

“*That Art Thou.*”

*Ghhandogya-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.*

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## THE LIGHT OF THE EAST.

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### Notes and Gleanings.

WE still seem, after hard upon nineteen centuries of Christian influence and experience to be looking out upon a world in which the ideal of Christianity, which we all profess to reverence, is worshipped only with lips...Throughout Europe we find nations armed to the teeth devoting their main energies to the perfection of their fighting material and the victualling of their fighting men and the keenest of their intellectual forces to the problem of scientific destruction. Beneath the surface of society whenever the pressure becomes so great as to open an occasional rift, we catch ominous glimpses of toiling and groaning thousands, seething in sullen discontent and yearning after a new heaven and a new earth to be realised in a wild frenzy of anarchy by the overthrow of all existing institutions and the letting loose of the fiercest passions of the human animal.—*London Times.*

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“Vegetarianism,” says *World’s Advance-Thought*, “is making rapid headway in London. Copley in his “Interesting facts about London,” states that there are forty Vegetarian restaurants in that city.”

The man who after reading numerous Shastras fails to form any idea of Brahma is like the ass who is conscious only of the load but not of the fragrance of the sandal woods which he carries.

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The buzzing of the bee is as long heard as it has not tasted the honey of the flower; as soon as it sits upon the honey it becomes silent. Similar is the case with the man of devotion. As long as he has not realised *Chit* he buzzes like the bee. The moment he perceives god, he is lost in rapture.

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Srimati Sanyasini Annie Be-Santin has left England on a two-month's lecturing tour to the United States America journeying as far as the distant Pacific Coast. She will not be back until February next.—*Pauses.*

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Hinduism is myriad-faced. Its *Gnan Marga* is Esoteric Buddhism. Its *Bhukti Marga* resembles the Christianity of Christ. Its grosser forms are suited to intellects of a lower order. Hinduism has as many aspects as there are different natures in this world. It owes its name to no man. It has one aspect for the barbarian and another for the highly cultured intellect of the nineteenth century. This is the reason why Buddhism does not exist as a separate religion in India. Hinduism has absorbed it entirely. Neither Sankaracharya nor Kumarila has driven it out of India. Neither sword nor fire has done it any harm. The ocean of Hinduism has made the drop Buddhism to disappear.

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Let any Buddhist show me a doctrine which is foreign to Hinduism. Buddha or Christ is held by me in highest reverence. The Christianity of Christ is not the garbled Christianity of his so-called modern followers. He was a *Sunnyasi* and a native of the East. He talked Hebrew, he dressed himself like a *Fakir*, he wore the skin of an animal like the Indian *Yogi*. By our habits and customs, by our traditions and by our birth we resemble him more than the princely bishop who opens his day by murdering some defenceless innocent animals to satisfy his belly-god and passes his life in luxuriant living.

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Infinite consciousness with infinite body, viz, the universe is the Brahma of the Vedanta. The infinite from its very nature can take no notice of the finite. The finite is governed by its own inherent laws. It is called *Maya* because it is in perpetual change. It is an Eternal

*Becoming while Chit is the Eternal Being. Prakriti in the infinite body, of the infinite Chit.*

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The will is, *as long as it exists*, unsatisfied for otherwise it would exist no longer; the unsatisfied will, however, is want, need, displeasure.

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A series of very thoughtful articles entitled "The origin of the universe" has made its appearance in Modern Thought. The writer tries to show that as the universe is infinite and eternal and as two infinities can not co-exist there cannot be any other infinite entity called god. In reply we make the following remarks:—Dr. Bunshaw can not but admit, as he actually does, that *something* exists by itself and is unchangeable which he calls Existence in which the group of attributes visible and tangible, appears and disappears. These he calls modes. Among the modes are included not only attributes but also our finite consciousness called mind. Mind and the attributes being the phenomenal product of that absolute existence, that Existence can never be of the nature of mind alone nor of matter alone but it must be something midway between mind and matter, self consciousness and unconsciousness. It can not be "unconsciousness" as Dr. Bunshaw states. For out of *absolute* unconsciousness no finite consciousness can appear. This absolute existence is called *Chit* in vedanta philosophy.

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Man is a strange compound made up, as he is, of the angel and the beast; inclined to the latter (the beast) he becomes worse than the beast; inclined to the former (the angel) he becomes better than the angel."

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We all have a *double* who is wiser and better than we are, and who puts thoughts into our heads, and words into our mouths.

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While the "New Spiritualism" is running in the *Morning*, the "New Mesmerism" is running in the *Times*, and the "New Hypnotism" in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The remarkable thing about it all is that, considering the vast store-house of well-authenticated facts with which the writers are dealing, no real attempt is made by them to arrive at any definite philosophical explanation of the subject. The *Pall Mall* correspondent has to acknowledge that "Hypnotic Science, both medical and legal, has made tremendous strides during the last few years," and he goes on to say that in the course of the next twelve months several

important announcements may be expected. As far as regards the advance of the Science that advance only means as yet to the ordinary experimenter the classification of facts. What the important announcements are likely to be I know not, but one thing is certain, that ultimately these experimenters and the world at large will be driven to Occultism for their true theories. For Occultism *does* explain, and herein lies the strength of the Occult position.—*Lucifer*.

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With this number we begin the sixth issue of the *Light of the East*. We should request our subscribers to try to push on the circulation of this magazine if they at all wish to place it in a permanent footing. This is the only magazine of its kind in India, and if each of our readers secures us at least one subscriber from among his friends, the *Light of the East* will not succumb in future to the severities of the struggle for existence. Such a high class magazine is not for the mass but for the select few; its subscription deducting postage is only Rs. 2-8. We, therefore, doubly venture to request our subscribers to help us in this noble undertaking in the way above indicated. It lies within the power of our readers to give this spiritual child all the nursing which is needed in its infancy so that it may grow up to a healthy manhood and shed light like the noon-day sun throughout the land of its birth.

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## The Existence of God.

THE topic that heads this short essay is indeed a very difficult one. It is a subject which learned men well versed in theology, psychology and ethics have found hard to deal with satisfactory to all. Had there been no atheists, no sceptics, no unbelievers, to disprove the existence of God, not of course mathematically but analogically and inductively, it would be as easy for me to prove that as to say that because I speak therefore I exist or that white is not red, or that brutes are irrational creatures.

I cannot open my eyes without admiring the art that shines throughout all nature. The least thought suffices to make me perceive the Hand Divine that makes everything.

Happy the man who sees a God employed,  
 In all the good and ill that checker life!  
 This truth Philosophy, though eagle-eyed  
 In nature's tendencies, oft overlooks,

And having found his instrument, forgets,  
 Or disregards, or more presumptuous still,  
 Disregards the power that wields it. God proclaims,  
 His hot displeasure against foolish men,  
 That live an atheist life; involves the heaven,  
 In tempests; quits his grasp upon the winds,  
 And gives them all their fury; bids plague  
 Kindle a fiery boil upon the skin  
 And putrefy the breath of blooming health.

Men accustomed to meditate upon metaphysical truths, and to trace up things to their first principles, may know the deity by its idea, and that is the sure way to arrive at the source of all truth. But the more direct and short that way is the more difficult it is for the generality of mankind who depend on their senses and imagination.

An ideal demonstration is so simple, and through its very simplicity it escapes those minds that are incapable of operations purely intellectual. In short, the more perfect is the way to find the first Being, the fewer men there are that are capable to follow it.

But there is a less perfect way, level to the meanest capacity. The wisdom and power He has stamped upon every thing He has made, are seen, as it were, in a glass by those that cannot contemplate Him in His own idea. This is a sensible and popular philosophy, of which any man free from passion and prejudice is capable.

#### Philosophy, baptized

In the pure fountain of eternal love,  
 Has eyes indeed; and, viewing all she sees  
 As meant to indicate a God to man,  
 Gives him his praise, and forfeits not her own.  
 \* \* \* But such a veil  
 Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,  
 And dark in things divine, that often too  
 Our wayward intellect, the more we learn  
 Of nature, overlooks her author more;  
 From instrumental causes proud to draw  
 Conclusions retrograde and mad mistake.

If a great number of men of subtle and penetrating wit have not discovered God with one cast of the eye upon nature, it is not a matter of wonder; for either the passions they have been tossed by have still rendered them incapable of any fixed reflection, or the false prejudices

that result from passions have, like a thick cloud, interposed between their eyes and that noble spectacle.

