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er of Humanity

# A Teacher of Humanity

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BY

C. S. MALLINATHJI

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of Shirogang (Sirohi State) for his  
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**—PUBLISHER.**

# FOREWORD

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It is a pleasure to think of great men, to read about them and to write about their activities and achievements. This is the only reason which induced me to write this little pamphlet on the great Acharya. There is nothing original in this book. While preparing this pamphlet I have freely drawn much matter from the following books:—Mr. A. J. Sunavala's *Vijaya Dharma Suri : His Life and Worth* ; Dr. L. P. Tessitori's *Vijaya Dharma Suri : A Jain Acharya of the Present Day* ; Dr. Charlotte Krause's English Introduction to *Dharma Jivan Pradip* a Gujarati poetical work on the life of the Acharya and Sri Vijaya Indra Suri's *Reminiscences of Vijaya Dharma Suri*. I am deeply indebted to every one of them for the help I have derived from their books.

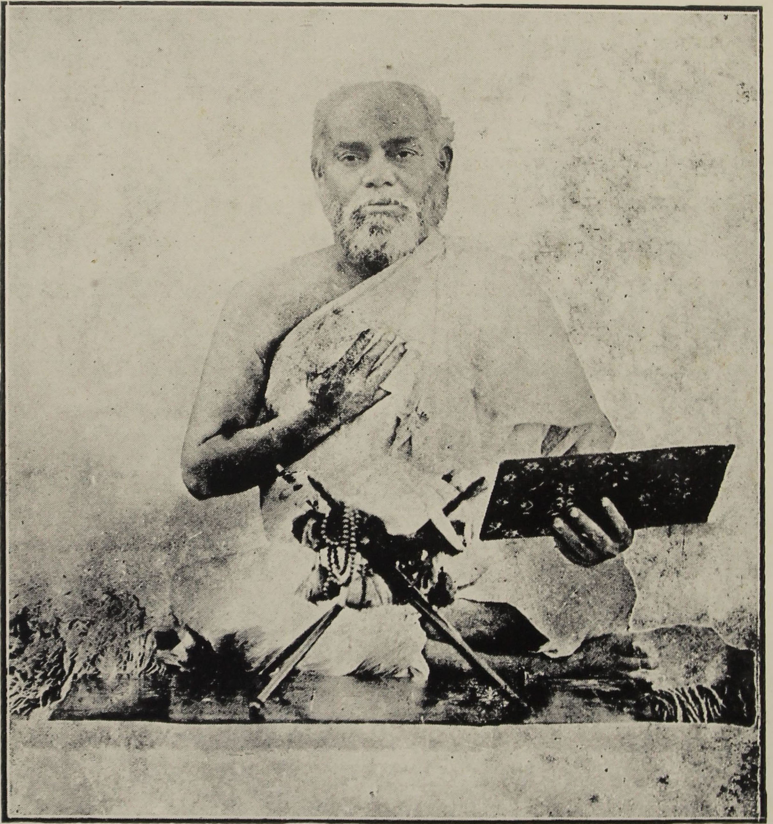
Vijaya Dasmi }  
1929 }

C. S. M.

“Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time”

—*Longfellow.*





SHASTRAVISHARADA JAINACHARYA  
SRI VIJAYA DHARMA SURI

# A TEACHER OF HUMANITY

THE hero of this memoir was born of a humble *Vaishya* family of the *Visa Shrimali* sect at Mahuwa in Kathiawar in the year 1868. His father Ramachandra, a petty merchant, was a very religious and pious *shravaka*. Because of his godliness, he was called Swami by the villagers and was much respected by them. His mother who was a virtuous and noble lady was called Kamala Devi. The child, who was to become a great teacher of humanity, was named Mulachandra since he was born on the day when the moon (*chandra*) was in the asterism Mula.

Mulachandra was not the only child of his parents. He had two brothers and four sisters. The insufficient income of the family and the largeness of its members stood in the way of the parents devoting enough attention to the bringing up and training of the children. Mulachandra was left in comparative neglect. He grew up like a child of the



streets. There was nothing extraordinary in his early career. He was sent to the village school. But he showed no inclination for study. He proved himself a champion in physical exercises and field games. Being irregular in attendance and inattentive to the lessons, he failed to give his teacher satisfaction or promise of any kind. After several trials, his teacher had to turn him out of the school in despair.

