

THE PARABUDDHA BHARATA OR AWAKENED INDIA

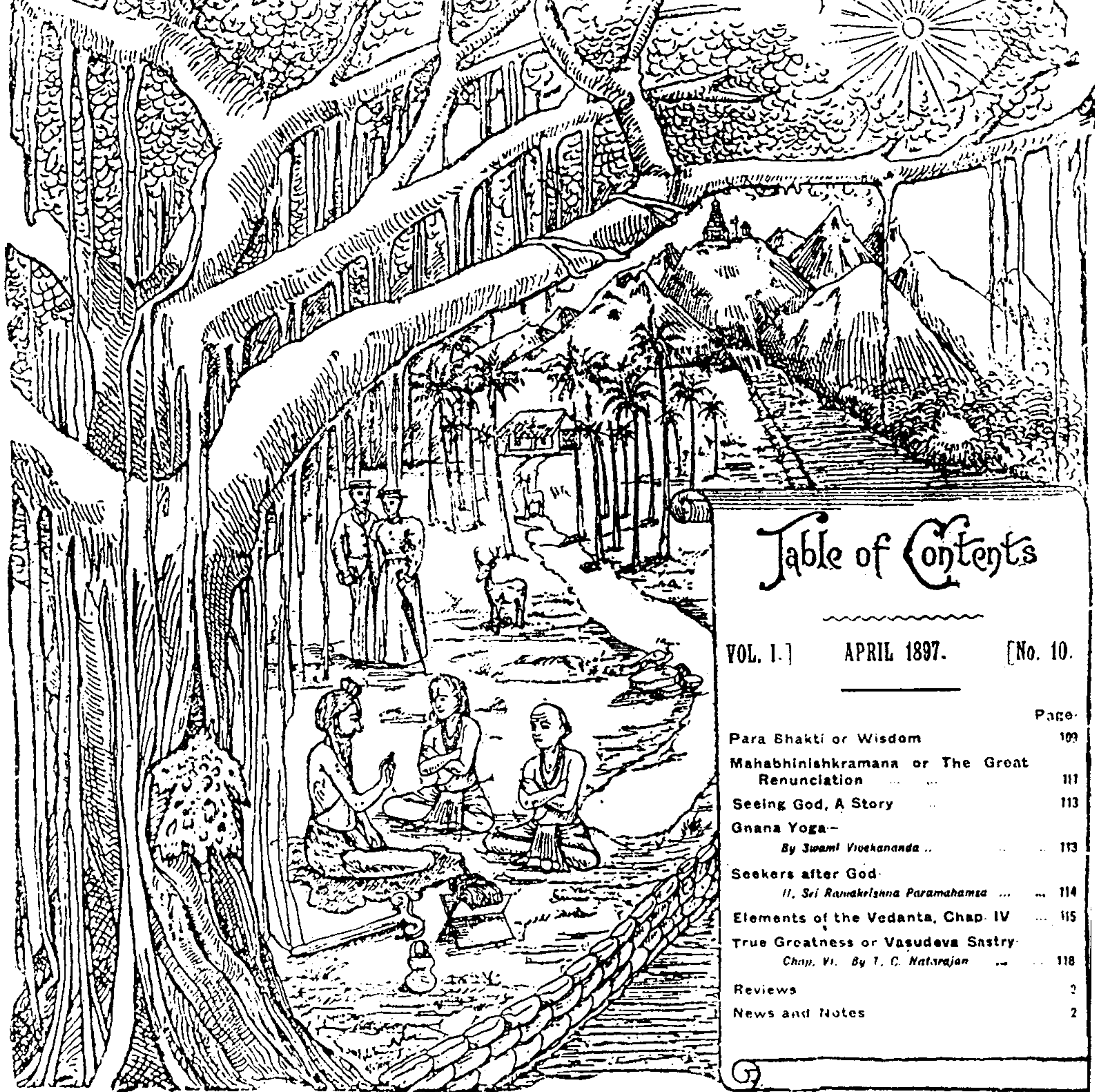


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Reviews.

The Vedic Philosophy or an exposition of the sacred and mysterious monosyllable *Aum*, with the Mandukya Upanishad (Text), English translation, commentary and introduction : by Harnarayana (Tatwa Vivechaka Press, Bombay—Price R. 1-8-.)—The book begins with a valuable introduction in which the Vedānta Philosophy is examined in the combined light of the Upanishads and Herbert Spencer. The plan of the whole book is sketched out and some of the fundamental positions of the Vedānta very satisfactorily dealt with. We would invite the reader's attention to the elaborate 'Comparison,' as the writer puts it, of Mr. Spencer's views with Vedānta philosophy. "The difficulty under which Messrs. Mansel and Spencer appear to have laboured is," the author rightly observes, "that they apparently tried to know Self like other objects" and the well-known passage from the Kena Upanishad, with the excellent commentary of Śaṅkara upon the epigrammatic verse II, 1, is very aptly quoted, and also the famous quotation from the Brīhadāranyaka Upanishad, in which sage Yāgnavalkya beautifully observes 'How can one know the knower?' There are in the book here and there some apparently fanciful derivations and hasty conclusions, and there is a general lack of evolution and proper subordination of parts to the whole. These, however, are minor defects and in no way lessen the value to the real student of the work, which we have no doubt in pronouncing to be a very honest and satisfactory one, especially in these days of hasty and irresponsible "book-building." The Mandukya Upanishad is very closely translated and the notes are very useful. The book is on the whole a very valuable one and deserves to be in the hands of all students of the Vedānta. It throws a considerable light on a number of points, and contains many precious extracts from the Upanishads, simply and accurately rendered. The general philosophy of *Aum* has been beautifully and succinctly explained, and its orthography minutely examined. The writer appears to be a respectable Upanishadic scholar and to have had *kramavichāraṇa*, that is, regular enquiry in the proper orthodox fashion, and deserves to be congratulated on the production of a really useful book though it must be remarked that the subject has not been exhausted in the volume before us, as indeed it could not be, and that some very important truths about the Great Pranava have not been dwelt upon.

The New Spiritualism by Richard Harte :—An address delivered before the London Spiritualist Alliance (Reprinted from 'Light'). A thoughtful and suggestive essay. The student of the Vedānta finds in it a closer approach to his philosophy than was made by the older and narrower spiritualism. Particularly, the distinction repeatedly emphasised between theological God and Deity and the readiness to give allegories and analogies their due, are very satisfying. There are here and there some very important truths put in a very simple and pointed fashion, for instance, "it is not at all necessary," the lecturer says, "that a thing should be what we call 'real' in order to deeply affect us, satisfy us and determine our action. It would puzzle us, I think, to say whether music should be classed with the real or with the ideal." In another place he remarks "Just in proportion as men cease to believe they begin to think." The New Spiritualism corresponds to some extent to the school of qualified Non-dualism of the Vedāntic philosophy, for Mr. Harte says, that the true man is in fact the hidden "I am I" in each of us, the real owner of body, mind, conscience, consciousness and everything else we call "ours", and which we infer to be a part of the Universal Noumenon, we call Deity. We wish god-speed to the movement which so closely approaches Indian thought.

The philosophical poem of the saint Thayumanavar; translated with annotations, etc, by R. Shanmuga Moodaliar. Pleader, Salem (Price as. 2):—We are glad to welcome this translation of the first few stanzas of the great Tamil sage. The language of Thayumanavar has an inimitable grace and a mysterious something in it, which refuse to be transferred to any translation, however careful. It is our opinion that none less than an Edwin Arnold, with greater capacity than even he had for entering into Indian thought, can do anything like justice to the task of

translating the poems of the sage. The present attempt, however, is good so far as it goes and deserves every encouragement. The translation reads well and is nowhere too strict to the letter. The noble object of familiarising the Tamil Upanishads to the English educated world has our fullest sympathy, and we hope that the translator will soon finish the work so well begun.

The Tamil Journal of Education. No. 4 and 5, contains much useful information. Besides a few action-songs, there are some lessons in grammar, the life of Froebel and a short fable for children's page. We are glad to find that the journal is thriving.

News and Notes.

The Photo-type of Swami Vivekananda :—Herewith, we gladly send the Photo-type of Swāmi Vivekānanda. It is the best likeness we have been able to send to our subscribers. It is from a half-tone block prepared for us by Messrs. S. K. Lawton and Co. of Jaffna, Ceylon, from a photograph specially taken here by Mr. T. G. Appavu Mudaliar, No. 31, Veeraraghava Mudali Street, Triplicane, Madras. We are sure many would be glad to have the likeness of the Swāmi in his simple Indian Sanyāsi dress and position. We are sorry to announce that many of our subscribers have not as yet sent us the small amount of two annas, we asked of them, to meet the extra cost in printing these phototypes on separate sheets. Nevertheless, we have sent a copy of the above phototype to each of our subscribers, in the fullest hope that such of our subscribers as have not already remitted the amount, will not fail to remit the same at their earliest convenience. We can never bring ourselves to believe that any of the subscribers of the 'Awakened India' will fail to send this small amount of two annas for both the phototypes. We tender our thanks to those of our subscribers who have already remitted the amount so promptly; we regret that we cannot find space to publish their names.

Swami Vivekananda :—We are glad to learn that the Swāmi has, by a fortnight's stay at Darjeeling, improved a little in his health. He paid a flying visit to Calcutta on the 21st ultimo, to meet the Rajah of Khetri, Rajaputana, one of his staunchest and most faithful disciples, who had gone all the way from Rajaputana specially to see the Swāmi. He will go back to Darjeeling, to take rest for some months more, before going to Almora.

Swami Ramakrishnananda and Sadananda :—have come to Madras, to work out Swāmi Vivekānanda's plans and they will shortly open Gīta and Vedānta Classes.