In short, what ought to help most to open their eyes serves only to close them faster.

St. Austin tells us that great wonders have been debased by being constantly renewed. Tully speaks exactly in the same manner :

What prodigies can power divine perform  
 More grand than it produces year by year,  
 And all in sight of inattentive man ?  
 Familiar with the effect, we slight the cause,  
 And, in the constancy of nature's course,  
 The regular return of genial months,  
 And renovation of a faded world,  
 See naught to wonder at. Should God again,  
 As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race  
 Of the undeviating and punctual sun,  
 How would the world admire ! But speaks it less  
 An agency divine, to make him know  
 His moment when to sink and when to rise,  
 Age after age, than to arrest his course ?  
 All we behold is miracle ; but, seen  
 So duly, all is miracle in vain.

Is belief in God a reasonable belief, or is it not ? Have we sufficient evidence for thinking that there is a self-existent, eternal Being, infinite in power, and perfect in holiness and goodness, the Maker of heaven and earth, or have we not ?

If one man believes there is a God, and another that there is no God whichever holds the less reasonable of these two opinions is chargeable with credulity. For the only way to avoid credulity and incredulity is to listen to, and to believe and disbelieve on good grounds.

Whenever reason has been awakened to serious reflection on the subject, the vast majority of men have felt themselves unable to believe that this mighty universe, so wondrous in its adjustments and adaptation, was the product of chance, or dead matter, or blind force ; that the physical, mental and moral order which they everywhere beheld implied no supreme Intelligence and will ; and the few who can believe it, have assuredly no right, simply on the ground of such ability, to assume that they are less credulous, and more free thinkers than others. The disbelief of the atheists must ever seem to all men but himself to require more faith, more credulity, than the beliefs of all the legends of the Talmud.

Nature is but the name for an effect whose cause is God. The prevalence of order in nature is an event, a some thing which once began to be,

Where order meets us, the natural and immediate inference is that it is the work of intelligence. And order meets us every where in the universe. It covers and pervades the universe. This order, the proof of which is the grand achievement of science, universally implies mind ; and that all relations of order, all laws and uniformities are evidences of an intelligent cause, the Supreme Being.

The moral law which reveals itself to conscience has seemed to some authors so decisive a witness for God, that all other witnesses may be dispensed with. Kant believed himself to have found in the practical reason or moral faculty an assurance for the existence of God and Divine government capable of defying the utmost efforts of scepticism.

Sir William Hamilton has also affirmed that the only valid arguments for the existence of God, and for the immortality of the human soul, rest on the ground of man's moral nature.

The fool may say in his heart that there is no God ; but he only proves thereby that he is a fool, for what he says is self contradictory.

Since he denies that there is a God, he has in his mind the idea of god, and that idea implies the existence of god, for it is the idea of a being than which a higher can not be conceived.

Dr. Fiddes' demonstration of the existence of god consists of six propositions. 1. Something does now exist ; 2. Something has been eternally self-existent ; 4. What is self-existent must have all perfections that exist anywhere or in any subject ; 5. What is self-existent must have all possible perfection ; 6. What has all possible perfections in an infinite measure is God.

The final proposition of Professor Ferrier's "Institutes of Metaphysics" is thus enunciated :—

"All absolute existences are contingent *except one* : in other words there is *one*, but only one, Absolute existence which is strictly *necessary* ; and that existence is a supreme, infinite, and everlasting mind in synthesis with all things."

We have proved the existence of God from his works in nature. We have given for it the cosmological proof also and we have proved it from the prevalence of order, of skill and of intelligence in the works of nature. We have given also some *a priori* arguments for the existence of God.

We now revert to the proof of the existence of God from nature, and we shall give below more lucid and very illustrative proofs for the existence of the one and only *one* creator of the universe.

All nature shows the infinite art of its Maker. When I speak of an art I mean a collection of proper means chosen on purpose to arrive at a certain end ; or if you please, it is an order, a method, an industry, or a set design. Chance on the contrary, is a blind and necessary cause, which neither sets in order nor chooses anything, and which has neither will nor understanding. Now I maintain that the universe bears the character and stamp of a cause infinitely powerful and industrious ; and, at the same time, that chance (that is, the blind and fortuitous concourse of causes necessary and void of reason) cannot have formed this universe.

To this purpose it is not amiss to call to mind the celebrated comparisons of the ancients.

Who will believe that so perfect a poem as Homer's "Iliad" was not the product of genius of a great poet, and that the letters of the alphabet being confusedly jumbled and mixed, were by chance, as it were, by the cast of a pair of dice, brought together in such an order as is necessary to describe, in verses full of harmony and variety, so many great events ; to place and connect them so well together ; to paint every object with all its most graceful, most noble and most affecting attendants ; in short to make every person speak according to his character in so natural and so forcible a manner ? Let people argue and think upon the<sup>d</sup> matter as much as they please, yet they never will persuade a man of *sense* that the "Iliad" was the result of mere *chance*.

Cicero said the same thing in relation to Ennius's "Annals" adding that chance could never make one single verse much less a whole poem. How then can a man of sense be induced to believe, with respect to the universe, a work beyond contradiction more wonderful than the "Iliad," what his reason will never suffer him to believe in relation to that poem ?

What power has built over our head so vast and so magnificent an arch ? Who makes one sun sufficient for the whole earth ?

Who has made the admirable order in which all the bodies that make up the Universe are arranged ? Can chance do so ? No man of sense will for a second entertain the idea that chance can do these wonderful things.

On the other hand the work is no less to be wondered at in little than in great. For I find as well in little as in great a kind of infinite that astonishes me. It surpasses my imagination to find<sup>e</sup> in a hand-worm, as one does in an elephant or whale, limbs perfectly well organised ; a head, a body, legs and feet, as distinct and as well-formed as those of the biggest animals.

That Divine Wisdom that moves all the known parts of the world had made so deep an impression upon the Stoics, and on Plato before

them, that they believed the whole world to be an animal, but a rational and wise animal—in short the supreme God. This philosophy reduced Polytheism to deism, or one God, and that one God to Nature which was eternal, infallible, intelligent omnipotent and divine.

Now pay your heed to the union of the soul and body. Has chance, by a concourse of atomes, hooked together the parts of the body with the mind or the soul ? Certainly not. No sane man can believe otherwise than that God alone can be the Author of the union of the soul and body.

The mind of man is mixed with greatness and weakness. Its greatness consists in two things. First, the mind has the idea of the Infinite. Secondly, the ideas of the mind are universal, eternal and immutable.

It is certain my reason is within me, for I must continually recollect myself to find it ; but the superior reason that corrects me upon occasion, and which I consult, is none of mine, nor is it part of myself.

That rule is perfect and immutable ; whereas I am changeable and imperfect. That master who instructs me, is everywhere, and His voice is heard from one end of the universe to the other.

The superior Reason that resides in man is God Himself ; and whatever has been discovered to be in man, are evident footsteps of the Deity.

Traces of the Deity in man are drawn from the knowledge he has of *unity*. The idea of unity proves that there are immaterial substances ; and that there is a Being perfectly one, who is God.

Here is another mystery which I carry within me, viz, that on the one hand I am free and on the other dependent. My dependence proves the existence of my creator.

We hope we have proved the existence of God.

In conclusion we will bring forward the following lines :—

'Tis sweet to muse upon his skill display'd  
 (Infinite skill) in all that he had made !  
 To trace in nature's most minute design  
 The signature and stamp of power divine,  
 Contrivance intricate, express'd with ease,  
 Where unassisted sight no beauty sees,  
 The shapely limb and lubricated joint  
 Within the small dimensions of a point,  
 Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,  
 His mighty work, who speaks and it is done,  
 The invisible in things scarce seen reveal'd,

To whom an atom is an ample field,  
 These are thy glorious works, thou source of good,  
 How dimly seen, how faintly understood !  
 Thine, and uphold by thy paternal care,  
 This universal frame, how wondrous fair ;  
 Thy power divine, and bounty beyond thought,  
 Adored and praised in all that thou hast wrought.  
 Absorbed in that immensity I see,  
 I shrink abashed, and yet aspire to thee ;  
 Instruct me, guide me to that heavenly day  
 Thy words more clearly than thy works, display,  
 That, while thy truths my grosser thoughts refine,  
 I may resemble thee, and call thee mine.

