

"That Art Thou."

Chhandogya-upanishad.

"This so solid 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.

THE LIGHT OF THE EAST.

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The Vedas.

TO appreciate and to understand the Vedas the modern man should place himself in a remote past when the spirit of the age was quite different from what it is at present. Since then what changes the earth has seen! How many empires have risen and fallen! How many revolutions have convulsed the social and political institutions of various nations! What geological changes have swept off for ever from the face of the earth mighty empires and flourishing civilizations! Let the modern man traverse cycle after cycle through the hoary past and then only he will confront the majestic spiritual figure of the Rishi. His eye is always turned towards the Infinite and he looks upon the short span of earthly life with a smile of contempt. At dawn he salutes with grand hymns the glorious orb, — the most august symbol of Nature visible to man. He passes the awful silence of midnight in silent communion with the Supreme Being. Such was the ancient authors of the Vedas, and in order to understand them let us shake off for a moment the mean worldliness, the ludicrous pride, and the foolish self-importance which characterise us. Turning from the finite let us stand for a moment face to face before the Infinite. Let us recollect for a moment that not only we but even the solar system of which our little planet is an insignificant member is not even a mote in the absolute space. Let us consider that our little brain is not adequate to the task of grasping the Infinite without a complete spiritual training with all its physical weakness and with its meagre content of some forty-five ounce!

The Vedas are the work of mystics ; and should be judged from the mystical standpoint. The mysticism of the Vedas is not that vulgar mysticism which is so abhorrent to a rational mind ; it was no mysticism to the Rishi but to men of a lower plane. From true mysticism has proceeded all that is great and noble in the human mind ; true mystics have in all ages been revered by the millions which inhabit the earth ; and while their critics and unbelievers have been forgotten in a day, Jesus and Sankaracharya, Mahomet and Budha, still continue to exact the homage of the whole world.

The clue to the whole secret of the Vedas is given in one word in Sanscrit *viz.*, *Subla Brahma*. The metre and the sound are the essence and the meaning is simply the external garb. This brings us to the consideration of *Swara Shastra*, the science which treats of the relation between sound and mind. Sanscrit is the language of the *Sanscrit* mind, which etymologically means spiritually *pure* mind. That peculiar sounds do excite various emotions of the mind no one can deny ; it is well known that a champion singer can excite at will the various emotions of one's mind by the magic stroke of sound. Even the meaningless songs of birds and the unintelligible sounds of Nature touch the chords of our heart in various ways. But apart from its effects upon the hearer, sound has a peculiar effect upon the breath of the man who utters it. The breathing becomes slow or quick, or is altogether suspended by the effect of sound ; it leaves its ordinary route and passes into the *Susumna nadi* by the proper enunciation of Sanscrit words. The metrical arrangement of the Vedas is so artfully contrived as to bring the mind to its *laya* state (vanishing point) as soon as possible. The Vedic hymns were always chanted aloud, they were never silently perused. This shows that the essence of the Vedas is its metro and *swara*. There is another point which should be noticed here ; the proper enunciation of the mystic syllables of the Vedas generates a sort of *akasic* or ethereal vibration which rebounds with a spiritual force against the minds which give them birth. It causes a sort of spiritual rapture which helps to bring the mind into the state of *Samañhi*. The breath becomes altogether suspended and the enraptured mind touches the silence of the Infinite.

In this connection the mysterious relation between sound and light may be noticed. In most natural phenomena as thunder &c. we find that light invariably accompanies sound, though in many cases the ethereal vibration can not affect our optic nerves. According to the *Swara Shastra* every sound in nature is accompanied by a particular

color though in all cases it may not affect the optic nerves. Even clairvoyants are able to see streams of colored light passing in swift vibration through space whenever a sound is generated. The mystic sounds of Vedic hymns generate a kind of ethereal light by which the *purified* mind of the Rishi becomes entranced ; nothing short of a mind purified by the fire of *Karma-Kanda* is able to see this *Parama Jyoti*, this Light of Lights. Hence it is strictly ordained that none but a Brahman is fit to read the Vedas. Not the Brahman of today—an abominable relic of a long-buried past,—but the ancient Brahman whose whole life from the cradle to the grave was a sacrifice to the altar of Truth. Even a *Sutra* was considered fit to occupy the position of a Brahman provided he passed his life in purity. The *purity* mentioned above must be purity of a practical nature, quite different from that which is wrongly regarded as such by a section of our countrymen who have received the light (?) of English education. And these Brahmins are much abused by our enlightened countrymen because they thought themselves superior to the other sections of the community. Were they not justified in thinking so? Who in ancient times used to make astounding self-sacrifice with an eye to the highest goal? It was the Brahman. Who used to live in a simple cottage while kings and princes bowed at his nod? It was the Brahman. Who was the promulgator of a system of philosophy and life which is the wonder of the modern world? It was the Brahman. Who used to pass his life through a series of austerities avoiding the contact of all that is sensual and base? It was the Brahman. Who was unparalleled in piety, devotion and spirituality in ancient times? It was the Brahman. Who was the sole lord of the psychic powers whose vague glimpse has opened up a new field of thought to the modern scientist? It was the Brahman. You the scorner and reviler of your glorious ancestors, you who fret and foam in vain self-importance within the limits of a fleeting finite existence, you who are destined to die the death of a dog in complete ignorance of Nature and God, are you the man to sit in judgment over the ancient Brahman? While you pass the day from sun-rise to sun-set in grovelling thoughts, and your nights in orgies and revelry, while you try to hide your greed and hypocrisy under the cloak of polished manners and decent speech borrowed from a foreign people, are you the man to sit in judgment over the ancient Brahman? Ah! you are so dead to spirituality that you have lost even the capacity to conceive the distance which separates you from your remote ancestors. You are so dead to spirituality that you have forgotten to imitate your con-

querors in one essential point viz. their godliness, however superficial it may be, while you have carefully imitated all their fashions and frailties. Such as you are, you can never conceive the high level of consciousness from which the Vedas were dictated. The whole of the Vedas is divided into *Karma* and *Gyan Kandas*, in other words, the *Prabritti Marga* and the *Nibritti Marga*. The former is suited to the great masses of mankind; it contains rituals and other moral prescriptions whose sole aim is to aid the natural evolution of man slowly but surely. It gives directions by following which the human monad may lead comparatively happy life in this birth as well as in the intervening period between one incarnation and the next. The prescriptions of *Karma Kanda* sometimes descend from a purely spiritual plane to temporal affairs. A complete system of hypnotism or mesmerism is unfolded in the various *muntras* of the Atharva Veda. This portion is quite unintelligible to the orientalist by whom it is ridiculed as superstitious. But let it be noted that hypnotism has received recognition in the hands of even the orthodox science of our day and in no distant future it will be raised to the *status* of Science. The latter, *Nibritti Marga*, deals with occultism and Nirvana. The directions given here are not suited to large portions of mankind; it deals with the mysteries of initiation,⁴ with the problem of the universe, and with the means of attaining *Mukti*. *Gyan Marga* and *Yoga Marga* are two of its departments.

It is expressly stated that none but he who is purified by the practice of *Karma Kanda* is fit to enter the *Nibritti marga*. The essence of *Karma Kanda* is to practise moral virtues. The goal of his path is to enter Nirvana the Causeless Cause, the Rootless Root.

