

“*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.*



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Keynotes.

THE introduction of Mr. Myer's book, “Phantasms of the Living,” contains the following curious passage regarding the Theosophical Society : “Acting through Mr. Hodgson whose experiences in this matter have been elsewhere detailed a Committee of the Society for Psychical Research has investigated the claim of the so-called ‘Theosophy’ of which Madame Blavatsky was the prophetess, to be an incipient world-religion, corroborated by miraculous, or at least supernatural phenomena, and has arrived at the conclusion that it is merely a *reckauffe* of ancient philosophies, decked in novel language, and supported by ingenious fraud.

The italics are ours. We can not understand what mysterious faculty enabled the learned members of the Psychical Society to go behind the curtain and declare that Theosophy is supported by ingenious fraud. As far as we know the experiences of Madame Blavatsky are not unique in their character. There are many persons in India who have had the same experiences. Should every thing be regarded as *fraud* which does not fall within the scope of the omniscient (?) exact science ? There are more things in heaven and earth than is dreamt of in your Philosophy, Horatio ? Perhaps the severe lashing which materialism has received

in the *Secret Doctrine* has much to do with the above opinion of the Committee.

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Indeed, if I may be allowed the anachronism, says Professor Monier Williams, the Hindus were Spinozites more than two thousand years before the existence of Spinoza; and Darwinians many centuries before Darwin; and evolutionists many centuries before the doctrine of evolution had been accepted by the scientists of our time, and before any word like evolution existed in any language of the world.

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Mr. Judge, the Vice-President of the Theosophical Society of the American Section, writes a very sensible article in the April Lucifer touching the idea and belief among the Brahmans in general all over India that the Theosophical Society is merely an engine for the propagation of Buddhism. Whether India is of any consequence or not in the Theosophical movement is a quite different thing. Mr. Judge has taken the true view of the question. The Hindu religion owes its name to no man, however great; it is regarded to be the *Sanatana Dharma*,—the ever-existing religion. We Hindus follow the religion of Nature. Why should our religion derive its name, from Buddha or Christ, Sankara or Byas Deva? However great these Beings may be, they are, no doubt, inferior to Nature Herself. While admitting that Buddhism is a grand religion, and a branch of the primitive Hinduism, we can not but remark that the true Hindu is apt to look with peculiar pride and emotion upon the religion which *owes its name to no man* and which looks upon Nature as the *living God*. The true Hindu is interpenetrated by Nature Herself. To preach to him *Buddhism*, or *Sankarism*, as the only true religion, is to preach dogmatism. No "ism" is eternal, but Nature *per se* (Brahma) is self-existing and timeless. We believe that every religion is true; but we can not admit that *Brahmavada*, the religion of Nature, is equal to any religion which owes its name to any man. Apart from its externals, what is *Brahmavada* but the Religion of Nature? What is Brahma of the *Vedanta*, but Absolute Nature, Nature apart from the perceiving mind? Millions of *Buddhas* and as many *Sankaras* have appeared and disappeared like bubbles on the bosom of eternal Nature. In thunder, lightening and storms, we see Her frowns, in the glorious sunrise and in the glittering dew-laden flowers, we see Her smiles; and when absorbed in *Yoga* we feel Her as the fulness of unmingled bliss.

Buddhism is not different from Hinduism. The Buddhist *Skundhas* are nothing but the *Puncha Kosas* of the Vedanta Philosophy; Nirvana,

Karma, and Re-incarnation are purely Hindu doctrines. The difference lies in the caste system. But the Hindus say that caste is a temporary institution; in the *Satya Yuga* there was no caste system, and in the end of *Kali* there will be no distinction of casts. It is a temporary phase of Nature to serve some secret purpose of Her own.

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There is a great mound in Georgia, U. S. A., covering more than two acres and running up to a height of 100 feet. In the heart of this mound has been discovered a human jawbone, large enough to easily slip over the head of a man of average size of the present day. No systematic researches into the interior of this mound have as yet been carried on, but we may hope that some of the geologists of the United States will shortly turn their attention to it.—*Lucifer*.

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In the 30th Chapter of the *Utpatti Prakarana* of *Yoga Bashista* "Attraction of Gravity" is clearly referred to. All these innumerable systems are held together in space by the law of mutual attraction, says *Bashistha*. The ancient Hindus were so familiar with this law that out of the twelve names given to the Sun on account of its different attributes one is *Aditya*, the Attractor. Sir Issac Newton was the re-discoverer of this great physical law.

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The *Bivutis* or the *Siddhis* are the supernatural powers which a *Yogi* acquires on reaching a certain stage of spiritual development. They are as follow :—(1) *Anima* by which the *Yogi* assumes the most subtle body; (2) *Laghima*, the power of assuming extreme lightness of the body; (3) *Prapti*, the power of obtaining whatever one likes; (4) *Prakamya*, is the uninterrupted fulfilment of all desires; (5) *Mahima*, is the power of assuming as large a body as he pleases; (6) *Ishitva*, is the god-like supremacy over every being; (7) *Bushitva* means absolute independence; (8) *Kumaboshitva* is the power of remaining in any state as long as he pleases.

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Melbourne is somewhat excited about a young man whose identity can not be discovered. He was brought up in the Police Court by a puzzled and well-meaning policeman on the charge of "Insulting behaviour." He had asked the constable, "Who am I?" and the constable, unable to solve the riddle conveyed the querist to the magistrate on the nearest charge the law offered. The doctors, to whom he was relegated

by the Magistrate, are convinced that the man is not shamming and are much puzzled. His mind is a blank as to his past, he appears perfectly sane, his manners and appearances are those of a gentleman. The only "clue to his identity" is a vulcanite plate fixed on the roof of his mouth, bearing the word Jones and the figure 7. It seems likely that he is one of the curious cases in which a new individual seems to take possession of a person's body and begin what is practically a new life. But it can not be a pleasant thing to be thrown loose in the universe with no clue to your identity beyond "Jones 7."—*Lucifer*.

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"Rajyoga and Samadhi," of which an advertisement was given of late will appear in this Magazine from the current issue before its appearance in a book form, under the title,—*The Vedanta System (Theory and Practice)*. The first two chapters are theoretical and the last three treat of practical Yoga.

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In the sixth issue of the Light of the East a request was made to the subscribers of this Magazine to try to push on its circulation as much as possible. In India in a *public* work of this nature we want co-operation. It is a matter of great regret that the educated Hindu community has not a single religious Hindu organ of their own. The Brahmos, the Christians, the Theosophists, the Buddhists have their special organs conducted in English, the common language of educated India. But the Hindu has none! Nor does he care to have any. Our appeal was heeded by few. We asked only one new subscriber from each member; among others, three of our subscribers, Babu Sreenatha Chatterjee of Darjeeling, Mr. R. Venkatarama Aiyer of Negapatam, and Mr. K. Narayanasamy of Kumbakonum have given us many subscribers. If our remaining subscribers co-operate with us in this unselfish work of National reform and advance this noble cause with half the zeal which characterises the above three gentlemen, the Light of the East will soon become a spiritual power in the land. We should act like one man to further a movement of this nature.

The Vedanta System.

(Theory and Practice.)

IT has been said that "Philosophy is the history of Philosophy" and though it has ever been in movement, the movement has always been circular. Metaphysics, after years of gigantic endeavour, finds itself returned to its starting-point, while positive science finds itself advancing and conquering the immense realms of Nature, each accumulation of power adding to the momentum of its progress. "Onward, and for ever onward," says Mr. Lewis, "mightier and for ever mightier, rolls this wondrous tide of discovery, and the "thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns." The same problems which agitated the minds of Plato and Aristotle, are now agitating the minds of modern philosophers. In short metaphysical speculation has always been, mystical, barren and useless.

All this is very true. As long as Philosophy is confined to speculation, it is likely to do very little good to humanity. In the West very little attempt has been made to apply the principles of speculative philosophy to the facts of every-day life, to reduce the theories into practice. The aim of science is to add to the comforts of the physical man; the aim of philosophy is to add to the comforts of the mental man. The progress of science is a long series of victories over intractable matter; philosophy lays down principles by which we can still the insatiate longings of the human heart. Science furnishes us with terrible weapons by which the thorough conquest of matter is to be effected; philosophy teaches us to place ourselves beyond the reach of the ever-changing tides of the phenomenal world.

