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# NUDITY OF JAINA SAINTS

SECOND EDITION

(Revised and Enlarged)

6-3-1932

BY

CHAMPAT RAI JAIN,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.



## INTRODUCTION

Nudity is the garb of nature for man. Adam and Eve lived naked and were not ashamed of it, so long as they ate not the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. So nudity in itself is not a thing of abhorrence, rather it is a Virtue, which has been much prized in every important religion of the world.

Mr. Champat Rai Jain, Vidya-Varidhi, Bar-at-Law, has emphatically established this fact in the present valuable booklet. Nudity is the primitive practice of simplicity and its value for morality and health can not be over-looked. "Having given some study to the subject" writes a learned contributor in the *London Daily News*, (dated 1st April, 1913) "I may say that Rev. J. F. Wilkinson's remark upon the superior morality of the races that do not wear clothes is fully borne out by the testimony of the travellers. It is true that wearing of clothes goes with a higher state of the arts and to that extent with civilisation, but it is, on the other hand, attended by a lower state of health and morality, so that no clothed civilisation can expect to attain to a high rank."

The Greek Philosopher Diogenes, a contemporary of Alexander the great, lived naked, and the ancient Greeks made nude images as well. In India nudity has been highly prized since hoary antiquity. It stands as a symbol for the highest pitch of Renunciation and the Divinity of man.

Lord Rishabha, the first Tirthamkara of the Jainas, preached it long ago; and he was imitated in this respect by the Brahmana Paramahansas and the non-Brahmana Sramanas. Nagas of the Kapalika School of Hinduism survive to this day in South India; but the naked Sramana-

Ajivikas had long been sub-merged in the fold of naked Jainas\*, who follow the path even now in the same manner as chalked out by the Great Tirthamkaras.

The thanks of all the pious Jainas, of course, are due to the learned author and the enthusiastic publishers for bringing out this valuable and interesting booklet, which, we hope, will dispel the darkness of ignorance in respect to Jaina Saints.

KAMTA PRASAD JAIN, M.R.A.S.

Aliganj (Etah) August 1931.

\* The Jaina as well as Hindu Shastras bear testimony to this view. (See my new book on the Digambara Saints). Makkhali Goshal, Puran Kassapa and other non-orthodox Sramanas were adherents of the Ajivika Sect and went about naked. (See Paramatthajotika, II, Pp. 372-373, and Jatakathavannana, I. P. 390). The Hindu Paribrajakas of the Turiyatita and the Avadhuta type also remain naked. (Sannyasopanisad 13).

NUDITY

The householders clothes which they the Vanaprastha saints on the 11th stage of the Digambara the *langoti*. But the view to assail virtue immorality in any by the nudity of sa Dharma, so far as forget that the point Religion and Art, and to interfere with the soul. It is vices of the world regarded as highly Sacred Literature; enough to deny that sexes are not only in museums and places in the draw respected and virtue. In respect also of it is sufficient argument would come to a state be permitted to such a healthy virtue. the frail little infant refuse to attend to ground of its nudity open to the sick in on him from consideration the marital relationship be rendered infelicitous being tantamount



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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I have enlarged the text of this tract for the second edition and have made several valuable additions to it here and there.

In Appendix B. are given some letters that passed between Mahatma Gandhi and myself on the subject of the nudity of Jaina Saints. Gandhiji has now cleared up his position in one of the issues of the *Nawajwan*, where he has expressed distress at the interference with the freedom of the Jaina Saints. The correspondence is, however, valuable as it is likely to clear up certain points and misconceptions in connection with the subject of the tract, and has been incorporated, for this reason, herein.

For the historical matter incorporated in Appendix A. in this edition I am obliged to my friend, Mr. Kamta Prasad Jain, M.R.A.S., whom I have freely robbed for the purpose, and who has put up with the robbery uncomplainingly. The references will be found in his "Digambaratva aur Digambara Muni," though I have given them in some places in my 'note'.

I have also derived some help from Mr. S. C. Ghoshal's manuscript, entitled "The Digambara Saints of India," which has not yet been published.

New Delhi, 6-3-32.

C. R. JAIN.





## NUDITY OF JAINA SAINTS.

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The householders in the Jaina community put on clothes which they discard gradually as they approach the Vanaprastha stage, finally retaining only a *langoti* on the 11th stage of the house-holders's path. The saints of the Digambara community must discard even the *langoti*. But they do not discard clothes, with a view to assail virtue or to excite sexual passion or immorality in any one's heart. Decency is not affected by the nudity of saints. As said in the House-holder's Dharma, so far as decency is concerned we must not forget that the point does not arise in connection with Religion and Art, and cannot, most certainly, be allowed to interfere with the attainment of the great ideal of the soul. It is well-known that most of the Scriptures of the world contain matter which would be regarded as highly indecent if met with outside the Sacred Literature; and no one will be found bold enough to deny that nude pictures and statues of both sexes are not only exhibited publicly, as works of art, in museums and show-rooms, but also find conspicuous places in the drawing-rooms and parlours of the most respected and virtuous families in all grades of society. In respect also of the inadmissibility of the objection, it is sufficient argument to say that all worldly traffic would come to a standstill should ultra-prudish notions be permitted to supplant and usurp the place of practical healthy virtue. What harm, for instance, would not the frail little infant in arms suffer should its parents refuse to attend to its comforts and cleanliness on the ground of its nudity? What, likewise, might not happen to the sick imbecile whose nurse declined to attend on him from considerations of a similar nature? Even the marital relations between husband and wife would be rendered infelicitous, should the doctrine of nudity being tantamount to indecency be extended to the



privacy of their retiring apartments. I have myself seen young European girls drawing entire nude male statues from original models in stone in the British Museum in London, publicly, without anybody being shocked or scandalised thereby.

It will be thus evident that there is nothing indecent in nudity itself, which becomes objectionable only when it is intended to assail virtue and modesty. This point is well illustrated by the story of certain heavenly damsels in the Hindu Puranas. These celestial ladies were once sporting in water in a tank when a young man (Shukracharya), stark naked, passed close by them. They were naked also, but took no notice of him and remained engaged in fun and frolic as before. A little while later they saw the young man's aged father (Vyasji) walking towards them, when they immediately rushed out of the water and hurriedly resumed their apparel. The explanation of this extraordinary conduct given in the Hindu Puranas is that the younger man had no eyes for their beauty, though he passed by looking at them, while the extreme old age of the elder one did not prevent his feasting his eyes on their charms.

It is well-known that far-reaching changes are taking place in the social life of many countries now-a-days, which have a great bearing on the point under consideration. In England itself remarkable alterations have been affected in the costumes of ladies, and scantily clad women and girls may be seen to-day at many of the fashionable resorts in that country. Not only this but certain social units have recently started the cult of the nude in the form of the Sun-ray clubs. There is one such club at Hendon in the north of London, where men and women bathe absolutely naked in the sunshine. In Germany the movement has become very popular, and large numbers have discarded all clothes. These people call themselves by the old title of Gymnosophists, which was applied to the Jainas by the Greeks in ancient

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Gymnosophists mix freely together, and a few months  
ago there was given by their society in Berlin a public  
performance, in the course of which completely nude  
young ladies walked and danced on the stage before  
hundreds of spectators. Sometime ago Mr. Oliver  
Hirst wrote about these people in the *New Statesman*  
as follows:—

“During the last ten years all the world has fixed  
its eyes on the political life of Germany, but very few  
will have noticed a social movement fraught with far  
deeper significance and more epoch-making results than  
the ephemeral structures of financiers and politicians?  
Behind the scenes, away from the foot-lights, a social  
revolution has been carried through in Germany, which  
must inevitably result in the liberation of the whole  
human race from a bondage and a curse that has  
existed from thousands of years.

“At long last, the lesson of the first chapter of  
Genesis is being perceived, and the fear and false shame  
of nakedness is being banished from the mentality of  
mankind, and the purification of society is being tackled  
at the source. There are now scores of societies, all  
over Germany, of people who gather together for games  
and sports of all kinds in the open air, in a state of  
complete nakedness; of people who have finished with  
the shades of the Charnel-house, that gather round the  
growing body, who have abandoned the ‘impure hush’  
about all matters relating to sex, and who regard such  
things with that cleanliness which simple natural facts  
and processes demand.

“This is the only real ‘Purity’ movement of the  
many that have been attempted throughout the centuries  
and the way in which it does purify can only be  
learned from a visit to a Gelände and a sight of  
hundreds of men and women, parents and children, in  
blissful freedom. The effect of such a visit cannot



possibly be described; it must be experienced to be known. It acts with many people like immersion in a bath of disinfectant, from which one emerges with all sorts of subtle mental and spiritual poisons washed completely away! One is ashamed of one's own coverings, in the presence of these pure creatures, and ashamed of all the troops of hidden thoughts that suddenly appear from the dark caverns of the mind, but which mercifully vanish as soon as they emerge into such a blessed atmosphere. The physical value of fresh air and sunlight is a matter of fairly general knowledge, but the mental and spiritual benefit is beyond all imagination.