The father took the son into his shop to help him in his business. But the shop was as undesirable a place as the school for the playful boy. He would neither learn nor earn. He fell into bad company and gradually contracted the pernicious habit of gambling. He could always be found in the gambling den betting and speculating. Instead of helping his father in his business, he was the source of illicit drain on his limited income. When the parents became aware of the evil life their son was leading, they were greatly disturbed in mind. They did not know what to do. They tried to reform the boy by advice, threat and punishment. But the strong-headed Mulachandra would not improve. He went on visiting the gambling house.

One day he lost heavily at a gambling stake for which his parents punished him severely. He became conscious of his crime and began to reflect on the vanity of possession, the instability of

wealth, the fickleness of fortune and the greed for money which had caused him to displease his parents and his parents to punish him. By defeat, by humiliation, by loss of sympathy and support, he came to learn the truth. He said to himself, 'I have had enough of all this ; I no longer care for money or wealth ; it ends in sorrow and disappointment ; I no longer care for riches, opulence, or affluence—they are a burden rather than a joy ; I no longer care for the things that break in the enjoyment ; I no longer care for the things that perish in the using.' So reflecting in his mind, he got *vairagya*. He became indifferent to the fleeting and the transitory things of this world. These things could no longer attract him. He understood now that permanent peace and happiness could be acquired only by leading the life of an ascetic. He made up his mind to renounce all attachment to the world. So he went out in search of a Guru and reached Bhavnagar where he met the venerable sage Vriddhi Chandra, a monk of vast learning and piety. One day he went into the *Upashraya* and sat at the feet of the holy hermit, listening to the discourse, which had for its subject the following verse:—

Mrityorbibheshi kim muda bhitam mucchati no yama ha  
Ajatam naiva gribnati kuru yatnamajanmani.

“ Why do you fear Death, O Fool ? Yama does not leave  
the frightened man.

He never catches hold of the unborn ; (therefore)  
endeavour not to be born.

Samsara is like a big ocean with Birth and Death as its waves. All the beings that are in Samsara are tossed up and down by these formidable tides. All those who are born die ; and all those who die are born again in some form or other. One can attain the deathless stage only by conquering Death and Birth. Before one can conquer these, one has to acquire a preliminary qualification *i.e.*, conquest over Desire since it is the root-cause of Samsara.

Desire is the root of Birth  
Desire is the cause of Karma  
Desire is the obstacle to Moksha  
Desire is the enemy of Soul.

Man in any status of life has always some desire to be fulfilled, some want to be supplied. When a man is not able to get the thing he requires, he feels disappointed. Desire is limitless. So it is not possible to have our desire fulfilled. If we should have happiness, we should have no desire for anything. Desire begets desire. So one should try to lead a life which will not give room for any desire. Such a life is possible only to Sadhus who leave their homes having no attachment for any worldly thing.

This solemn sermon of the venerable saint touched the heart of Mulachandra. His eyes were

now opened. He saw how he had been wasting his time in evil ways. His determination to become a sadhu was further strengthened.

. At the end of the sermon he approached the revered sage and manifested to him his desire to get initiation as a monk. The sage considering the young age of the applicant and the failings which are incident to youth and inexperience, refused to comply with his request and advised him to go back to his parents and obtain their permission.

Mulachandra went back to Mahuwa and expressed his desire to his parents. The news was a shock to them. The mother wept and the father blamed and remonstrated. But Mulachandra was firm as rock. He could not be moved. He explained to his parents the righteous and holy life he was going to enter and requested them not to obstruct him. With great difficulty he obtained their consent, came back to Bhavnagar and begged the Guru to give him *Diksha*. Satisfied with the earnestness and enthusiasm of the young man, Vriddhi Chandra initiated him into the Holy Order of Monks on the 12th of May 1887 and gave him the new name of Dharma Vijaya.