A large portion of Rigveda is full of hymns. These hymns are the expressions of universal pantheism. To the genuine pantheist the plough, the sun, the tuft of grass, and the moth are one and the same thing. Everything is to him a manifestation of Nature, a symbol of divinity. The distinction between the great and the small, the swift and the slow has vanished. Such a conception is not the product of a simple but of a highly philosophic mind. Such an idea Fichte presented to the world after a long life of philosophic thought. "How Thou art and seemest to thy own being", says he "I shall never know, any more than I can assume Thy nature. After thousands of spirit-lives I shall comprehend Thee as little as I do now in this earthly house. That which I conceive becomes finite through my very conception of it, and this can never, even by endless exaltations, rise to the Infinite. In the idea of person there are imper-

fections, limitations : how can I clothe Thee with it without these ? Now that my heart is closed against all earthly things, now that I have no longer any sense for the transitory and perishable, the universe appears before my eyes clothed in a more glorious form. The dead, heavy mass which only filled up space is vanished ; and in its place there flows onward, with the rushing music of mighty waves, an eternal stream of life, and power, and action, which issues from the original source of all life, from Thy life, O Infinite One, for all life is Thy life, and only the religious eye penetrates to the realm of true beauty. * * * The divine life, as alone the finite mind can conceive is self-forming, self-representing will clothed to the mortal eye with multitudinous forms, flowing through me and through the whole immeasurable universe, here streaming through my veins and muscles—there pouring its abundance into the tree, the flower, the grass. Great living Will! whom no words can name and no conception embrace ! Well may I lift my thoughts to Thee for I can think only in Thee. In Thee, the incomprehensible, does my own existence, and that of the world become comprehensible to me ; all the problems of being are solved, and the most perfect harmony reigns. I veil my face before Thee and lay my finger on my lips.”

Thus Fichte, like the Vedic Rishis, perceived God in every manifestation of Nature. Fichte lived in the Nineteenth Century so did Kant, Hegel and Carlyle. If the conception of the universe of the Vedic Rishis be rude and childish, why should not Fichte, Kant, and Hegel be counted as barbarians ? The orientalists are not ashamed to call Vedas the product of a *rude* age. For instance one of them, Mr. Gough, characterises the Upanishads as “ the work of a rude age, a deteriorated race, and a barbarous and unprogressive community.” Certainly *barbarous* because the rude, unscientific, and repulsive idea of Christian dogmas did never enter the brain of the authors of the Vedas ; because they never passed through life amidst a carnival of vice, sensuality and cruelty which is the bane of modern civilization ; because hunting, flesh-eating, and other forms of abominable cruelty formed no part of their *amusement* (!) ; because they developed faculties which are as superior to the civilized man of to-day, as the intellect of Newton is superior to that of an ape ; because, even according to men like Sir William Jones and Hartmann they knew more of the material universe than the greatest *savant* of modern science. If the whole rubbish which is published under the auspices of Trübner & Co., and styled “ Oriental series ” be reduced to ashes in a day, the practical philosophy of the Hindus will not lose even an

iota. For the orientalisists have misrepresented and caricatured the noblest system of life which leads to Nirvana. It is better not to read the Shastras from the garbled interpretations put upon them. It was therefore very wisely ordained by the Brahmans of old that none but a Brahman is fit to read the Vedas. Why? Because none but he whose mind is purified by the fire of *Karma Kanda* can realise the doctrines of the Vedanta. Having an eye to the present degenerated condition of India Mr. Gough characterises the Vedanta as the work of an "unprogressive community." As if eternal prosperity is the monopoly of the modern nations. History should teach our critic that fall is the inevitable lot of every nation and that the longest period of prosperity was enjoyed by the Hindu nation; again, by the law of cycles, they will rise to that height in the course of ages. Geology should have taught him that not only European civilization but even the slightest trace of a great continent will be obliterated within a scientifically measurable period and that his glorious island-home will be the play-ground of the roaring sea! The law of cycles is inevitable. It is the grand law of Nature.

It would not be out of place here to say a few words about the hymns with which a large portion of the Vedas is filled up. Some of these hymns are addressed to the plough and the soil, the symbols of the productive power of nature. According to the Hindus every power of Nature is a manifestation of the Divine Will; the will of man as well as the productive power of nature are but different phases of the universal will. The combined effect of the *pure* will of the Rishis mingling with the will of Nature naturally helped to bring about the desired result more effectively. Agriculture being the only source of subsistence of the world the Rishis tried to develop the productive power of Nature for the good of humanity. Similar hymns are addressed to Indra, the symbol of rain. Behind what appears to the superficial observer a collection of simple hymns there is hidden the deep wisdom of the Archaic ages. It is a maxim of Hindu philosophy that whatever is earnestly *willed* by the masses of mankind meets success sooner or later; and the *purer* the mind, the greater its powers and the greater the desired result. Moreover the Rishis as masters of the secrets of Nature could produce more wonderful results than the unaided will is able to accomplish. A relic of the Vedic practice has come down even to the modern times as is seen from the songs sung by the Hindus at the time of dearth in order to produce rain. It is not superstition but the dying relic of a great system of philosophy.

We will finish this article by throwing a hasty glance over the hymns of the Atharva Veda. We have remarked before that beneath the *muntrus* underlie the principles of what are known in modern times as mesmerism and spiritualism. The words of the mystic syllables are repeated over and over so as to direct the magnetic current all the more effectually towards the central figure of the ceremony.

As regards the date of the Vedas it is useless to make any research in that direction. For originally the Vedas were not *written* but *heard*. Hence, the Vedas are termed *Sruti*, that which was heard in silent communion with the Supreme Being during the state of *Samadhi*. Any *Yogi* having attained the highest state of spiritual development can know *afresh* what was known at the time of the Vedic Rishis. Different hymns were composed at different times by different Rishis ; it is probable that the majority of the hymns have not come down to us ; the Vedas as they at present stand represent only a fraction of the original collection. There is every reason to believe that the mystic portions of the Vedas are as yet a secret and the published portions are those which can be safely placed before the public. What is the reason of this secrecy, some may ask. It is expressly stated that a human monad must attain a certain spiritual level before he is morally fit to wield the tremendous powers of the occultist. If a tiger be endowed with the powers of a man he is likely to do more evil than good. A man whose passions are not subdued will become a veritable Satan if endowed with the psychic powers of the Rishi. These powers are latent in every man and are destined to be developed during the course of natural evolution, when the intellect will be the lord of the mind. Meanwhile it is considered wise not to endow the ordinary man with the psychic powers of a god.

We have presented to the reader a short review of the general principles which underlie the oldest work of the world, viz, the *Vedas*. How far we have succeeded we leave it to the consideration of the great minds who not only study but *live* Vedanta every moment of their lives.

Psychic Experiments.

(CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 16.)

IT was sunset. The magical flush of light of the sinking sun was turning into gold the steeples and spires of the antique temples which stand facing the silver ripples of the time-honored Ganges. The sound of ten thousand evening bells, the fragrant smell of *Dhupa*, the melody of the solemn utterance of the Vedic hymns, the memory of the glorious past of the holy city, induced a calm in my mind which for a moment made me think that I am surrounded with the sights and sounds of the Vedic times. Above, the deep blue vault of heaven brought to my mind the visions of the Infinite. For of all cities of India, Benares after sunset, presents though in an infinitely insignificant scale, the spiritual grandeur of the ancient *Arya*. From mystic reverie my mind passed to the incident which happened a few months ago *viz.*, the spiritual experiment which Brahmanunda had upon me. I was thinking with my eyes closed of the various psychic stages through which I was made to pass that day, when I suddenly found the eastern Yogi standing before me with a sweet smile on his serene face. Interrupting my exclamation of surprise with a beacon of his hand, the venerable sage began: "The various Mayavic stages through which I made you pass before in order to have a glimpse of the Infinite, are the various stages of natural evolution with which Sankhya Philosophy deals." Saying this he briefly described the stages which for the clear comprehension of my readers I put, as follow, in my own thoughts and words:

(1) *Mulaprakriti*. The *Mulaprakriti* of the Sankhya Philosophy is the same as the Parabrahma of the Vedanta. It is described by nine epithets: (a) Causeless, (b) Eternal, (c) Infinite, (d) Immutable, (e) Single, (f) Independent, (g) Attributeless, (h) Simple, (i) Sovereign. *Mulaprakriti* as above described is the primeval substance upon which appears and disappears the mirage of the universe. It is consciousness *per se*. It is the final goal towards which all evolution is tending. It is the final resting place of the *Yogi*.

(2) The first *fecitious* manifestation of the above is *Ahankara* (universal "I"). It is the self-hood which is common to every animate being in the universe. Even in an apparently inanimate atom it is latent and is destined to be developed in the course of evolution.

(3) Next in order comes *Buddhi* (the aggregate cosmic intelligence). It depends for its very existence on the sense of "I", for

instance when the sense of "I" remains latent as in the state of deep sleep, intelligence vanishes also. *Buddhi* is fictitious because it is fully dependent for its very existence on the sense of "I."