In the East the practical aspect of Philosophy has been assiduously cultivated for centuries by the followers of *yoga* system. Practical psychology goes by the name of *Hata Yoga* and practical metaphysics by the name of *Raj Yoga*. No hard and fast line is drawn here between the physical and the spiritual man. "Nature," according to the *yogis*, "is visible Spirit, and Spirit is invisible Nature." In the West the scientists proceed from *effects* to *cause*: in the East the *yogi* tries to realize the cause in order to rule the effect. In the West phenomena are studied to realise the Noumenon; in the East the Noumenon is approached to understand the phenomena. The two paths are altogether different. Let us see which of them is likely to secure the ultimate happiness of man?

The dream of Modern Science is the future *positive happiness* of humanity amidst the rush and turmoil of ever-changing phenomena. This is an illusion. For the material itself by which the edifice of happiness is to be raised is ever-changing. Matter is in perpetual change and unless one can place himself beyond matter, beyond the flux and re-flux of phenomena, happiness will always remain the creation of the brain. The human *will* is, as long as it exists, unsatisfied, for otherwise it would exist no longer; the unsatisfied will, however, is want, need, displeasure. Science can add nothing *positive* for the happiness of mankind; it may diminish a part of the impediments and inconveniences by which man is confined and oppressed. What science can remove death? What science can relieve us from the restless torment of passion? What science can put an end to war and bloodshed? What science can give us peace and contentment of mind? What science can place us beyond the thralldom of eternal change?

"With the increased *means*," says Hartmann, "nothing more has increased than *wishes* and *needs*, and in their train *discontent*. * * * *Peoples in a state of nature* are not more wretched, but *more happy*, than civilised peoples; that the *poor*, low, and *rude* classes are happier than the *rich*, aristocratic and *cultivated*; that the *stupid* are happier than the *clever* in general, that a being is the happier the obtuser is its nervous system, because the excess of pain over pleasure is so much less, and the entanglement in the illusion so much greater. But now with the progressive development of humanity grow not only wealth and wants, but also the sensibility of the nervous system and the capacity and education of the mind, consequently also the excess of felt pain over felt pleasure and the destruction of illusion, *i. e.*, the consciousness of the paltriness of life, of the vanity of most enjoyments and endeavours and the feeling of misery; there grows accordingly *both* misery *and also* the consciousness of misery, as experience shows, and the often-asserted enhancement of the happiness of the world by the progress of the world rests on an altogether superficial appearance."

Whatever way science may lead us, it is certain that it will never lead us to positive happiness; for happiness can never exist in a scene of perpetual change; permanent happiness is a fact of the inner world and victory over matter has nothing to do with it. "I am struggling to liberate the divinity within Me," said Plotinus in his deathbed and if permanent happiness be possible to the Ego, it must be achieved by freeing ourselves from the bonds of matter. Pain begins whose duality begins; nothing but the destruction of duality can give us lasting peace.

An attempt will, therefore, be made in the following pages to give a

clear outline of the theoretical and practical aspects of the Advaita system, a system which, according to its professors, leads one beyond the duality of the perceiver and the perceived and transforms his restless mind into the fulness of eternal, unbroken bliss. Before touching the system itself, it would be better to take a bird's eye view of those European systems which are more or less akin to Sankara's Advaita Vedanta.

ADWAITABAD IN WESTERN SYSTEMS.

Thales. His motto was, "Know Thyself." The knowledge of self is the knowledge of the universe.

Diogenes. The universe is a living Being spontaneously evolving itself during its transformation from its own vitality.

Anaximander. The Infinite is the origin of all things.

Pythagoras. Pythagoras saw that there was an invariable existence lying beneath these varieties; but he wanted some more definite expression for it and he called it Number. Thus each individual thing may change its position, its mode of existence; all its peculiar attributes may be destroyed, except one; viz., its numerical attribute. It is always one thing; nothing can destroy that numerical existence. Combine the thing in every possible variety of ways, and it still remains 'One'; it can not be less than 'One,' it can not be more than 'One.' Resolve it in its minutest particles and it is still 'One.' The Infinite of Anaximander became the One of Pythagoras.

Xenophanes. Casting his eyes upwards at the immensity of heaven he declared that the One is God. Overarching him was the deep, blue infinite vault immoveable, unchangeable, embracing him and all things; that he proclaimed to be God. As Thales had gazed abroad upon the sea, and felt that he was resting on its infinite bosom, so Xenophanes gazed above him at the sky, and felt that he was encompassed by it. Moreover it was a great mystery, inviting yet defying scrutiny. The sun and moon whirled to and fro through it; the stars were 'pinnaced dim in its intense inane.' The earth was constantly aspiring to it in the shape of vapour, the souls of men perpetually aspiring to it with vague yearnings. It was the centre of all existence; it was existence itself. It was the One immoveable on whose bosom the many were moved.

Zeno. He argued that there was but One thing really existing, all the others being only modifications or appearances of that One; he did not deny that there were many appearances, he only denied that these appearances were real existences. Parmenides established the existence of the One, and Zeno proved the non-existence of the many.

Heraclitus. He was the first to proclaim the absolute vitality of

Nature, the endless change of matter, the mutability and perishability of all individual things, in contrast with the Eternal Being, the Supreme Harmony which rules over all.

Empedocles. "He is wholly and perfectly, Mind ineffable holy, with rapid and swift-glancing thought pervading the whole universe."

Plato. "The individual thing was held to be transitory and phenomenal, the abstract idea was eternal. Plato did not look on life with the temporary interest of a passing inhabitant of the world. He looked on it as an immortal soul longing to be released from its earthly prison, and striving to catch by anticipation some faint glimpses of that region of eternal truth where it would some day rest. The fleeting phenomena of this world he knew were nothing. He could not, therefore, put his trust in them; he could not believe that time was anything more than the wavering image of eternity. These transitory phenomena are not true existence. Interrogate them; classify them; discover what qualities they have in common; discover that which is invariable, necessary, amidst all that is variable, contingent; discover the One in the many, and you have penetrated the secret of existence."

Aristotle. God, as the Absolute, unmoved, eternal substance, is Thought. The universe is a Thought in the mind of God; it is God passing into activity, but not exhausted in the act. God is the ultimate substance in which the three forms of power, efficient cause, and effect are united.

Philo. God is ineffable, incomprehensible; his existence may be known; his nature can never be known. But to know that he exists is in itself the knowledge of his being one, perfect, simple, immutable and *without* attribute. God being incomprehensible, inaccessible, an intermediate existence was necessary as an interpreter between God and Man, and this intermediate existence the Mystics called the Word. The Word, according to Philo is God's Thought. This Thought is two-fold; it is the Thought as embracing all ideas, *i. e.*, Thought as Thought, and it is the Thought *realized*; Thought becomes the world.

Plotinus. Every individual thing was but a phenomenon, passing quickly away, and having no real existence; it could not therefore be the object of philosophy. Phenomena were subordinate to the One Noumenon. In other words, the sensible world was but the appearance of the ideal world, and the ideal world in its turn was but the mode of God's existence.

Proclus. Know thyself that you may know the essence from whose source you are derived. Know the divinity that is within you, that you may know the Divine One of which your soul is but a ray. Know your own mind, and you will have the key to all knowledge.

Algazzli. The highest truths were not to be reached by study, but by *transport* or *ecstasy*, by a transformation of the soul during *Ecstasy*. There is the same difference between this higher order of truth and ordinary science, as between being healthy and knowing the definition of health. To reach this state it was necessary first to purify the soul from all earthly desires and humbly direct the thoughts to our eternal home. The object is *absorption in the Deity*.

Giordano Bruno. God is the Infinite Intelligence, the Cause of causes, the principle of all life and mind; the great activity, whose action we name the universe. But God did not *create* the universe; he *informed* it with life—with being. He is universe; but only as the cause is to the effect, sustaining it, *causing* it, but not limited by it. He is absolutely simple without parts. Above and beyond the visible universe there is an Infinite Invisible,—an immovable, unalterable identity, which rules over all diversity. This Being of Beings, this unity of unities, is God.

Spinoza. The Absolute Existence, the substance—is God. From Him all individual concrete existences arise. All that exists, exists in and by God; and can only thus be conceived. Here then the mystery of the world begins to unfold itself to the patient thinker; he recognises God as the fountain of life; he sees in the universe nothing but the manifestation of God, the finite rests upon the bosom of the Infinite; the inconceivable variety resolves itself into unity. There is but one reality, and that is God.