"The movement grows daily and can never look back, and it must count as Germany's greatest contribution to the cause of human progress (not excluding the Theory of Relativity). A recent Congress in Berlin was attended by over 3,000 Members of societies from all over Germany! A stage performance by 300 gymnasts from a nudity school was witnessed by an audience of town councillors and other dignitaries and their wives, who were inevitably converted on the spot. There is no ground for an opponent to stand on. An opponent discloses himself as the victim of an obscene obsession and shows, by his attitude, that he cannot think of the naked human form without immediate thought of sexual activity. But he can be cured, let me repeat, by a visit to a camp where hundreds of men and women, parents and their children, have attained to purity, and where his own view of existence will undergo a complete transformation as by a miracle."

The movement was much ridiculed at one time in prudish circles, but to-day things are taking a different turn. The *Statesman* of New Delhi, dated the 22nd of February last, writes as to this:—

"Germany is at present challenging the traditional view that clothes are requisite for health and virtue. The habit of wearing only the sun and air at exercise is

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experienced to be like immersion in the sea. One emerges with all mental poisons washed away. One is freed of one's own impure creatures, and thoughts that suddenly enter the mind, but which do not emerge into such a clear blue of fresh air and knowledge, but the mind is left all imagination.

One can never look for the greatest contribution to the Theory of the Mind. Berlin was attended to all over Germany! Students from a nudity of town councillors, who were inevitable, is no ground for an disclosure of himself as and shows, by his naked human form activity. But he took it to a camp where and their children, his own view of transformation as by

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against the traditional faith and virtue. The air at exercise is

growing, and the 'Nudist' movement, at first laughed at and blushed at elsewhere, is now seriously studied as probably the way to a saner morality."

As regards the effect of nudity on the moral life of a people, we have it in the "Sexual life of our Time" by D. Van Block, M.D. (P. 155):—

"Natural nudity, the state in which every human being is born into this world, not artificial nudity, with its lascivious influence dependent upon clothing, posture and gesture, is purely an object of simple contemplation for the human being of normal perceptions, who sees in the unclothed human body precisely the same individual natural object as he sees in the bodies of other living beings. People, in other respects extremely prudish, admit this when they have the opportunity—at the present day certainly very rare—of seeing completely naked human beings in natural surroundings, as, for instance, when bathing. It is only when we introduce intentionally a sensual or, speaking generally, an artificial influence, that nudity has an effect of lascivious stimulation."

As to the effect of nudity on sex-life, Mr. S. C. Ghoshal writes in his new work, "The Digambara Saints of India":—

"It has been found that after becoming habituated sex stimulus, through vision, falls to normal, and the initial curiosity is satisfied. No disturbing feelings are aroused by irritating and unwholesome concealment, and sex relations become, on the whole, more normal and healthy. Nudity, habitually practised, possesses no erotic suggestiveness. So far as vision is concerned, human body does not remain shamefully mysterious to be contemplated only by stealth."

There are still portions of the world where the dwellers wear no clothes and though civilisation regarded them as savages or primitive men, it has been established



from authentic reports of travellers that in health and morality they are far superior to residents of the civilised countries of the world.

A thoughtful writer, writing in the *Daily News* (London) in its issue dated 1st April, 1913, wrote:—

“Having given some study to the subject, I may say that Rev. J. F. Wilkinson’s remark upon the superior morality of the races that do not wear clothes is borne out by the testimony of the travellers. It is true that the wearing of clothes goes with a higher state of the arts, and to that extent with civilisation, but it is, on the other hand, attended by a lower state of health and morality, so that no clothed civilisation can expect to attain to a high rank.”

That clothes are responsible for a feeling of shame is evident from the feeling of mixed outrage, anger and shame, which is experienced by women, accustomed to cover their faces with a veil, when caught uncovered. No such feeling is experienced by women who habitually remain unveiled. In Malabar in India highly respectable ladies do not cover their breasts even to-day. On the other hand, the practice is observed by prostitutes!

In India there are various kinds of erotic symbols as the *Lingum* and *Yoni*, which are kept in Hindu places of worship. At Puri there are life-sized statues of men and women engaged in actual sexual congress. These are placed outside on the dome of the big Hindu temple there. These temples are visited and the emblems worshiped by the whole of the Hindu population of India, whose number is 250,000,000. Amongst the relics discovered at Mohenjo Daro recently were some small metal representation of “Maithun,” which is the Sanskrit term for co-habitation. These statues plainly, and without the least attempt at any kind of a disguise, depict the sexual act in its grossest form. Two of them were taken from India to London, and publicly exhibited in a room near Piccadilly Circus, last year, where men and women who visited the place examined them without hesitation or reserve.

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In the Bible we read about Adam and Eve: "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."

Milton's immortal comment may be recalled here:—

"Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
God-like, with native honour clad  
In nude majesty, seemed Lords of all . . . .  
Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed;  
There was not guilty shame. Dishonest shame  
Of Nature's works, honour dishonourable,  
Sin-bred how have ye troubled all mankind,  
With shows instead were shows of seeming pure,  
And banished from man's life his happiest life,  
Simplicity and spotless innocence!  
So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight  
Of God or Angel; for they thought no ill."

The immortal poem still runs on depicting the result  
of the transgression thus:—

" . . . . .  
Innocence that as a veil,  
Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone,  
Just confidence and native righteousness,  
And honour from about them, naked left,  
To guilty shame; he covered, but his robe  
uncovered more."

A European traveller, Marcopolo, who came across  
certain naked Saints in the course of his travellings  
through India, was told by a band of naked ascetics  
that they had come naked into the world and desired  
nothing of this world, adding:

"We have no sins of the flesh to be conscious of and,  
therefore, we are not ashamed of our nakedness any  
more than you are to show your hands and feet. You,  
who are conscious of the sins of the flesh, do well to have  
shame, and to cover your nakedness."—(Yule's *Marcopolo*,  
volume, 2 page 366.)



Many images of gods and angels are made in the nude in different countries, as the sculpture of ancient Greeks, representing the figure's of Venus, Cupid, Aphrodite, Bacchus and other divinities without clothes. Michael Angelo depicted Adam and Eve and Jesus Christ in a nude state. Nude cherubim appear in the picture entitled the Sacrifice of Noah. Among the Hindu gods, Mehadeva or Shiva is without any clothing, the term Digambara being one of his many names. The Jain Images of the Digambara sect are always made without clothes. There are some very big statues of the Jaina Gods (Tirthamkars) in Southern India. One of them is at Barwani in a native State; one in Southern India at Sharavan Belgola. This is of Bahubali Swami. Another huge statue of Bahubali Swami is at Karkal; and there is one at Venur. These colossal Jaina statues are amongst the wonders of the world (The Imperial Gazetteer of India). They are visited by travellers from all parts of the world, and by thousands and thousands of votaries and worshippers, including the ruling families and nobility of Mysore, who are not Jains. Nobody is shocked by the nudity of these statues and paintings. On the contrary, from the ancient most times men and women have been worshipping nude Images and Saints. Dr. Bernier, who visited India in the the time of Emperor Aurangzeb writes thus (See Bernier's Travels in the Mogul Empire, page 317):—

"I have often met generally in the territory of some Raja bands of these naked *fakirs*, . . . . In this trim I have seen them, . . . . . walk stark naked through large towns, men, women and girls looking at them without any more emotion than may be created when a hermit passes through a street. Females would often bring them alms with much devotion, doubtless believing that they were holy personages more chaste and discreet than other men."

Jean Baptiste Tavernier, who also visited India towards the end of the reign of Shahjahan, met many *fakirs*

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in his travels. He says:—"It is estimated that there are in India 800,000 Muhammadan *fakirs* and 1,200,000 among the idolaters. . . . . There are different kinds of these Muhammadan *fakirs* some are almost naked like the *fakirs* of idolaters . . . . . Wealthy idolaters consider themselves happy and believe that their houses receive the blessings of Heaven when they have as guest some of these *fakirs* whom they honour in proportion of their austerity . . . . . at all times, both in the country and in the towns, they go about altogether as naked as they came out of their mother's wombs; and although the women approach them out of devotion, . . . you do not see in them any sign of sensuality, but, on the contrary, . . without regarding any one . . . . . you would say they are absorbed in abstraction." (Travels in India, pages 201 and 202) . . . .

Another famous observer, Abbe Dubois, says:—"Though completely naked, no appearance of any throb or involuntary motion is ever seen in the parts of the body over which the will has often but little control. Sights the most apt to produce excitement appear to make no impression on this race." (Description of the People of India, Chapter XXXIV).

At present there are a number of naked Digambara Saints who have been moving about in the country over long distances. Never has a complaint been made against any of them of his having made any indecent gesture or suggestion to any member of the public. As a matter of fact only the very highly advanced and disciplined house-holders, who have crushed out all forms of sensuality and lust and all forms of gross passions from their hearts are admitted in Sainthood.

