

## *"That Art Thou."*

*Chhandogya-upanishad.*

"This seeming world, after all, is but an air-image over Me, the only reality; and nature with its thousand-fold productions and destruction, but the reflex of our inward force, the phantasy of our dream."—Carlyle.

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# THE LIGHT OF THE EAST.

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## The signs of the Times.

Years ago Arthur Schopenhauer predicted with the intuition of genius that the most remarkable event in the Nineteenth century in the judgment of the future historian will be the introduction of Aryan Religious Philosophy in the West. Science, which during the last half a century has made such brilliant conquests in the realms of Nature, has so far established the universality of law as to make it impossible for intellectual Europe to accept the dogmas and miracles of Christianity as its guide. On the other hand, the innate longing of the human mind for some sort of religion or other has turned the attention of European thinkers to the yet unexplored spiritual treasure of the East. The sublime thinkers of Germany dissatisfied with the crude philosophy and material science of the West have turned their attention to the caves of the snow-clad ranges of the Himalya where the yogi sits calm and motionless to mingle his phenomenal consciousness with the fountal, absolute Bliss. Eduard Hartmann echoes the opinion of almost all the modern metaphysical thinkers of the civilised world when he says,—“As it is characteristic of the oriental mind to be less systematic in its thinking but quicker in divining the occult and to be more open to the slight whispers of genius, there are in the philosophical systems of the Hindus yet unlifted treasures, in which we are often surprised to find anticipated

results of many thousand years of Western development.....The Unconsciousness has, in fact, been as clearly and exactly characterised in this old Indian book of the Vedanta philosophy (Pancādāsāprakarana) as by any of the latest European thinkers."

This eulogium on our system of philosophy appears to us as a mere babble of words. We are not at all satisfied to learn that the Rishis of India did not surpass the modern thinker in spiritual science. On the other hand we know it for certain that the Eastern yogi is face to face with the eternal truths of Nature as the Western scientist is face to face with a few of Her phenomenal aspects. We know it for certain that all attempts to cognise the Noumenon by intellect are futile because intellect is nothing but a phenomenal aspect of nature. "It is thought," says the Kena upanishad, "by him that thinks it not; he that thinks it knows it not; it is unknown to them that know it; known to them that know it not." By the above the sage means that the Higher consciousness can only be revealed by the suppression of the Lower (i.e., the mind), and as we attain the waking consciousness by the total suppression of the dream-consciousness. Here lies the fundamental difference between the means which the West and the East respectively adopts to reach the ultimate Truth. The highest faculty which the West employs to know the ultimate truth of the kosmos is intellect; and has it succeeded in its mission? From the days of the Ionian and Pythagorean schools when Socrates and Plato used to teach their disciples walking in the shores of Ægina to the days of Kant, from Spinoza to Hartmann, from Leibnitz to Lotze who can say that he stands "behind the Veil"? What have the deductive and inductive processes of reasoning done during the last two thousand years to know the ultimate Truth? Can Huxley or Tyndall say what an atom is? As regards the ultimate truth the modern scientist is as ignorant as the Australian savage sunk in the lowest depths of ignorance? "If you ask me," says Prof. Tyndall, "whether Physical science has solved or is ever likely to solve the problem of the universe, I must shake my head in doubt."

The theoretical side of Hindoo Metaphysics has exerted its greatest influence on the German thinkers; but they have failed to grasp its innermost essence, we mean, its practical side. No one who has not practised yoga for some time can positively know that there is in every human being a Higher Consciousness distinct from what is known as the human mind. It is the same in every individual being, beyond the limitations of time and space. How can Kant or Hartmann understand Hindu Philosophy, till they can get some glimpse of this

Higher Consciousness by the suppression of the Lower consciousness—mind?

Such being the case, we can not understand how the labour of the orientalists can throw any light on the practical philosophy of the Hindus. How can one describe the scenery of the Alpine heights if he has not taken the trouble to see them? You orientalist you regard reason as the sole faculty of knowledge, while we, on the other hand, firmly believe that it can never lead one beyond the phenomenal universe. You regard it as the highest faculty in man, we think that other higher but innate faculties come within the ken of our consciousness by the suppression of the lower faculty called reason. You say the innate faculty we mean may be a bundle of hallucinations; we answer that the innate faculty of direct cognition can not but be true, because the results achieved by it can be corroborated by the evidence of the five senses. The ancient Hindus had neither telescopes nor microscopes, but as every one knows, they knew everything which the modern astronomer knows with regard to the solar system. They knew all this by means of this innate faculty, the faculty of hypersensual cognition; they knew the physical as well as the metaphysical aspects of the solar system.

It is but fair to ask scientific Europe to examine *practically* the claims of Hindu Philosophy before condemning them in the unreasonable manner it has hitherto done; it is high time to try a different method to reach the ultimate truth, when the deductive and inductive methods have failed after a trial of two thousand years. To stick to them for the sake of Physical Science is indeed laudable but to stick to them any longer for knowing the ultimate truths of Nature is nothing short of intellectual suicide. All the great religious teachers of the world have sprung from the East and if Europe has cultivated Physical Science for a period of three hundred years Asia has cultivated Spiritual Science for thousands and thousands of years. The great yogis,—Jesus, Budha, Sankaracharja, Mahomet and Chytanna,—were all of them glorious sons of Asia; as the sun rises in the East to dispel the darkness of the world, so the great spiritual suns of the world, always rise in the East to dispel the spiritual gloom which sits deep in the innermost recesses of the soul. If the mission of the West be to teach mankind the best means to secure their temporal happiness, the mission of the East is surely to point out to the world the noble path of spiritual evolution which is to ensure their everlasting peace.

From the above it must not be imagined that we regard Physical

Science as something different from Spiritual Science. On the other hand we hold that an atom properly understood reveals a god; but an atom must be studied not only in its physical but also in its metaphysical aspect. "The Materialists," says Schopenhauer, "endeavour to show that *all*, even mental phenomena, are *physical*; and *rightly*; only they do not see that, on the other hand, everything physical is *at the same time metaphysical*". The chief instrument which the Rishis of old employed in cognizing directly physical as well as hyper-physical phenomena is metaphorically called the third eye. It is at present latent in the mass of mankind as the highly-developed intellect of Newton is latent in the African ape. Yoga is the training which ensures its development. In the ordinary man the mind acts by the help of the five senses; in the Yogi it acts without the aid of the senses. Even an ordinary man can send his mind thousands of miles away, but as his mind's eye is closed, it can cognize nothing. The mind of the Yogi, in virtue of his spiritual training, can cognize phenomena even at such a distance. The highly-developed Yogi is thus independent of his senses and of his body. When the mind becomes independent of the body it becomes, according to the Rishis, a fulness of unbroken bliss. This state is called Jivan-mukti according to the Hindu shastras. There is still a higher stage of development when the enfranchised mind after exhausting all the plains of perception fully realises that the universe is not apart from it but one with it; when the mind realises this, it becomes lost so to speak in the sense of its universal unity and becomes one with the fontal essence of unmingled bliss beyond the limitations of time and space. "The sun illumines Thee not, nor the moon, nor the lightning, nor the fire," says the upanishad, "but the infinite universe is illumed because of Thee."

The object of this magazine is of a two-fold nature. For the European readers\* it will supply expositions of the Hindu system of philosophy by its ablest expositors, viz., the Brahmins themselves. Most of the contributions in this magazine will be from the pen of those who really "lead the life"; the great Vedantic doctors of Benares and southern India will be consulted in every difficult and intricate problem of Hindoo Philosophy. An attempt will be made to give a rational explanation of the shastric injunctions followed strictly to their very letters by millions of Hindus even in these degenerate days. Another valuable feature of this Magazine will be the introduction into it of the translation of important Sanskrit works with Sankara's commentaries. The Hindu system will be invariably compared with the

theories of the great European thinkers from Plato downwards in order to make it more palatable to the over-refined European of to-day.