Berkley. The essence of matter is mind. All finite minds are simply the aspects of the Divine Mind.

Kant. He reduced all the varieties of the *ego* to an unconditional unity, viz., Soul, and all the varieties of *non-ego* to an unconditional unity, viz., the world. On looking deeper, he finds that these two ideas presuppose a third—a unity still higher, the source of both the world and of the *ego*—viz., God.

Fichte. The divine life, as alone the finite mind can conceive it, is self-forming, self-representing will, clothed, to the mortal eye, with multitudinous sensuous 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. The dead heavy mass of inert matter, which did but fill up nature, has disappeared, and, in its stead, there rushes by the bright, everlasting, flood of life and power, from its infinite source. 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.

Schelling. Besides the subject (Perceiver) there must exist an object; the two are identical in a third, which is the Absolute. This Absolute is neither Ideal nor Real—neither Mind nor Nature—but both. This Absolute is God. He is the All in All; the eternal source of all existence. He realises himself under one form, as an objectivity; and under a second form as a subjectivity. He becomes conscious of himself in man: and this man, under the highest form of his existence manifests Reason, and by this Reason God knows himself. The Absolute is the indifference point of the object and subject. The object and subject have only a phenomenal reality. There is but one existence—the Absolute. The Absolute is to be grasped only by *Intellectual Intuition*.

Hegel. Subject and object are both phenomenal. The only thing really existing is the relation between them. The perceiver and the perceived are but two terms of the relation, and owe their reality to it.

The short review of some of the leading metaphysicians of the West given above will convince the reader that the Adwaita system is not the exclusive property of the Hindus. It is nevertheless true that this system found its full expression in Sankara's hands, and the addition of the doctrine of Karmic law has made it invincible. As the law of gravitation reigns supreme in the physical world, so does the Karmic law reign supreme in the moral world. Upon it Buddha has founded a system of ethics which has become the guiding principle of one-third of the human race.

Before touching the Adwaita system itself it will not be out of place to go briefly over the whole field of Indian religious thought; for this will help us to understand more thoroughly the philosophy of Sankara.

The Nyaya Vaiseshika System. The fundamental principle of this philosophy establishes the existence of an extra-cosmic deity of super-human powers. The physical universe as well as all finite beings were created by the Divine Being. Without rejecting the extra-cosmic deity of Gautama, the *Vaiseshikas* busied themselves in analysing the material universe; they found out that matter may ultimately be reduced to atoms; the infinite and eternal atoms, moved by the will of God, produced the material universe.

The Charvaka System. The *Charvakas* maintained that life, thought, and energy are mere modifications of matter. In a word they fully resemble the gross materialists of the present age.

The Sankhya System. It postulated the existence of two interdependent entities, *Prakriti* (undifferentiated cosmic matter) and *Purush* (Eternal Mind), the former being the active and the latter the passive principle of the universe. Expansion and contraction of *Prakriti* were

held to be eternal. *Purush* in this system, is compared to a 'lame' man, who can *see* but can not *walk*, and *Prakriti* to a 'blind' man who can not *see* but can *walk*. For creating the universe, the one is dependent on the other. Out of the *union* of these two principles creation arises. The God of the Nyaya System is the author of the universe; the *Purush* of Sankhya Philosophy is entirely passive. The *Prakriti* of the Sankhyas expands and contracts according to its own inherent laws. The *Sankhyas* postulated the existence of many *Purushas*.

Sunyavada. It teaches that the universe is an emanation from Space (Vacuity). "Nothing that comes out of another thing can come out of it without the previous suppression of that thing," is the main formula of this system.

The Bhagabata System. "Autaryamin Brahmana" is the chief text of this system. (Bri. Up. III, 7). Souls and matter form, as it were, the body of Brahman. Though they are to be looked upon as the effects of *Brahman*, yet they possess individual existence from all eternity; they will never be entirely resolved into *Brahman*. They, however, exist in two periodically alternating conditions. Sometimes they exist in a subtle state by which they are ordinarily known, and there is then no distinction of individual Name and Form. Matter in that state is unevolved (*Avyakta*); the individual souls are not joined to material bodies, and their intelligence is in a state of contraction, non-manifestation (*Sunkocha*). This is the *Pralya* state which recurs at the end of each *Kalpa* and Brahman is then said to be in Its causal condition. At the time of expansion the Lord together with matter in its gross state and the "expanded souls" is Brahman in the condition of an effect. The released souls are similar to those of Brahman; it participates in all the latter's glorious qualities except only Brahman's power to emit, rule and retract the entire world. The chief modern follower of this system is *Ramanujacharya*. His system is called *Bishistadwaita*.

Leaving out of account a few more unimportant Systems, the above may be regarded as covering the whole field of metaphysical speculation of Sankara's time. To understand him properly the chief doctrines expounded above should be carefully borne in mind. Sankara's philosophy has two aspects, (1) Logical (2) Mystical. The province of Reason can never transcend the world of relation. Sankara's rigorous logic shows that there is an Absolute Existence and there it stops. If you like to realize the nature of this Absolute Existence, reason can not help you much. Another faculty undeveloped at present in the mass of mankind should be brought into play by the processes of concentration. The German philosopher Schelling calls this faculty "intellectual intuition." The

Neo-platonists called it "ecstatic perception." Sankaracharya calls it "Samadhi." This treatise being more of a practical than of a theoretical character, we shall pay more attention to the practical side of Sankara's philosophy than to its theoretical side, though the latter will not remain wholly untouched.

(To be continued.)

Genius from Emerson.

NATURE seems to exist for the excellent. The world is upheld by the veracity of good men. Our theism is the purification of the human mind. Man is that noble endogenous plant, which grows, like the palm, *from within outward*. I count him a great man who inhabits a higher sphere of thought, into which other men rise with labour and difficulty. Man is endogenous, and education is his unfolding. Right ethics is central, and goes from the soul outward. Gift is contrary to the law of the universe. *Serving others is serving us*. Each man, by secret liking, is connected with some district of nature, whose agent and interpreter he is. All that is yet inanimate will one day speak and reason. Unpublished nature will have its whole secret told. It is the delight of vulgar talent to dazzle and bind the beholder: but *true genius* seeks to defend us from itself. *True genius* will not impoverish, but will liberate, and add new senses. Life is a scale of degrees. We are tendencies, or rather symptoms, and none of us are complete. We touch and go and sip the foam of many lives. Rotation is the law of nature.

That which the soul seeks, is resolution into being above form, liberation from nature. Speculation tends to a terrific unity, in which all things are absorbed; but action tends directly backwards to diversity. The first is the course or gravitation of mind; the second is the power of Nature. Nature is the manifold. The unity absorbs and melts or reduces. Nature opens and creates. These two principles interpenetrate all things, all thought: the one, the many. One is being; the other, intellect; one is necessity; the other, freedom. One is rest; the other, motion. One is power; the other, distribution: one is strength; the other, pleasure; one is consciousness; the other, definition; one, genius; the other, talent: one, earnestness; the other, knowledge: one, possession; the other, trade: one, cast; the other, culture: one, king; the other, democracy: and if we dare carry these generalisations a step higher and name the last tendency of both, we might say, that the

end of the one is escape from organization, pure science: and the end of the other is the highest instrumentality or use of means, or executive duty.

Each student adheres by temperament and by habit to the first or to the second of these gods of the mind. By religion, he tends to unity, by intellect or by the senses, he tends to the many. *A too rapid unification, and excessive appliance to parts and particulars, are the twin dangers of speculation.*

The history of nations corresponded to this partiality. The country of unity, of immoveable institutions, the seat of a philosophy delighting in abstractions, of men faithful in doctrine and in practice to the idea of a deaf, unimplorable immense fate, is Asia: and it realises this faith in the social institution of *caste*. On the other side, the genius of Europe is active and creative. It resists *caste* by *culture*. Its philosophy was a discipline; it is the land of arts, inventions, trade, freedom. If the East loved Infinity, the West delighted in boundaries. European civility is the triumph of talent, the extension of system, the sharpened understanding, adoptive skill, delight in forms, delight in manifestation, in comprehensible results.

Plato imbibed the idea of one Deity in which all things are absorbed. The unity of Asia, and the detail of Europe, the infinitude of the Asiatic soul and the defining, result-loving, machine-making, surface-seeking, operating Europe. Plato came to join and by contact to enhance the energy of each. The excellence of Europe and Asia are in Plato's brain; metaphysics and natural philosophy expressed the genius of Europe. Plato substructs the religion of Asia as the base. In short, Plato was a balanced soul, perceptive of the two elements; he was a man who could see two sides of a thing. He said: "Philosophy is an elegant thing if any one modestly meddles with it; if he is conversant with it more than is becoming, it corrupts the man."