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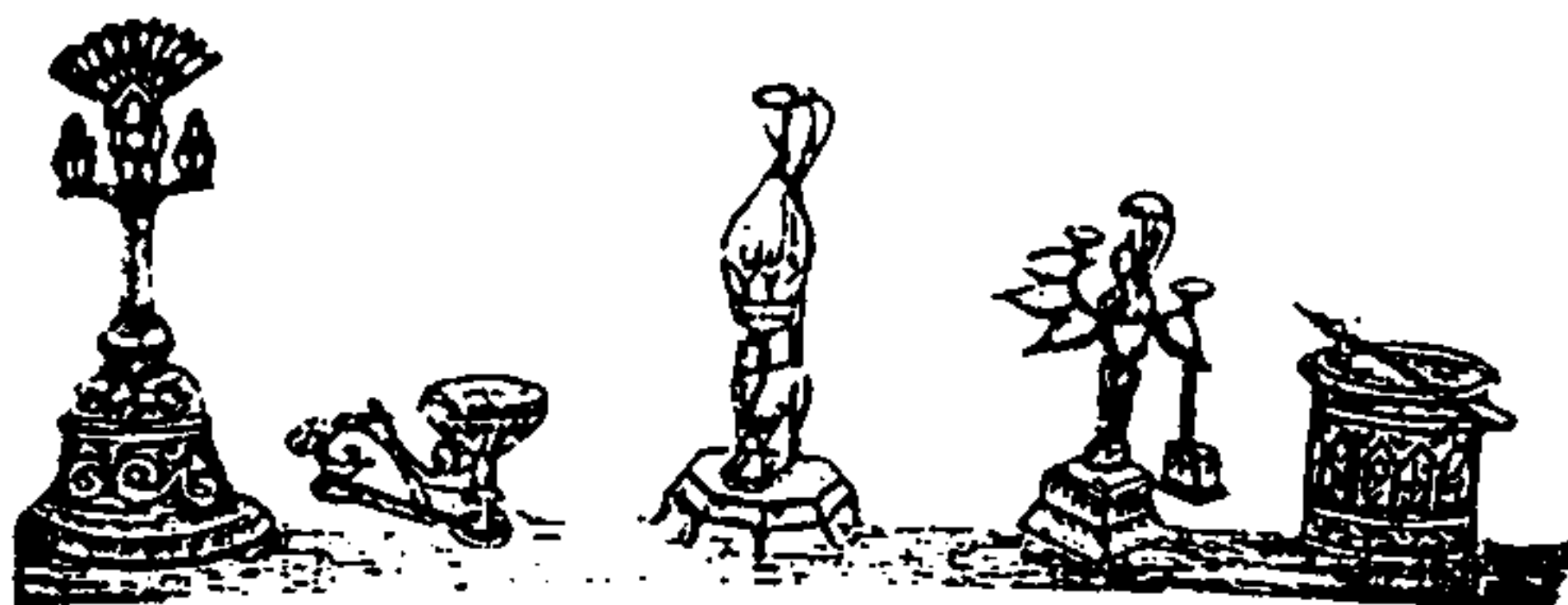
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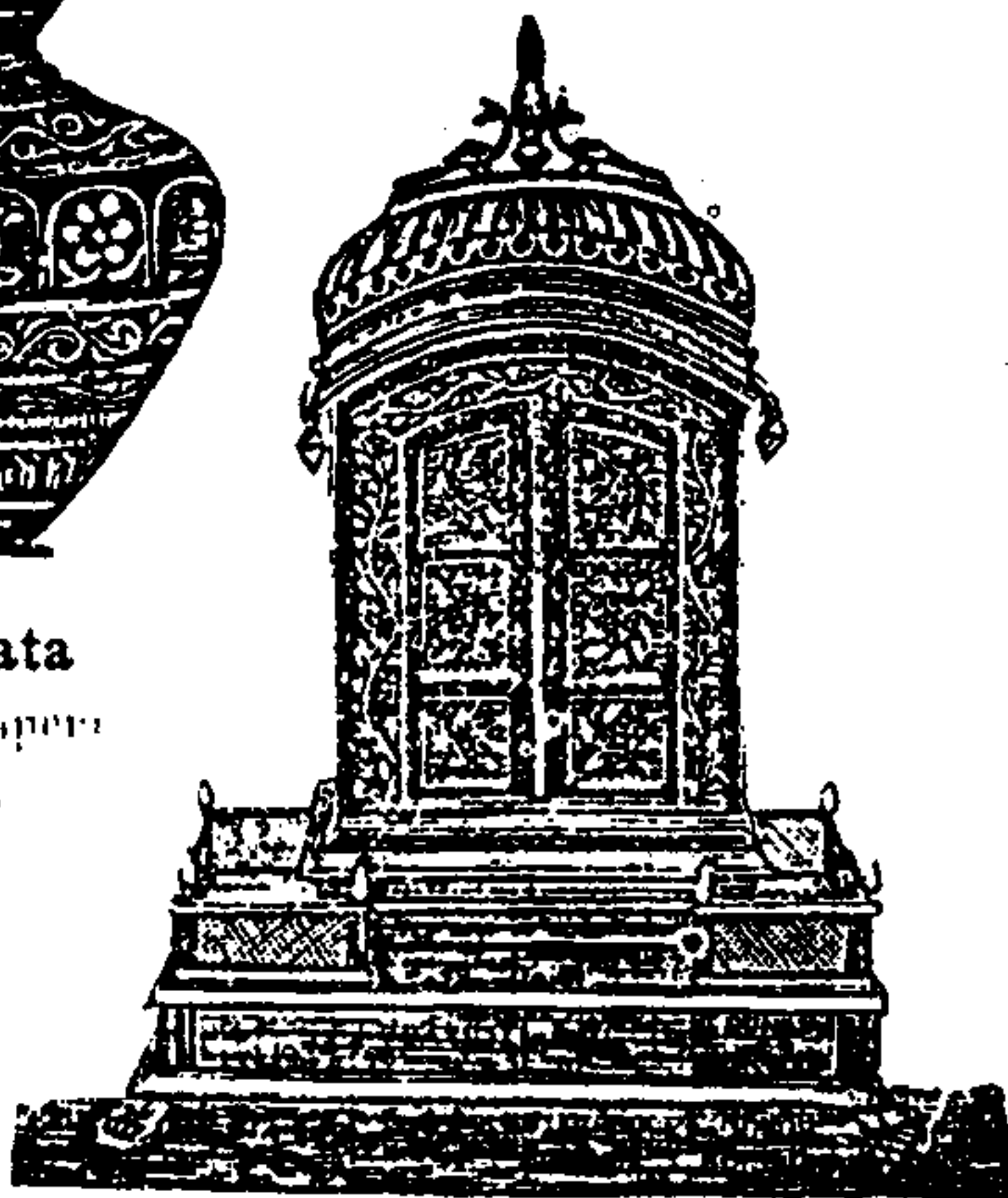
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THE Prabuddha Bhârata OR AWAKENED INDIA.

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(Para Bhakti or Wisdom.

(We have seen what *Apara-bhakti* or *Saguna worship* is. It is but a step and a very necessary one towards the highest form of worship,—absorption into the deity—in which alone can the mind find its final resting place. “God,” says the Yoga Vâsishta, “is neither Vishnu alone, nor Siva alone, nor any embodied being, for all bodies are merely compounds of the five elements; nor is God the mind; but He is the Gnâna, the Self, beginningless and endless. Can He be the little things, body, mind and the like? As Brahmagnâna is illimitable, actionless and without either beginning or end, such *gnâna* alone is true and fit to be attained. But in the case of the ignorant devoid of wisdom, worship of forms alone is ordained to be the best. Just as wayfarers when they are unable to travel a long distance are told that their destination is but a call distant in order not to let their spirits droop, so persons devoid of wisdom are told to worship diverse forms at first though the wise say that they will not reach the Self merely through the worship of these various forms (*Saguna worship*).”

“Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which storms,
Soaring and perilous, the mountain’s breast;
The weak must wind from slower ledge to ledge,
With many a place of rest.”

This will explain how Kabîrdâs one of the greatest of modern saints though by birth a Muhammadan and a worshipper of the abstract formless Alla. was initiated into the details of *Saguna worship* by God Himself as the story goes. Of course when one stops with *Vâchâ-kainkaryâ*, i.e., merely talking about religion, it matters not whether God is *Saguna*, with form or *Nirguna*, without form but, when he enters into practical realisation, it is very essential that the conception one has, should not be too far above his mental aptitude and capacity.)

Though we have to begin with this *Saguna worship*, we should not end there, nay, cannot end there; for some day or other it will not fail to strike us that the visible object or mental conception which we worship as God cannot be the eternal and changeless reality behind the Universe, and that the understanding within us, which conceives of the deity must be greater than the conception itself. The real God must, we shall sooner or later discover, be really inconceivable by our minds. The insufficiency of *Saguna worship* will thus become apparent, and the worshipper will gradually proceed to understand and realise the Inconceivable beyond. In addition to this insufficiency, there is what may be regarded a danger in *Saguna worship* which, however harmless in the earlier stages, will unless guarded against, prove a great barrier in the way of Self-realisation. The danger to which we refer is the tendency which there is in that worship to externalise the mind and fire the emotional side of man. “Religion in Christian countries at least”, says a great writer “has been made far too much a thing of sentiment. It has its use no doubt in prompting the initial effort, but when the path is chosen, it would seem that single-heartedness of aim and firm determination were the dominant qualities required.”

The ecstatic dance of bhaktas, their alternate weepings and rejoicings, their spasmodic trances and visions are all essentially emotional in their nature, and as action and reaction are equal and opposite in the psychic as much as in the physical plane, this excess of emotion is necessarily followed by a corresponding dejection and weariness and often seriously impairs both the mind and the body. “To us”, says the writer above referred to “whose aim is passionless tranquillity which no emotion can shake, must not the control of the feeling of pleasure be as important as that of pain? The bhakta often loses the control of his mind and suffers himself to be passively dragged along as best as it

chooses and the result naturally is feverish excitement or irksome dejection." Even so cautious and temperate a devotee as Thomas à Kempis, was a victim to such shifting states of mind and the note of melancholy resignation is more prominent in his 'Imitation' than that of uniform, sustained, cheerful and healthy fervour which is the characteristic of the Upanishads. "It is a good council" he says "that when thou hast conceived the spirit of fervour thou shouldst meditate how it will be with thee when that light shall leave thee"; and again "My son! thou must not depend too much on this affection which may be quickly changed into the contrary." This 'conceiving the spirit of fervour' is avowedly a matter of chance. How different is this confession from the following passage from the Upanishads! "In my illumined heart the Sun of Wisdom doth ever shine: He never riseth nor doth He set ever." (Maitreya Upa. II). Unlike the bhakta, the gnâni is free from excitement and dejection and as has been very wisely observed, "his attitude towards humanity will also find a parallel in his attitude towards divinity; for, the passionate adoration will have been left behind and will have given place to the carelessness of the divine serenity." "Let the wise" says the Upanishad "sink his senses in the mind, sink his mind in reason, sink the reason in the great soul and that in the Brahman." (Kath. Upa, I, iii, 13).