The Sannyasi stands for the perfection of virtue and good conduct in an individual's life. Abbe Dubois says as to this in his famous book already referred to above:—

"The highest station to which a human being can attain is that of Sannyasi or naked penitent. A person in



this station is no longer a man but becomes a part of the divinity to whom he is, in some measure, assimilated by his devotion. When he has arrived at the highest possible degree in this profession . . . . without dying his earthly frame is attenuated and he obtains the *moksa* by absorption into the Godhead. When he has reached this lofty perfection the penitent is no longer of this world but becomes insensible to earthly concerns. He sees with equal indifference the good and the evil, virtue and the vice, which prevail amongst men. He is entirely exempted from human passions and their effects and neither loves nor hates. He is beyond the wants of nature and can bear all sorts of privations without pain. . . . . Though quite naked, he is utterly regardless of wind or rain, of heat or cold. . . . He has lofty contempt for all men, let their ranks and conditions in life be ever so high. Whether they do right or wrong, he cares not. He casts no look away on any man nor receives any visit. He suffers no thought nor affection nor inclination to wander from the Deity of whose essence he already considers himself to be a part. Absorbed in the contemplation of the Divine perfections what consideration has he to bestow on the world and all its vanities ?”

It is with reference to these Saints that Jaina Scriptures teach:—“I take protection at the feet of those *gurus* (preceptors), who are naked, and who speak sweet words, devoid of calumny.”

So far as the religion of these saints is concerned, it points out that it would be disastrous if a misplaced sense of decency were allowed to mar the progress of the soul, condemning it to continually undergo re-births, in different conditions of life, the best of which can hardly be said to afford any real moments of joy. The Jaina Saint, whose vow of chastity is of the most rigid and unbending type, goes about naked, not because he wishes to seduce any one from the path of virtue, but because *Nirvana* cannot possibly be attained without the renunciation of the very last article of apparel and worldly goods, according to the Jaina belief.

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Nudity was certainly the mark of saintship in the ages gone by. In the Bible we read : “And he stripped his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they said, is Saul also among the Prophets ?” (Samuel XIX 24).

“ At the same time spake the Lord, by Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sack-cloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and bare-foot. And the Lord said, like as my servant Isiah, the son of Amoz, hath walked naked and bare-foot three years . . . .” (Isaiah XX. 22-23). In the Jewish work known as the “Ascension of Isaiah” (p. 32) it is said : “(Those) who believed in the ascension into heaven withdrew and settled on the mountain. . . . . They were all Prophets [saints] and they had nothing with them and were naked.”

Certain of the Christian saints, including St. Mary of Egypt, who was a beautiful woman, discarded all clothes and went about naked (see Lecky's History of European Morals, chapter 4).

In the Clementine Homilies, the Apostle Peter is shown to explain the point in the following striking language :—

“ For we, who have chosen the future things, in so far as we possess more goods than these whether they be clothing, or. . . . any other thing, possess sins, because we ought not to have anything . . . . To all of us possessions are sins. . . The deprivation of these, in whatever way it may take place, is the removal of sins.” (Ante Nicene Christian Library, XVII. 240).

It is difficult to explain the idea of Nirvana in the space available at present, but it may be said briefly that that supremely happy state cannot be



attained without the achievement of perfection in *vairagya* (renunciation); for the possession of all that is foreign to the soul-nature is sin, as explained in the above passage quoted from the Ante Nicene Christian Library.

No one who retains even that last vestige of habili-ment—the *langoti*—can hope to attain *Nirvana*.

Ancient records show that naked saints were found not only in India, but as far away from India as Caspia and Abyssinia.

Nudity was a sign of world renunciation amongst the ancient Arabs, too. Washington Irving says about their religious practices that “the *tawaf* or a proces- sion round the Caaba was an ancient ceremony observed before the time of Muhammad, and performed by both sexes *entirely naked*.” (The life of Mahomet).

As regards the Muhammadan belief, the following verses from Jalal-ul-din Rumi, one of the greatest of the philosopher saints of Islam and the author of the world famous Masnavi, constitute clear recognition of the sanctity of saintly nudity from Islam itself.

- 1—گفت: ای معصوم، بگذار رو - از برون گری (جلد 2 ص 262)
- 2—چو بستان را نظر بگذر ای - جامه در آن را بجای زور است (جلد 2 ص 382)
- 3—با ز دربانان یک سو باز رو - با چو ایشاں فارغ و بی جامه شو
- 4—ورندنی تانی که کل دربان شوی - جامه کم کن تیرا از میان روی (جلد 2 ص 383)

The references are to the Urdu translation of the Masnavi, entitled *الهام انظم* (Ilham-i-Manzum). The Urdu translation of the above verses is thus given in the *Ilham-i-Manzum* :

- 1—معصوم بولا معصوب کو کام جا - عوگا کہا نہاں سے تو مہدہ برا
- 2—تو نظر دہری بی جامہ پوش کی - ہے تجلی زور دربان تلی
- 3—با برہنوں سے ہو بگو والہی - یا ہو اونکی طرح بی جامہ ای
- 4—طلبا دربان جو ہر سکتا نہیں - کہتے دم کرے ہے او ماکے کرے (الهام منظوم)

The English rendering of the above is as follows:—

1. The intoxicated one (the saint) said : Go, critic: attend to thine own business ;

Thou shalt not prevail against the naked one !

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- 1—مہم ہوا
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- 3—یا برہان سے
- 4—طالبان

as follows:—  
d : Go, critic:

aked one !

2. The eyes of the robed one are turned to the washerman;

Light Divine, is the adornment of the nude body!

3. Thou shouldst either leave alone the Naked Ones altogether,

Or become free and robe-less like them !

4. If thou be not able to discard all clothes (at once),  
Reduce their number and follow the middle course !

Abul-Kasim Geelani, we know, discarded even the loin-strip, and remained completely naked (Religious Life and Attitude in Islam, page 206). Jamel-ud-din, of Kufa was another of the naked saints. He is mentioned in Miss Garnet's book "Mysticism and Magic in Turkey." He is described as a person of feeble frame, perfectly naked and apparently of forty to fifty years of age. The higher saints of Islam, called Abdals, generally went about perfectly naked. Miss Lucy M. Garnet thus describes the Abdals in her book "Mysticism and Magic in Turkey" (see pp. 37-38):—

"Below the "Absent Ones" is another class of saints called Abdals, from among whom the higher ranks are recruited as vacancies occur. . . The result of this reputation for sanctity enjoyed by Abdals is that they are allowed to wander at large over the country, sometimes half-clad, sometimes Completely Naked, following the bent of their errant fancies; and the wilder and more extraordinary their vagaries, the greater is their renown for virtue and holiness." (page 38)

"Many of those, however, who are termed Abdals, or Perishans, are in full enjoyment of all their faculties, but, possessed by an aversion for their fellow-men, shun their abodes, and, like the hermits of Christendom, retire to mountains and deserts where, fed perhaps on locusts and wild honey—though the popular belief credits them with the faculty of being able to dispense altogether with food—they live in harmony with wild animals



whose fierceness or timidity they overcome by means of their wonderful spiritual powers." (Mysticism and Magic in Turkey. Pp. 37-38).

Among the Bektashee Dervishes those who are prepared to take the vow of celibacy are initiated in the state of complete nudity:—

"On the evening appointed for the ceremony of initiation—for the services of the Bektashi Order are always held by night—the candidate is *stripped naked* if he desires to take the vow of celibacy; but if he proposes, as in the generality of cases, to take only the ordinary, or secular vow of this wide-spread and numerous Order, the breast is only bared." (*Ibid.* Page 98)

In India there are naked *sadhus* called *nagas* among the Hindus even to-day. They freely move about, and on the occasions of big *melas* (fairs) visit Allahabad, Hardwar and other big places, where they form themselves into processions and march through the public places without hitch or objection. One such party stayed for weeks in a public *dharamsala* at Hardoi in 1927, and were constantly surrounded by men and women devotees.

According to Rev. M. A. Sherring (see "Hindu Tribes and Castes"):—" . . . . . Gosains who lead the life of a *naga* or naked devotee are called *abdhuta*."

22 The Nanakshahi saints also have their order of naked saints. They are termed Udasis. With reference to them it is said in the work last referred to:—"The Udasi devotees profess the tenets of Nanak Shah and are, among Sikhs, similar to: Sannyasis among Hindus. They . . . . . worship the Granth or Sacred Book of Nanak Shah. . . . . Some of their number are termed Naga (from *nangu*, naked) because they go naked." (*Ibid.* p. 268).

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H. H. Wilson, in his "Sketch on the Religious Sects of the Hindus," thus describes these Nagas:—

"The *nagas* are of the same description as the Vairagis or Sannyasis, in all essential points, but. . . they. . . leave off every kind of covering, and, as their name signifies, go naked. . . . The Saiva Nagas are very numerous in many parts of India."

The fights between the Saiva and Vaisnava Nagas are historical facts.

Louis Jacolliot gives us the ancient practice of the order of saints when he says (The Occult Science in India, p. 71) "The *sanyasins* remained naked." This was with reference to Indian Sainthood generally. Buddha's contemporaries, Mankhali Ghoshal and Puran Kashyapa both, carried no clothing, and were completely naked.

