

CHAPTER VI.

" EVALUATION "

(I).

Introductory.

We have seen in the foregoing chapters the contents of Purusottama's works, his dialectics and interpretations and his exposition of the Suddhādvaita, which has been explained in his voluminous commentaries and more than a score of independent works. The work of an author can however best be appreciated, if we try to understand him and the ideas that he put forth in relation to the time and tradition to which he belonged. We have already seen in the first chapter that Purusottama was born, when India witnessed feuds and strifes from all the quarters. Though India was a dreamland of gold in the eyes of foreigners, there was no political stability and the strong regime of the Moghuls was defied from various quarters. A dark age was looming large over the head of Indians, forboding the grim picture of petty strifes of small principalities. The conditions were almost on the verge of being chaotic. Fear and distrust took the place of peace and stability and

inspite of the glory of wealth, there was utter poverty of prosperity and welfare. The Hindu society remained a hetegogenous mess of a variety of people having a variety of beliefs. There were too many religious beliefs and Hinduism was manifold and yet getting more and more conservative. There were many thinkers, scholars, authors and saints, all struggling to do something and the common man was led to and fro by the conflicting views, which he could not and therefore did not care to understand. It was this age which produced Purusottama.

We have to study the aims and achievements of this great scholar, who wrote and discussed and taught throughout the large span of his life. How was he looked upon by his own people? What did he think about them? How could he influence them? What did he contribute to the Sampradāya? What can possibly be his place in the history of the Sampradāya in particular and of Indian thought in general? All these questions remain to be answered. We have tried in the following pages to give an evaluation from this point of view. We have at our disposal no factual history of the

Sampradāya, how it was moulded and how it suffered the ups and downs in its chequered career of about five hundred years. We have to depend upon the references in his works, the references which are rare and at times not conclusive either. We have also at our disposal some hear-says and traditions.

(II).

Purusottama and the Sampradāya.

While we have no means to know the relations of Purusottama with other Goswāmis of his time, there is every reason to believe that his relations with at least some of them appear to be anything but cordial. Certain charges were levelled against him, we do not know by whom nor do we know whether they were levelled in his own time or after his death, though the later seems to be more probable. This great scholar is said to have been jeered at as 'Vedapaśu' by his contemporaries. Further a more serious charge against him is that with all his efforts to explain the principles of the Śuddhādvaita, Purusottama is said to have advocated

the 'Apsiddhāntas' or wrong theories.¹

There are three hearsays which go against him. We have referred to all of them while dealing with Puruṣottama's life. It is said that Puruṣottama brought the image of Bālakṛṣṇa to Surat, hiding it in the locks of his hair. The other two have something to do with his relations with Harirāya. One is that of Harirāya's ordering him to take off the footwear from the feet of Śrīnāthajī and the other is that of the explanation of one passage in the Subodhinī to Puruṣottama by an old lady, who just heard the explanation given by Harirāya.

The first of these ^{or} ~~hearsays~~ is nothing but a myth, because the idol of Bālakṛṣṇa was brought to Surat by Vrajerāya, who came to possess the same as a result of the distribution of the images. We have detailed the whole incident in chapter II above. The fact however that such a fiction has been woven round the name of Puruṣottama shows that attempts were made in the Saṃpradāya to portray him in not a very good light. The attempts appear to have been made deliberately

1. Avatārevādāvalī. Hindi. Intro. p.6.

because it is difficult to find out any basis for the currency of such a tradition. The two hearsays relating Puruṣottama's inferiority to Harirāya were current among the followers of the latter. The historicity of both the stories is seriously questionable. The impression that we get of Puruṣottama from his works ~~is~~ is that he was not only a very great scholar, but also very exact and fastidious. How is it possible that he might have committed such a breach of discipline, when he was himself so very particular about everything? Even if we admit that Puruṣottama was a young enthusiast, when he went to the temple of Śrīnāthajī and hence he might have done this, the second story is still more unacceptable, looking to the deep and penetrating in-sight that his works show. It is too much to assume that Puruṣottama could understand~~ing~~ the meaning of a passage from one who heard it from Harirāya. On the other hand it is very likely that both these stories have been made out by the followers of Harirāya to prove the superiority of their old teacher over this young man. Was there some sort of rivalry between these two great~~men~~ of the system? Harirāya was much older than Puruṣottama and it is not likely that he might have

considered this youth as his rival. If at all there was a rivalry, it probably existed in the minds of the followers of Harirāya. But there surely was a difference in the thoughts and treatment of these two and both have played their parts differently in the history of the Saṃpradāya.