The next and by far the most important object of the present venture is to help those who sincerely wish to lead the life but are hindered from doing so for want of a trustworthy guide. There are various ways pointed out in the Shastras leading up to the sublime beatitude of Nirvana, and each individual has to select for himself that path which will suit him best. As most of the important articles in our paper will be from the pen of those who, by virtue of *yoga*, are in a higher level of spiritual consciousness than the mass of mankind the practical hints given in this magazine will greatly benefit this class of our readers. It must not be imagined from this that the whole truth regarding the secret aspects of ancient science is to be revealed even if some of the contributors of this magazine be acquainted with them. The sacred mysteries of Hindu religion is always handed down to the initiated disciple and in no circumstance to the outside public. But no stone shall be left unturned to bring to light those mysteries which can be revealed without profaning the sacred tradition.

A stage in the cyclic progress of mental evolution has now come when the world is loath to be satisfied with any other religion but that which is compatible with the discoveries of modern science. If the ancients were more prone to abstraction and generalisations, the moderns are more exact in filling up every detail of the general outline. The age of inspiration is succeeded by the age of reasoning and experience, the age of unwavering faith by the age of agnosticism and doubt. But still as we count the leading minds of the century we can not but notice that the thinking world is verging towards the hoary systems of the East. Berkley, Hume, Spinoza, Kant, Fichte, Schilling, Hegel, Carlyle, Goethe, are they not more of an Eastern than of a Western philosopher? Even in the rank of scientists the greatest of them,—Tyndall, Huxley, and Herbert Spencer—are not materialists but agnostics. Unable to penetrate the inscrutable veil of the infinite, they stand wondering at the gigantic and mysterious laws of nature. In the following noble lines the poet thus sums up the attitude of modern thought :—

Oh yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final good of ill,  
To pangs of Nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood.

Behold, we know not any thing,  
 I can but trust that good shall fall  
 At last—far off - at last, to all,  
 And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?  
 An infant crying in the night :  
 An infant crying for the light :  
 And with no language but a cry.

Are God and Nature then at strife,  
 That Nature lends such evil dreams  
 So careful of the type she seems,  
 So careless of the single life.

I falter when I firmly trod,  
 And falling with my weight of cares  
 Upon the great world's altar stairs  
 That slope thro' darkness up to God.

Such is the gloomy tone which pervades modern thought. It produced the Hamlet of Shakespeare and the Faust of Goethe. "What is there behind the veil?"—To this Western science answers in broken and faltering accents,—“What space and matter, really may be, we do not know; if we attempt to reason about their essence and origin, or quit the region of science based on fact, we get into the misty realms of metaphysics, when like Milton's fallen angels, we find no end in wandering mazes lost.”—This is the high-watermark of modern science. It employed reason to solve the problem of the universe and its efforts were fruitless and barren.

It will not be out of place here to notice briefly the chief points of difference between the Eastern and the Western systems of Metaphysical science. It is true that Western evolutionists recognise the law of development, but unfortunately they recognise the imperfect Consciousness of man as the climax of Nature's development. To this the *Shastras* say that the range of the development of consciousness stretches into regions whose immensity baffles thought and that this development is eternally progressive till infinity is reached; man may be the highest being of this small planet called earth, a microscopic mote in the infinite space but there are other systems inhabited by higher and higher beings till the chain of finality is lost in the infinite. If the law of development be Nature's universal law why should it

stop as soon as the human level is reached? If the goal of evolution be perfection why should Nature stop at that most imperfect mammal called man. As the *Shastras* postulate the law of universal development, they can not but postulate the existence of millions and millions of high beings inhabiting the innumerable solar systems whom they call "gods." Is not this doctrine of the Rishis more liberal and rational than the one-sided superstition which places man at the head of creation? The *Shastras* further say that the higher beings are the development of lower beings; that the consciousness of a god is latent in a man and can be raised to that height by the practice of yoga which involves as its preliminary the fulfilment of the law of righteousness. When the initiate is working for his own development he is indirectly doing good to others, because there is a certain unity subsisting between all beings whose totality makes up the great whole.

In the next place the Rishis maintain that in order to cognise the Noumenon or the essence of things a higher level of consciousness than that of the ordinary man is required. This being the case we can not criticise the accuracy of their statement till we ourselves develop within us that spiritual level. What the slow process of Nature develops in thousands of years, the practice of yoga develops in a number of years only. These Rishis have showed in their philosophical works that they were possessed of mental powers distinctly above the average. Yet they believed in things which now appear absurd to a vain, conceited modern graduate.

The great axiom of Hindu Philosophy is that thought can never transcend itself. The distinction between consciousness and non-consciousness is therefore nil. There are various grades of consciousness, but the existence of unconsciousness is an impossibility. When the man of science thinks of an atom, he no doubt, forms a certain idea and it is folly to call that idea unconscious of which he is aware. Sleep itself is a state of consciousness. We can never imagine unconsciousness because that will lead one to the self-contradiction that that which is thought is apart from thought. Can that which is alleged to be apart from thought be even imagined by any conscious being in the universe. There are infinite grades of consciousness according to the *Sastras* but absolute unconsciousness is pronounced to be an impossibility and self-contradiction. There are conscious entities who can *think* and there are others who *cannot think*; and as we can *think* of those that cannot *think* the latter as thoughts must be conscious. This axiom should be the back-bone of every true search after the absolute. There are, however, some western

(a) ~~cannot think of unconsciousness. I cannot think I was~~ *cannot think of unconsciousness. I cannot think I was*  
~~unconscious. I must have been conscious when I was unconscious.~~ *unconscious. I must have been conscious when I was unconscious.*

philosophers of the materialistic school whose intellect has reached such a high point of development that in their opinion thought can transcend itself. We cannot understand whether this is the freak of a madman or the conclusion of a philosopher ; and we feel happy to think that India could never boast of such thinkers.

We think that an exchange between the physics of the West and the practical Metaphysics of the East will result in an inconceivable advancement of human knowledge, an advancement which may place mankind after a few centuries in the higher stages of evolution. A time may come when the developed intuition of mankind will recognise that as his true self which, in the words of Herbert Spencer, "persists, unchanging in quantity, but ever changing in form, under these sensible appearances which the universe presents to us and which we are obliged to recognise as without limit in space and without beginning or end in time".

"The one remains, the many change and pass ;  
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly ;  
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity."

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## A study of Bhagabat Gita.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE PRELUDE.

In the opening chapter of Bhagabat Gita we are presented with two great historical characters *viz.*, Khrisna and Arjuna. The characters are diametrically opposed to each other. The one is the *Drusta* or the witness of the great battle fought between virtue and vice, the other is the *Karta* or worker ; the one is the *atma* (the spiritual seer the other is the mind (the worker). The opposing forces of virtue and vice meet in the great *Dharmakshetra* of the world, where the *Karma* of every individual is rewarded or punished by the even-handed justice of Karmic law. If Krishna ever acts at all, he acts like the voice of conscience when he advises Arjuna. Though a mere witness his advice is given only to virtue just as the voice of conscience is com-

paratively loud to the pious man ; but he has not entirely neglected the other party. More than once before the great battle was fought his voice was heard in the palace of *Durjodhana* ; but it was lost amidst the tumult of jarring passions and selfish interest. Though he is now on the side of virtue he is nearest to the man who loves him best, just as the voice of conscience is most audible to a highly spiritually-developed being.

It is clear from the above that Bhagabat Gita is a discourse between Logos, the Higher Self of man, and his Lower Self, the mind. The Higher Self is common to all finite beings, the only unchangeable witness which persists through the process of an almost endless series of rebirths. It is the Lower Self, the mind, which as the result of *Karma*, changes in every birth. Krishna represents the Higher and Arjuna the Lower Self. Radically, the word Krishna means the "Atma of all" ; Arjuna is called "Nara" or the human *monad*, in several places of the Mahabharat ; the two together are called *Naranarayana* which is equivalent to *Jiva* and *Atma*.