(4) The third manifestation is the *mind* (which is quite different from the reasoning faculty). While *Buddhi* or intelligence is the faculty of comparison, mind is pre-eminently the faculty of *thinking*. And as thinking can never go on without comparison so mind fully depends for its existence on *Buddhi*.

(5) Next comes *akas* or ether which is equivalent to sound. According to occult philosophy words are the vehicle of thought. In the case of lower animals, *sound* takes the place of words. Again, sound and *akas* are one and the same thing, because every material object is a compound of the five simple elements, *viz.*, sight, touch, taste, smell, and sound; ether according to the *Yogi* is devoid of the first four attributes. *Akas* in fact is the fifth attribute, sound. *Subda* or Sound above mentioned is the *Subda Tunmatra*, the most attenuated form of sound conceivable.

(6) Sound with one more attribute superadded *viz.*, touch, produces *air*. *Air* is, therefore, the product of ether or sound. Every one knows that a tremendous natural sound can overthrow even a strong-built building, which means *that a certain stage of sound is touch or air*. To express the above in scientific vocabulary: Sound is vibration, and when this vibration grows in intensity it becomes *touch, air*.

(7) From air evolves *fire*, for fire can never exist *as such* without air. Fire is equivalent to sound, touch, and sight. Fire is a peculiar form of *touch*; it is touch with color superadded.

(8) Sound, touch, sight and taste are equivalent to liquidity (all forms of water). The chief characteristic of a juice or liquid is its *taste* which again is equivalent to our *sense* of taste. Taste depends for its existence upon color or the *sense* of sight. Devoid of color, a liquid becomes air. In fact there is no liquid without color. As liquidity depends fully for its existence as such upon *color*, it is a manifestation of *color* or the *sense* of sight.

(9) Sound, touch, sight, taste and smell combined are equivalent to solidity (all forms of earth). Smell is the chief characteristic of all forms of earth. *Pure* liquid unmixed with the particles of earth has no smell. Smell depends for its existence as such chiefly upon taste. There is no tasteless *smelling* substance in nature. A piece of stone for example is equivalent to sound, touch, color, taste and smell. If we subtract *smell*, the four other attributes go to make up liquidity.

The principle which underlies the above system of evolution is purely mental. There is nothing in the universe of form except sound, touch, color, taste, and smell. Matter is the combination of the above five attributes which are called elements in Sankhya Philosophy. Again, these five elements are the five branches of what is known as the universal mind. The universal mind has two laws, *viz.*, expansion and contraction. When it reaches the farthest limits of expansion, reaction sets in and it begins to contract. This process takes millions of years; this is known as the period of creation. The state of contraction is known as *Makapralaya*. When the mind reaches its furthest limits of contraction, a reaction sets in and it begins to expand anew. This process of perpetual change, this expansion and contraction is eternal.

Again the five elements, sound, touch, taste, sight and smell have no substance. These are attributes and nothing more. The perceiver of the action of these is consciousness. In this article we have nothing to do with consciousness per se; suffice it to say that the latter is termed *Mulaprakriti* in Sankhya Philosophy as distinguished from the word *Prakriti* which is reserved for the principle of perpetual change. Evolution and dissolution proceed from the universal mind, the five-faced *Shiva*, the five elements being his five faces.

The Problem of the Infinite.

(AN EXTRACT FROM MANSSEL.)

TO conceive the Deity as He is we must conceive him as First Cause, as Absolute, and as Infinite. (I) By the *First Cause*, is meant that which produces all things and is itself produced by none. By the *Absolute* is meant that which exists by itself, and having no necessary relation to any other Being. By the *Infinite*, is meant that which is free from all possible limitation—that than which a greater is inconceivable, and which consequently can receive no additional attribute or mode of existence, which it had not from all eternity. (II) The Infinite as contemplated by this philosophy, can not be regarded as consisting of a limited number of attributes, each unlimited in its kind. It can not be conceived, for example, after the analogy of a

(I) The Vedanta does not conceive the Deity as First Cause. The Absolute being beyond all relations can not stand as Cause to anything.

(II) The infinite of our philosophy has no part, consequently the term "great" can not be applied to it.

line infinite in length but not in breadth, or of an intelligent being possessing some one or more modes of consciousness in an infinite degree, but devoid of others. Even if it be granted, which is not the case, that such a partial infinite may without contradiction be conceived still it will have a relative infinity only, and be altogether incompatible with the idea of the Absolute. The line limited in breadth is therefore necessarily related to the space that limits it; the intelligence, endowed with a limited number of attributes, coexists with others which are thereby related to it as cognate or opposite modes of consciousness. The metaphysical representation of the Deity as absolute and infinite, must necessarily, as the profoundest metaphysicians have acknowledged, amount to nothing less than the sum of all reality. (III) "What kind of an Absolute Being is that," says Hegel, "which does not contain in itself all that is actual, even evil included?" We may repudiate the conclusion with indignation, but the reason is unassailable. If the Absolute and Infinite is an object of human conception at all, this and none other is the conception required. That which is conceived as Absolute and Infinite must be conceived as containing within itself the sum, not only of all actual, but of all possible modes of being. For if any actual mode can be denied of it, it is related to that mode, and limited by it; and if any possible mode can be denied of it, it is capable of being more than it now is, and such a capability is a limitation.

But these three conceptions, the Cause, the Absolute, the Infinite, all equally indispensable, do they not contradict each other when viewed in conjunction as attributes of one and the same Being? A cause can not as such, be a cause. The cause as such, exists only in relation to its effect; the cause is a cause of the effect; the effect is an effect of the cause; on the other hand, the conception of an Absolute implies a possible existence out of all relation. We attempt to escape from this apparent contradiction by introducing the idea of succession in time. The Absolute exists first by itself and afterwards becomes a Cause. But here we are checked by the third conception, that of the Infinite. How can the Infinite become that which it was not from the first? If Causation is a possible mode of existence, that which exists without causing is not infinite; that which becomes a cause has

(III) This argument completely refutes the idea of the Christian God which is limited by a number of attributes. The Brahma of the Vedanta philosophy being *Nirguna*, is neither good nor bad. Just as the central point of the curve of a horse-shoe magnet is neither positive nor negative but is indispensable for their existence so is the Brahma of our philosophy.

passed beyond its former limits. Creation at any particular moment of time being thus inconceivable, the philosopher is reduced to the alternative of Pantheism, which pronounces the effect to be mere appearance, and merges all real existence in the cause. The validity of this alternative will be examined presently. (IV)

Meanwhile to return for a moment to the supposition of a true causation. Supposing the Absolute to become a cause, it will follow that he operates by means of free will and consciousness. For a necessary cause can not be considered as Absolute and Infinite. If necessitated by something beyond itself, it is thereby limited by a superior power; and if necessitated by itself it has in its own nature a necessary relation to its effect. The act of causation must therefore be voluntary and volition is only possible in a conscious being. But consciousness again is only conceivable as a relation. There must be a conscious subject and an object of which he is conscious. The subject is a subject to the object, the object is an object to the subject; and neither can exist by itself as the Absolute. This difficulty, again, may be for the moment evaded, by distinguishing between the Absolute as related to another and the Absolute as related to itself. The Absolute, it is said, may possibly be conscious, provided it is only conscious of itself. But this alternative is in ultimate analysis, no less self-destructive than the other. For the object of consciousness, whether a mode of the subject's existence or not is either created in and by the act of consciousness, or has an existence independent of it. (VI) In the former case the object depends upon the subject and the subject alone is the true Absolute. In the latter case, the subject depends upon the object, and the object alone is the true absolute. Or if we attempt a third hypothesis, and maintain that each exists independently of the other, we have no absolute at all but a pair of relatives; for co-existence whether in Consciousness or not is itself a relation.

The corollary from this reasoning is obvious. Not only is the Absolute, as conceived, incapable of a necessary relation to anything else; but it is also incapable of containing by the constitution of its own nature an essential relation within itself; as a whole for instance, composed of part, or as a Substance consisting of attributes, or as a conscious subject in antithesis to an object. For if there is in the

(IV) The above argument cuts to pieces the idea of a theistic God.

(V) The proper term should be "self-consciousness" and not consciousness *per se*.