Harirāya can best be compared with Gokulaṅātha and Viṭṭhaleśa. He was a devotee and his mission was to explain the path of devotion to the masses. His works are mainly short tracts and most of them are on the Subodhinī. He taught more of Kṛṣṇa and his Līlā, Puṣṭi and Māyādā rather than Brahman and its attributes or the theory of causation. Puruṣottama on the other hand discussed and debated the principles of the Suddhādvaita philosophy. He was a scholar par excellence and he considered it his duty to explain the theories taught by Vallabha by argumentation and analysis. The works of Harirāya do not reveal the scholarship, that is seen in the works of Puruṣottama. Puruṣottama on his part appears to lack that emotion and spiritual experience of a devotee. Though he was sincere in his devotion, the emotional side of a devotee was burnt in the white heat of his

intellectual feats. Harirāya was a mystic, a follower of the Prameya Mārga, while Puruṣottama was rational and leaning towards the Pramāna Mārga. Is it likely that the followers of Harirāya, who did not find that brilliance of erudition in their own teacher, thought it proper to circulate such stories which would glorify Harirāya at the cost of Puruṣotta^{ma}?

And what did Puruṣottama himself think of the Sampradāya as it was before him? Puruṣottama was bold enough to assert that the Sampradāya was Nivṛtta. It was due to the grace of Lord Balakṛṣṇa who inspired his mind that he could know the meaning of Anubhāsyā. ² The ^{verse} ~~works~~ at the end of the Anubhāsyā-Prakāśa clearly shows that while Vallabha and after him Viṭṭhaleśa wrote certain works, their followers did not care to understand them much less to explain them. Vallabha preached his theories but he called himself Vallabha Dīkṣita and not Vallabha-Ācārya. Viṭṭhaleśa was mainly responsible for the establishment of the Śuddhādvaita as a system. While he completed the works, which his father left incomplete, and wrote

2. Kṛīḍan śrī Bālakṛṣṇaḥ paramakarunayā manmanah prerayitvā,
Dhāsyārtham yo' tigūḍham prakāṣitam akarot sampradāya

Nivṛtte.

Concluding V.1.A.B.P.p.1441.

some independent works also, he did not devote his time so much to the writing of works, as to the propagation and systematisation of the Śuddhādvaita as a Samprayadāya, which could open its doors even to the ignorant masses. The worship of the idol of God came to be a full-fledged affair.

Even Viṭṭhaleśa in his works gave much more importance to the practical rather than the theoretical side. He was followed by Gokulanātha, Kalyāṇaraya, Harirāya, and many others who taught, talked and wrote of the līlā of the Lord. It was the age of intense intellectual activity in India and scores of scholars came out to support and demolish various theories. Puruṣottama could see that whatever might have been the effect of the Sāmpradāyic teaching on the masses, it was necessary to face the scholars on equal ground; if at all the Śuddhādvaita as a system wanted to survive. Puruṣottama could further see that many important points were left ~~at~~ obscure by Vallabha and that blissful obscurity was kept intact by his descendants. The task before Puruṣottama was thus not only to comment upon the works of Vallabha and Viṭṭhaleśa but also to explain, analyse and find out the exact significance of many of the theories taught by Vallabha,

with a comparative study of the theories of others. The greatest contribution of Puruṣottama to the Sampradāya is this: He explained the doctrines and what is more he put the whole system on a dialectical basis, so that the opponents could be met on their ~~own~~^w grounds. In doing so he had to be an argu~~mentator~~ and could not afford to go on talking about the halls of Heaven. Even while commenting upon the sixteen~~th~~ tracts, Puruṣottama has this very approach and this perhaps earned for him the honorific title of 'Vedapaśu', because naturally none would have liked the bold statement 'Sampradāye nivṛtte'. The charge of Puruṣottama's having taught the apasiddhāntas is very serious indeed, but curiously none has said what apasiddhānta has been taught by him and how. We have in the preceding chapter given in detail the Śuddhādvaita doctrines as expounded by Puruṣottama and we have found that Puruṣottama arrives at the belief in Tādātmya: 'Bhedasahisṇur abhedah.' as the teaching of Vallabha. But this is a natural corollary to which any student of Vallabha would be driven and there is nothing wrong in it. Or is it that it is all miraculous and one should not even try to understand it? Puruṣottama never refutes Vallabha or