In spite of the weakness to which we have referred, Aparabhakti is an excellent preparation for the attainment of gnâna. It really corresponds so far as its results are concerned, to what is called *Sâdhana-Chatushtaya*, the four great qualities for Vedantic discipleship, for it brings about an intense desire for emancipation, *Mumukshutvam*, humility, patience and like virtues, a disregard as strong as genuine for earthly and heavenly rewards and *viveka*, i.e., discrimination of the real from the non-real, of the essential from the non-essential. The lower form of bhakti then is an excellent discipline and entitles one to the favour of the Guru. And when the real Guru, the adorable one, as the Upanishads style him, is sought and found, the fever of the heart ceases, the bhakta's abnormal excitement having fulfilled its mission, gets gradually sobered down and the highest instruction which the teacher gives to the disciple is, "As fire gets gradually extinguished when the fuel is exhausted, so the chitta or mind gets tranquilised by its out-goings being checked. . . . In the calm and tranquil mind one finds inexhaustible bliss." (Maitreya Upa. II). Here, at this stage, begins Parâ or Supreme bhakti. The Saguna God gives way before the Sâdhana or the secret method for attaining to the Nirguna into which the disciple is initiated by the teacher and the love and devotion which were hitherto employed in the worship of the former are now transferred to the finding out, and the meditation of, what is called *Anirvachaniya jyotis*, the Indescribable

Light of the Self within. Here is Parâ-Bhakti. "The contemplation of one's own real Self is bhakti" says Sankara. In the same way, Sândilya says "Love is the unbroken feeling of the Universal Self in one's own Self. Here will be seen the full force of the following *sûtras* of Nârada. "Love is immortal, attaining which man comes perfect, becomes immortal, becomes satisfied, and obtaining which he desires nothing, grieves not, hates not, does not delight in sensuous objects, makes no effort for selfish ends (how could he?), knowing which he becomes intoxicated with joy, becomes transfixed and rejoices in the Self."

This bhakti is deservedly termed *parâ* or supreme, because it is not merely emotional and spasmodic and it does not depend on any external, fleeting and mutable objects. Even the highest Saguna bhakta is one man when he is in the temple, and another when he is outside. These bhaktas depend by the very nature of their bhakti on external environments, external purity and external rituals and they generally attach importance to time and place. The parâ-bhakta, on the other hand, requires none of these external helps. The God whom he worships is within himself, unchangeable, eternal and blissful. *Dêho devâlayah proktassajivah kevalas Sîvaha...* The body is called the temple and the Jîva in it is verily Sîva (the Brahman), (Maitreya Upa. Ch. IV. also Skandopanishad) and the method taught by the teacher for reaching that God is in the disciple's own mind. To the parâ-bhakta what is there external to God by which to worship Him? Says Thâyumânavar. "I cannot worship Thee O God! in any embodied form, for I see Thyself in the very flowers (required for worship) and seeing Thee there how could I pluck the dew-filled gems: nor can I raise my hands for worshipping Thee. I feel ashamed to do so as Thou (the worshipful one) art within me all the while" In the same way the Upanishad says 'In the light-filled ethereal cavity of the heart, the Sun of the Âtman does always shine. He neither rises nor sets and thus (there being neither morning nor evening) how could we make our morning and evening prayers (*Sandhya*)?'

In Aparâ bhakti or Saguna worship the Deity is invoked (from the heart as the idea is; *âvâhana*,) to a particular seat (*Âsana*), His feet are then washed and the water is drunk. He is then bathed, dressed and after that, He is decorated with sacred thread, and sandal, and worshipped with flowers, rice and *dîpa* (incense), *dîpa* (light), then some offering is made to Him, after that the worshipper goes round the Deity, falls at His feet and utters prayers. Lastly the Deity is taken up from the seat, restored in idea to the heart of the worshipper. This may appear to foreigners as somewhat strange but it embodies and concretely represents a very grand and beautiful truth—that God lives really in the heart and worshipping Him as external to us, be it as here in the shape of an inspiring image, or as the Father in Heaven, or in any

other dualistic way, is really the objectification through our senses of the inconceivable Inner Self. In parābhakti there is no such objectification and so says Śankara "How could He be invoked from one place to another who is everywhere? how give a seat to Him who is Himself the seat of all?...how hath He who is eternally pure?...how go round Him who is infinite?...how bow to Him who alone really is—the one without a second?...how take Him back (into the heart) who is already inside, outside and everywhere? Pure pūja, the supreme worship therefore is the feeling at all times and in all places of the oneness with Him and the realisation of the truth 'I am He, I am not the body nor the senses nor the mind nor the intellect nor the will nor *Ahankāra* (the false individuality), nor am I the earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, nor ether, nor smell, nor taste, nor sight, nor touch, nor sound. I am He, the eternal witness, the only one, the true, the Blissful Brahman'." In the same way the Yoga Vāsishtha says "The annihilation of all *Bhāvanas* or mental conceptions constitutes the pure worship (pūja). The avoidance of the identification of I with the body which is concretised Karma, is the supreme Arādhana. Sincere worshippers of the Self should ever regard all forms and places as no other than Brahman and worship them as such. Enjoying with a sweet mind and a non-dual conception, whatever objects one comes by and not longing for things inaccessible is *gnāna-archana*, i.e., the sprinkling of flowers in the worship of the *Ātman*". In a beautiful passage, peculiarly sweet, we are told, to those engaged in active realisation, the *Mandala Brāhmanopanishad* says 'The cessation from all action is the true *Āvāhana* (the real invocation to God), true-*gnāna* or wisdom is the seat of the God of Self, a pure and blissful mind is the water by which that Deity's feet (the *Turiyapāda*) are washed, complete mental tranquillity is the water-offering, the uninterrupted feeling within the mind of light and bliss welling up as from a fountain of nectar is the bathing (*snāna*) of the Deity. Seeing the *Ātman* alone in all that one sees, and the knower knowing himself, form respectively sandal and sacred rice (*Ākshata*) in the worship. Serene contentment forms the flower, the fire in the *Chidākāś* is the *Dīpa*. The sun in that *Chidākāś* is the *Dīpa* and union with the nectar-filled, moonlike light is the food-offering. Steadiness is the real *Pradakshana* (going round the Deity). The feeling of I am the *Ātman* is the *Namaskāra*, the bowing at the feet of the Deity; and the highest praise is silence (*Mouna*).

Parābhakti is called *Sākshāt Sādhana* or the direct and immediate means for attaining salvation while aparābhakti is called *parampara sādhana* or the indirect means. The one is like rice ready for eating, while the other is like paddy. Religion in its highest or rather its truest sense, namely realisation, begins with parā-

bhakti. Then, when the adorable guru initiates the eager disciple into the great mystery, *Rāja Guhya* as the *Gita* puts it, and utters the memorial words 'That art Thou,' then and not before does religion begin. Aparābhakti, religious studies and all other things only clear the ground and prepare it for receiving the seed of wisdom. 'Tatwamasi'—'That art Thou' is the beginning of religion, and *Ahambrahmāsmi* 'I am Brahma' is the end; and parābhakti is the means whereby religion so well begun reaches its completion, whereby the mask of imperfect and struggling humanity is finally thrown off and the soul within stands revealed and realised in its fullest glory as the One blissful Existence, the great *Satchitānanda*, whose ineffable glory, the mighty Self-intoxicated sages of old, vainly struggle to render in the language of words.

Parābhakti is the highest flower of the human mind, the most beautiful that it can put forth, and its fruit is nothing less than waking once for all from the nightmare of life and realising that blissful existence, after realising which, as the *Gita* says, nothing further will have to be known. Truth, absolute Truth is the reward; and the highest Truth is the highest freedom, the highest bliss and the highest life. He who by divine grace conceives the celestial fire and lives the life of the parābhakta even in the dream state as the *śrutis* say, be his caste, country and religion what they may, commands the worship of the gods.

Mahabhinishkramana

OR

THE GREAT RENUNCIATION.

On a certain fair summer morning 2500 years ago, the city of *Kapilavastu* wore a beautiful festive appearance. The pavements in the streets were cleanly swept, the housewives scattered fresh red powder on their thresholds, strung new wreath and trimmed the *Tulsi* bush before their doors. The tops of houses were thick-set with flags, the towers were newly gilded, the paintings on the walls were brightened with fresh colour. From all the four directions huge crowds were steadily pouring into the city; and in a short time there was a vast ocean of men arranged by the royal military of the capital in theatric pomp on either side of the main streets. The trees, towers, roofs of the houses, and walls, all bristled with men in gay holiday attire. The whole crowd wore a look of eager expectation and wild joy. They had not to wait long when the cries of "Jai! Jai! for our noble prince" arose near the palace gate and thence came forth a painted car drawn by two snowwhite big humped steeds. The prince, for it was he that sat in the car, returned with both his hands the joyous greetings of his subjects and rejoicing, said to his charioteer,

"Fair is the world, it likes me well! And light and kind these men that are not kings, and sweet my lot here who toil and tend. Drive through the gates and let me see more of this gracious world. Ah! how good it is to reign in realms like these, how simple pleasure is if these be pleased because I come abroad!"