Plato is a great average man. A great common sense is his warrant and qualification to be the world's interpreter. He has reason, of the philosophic and poetic class, but he has also the strong, solving sense to reconcile his poetry with the appearances of the world. No man ever more fully acknowledged the Ineffable. Having paid his homage, as for the human race, to the Illimitable, he then stood erect, and for the human race, he affirmed. That is, the Asia in his mind was first heartily honoured, the ocean of love and power, before form, before will, before knowledge, the Same, the Good, the One, and now refreshed and empowered by his worship, the instinct of Europe, namely culture returns. and he cries, *yet things are knowable!*

Thus full of the genius of Europe, Plato, said, *Culture*; he said *Nature*. He did not fail to add, *there is also the Divine*. There is no thought in any mind, but it quickly tends to convert itself into a power, and organises a huge instrumentality of means. Plato, lover of limits, loved the Illimitable; he saw the enlargement and nobility which came from truth itself and from good itself and attempted to do it adequate homage; homage fit for the immense soul to receive, and yet homage becoming the intellect to render.

Plato teaches that Beauty is the most lovely of all things, exciting hilarity, and shedding desire and confidence through the universe, wherever it enters, and it enters in some degree into all things. But Plato also teaches that there is another, which is as much more beautiful than Beauty as Beauty is than Chaos: namely, Wisdom, which our wonderful organ of sight cannot reach unto, but which, could it be seen, would ravish us with its perfect reality.

Plato's *Banquet* is a teaching in the same spirit that the love of the sexes is initial, and symbolizes at a distance the passion of the soul for that immense lake of beauty it exists to seek. This faith in Divinity is never out of mind. Body cannot teach wisdom; God only. He constantly affirms that virtue cannot be taught; that is not a science, but an inspiration.

Socrates and Plato are the double star which the most powerful instruments will not entirely separate. Socrates, in his traits and genius, is the best example of that synthesis which constitutes Plato's extraordinary power. The strange synthesis in the character of Socrates capped the synthesis in the mind of Plato.

Plato represents the privilege of the intellect, the power of carrying up every fact to successive platforms, and so disclosing in every fact a germ of expansion. These expansions are in the essence of thought. In ascribing to Plato the merit of announcing them, we only say that he was a more complete man who could apply to nature the whole scale of *senses*, the *understanding*, and the *reason*.

These expansions or extensions consist in continuing the *spiritual sight* where the horizon falls on our natural vision, and by this *second sight* discovering the long lines of law which shoot in every direction. Everywhere Plato stands on a path which has no end, but which runs continually round the universe. Therefore every word becomes an exponent of nature. Whatever he looks upon discloses a second sense, and ulterior senses.

Plato's moral conclusions are more striking examples. He affirms the coincidence of science and virtue; for vice can never know itself

and virtue; but virtue knows both itself and vice. The eye attested that *justice* was best, as long as it was profitable; Plato affirms that it is profitable throughout; that the profit is intrinsic; that it is better to suffer injustice than to do it; that the sinner ought to covet punishment; that *the lie was more hurtful than homicide*; and that ignorance or involuntary lie, was more calamitous than involuntary homicide; that the order or proceeding of nature was from the mind to the body, and that, though a sound body cannot restore an unsound mind, yet a good soul can by its virtue render the body the best possible.

Plato domesticates the soul in nature. Man is the microcosm. All the circles of the visible heaven represent as many circles in the rational soul. There is no lawless particle and there is nothing casual in the action of the human mind. The names of things, too, are fatal, following the *nature of things*. All the gods of Pantheon are by their names significant of a profound sense. The gods are the ideas. Pan is speech or manifestation, Saturn the contemplative, Jove the regal soul, and Mars, passion. Venus is proportion; Calliope, the soul of the world; Aglaia, intellectual illustration.

These thoughts in sparkles of light had appeared often to pious and poetic souls, but this well-bred, all-knowing Greek Geometer (Plato) comes with command, gathers them all up into rank and graduation, the Euclid of holiness, and marries the two parts of nature. Before all men, he saw the intellectual valves of the moral sentiment. He kindled a fire so truly in the centre, that we see the sphere illuminated, and can distinguish poles, equator, and lines of latitude, every arc and node. A theory so modulated, so averaged, that you would say, the winds of ages had swept through this rhythmic structure, and not that it was the brief extempore blotting of one short-lived scribe. Hence it has happened that a very well-marked class of souls, namely, those who delight in giving a spiritual that is, an ethico-intellectual expression to every truth by exhibiting an ulterior end which is yet legitimate to it, are said to Platonize.

The atmosphere of moral sentiment is a region of grandeur which reduces all material magnificence to toys, yet opens to every wretch that has reason the doors of the universe. Almost with a fierce haste it lays its empire on the man. It is the kingdom of the will, and by inspiring the will, which is the seat of personality, seems to convert the universe into a person.

"The realms of being to no other bow,
Not only all are Thine, but all art Thou."

All men are commanded by the saint. The Koran makes a distinct

class of those who are by nature good, and whose goodness has an influence on others, and pronounces this class to be the aim of creation; the other classes are admitted to the feast of being, only as following in the train of this. And the Persian poet exclaims to the soul of this kind:

“Go boldly forth, feast on being’s banquet,
Thou art the called, the rest admitted with thee.”

The privilege of this caste is an access to the secrets and structure of Nature, by *some higher method than by experience*. In common parlance, what one man is said to learn by experience, a man of extraordinary sagacity is said to divine. If one should ask the reason of this *intuition*, the solution would lead us into that property which Plato denoted as *Reminiscence* and which is implied by the Brahmins in the tenet of transmigration. But man must have the courage, nor should he faint in the midst of his researches, for inquiry and learning are all *reminiscence*. How much more, if the inquirer is a holy and godlike soul. For, by being assimilated to the original soul, by whom and after whom all things subsist, the soul of man does then easily flow into all things, and all things flow into it: they mix; and he is present and sympathetic with their structure and law.

This path is difficult, secret, and beset with terror. The ancients called it ecstasy or absence, a getting out of their bodies to think. All religious history contains traces of the trance of saints: a beatitude, but without any sign of joy, earnest, solitary, even sad. Plotinus called it, “the flight of the alone to the alone.” This beatitude comes in terror, and with shocks to the mind of the receiver. “It over-informs the tenement of clay,” and drives the man mad, or gives a certain violent bias, which taints his judgment. Somewhat morbid mingles, in spite of the unquestionable increase of mental power.

M. M. Shroff.

The description of trance given in the last para is not correct. The trance-state is one of Absolute Bliss and not of terror. Nothing but experience can give any idea of it.

Ed., Light.

AHAM BRAMHASMI.

MAN is the miniature universe and he who studies man to the very root and experiences every fact, acquires the knowledge of the whole universe and becomes All-existence, All-knowledge and All-happiness.

Let us analyze the word *Aham* or *I* and see what this simple word teaches us. Every human being of whatever caste or creed, sex or age, applies this word to himself. A word is nothing but a symbol or *Sunga* of some object. When the same word is applied to many objects, they resemble one another not only in their external aspect but their origin is also the same; as for instance—"a jar of earth." All jars whether small or great go under the same name because they have got the same substance, i. e., "earth" in them. Things made of gold are called ornaments which differ in shape and size and have accordingly got different names but they all point out to "gold" as their substance. From this it is clear that the substance though appearing in different forms and going under different names remains unaltered. Gold can never remain as such without any shape, without being round or square, straight or crooked. These are the various *Forms* of gold. These *Forms* are ever-changing; we may destroy the round form and make it straight any moment we like. Again these *Forms* are composed of attributes and the attributes also change with the form. For example, gold when melted exists as liquid, otherwise it is solid; it may also exist in the form of vapour. What is the *real* gold, then, the substance which does not change with the change of attributes and forms? As all attributes are subject to change the unchanging element in gold must be without *Forms* or attributes. The substance of gold, therefore, is formless and without attribute. The substance can not be matter because matter is simply a group of attributes; it must, therefore be spirit or consciousness. It is the spiritual light which illumines the attributes. That which shows the existence of another thing must be consciousness or *Chit* and it is already said above that the substance remains unaltered in quantity, therefore it is both *Sat* and *Chit*. It is *Ananda* or happiness absolute as experienced by *Yogis* in *Samadhi*. Whatever forms gold may assume the substance remains the same. As the lump has no existence without the substance it cannot be considered as a separate object, in the same way as an image in the mirror being wholly dependent for its existence on the object before

the mirror, cannot be treated as a separate object. The image being false has only a nominal existence, but on account of ignorance this reality is forgotten and the mere shadow of that reality appearing before the eye is considered as a real object. This example clearly shows that everything has got two aspects, one primary and the other secondary, the former being real, the latter depending upon it being unreal. But on account of *Avidya* the secondary aspect appears to be real and the primary aspect on which it depends for its existence is totally forgotten.