Like the teachings of all great religious teachers of the world, the *Gita* contains practical instructions for the great masses of stumbling humanity. It is the light which guides the faltering steps of a mortal through the labyrinth of *Maya* till he beholds the steady and eternal Light of self shining within him. The position of Arjuna in the first chapter of the book is a critical one. He represents the *Jiva*, or the human *monad* who stands in this world between two opposite poles—Virtue and Vice. How is he to act? Like *Arjuna* he falters at every step unable to decide what to do. Are his feelings and passions to overcome his sense of duty? Is Arjuna to renounce all the claims of relationship and ties of blood in order to act up to the standard of an ideal *Kshatrya* (warrior)? What do those claims of relationship and ties of blood mean? Is a man to act from the sense of duty unaffected by the results of his acts? The clue to the answer of these great questions is given by *Arjuna* in the beginning of the book. Another fact of great importance is suggested in chapter I. Sloka 10 of the book. Here it is expressly stated that the forces of vice are in the present case stronger than those of virtue ; still it is virtue which is to win in the long run. *Durjodhana* was expressly told by his mother *Gandhari* just before the beginning of the great fight that victory will finally rest with that party which is guided by *Krishna* the Higher Self.

In sloka 24, chapter I Arjuna is addressed *Gurakesha*. This epithet is significant. The key-note of Arjuna's character and his fitness to be

the disciple of Krishna are here indicated. The epithet means, "he who has conquered sleep". In the *Vedānta* as well as in the 14th chapter of *Gīta* sleep is identified with *tomogunum*,—the worst of the three *gunas*, and the characteristic adjective *Gurakesha* means the conqueror of the worst quality of the mind, *tomogunum*. The only *gunum* which binds him down as a mortal is *Rajo* and Krishna later on advises him to conquer that also. The false appearances of *maya*, *nama* (name) and *rupa* (form) still deter him from comprehending his true nature, and like an ignorant mortal he gives a list of his temporal relatives (Chapter I sloka 32). How can he fight with those who are, so to speak, the blood of his blood and the bone of his bone? How can he raise the superstructure of happiness upon a ground dripped with the blood of his relatives and whitened with their bones? He also describes with much warmth of feeling the deterioration of his race which is to take place after the destruction of its male members. To these questions, solemnly and vividly set forth by *Arjuna*, questions which clearly indicate the victory of emotions and feelings over the stern sense of duty, *Krishna* replies with a smile (Chapter II Sloka 10). The smile is the smile of Logos, his attitude towards all sublunary things which, according to the teachings of the Sages, resemble the mirage, or the son of a barren woman. The smile of *Krishna* has a museum of meaning, which none but the *Gnani* can fully realise. What a contrast between the calm moonlight of *Krishna's* smile and the storm of false feelings and emotions, however noble and grand, which was agitating *Arjuna's* breast! The expressions of *Arjuna* are characterised as "*kshudra hridaya dourbalyam*" ("great weakness of mind") by Krishna (ch. ii sloka 3), and in the succeeding chapter, like the majestic harmony of the sacramental hymn, the grand and musical intonation of *Krishna's* advice falls upon the sleeping soul of *Arjuna*.

The Bhagabat Gita is essentially the Book of Logos, or *Shabda Brahma*. The relation of Logos to *Brahma* on the one hand, and to *Jiva* on the other, is clearly set forth in this great work. The path of the human monad to *Brahma* lies through Logos, and it is to the Logos that the *Jiva* must look up to for salvation.

Analysis :—The first chapter contains 46 slokas of which the 1st sloka contains the query of *Dhritarashtra*. From the second to the twentieth we have a description of the rival armies as arranged in the field of battle. From sloka 21 to 23 *Arjuna* asks *Krishna* to place his chariot in a position which may enable him to survey the field of battle. Slokas 24 to 27 describe *Arjuna's* attitude of mind after viewing his kith and kin arranged against him. From 28 to 45 we find that *Arjuna* is

declining to fight against his kinsmen and is determined to leave the battle-field in order to avoid what he understands to be the slaughter of friends and relatives for avarice. In the last sloka we find him sitting idle on his chariot, lost in thought, and incapable of determining his course of conduct.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Sankhya Yoga.*

The second chapter of Bhagabat Gita is certainly the most important, in as much as in it are first enunciated those great spiritual axioms upon which the entire structure of the Vedanta philosophy rests. In our opinion these axioms may be proved by the process of *pure* reason ; this is a bold claim, but a claim which we will substantiate in the course of the present chapter. The Sankhya philosophy of *Krishna's* time is described here. Originally (*i. e.* in the time to which *Krishna* refers in sloka 3. ch. 3) the *theoretical* side of the Sankhya and Vedanta philosophies was the same (Vide ch. 4. sloka I ; also ch. 5. sloka 5). We fully agree with Mr. Gough when he says that Sankhya was originally a nomenclature for the principles of the philosophy of the upanishads (Vide Philosophy of the upanishads, Ch. VIII page 212). But when we consider the *practical* side of these two philosophies, we find that the paths are quite different though the goal is the same. What then is this Sankhya *yoga* as understood in *Krishna's* time and what element he adds to it in order to restore it to its original form ? Withdraw the element which *Krishna* adds, and the Sankhya Philosophy, though not misleading, becomes the most difficult path which leads to salvation (Vide Ch. XII sloka 5). The *Gnana* or Sankhya yoga is eminently a philosophy of the brain and not of the heart ; its conclusions are based upon pure reason ; and its foundation is as solid as that of adamant. The first tenet of the Vedanta philosophy is enunciated in sloka 12. ch. 2.

“নস্বেবাহং জাতু নাসং ন ঙ্গ নেমে জনাধিপাঃ ।

ন চৈব ন ভবিষ্যামঃ সৰ্বৈ বয়মতঃ পরং ॥”

“These kings including yourself and myself all exist in the present, past, as well as in the future.” Properly speaking this verse is a corollary of sloka 16.

“নাস্ততোবিদ্যতে ভাবোনাতাবো বিদ্যতে সতঃ ।

উভয়োরপি দৃষ্টৌত্তমমমোত্তমদর্শিতঃ ॥”

"That which never existed never exists; that which exists never ceases to exist; in this way philosophers regard the fact of existence and non-existence." In plain language the above *śloka* means that the universe of name and form, if it exists at all, has only an unreal and fictitious existence, but "that which persists unchanging in quantity but ever changing in form (to use the words of Herbert Spencer) under these sensible appearances which the universe presents to us transcends human knowledge and conception, is an unknown and unknowable power which we are obliged to recognise as without limit in space and without beginning or end in time." The following proofs may be adduced in support of the above proposition.

*Proof I.* A thing is said to occupy a definite place in space, if it stands in relation to some *mind*. *Definite* place in space implies *relative* place. Suppose the material particle A to exist *alone* in space along with an observer B, A will then occupy a *definite* place in space in relation to B. If the relation of A with regard to B be overlooked, A being cut off from all relation will cease to occupy any *definite* place in the infinite space; that which has not a definite place must exist everywhere *i. e.*, it will be one with absolute space. In other words, that which has no *definite* place has no size; and that which has no size is *absolute*.

Next let a system of any number of material particles, say the universe, exist in space along with the observer A. Following the above train of reasoning, the system X can not occupy any definite place in space apart from the mind of A; that is the material particles of the system X, not occupying any definite place, vanishes in space. On the other hand, A the observer in the absence of either B or X ceases to be an observer, for the mind in order to exist as *such* must stand in relation to some object.

We thus see that matter and mind do not exist *per se*, but they are the phenomenal modes or appearances of the one true substance, the Absolute.

*Proof II.* We have direct knowledge of (1) the knower and (2) the known, which terms are equivalent to "mind" and "matter."

The mind *sees* the external world by its power of sight; but we can never *see* the real size of any object on account of its existence in space. A material particle when 10 inches from me is of one size, and when thousands of miles from me is of another size. As long as an object will exist in space we shall never know its real size. But the question is—Is there anything as real size? With whatever unknown size we may invest any visible object, we will find by follow-

ing the train of the above argument that that size is not its real size. This argument will hold with regard to *ad infinitum* number of sizes, in as much as every size must exist in space. We, therefore, come to the conclusion that there is no real size at all.

Take the power of mind which is called *touch*. Do we ever know anything else than *relative* touch? The touch of iron differs from the standpoint of different organisms. Iron is hard to flesh and blood; but if my hand be ten thousand times harder than it is now I shall be able to break iron into pieces like glass. What is then the true touch of iron? If you invest it with any touch, even that touch is *relative*, because that *touch* is estimated from the standpoint of an organism. With whatever touch you may invest iron that touch is not its touch; this argument holds with respect to *ad infinitum* touches; therefore, material objects have no touch at all; because if we admit any touch at all *apart* from the touch given from the standpoint of any organism, that touch is *untouched*; which is absurd.