(VI) The creation here spoken of must be unconscious creation. For conscious creation is equivalent to thinking and that which thinks is finite.

Absolute any principle of unity, distinct from the mere accumulation of parts or attributes this principle alone is the true Absolute. If on the other hand, there is no such principle, then there is no absolute at all, but only a plurality of relatives. The almost unanimous voice of Philosophy, in pronouncing that the Absolute is both one and simple must be accepted as the voice of reason also, so far as reason has any voice in the matter.' But this Absolute unity as indifferent and containing no attributes can neither be distinguished from the multiplicity of finite beings by any characteristic feature nor be identified with them in their multiplicity. Thus we are landed in an inexplicable dilemma. (VII) The absolute can not be conceived as conscious (VIII) neither can it be conceived as unconscious: it can not be conceived as complex neither can it be conceived as simple: it can not be conceived by difference, neither can it be conceived by the absence of difference: it can not be identified with the universe, neither can it be distinguished from it. The one and the many, regarded as the beginning of existence are alike incomprehensible.

The fundamental conception of Rational Theology being thus self-destructive, we may naturally expect to find the same antagonism manifested in its special applications. These naturally inherit the infirmities of the principle from which they spring.

If an Absolute and Infinite consciousness is a conception which contradicts itself we need not wonder if its several modifications mutually exclude each other. (IX) A mental attribute, to be conceived as infinite, must be in actual exercise in every possible object, otherwise, it is potential only with regard to those on which it is not exercised and an unrealized potentiality is a limitation. Hence every infinite mode of consciousness must be regarded as extending over the field of every other and their common action involves a perpetual antagonism. (X) How, for example can infinite Power be able to do all things and yet Infinite goodness be unable to do evil? How can infinite justice exact the utmost penalty for every sin, and yet Infinite mercy pardon the sinner? How can infinite Wisdom know all that is to be and yet Infinite freedom be at liberty to do or to forbear? How is the

(VII) This may be a dilemma to Mansel but not to the Yogi who has suppressed his thoughts by concentration and has become Absolute for the time being.

(VIII) Properly, self-conscious.

(IX) Properly, self-consciousness.

(X) This antagonism does not affect the *Niryama Brahmā* of the Vedānta.

existence of Evil compatible with that of an Infinite Perfect Being for if he wills it he is not infinitely good, and if he wills it not, his will is thwarted and his sphere of action limited? Here, again, the Pantheist is ready with his solution. There is in reality no such thing as evil (XI): there is no real relation between man and god at all. God is all that really exists: He does, *by the necessity of his nature*, (XII) all that is done: all acts are equally necessary and equally divine: all diversity is but a distorted representation of unity: all evil but a delusive appearance of the good; unfortunately, the Pantheist does not tell us whence all this delusion derives its seeming existence. (XIII) Let us, however, suppose for an instant that these difficulties are surmounted, and the existence of the Absolute securely established on the testimony of reason. Still we have not succeeded in reconciling this idea with that of a cause; we have done nothing towards explaining how the absolute can give rise to the relative, the infinite to the finite. If the condition of casual activity is a higher state than that of quiescence, the absolute, whether acting voluntarily or involuntarily, has passed from a condition of comparative imperfection to one of comparative perfection; and, therefore, was not originally, perfect. If the state of activity is an inferior state to that of quiescence, the absolute, in becoming a cause, has lost its original perfection. There remains only the supposition that the two states are equal; and the act of creation, one of complete indifference. But this supposition annihilates the unity of the absolute or it annihilates itself. If the act of creation is real, and yet indifferent we must admit the possibility of two conceptions of the absolute the one as productive the other as non-productive. If the act is not real the supposition itself vanishes and we are thrown once more on the alternative of Pantheism.

And how can the Relative be conceived as coming into being? If it is a distinct reality from the absolute, it must be conceived as passing from non-existence into existence. But to conceive an object as non-existent is again a self-contradiction; for that, which is conceived exists, as an object of thought in and by that conception. We may abstain from thinking of an object at all, but if we think of it we can not but think of it as existing. It is possible at one time not to

(XI) Add "or good" after "evil."

(XII) Rather, unconsciously.

(XIII) As it is the nature of the ocean to give birth to the delusive waves, so it is the nature of Brahmā to appear in seeming plurality as the universe. The essence of the wave is water, so the essence of the universe is Brahmā.

think of an object at all, and at another to think of it as already in being; but to think of it in the act of becoming in the progress from non-being into being, is to think that which in the very thought annihilates itself. Here, again, the Pantheist's hypothesis seems forced upon us. We can think of creation only as a change in the condition of that which already exists, and thus the creature is conceivable only as a phenomenal mode of the Being of the Creator. (XIV)

The whole of this web of contradictions is woven from one original warp and woof, *viz.*, the impossibility of conceiving the co-existence of the infinite and the finite, and the cognate impossibility of conceiving a first commencement of phenomena, or the absolute giving birth to the relative. The laws of thought appear to admit of no possible escape from the meshes in which thought is entangled save by destroying one or other of the cords of which they are composed. Pantheism or atheism are thus the alternatives offered to us according as we prefer to save the infinite by the sacrifice of the finite, or to maintain the finite by denying the existence of the infinite. Pantheism presents itself to all appearance as the only logical conclusion if we believe in the possibility of a Philosophy of the Infinite. But Pantheism if it avoids self-contradiction in the course of its reasoning does so only by an act of suicide at the outset. (?) It escapes from some of the minor incongruities of thought only by the annihilation of thought and thinker alike. The only conception which I can frame of substantive existence at all, as distinguished from the transient accidents which are merely modes of the being of some thing else, is derived from the immediate knowledge of my personal unity, amidst the various affections which form the successive modes of my consciousness. The Pantheist tells me that this knowledge is a delusion; (XV) that I am no substance, but a mode of the absolute substance, even as my thoughts and passions are modes of me (no !); and that in order to attain to a true philosophy of being, I must begin by denying my own being (*i.e.*, mind according to Vedanta.) * * * *

The logical advantage of the atheistic alternative vanishes, as soon as we endeavour positively to represent in thought the sum total of existence as a limited quantity. A limit is itself a relation; and

(XIV) According to Sankara, Brahma becomes eternally fictitiously divided into infinite fictitious existences just in the same way as the sandy desert becomes divided into mirage.

(XV) The Pantheists of India never say so; on the contrary, they say that the "I" is common to all beings—the universal ego is eternal. Mind is a delusion but the substance of the ego is not so.

to conceive a limit as such is virtually to acknowledge a correlative on the other side of it. By a law of thought the significance of which has not yet perhaps been fully investigated it is impossible to conceive a finite object of any kind without conceiving it as one out of many—as related to other objects, co-existent and antecedent. Thus the hypothesis which would annihilate the Infinite is itself shattered to pieces against the rock of the Absolute and we are involved in the self-contradictory assumption of a limited universe, which yet can neither contain a limit itself, nor be limited by anything beyond itself. *x*

A Saint's Prayer.

(Translated from Sanscrit.)

A PRUDENT man being fully convinced, after mature consideration that the world is of no worth, himself but a passing bubble in the infinite ocean of creation, wife and children chains that bind more and more helplessly with the expiration of time, wealth and property royal road to Hell; and friends and relations enemies incarnate, should thus give himself up to the most high and mighty creator saying "O Creator of the universe, you have given me hands for which I can work; legs for which I can speak; eyes for which I can see, ears for which I can hear; mind for which I can know; reason for which I can understand; and intellect and consciousness for which the above functions are discharged. Without these, there would have been no difference between myself and the wood and stones lying by the road-side.

You have given light as well as darkness, life as well as death. Its meaning is simply this, that I will not be joyful in happiness or sorry in woe. You give spring after summer and summer after spring and by your most just and regular laws sun-set after sun-rise and sun-rise after sun-set take place. There is no end of happiness in the world for the working of this beautiful law; but foolish and senseless man only sees continuous misery in it. Lord! He whose mind is always saturated with sin and bitter with fresh troubles is equally uneasy at sun-rise as at sun-set. Impatiently he waits for the rising sun, but as soon as it is morning he longs for the night. Lord! such a lot I never call mine and I always live like a child in the soft arms of Peace which is but your own shadow. O, that all my neighbours share this for a time with me!