It was evidently the first time that the prince had a look at his capital; and he seemed to know very little about the men that lived there and indeed about mankind in general. There was an expression of remarkable sweetness and joy in his face, softened however by a shade of melancholy. His big black eyes streamed with tears of joy, but it seemed they would more willingly weep for love. There was a royal dignity in his general appearance but with it a humility which was nothing less than divine. Such sweetness and love marked his mien, that, though a prince he would, it seemed, have leapt down from his car to raise a peasant's child that might happen to fall down. Not far had the procession advanced, when midway in the road crept forth an old man bent with age and disease, with shrivelled skin, hollow cheeks and sunken eyes, holding in one skinny hand a worn staff, to support his quivering limbs and crying "Alms, alms good people, alms, alms or I die." But such was the order of the king that no ugly sights should appear in the streets that day. The blind, the old, the maimed and the sickly were strictly prohibited from coming out before night-fall, lest the prince might happen to see them; but even kings cannot shut out fate and it had been so decreed that Prince Siddharta, for that was his name, should catch sight of this old miserable man whom the people around were thrusting away from the road. But Siddharta cried "For God's sake don't push him so" and asked his charioteer, "What is this thing? it seems a man, yet surely only seems, being so bowed, so miserable, so horrible, so sad. Are men born sometimes thus? Does he find no food that his bones jet forth so horribly? What means he by crying 'to-morrow or next day I die'?" Channa, the charioteer replied, "Why should your highness heed? he is a miserable old man on the verge of death." The prince, however, was not satisfied with this reply. "Do this miserable old age and disease and death" asked he "come to all alike, to me, to my dear Yasodhara, to Gautami, Gunga and others?"

Certainly a very strange question to ask, this! Few in the world have ever put it; even children, somehow, reconcile themselves to sights of poverty, sickness, and death. But such was the training that Siddharta had been given by his over-careful father, that not even a mention of sickness, sorrow, pain, age or death had ever been made to him till then. On account of a prophecy which had predicted that if he would rule he would be the greatest of kings or failing that, he would wander homeless and alone for the good of the world, he was shut out from the world and was confined in a prison house of pleasure where 'Love was jailor and delight its bars.' Vishraman, the place where his father anxious to see him a king of kings made him live was—a magnificent group of beautiful summer and winter palaces, filled with all the wealth and luxuries of Cashmere and teeming with gentle music of beautiful women, each one of whom was "glad to gladden, pleased at pleasure, proud to obey," so that, life in that fairy prison glided beguiled like a smooth stream banked by perpetual flowers.

Here in this love's pleasure house,
 Whether it was night or day none knew,
 For always streamed that softened light, more bright
 Than sunrise, but as tender as the eve's;
 And always breathed sweet airs, more joy-giving
 Than morning's, but as cool as midnight's breath;
 And night and day lutes sighed, and night and day
 Delicious foods were spread, and dewy-fruit,
 Sherbets new chilled with snows of Himalay,
 And sweetmeats made of subtle daintiness,
 With sweet tree-milk in its own ivory cup.

And night and day served there a chosen band
 Of match girls, cup-bearers, and cymballers.
 Delicate, dark-browed ministers of love;
 Who fanned the sleeping eyes of the happy Prince.
 And when he waked, led back his thoughts to bliss
 With music whispering through the blooms, and charm
 Of amorous songs and dreamy dances, linked
 By chime of ankle-bells and wave of arms
 And silver vina-strings; while essences
 Of musk and champak, and the blue haze spread
 From burning spices, soothed his soul again
 To drowse by sweet Yasodhara;

But even Yasodhara's love and beauty, matchless as they were and combined with such luxuries as would shame Dêva-loka itself, were not enough to turn the prince's mind from the melancholy in which it was wont to fall. Granite walls however high are not high enough to shut out fate. The musing habits of the prince only increased in the pleasure house, and the very contrivances which were meant to cheat him of his seriousness, proved their vanity, and every day the prince grew more and more curious to know if life was only a dull round of pleasure and if all the world outside the fort walls were worried with a similarly wearisome monotony. Often in his face there was an *enigma* which even Yasodhara 'the queen of the enchanting court' could not kiss away, a curiosity to know the outer world which all the singings and dancings inside could not restrain. Often would he sit alone listening, as it were, to the "voices of the wandering wind, which moaned for rest, and rest could never find" and by a quick intuition would he think within himself that mortal life might be like the wind "a moan, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife". The problem of life—the old questions of whence, why and whither—sought him out even in those Elysian retreats and haunted him like a demon both day and night, till at last he could no longer resist the desire to see the world outside the high walls of his home.

The king, his father afraid that the unwelcome alternative of the prophecy might come to pass, strictly forbade all noisome sights in the streets where the prince was to drive. The sight of the old man crying "Alms! Alms or I die" made an epoch in the Prince's life, and as soon as he learnt that the lot of man was not to live in alabaster halls, in eternal youth, and love, to the sound of well tuned vinas and the dance of fairy-like women, that even he and his dear Yasodhara would have in their turn to bend down with age and disease, he ordered his charioteer to turn back and drive home. A deeper melancholy now settled on his face and the store of love for humanity which was already great in his heart now increased with increased knowledge. He felt an intuitive kinship with all the surrounding world and yearned to know more of their joys and griefs that he might, if possible, find a cure for the ills of life. Accordingly a second request went forth from him to the king, to let him view the city as it was and it had to be granted.

In merchant dress, and accompanied by his charioteer, the noble prince crossed the palace walls and went into the work-a-day world. They had not gone far, when a mournful voice came from the road side crying "Help masters, lift me to my feet, oh help." And Siddharta rushing to his help took him in his arms and placing his head gently on his lap, asked Channa what the matter was with that man. "Touch him not my master" replied the charioteer, "he has caught the plague which might pass to you also. He cannot long live with this dreadful pest". The prince's curiosity was roused. He asked "how do such ills come?" "They come unobserved like the sly

snake, just as chance may send" was the reply. "Then all men live in fear?" "Yes, they do, and at any moment might die." Just then there passed by their side a corpse which was being carried to the burial ground followed by a band of mourners. The prince learned what that meant, and at once his eyes were filled with tears of compassion for the lot of man, for he came to grieve and cure. The sorrows of the world were at once his, and his large heart throbbed with the anguish of the world. Channa "Lead home" he said "it is enough, my eyes have seen enough."

(To be continued.)

Seeing God—A Story.

Pārvati once wanted to see her Lord. She was always with Him, yet she thought she had not fully seen Him. Learning that by penance (tapas) alone, the real Swarūpa of God could be known, she retired to a lonely place (akānta) and there made severe and steady penance. After some time Śiva her lord appeared before her, riding on a snow-white bull and followed by his usual retinue (Bhūta gana); and said, 'Uma, I admire your penance and here have I come that you might see Me.' Pārvati opened her eyes and seeing the Lord on the bull said, 'I that see you am greater than Thou that art seen. Besides, whatever is seen, is liable to change. I want the Unchangeable One.' Presently the vision disappeared.

A short time after, there appeared in her mind the form of a bright figure with a radiant face, saying, 'Behold, I am God.' Pārvati dismissed the vision with the remark, 'Thou canst not be God, for Thou being a conception, art lesser than my mind which conceives Thee.' The vision disappeared at once and was soon followed by a boundless expanse of space and light which seemed almost infinite and undefinable. 'May this be God' thought Pārvati for a while. 'But then' she added within herself, 'there are here two things, first the undefinable expanse before me, and secondly, my mind which perceives it. The former cannot therefore be the Infinite and Omnipresent God.' Several other visions and conceptions floated in her mind now and then, all of which, however, she dismissed in a similar way. At last her mind ceased to go out. It attained a state of perfect halcyon repose without a single idea rising to disturb its peace. It stood concentrated as it were, without any distraction, without any dispersion—like a vast ocean without the slightest ripple. It knew nothing but itself. The limitations of time and space were not there. It was free from pain of any kind, it was bliss itself. All that could be said of it was, that it was, that it knew itself and that it was bliss itself. It was, in other words, *Satchidananda*. Pārvati had lost all sense of her body, her mind and the world around her. After a long time (of which however she had no idea) her mind slowly began to stir; slowly she woke up to a sense of the world; but she retained a vivid recollection of the bliss she had been in. When she woke up, the first thing she said was, "I am God, I am God. Not knowing my nature, I thought I was a goddess ruling over the world. My body, mind, and the world are all but the broken reflections of the Light within me. They are like the circle of light which appears when a torch is swung round and round. Just as, when the motion of the torch ceases, the circle of light which appeared to be real disappears, so, when my mind ceases to wander, the illusion of the world vanishes. I am the Blessed One, the Eternal, the

Infinite, the Ancient whom the Vedas seek without rest, I am He whom the sages praise, whom the Gods adore. I am all forms and yet formless, the Lord of the Universe and yet one without a second. I am the only one that is, the only one that is'.

(Adapted.)

(Śha na Yoga.

(CLASS LECTURES DELIVERED IN AMERICA.)

BY

SWA'MI VIVEKA'NANDA.

No. 1. SADHANAS OR PREPARATION.

(Continued from page 92.)

(Do you remember the story of Solon and Croesus? The king said to the great sage that Asia Minor was a very happy place. And the sage asked him "Who is the happiest man? I have not seen any one very happy." "Nonsense", said Croesus. "I am the happiest man in the world". "Wait, sir, till the end of your life; don't be in a hurry", replied the sage and went away. In course of time that king was conquered by the Persians, and they ordered him to be burnt alive; the funeral pyre was prepared and when poor Croesus saw it, he cried aloud "Solon! Solon!". On being asked to whom he referred, he told his story, and the Persian Emperor was kind enough to forgive him.

Such is the life story of each one of us; such is the tremendous power of nature over us. It repeatedly kicks us away, but still we pursue it with feverish excitement. We are always hoping against hope; this hope, this chimera maddens us; we are always hoping for happiness.)

There was a great king in ancient India who was once asked four questions, of which one was "What is the most wonderful thing in the world?" "Hope" was the answer; this is the most wonderful thing. Day and night we see people around us dropping down dead, and yet we think we shall not die; we never think that we shall die, or that we shall suffer. Each one of us thinks that success will be his, hoping against hope, against all odds, against all mathematical reasoning. Nobody is ever really happy here. If a man be wealthy and have plenty to eat, his stomach is out of order, and he cannot eat. If a man's stomach be good, as hard as iron, and he have the digestive power of a cormorant, he has nothing to put into his stomach. If he be rich, he has no children. If he be hungry and poor, he has a whole regiment of children, and does not know what to do with them. Why is it so? Because happiness and misery are the obverse and reverse of the same coin; he who takes happiness must take misery also. We all have this foolish idea that we can have happiness without misery, and it has got such possession of us, that we have not control over the senses.

