmā remain combined it is called Parabrahma, which possesses neither form nor attributes. And, when Prakṛti and Puruṣa separate, of their own accord, they assume forms and attributes.

The above is Śaiva doctrine in a nut-shell. The Vaiṣṇavas do not accept this position. They ask, "How is it possible to have brightness or effulgence without there being an effulgent one?" Therefore, the Vaiṣṇavas believe in the existence, at the centre of an effulgent sphere, of a thing possessing the utmost effulgence and brightness equal to that of Brahmā. This 'thing'—Deva—is very efficient and effective to remedy sorrows due to birth, death, disease etc. and to him the lifetime of Brahma is just one minute only. This Deva is called Paramātmā, Parabrahma and Kṛṣṇa by the Vaiṣṇavas. 'Kṛṣ' means maximum devotion (love) towards Paramātmā, and 'ṇa' means he who becomes slave to such devotion. Hence Kṛṣṇa means he who becomes a slave to the love of his devotees. There is another meaning also for the word Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣ means all and 'ṇa' means seed or root; and thus Kṛṣṇa means he, who is the root of everything. In the very beginning there was only this Kṛṣṇa; and this Lord, subject only to his own will and pleasure, divided himself into two, the left side becoming woman and the right side man. (Devī Bhāgavata, Navama Skandha).

BHAGINI. A word used in addressing women. Verse 129 in chapter two of the Manusmṛiti lays down that the wife of another person and women who are not one's relatives should be addressed either as Bhavati, Subhage or Bhagini.

BHAGĪRATHA.

1) *Genealogy.* Descended from Viṣṇu thus: Brahmā-Marīci - Kaśyapa-Vivasvān-Vaivasvata manu-Ikṣvāku-Vikukṣi-Śaśāda - Kakutstha-Anenas-Prthulāśva-Prasenajit-Yuvanāśva - Māndhātā - Purukutsa - Trasadasyu-Anarāya-Haryaśva-Vasumanas - Sudhanvā - Traiyyāraṇa-Satyavrata or Triśaṅku - Hariścandra-Rohitāśva-