Many authorities have been collected by Pt. Makhan Lal Jain in his "Veda Purana Granthon men Jaina Dharma ka Istitva," and by Pt. K. Bhujbali Shastri in his "DIGAMBARA MUDRA," which show how widely recognized was the practice of Naked Saint-hood in Hinduism. Only a single quotation from Bhartri Hari will suffice here for our present purpose:—

पाणि पात्रं पवित्रं भ्रमणं परिगतं भैक्षं मत्तय्यमन्नं ।  
विस्तीर्णं वस्त्रं माशा सुदृशं कममलं तल्पम स्वल्पमुर्वी ॥  
येषांनिः सङ्गतांगीकरणं परिणतिः स्वात्मसन्तोषितास्ते ।  
धन्याः सन्यस्तदैन्यव्यतिकरनिकराः कर्मनिमूलयन्ति ॥

Tr. "They alone are praiseworthy (among saints), they alone are to be adored, they alone have destroyed the root of their *karmas* who do not need any vessel for holding food other than their own hands, who eat only what is offered when they go out for food, whose clothing consists of space, who have no associates or companions, who do not stoop to begging, and who are content to seek joy in the inner of Self alone!"



This is surely only the description of a Jaina Saint in the language of a learned saintly Hindu author !

The Jabalopanishad, the Paramahamsopanishad, the Naradparivrajakopanishad, the Sannyasopanishad and many other sacred works of the Hindus contain descriptions of naked saints, and regard saintly nudity as of the highest merit.

In ancient days kings gave up their kingdoms and became naked saints. Many famous names of kings can be given in this connection. Chandragupta of the Mauriyan Empire, who defeated the unconquerable Greek army in the B. C. days, and who married a Greek princess, the daughter of Sileucus Nicator, was one of the eminent kings who renounced a vast empire and became a wandering Digambara Saint. Amoghavarsha was another famous king in historical times who valued the Eternal Peace in *nirvana* more than worldly kingship. Vincent Smith writes as to the influence of Jainism in the time of the last named king this ( The Early History of India ) :—

“The Digambara or naked sect of the Jains was liberally patronized by Amoghavarsha. The rapid progress made by Digambara Jainism in the ninth and early in the tenth century under the guidance of various notable leaders, including Jinasen and Gunabhadra, who enjoyed the favour of more than one monarch, had much to do with the marked decay of Buddhism .....”

I give other historical facts in appendix A which will show to what extent Digambara Jainism was adopted, followed and patronized by kings and rulers of men in the past. It is quite true to say that the Nirgrantha (naked) Saints were seen all over the country and were respected by all classes of Indians in the remote past. The Buddhist books are full of references to such saints (see the Sacred Books of the East, vols xiii. 223 and xvii. 116 ; Dhammapadattakatha. vol 1, part ii.

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434-447). They had access to the private quarters of the most respectable of families. Alexander the Great invited some of these saints to his country, and took one of them with him. This saint was known as *Kalyana*, and is mentioned in the Greek literature as *Kalanus*, by which name also he was known to Philo Judaeus (see Yonge's *Philo Judaeus*, vol. iii. page 526). Digambara Jainas were known to the Greeks of the B. C. days as Gymnosophists, and it is significant that the term has been adopted by the unrobed nature-lovers of Germany of to-day as a distinctive appellation for themselves. The Greeks say about the Gymnosophist saints :—

“ These men went about naked, inured themselves to hardships and were held in highest honour. Every wealthy house is open to them, even to the apartments of the women.” (McCrindle's *Ancient India*, pages 70-71; *Asiatic Researches*, iii. 6).

The Chinese traveller Hieun Tsang, who visited India in the seventh century A. D., and who calls Naked Saints Li-his, says about them :—“ The Li-hi distinguish themselves by leaving their bodies naked and pulling out their hair.” (St. Julien, *Vienna*, p. 224).

Malik Muhammad Jaishi, an official of king Shershah (16th Century A. D.), mentions naked saints :—

कोई ब्रह्म-चारज पन्थ लागे ।

कोई सुदिगम्बर अच्छा लागे ॥

The *Padmavat* ii. 60

Emperor Aurangzeb and King Allauddin, too, are known to have honoured Digambara Saints (*Studies in South Indian Jainism*, part ii p. 134).



## The Legal Aspect of the Question.

So far as the legal aspect of the question is concerned, the British Government is pledged, and should remain pledged, to non-interference with the religion of every community living in the Empire. In the Proclamation of 1858 this intention has been very definitely and clearly affirmed, and has been repeated on every important occasion ever since. As a point of law, too, every community has a right to observe its religion unhampered by any other community or by the Government. The adoption of nudity by Jain Saints is no innovation. There are old documents—books—to show that the practice is at least thousands of years old. The Greek visitors to India of the B. C. days noticed it. Muhammadan chroniclers mention it in their writings, and the Jains have been practising it, according to their Sacred Literature, from times so remote as to be absolutely beyond computation and calculation.

No ancient religious practice can be put a stop to by any administration or Government in the world. It is a right of the Jain Saints to discard all clothes, and it is the right of the Jain laity to insist on their saints being allowed to observe this practice without which they believe Salvation cannot be attained.

Jaina Saints cannot accept food or an invitation to dinner from any one by appointment; nor do they eat if food be taken to where they are staying. They do not ride or drive in vehicles or conveyances of any kind whatsoever. They just move out at the meal time, in the morning, in the house-holder's quarters, and will accept food from any pious house-holder's hand, if given with due reverence and respect. They will eat it on the spot, and cannot carry it away anywhere else. Every day a Jaina Saint must cover a certain distance; and should not spend more than five days in an ordinary town, except in the rainy season when he is not allowed to go from town to town, but enjoined to remain in one locality for four months continuously.

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The house-holder looks upon the Saint's visit as a piece of great good luck, and longs for it. If he is deprived of it, he is thrown into irreparable grief, which nothing can allay.

To come to the case law, the Privy Council have held that persons of all sects "are entitled to conduct religious processions through public streets so that they do not interfere with the ordinary use of such streets by the public and subject to such directions as the magistrate may lawfully give to prevent obstructions of the thoroughfare or breaches of the public peace; and the worshippers in a mosque or temple, which abutted on a high road, could not compel processionists to intermit their worship while passing the mosque or temple on the ground that there was a continuous worship there" (*Manzur Hasan versus Muhammad Zaman*, 23 All. L. J. 179). See also *Parthasaradi Ayyangar v. Chinnakrishna Ayyangar* (I. L. R. 5 Mad. 309). [In *Sudram Chetti v. The Queen* (I. L. R. 6 Mad. 209)] the same principle had already been laid down in clear language. At page 219 of the last mentioned case (6 Mad. 209) it is said:—

"With regard to processions, if they are of a religious character, and the religious sentiment is to be considered, it is not less a hardship on the adherents of a creed that they should be compelled to intermit their worship at a particular point, than it is on the adherents of another creed, that they should be compelled to allow the passage of such a procession past the temple they revere."

A similar view was taken in *Sadagopachariar v. A. Rama Rao* (I. L. R. 26 Mad. 376).

At page 180 (23 All. L. J.) their lordships say;—

"The case seems to their lordships to raise for authoritative decision the question as to the right of religious processions to proceed along the roads in India, practising their religious observances, and the decided authorities in India are certainly conflicting. The first question is, is there a right to conduct a



religious procession with its appropriate observances along a highway? Their lordships think the answer is in the affirmative."

In *Shankar Singh versus King-Emperor*, All. Law Journal Report for 1929, pages 180-2, which was a case under the Police Act, Section 30, (Act V. of 1861) it was held that to "regulate" does not mean to "forbid." " . . . . The District Magistrate was of opinion that the prohibition of music was covered by the authority given to the District Superintendent of Police under section 30 of the Police Act to regulate the extent to which music may be used in the street on the occasion of festivals and ceremonies. I do not agree with the District Magistrate that a prohibition of every kind of music would be covered by the word 'regulate.' The power to regulate is given as regards some matter which is in existence, and it would be a misnomer to direct the regulation of a thing that does not exist. Regulation of Traffic, for instance, assumes the existence of traffic. That would not empower the police to confine every citizen to his house and prohibit all traffic. Under section 31 of the Police Act the Police are empowered to keep order on public roads and in public streets, thoroughfares, ghats, and landing places and at all other places of public resort. In Benares, in pursuance of this authority an order was issued that a certain class of people, the *Jatrawalas*, that is the people who take charge of the pilgrims to the sacred city, were prohibited from visiting the railway station. In that case a learned Judge of this Court held that it was not competent to the Superintendent of Police to issue a general order forbidding persons of a certain class to frequent certain specified places on the strength of his authority to keep order in a certain place. The reasoning was the same as here. *Emperor versus Kishan Lal* (I.L.R. 39. All. 131.) The keeping of order does not imply the confining of people to their own houses, so that no need may arise for the keeping of the order."

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These observations apply fully to the case of the Jaina Saints when walking about individually or in processions. The function of the authorities is not to forbid such rights, but to enforce them. The Jaina Saints have been freely moving about all over India, including the Native States. There has been no obstruction, nor complaint. It is clearly the duty of the authorities to help them observe their religion, as they have been doing all along, and as men at one time observed all over the world in the past.

I shall conclude by quoting from the beautiful text of that Magna Charta of Religious Freedom for the Peoples of India which was promulgated by Queen Victoria in 1858, and which was re-affirmed and confirmed fifty years later by Edward VII:—

"We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure."