When I was in Boston, a young man came up to me and gave me a little piece of paper on which was written Mr. so-and-so, and Number so-and-so house, and it went on to say "All the wealth and all the happiness of the world are yours, if you only know how to get it. If you come to me I will teach you how to get it. Charge \$5." He gave me this and said, "What do you think of this?" I said "Young man, why don't you get the money to print this; you have not even enough money to get this printed."

He did not understand this; he was infatuated with the idea, that he could get the wealth and happiness of the world in masses without its pains. These are the two

extremes into which men are running; one is extreme optimism, when every thing is rosy and nice and good; the other, extreme pessimism, when every thing seems to be against them. The majority of men, have more or less undeveloped brains. One in a million, we see with a well developed brain; the rest either have peculiar idiosyncracies, or are monomaniacs, or maniacs, or something else.

Naturally we are running into extremes. When we are healthy and young we think that all the wealth of the world will be ours, and when later we get kicked about by society like foot-balls, and get older, we sit in a corner and creak, and throw a bucketful of cold water on others. Few men know that with pleasure there is pain and with pain, pleasure; and as pain is disgusting so is pleasure, as it is the twin brother of pain. It is derogatory to the glory of man that he should be going after pain and equally derogatory that he should be going after pleasure, so both should be turned aside by men whose reason is balanced, and who have not a screw loose; we should look down upon them as fit only for children. Why will not men seek liberty from being played upon? This moment we are whipped, and when we begin to weep, nature gives us a dollar; again we are whipped and when we weep, nature gives us a piece of ginger-bread and we begin to laugh again.

The sage wants liberty; he finds that sense-objects are all vain, that there is no end to pleasures and pains. How many rich people in the world want to find fresh pleasures! all pleasures are old, and they want new ones. Do you not see how many foolish things they are inventing every day, just to titillate the nerves for a moment, and that done, there will come a reaction. We are just like a stream of sheep. If the leading sheep fall into a ditch, all the rest follow and break their necks. In the same way, what one does all the others do, without thinking about what they are doing. When a man begins to see the vanity of worldly things, he will feel he ought not to be played upon or borne along this way by nature and that it is slavery he is in. If a man has a few kind words said to him, he begins to smile and stretch his mouth from ear to ear, and when he hears a few harsh words he begins to weep. He will see that he is a slave to a bit of bread, to a breath of air, a slave to dress, a slave to patriotism, to country, to name and to fame. He is thus in the midst of slavery and the real man has become buried within through this bondage. This slave is what you call man. When one realises all this slavery, then comes the desire to be free, an intense desire comes. If a piece of burning charcoal be placed on a man's head, see how he struggles to throw it down; similar will be the wise man's struggles to become free.

We have now seen what *Mumukshutvam*, or the desire to be free, is. The next discipline is also a very difficult one. *Nityanitya viveka*—discriminating between that which is true and that which is untrue, between the eternal and the transitory. God alone is eternal, everything else is transitory. Every one dies; the angels die, men die, animals die, earths die, sun, moon and stars, all die; every thing undergoes constant change. The mountains of to-day were the oceans of yesterday and will be oceans to-morrow. Every thing is in a state of flux; sun, moon, stars, the human body are all constantly changing; the whole universe is a mass of change. But there is one who never changes, and that is God; and the nearer we get to Him, the less will be the change for us; the less will nature be able to work on us; and when we reach Him, and stand with Him, we will

conquer nature, we will be masters of these phenomena of nature, and they will have no effect on us. Then will the bullock's blinds fall and he will know his own way.

You see, if we really have the above disciplines, we really do not require anything else in this world; all knowledge is within us; all perfection is there already in the soul. But this perfection has been covered up by nature; layer after layer of nature is covering this purity of the soul. What have we to do? Really we do not develop our souls at all; what can develop the eternal? We simply take the veil off; so by these disciplines, the veil will come away, and the soul will manifest itself in its pristine purity, its natural, innate freedom.

(To be continued.)

Seekers after God.

II. SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA.

(Continued from page 93.)

After passing this stage, Râmakrishna began to practise *sâdhanas* or religious exercises. He used to remark that generally the fruit follows the flower but the pumpkin is an exception. We may very well apply the saying to himself, for, he first saw God and then performed his *sâdhanas*.

Egoism or *ahankâra*, the sense of 'I', 'I', 'I', in whatever one sees, or thinks or does, he considered as a thorny jungle which stands between man and God. Kill out this self, this 'sense of separateness,' this false individuality, the true Self or *Âtman* stands at once realised—this is the eternal teaching of the Upanishads. Self-realisation or *Brahmaguâna* being the one end which Râmakrishna steadily kept before his mind, he was extremely anxious to kill out his low selfhood, his false individuality. Thorough-going selflessness was his ideal and to reach this, he cried every day to Kâlî, "Mother! destroy my *aham* (self) and take your place there. I am the meanest of the mean, the poorest of the poor. May this idea be ever present in my mind. May I constantly feel that every being on earth, be it a Brahmin or a Chandâla, or even a beast or worm or an insect is superior to me." To practically realise this he went and cleaned, it is said, the W. C. of a Pariah. People thought him mad or possessed, but he heeded not their gibes. He never left uttering "Ma", "Ma", Mother, Mother, and whatever he proposed to do, he first brought to Mother's notice. Sometimes he threw himself on the banks of the Ganges and cried aloud 'Ma', 'Ma', in such a pathetic tone that people attracted by it, guessed he was suffering from some incurable disease, or was mad, and blessed him or prayed for him. He replied to no questions, while in this state.

Râmakrishna, as we have already said, had his own way in all things. He never once cared what others thought or said about him; public opinion was to him simply, to use his own simile, 'the cawing of crows'. It is no wonder, the actions of such a man who dared to set the world at naught, were somewhat strange and looked upon by his immediate neighbours as those of an insane person. The sympathetic reader will, however, take a different view of the matter and instead of condemning the behaviour of the great *bhakta*, go deeper and wonder at the mind which was so fully and freely dedicated to

the service of the Lord and which found the meanest things in the world entitled to the highest love and worship. There were no longer in it, the distinctions of beautiful and ugly, Brahmin and Pariah, high and low, or decent and the reverse. All that was, was pure, beautiful and godly. No occupation was too mean for him and he was the servant of all God's creatures—a great soul surely, struggling, mindless of the world and its noisy madnesses, to get free, to become pure and holy. To go and wash the house of a Pariah, how few of us have done it or can do it! how few can worship God that way! Cleaning the house of a Pariah! no, it was not the house of the Pariah that was cleaned, it was the heart of the great Ramakrishna that was cleansed, purified and made holy for the permanent residence of God.

A word of warning here will not be altogether out of place. The exercise which Rāmakrishna did is nowhere proscribed as a condition for attaining salvation. There are in our country some counterfeit Mahātmās who roll on dung hills and cover their bodies with filth and go about the streets with the hope of finding dupes to admire and worship them. There is just this difference, and it is a world-wide one, between these sages and Rāmakrishna; that what they do is for show and deceit, while what he did was done utterly mindless of others and solely for his own good. The test is the heart, the motive. If filthy occupation be the standard of spiritual greatness, the city-sweeps will enter Heaven much easier than saints and martyrs. No importance really lies in external actions, though in some cases they reveal the inner man.

Ramakrishna found that a great obstacle in the way of one's spiritual progress was a desire for wealth; and in order to rid himself of it, he resorted to the following *sādhana*. He would take a gold coin in one hand and a little earth in the other and argue within himself as follows:—O, Manas! they call this, money and this, earth; you must now examine both thoroughly. This coin is a circular piece of gold, with the impression of the Queen on it. It is an inert thing, with it you can buy rice, cloth, houses, horses, elephants, &c. By means of it you can feed many persons, go to various holy places, you can even spend it on *sādhus*; but you cannot attain through it, divine bliss; money cannot destroy *ahaukāra*, it rather increases it. It cannot destroy desire and attachment, it breeds passion (*rajas*) and animality (*tamas*); and these are incompatible with Satchitānanda, Divine bliss. You ought to avoid a thing which while it fetches a little *Piṇḍa* or virtue, causes much *Piṇḍa* or sin, you should not even touch it.

The following was one of his favourite stories with regard to the uses of money. A certain wealthy man maintained an *atīti-sālā* (a place for feeding people); a butcher was taking a cow for slaughter that way and when it came near the *chattram* it lay down on earth and would not proceed. The butcher beat the cow, tried to drag it and used every means to make it go, till he got quite exhausted. He then went to the *atīti-sālā* where he was well fed. He returned with renewed vigor and by beating and dragging, he succeeded in taking the cow to the slaughter-house, where it was slaughtered. The greater portion of the sin of killing the cow went to the rich man.

After thus disussing within himself about money, he proceeded to consider the nature of the earth. This is also an inert substance. In this, corn is grown by which we live, with it we build our houses, we even make the images of our gods and goddesses with it. Whatever is

achieved by means of money is also achieved by means of earth. Both are substances of the same class, then, why should one be preferred to the other? Thus reflecting he would look at both, repeatedly call the gold earth, and the earth gold, and then shuffling the contents of each hand into the other, he would keep on the process till he lost all sense of the difference of the gold from the earth. Then he would throw both earth and gold into the Ganges. The sight of money filled him with strange dread. He felt pain whenever any precious metal came in contact with his body. He avoided all talk about money; he was tempted by many people with offers of endowments but he stoutly declined them.

(To be continued.)

Elements of the Vedānta.

CHAPTER IV.

In the course of the three preceding chapters we have established some very important conclusions, viz.,

1. Wherever there is life, there is a longing for happiness—which has at the same time to be permanent and all knowing—a seeking, constant and unremitting, though blind for the great Sat-Chit-Ananda, the Self within.

2. No external thing, however, can ever give the bliss so unceasingly sought.

3. To obtain this happiness then, the mind which traffics with the outer world must die.

4. The death of the mind means nothing else but the clearing up of its ignorance about itself and realising that it is not, as it believed so long, really different from the Ātman or Pragnāna, the ever blissful Self within.