*Professor A. L. De.*

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## The East Farewell.

**C**OUSIN B—was to me for years the most amiable creature under the sun. He was a youth of sixteen only six years younger than me at the time in which lies the scene of this narrative ; though so young he possessed the brain of a Sankaracharja and the emotions of a Chaitanya. His personal attractions were not of a mean order. The physiognomy bore the marks of a profound thinker and a poet, coupled with the tender graces of a Helen or a Milton. Around his magnificent brow fell in jet black curls masses of soft and luxuriant hair which did not fail to remind me of Plato while walking with his disciples round the lakes of Greece. Such was my ideal cousin, a poem and picture in one.

He had his peculiarities as well, peculiarities which are the ornaments of a genius. At times when sitting with me in calm moonlight amidst the mountain scenery of Northern India he would pour down in a torrent of eloquence the spiritual beauty of his rich and classic mind. He would gaze for hours at the distant stars as if to fathom the depths of Infinity, and suddenly a trance would come over him from which I could awake him with great difficulty. He was not rich, but his father left him enough to allow him to lead the life which was the sole object of his ambition,—a life of philosophic reflection and spiritual culture. He had not a single care upon him and he was resolved not to sell his lofty mind to any woman, but to devote it to the Supreme Being without

any reservation whatever. Full of these transcendental qualities, my precocious cousin was the darling of my heart and the centre of all my tenderest feelings. It seemed as if we were bound by an eternal cord which nothing could break. But fate decreed it otherwise.

"I do not understand you properly," I told him one day in one of our evening walks through the solitude of the hill, "you are yet a child and you have left off all the ambitions of youth which sweeten the life of man. Are you not following a phantom, a mirage which is sure to delude you. What do we know of spirit or matter ? Where and what is that *Chit* you are trying to realise ?"

"We know more of *Chit* (Brahma) than anything else," he answered with a smile of supreme confidence. "Do you know, my dear friend, by whom the universe is lighted ?"

"Certainly by the sun, the source of all light and life," I answered briefly.

"What lights up your sun, the source of light and life," he asked abruptly, his face beaming with a kind of unearthly lustre.

"It is consciousness," said I after a little reflection. "The whole of the universe with its million solar systems would have remained shrouded in mystery, rather unknown, had there been no consciousness (Gnan) to light it up."

"The *Chit*, "replied B is the *light* which illumines the whole universe as well as your body. It is the light of the whole universe ; it is behind everything and is therefore, *self-luminous*. It is the life and the *essence* of the group of attributes which is called matter."

"How do you know that *Chit* is self-luminous," said I. "It may be the product of the attributes known as matter. Who knows that the opinion of the materialists is not right ?"

"The products of the attributes of matter can not but be attributes themselves. The product of sound, touch, taste, color and smell must be characterised by the above five attributes. Water, the product of oxygen and hydrogen, has the characteristics of the two gases. But *Chit* is consciousness pure and simple and it is devoid of attributes. How can darkness produce light ? How can dead matter produce consciousness ? How can attributes produce an attributeless thing ? That which endures changeless during the three states viz, waking, dreaming and sleeping is consciousness. It is devoid of degree. It is beyond the *states* of attributes. Uuborn, primeval, absolute as space and self-luminous, it is the essence and support of the mirage known as the universe. For It the sun shines, for It the wind blows, for It the ocean roars, and for It the passions play. It is the beauty of the woman, the tender grace of the flower, the splendour of the moon and the love of the lover. Without it the universe

would lapse into blindness, darkness and nothingness." While saying this a trance came over him one of those spiritual trances in which he used to stand before God face to face as it were. The light of the February moon was streaming full into his face, the face, in which mingled the emotions of a Sapho and the calm wisdom of a Socrates. Around him like an august reality stood the Eternal silence of the hills and the blue grandeur of the unfathomable space. The young life before me seemed to lose its spirit in the ocean of Eternity. Would he come back to this wretched despicable tabernacle of flesh? Who knows?

About twenty minutes after he came to his normal consciousness. What was a moment before like a sculpture of Phidias began to move instinct with fresh life.

"Are you still here," he said in a voice low, clear, lingering and melodious as music, "I had almost lost myself. The "I" is the root of all sorrow, its absence is rapture. Who can boast of having seen God with the "I" still clinging to him? The moment we lose egoism, we stand before the supreme spirit."

"Can you tell me what you felt a little before," I asked.

"It is inexpressible," he sighed, "more intense than the rapture of the first kiss of love, more glorious than the grandeur of the rising sun, and more deep than sleep itself. The rapture of *Chit* is unique, nothing can even resemble it."

"If such be the Infinite Source of all things, then tell me whence has this terrible world come into existence? Why man is a monster? Why Nature is howling around us insatiated even with eternal blood shed? How could poison come out of honey? Tell me, where to fly from this bed of thorns? Tell me, where to rest my weary head? our little existence is wrapt in flames. Everything is burning, when shall the whole universe be reduced to ashes?" I uttered the above words in a torrent of wrath, my frame shaking with convulsions. "Peace" he said firmly "what are you about? There is Existence alone and nothing else. What is nature? There can never be two infinite Existences. The terrible Nature you speak of is non-existent. It is like the dream of your mind. As the dream is a mode of your finite consciousness, so is the universe of the Infinite one. The non-existence of the universe shines as Name and Form. just as the non-existence of the imaginary snake shines in a rope. We are ignorance, darkness, non-existence. Know yourself, and the finite will become Infinite, pain will turn into rapture. "Show me the way," I exclaimed in intense agony, "which will lead me from darkness into light. Is there no egress out of this hell?"

"Nothing can bind this self-existent and eternal Atma in this prison

of flesh," he said coolly; "it is *Trishna* (the desire to live and enjoy) which has made us what we are. It is this which has imprisoned you in this house of clay. It is this which leads you from birth to birth and from death to death. It is *Trishna* which has spread this universe, the root of all misery. It is a black serpent which you hold in your bosom. Has it not bitten you again and again. Why do you haunt after positive pleasure like the vulgar? Is not positive pleasure a mirage? Have you ever attained it permanently? *Trishna* is insatiable; the more you enjoy, the more you burn. Will is the source of all pain. Its destruction is infinite peace; you are surrounded by fools who are running madly after the pursuit of happiness. The moment you leave *Trishna* you become a *Jivun-mukta*. You will then be infinite like space and eternal like Eternity itself; you will identify yourself with the Infinite Rapture of Brahma. Leave off this meanness, this *Trishna* for ever. This *Trishna* remaining constant gives a million births and as much deaths. Are you not weary of it as yet? Follow the footprints of those great men who have left marks in the sands of Time. Hold fast that which is True. The moment you leave *Trishna*, the *Asatjaradukha* (unreal world of pain) will vanish and in its place will roll with the sound of rushing music,—*Satchidananda*." Thus saying he raised his blue eyes above as if to grasp the Infinity of space. A thing of beauty is a joy for ever. And it imparted infinite joy to me to gaze at the spiritual emotions of such a fair and tender life. What can be more beautiful than this young spiritual figure so tender and so full of life moving in the luminous atmosphere of that Infinite spirit in whom the show we call the universe appears and disappears like a passing bubble. Tossed and convulsed by the visions of absolute Existence what could be more grand than the heart of this blooming youth?

About six years passed in the manner above described amidst the solitude of the hills during which time I imbibed from my cousin the inspirations of a prophet and the emotions of a Pindar. Slowly the tenour of my life began to change and what was hard pollution before began to melt in the form of a crystal stream. The baser elements of the mind began to give place to the idea of the lofty and the beautiful. My mind was electrified by the constant touch of this young mystic whose life was a sacrifice to the altar of Truth. Like Goethe this sweet life monopolised all that was grand and solemn in Nature. From him a reflection of these lofty emotions fell on my mind and purified it by its magic touch. For I had an angel for my friend and what can ennoble the baseness of our mind than the constant touch of a lofty soul.