When Mulachandra became a monk he was nineteen years old. Except his strong liking for ascetic life, he had no other qualification to become a *muni*. He had to learn everything. His Guru

could not find any better work for him than to send him to collect alms and fetch water. His mental capacity was so limited at that time that when he began to study the *Pratikramana Sutra*, it took him not less than eighteen months to learn by heart two *Pratikramanas* which an average student can easily master in about a month. But his intelligence was not dull; it was only dormant. Stimulated by the example of his learned preceptor, Dharma Vijaya soon began to study the Sanskrit and Prakrit Literatures. Under a competent teacher he mastered *Sarasvata Chandrika* in a short time and began to study the *Sutras*, the Canonical Texts of the Jains. Along with the progress of his literary studies, a strong liking for polemics was also growing in his mind. Vriddhi Chandra was a good and convincing preacher, and the sermons he was delivering before Jain audiences as well as the private discussions he was having with the orthodox and heterodox visitors in the *Upashraya*, were deeply engaging the attention of Dharma Vijaya, who soon began to feel a desire to become a preacher himself. This desire made him study the methods of his teacher;—how he delivered public *vyakhyaṇas* and conducted private debates, how he cleared doubts and answered questions. Sometime after, when he addressed the public for the first time, it was such a triumph that everybody was surprised including Vriddhi Chandra.

Unfortunately, Vriddhi Chandra was not destined to live long. He died in the year 1893. Sometime before his death, he had recommended Dharma Vijaya for the *Pannyasa-pada*, for he was fully cognizant of the ability, intelligence and enthusiasm of his pupil and also of the great mental and moral capabilities that were latent in him.

Now Dharma Vijaya was left without his guide to be himself a guide to others ; but he was already fully qualified to be his preceptor's successor. The mission for which he was born, was to be commenced. He made up his mind to travel far and wide and to preach the gospel of peace and universal brotherhood. His intention was not to convert people to Jainism. His aims were to remove all misconceptions regarding Jainism, to cast away all superstitions, to establish the brotherhood of religions and to teach the Jainas what real Jainism was. Excepting the four months of the rainy season every year when he had to remain in one place, he was travelling during the other months from place to place, bareheaded and barefooted, in the company of his white-clad monks and disciples.

After the demise of his Guru, he left Bhavnagar and began to visit the villages, towns and cities of Kathiawar and Gujarat. He spent the first *chatur-masa* at Limdi. The *chaturmasas* of the following years were spent at Viramgam, Kapodvanj, Sadri

(in Marwar) and Patri. While staying at Kapodvanj Dharma Vijaya began the study of the *Nyaya Sastra* which he completed three years later. During his halt at Patri he caused the *tirtha* of Upariyala to be restored, and re-established the annual pilgrimage which had been discontinued. The *chaturmasa* of the year 1900 was spent in Mahuwa, Dharma Vijaya's native place, where he had never been since his consecration as a monk. When he arrived there, he found his father dead; his mother was living. As he entered the village with his monks and disciples, the villagers came in large numbers to receive him and do reverence to him. His mother was also there in the crowd with mixed feelings of joy and sorrow to see her dear son after a long interval. She saw him now as a learned man, a Guru and a mendicant whom she could no longer call her own, nor receive in her own house, nor clasp in her own arms. How many of the villagers that beheld him, could have recognised in that monk with the serene face and saintly appearance, the naughty Mulachandra who used to squander his father's money in gambling! During his stay in Mahuwa, he preached to the people on many subjects and exhorted them to attend first to matters which affected their vital interests, their social and moral well-being. Before he left his native place he consecrated two new monks.

In order to revive the study of Jainism and to propagate it continuously, he opened at Mandal in Gujarat, in the year 1909, a school on a small scale and called it the *Yashovijaya Jaina Pathashala*, after the name of the great Jain polygraph of the 17th century. But it appeared to him that the Pathashala could not prosper at Mandal. So he decided to remove it to a famous and more central place, and selected for it Benares—the traditional seat of Brahmanic learning, the heart of Hinduism. The way to Benares was long, hard and difficult; Jainism was unknown in that place and the people there were hostile to the Jains. All those to whom he expressed his idea dissuaded him and earnestly besought him to desist, but nothing could shake our Dharma Vijaya's determination. One day he started on his march to Benares with six monks and a dozen pupils, and with no other conveyance but his bare feet and his walking staff, no other luggage but the wooden bowl in his hand, and the bundle of manuscripts on his shoulder. Passing through Rajgadh, Ujjain, Maksiji, Sajapur, Guna-ki-Chhawani, Sipri, Jhansi, Kalpi and Cawnpur he reached Benares on the day of Akshayatritya of Vaisakha in 1903. As had been expected, Dharma Vijaya had in the beginning strong opposition from the Brahmins who called the foreign monks *mlechchhas* and *nastikas*. But our hero was indifferent to all kinds of hostility. He went on