O, the Essence of the universe ! you are the Subtle Spirit for which the universe is, you are the mighty Being whose body is the world-soul. None but those who look down upon and shun the world can approach you. Like the moon's reflection in troubled waters, fontal consciousness, which is but your shadow is never fully reflected in a mind restless with the pursuits of the world. As all streams and rivers fall into the one great ocean, so everything of the world ends in or is drawn into you. As the chased and separated deer recovers her lost peace and security on regaining her herd, so the mind being harassed and troubled in the world becomes peaceful and happy again on gaining you. Those who are conscious of this fact are the really learned, the really wise, and the really good.

You are the sole abode of all weal, all peace, all happiness, all pleasure and all bliss. Oh ! how unfortunate are they who do not get you. Lord, see that such a lot never be mine and that I may be heir to all happiness through your favor.

Lord ! how sorely wounded my heart is by the world and how much pain I have suffered ; leaving that world, I now throw myself at your mercy as my last hope of deliverance. O take hold of me ! Being over head and ears in sins and visitations, sorely troubled with loss and disease, mad with ambition and disappointments and burnt within with anger and folly what indescribable pangs I have suffered in the world. I tremble, when memory presents them before my mind. Lord ! for these reasons I have taken your shelter. Now these troubles shall no longer be able to attack or overpower me.

Lord ! life and consciousness come from you ; intellect and reason, love and affection, devotion and belief all flow from you. Even this *Me* has emanated from you. Before this I never was, I appear only when you will it. Thus I am yours, never of the world. Then why do I try to be of the world—why try and desire to make the world mine ? O, I see, it is my indifference to you and my folly that make all this. Lord ! see that I am not thus befooled and cheated any longer.

Lord ! you are the aim of every prayer and meditation, so your name is *Japomaya* and *Chintanaya*. By establishing religion you place the world in proper order, so your name is *Dharmamaya*. From you flow mercy and love so you are *Dayamaya*, your will is the cause of all so you are called *Echhamaya*. Playfully you appear in the innumerable systems of creation, therefore you are called *Lilamaya*. You always work and therefore are *Kriyamaya* ; you live in the creation and the creation lives in you, therefore is your name *Lokomaya*.

There is no part of this vast space where you are not, nor a time

when you are not ; you are each and every atom, the sum-total of which is this world. You are the life as well as the consciousness within it, the body and the soul within it, the mind as well as the various functions of it. You are the earth and the various modes of growth on it. You are the heart and the essence within it. You are the individual soul as well as the world-soul. You are the effect as well as the Cause.

You have no form, but this infinite space manifests it ; you have no appearance but the emanation of this vast world testifies it ; you have no color, but the shining flame gives an idea of it. These alone who are conscious of this fact can approach you. You are the Lord of these innumerable systems and we are your little subjects. You yourself give and receive the seed, so you are both father and mother. You are the ailment as well as the medicine, you trouble and harass them with misfortunes and visitations whoever deviate from your path through folly, conceit or stupidity, but you immediately restore peace and happiness to them who pray sincerely to you to save them. That is your glory. O let me not ever forget it. Father ! happiness, heaven and *Moksha* forsake them who forget you.

Lord ! there is no such place as Heaven, it is heaven where you are, and it is hell, more than hell, where you are not. Those whom you favour are gods. He who is the chief among these Gods is Indra. So Indra means your chief favourite. O, that I may get this position.

Infinite goodness ! you are bliss itself. You are liquidity in water, heat in fire, light in the sun, soft effulgence in the moon, and tender grace in the flower. You live in the mother's heart as affection, tender care and natural complacency ; of friends you are the dearest for who on earth is dearer than you ? Therefore do mothers and sisters, husbands, parents and wives unite to worship you. Again, all can not be equally friendly to one another in the world but you are the same friend to all ; therefore, do friend and foe worship you.

The more one is earnestly after you the more knowledge, experience and improvement attend on him from day to day in his onward course. This is your glory. O, may I always try my best to know you.

O Lord ! deliver me, I am in danger, save me I am a sinner, give me peace, I am in trouble, befriend me I am friendless, help me I am poor, humble, and weak.

Buddha and Buddhism.

"To thoughtful men who evince an interest in the comparative study of religious beliefs, Buddhism as the highest effort of pure intellect to solve the problem of being, is attractive." *Oldenburgh.*

WHAT is Buddhism as it is now professed by its myriads of votaries? Our object in writing this and subsequent articles is and will be to answer the above question. The enthusiastic and imaginative admirers and biographers of Buddha, have thought right to testify their admiration, by interweaving with the probable facts of Gautama Buddha's life, fables so extravagant, that some of the oriental scholars have despaired of attempting to sift the truth from the myriads of fables that have grown around him, and have gone to the length of doubting that Gautama Buddha ever lived at all! To believe nothing that has been recorded about him is as unreasonable as to accept with unquestioning faith all the miraculous circumstances which are made to encircle him as if with a halo of divine glory. Our object in writing this article is not to write any extended critical essay on the subject. Our aim will be to present a complete and detailed narrative of the life of Buddha and his religion, as they are found in the Buddhistic literature.

The most ancient traditions of Buddhism which are preserved in Ceylon and studied by the monks of that island up to the present day, are in the Pali language. So it is to the Pali traditions, that we must go in preference to all other sources if we desire to know whether any information is obtainable regarding Buddha and his life. We will deal with the subject in the following order :—

- I. Biographical sketch of Buddha.
- II. Dharma or Law and Scriptures of Buddhism.
- III. Sanga or Buddhistic order of monks.
- IV. Philosophical doctrine of Buddhism.
- V. Morality of Buddhism.
- VI. Nirvana.

"The old childlike joy in life so manifest in the Vedas, had died away; the worship of nature had degenerated into the worship of less pure divinities and the Vedic songs themselves had faded into obscurity; the country was politically divided into small divisions; each was governed by its own ruler. The age of literature and poetry had already made way for an age of abstruse commentators and *grammarians*. The feelings of awe, wonder, and reverence at the elements

had given way before the belief in the efficacy of rites and ceremonies. Every man's position and occupation in life were decided from his birth; the necessaries of life were plenty. The village lands were held by tenure, and the thoughtless peasantry led on the whole a quiet and peaceful life under the tyranny of the superior class. The priests were mostly well meaning but ignorant, superstitious and were inflated with a sincere belief in their own divinity."

Under these circumstances an Aryan tribe by the name of Sakya dwelt about 600 or 700 B.C., at a place called Kapilavastu* on the banks of the river Rohini (the modern Kohana) a little north-east of Benaras. This streamlet rises from one of the valleys of the grand Himalayas, whose giant peaks loom up at the distant horizon of the Nepal sky. These Sakya people depended for their livelihood on the production of cattle and rice field.

After 222,769 princes of the race of Sakya (which was a branch of the great Ikhaku Dynasty) had reigned at Kapilavastu (so called because the ascetic Kapila, the great founder of the Sankhya system of Philosophy chose this place to be his abode, and created there his *pasala*, or hermitage. Spence Hardy in his Manual of Buddhism says on the authority of a Pali tradition, that the Bodhisat, who afterwards became Gotama Buddha, was in his former birth the ascetic Kapila,) the kingdom was ruled by Jayasena who was succeeded by his son Singha-vanu. The principal queen of Singha-vanu was Kasayina, by whom he had five sons Sudhodona, Amitadona, Dhotadona, Sukkodona and Ghatitodona. The principal queen of Sudhodona was Mahamaya, daughter of Suprabudha, of the race of Anusakya, who reigned in the city of Kali. Of Sudhodona and Maha-Maya, Gotama Buddha was born.

The king and queen were at first childless. The rejoicing therefore was great when the first queen Maha-maya, in the forty-fifth year of her age, promised her husband a child. A story of the miraculous birth of Buddha is worthy of repetition. The inhabitants

* This is the birth place of Guatoma Buddha. The Chinese specify Kau-pi-le, the Burmese, Kapilavot, the Siamese Ka-bi-la-pat, the Singhalese Kimboul-pat and the Nepalese Kapilapur as the city in which their legislator was born. The precise position of Kalipavastu is not easy to ascertain. The Thibetan writers place it near Kailas, on the river Bhagirathi or on the river Rohini. These indications render it likely that it was in Rohilkund or in Kumaon, or perhaps even rather more to the eastward; for the river now known as Rohini is one of the feeders of the Gundak. When visited by Fahian, Kapilavastu had neither king nor people; it was absolutely one vast solitude.