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It was an autumn evening. In one of the chambers of an antique house facing the window through which came in full splendour the glory of the autumn moon was lying a young man of two and twenty. The little window was covered with the foliage and clusters of innumerable flowers. He looked a man to satisfy a sculptor's dream to haunt an artists thoughts, to be hymned in a poets cancion; yet there was a certain paleness and a nameless fugitive coldness in his countenance. For he was in the presence of—Death. "Sit down by my side and place your hand on my head," he said briefly, my sum of days is over. The moment has arrived when my drop of life will lose itself in the Great Beyond. Henceforth be your own guide. Avoid the base world; and a few years after you will mingle with me." I sobbed aloud; my heart failed me. The very breath of my life, the light of my eyes was passing away. The picture of a solitary, dreary, and friendless future began to haunt me. "Do not leave me alone among rogues and fiends," I cried out bitterly and stooped close to take the last kiss and the last embrace. Before I could do so the word "farewell" entered my ears in a low musical tone and the flash mingled with the Eternal Light.

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## The Religion of the Puranas.

THE Puranas are both historical and religious; they show great superstition, and, at the same time, profound mysticism, and the number and extent of these works, coming to us as they do from the distant ages of time, bears witness to the great spiritual development of India at a period when we ourselves were not even known among the nations as a savage people of a distant isle. They show us how the lofty ideas of religion, contained in the Vedas and Upanishads had to be symbolized and embodied in story and legend to bring the truth within the grasp of the people of the lowest caste, for we must always remember in judging the Puranas that they form, so to say, but the outermost rung of the great system, which through Vedas, Upanishads, and Sutras passed on from age to age the great truth of the unity of spirit. The Puranas appeal to all men, no difference being made between the Chandala and the man of pure caste. In considering the myths and legends with which the Puranas abound, it is necessary also to bear in mind that they are not the exponents of nineteenth century civilization or of the social laws that have sprung therefrom. This consideration will enable us to form a more accurate judgment respecting these legends, which often appear strangely

at variance with present ideas of morality. Another point to be remembered is that symbolism and myth was the consecrated method of teaching in the olden times, and the very name of the teacher in many of the Puranas is Suta, which name means one whose vocation it is to expound ancient tradition. We shall find the same necessity for discrimination in the interpretation of our own sacred books as in the Puranas; the Jewish Jehova can hardly be represented as showing qualities which we are now accustomed to regard as moral or God-like. Vindictive cruelty, injustice, the punishment of the innocent with the guilty are in a marked degree characteristics of the histories of the tribal Jehovah, and it is not till we come to the words of the later prophets, or the mystical books like the *Books of Job* and the *Song of Solomon*, that we find some understanding of the qualities of mercy and justice as pertaining to a Godhead. The Pauranic myth is indeed far less misleading, as it always guards against mistaking the lower form for the higher reality, by asserting the attributeless character of Supreme Spirit.

The Uttara Kanda of the *Padma Purana* divides the eighteen into three classes, according to the three qualities, Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, or the pure, the passionate, and the dark; the *Vishnu* and the *Bhagavata* both belong to the Sattvika, and, I believe, are generally considered as holding a foremost place among the the Puranas; at any rate as I have had the advantage of studying these two I will make some extracts of the teachings from them.

What, then, is the general character of the teaching in these books on the two fundamental points of religion—the immortality of the Ego and its relation to the Supreme, and how far are they calculated to lead man to the unfoldment of his higher nature?

In the first place I find one very important point to be noticed, and that is the interchangeableness of the names of the Deity. Hari, Vishnu, Krishna, Shiva, Brahma, all of these in turn are put forward for the adoration of the worshipper; they are aspects of the one, and devotion paid to any one of them seems to be devotion to the underlying and supporting idea of Divinity, rather than worship to any special God. This multiplicity of the Hindu Gods is often put forward as a reproach to Hinduism, but it is a reproach which comes with but bad grace from the adherents of Christianity. If the Supreme Unity is to be personified through its powers or attributes in any way, it makes but little difference whether it be in three persons or 33,000.

In the first book of the *Vishnu Purana* there are series of names referring to Vishnu which, I think, will compare with anything found in our own Scriptures describing the attributes of Deity, Pundarikaksha,

the cause of all things, of all things, one with true wisdom, conceived of through false appearance, who is always and alone Vasudeva, who exists everywhere and in whom all things here exist. There seems also but little place for anthropomorphism in such a conception of a God to be worshipped, as the following :

There was neither day nor night, neither heaven nor earth, neither darkness nor light; and there was not aught else apprehensible by the senses or by the mental faculties. There was then, however, one Brahm, essentially prakriti and spirit.

And again :

No one knoweth thy true nature, and the Gods adore thee only in the forms it has pleased thee to assume.

I might give many more extracts of a similar character, but these will suffice to show that the conception of a condition of spiritual unity anterior to the creation of the material universe is quite as definitely declared as in our own Scripture.

The description of the appearance of the visible universe is more in harmony in its *modus operandi* with the modern theory of evolution than with that of creation. The primal elements and their three qualities are said to combine for the production of human beings, through the direction of spirit and the acquiescence of the indiscrete principle, till the Egg is formed, which, invested by the seven natural envelopes, becomes Brahma or the visible universe. Vishnu is the preserver through the Kalpas, but he is also the destroyer in the form of Rudru, and swallows up the universe. Having thus devoured all things, he reposes amidst the deep till again as Brahma he becomes the manifesting Power. In the *Bhagavata Purana* we read :

It is he, Bhagavan, by the help of his Maya manifested under the form of that which exists as well as that which does not exist, and clothed with the qualities from which the Supreme Being is essentially free, who created in the commencement the universe.

But it is not creation as we understand the word, but the one in substance becoming many in form. In no religious book can we find a more beautiful song of praise, or one grander in its conception of the unity of all creatures in the Supreme, than that which is supposed to be sung by the earth as she rises and glorifies the God that has called her forth. It commences, "Hail to thee, who art all creatures." Any one who will take the trouble to look it up in the *Vishnu Purana* will be well repaid.

In the *Vishnu purana* we read as follows. A Rajah asks a Brahman what is the best of all things, and the Brahman tells him that he should rather ask what is the great end of life, and goes on to say ;

The great end of life is considered by the wise to be eternal: but it would be transient if it were accomplished through transitory things. The great end is soul eminent over

nature (Prakriti). This knowledge that the spirit which is essentially one, is in one's own and in all other bodies, is the great end or true wisdom of one who knows the unity, and the true principles of things.

In this passage we find the immortality of the Ego and the unity of all spirit very clearly stated. In the *Bhagavata Purana* it says :

Spirit which is one, pure, luminous, by itself, independent of the qualities of which it is the shelter, penetrating everywhere, absolute, the internal witness and beyond which there is no other soul, this spirit is distinct from the body.

On this point, namely the immortality of the Ego and its separateness from the body, there can be but little doubt that the Indian popular teaching is more clear and definite than our own Scriptures. Throughout the *Old Testament* there are few references to a life after death; on the contrary death is generally spoken of as the end of man, the grave as that place from which there is no return; as said by Solomon :

There is no work nor device nor knowledge in the grave.

The reward of virtue is always long life and temporal blessings to the individual and his posterity. This absence of reference to an after life is the more remarkable considering that the Hebrews had sojourned with the Egyptians, among whom the idea of a future life was a very real belief, exercising an important influence on their daily life. Even in the Gospels there is very little direct reference to an after life. There is a great deal said about the kingdom of heaven, but I think on careful comparison of the passages it will be evident that this expression seldom means any condition after death, and certainly not the final goal analogous to Nirvana, but rather the particular path to the life eternal then being opened to the people. The teachings in the Gospels are easier to be understood and form a more connected whole when this interpretation is accepted.

In the Puranas we find the same characteristic of devotion as is to be found in the Christian gospel and religion. Devotion to Krishna, to Hari, to Vasudeva, is inculcated as of more importance than rites and ceremonies; the Vedanta is the path of knowledge, but the Purana the path of devotion :

Reliance upon Krishna is far better than any such expiatory acts as religious austerities or the like.

He who through holy knowledge diligently adores the lotus foot of that Hari who is revered by the gods is released from all the bonds of sin.

When fervent love for Brahma is developed in the soul he who experiences it fulfils all religious duties.

The high spiritual character of the devotion here alluded to may be seen from the following quotation from the *Padma Purana*.

The imperishable state is not attained by sacrifice, by penance, by abstract meditation,

by holy knowledge, but by thinking upon Vishnu. The destroyer of Madhu is not beheld through gifts or through pilgrimage, but through union that is effected by intense contemplation: the Brahman enters the state of Vishnu by the road of propound mental identification.