The language of the later proclamation is equally emphatic:—

"No man among my subjects has been favoured, molested or disquieted by reason of his religious belief or worship. All men have enjoyed protection of the law. The law itself has been administered without disrespect to creed or caste, or to usages and ideas rooted in your civilisation."



## APPENDIX A

### Historical Notes

Naked saints were to be found all over the country in ancient days. Many of these saints were kings and princes who had renounced their kingship and glory and taken to soul's future and the shaping of their destiny, through *sannyasa*.

In upper India it is learnt from the Gazetteers, prepared under official authority, that Bihar came to be so called because of the *bihar* (rambles) of the last Tirthamkara Wardhman Mahavira, who moved about there, preaching the doctrine Jainism. Several other towns also came to be named after the Tirthamkara. Burdwan is really Wardhman; Birbhoom is *Vira-bhumi* (literally, the land of Mahavira), and Sing bhoom is probably *Singh-bhoomi* (the land of the lion, lion being the distinguishing mark of the last Tirthamkara Mahavira.)

As for the south: "The whole of South India was strewn with small groups of learned Jain ascetics, who were slowly but surely spreading their morals through the medium of their sacred literature composed in the various vernaculars of the country. But it is a mistake to suppose that these ascetics were indifferent towards secular affairs in general. To a certain extent it is true that they did not mingle with the world. But we know from the account of Megasthenes that, so late as the 4th century B. C., 'The Sarmanes, or the Jain Sarmanes, who lived in the woods, were frequently consulted by the kings through their messengers regarding the cause of things.' Jaina Gurus have been founders of States that for centuries together were tolerant towards the Jain faith." (Studies in Southern Indian Jainism 1-106).

Alexander the Great found nude saints in India in the 3rd century B.C. The nephew of Aristotle, whose name was Kallisthenes, came with Alexander the Great,

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no ploughs nor anything of iron. They are homeless.  
They do not use fire. They keep no bread with them and  
no wine. In short they carry with them no articles of  
labour or pleasure." (Ancient India 181).

In 851 A. D. Suleman, an Arabian traveller, visited  
India. He came across a nude Hindu Yogi, who remained  
in one yogic posture for 16 years. (Elliot: History of  
India 1-4)

Dr. Bernier of France, who visited India in the days  
of Aurangzeb, writes with reference to the nude saints:—  
" I allude particularly to the people called 'Jaugies,' a name  
which signifies 'united to a God.' Numbers are seen, day  
and night, seated or lying on ashes, entirely naked,  
frequently under the large trees near *talabs* or tanks of  
water, or in the galleries round the Deuras or idol temples,  
..... Novices wait upon. . . . and pay them the utmost  
respect, as persons endowed with extraordinary  
sanctity." (Bernier's Travels in the Moghal Empire, 1-316).

In 1623 A.D. a European traveller, Peter D.  
Valla, found near Ahmedabad, on the banks of the  
Sabermati and in temples round about there, naked  
saints who were much respected by the people. (Dig. and  
Dig. Munis 36).

Sarmud was a Muhammadan saint, who flourished in  
the days of Shahjahan, the Mughal king, remaining nude  
and going about quite freely. The French traveller,  
Bernier, saw him personally wandering about naked in the  
streets of Delhi. Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shahjahan,  
became a follower of the saint.

Bernier writes:—"Among the vast number and  
endless variety of *Fakirs* or *Darvishes* ..... some



carried dolls, like Hercules, others having a dry and rough skin thrown over their shoulders..... several of these *fakirs* make long pilgrimages, and only the naked of them wear heavy iron chains such as are tied round the feet of elephants." (Tr. In Mogul Emp. p. 317).

Amongst the inscriptions there is one which records the gift of a village known as Kalvang for the use of the naked saints belonging to the Jain religion, by Maharaja Shri Vijai Shiv Mirgesh Verma, who belonged to the Kadamba *bansh*.

Another inscription dating from 1161 Vikram era has been discovered from Gwalior. There is a mention in this of the Jain saint Yasodev, "who was an adherent of the Digambar or nude saints" (Catalogue of Archaeological Exhibits in the Museum at Lucknow, Part I. page 444).

Dr. Monier Williams, in his Dictionary of the Sanskrit language, points out that the term *Kshapnak* applied to Jain Saints, who wore no garments. There is mention of one Raja Bena in one of the inscriptions of King Kharvel of Kaling. He is mentioned also in the Hindu scriptures as having been converted to Jainism by a naked saint. (Journal of the Bihar and Orissa R. Society, XIII. 224.)

The naked statue of Bahubali is still being worshipped by the ruling family of Mysore and has been so worshipped for generations past. At the time of the last *abhishekh* ceremony the present ruler of Mysore himself attended and made offerings before the naked statue.

Several of the sons of the king of Magadh in ancient days became naked saints; the names of two of them are Abhaykumar and Varisen.

In Southern India the king of Hemang, by name dhar, became a naked saint.

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According to James d' Alwis' paper (Ind. Anti. VIII) on the Six Tirthankaras "the Digambaras appear to have been regarded as an old order of ascetics and all of these heretical teachers betray the influence of Jainism in their doctrines." (Ind. Ant. IX. 161).

Professor Jacobi remarks:—"The preceding four Tirthankaras (Makkhali, Goshal etc.) appear all to have adopted some one or other of the doctrines or practices, which makes part of the Jaina system, probably from the Jainas themselves . . . . . It appears from the preceding remarks that Jaina ideas and practices must have been current at the time of Mahavira and independently of him. This, combined with other arguments, leads us to the opinion that the Nirgranthas were really in existence long before Mahavira." (Ind. Ant. IX., 162).

Prof. T. W. Rhys Davids notes in the "Vinaya Texts" that "the sect now called Jainas are divided into two classes, Svetambara and Digambara, . . . . They are known to be the successors of the school called Niganthas in the Pali Pitakas." (Sac. Books of the East, XIII. 41).

Dr. Buhler writes, "From Buddhist accounts in their canonical works as well as in other books, it may be seen that this rival (Mahavira) was a dangerous and influential one and that even in Buddha's time his teaching had spread considerably . . . . . Also they say in their description of other rivals of Buddha that these, in order to gain esteem, copied the Nirgranthas and went unclothed, or that they were looked upon by the people as Nirgrantha holy ones, because they happened to lose their clothes." (The Indian Sect of Jainas, p. 36).

Kassapa was one of Mahavira's rivals. About him it is said:—"The people brought clothes in abundance for him, but he (Kassapa) refused them as he thought that if he put them on, he would not be treated with the same respect. Kassapa said, 'Clothes are for the covering of



shame and the shame is the effect of sin. I am an Arhat. As I am free from evil desires, I know no shame.”— (Buddhist Studies, pp. 74-75).

The Majjhim Nikaya records that once Nigantha Nathaputta was at Nalanda with a big retinue of Niganthas.” (Ancient Indian Tribes, p. 147.)

The testimony of an ancient record (Life of Buddha Ghose p. 50) is as follows:—“The Buddhist and Jaina texts tell us that the itinerant teachers of the time wandered about the country engaging wherever they stopped in serious discussions on matters relating to religion, philosophy, ethics, morals and polity.”

Prince Abhay, who has already been mentioned before, spread Jainism in Persia, the result of which was that one of the Persian princes, called Arldrak, became a naked saint. (A Dictionary of Jaina Bibliography, p. 1 p. 292.)

Amongst the Lichhavis of Vaishali, Prince Sunakkhatt was a Buddhist at first; but he became a robeless Digambar saint later on. (Bhagwan Malavira and Mahatma Buddha, p. 255.)

From Buddhist scriptures we also learn of the existence of one Kundarmasuḥ, who was a naked Jaina saint. (Digha Nikaya III., 9-10). The Councillor's son of Srāvasti, called Arjun, also became a naked saint. (Psalms of the Brethren, p. 83.)

Naked saints are again mentioned in the Vinaya Text Vol. XVI., p. 116), in which it is said:—“At that time a great number of the Nirgranthas running through Vaishali from road to road and from crossway to crossway with outstretching arms cried ‘Today Siha, the General, . . . . has made a great meal.’”

It is now known that Nand Vardhan, who flourished about 400 B.C., was a Jaina, and worshipped nude saints and Images. He is the same who invaded Kaling and

carried away.



carried away, with him, to Patliputra the image (consecrated statue) of the first Tirthankara of Jainism. (Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, XVIII, 245). Five hundred Digambara saints performed Samadhi-maran during the days of the Nand dynasty at Muttra. (Dig. and Dig. Munis, pp. 104-5.) Some of the stupa relics have been unearthed recently and are to be found in the museum at the place. They are very old, dating from the B. C. days.

The Mauriyah dynasty also produced some devotees of the Digambara faith. Chandragupta himself became a Digambara saint. His Guru's name was Bhadrabahu, who was also a Digambara saint. One of the hills at Sharwan Belgola is still called Chandragiri after Chandragupta, as he had performed Samadhimaran there. Bhadrabahu's Samadhi-maran was also performed at Chandragiri and the cave in which he performed the Samadhi-maran is still in existence.

Sir Vincent Smith in his Early History of India (page 154) acknowledged the veracity of the Jaina tradition in connection with Chandragupta. Chandragupta's son, Vindusar, "followed the faith of his father Chandragupta" (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. IX., page 181). This is the opinion of Dr. Thomas. Dr. Thomas further thinks that Asoka also learnt his early lessons in Jainism. Asoka was the son of Vindusar.