But still we find that material objects have size and touch as we *see* and *feel* them as long as we have a mind; and we have proved before that they have no *material substance*. We therefore conclude that the Knower (mind), and the Known (matter) are *interdependent* upon each other, and exist as they do in a dream. In a dream the "man of dream" as well as the "matter of dream" are both false; so is this relative phenomenal world. That which underlies these sensible appearances is my Absolute self, which has no limit in space nor beginning in time.

*Proof III.* All philosophies should start with the plainest facts of our consciousness,—I or "ego" and not-I or non-ego. Every one will admit that the sense of "I" must have arisen in the presence of "not-I," because without "non-ego" "ego" can not come into existence. For similar reasons the *sense* of non-ego depends for its existence on the sense of "ego" or I. But if a thing, say  $x$ , depends for its existence on  $y$ ,  $x$  is substantially equal to  $y$ ; for the same reason  $y$  is substantially equal to  $x$ , if  $y$  depends fully for its existence *as  $y$*  upon  $x$ . We find that "ego" depends for its existence as "ego" fully upon "non-ego" and "non-ego" depends fully for its existence as "non-ego" on "ego"; therefore "ego" and "non-ego" though phenomenally different are substantially one and this substantial absolute unity is my Higher Self,—*Brahma*, which has no limit in space nor beginning in time.

(to be continued.)

## Psychic Experiments.

(By A Chela.)

Since the last six years of my life I am devoting my time to the study of occultism by which I mean the practical side of Hindu Metaphysics. Though young, life at the age of twenty seemed to me a burning mirage and all its so-called blessings the cup of Tantalus. The hopes and aspirations which govern the masses appeared to me foolish in the extreme as they were destined to be lost in the next moment in the shadows of death. Life is certainly a carnival to the man who like the lower animals live *in the moment*, but to the reflective few it is a hell indeed. The three-score-and-ten is not even a point in the infinitude of eternity and it matters not whether this short space be passed in laughter or in tears. What guarantee is there that any particular individual is to live out even the short period allotted to man? Is not the sword of death hanging over our heads like the fatal sword of Damocles? Is he not the greatest fool who loves this terrible life with the fatal instinct of that insect which rushes towards the flame to be consumed therein? Where are now the ideals of their day—the Alexanders and the Napoleons, the Shaksperes and the Goethes? They were little mosquitoes in the flame of Eternity! Even the brass which points them out will crumble into atoms and the lands which gave them birth will be the play-ground of the roaring sea! Such was the state of my mind when a strange event changed the whole tenor of my future career! It was my coming in contact with an Asiatic whom, during the course of this narrative, I will designate by the pseudonym of Brahmanand. To the venerable Brahmanand I owe everything which is noble and grand in my life; it is he who initiated me into the higher mysteries of the *yoga* Philosophy; and it is through his favour, that the universe is not to me a riddle but as plain as a simple machine. Without giving any explanation of the mysterious way which enabled me to come in contact with the occultist I like to describe the series of psychic experiments by which he convinced me of the truths of the Vedanta Philosophy before giving me any Practical Instructions into the mysteries of Raj Yoga.

It was an autumn evening; the moon had just risen above the horizon and her calm splendour was turning into silver the little ripples of the Ganges which, propelled by a cool breeze, were every moment breaking against the massive stone on which I sat. There was not a spot

above to mar the blue grandeur of the infinite sky, except the shining stars whose brilliance softly lighted the unfathomable depths of space. "You are trying to cognize Brahma with your intellect", spoke out a voice, and in another moment a form was before me, "it is as foolish as to see your back with your own eyes! You are yet bound by the fetters of *Karma* and so it is impossible for you to sink into the deepest *Samadhi*; as it is I will give you a glimpse of Nirvana." As these words fell from his lips through the silence of the night, the firm earth beneath my feet began to give way and as far as my mental eye could go I could discern nothing but an endless vapoury mist. It seemed to me that the solid earth had, like ice, melted into watery atoms which stood so close that the space between them became imperceptible and the whole scene presented the spectacle of a vast sheet of lustrous water. Gradually the lustre of the water began to thicken and it soon turned into the deep redness of the morning sun. To my mind the vastness of the space turned into the red glow of the rising sun. After an interval of unconsciousness I perceived a *motion* in place of the light, the like of which I never imagined. The motion was swifter than a flash of lightning and it was literally carrying my mind from one point of the space to the other. The motion was only there and nothing but the motion! Now burst upon my enraptured mental sight the *calm light* of a million suns with the *deep moaning* of a thousand thunders! Not that I saw the light but I felt that I *was* the light myself! Enshrouded in that Light of Lights I felt a *rapture* which even the most imaginative brain must fail to conceive! The "I" was not yet wholly lost but it was expanded into the depths of the Infinite Light. Waves of rapture and waves of Light succeeded one another every moment! Gradually the rapture grew into such infinite intensity, that the sense of "I," the sense of Light, the sense of Time and Succession disappeared, and deep, intense, infinite rapture alone remained! Where was Time then, where Space, where Light, where Darkness? Where was Being and where Non-being? Where was Sound then and where Silence? Where was Thought—the creator of a million universe? All hushed in that Eternal Rapture:

"That shrouded in his lonely light,  
Rests utterly apart  
From all the vast creations of his might  
From Nature, Man and Art."

How long I remained in that state I cannot say. That my fall from that sublime height was through unconsciousness resembling that of

sleep I do perfectly remember. When I came into my consciousness the venerable sage Brahmanand was before me with the grandeur of the stars above his head and the music of the silver ripples beneath his feet.

(to be continued.)

## The Prashna upanishad.

(Of the Atharva Veda.)

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE FIRST PRASHNA (QUESTION).

##### 1.

Sukesha, the son of Varadvaja, Satyakama, the son of Shibi, Garga, the son of Shaurjya, Kaushalya, the son of Ashvala, Baidarvi the son of Vrigu and Kabandhi, the son of Katya were all devoted to the path of Brahma, who intending to seek the absolute truth went to the sage Pippalad with *samit* in their hands believing that he will teach them all about it.

##### 2.

To them the venerable Rishi said, "You should all abide for a year more in the practice of austerities and devotion with unflinching faith and engaged in serving your spiritual instructor. At the end of that period come to me and ask me your several questions and if what you ask of me be known to me then I shall tell you all you want to know."

##### 3.

At the end of the stipulated period Kabandhi the son of Katya who had passed the year in the manner he had been instructed by the Rishi came back to the venerable *acharyya* Pippalad and asked him "O venerable father ! tell me how the several classes of beings (Praja) came into existence."

##### 4.

To whom the Rishi replied, "At the beginning of the Kalpa, the Prajapati intending to create the several species of beings absorbed himself in meditating upon the state of existence in the previous Kalpa and as the result of such contemplation gave birth to the two first principles of Creation called Rayi and Pran, in order that they should originate the manifold creations.

5.

"Of those two first principles, the Pran or Agni is the Aditya or the Sun ; it is the Perceiver. The Rayi is known as the Soma or Chandra and is that which is the object of perception. Whatever there is whether in a gross or subtle state is Rayi ; hence, it includes everything which is perceptible. (1)

6.

"The Pran or the Aditya is the all-pervading spirit in all. When this Aditya enters the East and illuminates that quarter with its rays, it propagates life through every object in that quarter, and similarly when it enters the South, the West and the North, above and below, and the four corners, it illumines everything in those quarters and diffuses life by means of its rays.

7.

"The Pran or Agni is therefore the life of all life, and is the one, all-pervading universal soul, and it shines every day as the sun. This is what has been described in the last verse (Ric or mantra).

8.

"This sun is the Kosmos itself ; it is possessed of the manifold luminary rays ; it is the universal consciousness ; it is the support of all life ; it is the universal luminary for it is the eye of all beings ; it is one and unprecedented and it propagates heat throughout the universe. Its rays are infinite, and it exists in infinite varieties of existences and generates universal life.

9.