In the *Agni Purana* the object of devotional study is given as twofold, as Para Vidya and Aparā-Vidya, or the supreme knowledge and the lesser knowledge. This is a most important division. Three hundred and sixty-nine chapters of this Purana are occupied with discussions of almost every conceivable ritual and description of knowledge through which temporary gain either in this world or in a state succeeding it may be acquired. But the last twelve chapters are engaged with the transcendental knowledge leading to final emancipation. This characteristic division of knowledge is to be found in other Puranas and is very important for our consideration. Those who seek for gain in this world, riches, honour, prosperity of all kinds are informed what are the means to be pursued in order to gain such rewards, but they are clearly told that such knowledge is the lower and transitory. The essentials for the perfect knowledge are given in this Purana as the following—control of the passions, subjugation of sensuous desire, the means for concentration of the mind leading to Dhyana, or meditation, and Samadhi, the conviction of the identity of the thinker with Brahma. I have but little acquaintance with other Puranas, but the great devotion manifest in those I have mentioned shows that at this period at any rate, in the popular religion of the Hindus, the indwelling in the heart of the God worshipped, was as much realized as it has ever been by the most ardent disciple of the Christian faith.

When the eternal has taken up his abode in the heart of anyone, that man is lovely amidst the beings of this world.

says the Hindu scripture. The Pauranic conception of the Supreme Spirit is worthy of the highest religion, and the saying,

God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, is but the echo on the Jordan of the truth taught ages before on the banks of the Gangea.

The next consideration we come to is how these lofty ideas fitted themselves into precept so as to become a rule of conduct and a guide of life. In the fifth chapter of Matthew we find a code of rules culminating in the supreme injunction,

Be ye therefore perfect even as your father in heaven is perfect.

The commands and prohibitions of Christianity were here clearly stated to the people in the simplest language, however little attention is now given to them by priest or layman. Let us see what are the teachings offered in the popular Hindu Scriptures.

We find first and foremost the clearly enunciated doctrine of the responsibility of the individual.

Each is his own destroyer or preserver as he follows evil or good.

Knowest thou not that the cause of displeasure only exists through ignorance, for it is our own actions which decide our fates in this world.

He who meditates not of wrong to others, but considers them as himself, is free from the effect of sin, inasmuch as the cause does not exist. But he who inflicts pain upon others in act, thought, or speech, sows the seed of future life, and the fruit that awaits him after birth is pain.

There are many passages which may be quoted to show that the worshipper of Hari was enjoined to be pure, selfless, and devoted, even as was required of the worshipper of Jesus. It is said:

He who never deviates from the duties prescribed to his caste; who looks with equal indifference upon friend and enemy, who takes nothing, nor injures any living being; know that person of unblemished mind to be a worshipper of Hari.

The observation of the rules of morality, the selfless practice of religious duties, tolerance, the absence of all desire, are some of the obligations for a worshipper of Vishnu. The Christian Scriptures enter more into detail and particularize with greater exactitude the duty of love to the neighbour, than do the Hindu Scriptures. The reason for this is obvious. The Puranas being founded on Vedanta, we may expect to find in them the emphatic assertion of the unity of all being and the inculcation of the abnegation of self. Religion as taught in the East is synthetical, that of the West more analytical. In the Christian gospel we are told to love our neighbour as ourselves, in the Indian that our neighbour is indeed our very self. The consequence of this different mode of treatment is that while in the later development each particular offence is specified, in the older teaching the root cause of all offence is shown to be that of conceiving of the *I* and *mine* as separate from all other manifestation. The recognition of the unity of all being is a striking feature in Pauranic teaching. Bhagavan, or the incarnating Spirit, says:

When the world recognizes me in the bosom of all creatures the same as fire is in all kinds of wood, then only will it be free from sin.

The Brahman teaches the King that:

What is distinguished as *I* and *thou* and others is constructed of the elements. When the difference of the investing form as that of God or the rest is destroyed, then there is no difference.

It is said also in the *Padma Purana*:

Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshvar are one form; though three Gods, there is no difference between the three - the difference is that of attributes alone.

We have drifted far into the cycle of materialistic and utilitarian

knowledge since the days of our Aryan forefathers. It may be a necessary outcome of the path of evolution, but if as nations and individuals we cannot realize that we have to leave the path of materialistic selfishness, we shall be unable to pass onward to the succeeding cycle of spiritual progress. We have carried this sin of separateness even into our religion in the egoism of belief, by which we at once erect barriers between man and man; the creeds and formulas put forward as necessary requisites to salvation are in reality but so many blows at the principle of unity. What does it matter whether the recognition of this unity calls itself in one creed Jehovah, in another Jesus the Christ, Buddha or Krishna, the development of truth or the Brotherhood of Humanity? Let us recognize a common goal, a common duty, draw near to one another in the common cause of work for humanity, looking to that unity that holds all the countless lives in one.

There are some doctrines that are only hinted at in our Scriptures, which are very prominent in the Puranas. Theory of Maya, or illusion, the doctrines of renunciation and reincarnation are the principal. Maya may be considered as the shadow of unity, for Maya could have no existence except by reason of the one reality, which is Brahma, that which appears to be the not-Brahma is illusion. At the same time, it is clearly shown that illusion does not mean unreality, for illusion being itself the power of the Supreme, is real as illusion. It is said :

It is he, Bhagavan, who by the help of his Maya, manifests under the form of that which exists, as well as that does not. It is through the qualities of Maya (which are intelligence and the other principles) that there is produced in the soul the form of Bhagavan, who has no real form, but is spirit.

The doctrine of the renunciation of works is prominent in all teachings of the Vedanta, and is very explicitly explained in the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is equally an essential feature of all Pauranic teaching. In the *Bhagavata Purana* we are told that

The individual soul, the product of Maya, receives abundantly as the price of its works, pain, and every different result that time brings.

Renunciation does not mean that any specific acts are to be renounced, but the consequences or results, which are called the fruit of action. It is the desire for personal gain in any way that has to be renounced; as it is said :

All things that a man conceives in his heart when he says, *I*, this is mine, are so many actions fulfilled, which place him under the law of rebirth.

Good works will bring their reward, but they will not avail for liberation, for there is no possibility of getting rid of action by action itself; and says the Purana :

Of what avail is ascent to the summit of heaven if it is necessary to return thence to earth?

Renunciation does not mean that acts and duties brought to an individual through Karma should be renounced in order to take up some other path, for this would be giving up one action for another, which we are told is not conclusive; on the contrary, it is said that

The man who does his duty in the profession assigned to him by nature, freeing himself from the action which is the product, will little by little acquire the advantage to be free from the qualities.....He who only performs necessary acts prepares himself little by little for deliverance.

That only can be called renunciation which extends to the renunciation of self, that is, personal gain to the individual either spiritual or temporal, and we are told :

The danger of rebirth exists for him who retires to the forest, if he is not master of himself, for he carries thither his six adversaries ; but what injury can the condition of householder work on him who has vanquished his senses and find his joy in himself ?

This self, of course, being that which remains as self-knowledge, self-enjoying, and self-existent, when all attributes in manifestation have been eliminated.

Of the doctrine of reincarnation I need only say it is to be found all through the Puranas.

This paper has become so long that it is impossible to do more than just mention the poetical beauty of the narratives of the Puranas. They have been many times called childish, and even harsher epithets have been applied to them, but in these so-called childish narratives the true philosophic teachings may be found.

The Hindus, like most Eastern nations, are much addicted to symbolism ; it is natural that we should fail to understand this *method* of teaching, but we must not for that reason reject or scorn the thought of the Oriental Sage, however much it may be clothed in parable and metaphor. Let us rather seek to discover the hidden meaning which, alas ! is being forgotten even by the very children of those to whom the teaching was given.

What can be more beautiful than the selfless devotion portrayed in the mystic story of Narada, or the persevering energy of Dhruva, who gains the most elevated position in the three worlds ? What more graphic than the description of the fate of soul in the forest of existence given in the "carvan of souls" ? These stories, of which there are so many give us glimpses of the life in the distant ages of the past, and show us some of the many ways in which the eternal truth has been manifested to man. The value of these books from a literary and historical aspect is undoubted, and even the most casual critic must experience some feeling of emotion in perusing these ancient histories, these myths and legends

and teachings, upon which has been based the religious belief of so many millions of human being for such countless ages.