Let us now find out what object is signified by the word *Aham* or *I*. Is the human body signified by it? Decidedly not, since the object going under the name of *Aham* or *I* separates itself as the owner of the body. Every one says *my* body, *my* eyes, *my* mind and so on. This is a sufficient ground for supposing that, *Aham* cannot be the human body, the limbs, the senses, or the mind, but that it is something which claims mastery over all these. On account of ignorance or *Avidya*. *Aham* or *I* cannot realize this simple truth and so firmly associates with the physical body that it considers itself happy or miserable according as the physical body is in one or in the other condition.

The physical body changes from childhood to manhood and old age but the object called *Aham* or *I* remains constant because no one says 'child *I*,' 'manhood *I*,' 'old *I*' 'woman *I*.' The sense of '*I*' remains in dream but the physical body is forgotten at that time. There is another proof that the physical body is separate from the object called *I*. In sound sleep there is neither the 'sense of *I*' nor the imaginative body of the dream with its imaginative surroundings nor the physical body. There is nothing but profound peace during that interval of sound sleep and this experience is remembered as soon as 'the sense of *I*' awakes and associates with the physical body. Every one says, "this night I slept happily and did not know where I was." This expression implies the experience both of profound peace and ignorance referred to above. Nothing can be remembered unless one has previous experience of it and as these facts occurring in sound sleep are remembered afterwards, it necessarily follows that though the sense of '*I*' is totally lost in enjoying the peace of sound sleep, '*I*' exists there too. What is this *Aham* then? It is not the *Sthula Sarira* of the waking state, it is not the *Suksma Sarira* of the dreaming state nor is it *Agnana* (ignorance) called *Karana Sarira* which is felt in the state of deep sleep. Things in a dark room cannot be seen without light and as the ignorance or darkness of sound sleep is experienced by *Aham* or *I*, it cannot be anything but light or *Chaitanya*. It remains shining in the waking, dreaming,

and sound-sleeping states and also in the fourth state called *Samadhi* experienced only by the *Yogis*. Therefore it must be both *Sat* and *Chit*, and everything up to *Karana Sarira*, *Asat* and *Achit*, i. e., non-existing and non-shining. When *Aham* is buried in sound sleep it becomes shrouded with *Agnana* or ignorance. This ignorance or darkness is done away with in *Samadhi* and then nothing but *Satchidananda* exists. This *Satchidananda* is the object signified by the word *Aham* or *I* and it is the *Paramatman* or *Parabrahm*, the very root meaning of which signifies the all-pervading and ever-shining light. This is the real self of man as shown above in the case of gold and everything besides is unreal having only transitory and nominal existence. The world comes out of this reality, it exist in it, and it finally merges in it. What is *Asat* or non-existing cannot be *Sat* or existing except by illusion or *Maya*, as a rope is mistaken for a serpent, a burning sandy plane for water, or a tree for a person in the dark. The rope, the sandy plane, and the tree remain as they are and yet appear as serpent, water and man respectively on account of ignorance. Can these altered forms be said to be truly existing or are they separate objects? Never. A thing may have different names and different forms as ornaments of gold or jars of earth but the substance remains unaltered as has been clearly shown above. The substance of gold has been proved to be *Satchidananda* and the analysis of *Aham* or *I* brings us to the same conclusion. By similar reasoning we can arrive at the conclusion that the whole universe is *Satchidananda Parabrahm* and all things are named after this real substance but on account of ignorance strengthened by thousands of births and rebirths the real substance is lost sight of and man is satisfied with its shadow and calls it a real thing. It is not possible to get rid of this ever-existing ignorance or *Avidya* except by *Bhukti* or *Gnana*. These cannot be secured unless one is a staunch believer in the truth of things and performs the *Karmas* prescribed in the *Shastras* without any selfish motive, i. e., only for God's sake. When the purification of the mind is complete, *Paramatman* manifests itself in the form of a *Guru* or spiritual guide who gives him *Paroksha Gnana* (ultimate knowledge) and the *way* which enables him to realize it in his own self. A student must undergo a severe course of training to acquire complete mastery over his body, senses, and mind. He should lead a holy and moral life and bring the instructions received by him into practice at every moment of his life and correct himself accordingly. This is the only way to recognise one's own self or *Atma*. When self is recognised he becomes *Brahm*.

Dehavimāṇa bīdhusta bīgnatā paramatmaṇi

Jatra jatra mano jati tatra tatra samadhyah.

When the *Aham* of the body is totally destroyed the *Paramatman* is known and then the mind experiences the happiness of *Samadhi* every moment, wherever it goes.

RAGHUNATH GANESH NAVLEKAR, B. A.

A Study of Bhagabat Gita.

CHAPTERS X, XI, & XII.

THREE words, viz., *Jivatma*, *Pratyagnatma*, and *Paramatma* are of frequent occurrence in Hindu religious books. *Jivatma* is the sense of ego connected with the ordinary states of our consciousness; *Pratyagatma* is the universal Ego called *Narayana* in the Shastras; it is the Ego of our Ego, the *Atma* of our *Atma*. *Paramatma* is the *Atma* of even the universal Ego or *Narayana* which word radically means the support of the *Jivas*. *Narayana* is our *Atma*, but *Paramatma* is the *Atma* of *Narayana*. *Mahavishnu* is another name for *Narayana*. Sree Krishna is regarded by the Hindus as the *avatar* of *Mahavishnu*. Sankaracharya, in his introduction to the Gita says, "The First Being Vishnu called *Narayana* in order to maintain the preservation of the universe and to protect the Brahmins and Brahminism on earth took birth as Krishna in the womb of *Devaki* as the son of *Vashudeva*." Chapters X and XI are concerned with the description of the various aspects of *Narayana* as manifested in Nature. For our remarks on the opening eleven slokas of this chapter we refer our readers to the criticism of Chapter IX. In Sloka. 15 it is said that it is impossible for the phenomenal *Jiva* to know *Narayana*, the Support of all. *He Himself knows Himself*. How is it possible for *Arjuna* to know *Krishna*? In reply to this query it is said that the manifestations (*Bibhutis*) of *Narayana* should be made the object of concentration. The Tenth Chapter is, therefore, called *Bibhuti Yoga*. Contemplation of the grand manifestations of *Narayana* in Nature will purify the mind and will eventually bring it to the state of absorption. From Slokas 21 to 42, Krishna identifies himself with the grandest and noblest objects of Nature and Mind and concludes at last by saying that the whole *Jugat* (universe) is his manifestation.

Chapter XI, treats of the *Vishwarupa* or the *Birat Murti* of *Narayana*. This Chapter is the practical side of Chapter X. *Arjuna* is here made to realise the *unity in the diversity of nature*. Sloka 15 of

this Chapter contains the phrase "*Brahmanamishum Kamalasanusthum.*" In the Hindu Shastras Brahma is said to have taken his birth from the *Navi Padma* of *Narayana*. What is meant by this *Padma* (Lotus) and why is Brahma described as seated in a lotus. The above description is highly suggestive and poetic. In the 10th *Adhyaya* of the third *Skandha* of *Bhagabat* the *Padma* (Lotus) is identified with the universe. The word *Narayana* represents two things; it is derived from two different roots; by the one it means the support of the universe and by the other it means the "waters of the deep." Taking the latter meaning we see that the universe is represented as a Lotus in *Narayana*, the Eternal Ocean. As the universal mind (Brahma) permeates the universe he is represented as seated on the Lotus. Just as the individual mind of a *Jiva* is seated in the lotus of the heart, so the universal mind (Brahma) is represented as seated in the lotus of the universe. The basis of this universal Lotus is *Narayana* the great spiritual Ocean. At the dawn of evolution a lotus appears in the infinite Ocean of Chit (consciousness) and in *Mahapralya* this lotus disappears. It is the Lotus of the Universe. *Narayana* viewed as the creator is called *Brahma*, as the preserver he is called *Vishnu*, and as the destroyer he is called *Shiva*. In the microcosm, our mind is *Brahma*, our intellect *Vishnu*, and our ego (the sense of "I") *Shiva*. The remaining Slokas of this chapter do not call for notice.