"How do the Sun and the Moon, which are one and the same thing being the different aspects of the same substance, give birth to such numerous creations ? The Sun and the Moon produce the day and night which multiplied produce weeks, months, and the year. Time as denoted by hours, days, nights, weeks, months and the year is therefore the Prajapati. This year has two courses or cycles called the

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NOTE. (1). The *Kalpa* is the period fixed for the existence of one creation. It begins when the Logos or *Shabda-Brahma* emerges from its state of *Samadhi* in the Param-Brahma and ends when this Logos absorbs into the same infinite and all pervading Essence of all essences. This Logos is the Prajapati or the Creator and the two first principles of creation called Rayi and Pran are but two different aspects of the Logos itself and are not different entities. The contemplation of the Logos described in the fourth verse is its ideal separation of itself into the two States of the Perceiver and the Perceived. The perceived is denoted by the term *Praja* which includes all sorts of *beings*, whatever exists in any way, whether as *substance* or *accident*, whether *actually* or *potentially*, whether in the nature of things or only in our notions."

*uttarayana* and the *dakshinayana* marked by the summer and the winter solstices. Those who perform the religious rites of *Ishta* and *Purta*, [The *Ishta* rites are the performances of the vedic ceremonials, sacrifices, *agnihotra* and the worship of the gods. The *Purta* actions are the digging of tanks, wells and similar benevolent actions.] they by virtue of those actions conquer the *Chandra-lokam* or the region of *Chandra* or *Rayi*, the Moon, which is signified by the *dakshinayana* or the Southern course, and thence they return to this world when their term of enjoyment in the *Chandra-lokam* is over. Even Rishis having reached Heaven return to this world on account of their attraction for the *beings* (*praja*) and follow the southern course. This course is marked as the course of *Rayi*, and is called the *Pitriyana* or the course of the fathers. (2)

NOTE (2) There is a similar description of the two courses in the Bhagabat Gita Chap. VIII slokas 23-26, which are quoted below :

Yatra kale tvanabrithvim avrithvim chaiba yogina,  
Prayata yanti tam kalam bakshyami Bharatarshava. (23)  
Agni jyotiraha shukla shanmasha uttarayanam,  
Tatra prayata gachchanti Brahma Brahmabidojana. (24)  
Dhoomo ratristatha krishna shanmasha dakshinayanam,  
Tatra chandramasam jotiryogi prapya nibartate. (25)  
Shukla-krishna gati hyiate jagata Savashvate mate,  
Ekaya yatyanabrittimanynabartate puna. (26)

"O Bharatarshava! I shall tell you of those two courses, by the one of which the yogis return to the world and by the other they do not (23) The course which is signified by *Agni* (fire), flame, day, the fortnight having the full moon, and the six months of the *Uttarayana*, or the northern course of the Sun, is the path by which they reach Brahma. (24) They who follow the path indicated by smoke, night, the dark fortnight and the six months of the *dakshinayana* or the southern course of the Sun receives the effulgence of the moon, and then they come back. (25) These two, the white and the black courses of the universe, are everlasting : by the one of which final dissolution is attained and by the other there is a retrogression again. (26)

These two courses signify the *Probritti* and *Nibritti margas*—the courses of one who is inclined to the pleasures of the world, and the *annihilation* (*nirvana*) of him who seeks the Absolute. The Creator divided himself into the *Rayi* or the world of perception and *Pran* or the Perceiver. The Perceiver is the permanent and unchangeable element, whilst that which is perceived is but an imaginary creation of the Perceiver himself and consequently it is always changing. The Perceiver when devoid of egoism, is one with the universal infinite consciousness of Brahma, and is therefore pertaining of the Absolute. All, besides this pure *unapproached* (by egoism) consciousness are within the sphere of *relative* ideas and are therefore transitory. To the universal and infinite consciousness there is nothing to think upon besides itself—it can only enjoy itself. The ideal separation of the Logos into the two states of the Perceiver and the Perceived presupposes, therefore, that the consciousness of the Logos is under the influence of *Ahankar* or Egoism: This *Ahankar* is the fountain-head of all we behold—it is the root of all materialism. That course which

10.

"By the northern course the sages become finally absorbed in the Sun by means of austere devotion, by the sacrifice of all pleasures, by their faith in and veneration for the One Supreme Being, and by the light of divine knowledge dissolving their individuality in the universal soul, the Sun. This Sun is the support of all life, it has eternal existence and there is no fear of continual changefulness in it as there is in the Moon. It is the one centre towards which all are approaching. But the sages only, whose eye can see the divine truth, receive salvation in it; those who are ignorant of that truth revert from it, for it is the barrier of those who are engrossed in the pleasures of the world.

11.

"This Sun is five-footed, the five seasons being its five feet, (the Winter and the Autumn seasons are taken into one), it is the progenitor of the universe; the twelve months of the year are its twelve different forms; it is situated in the third plane in the skies; it is spoken of as possessing water, and others call it the knower of all. It revolves in the orb of seven horses and the six seasons of the year are fixed in that orb as its axle.

12.

"The month, which is a part of the year, is therefore the Prajapati. This month has two phenomenal divisions, the two fortnights—the dark fortnight which commences after the full moon and ends with the new moon and the bright fortnight which commences after the new moon and ends with the full moon. The former is the same as Rayi or the Moon, and the latter corresponds with Pran or the Sun. Therefore, the Rishis who behold the Pran as pervading everything always perform their Ishta sacrifices in the latter division, even if the sacrifices should be actually performed in the former or the dark half, and those who do not so behold, have their sacrifices performed in the former, even if they should be actually performed in the brighter half.

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can ultimately deliver us from the shackles of materialism is marked as the course of the sun, the Perceiver; that which leads to materialism is the means of gaining the *Chandralokam* the world of relativism. The sun, the Perceiver, leads to the absolute, the moon represents the perceptible cosmos and as the cosmos is ever coming and going so does the man who follows its course ever remain away from *Nirvana*. The northern course is the way to salvation; the southern course is *samsara* or continual transmigration.

13.

"The month is composed of days and nights. Therefore, one day and night represent the Prajapati, of which the Day is Pran and the Night is Rayi. These (day and night) neutralize the life of those who have sexual intercourse in the day. It is religious austerity (Brahmachariya) to have at night sexual intercourse on the wife during her menstrual period.

14.

"The food which is the nutriment of life is Prajapati, for it produces the seed (male generative product) from which these beings are generated.

15.

"And therefore, those who obey the law of Prajapati (by having sexual intercourse at the menstrual time) give birth to a son and a daughter (as the manifest fruit of their action); and those who practise austere devotion and holy asceticism, and those who never deviate from truth, have for their portion habitation in the *Brahmalokam*.

16.

"For them is destined the pure and transcendental *Brahmalokam* that which is the solar region, who are devoid of wickedness, falsehood and deception unlike those who being householders are compelled from their very position to practise them in some shape or other.

## Voice from the Himalaya.

The esoteric classification of the constitution of man is twofold. In the first place the almost infinite variety of Consciousness in the kosmos is divided into nine heads :

Jagrata	Maha-Jagrata	Vaishwanara
Swapna	Maha-Swapna	Taijasa
Sushupti	Maha-Sushupti	Pragna

The above division of Consciousness is referred to in Yoga-Vashistha though with a different nomenclature. Generally speaking, the first triad is the state of consciousness of all those Jivas who are under the chains of their own past *Karma*; the next triad is the state of consciousness enjoyed by Jivan-muktas; the third triad is the state of consciousness of the Bideha-muktas.

The waking, dreaming, and sleeping consciousness are independent of the will of the *agnani*, i.e., beings bound by their own Karma. But the three ordinary states of consciousness of the Jivun-muktas (i.e., those free from Karma) are fully dependent on their will. Vaishwanara, the total of *Jagrata* and *Mahajagrata* states of consciousness; *Taijasa*, the total consciousness of the astral plain; and *Pragna*, the sum total of consciousness of beings having *Karana Sharira*;—these three are the lofty states of consciousness of the Videha-muktas. That which is not any state of consciousness, but which is consciousness *per se*, is that which runs through *Vaishwanara*, *Taijasa* and *Pragna*. "The eye reaches it not, speech reaches it not, thought reaches it not" says the Kena upanishad, "we know not, we understand not, how one should teach it: it is other than the known, above the unknown." All the above nine states of consciousness are fully but unconsciously working in every individual; and the total suppression of our lower consciousness can only reveal the working of the higher.