(Wilson, Journ. Bengal As. Soc., Jan. 1832.)

of Kapilavastu were accustomed to hold a festival from the 7th day of the moon to the 14th in the month of Aesala (Agrahayana) which period they spent in dancing and all other kinds of pleasure. On the last day of the festival, Mahamaya bathed in fragrant water, and arrayed herself with flowers and ornaments; and after giving four lacs of treasure in alms, she retired to her royal couch and while reposing upon it had a dream. In her dream, she saw that the guardian *devas* of the four quarters took up the couch upon which she slept and conveyed it to the great forest of the Himalaya, where they placed it upon a rock, under the shade of a *sal* tree. The four *devas* then took her to a rock of silver, upon which was a palace of gold; and having made a divine couch, they placed her upon it, with her head towards the east. Whilst thus reposing, Bodhisat appeared to her like a cloud in the moonlight, coming from the north, and in his hand holding a lotus. After ascending the rock, he thrice circumambulated the queen's couch, and Mahamaya discovered, after the circumambulations were concluded, that Bodhisat was lying in her body, as the infant lies in the womb of its mother.

Next morning when the queen awoke she related her dream to the king, who called together learned Brahmins well-versed in the Vedas, and enquired of them the meaning of the queen's dream. They declared that the child would be invested with the dignity of a *Chakrabartti*, but if he renounced the world he would become a supreme Buddha.

In accordance with the custom prevailing in those days, the queen started in due time with the intention of being confined at her father's house, but it was on the way, under the shade of a lofty tree, in a grove called Lumbini, that her son the famous Buddha was born, without any pain whatever and entirely free from all that is unclean. The child was received by Maha-Brahma in a golden net, who, on presenting the child to the mother said, "Rejoice, for the son you have brought forth will be the support of the world." The guardian *devas* of the four quarters received the child from the hands of Maha Brahma, on the skin of a tiger, and from the *déwas* he was received by the nobles, who wrapped him in folds of the finest and softest cloth. A story is told of him that he descended from the hands of the nobles and looked towards the east, and in an instant beheld the whole of the limitless *sakvalas* (the Sakha heaven) in that direction; and all the *devas* and men in the same direction presenting flowers and other offerings, exclaimed, "Thou art the greatest of all beings, there is no one here like thee. No one greater than thee; thou art supreme!"

Seven days after the birth of Buddha, his mother Mayadevi died. But the infant son found a careful and affectionate nurse in his mother's sister Maha Projapati, who was also one of the wives of Sudhodana. Buddha was born in the year 557 B.C. But different opinions are held in different countries of this date. According to the Singhalese account, he was born in the year 543 B.C. According to the Chinese account he was born in the year 983 B.C.; Professor Monier Williams holds that he was born in the year 500 B.C. Almost nothing is known about his early life and childhood. But it may be inferred from the scattered records of his early life that he had all the knowledge, all the purity, and all the holiness needed to constitute an innocent childhood. His name was Sidhartha, his family name was Goutama, and it is by the latter name that he is constantly mentioned by his biographers.

We may infer that he was educated as a prince, under the best of masters, but the existing biographies present no glimpses of his mode of education, or of the peculiar powers of head and heart, developed under its influences.

When Sidhartha was twelve years old, the king invited the Brahmans and enquired of them why he would become an ascetic. They told the king that he would see four things, *viz.*, decrepitude, sickness, a dead body, and a recluse, which would lead him to leave the throne and retire to the forest. To prevent the prince from coming in contact with these objects, Sudhodana commanded that they should be kept at a distance from the palace and caused three mansions to be built, suited to the three seasons of the year.

One peculiar trait of his character which we notice from his early days is this, that in the midst of the luxurious repose, he was melancholy and sad; an ardent love of solitude and meditation took possession of his heart from his birth. This spiritual despondency, love of solitude, and meditation which are visible in every great man, stimulate spirituality in man, and ultimately raise him in the higher level of humanity.

Nothing particular is known of the boyhood of Goutama except that at the age of sixteen he was married to his cousin Gopa, daughter of Dandapani, the king of Koli. ×

While living in the midst of regal ostentation, the prince resolved one day to break the monotony of his existence by visiting the condition of his subjects. According to the Buddhist tradition, the above circumstance was brought about by the *Devas* as the moment of attaining Buddhahood by the prince was drawing near. While passing through the streets, seated in his royal couch Siddhartha saw before

him the trembling, shattered frame of an old man. Turning to his charioteer, Channa, he exclaimed, "What horrid being is that, Channa? Is the condition of that man the common lot of all mankind? Am I to be the prey of decrepitude?" "Yes, my lord," replied the Charioteer, "infirmity and death are sure to overtake all of us". A few more sights of human misery were enough for the prince to realise the vanity of human life; he entreated his royal father to allow him to leave for ever the pleasures of the palace in order to seek the highest goal but all in vain. How could the old man bear the sight of parting with one who was the nearest and dearest to his heart? But Buddha was resolved to embrace the life of a perfect hermit and the shadow of the Infinite fully encompassed his soul. In this tradition we find an explanation of the cause, which induced Buddha to abandon his family and home. The explanation I shall give in the language of Rhys Davids one of the greatest authorities on Buddhist literature. "He was probably not the first, he was certainly not the last who in the midst of prosperity and comfort has felt a yearning and a want which nothing could satisfy, and which have robbed of the charm, and all earthly gains and hopes. This vague dissatisfaction deepens with every fresh proof of the apparent vanity of life, and does not lose but gains in power, when as is reported in the case of Gautama, it rises more from sympathy with the sorrows of others, than from any personal sorrows of one's own. At last the details of daily life become insupportable and the calm life of a hermit troubled with none of these things, seems a haven of peace, where a life of self-denial and earnest meditation may lead to some solution of the strange enigmas of life." Such feelings were in their full ascendancy in his mind when about 10 years after his marriage his wife bore him their only child Rahula.

The idea that the new tie may become too strong for him seems to have been the immediate cause of his sudden flight. At midnight he went to the threshold of his wife's chamber and there by the light of the flickering lamp, he watched her sleeping, with one hand on the head of the child. He had wished, for the last time to take the babe in his arms, before he left; but he saw, that he could not do so, without awaking the mother; as this might frustrate all his intentions, the fear of waking Gopa, at last prevailed; he reluctantly tore himself away, and accompanied by Channa, left his father's house, his wealth, and power, his young wife and only child to become a homeless wanderer. In that eventful moment, in the silence of night, he renounced for ever, his wealth and position, his proud rank and

princely fame, and the ties of a happy home. His faithful servant Channa asked to be allowed to stay with him and become an ascetic ; but Gantoma sent him back, and repaired alone to *Rajogriha*.

The Prashna Upanishad.

The Second Prashna.

1.

WHEN Baidarvi, son of Vriḡu asked him, “ Venerable father ! what are those gods (powers) which support these beings, which of them illumine them and of these who is supreme.”

2.

To him he (the Rishi) answered : “ Ether, air, fire, water and earth (the five original created substances), and speech, mind, the eye and the ear (the external and the internal senses of perception) are those gods (which support body). [Of these the ten senses of perception and the mind manifest their powers in the body.] They declare their own authority and (boldly) affirm, “ we manifest and support this body.”

3.

“ To them Pran or life who was the chief of all said, ‘Indulge not such vain delusions. I have divided myself into five different capacities and thus do I support the body.’”

4.

“ They became indignant and did not put faith in his words. He (Pran) proudly started up (in order to manifest his supremacy.) Seeing him thus to exert proudly they all exerted (to declare their own powers,) and on his becoming motionless they at once became destitute of all exertion. Just as the bees on seeing their master to make effort stir up, and on its courting rest they all give up exertion, so these external and internal senses of perception (knowing that their exertion and inertion entirely depended upon the exertion or inertion of Pran, became pleased and sang his eulogium.