Dr. Havell points out that Chanakya, the famous ancient Brahmin politician, was also inclined towards Mahavir's doctrines.

The Greeks knew of the Digambara Jainas as Gymnosophists. When Alexander the Great visited India, he took away with him a Digambara saint, Kalyan, who came to be known as Calanus to the Greeks. Philo Judaeus also mentions Calanus. Cicero knew of naked saints and wrote:—"What foreign land is more vast and wide than India? Yet in that nation those, who are



reckoned saints, spend their life-time naked and endure the snows of Caucasus and the rage of winter without grieving." (Tusc. Disput. V. 27). This shows that the Digambara saints had penetrated even as far as Caucasus. Clement of Alexandria also knew of the naked saints.

McCrindle writes in Ancient India :—"The king had come to worship them (Indian Gymnosophists). . . . . They will have the house open to them to the apartments of the women. . . . . When they repaired to the city they dispersed themselves to the market places. . . . ."

In the Sungh and Andhra dynasties also the religion of the naked saints prevailed. Hal, Pulumaga and others are known to have been Jaina devotees (See JBORS I., 76-118). King Vikramaditya of undiminishing fame also respected naked saints. In the end he embraced Jainism (see All. University Studies, p. ii, pp. 113-147).

History also tells of a Digambara saint, who went with an Indian envoy to the Court of Augustus at Rome before the birth of Christianity. From Rome the saint went to Greece and died at Athens. Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. II., page 293, has the following note about this incident:—"In the same year (B. C. 25) went an Indian embassy with gifts to Augustus from a king called Purus by some and Pandian by others. . . . . They were accompanied by a man who burnt himself at Athens, who with a smile leapt in the fire naked, and this inscription is there still 'Zeramonohegas to the custom of his country lies here.' Zeramonohegas seems to be the Greek rendering of Sramanacharya or Jaina Guru, and the self-immolation, a variety of Sallekhna." The Ind-Greek dynasty also respected Jainism and held it in high esteem. Apollonius of Tyana travelled with Damus, who was born about 4 B.C. "He came to explore the wonders of India. . . . . He was a Pythagorean philosopher and . . . . . disputed with Indian Gymnosophists (Niganthas)." (Quater-



ly journal of the Mythic Society, XVIII. 305-306). About the time of Mahavir, Pythagoras himself had visited India and carried with him two striking doctrines of the Jainas—the practice of Ahimsa and the avoidance of beans. King Menander came to accept Jainism. Many Jaina stupas of that age are still found about Taksila. The Kshtrapa king, Rudra Singh, also appears to be strongly inclined towards Jainism. He has left an inscription in one of the caves at Junagarh. (Indian Antiquary XX, 163 ff). Amongst the kings of Kaling, Kharvale is the most famous. He was a Jaina and he brought back the lost statue of the 1st Tirthamkara from Patliputra (Patna). Kharvale convened a great gathering of Jaina saints. Nude saints from many places—Muttra, Ujjain, Girnar, etc.—came on his invitation. (The Anekanta I., 228). After Kharvale, Kudep Shrikher and Mahameghvahan were Jainas. For centuries the kings of Kaling followed Jainism.

In the Gupta period Jainism also widely prevailed. Even under Brahmin kings no obstruction was offered to the Jaina saints' movements. They freely roamed all over the country. Many works of the ancient writers of the time of Chandragupta II, who called himself Vikramaditya, contain references to Jaina saints. The Chinese traveller, Fahian, came across Digambara saints in many parts of India. An early inscription, discovered at Sanchi, and dating in the Samvat year 468, mentions the gift of the village Ishwarvasak for the service of nude Jaina saints. (Dig and Dig. Munis, p. 132).

Harshavardhan was one of the kings of Northern India and in his time also we find Digambara saints mentioned by the court poet Bana. (See Harsha Charit). Harsha convened a great religious assembly for the purpose of holding philosophic debate, which was attended by many nude Jaina saints. (Havell, History of Aryan Rule in India, p. 270.) This was in the 7th century, when Hienn Tsang visited India. Hienn Tsang found Jaina saints throughout the



whole of India and even outside its boundaries. (Hieun Tsang Ka Bharat Bhraman Hieun Tsang mentions a stupa on the top of Vipula Hill devoted to the worship of nude images, and mentions that a large number of Digambara saints visited that stupa. (*Ibid.*, pp. 474-475.) There were several hundred temples then mostly belonging to the religion of the nude Digambaras in Bengal. (*Ibid.*, pp. 526-537.) In Eastern Bengal also he found Digambara saints in large numbers. (*Ibid.*, p. 545.) In Kalinga Hieun Tsang found the largest numbers of nude saints. Probably the kings of Kaling at this time were the members of the Sen dynasty (The Vira,—Vol. iv pp. 328-332.) and very probably they were Jainas. In the Chola country also Hieun Tsang found Digambara saints. (Hieun Tsang Bharat Bhraman, p. 570.) In the Dravida country he mentions 80 temples and an immense number of naked saints. (*Ibid.*, p. 572.) With reference to Malkut, many temples are mentioned by him, which were frequented by naked saints. (*Ibid.*, p. 574.)

In the Dravida country the Chinese traveller, Hieun Tsang, mentions 80 temples and an immense number of naked saints. With reference to Malkut many temples are mentioned by him which were frequented by naked saints.

In the reigns of the kings of Malwa of the Parmar dynasty Jainism flourished full well. Raja Munja was a great admirer of the Jaina philosophy. (मध्य प्रान्तीय जैन स्मारक, भूमिका पृ० २०) In Gujerat, amongst the Chalukya Rajputs and other dynasties, Jainism prevailed all round. During the Solunki period Digambara saints moved about freely in the capital of the kingdom of Anahilpur. Sidhraj, a Solunki king, too, convened a huge philosophical assembly. One of the Digambara Acharyas, who attended the assembly, was Kumuda Chandra. (Hindi Encyclo, Indica V. 105.) In Barahnagar there were many Jaina temples and also nude saints: (Indian Antiquary XX. 353-354). In the year 1025 of the Bikram era a debate was held between Digambara and



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Swetambara saints in the court of Raja Allu. (Dictionary of Jaina Biography p. 45). In the 13th century there was a great philosopher, named Anant Virya, belonging to the nude order of Jainas. (*Ibid* p. 86.) Prithviraj Chauhan of Delhi endowed the temple of Shri Parashnathji at Bijolia with a village called Morakuri. (History of Rajputana by G. H. Ojha, vol. I. p. 363.) Similarly Raja Someshwar gifted Revan village to that temple. In Chittor during the days of Kumar Pal, many Digambara temples existed. The silent testimony of the ruins of Deogarh shows to what extent Jainism prevailed in that neighbourhood. From the 5th to the 13th century A.D. Jainism predominated in that part. There are nude Jain Images on the walls of Gwalior Fort, showing the devotional inclination of the kings of that place towards Jainism. Gwalior seems to have become the centre of Jaina saints towards the end of the thirteenth century. (Jaina Hitaishi, Vol. VI. p. 26).

Ancient literature also bears out the prevalence of the naked saints in ancient days. Some of the books that may be read in this connection are the Vairagya Shatak by Bhartri Hari, the Mudra Rakshas, the Varaha Mihir Sanghita, the Dashkumar Charitra, the Pancha Tantra, the Prabodh Chandra Natak, and the Goladhyaya. In addition to these, the Hindu Puranas and Vedas themselves are full of reference to Jainism and the naked Jaina saints. The term Arhan is repeatedly used in the most ancient of the Vedas. Some of the Jaina Tirthankaras are also mentioned by name in the Vedas, especially the first, Rishabha Deva.

Jiwandhar was the king of Hemang in the days of Mahavira, the last Tirthankara whose *nirvana* took place 2,458 years ago. He became a Jaina on hearing Mahavira's discourse. (Mahavira aur Buddha p. 96.)

With reference to the Pandiya kingdom we have it from an authoritative source:— "Pandiya kingdom could boast of respectable antiquity. The prevailing religion in early times in their kingdom was the Jaina



"creed." (Madura Gazetteer, 1906, quoted in the मद्रास-मैसूर जैन स्मारक p. 106.)

The famous Tamil poem, Nalidiyar, composed in the 5th century A.D., was the work of 8,000 Jainas saints, each of them contributing just one stanza. The story of the book is that the then king of the place was a great admirer of the learning and wisdom of the Jaina saints, who were living in his kingdom. After some time these saints proposed to leave the kingdom and travel to other places. The king desired them to stay on; but they only composed one verse each in poetry and, leaving it on their seats, went away. The collection constitutes the Nalidiyar. (Studies in South Indian Jainism, p. 91).

Coming to the Gang dynasty; Digambara Jaina religion was the family religion of these kings also. They had the mark of a feather whisk (Mor Pichhika) on their flags, in grateful recognition of the fact that the founder of the dynasty had received wise counsel from Digambara saints, and had succeeded in carving out an Empire for himself. The Mor Pichhika is carried by Digambara saints even today.