These nine states of consciousness are classed under three heads in the Mandukya-upanishad, viz., *sthula*, *sukshma* and *Karana* consciousness respectively. The first includes *Jagrata*, *Mahajagrata*, and *Vaishwanara*; the second includes *Swapna*, *Maha-Swapna*, and *Taijasa*; the third includes *Sushupti*, *Maha-Sushupti* and *Pragna*.

It may be noted here that when the *atma* regards the visible and tangible objects as real, it becomes fictitiously limited; this fictitious limitation of the infinite consciousness is called "state of consciousness." Every Gnata or Knower in the Kosmos must be finite, because he is limited by the Known. *Brahma* is the Absolute Chit-Shukti of the universe which runs like a string through these various states of consciousness. Shankaracharya divides the whole of the universe into five categories, viz., (1) Sat (existence); (2) Chit (Consciousness); (3) Ananda (Bliss); (4) Nama (name); (5) Form (Rupa). The first three epithets represent *Brahma*, and the last two represent what we have styled "states of consciousness." Name and form are, therefore, equivalent to *Bhbums* or states of consciousness. The materialists are right when they say that our waking consciousness is the body itself; the difference between them and the Vedantists lies in the fact that the latter postulate the existence of two other bodies, viz., *Sukshma* and *Karana* beside the present one. Who can deny that death is the death of physical consciousness which is equivalent to the *Sthula sharira*? After death the individual lives in *Sukshma Sharira* and from his standpoint the *Sthula* body is non-existent. We fully agree with the materialists when they say that Consciousness of our plane is the brain itself; but there

are other States of Consciousness in the same individual of which even the materialist with his physical eye can see in the well-known instances of mesmerism, somnambulism, and clairvoyance. We admit that our Brain-Consciousness depends upon the vibrations of certain molecules; but we ask our learned opponent to explain what does he mean by a molecule or by an atom? In answer we are told that an atom is that which has no mind, which expression gives us the conception of our own sound-sleeping state—a state of “latent Consciousness.” Indeed no one can ever imagine a state of absolute unconsciousness apart from his own sleeping state; it is evident therefore, that absolute “unconsciousness” is beyond the experience of all mankind and is therefore non-existent from the standpoint of our own consciousness. We do not know whether death carries one from one state of consciousness to another or not; our imagination stops at the sound-sleeping state which is no other than a state of latent consciousness. No amount of thought can make us transcend the states of our consciousness; therefore, the statement of a materialist that he can think of absolute unconsciousness is equivalent to the statement that he can be conscious and unconscious simultaneously,—a statement which is rather the freak of a mad man than that of a learned philosopher. The truth is as the poet says:—

“Eternal process moving on,  
From state to state the spirit walks,  
And these are but the shattered stalks,  
Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.”

(Tennyson)

The other classification of the constitution of man is given in the Taittiriya upanishad; this classification is of a psychological character and it refers to the various states of consciousness through which the *yogi* passes during *samadhi*. These are (1) Annamaya Kosha (physical body), (2) Pranmaya Kosha (the Vesture of the Vital airs), (3) Monomaya Kosha (the Vesture of common sensory), (4) Vignanamaya Kosha (the mental Vesture), (5) Anandamaya Kosha (the Vesture of Beatitude), (6) Logos, (7) Absolute consciousness. It must be borne in mind that the above states of consciousness are inter-dependent upon one another for their relative existence; the seventh is not a *state* but consciousness *per se*; it is so to speak the essence of Logos itself. When the *yogi* mingles his consciousness with Logos, he is said to have attained *Nirvana*; when he mingles himself with

its essence, he attains *Maha-nirvana*. Let us picture to ourselves the *yogi* sitting in *Pudmasana* with his eyes closed and his mind concentrated on a single point. Above him is the deep, blue infinite vault of the heavens lighted by innumerable stars, and around him is the calm grandeur of the hills covered with eternal snow. Now, the conscious motion of his fickle and wavering mind ceases and he passes from the Annamoya Kosha to the Pranamaya Kosha ; time and space have no existence for him here, though he has not entirely lost the sense of their existence. Anon he passes to the Monomaya Kosha and becomes one with the universal mind ; deeper his consciousness sinks when from Vignanamaya he passes to Anandamaya Kosha ; one wave of ecstasy succeeds another and fully unconscious of time and space he identifies himself with bliss. At last his enraptured vision beholds the Spiritual Light and his individuality becomes the Logos itself ; he identifies himself with every manifestation of Nature from a tuft of grass to the highest Deity ; here he becomes *Ishwara* with infinite eyes, infinite ears, infinite hands and infinite feet, for he has become the one and the all ; he has become the universal Light which shines in every heart. Another moment, and he is neither light nor darkness, neither conscious nor unconscious, neither space nor time, neither one nor all. Such is the Absolute in which the mirage of finite consciousness vanishes at last. The above seven-fold classification of the upanishad does not differ in any material respect from the four-fold classification.

The Annamaya and Pranmaya Koshes are equivalent to the *Sthula Sharira* ; again the Annamaya Kosha is subdivided into the *Satadhatu*s of the Vedantins ; the Pranmaya is subdivided into Pancha Pran, viz, Pran, Apan, Byan, Saman, and Udan. The Manomaya and Vigyanmaya Koshes include the *Sukshma Sharira*. In the astral plain there are higher beings such as *Devas*, *Jivunmuktas*, *Ghundhurbas* &c. The bodies of these entities are called Vigyanmaya Kosha ; on the other hand, the bodies of *Asuras*, dead men, *Pishachas* are called Menomaya.

The Anandamaya Kosha is equivalent to the *Karana Sharira*. This is the body of the *Bidheha mukta* Mahatmas and of other beings of the same level. The light by which the Anandamaya Kosha is illuminated is the Logos. Logos is the collective "I" of all beings in the universe ; it is the purest form of self-hood which has an individuality of its own. It is the light of the infinite Kosmos ; it is purely subjective, and nothing but yoga can give us any idea of it. The essence of the universal "I" is the absolute consciousness, the

“chit” of the Vedantists. There is another seven fold classification, the secret Rajyoja classification of the vedānta Philosophy. This will be taken up in our next issue.

## Spiritualism.

The phenomena known as “spiritual manifestations” first originated in a house in Hydesville, United States, occupied by a Mr. Michael Weekman in 1847. There are various theories explaining the causes of these mysterious phenomena which we like to notice here; but whatever the real cause may be it is certain that the phenomena of spiritualism have become widely prevalent in the western world. Its adherents amount to two millions with one thousand public advocates, it has forty thousand public and private mediums and a literature of nearly one thousand different works.

When Mr. Weekman left the premises in Hydesville they were tenanted by the family of Mr. John D. Fox. From March 1848 the rappings, tappings, knocks, and shuttling of furniture began to be more and more manifested especially at the close proximity to the bed occupied by the two Fox girls. For several months the village was in great consternation and crowds began to pour in to examine this curious physico-psychological phenomenon. It was ascertained by means of “raps” that the invisible intelligence was the spirit of a peddler who had been murdered in that house some years previous. No public effort to sift the matter was made till 1849 when a committee was chosen to examine its nature and origin. Though every precaution was taken to detect the deception the committee declared that they entirely failed to discover the cause of these mysterious and intelligent sounds. The Fox girls were disrobed and searched by a committee of ladies appointed for that purpose, handkerchiefs were tied tightly around their ankles but to no purpose; intelligent answers to unpremeditated questions were given in the usual way. From the little village of Hydesville spiritualism has, at the present day, spread over the world. The variety of spiritual manifestations has been classed under five distinct groups by Mr. Ballou. They are the following in his own words:—

(1) “Making peculiar noises indicative of more or less intelligence, such as knockings, rappings, jarrings, creakings, tickings, imitation of

many sounds known in the different vicissitudes of human life, musical intonations, and, in rare instances, articulate speech. Some of these various sounds are very loud, distinct, and forcible; others are low, less distinct, and more gentle, but all audible realities.