To sum up. We find in these popular expositions of wisdom intended for the lowest and humblest of the people, an exalted conception of the unity of the Supreme Spirit, a clear enunciation of the immortality of the individual soul, the declaration of the necessity of devotion to the Supreme Reality as the highest path to knowledge, the constant reiteration that man is himself responsible for his acts, and that each life is a necessary consequence of the acts in a preceding life, that abnegation of self and compassion towards all living creatures is the path to emancipation from re-birth and to union in the Supreme.

Who will dare to say that such teachings as these are injurious to moral virtue and the development of the spiritual nature, or that they cannot lead man to recognize the potential power of his own divinity, and that they are to be cast as worthless on the dung-heap of the superstitions of the ages? Is it not rather evident that these books, which have been denounced as childish, indelicate, and absurd, will compare favourably in all the essentials of religion with our own Scriptures, in some respects, notably on the immortality of the individual soul and the responsibility of man, the teaching being even clearer and more definite?

I have refrained from going into details concerning the many interesting and instructive statements relative to the histories of creation, the evolution of the races, or the fate of the individual soul after death. It needs considerable knowledge of Indian mythology, of the Sanskrit language and the meaning of names, to rightly interpret these descriptions; but if some of our Eastern friends would help us, I am convinced we should find that these Puranas contain much valuable information. Subha Row, who certainly may be considered to have been an authority on these subjects, has said that important historical facts are concealed under the exoteric phraseology of the Puranas. Unfortunately, in the natural tendency of the East towards Western modes of thought, men are apt to forget that it is not the scorn of the ancient teaching which marks progress, but its right interpretation. It may be that the older forms will give place to others more suited to a later development, but all forms are on the same level, and we are but bound and limited by the external if we cannot draw aside the veil and discover the truth that lies beneath. It is the one light which shines through the many-coloured glasses, and is the unity of spirit which must be realized as the source of every ray of light descending on humanity, as also of every aspiration which responds in the heart of man.—Lucifer.

## Mesmerism.

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THERE is but one *Atma*, all-pervading like space ; it is the eternal witness of the action of the mind. The universal mind or will is also single, but by *Karma* different wills appear to exist. Mesmerism is the process of making two *wills* one for the time being. The *Atma* of the mesmeriser as well as of the mesmerised is the same, but the *wills* appear different. The mesmeriser makes the will of the mesmerised one with his own. This is the secret of mesmerism. Different processes of mesmerism will be given below :—

The subject shall sit inclined on an easy-chair or lie down on a couch. Standing or sitting just opposite him, the mesmeriser shall draw his hands with stretched fingers over the head, the brow and the face, down to the abdomen or the feet of the subject, taking care not to touch his body, though his fingers shall go very close to it. At the end of this process, he shall close his hands and getting his close-fisted hands over the subject's head again repeat the same process. While thus moving his hands for a certain time over the body of the subject or giving *passes*, as it is called, he may cover the latter's eyes with his own hands now and then. In the absence of an easy-chair or a couch the subject may be seated in an inclined position in any place or be laid on his back on a bed. The mesmeriser shall then do the same as before *i. e.* pass his hands with stretched fingers over the brow and face down to the feet or abdomen of the subject, in such a manner that in no way shall his finger's ends come in contact with the body, however close they may be to it. The same result may be obtained if the hands be drawn down the two sides of the brow and the hands of the subject.

The mesmeriser should do all these with a resolute and quiet heart and to ensure success the subject should also bear any fatigue or trouble in consequence thereof. Care should always be taken that there is no noise or sound at or near the place where the experiment is being done. In course of time the eyes of the subject or medium will close and begin to revolve in their sockets ; and he will fall insensible. To determine whether this state of unconsciousness is brought about by mesmeric force *i. e.* whether it is a mesmeric sleep, the hands of the medium may be raised and if they fall down, when let go, like a dead weight, or if, the eyelids being opened, the eye-balls are seen to revolve, then it is sure that mesmerism has got its effect. Sometimes gentle breathing or touch

of the hand on the brow occasions deeper sleep. A beginner should not however try this, for whom the process mentioned above is preferable. Some are of opinion that the mesmeriser and the medium should fix their gaze upon each other's eyes, while the process is being carried on. After a time the latter, will, according to his constitution, feel either hot or cold, and over his body will come a feeling of dullness and a prickly sensation like that caused by a pin. Gradually the medium lapses into unconsciousness, in which state even the pricking of his body with a needle causes no sensation. It often happens that the mesmeriser becomes unable to induce sleep by mesmeric force on a medium. Yet a beginner should not lose heart but repeat the process over and over again with renewed energy, till at last his efforts are crowned with success.

To bring back the consciousness of the medium, his head should be fanned and opposite *pâsses* be given *i. e.*, the passes should this time be from the feet towards the head. Even if after that the medium feels difficulty to open his eyes, the mesmeriser shall tightly rub his thumbs repeatedly against the top of the nose and the eye-brows up to the temples and fan his subject or otherwise blow air upon him. He shall not leave him until perfect consciousness is restored. It is sometimes better to break the sleep after two or three hours, though the mesmeriser may, in certain cases, do it whenever he desires. The mesmeric coma sometimes lasts long, when the mesmeriser cannot recall consciousness very soon. But this long sleep breaks itself after a time. No one except the mesmeriser should touch the medium in the state of a mesmeric coma, for any other person, specially one who is hysteric or nervous, may thereby fall into mesmeric sleep himself and get into a "cross mesmeric state."

A beginner should not solely depend on treatises for they can but partially impart any practical knowledge on the subject. He should begin an experiment after having witnessed some at least done by an expert mesmeriser. The processes of mesmerism are many, and the most suitable ones under different circumstances can be determined by experience only. The process which holds good for one medium may have no effect upon another. Gentle breathing on the brow may bring about coma in certain cases, but will have the opposite effect in others. Simple fanning may break the sleep of one medium but not of another; and specially this science which in the hands of an unexperienced person brings out no result, will in the hands of an expert mesmeriser be efficacious in healing many diseases and alleviating pains of patients.

We may here describe other methods of producing mesmeric coma, the most common of which is called "the thumb pressure and staring

process" employed by M. Lafontaine. "He seated himself opposite the patient and taking her hands, passed the tips of her thumbs with his own, at the same time gazing fixedly into the patient's eye"—a process of powerful effect tried many times by Mr. Braid. He found that "by fixing the patient's gaze upon an object above the level of vision, a pencil case held up or a cork fixed on the midforehead, he could induce a peculiar condition which he called hypnotic or nervous sleep"—during which state many wonderful phenomena may be elicited and many diseases successfully treated.

For another and perhaps a more scientific method of mesmerism, we should better quote a few passages from a book on the subject:—

"It is, however, certain, that no effect can be produced till you establish a thorough communication between yourself and the subject, through the nervous force of the organ of individuality that constitutes his personal identity. And as the centre or moving nerve of this organ has sympathy with all the voluntary nerves of the system, and as they reciprocally affect each other, so you can establish a psychological communication by touching any part of the system where voluntary nerves are located and particularly of those individuals who are very sensitive and impressible. But the most natural mode to get a good communication, and the one least liable to be detected by the audience, is to take the individual by the hand, and in the same manner as though you were going to shake hand. Press with thumb with moderate force upon the Ulnar Nerve which spreads its branches to the ring and little finger of the hand. The pressure should be nearly an inch above the knuckle, and in range of the ring finger. Lay the ball of the thumb flat and partially crosswise so as to cover the minute branches of this nerve of motion and sensation. The pressure, though firm, should not be so great as to produce pain or the least uneasiness to the subject. When you first take him by the hand, request him to place his eyes upon yours, and to keep them fixed, so that he may see every motion of your mind expressed in the countenance. Continue this position and also the pressure upon this Cubital Nerve for half a minute or more. Then request him to close his eyes, and with your fingers gently brush downwards several times over the eyelids, as though fastening them firmly together. Throughout the whole process feel within yourself a fixed determination to close them so as express that determination fully in your countenance and manner. Having done this, place your hand on the top of his head and press your thumb firmly on the organ of Individuality bearing partially downward, and with the other thumb still pressing the Ulnar Nerve, tell him—*you can not open your eyes!* Remember, that your manner,

your expression of countenance, your motions, and your language must all be of the most positive character. If he succeed in opening his eyes, try it once or twice more, because impressions, whether physical or mental, continue to deepen by repetition. In case, however, that you can not close his eyes, nor see any effect produced upon them, you should cease making any further efforts, because, you have now fairly tested that his mind and body both stand in a positive relation to yours as regards the doctrine of impressions."