It clearly follows from the above simple truths that the mind being Pragnāna is itself the seat of all bliss and that like a millionaire going about begging for a few pice not knowing what he is worth, this really blissful mind wanders about seeking for happiness not knowing its own nature (*svarūpa*). When the mind or rather the inner man, the Jīva realises its identity with the Ātman or Pragnāna, in other words its own real nature and then alone, the happiness which it so unremittingly seeks will be obtained, and it will cease to wander, for as the Ātmapanishad puts it 'the wealthy man will not seek poverty.' The above truths have been put in a thousand different ways in our books, but all roads lead to Rome. We are miserable, we want to be happy, but we persistently seek for happiness in the wrong place, just exactly where it could not be found. The only solution possible for the vast mass of misery is to find out where real and permanent happiness is and to obtain it. We must strike at the very root. Temples, *chattrams*, asylums, hospitals and work-houses can never completely solve the problem. They are merely temporary expedients, make-shifts for the moment. This remedy is 'neither absolute nor final' as Kapila has so well put it. The only solution, the only cure for the ills of life is the removal of ignorance. In some mysterious manner of which we shall speak later on, the mind fell into the error of regarding itself as something different from the Ātman or Pragnāna which alone really exists. Here came the fatal mistake, the primary cause of innumerable rounds of births and deaths, of selfishness, quarrel, hatred and other passions. This primary ignorance, this false sense of separateness which has made us the narrow-minded selfish little things we are, is called in Vedāntic Texts *Māya* or *avidyā*.

Creation with its accompaniments, misery, transformation

and death, began just at the point where the mind thought ignorantly of course, that it was separate from the Atman. So *Aridya* or *Māya* is described as the cause of the world. 'The root of non-dual things is *Māya*—her nature is ignorance. She is what is called *Mūlaprakṛiti*, she is the *gunas* in their separate state, she is *Aridya*. In these diverse ways she it is, that lies spread out as the universe' (*Sarvasūpaniṣad*). Through *Māya* or ignorance, the One became two, and when it became two, it also necessarily became many. The process of extension through which the unmanifest became manifest is thus allegorically described by the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* :—

"Prajāpati, the first born embodied soul did not feel delight. Therefore nobody, when alone, feels delight. He was desirous of a second. He was in the same state as husband and wife are when in mutual embrace. He divided this two-fold. Hence were husband and wife produced...He approached her: hence men were born. She verily reflected: how can he approach me, whom he has produced from himself? Alas I will conceal myself. Thus she became a cow, the other a bull. He approached her. Hence kine were born. The one became a mare, and the other a stallion, the one a female ass, the other a male ass. He approached her. Hence the one-hoofed kind was born. The one became a female goat, the other a male goat, the one became an ewe, the other a ram. He approached her. Hence goats and sheep were born. In this manner he created every living pair whatsoever down to the ants.

"He knew: I am verily the creation: for I created this all. Hence the name of creation. Verily he who thus knows (that is that his Atman is the world) becomes in this creation like Prajāpati." 1. iv. 3, 4, 5.

We cannot afford to pause here to consider in detail the meaning of the allegory but its general import is plain. It describes how one became many as soon as it became two through the force of space, time and causality, how misery sprang with division and how that misery is curable only through the knowledge of the identity of the one and the many. That *aridya* which creates two out of one creates the many also is described in the following words by the great Tamil sage *Thāyumanavar*. "When the sense of 'I' takes possession of any, the world—*Māya* spreads out in wonderful diversity; and who could describe the ocean of misery that springs out of this? Flesh, body, organs, inside, outside, all-pervading ether, air, fire, water, earth, mountains and deserts, vast successions of visible and invisible things rising like mountain chains, forgetfulness, recollection, waves of grief and joy or the ocean of delusion, actions that breed them, religions with various prophets as their founders to cure sins, gods, bhaktas, śāstras and methods and disputations to support them. Ah! one might more easily count the sands on the seashore than tell this battalion of evils springing all from one primary cause of this false sense of separateness."

The cure for our misery and the only way that is 'absolute and final' is then the removal of *aridya* or ignorance. If that be removed its child *ahankāra* the false sense of "I" will die, and in the language of the *Adhyātma Upaniṣad*, the Self will shine of its own accord, freed from *Ahankāra*, like the moon freed from an eclipse. *Gnāna* or wisdom then is the panacea for the ills of life. 'Awake, arise! seek out the great ones and get understanding!' says the *Upaniṣad* (*Kath*, Upā, III. 14). 'He who obtains wisdom in this life obtains immortality. Great is the loss of him who does not obtain it in his lifetime. Those heroes who behold the soul in all they see have this world and live in immortality.' (*Ken. Upa.* II. 5). Nothing but knowledge of

the Atman can give us salvation. Says *Thāyumanavar*: 'Though one lyses the life of a bhakta, goes on pilgrimage round the whole world and bathes in the sea and in the rivers, though one does penance checking hunger and thirst in the midst of fire, though one satisfies his hunger with fallen leaves, water and air and keeps a vow of absolute silence, though one lives in inaccessible mountain caves, though one cleanses his veins and arteries through yogic powers, though one controls his breath and drinks the nectar from the moon in trance, though one makes his little body live for *Kalpas*, though one might do all these, can salvation be attained, O blissful guru except by wisdom?' In the same way the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* says, 'In the midst of ignorance, fools fancying themselves wise and learned, go round and round, (i.e., from birth to birth) oppressed by misery, as blind people led by the blind. Fancying oblations and pious gift to lead to the highest, fools do not know anything good. Having enjoyed on the high place of heaven which they gained by their actions, they enter this world or one that is lower. Those again who with subdued senses, with knowledge and the practice of the duties of a *śaṇyāsin* (i.e., one that knows the supreme) in the forest follow austerity and faith, go freed from sin through the sun (by the northern path or *gnānamārga*) to where abides the immortal spirit of inexhaustible nature.' That nothing, but *gnāna* or wisdom can bring about salvation is repeatedly emphasized in the *Upaniṣads* and *Sankara* has elaborately proved that *gnāna*, not *karma*, can directly secure salvation. In this connection the following discussion (freely rendered) between the guru and the disciple from that wonderful Tamil book 'The *Kaivalyam*' will be found interesting :—

Disciple:—Will not good acts themselves reveal the Brahman?

Where is the necessity then for Vedāntic inquiry?

Guru:—If you want, my son! to find out the real man beneath a mask, what will be the good of your running and leaping and jumping and standing on your head and dancing upon a high pole, instead of watching his movements and observing his actions and nature? In the same way the Self cannot be known by merely the study of the śāstras, or by the performance of sacrifices and penances or by mantras or by ceremonies or by feeding the poor.

Disciple:—A dirty glass, O holy father! can only be cleaned by washing it with one's hands and not by mere intellect; in the same way should not the ignorant mind be cleaned by *karman* rather than by inquiry and wisdom?

Guru:—My son, in the case of the glass the impurity is real, (but in the case of the mind the impurity is false for it only falsely thinks itself separate from the soul). In the case of a pebble on the other hand darkness or impurity can only be unreal, merely a shadow. In the former case physical means like washing, &c., are required, in the latter, the mind alone will do to know that pebble is really pure. In the same way ignorance of the mind as to its own nature can only be removed by *gnāna* or wisdom.

But what is *gnāna*? Says the *Nirālambopaniṣad* *Gnāna* consists in knowing that nothing in the phenomenal world exists apart from *Chaitanya* or the Brahman who is both the seer and the seen, who pervades all things and is equal in them all and who really is not of diverse forms like pot, cloth, etc., and realising the Self through subduing the senses, serving the guru and hearing and meditating on the Atman and by practising the *Sādhana* (means) taught by the guru for realisation. This is perhaps the best and the most complete definition that has been

given of *gnāna*. According to this definition, *gnāna* involves first a clear intellectual grasp of the nature of the self through the most searching inquiry, and secondly, the realising for oneself the truth through the grace of the guru. Of course we can here confine ourselves only to the intellectual part of the subject leaving the second part which consists in practical realisation to those who care for it. Analysing the first portion of the definition we see that four important statements are involved in it. (1) The seer and the seen are both of the *Pragnāna* or *Chaitanya*. (2) This *Pragnāna* pervades all and at the same time has no limitations of name and form. (3) Even things that are different are really nothing but *Pragnāna*, in other words the differences that exist are only illusory.

It may probably be asked here, is not this definition of *gnāna* too wide? Is it not enough to say that *gnāna* consists in knowing intellectually and then realising through experience that the mind or rather the *Jiva* is not different but identical with the *Ātman*? Is it also necessary to say as the definition does that the seer, the seen and *Pragnāna* are all of them one, in other words, the *Jiva*, the world and the *Ātman* are all in reality one? The prime cause of our misery is ignorance of the fact the *Jiva* and the *Ātman* are identical. To cure this, is it not enough to prove the identity of the two, is it also necessary to establish the identity as the definition involves, of the three, the *Jiva*, the *Ātman* and the world? We reply, yes. In the first place the happiness we seek or the Self within, we have already seen (chap. II), must be eternal and infinite as well as permanent and all-knowing. Therefore it follows that there can be nothing outside this Self. To say that the world is not the *Ātman* is inconsistent with the conclusion that the *Ātman* is infinite. To further strengthen our position, let us approach the question from another starting point.