with his work. Evening after evening he visited with his monks the most crowded parts of the city and preached to the people the sublime teachings of Jainism. His learned lectures and his arguments attracted the attention of the orthodox pandits who began to take interest in him. In course of time he gained their friendship and their sympathies. A spacious building was purchased and the *Yashovijaya Jain Pathashala* was re-established on a firmer basis. Students of all castes and creeds were admitted into the College. The number of students rapidly increased. Sanskrit, Prakrit, Jaina Philosophy, and Literature were specially taught. To afford facilities to students, a library consisting of a large number of ancient and modern works in English, Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit was founded with the name of *Hemachandracharya Jaina Pustakalaya* and placed under the supervision of the learned *Upadhyaya* Shri Indra Vijaya (now Acharya Vijaya Indra Suri).

The fame of Dharma Vijaya as a great religious preacher rapidly spread in Benares. One day, the Maharaja of Benares sent for him ; and he went to the palace and there before the Maharaja and a gathering of pandits, delivered a very learned lecture on Jainism. He proved to the audience how absurd and irrational it was to call Jainism an atheism when it believed in God, Soul, *punya*, *papa*, *moksha*, *moksha-marga*, heavens and hells.

He also explained that the five cardinal precepts of Jainism were the same as those taught in the Hindu Shastras. He concluded by saying that a true brotherhood of religions could only be secured by the followers of each recognizing and honouring the truths contained in other faiths. The Maharaja was so much pleased with the simplicity and learning of the Monk that he regarded him as a great acquisition to his State: and from that day he began to take keen interest in the Pathashala and encouraged its growth by all sympathetic means.

In 1906 Dharma Vijaya was invited to the Sanatana Dharma Mahasabha held on the occasion of the Kumbha Mela at Allahabad. He went there and made the best use of the opportunity by speaking on Jain Religion as taught by the Tirthankaras. The Maharaja of Darbhanga, who was present in the *sabha*, was so much impressed with the Monk's learning that he invited him to his place of residence and asked him questions about Jainism and Buddhism. Dharma Vijaya explained to the Maharaja the points of difference, and proved to his satisfaction that Jainism was older than, and independent of, Buddhism.

After the rainy season in 1906 Dharma Vijaya left Benares with four monks and twenty students and went on his travels to preach the Gospel of the Jina. Making his way through Arrah and Patna,

he made a pilgrimage to the Jain sacred places in Bihar,—Pavapuri, Kundalpur, Rajagriha, Gunayan, Kshatriyakund and Sammet-shikhara. He then proceeded to Bengal where the doctrine of Ahimsa was most disregarded. He preached to the Bengalis on Ahimsa as a result of which several of them gave up eating fish. Coming to Calcutta he consecrated five new monks, among whom Muni Vidya Vijaya and Muni Nyaya Vijaya are both scholars of great ability.

Before leaving Bengal he visited Nadia—the famous place for the study of Logic—and had religious and philosophical discussions with the Pandits of the *Nyaya shastras*. On returning to Benares he effected some reforms in the Pathashala.

On the 25th of August 1908 a large number of Pandits from different parts of India assembled in the premises of the Jain Pathashala under the distinguished presidency of His Highness the Maharaja of Benares, to confer on Dharma Vijaya the title of *Shastravisharada Jainacharya*, in recognition of his learning and of his propagandist and educational activities. Dharma Vijaya attached very little value to temporal honours; nevertheless, in this case, he respectfully accepted the title, inasmuch as it was given by the most learned and religious men of his own country. While replying to the addresses presented to him, Dharma Vijaya laid stress on the significance of

that honour, not as being conferred on himself, as he modestly deemed he did not deserve it, but as being conferred on a *Jain Sadhu*. In consequence of the *Acharyapada* bestowed on him, the name Dharma Vijaya was changed into Vijaya Dharma, as is often done in the case of Jain Acharyas, and the appendage of *Suri* was added to it.