(2) The moving of material substances, with like indications of intelligence, such as tables, sofas, light-stands, chairs, and various other articles, shaking, tipping, sliding, raising them clear of the floor, placing them in new positions, (all this sometimes in spite of athletic and heavy men doing their utmost to hold them down), taking up the passive body of a person, and carrying it from one position to another across the room, through mid-air; opening and shutting doors; thrumming musical instruments; undoing well-clasped pocket books, taking out their contents, and then, by request, replacing them again, writing with pens, pencils, and other substances, both liquid and solid—sometimes on paper, sometimes on common slates, and sometimes on the ceilings of a room, etc.

(3) Causing catalepsy, trance, clairvoyance, and various involuntary muscular, nervous, and mental activity in mediums independent of any will or conscious psychological influence by men in the flesh, and then through such mediums, speaking, philosophising, prophesying, etc.

(4) Presenting apparitions: in some instances, of a spirit-hand and arm; in others, of the whole human form; and in others, of several deceased persons conversing together; causing distinct touches to be felt by the mortal living, grasping and shaking their hands, and giving many other sensible demonstrations of their existence.

(5) Through these various manifestations communicating to men in the flesh numberless affectionate and intelligent assurances of an immortal existence, messages of consolation, and annunciations of distant events unknown at the time, but subsequently corroborated, predictions of forthcoming occurrences subsequently verified, forewarnings against impending danger, medicinal prescriptions of great efficacy, wholesome reproofs, admonitions, and counsels, expositions of spiritual, theological, religious, moral, and philosophical truths appertaining to the present and future states, and important to human welfare in every sphere of existence, sometimes in a single sentence, and sometimes in an ample book."

From the above it will appear to the reader that no one explanation can suffice for the various phenomena of spiritualism. More than one scientific man has borne testimony to the facts enumerated above. Prof. Crookes, perhaps the greatest name in modern chemistry,

Prof. Zollner, the great German mathematician, Fox, president of the psychological society of Great Britain, and a list of other eminent scientists have examined spiritual seances and have become converted. The theories concerning these phenomena are classed by Mr. Devens of America into the following heads :

(a) "Concerning the latter (*i.e.*, moving of tables and other ponderable substances and objects, as well as the knockings) it has been argued that, in spiritualism, it is the mind of the person charging the medium who exhibits all the intelligence—or it may be some one *en rapport* after the medium has been charged to that degree that the electricity overflows in raps and these raps are of the same character as detonations of electricity when a positive and negative cloud meet in mid-air and produce thunder. (b) Another theory of the cause of the rappings is that of a too great redundancy of electricity congregated upon the involuntary nerves, through passivity of mind, and thus imparting to them extraordinary force. (c) The theory presented with much philosophical ability by Prof. Mahan is, that there is in nature a power, termed, scientifically, the odylic or mesmeric force which is identical with the cause of all the mesmeric and clairvoyant phenomena on the one hand, and with the immediate cause of these manifestations, on the other ; that by reference to the properties and laws of this force as developed in the spirit circles, and to its relations to the minds constituting the same, every kind of spirit-phenomena can be most fully accounted for, without the supposition of the presence or agency of disembodied spirits, and that the entire real facts of spiritualism demand the supposition that this force, in the production of these communications, is controlled exclusively for the most part unconsciously, by the minds in the circles, and not by disembodied spirits out of the same. (d) Professor Faraday of England claimed to demonstrate that it is by physical power, and not by any magnetic fluid, that tables move on being pressed by the fingers. (e) Herschel suggested that there might be a fluid which served to convey the orders of the brain to the muscles. (f) Mr. Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie seer, is of opinion that the producing agencies, in the moving of tables and other inorganic substances by spirits, are terrestrial magnetism and electricity."

We are of opinion that part of the phenomena known as spiritual manifestations is genuine and that a part is accomplished by fraud ; of the first class some are produced by real disembodied spirits, some by electricity and magnetism, some by the force of the unconscious will of the mediums, and some by other beings of lower order in the spiral

plane which are different from disembodied spirits. In India spiritual mediumship is known from time immemorial, though, as in everything of the world, truth is often mixed with fraud, illusion, and deception.

## The Seavoyage Question.

The time has gone by when the Hindus thought it their duty to bow down before every injunction of the *Shastras*, when faith was stronger than reason, when the three-score-and-ten was nothing compared with the Eternal beyond. Every age has its peculiar mission and the present age is destined to develop the physical attributes of man. In the *Satya Yuga* the self-consciousness of man was centered in his "I," the principle common to all mankind; in the *Treta* age his consciousness was centered in Reason or *Karana Sharira*; in *Dwapara* his self-consciousness was centered in his mind, technically known as the *Shukma Sharira*; and in the present *Kali* age his consciousness is centered in his physical body. From the standpoint of Nature all these four principles are equally important and each of them is destined to undergo its own peculiar development. Not only humanity changes during the influence of particular *Yugas*, but also its physical surroundings including the fauna and flora of the earth he inhabits. The great Authors of the *Shastras* foresaw all these and in the *Mahabharata* as well as in the *Mahanirvanatantra* we have a complete picture of the present state of things. The *Kali* age is as necessary for the development of mankind as a mass as the *Satya*! From our relative standpoint one may be good and the other bad; but from the standpoint of Nature everything is important. It is a mistake to suppose that any particular individual can change the destiny of a nation; every great man is the unconscious product of his age and it is the national mind through which Nature speaks! The French Revolution was brought about neither by Rousseau nor Voltaire; they were simply the physical embodiments of the national mind of that time. If the majority of the Hindu nation is determined not to obey any longer the injunction of the *Shastras*, who can prevent them from carrying out their intention? The national destiny is fulfilled by the unconscious direction of Nature; and what is Nature but the aggregate of all Her parts? According to the *Shastras* the *Kali* age is sure to bring about the disintegration of the Hindu race. But the question is whether that time is not in the distant future? To the

calm thinker the sanction of the entire nation to the sea-voyage question is not a trifle but a step fraught with momentous consequences. The *Shastras* are not for the great *masses* of mankind of the *Kali* age ; they are for the *few* who are struggling against enormous odds to lead the higher life. The very fact that the great Rishis, Munis, and *Mahatmas* have disappeared from the scene shews that the *majority* of this age is to be guided by its own mind. To seek Shastric sanction to the sea-voyage movement is, therefore, ridiculous. We repeat it, again, that the *Shastras* are not for the majority of this age, but for the microscopic minority. The interpreter of the *Shastra* of today is not the omniscient Rishi immersed in Yoga sleep amidst the solitary grandeur of the Himalya, but a half-Hindu, half-anglicised pundit who has sold his conscience to the English gold ! Apart from the sanction of the *Shastras*, the question arises, is the sea-voyage movement the movement of the whole Hindu community or of the interested few ? To us it is of no consequence whether the movement is the movement of the majority or of the minority provided we derive any substantial national benefit from sea-voyage. Had this movement been a national movement we would have regarded it as the will of Nature ; as it is, a small minority are its prime-movers and we should, therefore, see what benefits sea-voyage is to confer on the nation<sup>a</sup> at large. If we look at the question from the material point of view we can not deny that some good is sure to accrue from sea-voyage to England. The rulers and the ruled will learn to understand each other better ; young men will receive more freely the benefits of technical education and in this way may do some good to their country directly or indirectly. While we admit this, we fully deny that a Hindu can live in a foreign country like England in the *Hindu mode of living*. An anglicised Babu may live in England, for a short time, in the same manner in which he used to live in India, if he tries his best ; but the anglicised Babu's mode of living is certainly not the Hindu mode of living ! He is neither an Englishman nor a Hindu, but a strange mixture of them both. If the anglicised Babu can not live like a Hindu in his native land, how can it be possible for him to live like a *true* Hindu in a foreign country ? We sincerely doubt whether the great majority of such a conservative nation as the Hindu will be willing to take within its social pale its England-returned members even in spite of the sanction of some of the pundits of this country. Custom, in this country, has a strong binding force which is not inferior to the *Shastras* themselves ; it is extremely doubtful whether a few sea-voyage meetings will be able to nullify immemorial custom.