The twenty Slokas of Chapter XII. treat of *Bhukti Yoga*. This *yoga* is common to all religions of the world. *Bhukti Yoga* involves three principles, (1) avoidance of vice, (2) cultivation of virtue, (3) absolute reliance on God for deliverance. The above *Yoga* is suited to the mass of mankind; by Sankara, it is regarded as the absolutely necessary step for attaining *Gnan* (the knowledge of self). The grand principle which underlies Hindu religious philosophy is as follows: "*At first practise Bhukti Yoga (otherwise called Karma Yoga); from it will follow the purification of the mind; and lastly from the purification of mind, Gnan (knowledge of self) will naturally follow.*" *Bhukti Yoga* appeals to the emotional side of man, *Gnan Yoga* to his intellectual side. As the religious sentiment is essentially of an emotional character, *Bhukti Yoga* will always be found suited to the mass of mankind. *Gnan Yoga* appeals to the intellectual side of man, it is, therefore, suited to the philosophic few. This fact is clearly stated in the opening Stanzas of the twelfth chapter. Even the *Gnan Yogi* shall have to reach the *Nirakara* (limitless) Brahmi through Him. (Sloka 4). Moreover *Gnan yoga* is extremely difficult for the embodied *Jivas* (Sloka 4).

From Sloka 9 to 11 different kinds of *Bhukti yoga* are mentioned

according to the capacity of different individuals. In the first place, concentration on the physical body of Narayana as *avatar* is recommended in Sloka 9. It is said that practice will make concentration perfect; failing to practise concentration the *Mumukshu*, is recommended to practise all religious observances such as fasts &c., and to bring about the state of "God-intoxication" by singing and dancing. Such is the interpretation of Sankara of the phrase *Mutkarmaparumo* of Sloka 10. Failing to practise the second method the tyro is recommended to *work without looking to the fruit thereof*. These are the three different kinds of *Bhukti yoga* given in Chapter XII. The remaining Slokas of this Chapter are taken up with the description of those moral qualities which should decorate the true devotee like so many ornaments. Here ends the second group of six Chapters which contains the special teachings of Sree Krishna to his favourite disciple Arjuna. The last group from the 13th to the 18th is important on account of its practical nature. In the concluding group morality predominates over metaphysics.

Annie Besant's Oration on Death.

THE masterly exposition of theosophic thought, by Annie Besant, on the ever mysterious theme of "Death and After," was interspersed with oratorical gems that defy transcription, since it is only the speaker's voice and tangible grace of presence that completely illustrates her power and meaning. But between the frequent recurrence of the rich positive climax the following substance of her clear analytical thought was gleaned:—

Death is at once the most certain and least realized of all things. Every one knows intellectually that he must die; nature all around him exclaims it, but he does not let it affect his conduct or occupy his thought. The whole of life is spent as though this fact were a dream. He veils it away from his sight because it does not please his sense. He only takes it per force on the seventh day as an inevitable concomitant of his religion and lives six days in the week as though the seventh had no vital importance whatever. He attends to it out of duty and not because of real interest or as entering into the basic elements of his existence. The idea of death is repugnant and therefore incomprehensible. And this is no marvel since this life is the only life known practically to the majority. Everything else seems vague and doubtful and unreal. Hence he

keeps it out of his mind as much as possible, shrinking from the super-sensible and unknown and therefore terrible. In order that I may be clearly understood in the use of terms too frequently defined but vaguely, I must state the vital difference between Theosophy and religion, for there is a difference. Theosophy holds that all that is worth knowing, can be known and must become a matter of knowledge, while religion is satisfied to take things as a matter faith. Ordinarily Theosophy and Occultism also make a difference. To the occultist the invisible is real; he has experimented with and knows from actual contact the powers and faculties of a region in the universe that to the ordinary man are totally unknown. Theosophy believes him because it follows him mentally with a rational analysis but has not the time to explore the domain partially for itself. Let us take a simple illustration in the discovery of America by Columbus, who, 400 years ago, set out on his voyage towards unknown lands; he came and saw this continent, made maps of it and returned to Spain from whence he started. When he arrived in his native land, you may classify his people into three sets analogous to those of my argument. First, the people before the voyage had been made, who believed his allegations to be a myth, the crazed glimmerings of an unsound mind, and to them the idea of another continent was but the wildest of dreams, an utter impossibility. The second constituting of that body of persons who stayed at home in Europe and to whom Columbus showed the maps he had made of the new country, and who therefore learned something about the discovery by what was related directly by the observers; and the third class, the observers themselves who possessed their knowledge from personal investigation, having secured it for themselves. Now, what I shall say to you tonight has been secured in just the same way. I lay before you the maps, part of whose contents I have obtained myself from personal observations made in this land beyond our immediate physical vision, and part of which is revealed by others who have made that voyage and returned.

Understand then that it is entirely possible for a living being to leave the material body which encases him and thus for a time released make observations of the beyond, return to the body and impress his observations on his physical brain to become part of his memory. For ethereal matter forms part of the nerve cells of the body and when this grosser vehicle is tired or weary or worried, or anything has diminished its vitality, it is in a state to be impressed and to become conscious of the finer vibrations. It is when in this state that man comes in contact with other ethereal bodies, and some degree of such astral perception is within all men's experience. Perhaps the most frequent is the momentary

appearance of the ethereal body projected by the thought of one dying to some one that is dear. This is what the Scotch call *wraith*.

If it were not for the cowardice of men and women who think themselves brave, our knowledge on these matters would be centuries in advance. But as soon as one dares enunciate an unfamiliar law of nature he is ridiculed and denounced. Take Galvani, for example, who discovered the electrical action in the legs of dead frogs. He made a grand sacrifice of himself to the ignorant world, and so with many others who have never been afraid of what nature said.

It is only when strange laws have been undeniably proven over and over again that the timid public comes forward and exclaims: "why of course its true, there has been lots of evidence a long time."

Now those who have gleaned positive knowledge as to higher laws of life claim that man himself is a spiritual intelligence dwelling in the body for experience.

There are three garments which this soul wears during its earth life, and death is merely the shaking off of these coverings. First is the material body, which we all know and have constantly before us. Second is the astral body, the ethereal double of the material body. It is a part of the surrounding ether and it is related to him just as the ether which surrounds the universe is related to it. It is the reservoir of electricity and magnetism and of vital force. The astral can be seen by you with your eyes and is perceptible to your sense of touch. You can see it and you may feel it. It has a fleshy touch. But what if you could not see it, nor feel it? Would this be proof that it did not exist? There are persons whose eyes are so constructed that they can perceive the violent rays of the solar spectrum, but if such light were turned into this room it is probable that every one of us here would be overcome by darkness. Huxley, the great biologist, realizes that there may be beings around us that we cannot know. Prof. Crooks, one of the most eminent men of science of Europe, admits that there are vibrations of light in the universe not apparent to us sentient beings. Such creatures as are susceptible to these rays, he states, exist practically in another world than ourselves. To one born deaf and blind there is no point of contact with our world, and to him there is no such world recognized. This is practically the case with the majority whose senses are not developed for astral perception.

The astral is the ethereal body, and it belongs to the ethereal sphere; when it moves out of its physical frame it is still connected with it by a thread; the physical body is perfectly comatose, it lies stiffly in a state of coma, the pulse pulseness, the breath so far gone that it will

not dull a mirror held over the mouth, the heart's beating just perceptible to those delicate instruments invented for that purpose.

The fact of the projection of this astral body, like the fact of the hypnotic state, being possible of production, has now passed beyond dispute. It is established just as is any other fact in nature.

Professor Crookes, whose word on a question of chemistry or kindred science is accepted without question by his fellow scientists, recently made this experiment, and he states the fact, writing it over his own name. There were three persons in his library—himself, his secretary and a medium. He locked the door and put the key in his pocket. The medium reposed on a sofa, the astral was projected, and the doctor saw it on the opposite side of the room, perceiving the medium on the sofa at the same time. Now, Professor Crookes is either not sane in stating that, or he is deliberately deceiving the public. If you will accept a man's statement upon a question appertaining to radiant matter of chemistry, why will you not accept it upon a question of another sort when the statement is made with equal positiveness?