We have already established (chap. III) that the *Jivā*, the inner man whom we have been loosely calling 'mind' is not essentially different from the *Ātman*, and that it is miserable, because it is ignorant of its real nature. Of course, *Manas*, intellect, will, *Abhikāra*, and the *Sākshi* or the witness, all perform different functions, but it is an axiom that difference of functions does not mean difference in nature or essence. One man may at one and the same time be the husband of his wife, the son of his father, the master over his servants and the servant of his master, similarly *Pragnāna* is at one and the same time *Manas*, intellect, will, *Abhikāra*, and *Sākshi*, the witness. But what is gained by proving that the mind is really *Pragnāna* if its different functions are all real and have to be performed? The capacity of a husband is different from the capacity of a servant and it will be ridiculous to confound the two though they both belong to the same man. So what good is there in proving that the *Jiva* is really the *Ātman* and therefore all blissful, if it has to perform different functions and wander and make itself miserable? I may be really and in law a millionaire but so long as I am kept out of it by an irresistible power and compelled to be poor, what can I do but beg and be miserable and of what use is my wealth to me? Similarly, if the *Jiva* be compelled to perform its five functions which necessarily disperse its glory and make it miserable, what use is it to prove that it is in its nature happy? Its happiness is then like a treasure guarded by a blood-thirsty demon. True; but is it really compelled to perform the different functions? Can it not avoid them? The reply is naturally how can it, so long as there is the world from which it cannot but take impressions, analyse them, act upon them and eat therefrom the sweet and bitter fruits

of life? A man cannot help being a husband, servant and master, so long as there are wives, masters and servants outside him. Similarly, so long as there is a world external to the *Jiva* and with such vast differences as we behold in it, how can it escape being attracted and repulsed and distracted by it? As *Swami Vivekānanda* says 'this moment we are whipped, and when we begin to weep, nature gives us a dollar, again we are whipped and when we weep nature gives us a piece of ginger-bread and we begin to laugh again.' This is how the world deals with us; and what good will it be for us to know that our real nature is all happiness if we cannot escape being played upon by the world in this fashion? The only possible way of effecting the desired escape is to know that the world is nothing outside our real nature. Flying away to forests, burying ourselves in caves or closing up our eyes and ears cannot save us from the world. The forests and the caves are themselves in the world and the shutting up our senses can be no remedy for there is nothing to prevent us from dreaming. The only possible way of escaping from the world is by knowing that it is not the ugly thing it seems, the methodless madness it appears, the tyrant which it seems to be over us but that it also is in reality the *Pragnāna* and therefore identical with our own real nature. 'He who sees himself (i.e., the real he, the *Ātman*) in all creation and all creation in himself does not go to disgusting states, but becomes liberated. When a man beholds all beings as his own Self, in that state in which all beings have become to the wise man his own Self, then to such a one who beholds all alike, where is delusion, where is grief? (Isa. Upa. 5. 6.) As the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* picturesquely puts it, 'Prajāpati was afraid, therefore man when alone is afraid. He then looked round: since nothing but myself exists, of whom should I be afraid? Hence his fear departed: for whom should he fear, since fear arises from another.' There is no way of escaping nature's tricks unless we examine and ascertain that the world is nothing outside our mind. It has its existence only there. When there is another, naturally there is fear, we become subject to attraction and repulsion; we at once get liable to be played upon. It follows then, that to establish the identity of the *Jiva* and the *Ātman* will be of no avail unless it includes also the identity of the world with them. Here will be seen the wisdom of the definition which says that *gnāna* consists in finding out by reason and practical realisation that the seer, the seen and the *Chaitanya* or *Pragnāna* are all one. Until the realisation of this grand unity comes, there can be no escape from the world and no cessation of the functions which distract the mind and prevent it from being happy. Here in this connection, let us read a chapter from the *Upanishads*.

The question is put. "Whom do we worship as the *Ātman*? What is His nature?" and the answer is "He is that by which one sees form, by which one hears sound, by which one apprehends smells, by which one expresses speech, by which one distinguishes what is of good and what is not of good taste.

"The heart and the mind, self-consciousness, pride of dominion, discrimination, good sense, knowledge of the *sūtras*, understanding, perception, thinking, the power of endurance, sensibility, independence of mind, recollection, determination, perseverance, the will to live, desire, submission, are all names of knowledge (that is, they are all different aspects and functions of the same *Pragnāna*.)

"This *Ātman* is *Brahma*, this is *Iudra*, this is *Prajāpati*, this, all the gods and the five great elements, Earth

Air, Ether, Water and Fire, this, all those which are made up of fractions of those elements, this is the cause of all what is born from eggs, what is born from the womb, what is born from the heat, what is born from the sprouts, horses, cows, men, elephants. Whatsoever has life—what moves on foot, what moves by wing and all that is immovable—all this is brought to existence by knowledge Pragnâ-Netram; is founded on knowledge. The world is brought into existence by knowledge; knowledge is the foundation, Brahma is knowledge (Pragnâna). He, Vâmadeva, having by that knowledge departed from this world and in the world of Heaven obtained all desires, became immortal, became immortal (Aitareya Upa. Ch. iii, Sec. 5.)

According to this Upanishad, not merely the inner man whom we have been calling the mind and who more correctly should be styled the Jiva is the Atman, but the whole Universe; 'The whole world is brought into existence by knowledge,' says the Upanishad. 'Knowledge is the foundation, Brahma is knowledge. The word 'knowledge' by the way is apt to be misleading. The word in the text is Pragnâna, for which unfortunately there is no proper English equivalent. Knowledge and consciousness denote functions more than the substance, and generally involve three things, the knower, the known and the act of knowing. Pragnâna on the other hand is no function. It is the thing-in-itself of which knowledge, consciousness, &c., are functions, we shall therefore adhere to the word Pragnâna in future. The above passage from an Upanishad of the Rig Veda tells us in the simplest and the most direct form possible that all that exists including you, me, animals, plants and stones are all modifications of the same Pragnâna, 'sparks from the same furnace' as another Upanishad puts it. They are waves, bubbles and froth of one vast ocean of consciousness, and as such are different only in name and form. If we succeed in proving this bold assertion of the Upanishads, the theory of the Vedânta would be complete. The full truth, however of the grand unity of which the seers speak, could only be grasped by actual realisation—Sakshâtkâra Anubhava. The Rishis spoke what they know; how we have to begin at the other end: we have to know what they spoke. What were truth to them are theories to us. We shall first intellectually examine and understand them, and then proceed, such of us as are allowed, to seek for ourselves independently to realise in its full glory the grand unity of which the Self-intoxicated seers so rejoicingly speak.

(To be continued.)

True Greatness or Vasudeva Sastry.

By T. C. NATARAJAN.

CHAPTER VI.

A timely expedient: and very angry with Nature.

The third person who interrupted the edifying conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Wild Cat was a neighbour of theirs, a pretty remarkable man in his own way. Our world is full of wonders if one has only the eye for them. The little story we are concerned with being a chip of the great world-block, has its own share of these wonders; and Sundarayya, for that was the name of the stranger, was undoubtedly one of these. For he

had in him a genius for mischief-making which endowed him with the glorious surname of Nârada, the celebrated bard of the Indian Olympus. Sundarayya, while returning from the polluted house of the late Krishna had noticed the sulky face of Nayanna lit up with an unusual moonlight. To go home, to wear a dry cloth, and reach Nayanna's house were all the work of a few minutes and the self-elected member of God's detective police was busy caves-dropping when the 'Wild Cats' were gloating over their calculations. When the great secret "that fellow Krishna is gone and so our child Muttu will be the heir" with a significant "you understand" added to it, was uttered, our friend Sundarayya was there unobserved. He would have continued where he was till the whole of the conspiracy was unfolded, had he not feared that his presence had begun to be suspected. To mend matters therefore, he boldly advanced into the interior of the house and asked Nayanna for snuff. This little powder it may here be mentioned has all along played an important part in social politics and has often brought together in close hand-to-hand relation the Brahmin and the Sudra, the Zamindar and his dog-keeper, the Dewan and his cook. This wonderful leveller of privileges as well as prejudices was now invoked by the intruder as an excuse for his intrusion. Nayanna's wife, as soon as Sundarayya entered, withdrew according to custom and the latter sat down saying, "Sankara! how tired I am?" Nayanna also sat down and asked "why! what is the matter, why are you so tired?" Sundarayya replied, 'I had a very hot quarrel with a beggar fellow from Madura.'

Nayanna:—'Who was he? and why a quarrel?'

S.:—'That fellow, it seems, is a relation of that cursed widow Lakshmi and claims that all Krishnan's property must go to her and her devilish father. I said 'there are men who will take care not to let a single pie go to her,' got exceedingly angry and abused him outright. These Madura men are wicked. What do you say?'

N.:—'What right have any of these Madura fellows to the property?'

S.:—"Surely there are claimants enough here."

"Claimants!" roared out Nayanna "Claimants! there is only one and he will get it."

S.:—Yes, you are right, there is only one and that, of course, is your relation Seetharama.

Nayanna's face and eyes became red with rage. "I have calculated, I have calculated," he thundered out, "Let Seetharama or any other devil approach it. I will cut his throat. It is mine. I am its master," "You! how!" interrupted Sundarayya. "Yes, I mean, not me but—"

At this stage there was heard a loud scream from the kitchen side, and Nayanna finding that it was the voice of his dear dirty boy, ran in to see what the matter was. Subbi was busy thumping the little imp in the kitchen. Nayanna exclaimed, "My dear! my dear! why do you beat him so?" but the thumping only increased in reply and the boy screamed louder and louder. Nayanna again remonstrated and Subbi gave him the following sweet reply loudly enough, "What do you care what I do with him or how the family goes? You have time only to talk about your plans and schemes to every fellow that passes in the street. You have got so much work to do here; the calves are dying with thirst; leaves and vegetables have to be brought from the garden, so many clothes have to be washed; but you keep talking and talking, idly that you are; and this little fellow worries me for food; how to feed him without leaves? You care

not about these things but keep talking to all the men in the street," and repeated the thumping operation upon the child's back. Sundarayya heard these words which were spoken loud enough to reach at least two houses and shrewd as he was, found that he was outwitted and that he must wait for another opportunity to draw forth from Nayanna all his schemes. The fact was, as our readers would have guessed, Subbi was hearing from the kitchen all that passed between her husband and his friend, and seeing that the former was foolishly on the brink of divulging what he described as his calculation and what we might call his speculation, resorted to the thumping expedient to draw away her husband and avert the danger. Sundarayya knowing full well the meaning of the device, thought it best to withdraw, saying, for formality's sake, "Nayanna, I go, I have got some business," and vowing within himself to make what he can of Nayanna's plans. Subbi loudly bolted the door on his back and treated her husband to a severe curtain lecture on the foolishness of divulging one's plans about property to men in the street, especially to Sundarayya. After this lecture he was placed under a sort of quarantine indoors, lest he might be too communicative.

Let us leave for a while the Wild Cats (Mr. and Mrs.) and the good people of Dindigul to themselves and run to Madura to see a friend of ours in whom we are greatly interested. That it is late in the night, and that there is just now no train running from the one place to the other are no considerations with us, nor is there any fear of our sleep getting disturbed, for in a novel which is a dream within the long dream of this world, being *Pratibhasika Satta* as the learned Vedantins would put it, we all see and act with our Sūkshma śarira, the subtle body, and though without hands or feet we are the swiftest of approach, though without eyes or ears we see and hear everything, though ourselves uncomprehended, we comprehend everything knowable.