Vijaya Dharma Suri now thought of leaving Benares, in order to carry on his mission of preaching and propagating the religion of the Jina in other places. Before he commenced his journey, he caused a *Pashushala*, hospital for animals, to be established in Benares, in order to relieve the sufferings of the poor dumb animals.

Towards the end of 1911 Vijaya Dharma Suri left Benares and passing through Ayodhya, Fyzabad, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Kanauj, Farrukhabad, Kayamganj and Firozabad he reached Agra just before the rainy season of 1912. Here he spent the *Chaturmasa*, the four months of the rainy season, caused a library to be opened and a free dispensary to be started, the funds for both the institutions having been provided by Sheth Laxmichand, a wealthy and generous-hearted gentleman of the place. During this stay at Agra, he caused a *Gurukula*, an institution in the form of a boarding-school, to be opened at Palitana, and called it the *Yashovijaya Jaina Gurukula*.

After the rainy season Vijaya Dharma Suri left Agra and making his way through Mathura, Brindawan, Bharatpur, Jaipur, Ajmer, and Beawar, entered into southern Marwar. The Jains of Rajputana, who had been thinking of holding a Jain Literary Conference, requested the Acharya to convene the Conference. The historic city of Jodhpur was chosen for the seat of the conference which met on the 3rd of March 1914. A number of delegates and distinguished visitors attended the Conference. Several resolutions, regarding the steps to be taken for the preservation and propagation of Jain literature, were passed. It was in this Conference that Dr. Jacobi, the distinguished scholar of Jainism, thanked the Jain Acharya, on behalf of himself and other European scholars, for the valuable suggestions and useful manuscripts that he had been giving them always readily and most willingly.

Some days after the Conference Vijaya Dharma Suri left Jodhpur and passing through several villages and towns, reached Shivaganj, before the rainy season of 1914. Here came the learned Italian scholar, the late Dr. L.P. Tessitori, to pay his respects to the Jain Acharya. The great simplicity of the Monk, his absolute renunciation and detachment from worldly objects, his learning and eloquence, his scholarship and piety made a deep impression upon the mind of the great Italian scholar, so much so that he was tempted to write a

vivid description of the Monk in a treatise entitled 'A Jain Acharya of the Present Day.'

When the rains were over, Vijaya Dharma Suri resumed his travels through Godwar, Mewar, Gujarat and Kathiawar. He visited almost all the important villages and towns and preached the tenets of Jainism in those places. He also established several institutions such as schools and libraries wherever they were much needed. He reached Bombay in June 1919; and with the object of training students to preach Jainism far and wide, he established an association called the Vira-Tattva Prakashaka-Mandal which was transferred to Shivpuri after the decease of Vijaya Dharma Suri. The rainy seasons of the years 1919 and 1920 were spent at Bombay; and the *chaturmasa* of 1921 was passed in Dhulia. After a short illness, the great Acharya passed away at Shivpuri on the 5th September 1922 at 6-30 a.m. To Dr. Sylvain Levi, who had the rare privilege of visiting the great Acharya only a week before the demise of the great saint, was given the singular fortune of hearing his last sermon on Jainism and of being blessed with *Vaskshepa* poured on his head by the Guru Maharaj himself. His Holiness passed away in perfect peace and tranquillity reciting the names *Mahavira* and *Shrimandhara*. On the spot where the body of the Holy Saint was cremated, a beautiful memorial temple has come into existence,

through the help of H. H. the Maharaja of Gwalior and the never-ceasing efforts of Shri Vijaya Indra Suri, the learned successor of the departed Mahatma.

Such is in brief outline the life of Vijaya Dharma Suri. Let us now study the hero in different aspects—as a man, as a monk, as a scholar and writer, as an editor and critic, and as a founder of Institutions.