The majority of the Hindu population of India of the present day may be divided into three great sections ; fifteen and half-anna are as yet even in spite of Western influence pure Hindus in their mode of living ; of the remainder, one half, after receiving high English education, has learnt to honour the solid wisdom of their ancestors ; and the other half has learnt to be semi-Englishmen. The majority of the reform party who tried to *force* upon the people the infamous Consent Bill (infamous, because it was forced) belong to the latter class. The most characteristic epithet for these men would be "Hindu Eurasians." As the Eurasians are looked down upon by the majority of Englishmen, so these people are held in high contempt by the great masses of the Hindus. Some Englishmen are apt to regard them as the leaders of Hindu Society ; but the real fact is that they are regarded as outcasts by the Hindus themselves. The above is the real state of facts. If there be any leaders of the modern Hindu Society, they are men like Krishno Prossuno Sen and Shasadhara Turkachuramani. The agitators of the sea-voyage question should apply to the men of the above type for the sanction which they so urgently want.

Without the sanction of such true leaders of Hindu community the England-returned Hindus will be in a false position as regards the great mass of their countrymen. We fully admit that this is a "progressive" age and we should "act in accordance with advanced notions." We also know that the Hinduism of the present day can never be the Hinduism of former ages. Time brings about some change and as we have remarked before it will finally bring about the downfall of the present state of things. But the "progressive" age touches the Hindus very slowly. If we compare the mighty changes which time has brought about in the social customs of other nations of the world with those of the Hindus, we are surprised to notice the innate conservative tendency of the elder branch of the Aryan family. The reason of this is obvious. The social laws of the Hindus were so judiciously framed by their wise ancestors that they are apt to meet the requirements of every succeeding generation. The Hindu Rishis thought that man's life in this earth is a point in a straight line ; infinite in both ends and the chief object of human life is to reach the highest goal. Whatever tends to destroy man's spiritual equilibrium was carefully eschewed from the social laws which they framed. It is quite natural that to the man to whom everything beyond the grave is dark, these wise laws will appear somewhat irrational. The social customs of this country have struck such a deep root in the Hindu mind that no superficial agitation can shake it permanently. If any

change consonant with the spirit of this progressive age is necessary, it must be brought about unconsciously by the people themselves. We are certain that the sea-voyage agitation will suffer the fate of the Consent Bill. The very Brahmins who seem to sanction sea-voyage will be the first to outcast the England-returned Hindus. They have sanctioned sea-voyage but they can never practically sanction residence in England. The result will be that the few Hindus who will go to England on the strength of a *seeming* national sanction will be in a false position after their return. In a conservative country like India social, political and religious changes take place slowly and gradually; every attempt to force a reform upon the people must, in the end, prove abortive. 4291

## The Vision of Shukra.

(An Episode of the *Yoga Vashistha*.)

On a peak of the mount Mandar, the venerable Rishi Vrighu was in the ancient days of the world, devotionally absorbed in the deep meditation of the one Universal Essence. He was seated on a large flat stone, and in his sublime meditation he was plunged in what is called the *Nirbikalpa Samadhi*, that sublimest state of spiritual existence in which the individual soul becomes one with the Parama Brahma, and all notions of the Perceiver, the Perceived and Perception vanish away. Around him were the various kinds of trees and plants bearing fruits and flowers which never fade, the streams were ever rippling with the clear and transparent waters of the springs and were decked with many-colored lotuses and water-lilies, the cool breeze was ever fraught with the fragrance of the sweet-scented flowers and Sandal trees, the snow-clad peaks towered high up in the dark-blue sky reflecting the glow of the rising and the setting sun, and the six seasons were uniformly present throughout the year. Before him and upon the very stone on which he himself was seated, was his only son *Shukra* reposing on a bed of odorous flowers. While thus seated he (*Shukra*) beheld the beautiful and voluptuous form of a youthful damsel of heaven who was passing across the sky overhead. She was adorned with the garlands of Mandar flowers, her brilliant eyes shot forth flames of love, the gentle breeze played with her flowing locks and her path was glowing with the effulgence of her radiant form. As the calm sea is disturbed by the gusts of a strong wind, so was he inflamed

with a passion for the damsel, and his heart was so much captivated by her ethereal beauty that he beheld her form all around him.

Closing his eyes, Shukra placed her beautiful shape on the throne of his heart and was enveloped in the raptures of imaginary communion with that houri of heaven. He imagined to have reached with her the abode of *Purandar*. There he beheld the gods adorned with the garlands of Parijat and the beauties of heaven whose eyes resembled the blue lotus. He saw the swallows and the geese playing among the lotuses of the Mandakini (the Ganges in heaven), and the angels were reposing in the pleasure-gardens on her banks. Here, he saw Yama, Chandra, Indra, Surya and others whose bodies were flaming forth fire. He saw the *Nandanban*, the pleasure garden of Indra, whose Parijat trees were saturating the atmosphere with the sweet fragrance of their flowers. He saw Indra, the king of Heaven seated on his high ethereal throne encircled by the gods and goddesses, and Shukra saluted him like a second Vriṣṇu. The king of the gods being thus worshipped by Shukra, took him by the hand and seated him by his side as a token of his highest pleasure and requested him to remain in heaven for sometime to enjoy the pleasures of that sublime abode of beatitude.

Thus seated in his heavenly throne Shukra forgot his earthly existence. After a few moments' rest in the Court of Indra he set out to survey the various quarters of heaven. In a beautiful orchard he met with the same Apsara who had been the cause of his sojourn there, in a galaxy of the beauties of heaven, who shone like moon-beams in a clear blue sky. The damsel was in her turn flamed with a similar passion for the youthful son of Vriṣṇu. Perceiving this, Shukra created a sheet of darkness which completely enveloped that quarter of heaven, and taking the voluptuous houri by the hand he conducted her into a crystal palace. In this imaginary love-intrigue he totally lost sight of his earthly body on the top of the Mandar hills and drowned himself in these amorous pursuits, sometimes walking with her on the banks of the Mandakini, or in the beautiful garden of Parijat, sometimes in the orchard of Chitraratha they were encircled by the Vidyadharis of heaven, and his sweet love adorned from head to foot with the garlands of golden lilies will occasionally rest with him on the lovely *Gandhamadan* rock or play with him in the palaces of heaven.

In this way they passed sixty years (of the gods) on the banks of the Mandakini. Thence they removed to the *Sveta-dvīpa* where they remained for the space of half a Yuga and passing through many cities of the Gandharbas they again returned to the abode of Indra

where they peacefully whiled away thirty-two Yugas more. At length their cup of virtue was drained to the last drop and the pleasures of heaven being no longer a source of happiness to them they became embarrassed with evil thoughts and no longer able to maintain a footing in that ethereal region they fell down headlong upon earth. While falling through the vast space their mind was transformed into two infinitely small particles of frozen moisture which coming in contact with the earth was drawn up by rice-plants as sap. A Brahman of Dasharna took that rice and Shukra was thus transformed into the seed of that Brahman. He thus took birth in the womb of his wife as a son. There falling in company with the Rishis he went into the jungles and was devoutly engaged in the practice of religious austerities. In this jungle he had connection with a she-deer who thus became the mother of a son. His affection for this son again deluded him. He was so deeply absorbed in the thought of his son's longevity and temporal welfare that he totally banished from his mind all idea of spiritual meditation. In this state he was taken by death and as the result of his previous attachment to the blessings of this world he became the king of Madra. Here enjoying for a long time this happy state he left that king's shape and was born as the son of a Brahman devotee on the banks of the river Samanga. In this body he was freed from the impurities of earthly passions and he began to practise austere Yoga on the banks of this river for the attainment of spiritual beatitude.

Here, on the Manlār hills Vrigu, the father of Shukra, remained in his *Samadhi* state for the space of a thousand years (of the gods). At the end of that time he came to his individual consciousness, and seeking for his dearest son he beheld before him a skeleton lying prostrate at his feet. The sparrows had sought their nest within the skull of his dear child and insects had bored into his body, seeing this wretched condition of his son's lifeless body Vrigu became at once inflamed with great wrath and without discovering the cause of such untimely death at once proceeded to curse Death.

(To be continued.)

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