With reference to the Kadamba kings we quote the following from the Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society XXII, 61-62:—"Kadamba kings of the middle period, Mrigesa to Harivarma, were unable to resist the onset of Jainism; as they had to bow to the 'Supreme Arhats' and endow lavishly the Jaina ascetic groups. Numerous sets of Jaina priests, such as the Yapiniyas, the Nirgranthas and the Kurchakas, are found living at Palasika" (Ind. Ant. VII. 36-37). Four Jaina Mss. named Jayadhavala, Vijaya Dhavala, Atidhavala and Mahadhavala, written by Jaina Gurus Virasena and Jinasena, living at Banavase during the rule of the early Kadambas, were recently discovered. Palasika, the capital of Kadambas, was full of naked Jaina saints. According to Prof. Seshagiri Rao the early kings of the Kadamba dynasty were all Jaina. (Studies in South



Indian Jainism Pt. II. pp. 69-72.) The Guru of the Pallav king, Shivaskand Varma, was the Digambara Acharya Kund Kund (Panchastikaya Sar, Hist. Intro, p. XV). Mahendra Varma, another king of this dynasty, was a Jaina at first. In Chola Desh Hieun Tsang found Digambara saints, also in Malkut in the kingdom of Pandiyas (Hiuem Tsang Ka Bharat Bhraman p. 574.) The Guru of the Pandiya king Sun, who was also known as Sundra, was Shri Amal Kirti, a Digambara saint. (A Dictionary of Jain Biography, p. 46).

In connection with the prevailing religion of the people of the Peninsula (Dekkan), Mr. Rice states :—" For more than a thousand years after the beginning of the Christian era, Jainism was the religion professed by most of the rulers of the Kanarese people. The Ganga kings of Talkad, the Rashtra Kuta and Kalachurya kings of Manyakhet and the early Hoysales were all Jainas. The Brahmanical Kadamba and early Chalukya kings were tolerant of Jainism. The Pandya kings of Madura were Jainas ; and Jainism was dominant in Gujerat and Kathiawar." (History of Kanarese Literature, p. 16). Pulikeshi II. amongst the Chalukya kings and Vinyadit and Vikrmadit and others were patrons of Jainas. Govinda of the Chalukya dynasty had honoured Arkkirti, a Digambara saint. (A Dict. of Jain Biog., p. 97)

The kings of Rashtrakut also were great patrons of the naked saints. Several kings of this dynasty became naked saints themselves. Amongst them is Amogh-varsha, who composed Ratnamalika. In the same dynasty Raja Indra was another follower of Jainism, who gave up the ghost in the approved manner of the Sallekhana. (Studies in South Indian Jainism, pp. 111-112, Pt. I).

Amongst ministers, Chamund Rai is famous as the builder of the famous statute of Shri Bahubali at Shravan Belgola. (The Vira, Vol. VII., Nos. 1-2). In the 10th century the kings of the Kalchuri dynasty were also devotees



to Jainism. Amongst them Vijjal was famous. (Early History of India, p. 450). The founder of the Hoysal dynasty was a Jaina. His name was Sal. He once protected the life of a Digambara saint from a tiger, and from that moment he came to be known as Hoysal. Afterwards he established his kingdom, which came to be known as the Hoysal dynasty. All of the kings of this dynasty were Jainas. The Guru of King Vinayadat of this dynasty was Shantidev, who was a Digambara Acharya. King Vishnuvardhan in this dynasty was also famous; but he became converted into Hinduism later on. (Studies in South Indian Jainism, I., pp. 115-116) The Guru of the Hoysal King Punis was Saint Ajit. (A Dict. of Jaina Biog., p. 31). In Vijayanagar also Jainism was much respected. (Studies in South Indian Jainism I p. 118.)

Even Mahammadan princes showed great tolerance towards the religion of the naked saints at times. The great Haider Ali made a gift of some villages to the naked statue of Gomateshwar, established by Chamund Rai (see Asiatic Researches, Vol. IX., p. 267 and Studies in Southern Ind. Jainism, p. 1-117). Some of the naked saints attained to great and undying fame by their erudition. Prof. Ramaswami Ayengar tells us:—"First comes Yatindra Kunda, a great Jaina Guru, who, in order to show that both within and without he could not be assisted by *Rajas*, moved about leaving a space of four inches between himself and the earth under his feet. Uma Swami, the compiler of Tattvartha Sutra, Griddharpinchha, and his disciple Balakpinchha follow. Then comes Samantabhadra, "ever fortunate, whose discourse lights up the palace of the three worlds filled with the all meaning Syadvads." This Samantabhadra was the first of a series of celebrated Digambara writers, who acquired considerable predominance, in the early Rashtrakutta period. Jaina tradition assigns him Shake 60 or 138 A.D. . . . . He was a great Jaina missionary who tried to spread for



and wide Jaina doctrines and morals and he met with no opposition from other sects wherever he went. Samantabhadra's appearance in South India marks an epoch not only in the annals of Digambara tradition, but also in the history of Sanskrit literature. . . . . After Samantabhadra a large number of Jain Munis took up the work of proselytism. The more important of them have contributed much for the uplift of the Jaina world in literature and secular affairs. There was, for example, Simhanandi, the Jaina sage, who, according to tradition, founded the State of Gangavadi. Other names are those of Pujiyapada, the author of the incomparable grammar, *Jinendra Vyakarana*, and of Akalanka, who, in 788 A.D., is believed to have confuted the Buddhists at the court of Himasitala in Kanchi, and thereby procured the expulsion of the Buddhists from South India." (Studies in South Ind., Jainism, Pt. I., pp. 29-31)

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APPENDIX B.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO MAHATMA GANDHI.

From

Mr. C. R. JAIN,

C/o Imperial Bank of India,

22, Old Broad Street, London E. C. 2.

1st July, 1931.

Dear Mahatmaji,

I am distressed to read in the *Navajivan* in one of its recent issues your support to the scurilous views entertained by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel concerning the nudity of Jaina saints, and your own impolitic notions on the subject.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is a national hero undoubtedly, and in his department (Satyagraha) it will be well-nigh impossible to challenge his views except by a man who has put in an equal amount of self-denying service. But as an athlete, however excellently well-trained, would not be entitled to speak on surgery and medicine, so the worthy Sardar should have refrained from expressing his opinion hastily on the subject of the nudity of saints which I am sure he does not understand in the proper way.

As for yourself, you are an acknowledged great man—perhaps the most unique leader of men in the world to-day—but I am inclined to think that you yourself are aware, more than anybody else, of the fact that Jainism requires a life-long study and a scientific intellectual acumen before its principles can be fully appreciated and understood. You will permit me if I criticise your views and incidentally those of the worthy Sardar in this letter, a little in detail.

If the views expressed by the worthy Sardar be correct, would it or would it not mean that the Jainas will not be at liberty in the coming Swarajya to practise their religion as they have been doing from untold ages in the past—at least in respect of this particular, i.e., the saints remaining unrobed.

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The views of society may change from time to time, but religion is unchanging; it cannot change; if it does change, it will cease to be correct and true. To-day, society is involved in frivolity and fun on the one side, and politics and money on the other. Religion is almost ignored. Will you be guided by such a society or by its views? Will you introduce corruption and defilement into the true principles of religion because society to-day does not look with favour upon the nudity of saints, or will you raise the social ideals to correspond with the religious ideals which undoubtedly are the highest? Don't you recognize that the Aryan civilisation is distinguished from the non-Aryan civilization in so far as it is grounded upon four ideals, namely, Dharma, Artha (acquisition of wealth), Kama (pleasure) and Moksha (salvation), while the non-Aryan civilization is grounded upon two ideals alone in this age, namely, acquisition and fashion (pleasure)? Are you going to allow the sacrificing of the higher ideals to make the higher civilization conform to a lower one?

And as for society, are the Jainas not a society in themselves? The Jainas are exalted and sanctified with the nudity of saints; they worship it. Are they to be ignored altogether?

The Hindus, too, have their naked saints, who march through the towns and streets in thousands, wherever and whenever they please, and are worshipped by all sections of Hindu society, women and girls included. And what about that section of society who go into the temples of Shiva and worship the most direct and undisguised representation of the sexual organs of the two sexes actually engaged in the act of sex gratification? Not only men but women and young adolescent girls pour water on the stone representation of the *lingum* and *yoni*, placing green petals and leaves thereon. And what about the images on the dome of the great temple at Puri in Orissa, where Hindus of all classes and communities flock in millions to worship the great Jagannath? Possibly, even probably, the ladies

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saints remaining



of your own family, my good friend, and of that of the worthy Sardar, have been inside the temple of Shiva, and some of them might have visited even Jagannath at Puri.

Do you want me to tell you a special feature of the temple at Puri? Full-sized human statues are built on the huge dome of the temple all round, depicting the various postures of sexual gratification without the least drapery or concealment—openly and without reserve.

Is the Hindu society shocked by its naked saints and by the representation of the sexual union in the temples of their gods; or even by the grossest portrayal of the sexual act at Puri? The Hindus count something like 250,000,000 in India. When you referred to society, were you talking on behalf of these 250 millions? If not, why do you ignore this vast number of men and women who act in the way as described above?