### AS A MAN

As a man, Vijaya Dharma Suri, had an inspiring and amiable personality. Anger was thoroughly absent in him. He was all love and compassion. He was a complete observer of the great and noble doctrine of *Ahimsa*. From his boyhood to the end of his life, he was always strong-willed. What appeared to him to be correct, he was ready and willing to do, irrespective of what others might think or say. His sincerity, simplicity and modesty attracted many people to him. When the title of Shastravisharada Jainacharya was conferred on him at Benares, he accepted it modestly not because he personally deserved it but because it was conferred on a *Jain Sadhu* by a consensus of learned Pandits under the distinguished presidency of H. H. the Maharaja of Benares who was himself an orthodox Hindu. He regarded all honours done to him as honours done to his religion and community.

Whenever he made up his mind to do a thing, nothing could obstruct him. He would not mind physical troubles. His journey from Gujarat to Benares was in no way an easy one. He had to walk all the way bare-headed and bare-footed; he had to cross forests and rivers which barred the way; he had to march through countries where the people were hostile; he had to walk sometimes the whole day to reach the next village; he had to go without food and drink sometimes. In Benares itself, the Brahmins were hostile and indifferent to him, in the beginning. But nothing could shake him. He was a true Jaina ascetic in patiently undergoing all sufferings (*parishahas*) for the sake of the object for which he left his home and became a *Sannyasi*.

### AS A MONK

From the day when Vijaya Dharma Suri was initiated as a Jaina Muni till the moment of his leaving this world, he had before his mind's eye the example of Lord Mahavira and His ascetic-disciples. After becoming a monk he studied Sanskrit and Prakrit and the Jaina Canons and became a master of the Jain Literature. Having studied the religion he wanted to preach it widely to all people irrespective of caste and creed. So in addition to his sermons delivered before orthodox Jains, in the *Upashrayas* he also gave lectures in the



public halls, street-corners and market places where all sorts of people could hear his speeches and be benefited by them. Though he was very strict in observing all the rules of conduct laid down for ascetics, he was entirely free from the defects of narrow-orthodoxy. He was ready to adopt any practice which was not opposed to the teachings of Jainism. Thus whenever he had to address public meetings and speak before non-Jain audiences, he always stood up and spoke. Unlike many Jain Sadhus, he was broad-minded and free from religious prejudices. He gladly welcomed the follower of any faith and exchanged ideas with him. When he was requested to attend the Sanatan Dharma Mahasabha, he readily accepted the invitation, went to Allahabad and delivered several learned lectures before a large gathering of orthodox Hindus. He rightly understood that the duty of a Jain monk was to preserve and propagate the Gospel of the Jina. To this end he dedicated his life and he spared no pains to work towards its achievement. For the sake of spreading the knowledge of Jainism he was always ready to go any distance in any direction and to visit any place—be it the Palace of a Maharaja or the hamlet of a peasant.

#### AS A SCHOLAR AND WRITER

It needs no saying that Vijaya Dharma Suri was a scholar of very great reputation. Those who

came in contact with him personally and those who read some of his writings were convinced of his vast learning. As a true scholar, he appreciated very much the Western method of critical study and research. His high merits soon attracted the attention of all Orientalists in Europe. They began to correspond with him and request him for manuscripts and suggestions, which he was pleased to give them readily. Several Orientalists such as Drs. Thomas, Jacobi, Hertel, Guerinot, Tessitori and Sylvain Levi were among his personal friends. The life and work of the Jainacharya appealed so much to the scholars in the West that they were tempted to write biographical accounts about him in the scientific Oriental Journals.

Vijaya Dharma Suri has written several original works in Hindi, Gujarati and Sanskrit; most of them are of a polemic nature, dealing with controversial matters, containing discussions and disputations on moral and religious subjects of great utility and importance. They were written chiefly for the purpose of propagating Jainism and for correcting all misconceptions regarding Jainism. *Ahimsa-dig-darsana* (a treatise on Ahimsa), *Brahmacharya-dig-darsana* (on the value and importance of celibacy) *Purushartha-dig-darsana* (on purusharthas), *Indriya-parajaya-dig-darsana* (on control of senses), *Atma-urnnati-dig-darsana* (on the spiritual advancement), *Jaina-siksha-dig darsana* (on Jainism), and the

*Jaina-tattva-dig-darsana* (on Jaina philosophy) are some of his important works which have gone through several editions.