Vitthaleśa, he never goes against them at any point while writing; not only so but he defends them even though at times he appears to be defending what can not be defended.

We have referred above in Chapter V. to the statement of Giridhara, who says that the understanding of pure monism is the best, while the Bhedābheda is understood by the Madhyames. Puruṣottama has mainly taught the Madhyama Pakṣa, while it has been shown at places by Vallabha.³ Can this be taken as a clue to the said charge of apasiddhānta? Any way there is no apasiddhānta in what Puruṣottama has taught. If Vallabha's philosophical teaching is to be understood from the point of view of reason, the Śuddha-advaita is nothing more, nor anything less than Tādātmya.

Puruṣottama very often does not subscribe to the traditional line adopted by his predecessors. Thus for instance he is the only writer in the Sampradāya who pays homage to Gopīnātha, the elder son of Vallabha.⁴ He calls him the Vallabha-Pratinidhi. The relation between Vitthaleśa and

3. Śuddhādvaita Mārtanda. V. 34-36. Appendix . to Śuddhādvaita-
-tasiddhāntapradīpa. p. 226.

4. A.B.P. Intro. V. 5. p. 1.

Gopīnātha was fairly cordial but after the death of Gopīnātha, there was some quarrel between his wife and Viṭṭhaleśa. As a result of this, perhaps, and also because Gopīnātha did not enjoy a long life so as to be able to do something for the system, he was completely forgotten by the scholars of the Sampradāya. Any way, Puruṣottama thought it to be sheer in-justice and thus he mentioned him even before Viṭṭhaleśa. Curiously enough this has led to a traditional belief in the Sampradāya that Gopīnātha was reborn as Puruṣottama.⁵

Puruṣottama again is completely conservative in his outlook like a typical Brahmin author of mediaeval days. He does not like that even the Śūtras and women should be given freedom to get knowledge as much as a member of the three higher classes. After Viṭṭhaleśa there was a tendency among the teachers of the Sampradāya to appeal to the lower strata of ignorant masses and to explain to them the Bhāgavata, the Mahābhārata and such other works. Puruṣottama tries to put a check on this and says that

5. Cf. Puṣṭimārganām pañcama varṣa. Part. II. p. 2.

the Śūdras and women may be allowed to study these works but only those portions which do not treat of Brahman. He discusses the whole point and argues out why they should not be allowed to do so.⁶

A very important point, which should be noted in this connection, is that Puruṣottama was very careful in emphasising a high moral standard for the people. Puruṣottama has discussed the whole question of Indriya-nigraha very forcefully and at length in his Āvaranabhaṅga.⁷ Puruṣottama was also unhappy at the way in which foreign language and dress were wholeheartedly welcomed by his own people. He called them fools.⁸ Puruṣottama had thus something of a reformer in him and he tried hard to point out that laxity of morals should never be tolerated in any case.

6. A.B.P. pp. 442-444.

7. T.Sn. Ab. V. 238. pp. 184-186.

8. Etena ye mūrkhā anāpady api mlecchādiveśabhāśādikam
rocayante svīkurvanti ca te'pi tatheti bodhyam.

T.Sn. Ab. p. 163.