5.

“ It is this Pran which burns as fire, it is the sun ; it is the cloud ; it is Indra ; it is air ; it is the earth ; it is Rayi ; it is the Lord of the universe ; it is great and small, gross and subtle ; it is ambrosia (the support of the gods).

6.

“ Like the axle fitted in the nave of a chariot-wheel everything has its existence in Pran. The *Ric*, the *Yajuh*, and the *Sama*, the isacrificial rites, the Kshattras (protectors of all) and the Brahmans (performers of sacrifices) are all Pran.

7.

“ Thou art the Prajapati, the Creator of all, and as such thou takest birth in the womb, and thou art born (as the image of the parents). To serve thy purpose are these beings and to offer thee their sacrifices (through their senses) for thou dost exist in their senses of perception.

8.

“ To the gods thou art the Sacrificial fire (through which they receive their portion of *homa* sacrifice) ; to the *pitris* (deceased ancestors) thou art the more commendable (than the offerings to the gods) *Swadka* (which term is indispensably uttered in offering oblations to the forefathers in *shradh* and other ceremonies). Thou art in fact the acting principle in the eye and other organs of sensation, in *Atharvan* or *Shiva* and in beings like *Angirah* (one of the seven heavenly Rishis).

9.

“ In thy glory thou art the Lord of the universe ; thou art Rudra (the destroyer of Kosmos) ; thou art the sole preserver (of the universe). Thou (constantly) movest in the skies ; thou art the Sun ; thou art the Lord of the heavenly luminaries.

10.

“ When thou (in the shape of clouds) showerest down rain then these thy *creatures* move for their livelihood. They enjoy happiness (on being nourished by the food thus produced) ; and food is the product of desire.

11.

“ Thou dost not require any ritual purification (for being the first-born there is none to purify thee, and thou art therefore naturally consecrated) ; thou art, O Pran ! celebrated in the Atharva Veda as *Ekā-Rishi*, the consumer of sacrificial offerings ; thou art the Lord of everything existent in the universe. We are the offerers of sacrifices to thee and thou art our progenitor.

12.

“That body (power) of thyself which sits in the power of speech, that which is in the ears, that which is in the eyes and that which is in the mind, tranquilize those powers and do not let them be disturbed.

13.

“All earthly substances are under the control of Pran, may even those which exist in the third celestial plane (Heaven). As the mother supports her children so do you protect us, and bestow upon us prosperity and wisdom.”

The Third Prashna.

1.

Then *Kaushalya* son of *Ashwala* questioned him : “Most worshipful father! from what cause is this Pran originated, how does it enter this body, how again it divides its own self. How it manifests power, and how it entertains the external (*adhibhuta*, nature, and *adhidatva*, God) and the internal (spiritual) world.”

2.

To him the *Acharyya* replied : “you have asked me not a very easy question ; but you are gifted with the true knowledge of Brahma and I shall therefore tell thee what you want.

3.

“This Pran has its origin in *Atma* (or Brahma, the Absolute). As the shadow of a man has its cause in the man, so this Pran (equally unsubstantial as the human shadow) depends for its existence upon that Absolute Being, and it acquires body through actions performed by its mental propensities.

4.

“As the king employs his dependents (by ordering) “You govern this and you govern that province, so this Pran employs the minor functionaries (which are but part and parcel of the paramount Pran) in the performance of their several duties.

5.

“Of these subdivisions of Pran : at the anus and the urinary organs sits *Apana* (to perform the functions of those organs) ; in the eyes and the ears, as well in the mouth and the nose sits (the Supreme)

Pran himself; between them (at the naval region) is *Samana*. This *Samana* makes even whatever is taken as food and drink which give rise to the seven flames. (These seven upward flames, caused by the offering of food and drink to the fire residing in the abdomen, and passing through the head, enable the organs of sensation to do their functions).

6.

“ In the region of the heart dwells the *Jivatma* (the individual soul). Here are a hundred and one (principal) *nadis*. These principal *nadis* are each of them hundredfold, and are connected with seventy-two thousand branch arteries. In these flow the *Vyan* (air).

7.

“ Then, the *Udan* (air) flows upward through the one (*Shushumna*) the first in importance of those hundred and one principal *nadis* it leads the virtuous to the world of the blessed and the sinful to hell, and those to the human world whose life is one of mingled virtue and vice.

8.

“ The sun is the external *Pran*, and it rises (in the sky) thus favouring the sense of vision (by giving it light to distinguish forms). The Being who is the Deity on earth, attracts the *apan* air of man (and thus prevents the *apan* air to pull him down); the *samana* air occupies the middle space (and preserves the equilibrium of the body); the external air *vyana* is diffused in the whole body.

9.

“ The *udan* air is in fact the moving spirit (in the body). When this force becomes tranquilized, then with all the senses of perception and the mind, the soul passes on into a new body.

10.

“ The *Jiva* reverts to *Pran* with the state of mind (which exists at the time of death). Combined with the spirit of *udan* and with the individual soul, the *Pran* takes the subject to his wished for region.

11.

“ That truly wise person who thus knows *Pran*, never becomes destitute of progeny. On the decay of his body he enjoys immortality (being one with *Pran*). This is the purport of this *Sloka*.

“ He who knows of the origin of Pran, its coming into body and remaining therein (in order to enjoy its cherished desires), its lordliness in five different capacities and its existence in the external and the internal world, enjoys immortality, surely he enjoys immortality.

Bhagabat Gita with Sankar- Bhashya.

Sankar's Introduction.

☉ M. Narayana, the support of all existence, is above the *Abyachita*, or the unspeakable State; the Itiranyagarva or the Mundane Egg, the prime cause of the Kosmos took birth in the *Abyachita*, and within this Egg were generated these various spheres of the Kosmos as well as the Earth with its seven continental islands.

That Supreme Being having created the universe, in order to secure its preservation at first brought into existence Marichi and other Prajapatis and by them was propagated the *Prabritti* Religion of the Vedas, that religion which leads mankind to perform the various vedic rites and sacrifices as the means of obtaining bliss. Then He created others named Sanaka, Sananda and so forth, and they propagated the Nibritti Religion teaching mankind *Gnan* or the knowledge of the Absolute, and *Bairagya* or non-attachment to the pleasures of earth.

Of two kinds is the Religion propagated by the Vedas: the one is marked as Prabritti Religion and the other is the Nibritti course. Of them the one which is the means of preservation of the universe as well as the direct path for the attainment of earthly welfare and prosperity and final bliss of mankind, this Vedic Religion being for a long period practised by the Brahmanas and the other classes and by all who sought for good, in course of time became impure and irreligious through the avarice and consequential loss of wisdom and conscientiousness of its priests and followers and in its place sprang up irreligion. The First Being Vishnu called Narayana in order to maintain the preservation of the universe and to protect the Brahmanas and Brahminism on earth took birth as Krishna in the womb of Devaki as the son of Vashudeva.

That Original Being is always surrounded by his godly powers and sublime state, and transcendental splendour always shines round him; He is without origin and He has no destruction, He is the creator of all beings, His perception is always clear and He is in His nature always free : still in order to do good to mankind, He controlling his own Vaishnavi Maya, the Mula Prakriti, having the three-fold *Gunas*, became incarnated in his own Maya. Himself nothing to desire for, yet out of kindness to the human race He instructed Arjuna in the two kinds of Vedic Religion while he was drowned in the ocean of sorrow and grief. For Religion, if it is engrafted in the virtuous and the noble and practised by them becomes vastly propagated. This Religion as instructed by that great Being has been strung into seven hundred slokas by the all-knowing sage Vedavyasa and styled, *The Gita*.

This Gita Shastra is therefore an abstract of all the Vedas, it is a compendium of the vedic teachings and consequently it is very difficult to comprehend. In order to make its purport clear, many have propounded its meaning, but they have come to different views and their commentaries are understood by men in a contradictory and incorrect sense. Seeing this, and in order to define its true and conscientious meaning, I shall propound a brief commentary.