B. K. BOSE, M. A.

### The Vedic Funeral Rites.\*

THE Aranyaka of the Black Yajur describes in detail the funeral ceremonies which are known by the name of Pitrimedha or rites for the welfare of the manes. The first mantra of the Aranyaka on the subject of funeral rites refers to the performance of a *homa* immediately after the death of a man who had maintained the sacrificial fires in his house. After the completion of the *homa* ceremony, a cot made of *Udumbara* wood is to be provided, and having spread on it a piece of black antelope skin the corpse is to be placed thereon. A son, brother, or a near relative or in their absence whoever takes the lead should address the dead to give up its old clothing and dress it in a new suit. The mantra for the purpose says:—Give up the cloth thou hast hitherto worn, remember the *ishtas* and *purta* sacrifices thou hast performed, the fees (to Brahmans thou hast given) and those (gifts thou hast) bestowed on thy friends. The dead body is then covered with an uncut cloth. Then wrapping the dead body in its beddings, it is borne on its cot to the place of cremation. According to some authorities, this removal of the dead body to the place of cremation should be made by slaves; according to others on a cart drawn by two bullocks. The mantra of the occasion says, "I harness these two bullocks to the cart, for the conveyance of your life, whereby you may repair to the regions of Yama—the place where virtuous resort." Unlike the modern Brahmans, the ancient Hindus did not evince any repugnance to the employment of Sudras for the removal of the corpse of a Brahman.

The way from the house to the burning ground was divided into three stages, at the end of which the procession used to halt, to place the dead body with its cot on the ground, and to address a few *mantras*. The mantra which was used on first halt runs as follows:—"Pusha, who knows

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\* The translations that have been used here are taken from Dr. Rajendra Lalla Mitra's contributions on the "Religious Rites of the Ancient Hindus."

the road well, has well trained animals, to carry you, and is the protector of regions, is bearing you away hence; may he translate you hence to the regions of the *pitris*. May Agni, who knows what is meet for you, bear you away." An important member of the procession is a cow called *rajagavi*. The animal is brought with the mantra, "Protector of regions, this is an offering for thee." An oblation is then poured on the fire, saying, "may this prove acceptable to wealthy Agni." Then the cow is sacrificed and if any accident happened at the time of the sacrifice the forefeet of the animal was to be broken, and the wound being dressed with dust, the animal was to be set free. The mantra for the sacrifice says, "Companion of the dead, we have removed the sins of the dead by thee; so that no sin or decrepitude may approach us. The address after the immolation runs as follow:—"Companion of the dead, we have made thy life inert; thou attainest the earth by thy body, and the regions of the manes by thy life. Pardon us and our children in this world." The third address to the cow, when her body is being dusted runs to the following effect:—"O dear one, say not that I am so killed, for thou art a goddess and virtuous, going to the region of the *pitris*, travelling by the adorable sky: keep us well supplied with milk in this and the future world."

Next thing which they used to do was to dig a trench, arrange fuel thereon, wash, shave and pare the nails of the corpse, and place it on the pyre along with the wife. When placed on the pyre it should have in its hands, if a Brahmin, a bit of gold, if a Kshatriya a bow, and if a Vaisya a jewel. According to Sayana and Boudhayana, the wife should lie down on the left side of the corpse. The man who is to set fire to the pyre then addresses the dead saying, "O mortal, this woman (your wife) wishing to be joined to you in a future world (to obtain *Poti loka*, or the region of the husbands) is lying by the corpse; she has always observed the duties of a faithful wife, grant her your permission to abide in this world and relinquish your wealth to your descendants. A younger brother of the dead or a disciple or a servant should then proceed to the pyre, hold the left hand of the woman and ask her to come away, saying, "Rise up, woman, thou liest by the side of the lifeless, come to the world of the living, away from thy husband and become the wife of him who holds thy hand and is willing to marry thee."

Meanwhile the pile being ready, a fire is applied to it with a prayer. "Agni, consume not this body to cinders; nor give it pain, nor scatter around its skin or limbs! O Jatavedas, when the body is fairly burnt, convey the spirit to its ancestors." A second prayer of somewhat same purport is offered to the same divinity when the fire is in full blaze. It

is followed by an address to the organs of the dead. It says, "May thy organ of vision proceed to the sun; may this vital air merge in the atmosphere; mayest thou proceed, according to thy virtuous deeds, to heaven or earth or the region of water, whichever place is beneficial to thee; mayest thou there, provided with food, exist in corporeal existence." The chief mourner then offers twelve oblations to the fire with a spoon made of wood. After these oblations, he has to offer nine prayers, of which the first four are addressed to Agni, the fifth to Yama, the sixth to the messengers of death, and the last three for a good region for the deceased. At this stage, the chief mourner excavates three trenches to the north of the pyre and lining them with pebbles and sand fills them with water. The people accompanying the procession are then requested to purify themselves by bathing in them, which being done a yoke made of three *palasa* branches, is put up; and they are made to pass under it.

The party then proceed to the nearest stream, and without looking at each other, purify themselves by bathing and by a prayer to Prajapati. They then get out of the water, put on dry clothes and wringing the wet clothes, spread them on the ground towards the north and sit down there till the stars are seen. When this is done they start for home, the young ones walk first and the old ones follow them. When they reach home, in order to purify themselves, they touch the stone, fire, cow dung, grain, oil and water, before they step in.

When this is done, the ceremony of burial takes place, the first operation for the ceremony of burial, is the collection of half burnt bones. First of all, they sprinkle milk and water on the cinders and strike the heap with a staff made up of *Udambara* wood to separate the bones. The cinders are then collected and thrown towards the south side, leaving the bones behind. Three oblations are next offered to Agni. After this the wife comes forward, with two bits of red and blue strings to which a stone is tied, to draw out the bones with her left hand saying, "Arise hence, and assume a new shape. Leave none of your members or your body behind. Repair to whichever place you wish, may Savita establish you there. This is one of your bones, be joined with the third (another bone) in glory; having joined all the bones be handsome in person; be beloved of the gods in a noble place." The bones are then washed and placed in an urn or tied up in a piece of black antelope skin. If the bones be of a person who had made *Soma* sacrifice, they should be burnt, if not, they should be buried.

Subsequently a proper place is selected, and the funeral procession proceeds to the place in the morning. The chief mourner then begins to sweep the place with a piece of leather or a broom of *palasa* wood. With

the help of a plough, he digs six long trenches, running from east to west, and saluting them with a mantra, deposits the run, consisting of the bones, in the central trench. After this, water is sprinkled over the place with an *Udumbara* branch. Having removed the covering of the urn, some aromatic herbs are put into it and subsequently it is closed with pebbles and sand. Each of the operations being performed while repeating a mantra.

Some *charu* rice then being cooked and sanctified by a mantra, is put on the five sides of urn. A few holes now being dug round the mound the ceremony of burial is completed. The last ceremony is called *Santikarama* or the rites for the well being of the living. It is performed on the morning following the ninth night after death, i. e., on the tenth day. On the day of the new moon, the relatives by blood both male and female assemble round a fire and sit down on a bullock hide of a red color spread on the ground. The assembly being seated, the chief mourner offers four libations to fire. The men and women then rise up, and placing themselves on the north of fire and facing the east, recite a mantra, while touching a red ball. The last of the party, who is the chief mourner, is to recite a mantra and efface the footmarks of the bull that proceeds the party. On the departure of the last man, a circle of stone is made behind him as if a wall to prevent death from overtaking those that have gone forward. The mantra for the occasion says :—"I place this circle for the living, may we and others not go beyond it in midlife, may we all live a hundred autumns, driving death by this heap. Lastly the party proceed to the house of the chief mourner and feast on kid and barley cooked for the purpose.

The operations, it will be seen, though oft repeated and tedious, are of the simplest nature, "the prayers are throughout addressed for the sensuous enjoyment and ease of the dead, and no where is any indication given of a desire for spiritual benefit, liberation from the wheel of transmigration, salvation or beatitude. Even sin is lightly looked upon, and the prayer for redemption from it is slight and casual."\* This double ceremonial of cremation and burial was common among the Greeks, Romans and other ancient races and in the fifth century before Christ, the remains of great Sakyamuni were disposed of in the like manner.