### AS AN EDITOR AND CRITIC

For the purpose of bringing out authoritative and exhaustive editions of the vast and varied branches of the Jain Literature, Vijaya Dharma Suri started the *Yashovijaya Jain Granthmala* in Benares which is now being continued in Bhavnagar. During his lifetime the great *Acharya* himself edited several works of the series which include important works on history, philosophy, poetry, grammar, logic, rhetoric, lexicography, astronomy and other sciences. His edition of the *Yogasastra* of Sri Hemachandra Acharya published in the *Bibliothica Indica* revealed to the world his ability as a philologist and an erudite critic. The first fasciculus of this edition was attacked in a rather unmerciful way by an Italian scholar Dr. F. Belloni-Fillipi in his review of the book contributed to ZDMG. But in his Rejoinder to the Italian Professor's criticism, which appeared in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1910) Vijaya Dharma Suri displayed such a sound erudition and such a mastery of his subject that he was not only fully justified before the eyes of the world, but every one was also convinced that the *Acharya* had gone to work with all the care

and scholarly method which is expected from an editor, and that he was the right man to undertake that publication.

. In the year 1911 a fortnightly paper called the *Jaina-Shasana* came to be published in Hindi and Gujarati to spread amongst the Jain community a true and correct knowledge of their faith and to guide them in the practice of their religion. Vijaya Dharma Suri himself contributed to its columns a series of articles in Gujarati under the title of *Dharma-Deshana* or religious instruction. These have been collected and published in a book-form under the same title, and they give to the reader an easy and popular exposition of Jainism.

He had deep interest in archæology and history. During his pregregations, whenever he visited ancient Jaina places and temples Vijaya Dharma Suri, thought of publishing accounts about them. With this end in view he used to collect rich and valuable materials, both manuscript and epigraphical. As a result of his efforts in this direction, a monograph entitled *Devakulapataka* which gives an interesting sketch of the history of Delwada, a small village in Mewar, was published. The treatise contains texts of twenty-six inscriptions which throw much light on the antiquities of the village. The monograph is especially noteworthy for the painstaking accuracy and the strict method with which it is written and for the erudite notes

with which it is illustrated. Another publication called the *Aitihasika Rasa Samgraha* was inaugurated to bring out such Jain *rasas*, in the vernaculars of Gujarat and Rajputana as appear to possess some historical value.

A trilingual monthly magazine called *Dharma-bhjudaya* was also started in Agra for publishing articles in Hindi, Gujarati and English on literature, history, archæology, art and such other interesting and useful subjects.

#### AS A FOUNDER OF INSTITUTIONS

Vijaya Dharma Suri was gifted with the quick intuition of a genius which helped him to foresee the demands of coming generations. He was grieved to see the present down-fallen condition of his religion and community. He had to provide for the future requirements of his community and find means to redress the present deplorable condition. Many of his people were Jainas only in name; they did not know anything of Jainism. The Jaina Literature was left uncared for. It was decaying day by day. The non-Jainas had no interest in Jainism. Not only that. Knowing little nor nothing of Jainism they misunderstood and misrepresented it. The task before Vijaya Dharma Suri was in no way a small one. He had to educate his community; he had to remove the prejudices and wrong notions of his

non-Jain brethren; he had to provide for the preservation and propagation of his religion. For the achievement of these objects he started magazines and published *Granthamalas*. He founded *Pathashalas* and *Gurukulas* and he established *Pustakalayas* where books and manuscripts on the several branches of the Jaina Literature were collected, preserved and lent for reading. Vijaya Dharma Suri knew how, when and where to found an institution and how to provide for its proper working.

The life and activities of Vijaya Dharma Suri mark an epoch in the history of Jainism.

# Some Impressions

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Vijaya Dharma Suri was not only an ideal Jain Sadhu but his was a personality of eminence and rare attractiveness. His was a great and liberal mind, which made him just in the appreciation of things good and noble in other sects and religions. His was a warm heart, which made him mild towards poor infatuated fellow-creatures, whom he loved as a father does his own erring children. His was a firm soul, which made him forbearing even towards his adversaries. His was the quick intuition of a genius, who, ages before, knows the demands of coming generations and his was a sound common sense, which knows the needs and grievances of the present hour, and finds means to redress them. Renowned was he as a writer, a scholar an orator and a social reformer.