To remove the ignorance of his own people and to refute the charges against the Sampradāya, Puruṣottama goes to the extent of discussing even the practice of the Brahmasambandha and the prose passage connected with it. He explains the Brahmasambandha as "Brahmasambandho nāma sarvasmin bhagavatsvāmikatvarūpaḥ sambandhaḥ; tasya karanam nāma bhagavatā ācāryān prati gadyenokto ya ātmasamarpana-prekārah; tadrītyā bhagavati svātmasahitasvīyasarvepadārthā-nām bhagavati tathātvavijñāpanam. 'Sa vai naiva reme'iti śruteḥ, 'krīdārtham ātmana idam trijagatkṛtam te svāmyam tu tatra kudhiyo para īśa kuryar' ity ādivākyaḥ ca, vestutaḥ sarvasya bhagavedīyatve'pi 'sa vai naiva'ityādi śrutyā ramanārtham dvitīyanirmānādiśrāvanāt tenāpādītā yā tattatpadārthe jīvasye svatvasvīyatvābhināpiḥ tatparityā-gena teṣu bhagavedīyatvasya vijñāpanam ūti yāvat."⁹ While discussing the prose passage, Puruṣottama knows that he is not maintaining the secrecy of the Sampradāya. He is apologetic for this. He says: "Yat punaḥ prācīnair atra

9. Puruṣottama's Vivaraṇa on Siddhāntarahasya. p. 39.

kim api noktam tatra itadgopyatvam eva bījam. Mayā tu yad
 idam uktaṃ tad bahirmukha mukhadhvansārtham eveti na tad-
 -virodho doṣāya. Yady api maduktau mārgarahasya prakāśanā-
 -parādha āyāti, tathāpi pāra-kāśanasyānyenaiva kṛtatvena-
 -tadarthasandehavāraṇasyaiva matkṛtityā svotkarsa prakāśanā-
 -rjhatvābhāvāt bhagavān śrīmadācārya acaraṇās ca madaparādham
 10
 kṣemaṃ ity ity dik."

Puruṣottama treats all his predecessors with due
 respects. This is particularly noticeable in his commentaries
 on the sixteen tracts, where he refers to the diversity of
 interpretations given by the earlier writers of the
 Sampradāya. It is important to note that in these cases
 Puruṣottama does not refute those who have given different
 interpretations. He just refers to them and then he appears
 to give his own view with some hesitation. A typical
 example of this is found in his commentary on the
 Bhaktiverdhinī, when he says that he was inspired by the
 Lord to explain in that way. He says : "Prāñcas tu kecid-
 imam bhānam āsaktilakṣaṇatvenāhuḥ. Anye punar Vyasa-

lakṣaṇatvena. Artham ca svasvarītyā tamṣtām āhuh. Mama tu bhagavān evam preritavān iti mayāivam vāyākhyātam. Gr̥h̥atyaga evācāryānām āśayasya sphuṭatvād iti.¹¹"

To wind up the whole discussion we may again bræefly indicate Puruṣottama's contribution to the Śuddhādvaita. Firstly Puruṣottama has for the first time analysed and explained those principles of the Śuddhādvaita, which have so far been neglected by his predecessors. Secondly Puruṣottama for the first time put the Śuddhādvaita System on a dialectical basis, on a par with other systems of the Vedānta and outside the Vedānta. Thirdly Puruṣottama tried to raise the moral standard of the people.

(III).

Puruṣottama's influence on the Sampradāya.

Puruṣottama's voluminous works, commentaries and independent tracts, opened the eyes of latter scholars of the system. They considered it therefore their duty to focus their attention on the principal works of the Śuddhādvaita, Anubhāṣya, Tattvadīpanibandha and to a lesser extent the Vidvanmandana. They saw that these works should no longer be

11. Puruṣottama's commentary on Bhakti-wardhinī. p. 40.

neglected and efforts were made to study them and to explain them by writing commentaries on them. This is surely an achievement for Puruṣottama, because none of his predecessors explained those works and they were content with commenting upon the sixteen tracts and some parts of the Subodhinī alone. The deep and penetrating insight found in the works of Puruṣottama however shows that he set a very high standard of scholarship, which could not be achieved by the scholars who followed him. Those commentators followed the voluminous works of Puruṣottama and many of them appear to have given nothing more than simple short explanations, abridged and culled from the ^PBrakāśa or Suvarṇasūtra or Āvaranabhaṅga.