The means of transit and other things thus cheaply settled, we reach an upstairs-house at Madura which we readily recognise as that of M.R. Ry. Narayana Iyer Avergal, Dewan Bahadur, C. I. E. The Deputy Collector is fast asleep enjoying perhaps in the astral plane his titles and his gubernatorial interview. Let us pass by, elowly for fear of disturbing him and his family, for our business just now is not with the sleeping. We reach the open space in the upstairs, and there to our surprise find a young man seated in an armless chair, all alone in that dark midnight staring at vacancy, self-absorbed; his young and beautiful cheeks are wetted with tears gently flowing from two dark big eyes, his lips are firmly knit to each other; one arm listlessly hangs over the chair and the other supports his bright but drooping face, itself resting on his thigh. His dark curly hair spreads uncared over his shoulders like a black cloud and he sat cross-legged, the very picture of melancholy. All nature was still as if it respected grief. The sky was perfectly silent with its silent conclave of stars. Below, there was not a mouse stirring and the silence of the midnight was enhanced by the darkness of the hour which made it almost dreadful. As if still more to heighten the effect, some dark monster clouds were carcering in the heavens and by turns swallowing one another like mountain snakes. The temple towers stood enveloped in darkness like colossal *Jilamunies* and one of them in particular—an incomplete tower with the old old tradition about it of being presided over by a demon-god reputed to have delivered up to Death many an unfortunate man return-

ing by midnight from the arms of clandestine love,—was in its unfinished state, enough to have frightened cowards into demoniac possession. But a few years ago, it was the popular belief that the tutelary demon of this tower would never suffer it to be completed, that it was left unfinished because the cock crew before the spirits which were engaged in its building could complete it, and that repeated human endeavours to complete it had proved futile. The great tower has now been completed but still there is the belief in its terrible guardianship; on Tuesdays and Fridays it is garlanded from top to bottom, and people with the Hindu conscience in them, would not dare pass that way or ever see it in midnight hours.

But in Sreenivasan's heart, for that is the name of our young friend, there was no fear. In his heart of hearts he defied death. He would be thankful if death would remove him from a world of injustice and wickedness, where, as he thought, all the enjoyment went to the wicked and all the suffering to the good and the god-fearing. "Could there be a god," he argued, "who would suffer harlots to thrive and drive angel-like Lakshmi to widowhood and lifelong misery? Is such a world worth living in where an innocent and virtuous, god-like Krishna is snatched away in the prime of life? Ah! Krishna, my sweet and only friend who was solacing me in my grief, whose one aim was to woo me out of my melancholy and familiarise me with the bright side of life, to lose you and survive! and ah! Lakshmi, the sweetest wife that ever man had, how often has Krishna spoken to me in secret, of your inestimable virtues, of your sweetness, your love, your kindness to all that lives, the beauty of your family relationship, the poetry of your life, the angelic philosophy you inherited from your father to which, though we did not fully comprehend it, you tuned the least of your actions! Yourself and Krishna to be parted once and for ever, you, never to see each other more! Is this life? Who had the right to send us into this and torture us this-wise? Are we such born slaves to fate? Where is the sanction for such tyranny? To say that God's pleasure was so and so—! where is that devil who gloats in such human misery, such torturing of helpless creatures? The world is the worst jobbery nature, the worst swindler, it cheats us, fools that we are, at every turn, now beating us with worn shoes, now patting our heads and patronising us—a rascalish Vivien, a siren coaxing us and making pigs of us. These suns, moons and stars, dead worthless masses of matter all rolling forward into sight because their great great grandmother, yarrow-crooning Nature bade them so, and rolling backward out of sight once again because Nature would have it so, these are the great luminaries where gods reside! And these men innumerable all sleeping and snoring because the old devil bade them; and rushing out into life, next morning saying 'I slept, and I woke, I can do this, I can do that, I have done that and so on.' This meaningless 'I' with which every man starts up like a shameless jackdaw is Nature's mischief. Nobody ever does anything himself, whether man or woman or animal. It is all Nature, Nature, Nature. This Nature hurled this me into this life—drove away that Krishna out of it and has broken Lakshmi's innocent and faultless heart. I do not want to live. If people say I must be born again, why should I? I shall put an end to myself and then let me see where this power is that can again start me up into the mad course which foolish men call life and the wise should call death. Let Nature dare approach me." He unconsciously roared out these last words and violently stamped his foot on the ground.

Just then there came rushing up to him, as if frightened, a young girl of about 18 years of age, her hair all dishevelled and her dress in wild disorder, and clasped him in her arms crying "My dear, My dear." "Stand off, there is no 'dear' here, anywhere under the sun or above it, stand off" cried out Sreenivasan and pushed her away. "I have got frightened, my dear, don't treat me so, my dear," cried the girl and again embraced him and wept, her tears rolling down on his broad breast. "I am very much alarmed; I am very much alarmed, clasp me in thy arms and comfort me my dear", added the girl almost sobbing. We seem to know the girl; have we not seen her in Vasudeva Sastry's house once with her mother just before the terrible Annammal's arrival from Dindigul? Yes. She is Rukmani, Dewan Bahadur Narayana Iyer's daughter. Sreenivasan, just now so angry with Nature and her ways, is then the Deputy Collector's son-in-law. When Rukmani took refuge in his breast, and he felt her heart beat wildly with fear, he reluctantly but gently laid his arms round her and ground his teeth with rage saying, "It is Nature driving me mad; why do you thus come and trouble me? I shall have nothing to do with anybody. You are all Nature's slaves, but I will be none." "My Lord, when I am frightened, is this how you would treat me, to whom shall I go for refuge if not to you? Where is your wonted kindness gone? Soothe my fear, my dear, I shall tell you all. First let us go in, I am afraid to be here in this dark midnight." Sreenivasan had to suspend for a moment his rage against nature and had to go in. A woman in distress melts the stoniest heart. They went into the hall, the door was closed; a lamp was lit, and Rukmani, comforted and assured that all was safe, looking up at her husband, said, "My dear, is this how you will leave me alone? I don't know how long you had been sitting in the dark alone before I found you. I dreamt a dreadful dream which found strange confirmation in your conduct." "Yen girls are the silliest things in the world," muttered Sreenivasan; "was it only, only a dream that frightened you so, what was the dream?" "I dreamt," began Rukmani, "ah, horrible! that you had deserted me and leaving me alone in the bed as Nala did poor Damayanti, fled away into the solitudes of the forest, and there, got up a precipice overhanging a dark fathomless abyss and was about to fall down into it with a view to put an end to your life. I seemed somehow to find you. Just then I even heard you say, 'I will now kill myself and let me see which devil can bring me back to life.' Just at this critical moment I heard some one roaring and stamping on the ground which cut off my terrible dream. I woke sud when in your place I saw the empty bed and unpressed pillow I got awfully afraid and ran out screaming and found you where you were. Ah! what a bad night!" "A very curious dream certainly," interrupted Sreenivasan, "I really did want to get rid of this wicked and tyrannical Nature which has enslaved us, and I did say, 'I will put an end to myself and then let me see where the power is which could start me up into this life again.' Nature is a humbug and I want to get rid of her at any cost." "Will you leave me miserable, my dear?" replied Rukmani weeping, "is this the way to escape Maya? Even great sages like Vasishtha lived with their wives." "I should like to know how they both lived in the world and escaped the devil Maya. It is all nonsense." "I do not know it well, my dear, but uncle Vasudeva Sastry says 'By the conquest of mind alone is the conquest of Nature attained. Nature or Maya is simply one's mind, he says; and when one subdues the mind he becomes immortal. Only a few days before sister Lakshmi became so miserable, he uttered to me some verses in which

a sage says of himself: 'I am always immortal, I am all knowledge, I am all bliss, I am beyond nature. I am not the body—how could I be born? I am not ahankara (false egoism)—how could I be subject to hunger and thirst? I am not the mind, so how could I be subject to passions and grief? I am not an agent, so how could there be slavery and freedom for me?' Srinivasan replied "I too have read such things, but it is all talk, talk; where is the man who has actually gone beyond nature and rent the veil of maya and who cares not what happens, who thinks himself immortal even if the body dies?" Rukmani said, "I have heard uncle say there are men who care not whether the sun is hot or cool, whether fire burns upwards or downwards, whether they are praised and worshipped or abused and beaten or even whether they die the next moment or hundreds of years after—but compose yourself, my dear, and sleep, for you have had no sleep and we have to get up early. Only assure me, my lord, that you will not desert me, that you will not once again expose yourself in the dark midnight." A sort of consent was slowly wrung out from Srinivasan who desired to be left alone, after which his wife began to sleep. "To subdue the mind! the mind is already too subdued and slavish," he remarked to himself, and once again fell into a fit of meditation which fortunately terminated in sleep. But even his sleep was philosophical, for it was a long dream in which he met a great Yogin who spoke philosophy to him and graciously undertook to initiate him into the mysteries of Yoga. He was about to become the great Yogi's disciple when suddenly he was roused to witness a strange occurrence.

The Sages of India.

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and bring a marvellous harmony, the universal religion of head and heart into existence, and such a man was born and I had the good fortune to sit under his feet for years. The time was ripe, it was necessary that such a man should be born, and he came, and the most wonderful part of it was that his life's work was just near a city which was full of western thoughts, which had run mad after these occidental ideas, a city which had become more Europeanised than any other city in India. There he was born, without any book-learning whatsoever, he could not write his own name, this great intellect, never could write his own name, but everybody, the most brilliant graduates of our university found in him an intellectual giant. That was a curious man. It is a long, long story, and I have no time to tell anything about him to-night. I had better stop, only mentioning the great Sri Ramakrishna, the fulfilment of the Indian sages, the sage for the time, one whose teaching is just now, in the present time, most beneficial. And mark the Divine power working behind the man. The son of a poor priest, born in one of the wayside villages, unknown and unthought of, to-day is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more. Who knows the plans of the Lord? Now, my brothers, if you do not see the hand, the finger of Providence it is because you are blind, born blind indeed. If time comes, and another opportunity, I will speak to you about him more fully, only let me say now that if I have told you one word of truth it was his and his alone, and if I have told you many things which were not true, which were not correct, which were not beneficial to the human race, it was all mine, and on me is the responsibility.