DR. CH. KRAUSE,  
*Leipzig (Germany).*

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His Holiness was a famous scholar and particularly, a great promoter of literary studies. This has been acknowledged, in the western world, by the great Oriental societies of Germany and Italy, through the nomination of His Holiness as

honorary member. The European scholars just, as those of India, are obliged to him very much.

Dr. W. KIRFEL,  
(Bonn. Germany).

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As the first Italian Sanskrit scholar, who wrote a biographical sketch of the great Jaina Acharya, whose loss we now lament, may I be allowed to remember his extraordinary personality as a monk, a writer and propagandist. His many-sided qualities entitled him to the highest place amongst the entire Jaina community of India. As a scholar, he can be regarded as the true mediator between the Jaina thought and the West.

Dr. F. BELLONI FILIPPI,  
*Pisa, Italy.*

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It was for me a matter of sincere grief to hear the sad tidings of the passing away of your revered Guru Maharaj, Shri Vijaya Dharma Suri. Although I never had the opportunity of meeting him, I was able, in the course of a friendly correspondence, to appreciate his profound learning, lofty spirit and kindness of heart.

Dr. L. FINOT,  
*Hanoi, (Indo-China).*

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I can tell you that he is one of the most impressive personalities I ever met with in the whole world. I was conversant with his name and his work when I came to India. When I could pay him a respectful visit, though I found him already dying, I found before my eyes the very man I had been hearing of,—the real type of a muni; in spite of his physical pains, he welcomed me with a dignified and sweet smile I never forget; nor shall I ever forget the noble words, I heard from his mouth, the magnificent explanation of the *sloka*, . . . . . proclaiming the duty of tolerance, respect, sympathy, kindness to any creed or opinion of good faith. As a scholar he was simply wonderful, though he could spare only a little of his time for study. No name can stand higher in the record of the Jaina community.

DR. SYLVAIN LEVI,  
*Paris, (France).*

Acharya Vijaya Dharma Suri will always be remembered not only as a great scholar and a prominent priest of his community, but also as one who has had the collaboration of Indian and Western scholars, and has rendered excellent service to Sanskrit scholarship by the help he has offered to his fellow students in Europe. His memory will be held in honour in the West as well as in the East not only as a great scholar, but also as a noble and good man.

DR. M. WINTERITZ,  
*Prague Czecho-Slovakia.*

I think that not only Jainism has lost one of its most distinguished leaders but that, with the death of Dharma Vijaya Suri, the world itself is deprived of one of its greatest men.

PROF. GIUSEPPE TUCCI,  
*Rome, (Italy).*

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Vijaya Dharma Suri was firmly convinced that truth is one, and he welcomed every earnest teacher, without regard to race or nationality, as a co-worker. He thus became a living link between the East and the West.

DR. STEN KONOW,  
*Oslo, (Norway).*

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In his all-embracing goodness he made no distinction between friend and enemy, between Orient and Occident. On the contrary, he only acknowledged one wide, undivided world, expecting help from true charity. His fame as a scholar, his noble humanity are a light, whose rays shine across the seas, and gladden our eyes.

PROF. V. NEGELEIN,  
*Erlangen, (Germany).*

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During his life in this human world, he lived in the severest asceticism, and in the most absolute poverty. Still he was wont to bestow immense riches—more valuable than any terrestrial and perishable treasures—on all those, who had good fortune to be known by him. He was a model for us all.

Dr. JOHANNES HERTEL,  
*Leipzig, (Germany).*

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Shastravisharad Jainacharya Shri Vijaya Dharma Suri fulfilled in our day an old Indian ideal of a great man. Having secured the mastery of human passions, he was actuated by a selfless benevolence. Entirely loyal to the doctrines of his faith, he realized them with a philosophic insight—His teaching and preaching were invested with reasonableness and sweetness, while his advances to members of other sects, countries and cultures were characterised by an unfeigned friendliness—His exertions in the cause of education, and his constant pre-occupation with plans for the foundation of institutions, and the publications of periodicals, texts and studies revived and invigorated his community.

Dr. F. W. THOMAS,  
*London.*