Of this Gita Shastra the object is briefly to secure the sublime transcendental bliss and to check the continual earthly transmigrations called *Samsar* and this can only be acquired by the total abandonment of all actions as well as by the unbroken knowledge of the Absolute *Atma*. Alluding to this religion of the Gita it has been said by Him in the *Anugita*, "that religion is the one sufficient which teaches men to know Brahma;" and in another place of the same work it has been said "Men are neither religious nor irreligious, but they are doers of good and evil (unto themselves.)" "He who thinks nothing, but sitting in one place and restraining his senses mingles his consciousness with the Higher consciousness of Brahma, his Knowledge of the Absolute obtained by the resignation of all earthly concerns becomes the means of his final emancipation." And in this Gita too it has been said to Arjuna in the end, "Forsaking all religions put faith in me alone." And for the acquisition of welfare and prosperity of mankind the Prabritti religion has been propounded instructing men to perform actions proper to their own class, such actions though they are the means of reaching the states of gods, when performed without desiring any such result and resigning the fruits of such actions in the Supreme Being they then become the means of sanctifying the mind and

increase the clear unalloyed *Satva* guna. For persons of pure *Satva* guna naturally become fit to act in the light of divine knowledge and ultimately acquiring the knowledge of the Absolute they reach that final goal above which there is nothing ! Alluding to these truths it has been said "The Yogis who have controlled their senses and subjugated their mind perform actions for their self-purification without any attachment for the consequences of those actions, for they resign the actions and their consequences in the Brahma."

Having clearly expounded these two kinds of religion, the Highest Good as well as the sublime State of the Supreme Being who is designated *Bashudeva* and known as *Parama Brahma*, I engage myself in the exposition of this *Gita Shashtra*, for by the attainment of a true knowledge of its meaning, man could acquire all that can be accomplished in this world by the unflinching faith and perseverance of humanity. The opening line is the query of *Dhritarashtra*, "In the *Dharmakshetra* &c.

CHAPTER I.

[N. The commentary of *Sankaracharya* commences from Chapter II, precluded by a general review of Ch. I. The notes given below have been compiled from the Commentary of *Anandagiri* and from the *Subodhini tica* of *Sridhar Swami*.]

I.

Dhritarashtra said : "Tell me, Oh *Sanjaya* ! what has been done by our men and the *Pandavas* assembled to make war in the sacred field of *Kurukshetra*."

NOTE. 1. The two antagonistic forces which fought the great battle of *Kurukshetra* consisted of the party of *Durjodhana*, the son of *Dhritarashtra*, on the one hand and the five sons of *Pandu*, deceased younger brother of *Dhritarashtra* on the other. *Dhritarashtra* was born blind, and therefore remained at home while all the kings, princes and chiefs of *Hindustan* both *Hindu* and *Mlechha* had united under the banners of one or other of the two sides. But though himself deprived of both physical and mental sight the voice of *Sanjaya*, his well-wisher who was gifted with *Gnan-chakshu* (the eye of knowledge), poured into his ears detailed accounts of the battle-field. Hence it is that the blind king addresses him for information. The battle-field is called "*the sacred Kurukshetra*", because *Kuru* an ancestor of *Dhritarashtra* and his kinsmen (who are therefore called after him *Kauravas*) performed for his spiritual purification religious austerities in this field, and therefore it was revered as a sacred place of religious worship.

II.

Sanjaya said : There, king *Durjodhana* on beholding the army of the *Pandavas* marshalled in military array went to his tutor and thus spoke to him,—

NOTE. 2. Whether the enemies of *Durjodhana* seeing the mighty array on his side under the generalship of such cool-headed warriors like *Yishma* were convinced of their own weakness and overawed, or that both parties afraid to incur the inevitable sin of human slaughter in case of battle

had scrupulously abstained from it, was the object of Dhritarashtra's question prompted as it was by his dependence upon and affection for his son. Seeing this, Sanjaya answers to show that the Pandavas had no cause of fear ; on the other hand, king Durjodhana was panic-stricken at the sight of the splendid army of the Pandavas under Dhristadumna and others, and when the signal of war was about to fall he presented himself respectfully to his tutor and protector Drona Acharya, and concealing the tremor of his heart vaunted as follows. (*Anandagiri*). Drona Acharyya although a Brahmin by caste was a great master of arms and he was appointed tutor to the princes of the Kaurava family.

III.

"Venerable Preceptor ! Behold this mighty army of the sons of Pandu arrayed in military order by your wise pupil, the son of Drupada.

NOTE. 3. "Disregarding the renowned and veteran warriors of our side the vast army commanded by Yudhishtira and the other Pandavas stands dauntless as if the presence of you all does not strike terror into their heart." To represent the contempt of the enemy was the object of Durjodhana as he intended to arouse the anger and hatred of Drona against them, (for although Drona followed the standard of Durjodhana, he loved Arjuna the hero of the opposite side and the most favorite of all his pupils, even more than his beloved son). Moreover he also hinted at the inadequacy of the enemy's force to convince the general that it was an easy task for him to send them to the house of death. Dhristadumna was the son of king Drupada, the father-in-law of the Pandavas, and Durjodhana extols him as the *wise pupil* of Drona in order to indirectly make Drona feel the competency of the opposite force when marshalled by such a renowned and veteran soldier (*Anandagiri*). Wiliness and insincerity mingled with alternate haughtiness and sycophancy were the true characteristics of Durjodhana's temper. The term *Chamu* in the text means an army consisting of 3645 foot-soldiers, 2187 horse, 729 elephants and 729 chariots. It generally means a large army.

IV.

"In this army there are great warriors, wielders of mighty bows, who are equalled in battle only by Bhima and Arjuna,—Yuyudhana, Birata and the great warrior Drupada ;

NOTE. 4. Durjodhana describes the valiant heroes of the other side lest they be disregarded by the General and sufficient preparation be not made in time. In the two following Slokas also he mentions the choicest heroes of the opposite side.

V.

"Dhrishtaketu, Chekitana and the valorous Kshiraja ; Purujit, Kuntibhoja, and Saibya the bravest of men ;

VI.

The bold Yudhamanyu and the heroic Uttamauja ; the son of Subhadra, and the sons of Draupadi are all of them great charioteers (*maharatha*).

NOTE. 6. "He who alone fights against eleven thousand warriors and has long experience in the science of arms is denominated a *maharatha*. He

who is competent to fight against unnumbered enemies is termed an *atiratha* ; a *rathi* is one who fights against one charioteer, and below this a soldier is called *aridharatha* (*aridha*, half and *ratha*, chariot)."

VII.

"Foremost of the twice-born ! next understand the most distinguished warriors on our side, those leaders of our ranks whom I shall describe for your comprehension.

NOTE. 7. Durjodhana suspecting lest the *acharyya* on hearing his description of the enemy would take him to be convinced of their superior strength and therefore frightened, and consequently would dissuade him (Durjodhana) from hostilities and advise him to seek peace, thus describes the choicest heroes on his side controlling for the time his own terror. He further takes this opportunity of showing off his own carelessness of his foes. He addresses Drona as "the foremost of the twice-born" thus indicating that what he was about to say was not unknown to Drona who was not only the first among the three twice-born classes but was also the chief of the elders versed in the three Vedas. (*Anandagiri*.)

VIII.

"Yourself, Vishma, Karna, and Kripa the conqueror of battle ; Ashwathama, Bikarna, the son of Somodatta, and Joyadhrata ;

IX.

"And beside them there are other numerous heroes who are willing to sacrifice their life in my cause, and all of them armed with various kinds of offensive weapons and skilful warriors.

X.

"But still our force under the command of Vishma as bulwark seems incompetent, while the enemy's force guarded by Bhima is sufficient and strong.

NOTE. 10. This Sloka has been explained by Anandagiri in a different way than the above which is the view of Sridhar Swami. Anandagiri very skilfully explains in four different varieties of construction that Durjodhana meant to represent the superiority of his own force over the enemy, but it is rather far-fetched while the simple construction taken by Swami is clear. Anandagiri's explanation :—"Our force is far superior in number to that of the enemy and commanded as it is by the renowned and cool-headed warrior Vishma it is competent to vanquish the enemy, while the scanty force of the enemy guarded by the unskilful and irresolute Bhima is quite insufficient to defeat our overwhelming force."