There are those who by reason of their own ignorance, feel they have a right to deny the possession of knowledge to others. The only right a person without knowledge has, is to suspend his judgment; he has no right to deny the knowledge I claim to possess until he has himself investigated.

The astral body is also projected through trance—whenever trance occurs it is projected. This sometimes occurs also in dreams. Dr. Roche hypnotized a man and performed what he called "externalizing sensation." He drove the sensibility of the subject to a point some distance from the body, then inflicted a wound upon that point; instantly the wound appeared upon the dormant body of the subject. This was regarded as very marvelous; it was certainly very dangerous; but it was simply the projection of the astral body to that point and the wounding of it, which would, of necessity, reappear on the body.

The astral is short-lived upon physical death. Upon the occurrence of death it slips out of the body, spans its cord and hovers about the body until the body decays with it. A lady friend of mine in London possesses this ethereal sight when in a state of mental worry or annoyance. She is a materialist. A lady friend of hers died and she saw the body for weeks after; perceived it undergoing its process of decay. It was a most horrible experience and exceedingly unique, and she was unable to account for it or to understand what it was. A knowledge of the astral would have explained it all.

Each molecule of the brain is surrounded by waves of ether, and as

each molecule is in a motion produced by thought, the waves of ether surrounding it must be affected by that motion and in turn affect others, and other waves of ether in an ever-widening circle. The Theosophist believes that through the continued action of these waves of ether thought transference is effected. And he believes, also, that out of that ether which he scientists show as existing in and permeating matter and the body, giving birth to the magnetic forces, is formed the astral body which envelops the soul and forms a bridge between it and the material frame.

The third garment of the soul is the passional and emotinal nature of man, formed of all the necessities and instincts, impulses and desires and appetites of the material body.

The casting off of the physical is but the first stage of death—that physical body which brings us into nearer kinship than we imagine, with those who surround us. For the constant change of the molecules of the body make of it a very fluctuating instrument with a steady influx and outflux of substance so that within the short period of seven years not the minutest particle remains the same. The constant outward streaming of the molecules of my body upon which I have put the impress of the kind of life I live, and the constant streaming into mine of the molecules of your body, impressed with your mode of life, produce an inevitable physical brotherhood of all men and women.

Now, when the soul has cast off these physical and astral bodies and stands clothed only in the body of desires, its length of life in that state depends on the kind of life in has lived in the body. Starve the animal emotions and passions of the body and the sooner will the soul disentangle itself from that which holds it down and pass on into the life of repose and assimilation, of all the experiences through which it has passed while on earth, thus preparing itself for another incarnate life. In its higher realm the soul digests and assimilates the immortal knowledge it has gained while on earth, and when it is born again possesses what it has acquired in the shape of character. This explains the difference between your Shakespeare and your savage, your Newton and your Newgate culprit. It is unreasonable to suppose that their difference are the production of accident or are drawn from parents. What a soul gains while on earth it retains, and it accrues to its benefit when it takes upon itself another earthly body.

When a man can feel that he possesses an immortal soul, that it is a thing which by his making grander and grander, it shall be the better in a future earth-life, then men will understand themselves, and will realize what it will mean for us to aid the soul in gaining its own kingdom. Life

will become to us sublime, part of an immortal destiny in which this earth-life is merely one lesson in learning how to live, and death the doorway to another existence which in its turn is but another lesson; and we will understand that man is a being whom death can not touch, the royalty of whose spiritual nature will grow more and more brilliant as life succeeds life, until he will become in form as in reality the essence of divine life and the object of the universe will have been secured.

The New Californian.



Spencer's View of Caste System.

SPENCER sees an everlasting rhythm of evolution and dissolution, expansion and contraction, not only in each organism, vegetable or animal, in the aggregate of organisms, thought and geologic time, in the mind, in society, in all products of social activity, but also in the innumerable solar systems comprising the whole of the universe. "Evolution" and "dissolution" as used above are equivalent to the *Muhama-nuntwara* and *Mahapralya* of Hindu Philosophy. By evolution, the homogeneous or the uniform becomes the heterogeneous or differentiated. This process of differentiation, in course of time, tends to sharpen and make more definite the existing differences whether in a single organism, or in the solar system, or in society. We can not refrain from quoting his own words below:—"The successive phases through which societies pass, very obviously display the progress from indeterminate arrangement to determinate arrangement. A wandering tribe of savages, being fixed neither in its locality nor in its internal distribution, is far less definite in the relative positions of its part than a nation. In such a tribe the social relations are similarly confused and unsettled. Political authority is neither well-established nor precise. Distinctions of rank are neither clearly marked nor impassable. And save in the different occupations of men and women, there are no complete industrial divisions. Any one of these primitive societies, however, that evolves, becomes step by step more specific. Increasing in size, consequently ceasing to be so nomadic, and restricted in its range by neighbouring societies, it acquires, after prolonged border warfare, a settled territorial boundary. The distinction between the royal race and the people, eventually amounts in the popular apprehension to a difference of nature. The warrior class attains a perfect separation from classes devoted to the cultivation of soil, or other occupations regarded as servile. And there arises a

priesthood that is defined in its rank, its functions, its privileges. This sharpness of definition, growing both greater and more variously exemplified as societies *advance to maturity*, is extremest in those that have reached their *full development* or are *declining*. Of ancient Egypt we read that its social divisions were precise and its customs rigid. Recent investigations make it more than ever clear, that among the Assyrians and surrounding peoples, not only were the laws unalterable, but even the *minor habits*, down to those of domestic routine, possessed a sacredness which insured their permanence. In India, at the present day, the unchangeable *distinctions of caste*, not less than the constancy in modes of dress, industrial processes, and religious observances, show us how fixed are the arrangements where the *antiquity is great*. Nor does China, with its long-settled political organization, its elaborate and precise conventions and its unprogressive literature, fail to exemplify the same truth."

From the above it will be evident that caste system is a *passing phase* of the law of evolution. It is a short-sighted presumption to say that Brahmins were the originators of this system; this is the natural remark of half educated people unacquainted with the philosophy of history. The Shastras plainly say that this system will gradually disappear with the advance of the *Kali* age. The *Tantric* view is very lenient as compared with the view presented by *Manu*, whose code was compiled for a different order of things altogether.

Now in the present *Kaliyuga* we see Hindu Society in a state of disbandment. The four castes are running pell-mell towards one goal—lucre; and have left their natural avocations. Time has made them do so. Now the strict injunctions to follow one's own *Barnasram Dharma*, as of yore, will not stand. The Brahman has become degenerated and in many instances we see a *Sudra* beating him on his own ground. The *Tantras*, the authorized Shasters for the *Kaliyuga*, acknowledge this, but it by no means follows that there will remain no more distinction of castes in the opening of the *Kaliyuga*. The high authority of *Mahanirvan Tantra* in specifying the duties and pursuits of Humanity in *Kaliyuga* orders the following arrangement:—

There will be five castes with the advancement of *Kaliyuga*, the *Brahman*, *Khettria*, *Vaisha*, *Sudra* and *Shamanya* (belonging to neither of the four, a common or a foreign extract). There will no longer remain the five *asrams* as in the previous Yugas, but they will be replaced by the two *Garhastha* and *Vaikhuk*. As the key to the Vedas will be lost and the majority of Brahman's degenerated, Vedic principles will be obsolete. The *Tantric* mode will come in vogue. The

Sudra and even the Shamanya will in common with the Brahman be free to perform all religious rites. In religious matters, the principles of *Agama* do away with caste system, but in social observances possible adherence to caste rules is enjoined. There is a general laxity in the direction of the duties of each class, which is strangely in accord with the needs of the times. The Brahman may in case of incapacity earn his livelihood by the means which a *Khettria* or *Vaisha* should adopt; and so on with the other castes. This is perfectly in harmony with the changed circumstances of the present times. But the *Tantra* nowhere sanctions the violation of caste-rules; on the contrary it states in unmistakeably clear language that the different castes should try their utmost to live within their respective bounds. Only in religious affairs they are placed on an equal basis with the Brahmans.