Look at the practices of men in the past: Kings and ministers and millionaires used to go with their families—wives, mothers, sisters and daughters—and worship saints, who stood in (Yoga) Samadhi absolutely without covering of any kind. Queens and princesses considered it their good fortune to massage and wash the bodies of such saints. The proudest among men and women were happy if they could entertain one of such saints in their home to food any day. History reveals that Chandra Gupta, the great Aryan Emperor within historical times, was a Jaina who not only entertained and worshipped naked saints but who became a naked saint himself. Srenik was the king of Magadh. He, too, felt it the greatest honour to sit at the feet of the naked Tirthamkra Mahavira and the Jaina saints of his time. His queen was devoted to the worship and service of the naked saints. King Amoghvarsh, likewise, was one of those who became a Digambara saint. Would you not, dear friend, consider that these kings and queens constituted some sort of society, or were they all lunatics in your opinion? If you have read anything of the past history of India, you must have known that not only Mahavira, but



ranks, in point of authority, immediately after the Quran and the Hadis (Tradition), actually upholds nudity for saints. His actual verses will be found quoted in one of the books mentioned herein towards the end. These facts are fatal to the view that Muslim culture is opposed to nudity of saints. So even apart from the question whether the followers of one religion can impose their views on those of another, an advocacy of the Muslim culture is not likely to bring you credit or fame in this instance.

Your observations which are, no doubt, made in language which is characteristically picturesque, only amount to teaching the saints to give up the practice of sainthood which has been sanctified by time and tradition. Did you sincerely imagine, dear friend, that you were qualified to teach the Jaina saint? You are not a Jaina yourself, and even if you were, a Jaina saint will only follow the teaching of a Tirthamkara. As you cannot enforce your private opinions on a Christian, a Muhammadan, or a Jew, who will only follow the injunctions laid down by the founders of their respective religions, so you should have recognized that the wisest thing to do was to refrain from assuming to teach their religion to the Jains.

The reference to the terms "Aparigrah" and "Parigraha" in your article is un-Jaina. A *lang'i* is definitely considered to be "Parigraha." "Parigraha," it should be understood, is both internal and external; so long as you retain external "Parigraha" internally, you cannot become "Aparigraha."

You say, dear friend, that there is no reason to believe that the Jain saints are devoid of passions. What evidence, may I ask, do you possess of this? I grant you this much that certain of the Jaina saints are not as passionless as they should be, but your statement is too sweeping. I would refer you to several of the Jaina saints, whom I have found to be passionless in the proper sense



of the term. And I do not think you can point to a single Jaina saint who has attempted to assail virtue and feminine modesty. You must not in any case condemn the class for the short-comings of the individual.

It should also be borne in mind that saints do not drop from the skies ready made. Advanced house-holders, when filled with the sense of detachment from the world, take to further perfecting of the element of renunciation and seek to do so in sainthood.

You refer to a *sloka* from the Gita. The Gita, no doubt, is a wonderful book and is deemed holy and venerable by 250,000,000 of human beings to-day, but the Jainas have other scriptures. You certainly would not expect the Hindus to be governed by the religion of the Jaina scriptures, and naturally one would not expect that you would demand that the Jainas be governed by the injunctions in the Gita. However, in the whole of the Gita there is not a passage which says that nudity of saints is to be condemned.

I am afraid I have already exceeded the limits of brevity in his letter. I will not further lengthen it out by giving you quotations from different scriptures of the world to show that nudity of saints was respected alike in Hinduism, in Muhammadanism, and also in certain other religions in the past. I would refer you only to certain books on the subject. One of them is "Digambara-Mudra-Ki-Sarva Manyata," which can be had from the Jaina Siddhanta Bhawan, Arrah.

I myself have composed one on the subject which is entitled the Nudity of Saints. It is probably now in Press and I am giving instructions to my friends in India to send a presentation copy of it to you as soon as it is ready.

I do hope, dear friend, that you will re-consider the subject once again and recognize fully the two principles which are involved in it, namely:—(1) the right of every community to practise its religion, unhampered and un-



hindered by any other community or individual, and (2) the guiding policy of the state, the strength and stability of which lies in the principle of non-interference with any form of religion, new innovations being excepted.

The Jains have been distressed by the views of two of the leading Indian patriots and honoured guides, and they are now eagerly looking forward to a declaration of policy that will put things right at the earliest moment. The views of leaders like your good-self and Sri Vallabhbhai Patel are likely to mislead the world, and those who are naturally not in sympathy with or hostile to the Hindu and the Jaina religions are ever ready to take advantage of any such hasty expression of opinion and to turn it into a sanction to interfere with or injure the *dharma*s named. I do not for a moment believe that you will refuse to recognise the principle that the best policy for a government is to be tolerant to all *dharma*s alike. If a legislator finds anything which does not conform to his own notion of things as they should be, he does not denounce it, for that way he will be raising a storm from those, who, like himself, are opposed to the practice, but, on the contrary, takes every opportunity to impress on the unreasoning, fanatical or intolerant elements of his peoples the need for rigid toleration for all forms of faiths and creeds.

Respected friend, you will permit me to add in conclusion that the views you have expressed about dispassion, sin and other points in your article are quite wrong, and I am ready to enter into a discussion with you or any one else on the subject to convince you that they are wrong, but it is only necessary at present to tell you that the Jainas can never be induced to take their guidance from any one but a Tirthamkara. Is it asking too much to demand that they should be allowed to nurse their own "follies" without interference from any one?

Believe me

A devoted admirer of yourself in many respects,

(Sd.) CHAMPAT RAI JAIN,

Vidya Varidhi, Jaina Darshan Divarka,

Bar-at-law, and Life President Digambara Jaina Parishad.



AS AT SABARMATI,

July, 30, 1931.

Dear Friend,

I have your letter of 1st July for which I thank you.

I dare not enter into a discussion with you. I have simply expressed my own humble opinion in the most cautious manner possible for me. Every argument you have advanced was before my mind's eye when I gave the opinion. In the words of Saint Paul many things may be lawful but may not be expedient.

Yours sincerely,  
M. K. GANDHI.

Syt. Champat Rai Jaina,  
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Care of Imperial Bank of India Ltd.  
22 Old Broad Street,  
London, E. C. 2.

(Geneva) 24th August, 1931.

Dear Mahatmaji,

Your letter of the 30th July last reached me here at Geneva where I am spending a few days this month. I thank you for your promptness in responding to my own letter on a very very vitally important question to the Jaina community.

You are perfectly right in not seeking to enter into a discussion with me on this subject. Discussions really are useless generally.

You have referred to the text of St. Paul—all things may be lawful but may not be expedient—but this was said on an entirely different occasion. [The question was whether flesh foods being lawful under the secular law should be taken by Christians?] The reply was No! Religion must rule supreme; what secular law sanctioned was not always expedient.



Thus religion triumphs over secular or social laws and conventions. The same should be the case with the nudity of saints. The voice of Religion should govern social conventions if there be a conflict between the two.

If you apply the formula of St. Paul in an opposite sense, it will not work and will reduce *Aryan* culture (the civilisation of Gods) to an ordinary social "Babel of Voices"\*.

I don't know if I shall ever succeed in this life in gaining my ambition, but it is my ambition one day to become a Digambara saint. I wonder what you will do to me in the *swarajya* if it should come by that time.

If I put on robes under social pressure or legal tyranny I forego my great Ideal—*nirvana*; and if I put them on for a time and then seek to disrobe myself again, law will have something to tell me about the disuser, or death by disuser, of a practice and custom abandoned voluntarily. In either case I shall be in a sore or sorry plight!

Would you not, dear friend, then think that the best thing for me to do under the circumstances would be to defy the *Swarajya* law against nudity and to enforce my Digambaratva by *Satyagraha* and non-violent non-co-operation?

With such a "pleasant" prospect before me will it [not be un-wise to help in the realization of a *Swarajya* that will be responsible, directly, for the loss of my liberty and the enjoyment of a time-sanctioned privilege and an essential for the well-being of my soul?

Since the publication of your opinion the Jaina saints (Digambaras) have been molested in one or two places, and, perhaps, the Government too has expressed itself as hostile to the practice of nudity. It is still time

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\*St. Paul is, no doubt, a very great authority on the Christian religion; but surely the Jainas are not expected to follow any one's but their own leader's authority even on the question of expediency.



to recall what was said without a full realization of the consequences and the effect of the words on the Jaina Samaj. It is a question of life and death for the Digambara religion and the matter is full of fearful forebodings. It would soon become a terrible struggle between the authorities and the Jainas, when, perhaps, not even the pen of a Gandhi will be able to undo the mischief that shall have been done by the time. Perhaps it is not even a question of recalling anything. You know how to make things appear in their true light, and none knows the art of graceful explanation better than yourself. I request you now to exercise that incomparable art and to publish an explanation that will set at rest all misconceptions and will make it clear that in the *Svarajya* which we Indians—Jainas and others all combined—are fighting for there will be no restrictions on the Digambara saints practising their tenet of nudity freely, as they have been doing all along.

Dear friend, I thank you again for the spirit in which your reply was composed, and pray you to give full consideration to these lines. Believe me.

Ever Sincerely Yours,  
(Sd.) CHAMPAT RAI JAIN.