Out of the successors of Puruṣottama, Gopāśvara can be called the most outstanding writer and scholar in the Sampradāya. Even his father Gokulotsava, who was born in V. S. 1815, was a very good scholar and was called Vidvat-śiromani and Vāk-cāturi-dhurīna. We have seen that Puruṣottama gave his property to another Puruṣottama, son of Muralīdhara. This Puruṣottama's son Govardhaneśa also died sonless. His wife Mahārāṇīvahujī adopted Gokulotsava

in V.S.1850. Gokulotsava is said to have written some comentaries. Shri C.H. Shastri gave me a list of some of the works written by him. They are : (1) Saundaryapadyatīkā, (2) Vivekadhairyaśrayatīkā, (3) Sannyāsanirnayatīkā, (4) Siddhān-tarahasyatīkā and (5) Srīngāraraśamandanatīkā. It is said that Gokulotsava was a very good speaker.

Gopeśvara, born in V.S.1835, was the eldest son of Gokulotsava. On account of Gokulotsava's adoption to the pontifical chair in Surat, Gopeśvara could acquire all the works, that were in possession of Puruṣottama. It was a literary heritage and Gopeśvara took the greatest advantage of it. Shri. C.H. Shastri could find out a list of his works, in his own handwriting. His works as stated in the list are as follows:-

- (1) Vedanavārthitīkā,
- (2) Brhadāraṇyaka-brāhmanadvaya-tīkā,
- (3) Chāndogyānuvāk-vyākhyā,
- (4) Ātmabodhopaniṣat-tīkā,
- (5) Śloko...with commentary (Some letters are missing here in the list, found by C.H. Shastri),
- (6) Sadyuktimaṇi,
- (7) Bhaktimārtanda,
- (8) Fourth Adhyāya of the Adhikaraṇamālā,

- (9) Ātmavāda,
 (10) Parivṛdhāstakāṭikā,
 (11) Svapnadarśanatīkā,
 (12) Sub-commentary on the commentary of the Vivaraṇa-
 -kārikās, on 'Kathā imāste...',
 (13) Bhaktiretna,
 (14) Bhaktiretnatīkā,
 (15) Raśmi,
 (16) Pañcapadī,
 and
 (17) Jaiminisūtravṛtti.

Raśmi is a voluminous sub-commentary on the Bhāṣya-
 -prakāśa of Puruṣottama. Shri M.T. Telivala says about it
 thus: "The author of Raśmi thoroughly explains not only
 the Bhāṣyaparakāśa of Śrī Puruṣottamajī but even supplies
 the want, which was felt by the readers of Prakāśa.

Prakāśakāra took for granted that readers^{er} of Aṇubhāṣya,
 understood the literal sense of the Aṇubhāṣya and hence
 we rarely find him explaining the literal text of the
 Aṇubhāṣya. For this reason, the author of Raśmi in all
 places where he finds that Śrī Puruṣottamajī has not
 explained the Aṇubhāṣya, tries to give the literal meaning

of all the passages of the Anubhāṣya." ¹² Gopeśvara was called "yogī" and 'sarvavettā', while Puruṣottama was called 'Paṇḍita Purandarepūrī' and 'Daśa-Śāganta-vijayā'. A comparison between Puruṣottama and Gopeśvara need not be attempted, but it must be said that Gopeśvara was recognised by the Sampre-dāya as a sincere devotee, besides being recognised as a great scholar, while Puruṣottama was appreciated only as a scholar.

It will be a point of interest to compare the Bhakti-mārtanda of Gopeśvara with the Prasthānaratnākara of Puruṣottama. Like the Prasthānaratnākara, it also contains four chapters on Premāṇa, Prameya, Sādhana and Phala. But there is an important point of difference. Puruṣottama's aim is to explain the theories of the Śuddhādvaita, whereas Gopeśvara sets out to explain the Bhakti, as he himself says in the beginning. ¹³ Thus he begins not with an explanation of the theory of knowledge or the means of proof, but with a

12. A.B. with P.&R. III. i. Intro. p. 10.

13. Vedādisarvasāstrārthabhūtām brahmiṣṭhadurlabhām,

Bhaktim vakṣye yethāsāstram prabhubhir viśadikṛtām.