CHARU CHANDRA BOSE.

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\* J. B. A. S. Vol. XXXIX.

## Philosophy of the Tantras.

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II. The *Gouri Tantra*.—Chapters 1 and 2. What is the means of salvation from this shoreless ocean of ignorance—our life on earth? To this question it is answered that the light of divine knowledge is the only path to *Mukti* or *Nirvana*. Retired in solitary calm the *Mumukshu* sits in his *yoga-asana* and distracting the senses from their objects purifies the mind by the controlling virtue of *pranayama*. Then he grasps the all-pervading *atma* in the fulness of his heart.

In the first stage the *yogi* knows the kosmos as the manifestation of *Pranava*. The first particle ॐ (*a*) signifies the *Vishva* or the consciousness in our waking state; the second particle ॐ (*u*) is the *tujasa* or *swapna* state; and the third particle ॐ (*m*) denotes the *pragna* or *shushrupti* state of consciousness. These three states of *jaqrata*, *swapna* and *susupti* are the only states of consciousness of the ordinary mind, and the knowledge of the kosmos can be nothing but any of those three states or their combinations. They disappear when the *yogi* reaches the super-sensual state of *samadhi*.

In the advanced stage the *yogi* annihilates the grosser states of consciousness into the subtle and comprehensive states. The *jaqrata* state ॐ is vanished in the *swapna* or ॐ; that is, the consciousness of the *sthoohu sharira* (the visible body) is withdrawn into the consciousness of the *sukshma sharira*, the individual self. Finally, the state ॐ loses itself in the third or *susupti* state ॐ, that is, the individual self having shaken off the consciousness of the grosser material body becomes absorbed in the universal mind, the *Jiva*, or the *karana shashira*. In this state the *Jogi* comprehends in him the *Brahma*, and in the full glare of *gnan* all those three states are lost in the infinitude of attributeless *Chaitanya*. Then he forgets his *self* and his visions, the universe and its notions, and becomes unbroken bliss itself. This gradual evanescence of the grosser states of consciousness into the more subtle is known as *laya*.

Chapter III. *Jivunmukti*.—There is no gulf between the *Jiva* and *Brahma*. The consciousness of *Brahma* is expressed as *sat*, existent without destruction, *chit* absolute knowledge, and *ananda* or perpetual bliss. He who perceives this *Sat chit ananda* *Brahma* in every conceivable notion is called *Jivunmukta*. The *Jivunmukta* sees the cosmic consciousness as a mere reflection of that higher, absolute consciousness of *Brahma*, as men behold the reflections of the same Moon in different receptacles of

water. The differences of Name and Form do not prevent him from seeing the same *atma* reflected in all notions alike.

The human mind is the only cause of creating the conception of duality. He, whose mind is no more swayed by positive or negative conceptions, is fit to obtain *Moksha*.

Chapter IV.—After death. So long as the knowledge of *atma* or Brahma is not fully realized the individual does not forsake its separate character, and remains attached to its garb of the five elementary substances. On leaving the gross material body the soul passes in its *Sukshma sharira* with the accumulated result of virtue and vice (called Fate), with mind and the senses and organs in their subtle state. The notion of self is the chief obstacle in the path to mukti or gnan. When this limited notion of self is destroyed, it is then only that the senses of perception vanish each in its respective cause, and with self dies out fate, the accumulated effect of our past Karmas both good and bad.

*Paramatma*. The *akas* is the first element in point of evolution and it has the single attribute of sound. The Paramatma while pervading all space like *akas* is devoid even of this single attribute. This Paramatma is not beyond the perception of the individual. The odour of the flower is unseen, untouched, unheard and without taste, but it is comprehended by the sense of smell. Similarly the Paramatma is beyond the cognition of the five senses but he is reached by *gnan*. The yogi withdraws the senses from their respective objects, and this is known as *pratyahar*; and in this singleness of mind he comprehends in *dhyān* that Light of all Lights. *Pratyahar* is distraction, and *dhyān* is concentration. Both are necessary in order to purify the mind to reach that divine Sat-chit-ananda.

III. The *Mahanirvana Tantra* is a work of quite recent compilation, and this fact is admitted in its opening chapter, where it is clearly stated that the inapplicability of the former Tantras to the present degenerate times necessitates the exposition of a new and easy way. Though revered in Bengal it is not followed as a guide, nor is its name mentioned in the *Tantrasar* of Krishtananda, which is a compilation from all the Tantras that were followed in Bengal at his time. Kristananda lived about 200 years ago, and consequently the *Mahanirvana* must either have been compiled after the *Tantrasar*, or its name was not known in Bengal at that time. This second supposition is possible if we refer to the division of the Tantras into three classes to be followed in the three divisions of India. According to that classification the *Mahanirvana* is not mentioned

in the list of those sixty-four Tantras prescribed for Bengal.\* Be that as it may, the Mahanirvana is gradually becoming a great favourite even in Bengal. It is a work of considerable interest. It formulates two kinds of worship, the one as the worship of Nirguna Brahma and the other of Prakriti or Saguna Brahma, and both are maintained as the means of final emancipation from the ties of Karma. Besides this, the work touches upon all questions of Hindu society and religion. † The worship of the Nirguna Brahma has been adopted by the Brahmō Somaj of Bengal, and is also in force among the *Sanyasis* of the *Abadhuta* class. Even persons of the *Grihastha asram* are initiated into its forms after they have been purified by the ceremony of *Purna-avishēka*, the last of the sanctifying rites prescribed in the Tantras. But it is with the philosophy of the Tantras that we are immediately concerned, and we draw the attention of the reader to a portion of the fourteenth chapter where there is a little discussion about the true and the false.—(Continued.)

A. C. MITTRA, B. L.

### THE SECRET OF DEATH.

It is not known by knowledge ! man  
 Wotteth it not by wisdom ! learning vast  
 Halts short of it ! only by soul itself  
 Is soul perceived—when the Soul wills it so !  
 There shines no light save its own light to show  
 Itself unto itself ! None compasseth  
 Its joys who is not wholly ceased from sin,  
 Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred—calm,  
 Lord of himself. It is not gotten else !

EDWIN ARNOLD.

\* They are the following :—(1) Siddheswar, (2) Maha-tantra, (3) Kali-tantra, (4) Kularnav, (5) Gnanarnav, (6) Nil-tantra, (7) Fetkarini, (8) Devi-agama, (9) Uttara, (10) Srikrāma, (11) Siddhi-yamala, (12) Matsya-sukta, (13) Siddhi-Sara, (14) Siddhi-Saraswat, (15) Barahi-tantra, (16) Yogini-tantra, (17) Ganesh-bimarshini, (18) Nitya-tantra, (19) Shiva-gama, (20) Chamunda, (21) Mundamala, (22) Hamsa-maheshwar, (23) Niruttar, (24) Kula-prokashaka, (25) Devi-kalpa, (26) Gandharbaka, (27) Kriyasar, (28) Nibandha, (29) Swatantra, (30) Sanmohana, (31) Lalita, (32) Radha, (33) Malini, (34) Rudra-yamala, (35) Vrihat-Srikrāma, (36) Gaboksha, (37) Sukumudini, (38) Bishoodheswar, (39) Malini-bejoys, (40) Samayachar, (41) Bhairabi, (42) Yogini-hridoya, (43) Bhairaba, (44) Sanat-kumaraka, (45) Youi-tantra, (46) Tantrantar, (47) Naba-ratneshwar, (48) Kula-chudamoni, (49) Bhab-chudamoni, (50) Deva-prokasha, (51) Kamakhya, (52) Kam-dhenu, (53) Kumari, (54) Bhoot-damara, (55) Malini-bejoys, (56) Yamala, (57) Brahma-yamala, (58) Bishvasara, (59) Maha-tantra, (60) Mahakala, (61) Kulamrita, (62) Kuloddish, (63) Kubjika, (64) Yantra-chintamoni.—(Maha-Bishwasara-Tantra.)

† The Mahanirvan Tantra now published in Bengal contains fourteen chapters dealing with the subjects stated above. It is stated in the work that these fourteen chapters are the first half (*purbardha*) of the entire work, but the other half (*uttarardha*) is not known to us.