Thus we see what is most demanded has been conceded to. No ground for just grievance has been left. But it is unwise to vanish caste system away in the manner attempted by modern reformers. Let it disappear naturally. It is extremely injurious to try to make things even when there is real natural difference. We will conclude this by quoting the following lines from Herbert Spencer for the clear vision of those short-sighted reformers who are so desirous of struggling against Nature.

"You need but look at the changes going on around, or observe social organisation in its leading peculiarities to see that these are neither supernatural nor are determined by the wills of individual men as by implication historians commonly teach; but are consequent on general causes. The one case of the division of labour suffices to show this."

And again, "The failure of Cromwell, permanently to establish a new social condition, and the rapid revival of suppressed institutions and practices after his death, show how powerless is a monarch to change the type of the society which he governs. He may retard, he may disturb or he may aid the natural process of organization: but the general course of this process is beyond his control." Spencer's Essays Vol. I. p. 387-88.

A. H. B.

Sree Sankaracharya.

AS there are certain epochs in the world's history that stand out distinct and prominent, signalling great events which form landmarks in the chronicle of the world, where we turn over a new chapter in the history of the eternal progress of mankind; so do we find at intervals the appearance of men on the stage of the world with whom these events are connected, who by the native strength and energy of their genius

and the more than human force and influence of their divine character mould and guide for the regeneration and well-being of mankind,—forces which but for their interference would have carried havoc to the very heart of every human institution ravaging and destroying every vestige of all that was good, noble, and beautiful in it ; such personages in the world's great battle-field, are invested with nothing short of divinity in rare cases, are considered by the Greek, Hindu and other ancient mythologies as Gods, demi-gods and incarnations. Church and religious institutions dominate them as saints, apostles and prophets, history records their names as heroes, and chivalry clothes them with knightly grandeur. Such are these men, “the salts of the earth”—who by their human lives help towards the fulfilment of the end of divine providence in guiding the destinies of the nations on earth.

As the great Buddha came into the world to reclaim the Arya Society from the ruin and degradation consequent on the tyranny of misdirected Brahmanism on the eve of the decline of the Vaidic religion and to restore it to its pristine glory ; as the divine Christ took his birth in order to protect the fallen Jews and neighbouring nations from the dreadful vices, rancorous ill-feeling and bitter malice among the Pharisees and the Seducers, and to give a religion of peace, love and good-will to mankind ; as the chivalrous champion of truth, Martin Luther, was born at a time when the whole of Europe was trembling and smarting under the tyranny of the Pope,—revelling in the pride of riches and power—in order to free it from the yoke of religious slavery, as four hundred years ago, the advent of Sree Chaitanya, the incarnation of Love and Faith was necessary to rescue down-fallen Bengal from the hands of the terrible, iron-hearted *Tantriks* of the time, so when on the decline of Buddhism Indian Society reached its lowest state of degradation and disorder by indulging in the ruinous doctrines of *Sunnavaḍa* and *Vignanaḍa*, the great Sankara came to restore the balance between *Gnan* and *Karma*. We will try to present to the reader a succinct history of the life of such an acute philosopher and reformer of superhuman force of character.

In all probability he was born at the end of the 6th century or the beginning of the 7th century of Saka era. His life is described in Sankara Joy, Sankara Digbijoy, Sankara Bijoybilash, Kerol Utpatti and many other books. Like all divine men the birth of Sankara is surrounded with miraculous stories. There lived in the little village of Chidambar in the province of Kerole a holy Brahmin of the name of Biswajit (alias Sivaguru) and his virtuous consort Bisista Devi, the daughter of Maghamandhu. It is told that this pious pair, though, for years

worshipping Maheswar, were denied the pleasure of seeing the face of a son. The childless Biswajit began to dislike the world and leaving his wife went to the forest to spend the remaining days of his life in meditation. His pious consort, on the other hand, dedicating her life and soul to the *Chidamvereswar*, devoted herself to his worship. Being pleased with the uncommon faith and devotion of the lady, the deity one day in the presence of all the worshippers present in the Mandir, entered her womb as a lustrous blaze of light.

The people of Chidambar hearing of the conception of the pious lady excommunicated her as unchaste. Besistha Devi had all along considered herself as pure in soul and body. Yet unable to bear the shame, dishonour, and persecution which followed this abnormal event, she conceived the idea of putting an end to all her troubles by doing away with her life any how. Just about this time one night the lady's father had a dream in which he was accosted thus, "Bhagavan Pinakpani (Siva) is living in the womb of thy daughter as Sankara. Be thou on thy guard that her life be preserved." On the morning he with a cheerful heart divulged the dream to all and this saved his guiltless daughter from shame and death. Another story runs to the effect that Sankar's father never renounced the *Grihastasram*. The pair being childless even in their old age, forsook food, sleep and pleasure and taking only sweet ambrosia of the feet of the God of Chidambar in order to keep their body and soul together devoted themselves to the severest austerities in worshipping the Siva Linga.

Their frame had been reduced to skeleton, their eyes sank in their sockets and yet their austerities continued; once as Sivaguru was lying senseless, very weak and prostrated by hunger and thirst, Mahadeva approached him in the form of a Brahmin and accosted him thus: "Pleased with your worship I have come here. Tell me what your desire is. I will fulfil it." On this the Brahmin prayed for a son who would be famous, possess many qualities and be the ornament of his house. Mahadeva disappeared saying, "Let that be." Sivaguru told everything to his consort and returned home with her. In proper time Besista Devi conceived and ten months after Bhagavan Sankara came into the world, lustrous like the full moon,—the idol of his parent's heart with hands and feet bedecked with the auspicious signs of *Shankha* and *Chakra*, his head adorned with the emblem of a *trisul*. Even in his infancy was visible every vestige of those transcendental powers which adorned his future life. History presents no brighter record of such great intellect and mighty influence as Sankara's. What he once heard, he never forgot in his life! The formidable array of Shastras that his grand intellect

devoured within the 8th year of his boyhood might dismay any ordinary heart but any one who has read, in Mill's Autobiography the intellectual facts which he achieved in his boyhood or those done by Mr. Gladstone of England, will surely consider these possible in a higher degree in the case of one who was undoubtedly a far greater intellect than the two.

In his eighth year he was invested with the "sacred thread," after which he engaged himself in the study of the holy Vedas. The boy Sankara could comprehend, with the help of his extraordinary intellectual powers, all the higher truths of the Vedas. In a short time he mastered the Shastras completely and acquired uncommon knowledge in the Vedas and Vedanta, to the great wonder and satisfaction of his tutor and fellow-students. He had to meet many untoward circumstances after the death of his father which occurred in his 12th year, yet his love for the Shastras, instead of diminishing glowed brighter in his heart day by day. His disciple Anandagiri says, "Our Acharjya is like unto the divine *Kalpa* tree flourishing on earth, the giver of everything to the *Devas* and *Naras*. A *Brāhma* in the Vedas, a *Gargya* as regards the *Sarungas*, in determining the acutest significance of the Vedas he is as the god priest *Bṛhaspati*, in the *Memansa* (solution) of the Vedic *Karmakanda*, a *Jaimini*, and verily a *Vyasa* in the *Gyanakanda*. From his childhood Sankara had a settled conviction that the only path to attain *Moksha* is the *Sanyasa Dharma*. Perceiving that the object of the boy is to relinquish the world and to be an ascetic, the mother tried her utmost to get him married but to no avail. Sankara on the other hand essayed hard to be allowed to forsake his mother, but how could a helpless mother remove with her own hands from her bosom the idol of her heart, the only stay in her old age. Sankara could not succeed in his desire. At last an unusual event brought about the fulfilment of his cherished desire. One day, he and his mother went to a relative's house. They easily walked across a shallow river in their way. But on their return home they found the river swollen with the rains. They waited for a short time and when the water subsided, they descended down the bed. But lo! the river again swelled and when they reached the middle of the river the water closed in upon them and they were in the water up to their very neck. The current of the stream gradually increased in strength when neither any advance forward nor retreat backwards was possible. Sankara, by a happy hit of his intelligence, taking the advantage of the circumstance told his mother, "We two are going to die a watery death, if you permit me to become an ascetic, I may with the blessings of God try to save ourselves." The poor mother consented and Sankara swam across the river with his mother. Surely events like these are brought about by the divine hand of God, to fulfil the benignant end of his providence. The great Sankara walked round his mother according to Hindu rites and taking the dust of her feet on his head bowed down with reverential feeling, and started from home to fulfil his divine mission on earth.

(To be continued.)

B. K. BOSE, M. A.