Bhaktimārtanda. Intro. V. 5. p. 1.

question as to how Bhakti can be understood as the meaning of all the Śāstras. Similarly the Prameyaprakaraṇa is also written with the express purpose of explaining Bhakti.¹⁴ The Sādhanaaprakaraṇa is to show that Bhakti is the main Sādhana, and the fruit obtained by means of it is explained in the last chapter. Gopeśvara discusses other topics also, e.g. the concept of akṣara,¹⁵ that of Abheda,¹⁶ etc, but one will find that these discussions are subordinated to the discussion on Bhakti. Again many of them are bodily found in the works of Puruṣottama. A typical example of this is Puruṣottama's defence of Bhāskara against Vācaspati in the Anubhāsyaprakāśa. The whole passage is almost quoted in the Bhaktimārtanda.¹⁷

Thus we find that in his works Gopeśvara discusses more about Bhakti, Puṣṭi, Līlā and all that than Puruṣottama. If Puruṣottama can be compared with Vallabha, Gopeśvara should be

14. Atha bhaktiśabdārtham nirṇetum prameyaprakaraṇam
ārabhyate. Bhaktimārtanda. p. 70.

15. Bhaktimārtanda. p. 109. ff.

16. Bhaktimārtanda. p. 116. ff.

17. Cf. Bhaktimārtanda. p. 205. ff. and A. B. P. pp. 93-95.

compared with Vitthaleśa. Even in the colophons one may note that while Puruṣottama generally refers to Vallabha, Gopeśvara, refers to Vitthaleśa.¹⁸

We have noted above how Cokulotsava came to Surat, after being adopted by Mahārānīvahujī, wife of Govardhaneśa. His descendants were also good scholars and sincere devotees. Surat thus remains a seat of learning. Just now the Badamandir in Surat is adored by His Holiness Shri. Vrajaratnalalji Maharaj, who was born in V.S. 1952. He is a very good scholar himself and a sincere devotee. Due to his efforts the Akhila Bharatiya Shri Balakrishna Shuddhadvaita Mahasabha was established in Surat in V.S. 1882. Many works of the Sampradāya have been published by the said association. The Mahasabha is also conducting examinations on the Śuddhādvaita. One Shuddhadvaita Vaishnava school has been established in Madras in V.S. 2002. There is also a Vallabha-Vedānta prize, bearing his name in the Gujarat University.

(IV).

Puruṣottama's place in Indian Philosophy.

The late Pandit Gattulalji of Bombay is said to have

18. See Colophons in A.B. with P. & R.

compared Puruṣottama with the famous Jain scholar Hemacandra, described as Kalikālasarvajña, and with Sāyana Mādhava. He called Puruṣottama a 'Sarvatantrasvatantra! The title of Sarvatantrasvatantra, though so much in vogue among ancient scholars, has not often been understood exactly as regards the meaning, it conveys. Sarvatantrah may mean one who knows all the Tantras. 'Sarvāṇi tantrāṇi adhīṣe veda vā.' Together with this is added 'Sva-tantra' which shows that such a scholar is not only a very good student of all the systems, but is an independent thinker himself. Thus he has both the scholar-ship and originality of thinking.

Hemacandra, perhaps the greatest Jain scholar, who ever wrote in Sanskrit and Prakrit, was not just a philosopher or teacher of Jainism. He was a poet, grammarian, rhetorician, historian, writer of a work on prosody, and what not. Puruṣottama also was a profound scholar of all the branches of Sanskrit literature and philosophy. We have seen that he refers to many works and systems and has so many things of his own to say regarding them. One may perhaps feel that Puruṣottama, though a prolific writer, has written everything by way of

explaining the Śuddhādvaita theories and practices, while for Hemachandra it may be said that he has written on all the branches of literature independently.

Puruṣottama should be compared with great commentators like Vācaspati Miśra, Sudarśana Bhaṭṭa, and Jayatīrtha. All these scholars were authors of standard commentaries on the Bhāṣyas of their respective masters. Even among these, the figure of Vācaspati Miśra stands aloof. He can really be called Sarvatantrasvatanttra, because he has written scholarly and authentic commentaries on almost all the orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy. He has written Nyāyakanikā, Tattvasamīksā, Tattvabindu, Nyāyavērttikatātparyatīkā, Sāṅkhya-tattvakaumudī, Tattvasāradī and Bhāmaṣi. Thus he wrote on all the systems of Indian Philosophy except the Vaiśeṣika. It is noteworthy that Vācaspati, though a follower of Śaṅkara, shows himself an independent thinker, owing allegiance to no single system in a dogged manner. Puruṣottama is surely an independent thinker (Svatanttra), and has passed his own comments on the concepts of other systems also, but he is a follower of the Śuddhādvaita, from the first to the last.

Curiously however there is one common point between the two. Just as Puruṣottama was charged with having taught the Apasiddhānta, even Vācaspati was taken to task by some for saying something against the Bhāṣya of Śaṅkara. Amalānanda gives a spirited defence of Vācaspati, when he says :
 "Tasmād Vācaspatimatam Bhāṣyaviruddham iti kaiścid ayuktaṃ uktaṃ. Kiñ ca -

Agnītatvabhrāntatādōṣād arakṣat parameśvaram,
 Etad bhāṣyārthatattvārtho vācaspatir agādhadhiḥ." 19

Puruṣottama's task however as a commentator of Vallabha was more difficult than that of Vācaspati, Sudarśana, or Jayatīrtha. Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva were clear and exact, while Vallabha was not at all clear, at times very obscure. The difficulty of Puruṣottama thus lay in the terse laconic style of Vallabha. Hence whereas Vācaspati and others were concerned with advancing the arguments for the positions, accepted by their respective Ācāryas, Puruṣottama had to explain the theories of Vallabha, analyse them and then indulge in argumentation.

19. Kelpateru on Brahmasūtras. I. ii. 22, quoted by D. K. Shāstri in 'Aitiḥāsika Śaṅśodhana.' p. 122.

The real contribution of Puruṣottama to Indian Philosophy is his work for the Sampṛadāya. He could see that it was an age of Chaos, in which the system of Vallabha could flourish ~~ed~~ only if it was properly explained and argued out. Otherwise it would go down in the eyes of scholars. Puruṣottama did what was needed. His name will be remembered in the History of Indian Thought as the strongest and greatest exponent of the Śuddhādvaita, which was hitherto not understood and was therefore mis-understood and neglected. If one wants to study the system of Vallabha, one should read the works not ^{only} of Vallabha and his son, but one should also read with them the commentaries of Puruṣottama, besides his independent works. It is really a misfortune that a scholar like Puruṣottama should have been jeered at and called 'Veda-pāṣu' by those for whom he wrote and debated and argued.

The best appreciation of Puruṣottama was made by Prof. M. C. Shastri, who founded an association called 'Śrī Puruṣottama Mandala' in Bombay in 1925 A.D. Every week end Prof. Shastri came from Poona to Bombay and delivered Lectures on the works of Vallabha and Puruṣottama. It is interesting to note that in 1926 A.D. the members of the said association

expressed their feeling of gratitude to the Learned Professor by presenting him an address and a Gold Medal in the Madhavbag, Bombay.

The present writer has seen a copy of the picture of Puruṣottama and is prepared to endorse readily what Shri. N.D.Mehta has said about him. Shri Mehta who happened to see one such copy remarks that his forehead is brimming with profound thoughts and his large eyes appear to accept the objections of the opponents with an open mind. The pointed tip of his nose shows his ability to refute those objections with subtle arguments, and his chin shows the strength of his firm determination.²⁰

At the end of this study, I would like to quote two traditional verses regarding Puruṣottama:

(1) Śrīmadvallabhādikṣītāhvayaharer vandyānvaye saṅgamas
Tatkārūnyasudhābhīṣekavikasatsaubhāgyabhūmodayah,
Dṛpyeddurmedavādividvādibhaduṣkūtoktikumbhasthālī-
Sadyobhāñjenakelikesariṇpatih Pītāmbaresyātmejah.

20. Cf. N. D. Mehta. Hinda Tattvajñāneno Itihāsa. Vol. II. p. 260.

(2) Nēsīd ena samah samastanigamasurtyāditattvārthavid
Vektā cāpratimāḥ sadāḥsu viduṣām adyēpi bhūmau budhāḥ,
Yeh sarvam naivalakṣapādyakemitapraudhāprabandham vyadhāt
Sa Śrīmān Puruṣottame Vijayatām Ācāryacūdāmanih.

-(0)X X X (0)-